



NEHEMIAH'S WALL

Nehemiah 1:1-4 NLT: In late autumn, in the month of Kislev, in the twentieth year of King Artaxerxes' reign, I was at the fortress of Susa. Hanani, one of my brothers, came to visit me with some other men who had just arrived from Judah. I asked them about the Jews who had returned there from captivity and about how things were going in Jerusalem. They said to me, "Things are not going well for those who returned to the province of Judah. They are in great trouble and disgrace. The wall of Jerusalem has been torn down, and the gates have been destroyed by fire." When I heard this, I sat down and wept. In fact, for days I mourned, fasted, and prayed to the God of heaven.

LIFE GROUP / PERSONAL STUDY:

This week we are concluding our series called "Vacation" by taking a long road trip from Susa - the capital of the Persian Empire to Jerusalem. We find that Nehemiah was a very trusted individual - even though he was a Jewish slave - because he was the cupbearer for King Artaxerxes. The first thing we see is that he was greatly distressed by the news he received about the state of affairs in Jerusalem. Just as many people today are greatly distressed by the state of affairs in our country, we can learn a great deal from Nehemiah. His attitude and his actions are a wonderful example for us to follow!

Read Nehemiah 1:5-11:

1A) One of the models for our prayers is the accrostic ACTS. Adoration, Confession, Thanksgiving, and Supplication. How could Nehemiah's prayer be used as an example of this type of prayer?

1B) PERSONAL: Nehemiah's first response in his distress was to "ask for help." How does this encourage you to ask for help in whatever is causing you to be distressed?

Read Nehemiah 2:1-9:

2A) Who else did Nehemiah ask help from and what did he ask for?

2B) What was the response to his request and why did Nehemiah receive this response?

3A) How was Nehemiah's experience a great example of Ephesians 3:20?

3B) What do we learn from Ecclesiastes 4:9-10, 12 that reveals the importance of asking for help and not trying to take care of situations by ourselves?

Read Nehemiah 4:

4A) Describe the resistance the people experienced while they worked to rebuild the wall.

4B) Describe how Nehemiah and the people responded listing the different action steps they took.

4C) PERSONAL: How could you incorporate these same types of steps to ward off the attacks you may be experiencing?

5) What promises and words of encouragement are we given in the following verses?

Isaiah 54:17:

John 10:10:

James 4:7:

Read Nehemiah 6:1-9:

6A) Describe the next type of opposition that came against Nehemiah and his response.

6B) How does 1 Peter 5:8-9 encourage you to respond to ongoing opposition the way Nehemiah did?

7) PERSONAL: According to Nehemiah 6:15-16, what results came because of these responses and trusting in God and how do these results give you encouragement today?

ACT: With the ongoing pandemic and the world in chaos, we may all be feeling like the attacks, distractions, and other forms of opposition are overwhelming. But Nehemiah has shown us that we need to 1) Ask for help - from God first and then from others around us. We need to 2) Anticipate resistance because when we're trying to serve God and do what is right our enemy is like a prowling lion just looking for a weak spot to attack. But our response must be 3) Avoid distractions at all cost. Be prepared to stand firm, to keep on working, to not give in or give up. When we resist the devil, he will flee! It's time to rise up and rebuild and with God's help we will be able to accomplish this goal.

Daily Devotional: It always helps to look at the context of the passage. Then try to answer the following questions about the passage. Who is involved? What is going on? Where is the action taking place? When? How can this concept apply to my life? Why is it important? Also look for Commands, Warnings, and Examples to follow or not to follow.

- This week let's look at passages that describe what we should do when we're distressed.

Monday:

2 Chronicles 15:4 NASB

But in their distress they turned to the Lord God of Israel, and they sought Him, and He let them find Him.

Tuesday:

Psalms 18:6 NASB

In my distress I called upon the Lord, And cried to my God for help; He heard my voice out of His temple, And my cry for help before Him came into His ears.

Wednesday:

Psalms 81:7 NIV

In your distress you called and I rescued you, I answered you out of a thundercloud; I tested you at the waters of Meribah.

Thursday:

Psalms 120:1-2 NIV

I call on the Lord in my distress, and he answers me. Save me, Lord, from lying lips and from deceitful tongues.

Friday:

Jonah 1:1-7 NIV

From inside the fish Jonah prayed to the Lord his God. He said: "In my distress I called to the Lord, and he answered me. From deep in the realm of the dead I called for help, and you listened to my cry. You hurled me into the depths, into the very heart of the seas, and the currents swirled about me; all your waves and breakers swept over me. I said, 'I have been banished from your sight; yet I will look again toward your holy temple.' The engulfing waters threatened me, the deep surrounded me; seaweed was wrapped around my head. To the roots of the mountains I sank down; the earth beneath barred me in forever. But you, Lord my God, brought my life up from the pit. "When my life was ebbing away, I remembered you, Lord, and my prayer rose to you, to your holy temple.

Saturday:

Romans 14:15-16 NIV

If your brother or sister is distressed because of what you eat, you are no longer acting in love. Do not by your eating destroy someone for whom Christ died. Therefore do not let what you know is good be spoken of as evil. For the kingdom of God is not a matter of eating and drinking, but of righteousness, peace and joy in the Holy Spirit,

Sunday:

James 1:26-27 NIV

Those who consider themselves religious and yet do not keep a tight rein on their tongues deceive themselves, and their religion is worthless. Religion that God our Father accepts as pure and faultless is this: to look after orphans and widows in their distress and to keep oneself from being polluted by the world.

