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? 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."

11 And I said, "Should such a man as I flee? And who is there such as I who would go into the temple to save his life? I will not go in!" 12 Then I perceived that God had not sent him at all, but that he pronounced this prophecy against me because Tobiah and Sanballat had hired him. 13 For this reason he was hired, that I should be afraid and act that way and sin, so that they might have cause for an evil report, that they might reproach me.

14 My God, remember Tobiah and Sanballat, according to these their works, and the prophetess Noadiah and the rest of the prophets who would have made me afraid.

Digging Deeper

Dig deeper using other resources such as a dictionary, concordance, maps and cross-references. **Notate** where you found it to share with the group. Look for commands to obey or questions to be answered. **What does God want you to know about Himself**?

the first time a w	nk about when looking u vord or phrase appears in	n Scripture often est	ablishes a precedent, p	attern, or biblical
concept that occ	curs throughout the rest o	of the Bible. Be care	eful not to ignore the cor	ntext.

Nehemiah 6:15-7:3

15 So the wall was finished on the twenty-fifth day of Elul, in fifty-two days. 16 And it happened, when all our enemies heard of it, and all the nations around us saw these things, that they were very disheartened in their own eyes; for they perceived that this work was done by our God.

17 Also in those days the nobles of Judah sent many letters to Tobiah, and the letters of Tobiah came to them. 18 For many in Judah were pledged to him, because he was the son-in-law of Shechaniah the son of Arah, and his son Jehohanan had married the daughter of Meshullam the son of Berechiah. 19 Also they reported his good deeds before me, and reported my words to him. Tobiah sent letters to frighten me.

7:1 Then it was, when the wall was built and I had hung the doors, when the gatekeepers, the singers, and the Levites had been appointed, 2 that I gave the charge of Jerusalem to my brother Hanani, and Hananiah the leader of the citadel, for he was a faithful man and feared God more than many.

${\bf 3}$ And I said to them, "Do not let the gates of Jerusalem be opened until the sun is hot; and
while they stand guard, let them shut and bar the doors; and appoint guards from among
the inhabitants of Jerusalem, one at his watch station and another in front of his own house."

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:

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8 The family of Parosh 2,172
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- 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 Bani648
- 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

38 The citizens of Senaah	3,930				
39 These are the priests wh The family of Jedaiah (thro 40 The family of Immer 41 The family of Pashhur 42 The family of Harim			973		
43 These are the Levites who The families of Jeshua and 44 The singers of the family 45 The gatekeepers of the	Kadmiel (desce	ndants of Ho 48		74 atita, and Shobai	138
46 The descendants of the Ziha, Hasupha, Tabbaoth,47 Giddel, Gahar, 50 Reaiah, Ronghusim, 53 Bakbuk, Haki Temah, 56 Neziah, and Hati	[,] Keros, Siaha, Pa ezin, Nekoda, 51 upha, Harhur, 54	adon, 48 Leb Gazzam, Uzz	anah, Hagaba za, Paseah, 52	h, Shalmai, 49 Ha Besai, Meunim,	nan,
57 The descendants of thes Sotai, Hassophereth, Perud hazzebaim, and Ami. 60 In all, the Temple servar	a, 58 Jaalah, Dar	kon, Giddel,	59 Shephatiah	, Hattil, Pokereth-	

Nehemiah 7:61-73

61 Another group returned at this time from the towns of Tel-melah, Tel-harsha, Kerub, Addan, and Immer. However, they could not prove that they or their families were descendants of Israel. 62 This group included the families of Delaiah, Tobiah, and Nekoda—a total of 642 people. 63 Three families of priests—Hobaiah, Hakkoz, and Barzillai—also returned. (This Barzillai had married a woman who was a descendant of Barzillai of Gilead, and he had taken her family name.) 64 They searched for their names in the genealogical records, but they were not found, so they were disqualified from serving as priests. 65 The governor told them not to eat the priests' share of food from the sacrifices until a priest could consult the Lord about the matter by using the Urim and Thummim—the sacred lots.

66 So a total of 42,360 people returned to Judah, 67 in addition to 7,337 servants and 245 singers, both men and women. 68 They took with them 736 horses, 245 mules, 69 435 camels, and 6,720 donkeys.

70 Some of the family leaders gave gifts for the work. The governor gave to the treasury 1,000 gold coins, 50 gold basins, and 530 robes for the priests. 71 The other leaders gave to the treasury a total of 20,000 gold coins and some 2,750 pounds of silver for the work. 72 The rest of the people gave 20,000 gold coins, about 2,500 pounds of silver, and 67 robes for the priests. 73 So the priests, the Levites, the gatekeepers, the singers, the Temple servants, and some of the common people settled near Jerusalem. The rest of the people returned to their own towns throughout Israel.

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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 ______



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?

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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 ar
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



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<u>Message Notes</u>	