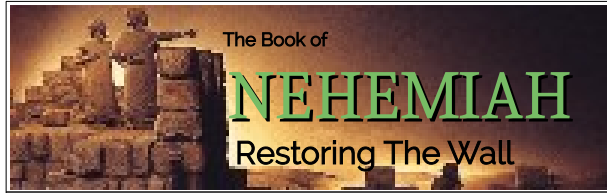


A TIME TO BUILD

Let us rise up and build ... Nehemiah 2:18



Enemy Overcome
Nehemiah 6-7
Lesson 14

Background Information

As we saw in the last chapter, if God's people are quarreling among themselves, the enemy can afford to rest, but as soon as things are set right within the servants of God, he rises for attack. Satan is both a liar and an accuser, his mission is to slander God's servants. Israel's enemies sought to discredit their leader in the eyes of the people, so that they would lose heart and the work would not be completed. Using threats alone, they hoped to ruin Nehemiah's reputation bringing the work to a halt. Nehemiah kept his eyes firmly fixed on the goal that the Lord had given him, and refused to get side-tracked. He countered the lies with the truth and prayed for the Lord to strengthen His hands.

The enemy used fear to lure Nehemiah into sin, in order to save his own life. God gave Nehemiah discernment to distinguish the truth from the lie. He refused to disobey God's Law and go into the temple, into the place reserved only for the priests, even to save his own life. He trusted his life into God's hands; God alone could protect both his reputation and his life. When life gets tough, some people flee, but Nehemiah fled into the arms of God and was safe from all harm.

Treasures of the Heart

...they all were trying to make us afraid, saying, "Their hands will be weakened in the work, and it will not be done." Now therefore, O God, strengthen my hands

Nehemiah 6:9

What does it say?

The first step is getting the lay of the land. Carefully observe the text looking to see where you might dig to find hidden treasure. Studying a narrative requires following the key characters and paying special attention to what God says and does. Mark your text looking for repeated words, contrasts or similarities. **Does a key verse stand out in each section?** Look for answers to: Who? What? When? Where? Why or How?

Nehemiah 6:1-14

1 Now it happened when Sanballat, Tobiah, Geshem the Arab, and the rest of our enemies heard that I had rebuilt the wall, and that there were no breaks left in it (though at that time I had not hung the doors in the gates), **2** that Sanballat and Geshem sent to me, saying, "Come, let us meet together among the villages in the plain of Ono." But they thought to do me harm.

3 So I sent messengers to them, saying, "I am doing a great work, so that I cannot come down. Why should the work cease while I leave it and go down to you?"

4 But they sent me this message four times, and I answered them in the same manner.

5 Then Sanballat sent his servant to me as before, the fifth time, with an open letter in his hand. **6** In it was written:

It is reported among the nations, and Geshem says, that you and the Jews plan to rebel; therefore, according to these rumors, you are rebuilding the wall, that you may be their king.

7 And you have also appointed prophets to proclaim concerning you at Jerusalem, saying, "There is a king in Judah!" Now these matters will be reported to the king. So come, therefore, and let us consult together.

8 Then I sent to him, saying, "No such things as you say are being done, but you invent them in your own heart."

9 For they all were trying to make us afraid, saying, "Their hands will be weakened in the work, and it will not be done."

Now therefore, O God, strengthen my hands.

10 Afterward I came to the house of Shemaiah the son of Delaiah, the son of Mehetabel, who was a secret informer; and he said, "Let us meet together in the house of God, within the temple, and let us close the doors of the temple, for they are coming to kill you; indeed, at night they will come to kill you."

Nehemiah 7:4-60 (New Living Translation)

4 At that time the city was large and spacious, but the population was small, and none of the houses had been rebuilt. 5 So my God gave me the idea to call together all the nobles and leaders of the city, along with the ordinary citizens, for registration. I had found the genealogical record of those who had first returned to Judah. This is what was written there:

6 Here is the list of the Jewish exiles of the provinces who returned from their captivity. King Nebuchadnezzar had deported them to Babylon, but now they returned to Jerusalem and the other towns in Judah where they originally lived. 7 Their leaders were Zerubbabel, Jeshua, Nehemiah, Seraiah, Reelaiah, Nahamani, Mordecai, Bilshan, Mispar, Bigvai, Rehum, and Baanah.

This is the number of the men of Israel who returned from exile:

8	The family of Parosh	2,172	
9	The family of Shephatiah	372	
10	The family of Arah	652	
11	The family of Pahath-moab (descendants of Jeshua and Joab)		2,818
12	The family of Elam	1,254	
13	The family of Zattu	845	
14	The family of Zaccai	760	
15	The family of Bani	648	
16	The family of Bebai	628	
17	The family of Azgad	2,322	
18	The family of Adonikam	667	
19	The family of Bigvai	2,067	
20	The family of Adin	655	
21	The family of Ater (descendants of Hezekiah)	98	
22	The family of Hashum	328	
23	The family of Bezai	324	
24	The family of Jorah	112	
25	The family of Gibbar	95	
26	The people of Bethlehem and Netophah		188
27	The people of Anathoth	128	
28	The people of Beth-azmaveth	42	
29	The people of Kiriath-jearim, Kephirah, and Beeroth		743
30	The people of Ramah and Geba	621	
31	The people of Micmash	122	
32	The people of Bethel and Ai		123
33	The people of Nebo	52	
34	The citizens of Elam	1,254	
35	The citizens of Harim	320	
36	The citizens of Jericho	345	
37	The citizens of Lod, Hadid, and Ono		721

What does it mean?

What lesson can I draw from my observations? Ask yourself, "What was the intended meaning of the original author?" Is there a command to obey, a warning to heed, or an example to follow or avoid? State each lesson in a simple sentence that you could share with someone else.

(aim for 10 words or less)

Nehemiah 6:1-14 _____

Nehemiah 6:15-7:3 _____

Nehemiah 7:4-60 _____

Nehemiah 7:61-73 _____

How can I apply it?

Ask yourself, "What course of action do I need to take to apply each lesson?" How should it change me? What does it challenge me to do? Does it point out error in my attitude or actions?

(aim for 10 words or less)

Nehemiah 6:1-14 _____

Nehemiah 6:15-7:3 _____

Nehemiah 7:4-60 _____

Nehemiah 7:61-73 _____

What did God say?

See if you can discover what God wants us to understand about His character and His ways? Which of His attributes is He displaying? When we are questioning the circumstances that surround us, understanding Who God is helps us trust Him when we don't see Him working. Simply state what God is trying to communicate about Himself **and how it affects your thinking**.

What words or phrases are repeated? Repeated words help us discover the main point.

Getting the point!

Discover the "Big Idea" of each section. The main point of the passage is like a topic sentence in a paragraph. See if you can boil down the meaning of each section into one or two words. This helps you fully understand what the author is trying to convey. (It's fun to alliterate if you want to try) Did you find the "Big Idea"

Nehemiah 6:1-14 _____

Nehemiah 6:15-7:3 _____

Nehemiah 7:4-60 _____

Nehemiah 7:61-73 _____

Title

State the main point of the entire passage in the form of a title.

Flex Your Muscles

From your title Can you discover a N.T. example of this O.T. truth?

Time to build

Take note of how Nehemiah prepared and planned. Ask yourself, how did he attack each challenge? How did it affect those who interacted with him? What building materials did he use? (prayer, confrontation, standing firm, waiting etc.) **What did you learn that can help you next time you meet an obstacle?**

Radiating His Truth

The enemy seeks to persuade us into an easy-going, compromising religion that will shirk persecution, carry no cross, and is governed by fear of the opinions of others.

Alan Redpath



