

Nehemiah Rebuilds the Wall

I: Prayer Request

II: Nehemiah Rebuilds the Wall

A: Who is Nehemiah?

1. Cupbearer to King Artaxerxes I, leader of the Israelites at Jerusalem.
2. A Cupbearer pours wine for the King and also tastes the wine before the King does to make sure it was not poisoned.
3. Best known for:
 - a. Being a man of religious devotion and prayer.
 - b. His ability to motivate others.
 - c. Leading the rebuilding of the wall around Jerusalem (took 52 days).

B: Read Nehemiah 2:11-2:20

1. 2:11 Why is Nehemiah returning to Jerusalem?
 - a. To rebuild the wall around Jerusalem that protects the temple.
2. Why was the wall destroyed to begin with?
 - a. The wall was destroyed by the Babylonians when they invaded Israel and sent the Israelites into exile.
 - b. King Nebuchadnezzar led the destruction of the wall.
3. 2:13: Nehemiah was examining the wall around Jerusalem. He examined the Southern part of the city as the Valley Gate and the Jackal are located there. Jerusalem was always attacked from the North, so Nehemiah knew that they were completely destroyed up there.
4. 2:14: The fountain Gate = This could possibly be in the southeast wall. Kings Pool = Irrigation area of the royal gardens located outside the city walls.
5. Why did Nehemiah not want to tell anyone about his plans?
 - a. Nehemiah knew about Sanballat and Tobiah who were unhappy about the plans. They did not want anyone to help the Israelites. He did this in secret because he wanted to keep his intentions of himself until the time was right to reveal them.
 - b. After making sure there was no new opposition he revealed his plans to the Jewish officials.
6. 2:17: When Nehemiah tells the officials that Jerusalem was in disgrace and in ruins, they rallied to help him and responded in 2:18 "Let us start rebuilding."
7. 2:20: As expected Sanballat and Tobiah ridiculed and were skeptical about the rebuilding
 - a. How did Nehemiah respond to that?
 - i. In 2:20 he says "The God of heaven will give us success. We his servants will start rebuilding, but as for you, you have no share in Jerusalem or any claim or historic right to it."
 - ii. We can see Nehemiah's commitment to God through this statement. He was certainly devoted to his faith.

C: Read Chapter 3

1. We see in the beginning of Chapter 3 that many people worked on building the wall. Do you think the wall was built all at once? Or in Sections?
 - a. Sections
2. Who do you think these people were?

- a. We can see that the sections were probably build by families who lived near the sections they rebuilt.

D: Read Chapter 4

1. Opposition to the wall building became intense in this chapter. Sanballat became angry and ridiculed the Jews.
2. Tobiah also was irritated at the Jews. What did he say could climb the wall and break it down?
 - a. 4:3 Tobiah says “Even a fox climbed up on it, he would break down their wall of stones!” Very skeptical individual.
3. Why do you think Sanballat was angry at the rebuilding of the wall?
 - a. Well the wall was likely about 8 feet thick and 20-30 feet high so that is a very well built wall. Extremely strong don’t you think? It could be said that Sanballat was threatened by the success of the wall and that weakened his sense of security.
 - b. 4:6 “The people worked with all their heart”
 - i. This is a sign of strength, encouragement and success.
4. When the wall was coming along and was about half way built Sanballat and Tobiah met with other enemies to plot their next plan. How did the Jews respond to those threats?
 - a. They prayed and posted guards around the wall.
 - b. Half worked building while the other half, well armed, stood guard.

E: Read Chapter 5

1. A lot of Jews helping to build the wall were in serious financial trouble. Those who had to take out loans were being charged extremely high fees and were being sold into slavery to other Jews.
 - a. Was t his against Jewish law?
 - i. Yes (Exodus 22:25; Leviticus 25:39-42)
2. Nehemiah worked with these Jews and they apologized for breaking the law. They then did what Nehemiah asked them to do and fixed the situation.

F: Read Chapter 6

1. In chapter 6 we see yet again more opposition to the building of the wall.
 - a. What were these challenges that Nehemiah faces?
 - i. The opposition tried to kill Nehemiah by drawing him out.
 - ii. Attempt to deceive him into showing fear and weakness by hiding in the temple.
 - b. Did any of these work?
 - i. No, they both failed and the wall was complete.
2. How long did it take for Nehemiah to rebuild the wall?
 - a. 52 Days.
3. How long did the wall lay in ruin before Nehemiah rebuilt it?
 - a. Over 100 years.
4. After the wall was complete the neighboring people realized that God had been helping the Israelites.