

Study of Nehemiah

REBUILDING THE CITY/REBUILDING THE CHURCH

Chapter I Finding the right man to meet the need.

Introduction:

Because I am builder and have dealt with a number of restoration and rebuilding projects, the book of Nehemiah has long caught my attention.

When it comes to a restoration projects there are a number of factors that must be considered.

- The need must be understood. Is the project realistic?
- The purpose of the project must be attainable
- The conditions of the project must make it viable.
- The resources for the project must be available
- The manpower for the project must be available
- The leadership must be in place.

Any major building project whether it be a restoration project, a remodel or new construction will need to have the appropriate leadership. Finding the right man for the task may not always be easy. I have a son-in-law who manages a large construction company and one struggles that he sometimes has is to find someone qualified to be a project manager.

When it comes to the work of God – the building of God’s Kingdom, it is a big job. The task of spreading the Gospel is an immense job. The task of rebuilding struggling Churches is a big job. How do you get a big job done? How do you get ready to take on a big job? How do we organize to get the job accomplished?

In studying the book of Nehemiah it is my hope that we gain some of the answers to these questions. I believe that we will see in part the kind of a man God can use to get the big job done. I hope that we will all see what kind of people we need to

be in order to get the job done. All Christians should have a desire to be part of God's work. The fact that you are here today is evidence that you want to see God's work – this Church go forward.

As we study the first chapter we will see three specific things or characteristics about the man God uses to get His work done. These three characteristics will have application to both church leaders and all church members. This study has challenged my heart as to the kind of man I need to be in order to get this job done.

The setting of the Book. 1:1 READ VS.1

Author = Nehemiah son of Hacaliah

Name = "The comfort of Jehovah"

Date = Month of Chlev Nov/Dec.

20th year of Artaxerxes = 445/446BC

Place = Susa the citadel or capitol – Winter home of the king

Nehemiah was a high ranking official in the palace of the king

Time span = 445 to 425 BC

I. The Man God uses is one Who has a deep concern for the work of God.

The work of God gets done when there is a good heart for God and His work. It starts in a heart with a deep concern for the Glory of God and the health of His people or His Church

Neh.1:1-4 READ VS. 2 & 3

A. Nehemiah was concerned enough to ask questions

Nehemiah is an example of one is concerned in that he asked a two part question about what was going on in Jerusalem.

1. What about the remnant – people?

What did he learn? Remnant is in great trouble and reproach or shame.

Is the Church of God in America in trouble and in reproach today?

What do we know about the Church in America? Recently, I saw a report that said less than 50% of Americans belong to a local church, with corresponding declines in regular church attendance.

COVID 19 has also had a devastating impact on church attendance.

2. What did he learn about the city? The wall is broken down and its gates destroyed by fire. The devastating news is that the once beautiful city was in ruin even though under Ezra a remnant had gone back to rebuild.

Realize that Nehemiah didn't need to ask about Jerusalem – he didn't need to be concerned, he was in a good position as the king's CUPBEARER. He wasn't even born when the exile took place yet Judah was his homeland.

God's work needs people who ask question – get involved etc. God needs to raise up people who are concerned about what is happening not only here but throughout our country.

B. Nehemiah demonstrated his concern by the way he reacted

Nehemiah listened to the report. It was important to him – he listened!

But more than that:

He sat down and wept. He cared enough to weep! Are we grieved by the conditions of the church here and the church in America? I believe it starts with each local Church.

He mourned for days

He fasted and prayed before the God of heaven.

Nehemiah was expressing a deep concern for the people of God.
Nehemiah was a man of concern and as result he had a vision – a plan.

“Without a vision the people perish”

Do we demonstrate the same kind of concern for the Church of God today?

Which leads us to our next point as to the man God can use.

II. **The Man God uses is one whose concern leads to PRAYER.** READ VS.5-10

Nehemiah’s concern drove him not to depression or a fatalistic attitude but to God in prayer. This prayer contains a great deal of instruction for us. Almost the entire prayer is quotation of Scripture and is based on God’s Word. The composition itself borrows vocabulary form the prayer of Daniel 9, Deut. Chs.7,9,and 30, the prayer of Solomon in 1 Kings 8:23-53 “What a Friend We Have in Jesus”

A. Worship- adoration READ VS.5

States who God is - Jehovah – God of heaven

The great and awesome God

Jesus taught us to pray, “Hallowed be thy Name”

Covenant keeping - promise keeping

Two aspects to the promises that God made for Israel

Deut 4:25-31

2 Chron. 7:14

Steadfast love

B. Supplication. Vs.6a READ VS.6a Lord hear my prayer – Hear our prayers

C. Conviction/ Confession READ Vs.6b-7

States who man is – a sinner

“Confessing the sins of the people of Israel”

“Which we have sinned against you”

“Even I and my father’s house have sinned”

“We have acted corruptly against you and have not kept the commandments, the statutes, and the rules”

D. **Promise keeping God** READ vs.8-9 Remember

States the results of sin - DISCIPLINE

Deut. 28:63-67 & 30:1-3

States the promise of restoration

God’s word is filled with both warnings of potential judgment and promises for restoration. We need to look for those warnings and promises as we study God’s word and pay attention to the warnings but also be quick to claim His promises. “Trust and Obey or there is no other way”

“Standing on the promises that cannot fail” I Jn.1:9 Heb.10:22-23

E. **Identification** vs.10

Nehemiah prayed for God to remember. “These are your people whom you redeemed!” In bringing Babylon to destroy Jerusalem and take the people captive, God chastened the Jews sorely, but He did not forsake them!

This God’s church – you are His redeemed – God’s Church in America maybe struggling and in many ways may be under chastisement but God still cares. Many Churches have struggled these past two years because of COVID 19 even as this Church has been caused to struggle, BUT God has not forgotten.

God does care!

F. Request Vs.11a

Nehemiah has developed a plan -

III. **The Man God uses is one who is Faithful** READ vs. 11

- A. He was reliable “Cupbearer
- B. He was trustworthy.
- C. He was responsible. He was a man who was responsible for the life of the king.
- D. He was persistent vs.6 & 11a

Nehemiah is often used as an example of effective leadership as we study this book, I am hopeful we will recognize the kind of church member God wants us to be as we work to rebuild.

Note Paul’s instructions to Timothy and Titus.

Commit to faithful men

God uses people who are concerned

God uses people who are prayerful

God uses people who are faithful.