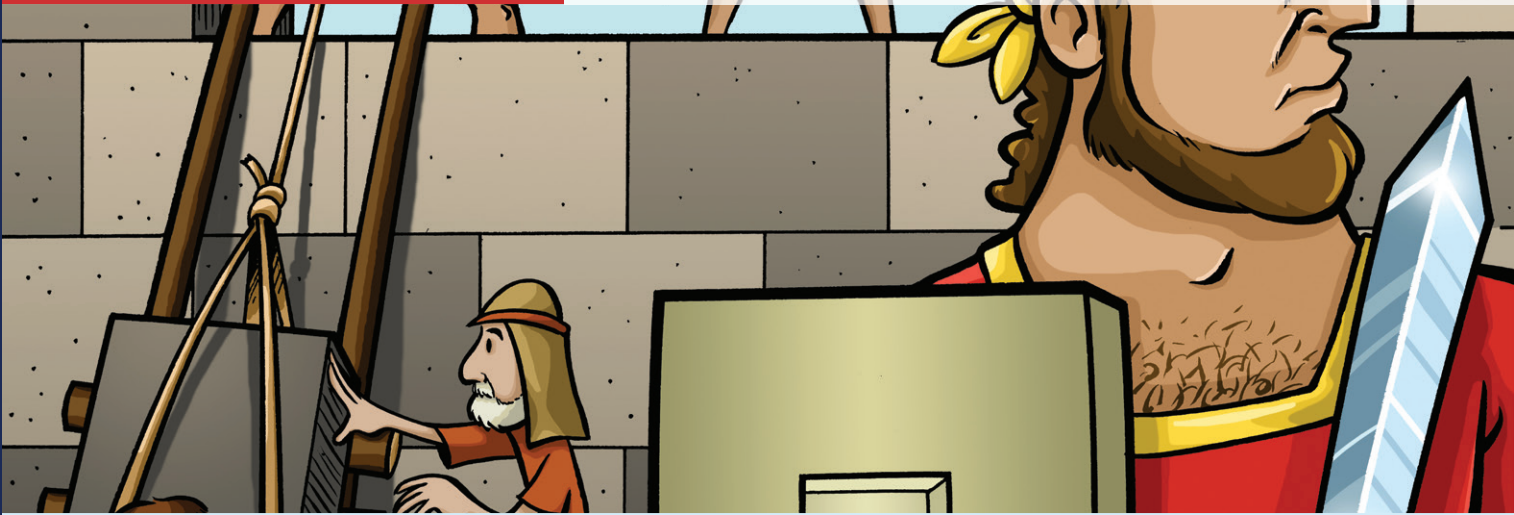


SHARE THE BIBLE LESSON
WEEK 40

God led Nehemiah to reconstruct the wall
Nehemiah 1:1–7:73a



DAY 1

God prepared Nehemiah to go to Jerusalem • Nehemiah 1:1–2:8

READ 

Nehemiah 1:1–2:8

EXPLAIN 

The truth of Nehemiah 1:1–2:8

God provides for His people in many ways. In this case, He provided by giving Israel another godly leader. He had sent Ezra to reform the people, and now He was calling Nehemiah to rebuild Jerusalem's broken down walls (Neh 1:3). Like Ezra, Nehemiah cared deeply for God's people and God's city (1:4). Like Ezra, he was a man of prayer because he trusted God's sovereignty (1:5) and promises (1:7–9). Like Ezra, he confessed Israel's sin (Deut 4:25–28). Nehemiah called upon God to remember His people, not because they deserved it, but because God had made them His people (1:10) and promised to restore them (Deut 30:1–3). God was already at work answering Nehemiah's prayer. As cupbearer, Nehemiah guarded the life of the king against poison, so he was already trusted. Then when God provided a chance to speak, Nehemiah took it (2:1–3). During the conversation, Nehemiah continued to depend on God, showing what it means to pray without ceasing (Neh 2:4; 1 Thess 5:17). When Artaxerxes chose to provide for all his needs (Neh 2:5–8), Nehemiah knew God had done it (2:8).

ASK 

1. What was wrong with Jerusalem?
Its walls were still knocked down.
2. Who was the man God sent to rebuild the walls?
Nehemiah.
3. What did Nehemiah do when he heard the news about Jerusalem?
He was very sad, confessed sin, and prayed to God for help.
4. What was Nehemiah's job?
He was the king's cupbearer.

DISCUSS 

1. What godly leaders has God put into your life? Are you thankful God has provided for you in this way?
2. God is ready, willing, and able to forgive our sin when we confess it before Him (1 John 1:9). What are some reasons we put off confessing our sin?

DAY 2

God encouraged Nehemiah to work responsibly •
Nehemiah 2:9–4:23

READ

Nehemiah 2:9–4:23

EXPLAIN

The truth of Nehemiah 2:9–4:23

If God makes sure His plan happens, does that mean we can just sit back and do nothing? No, because one of the ways God accomplishes His plan is by our hard work. In fact, Nehemiah worked hard because he knew God would make it happen. So when opposed by Samaritan enemies, Nehemiah did not give up (Neh 2:9–10). Instead, he acted wisely, inspecting the city's walls under the cover of darkness before revealing his plan (2:11–18). He also wisely reminded his enemies that the Jews had the king's permission and God's protection, while Israel's enemies had neither (2:20). God's gracious power also encouraged the people (2:18). You can see this in their prayer: they stood firm because they trusted that God would fight for them (4:4–5, 14, 20; Josh 10:42). As with Nehemiah, their faith did not make them stop working. Instead, it motivated their work. They worked hard to complete the wall (2:18; 3:1–32), they vigilantly stood guard (4:1–3, 7–8, 11), and they prepared a plan in advance in case of attack (4:18–23). So God's sovereign power motivates His people to act.

ASK

1. Why were Nehemiah and the Jews encouraged to rebuild the walls?
They knew God was with them and would help them succeed.
2. What did Nehemiah's enemies think about the walls being rebuilt?
They were furious.
3. How did Israel's enemies try to stop the walls from being rebuilt?
They planned to join together and fight against Jerusalem.
4. How did the people respond to Sanballat's mocking and threat of attack?
They trusted God to fight for them, and they also stood guard.

DISCUSS

1. Are you willing to take more risks when you know your parents are there to help you succeed? Compare this to God's people and their trust in Him.
2. Nehemiah and the Jews worked wisely and diligently. How would you describe your family's work ethic? Do you thoughtfully plan? Do you work hard?

DAY 3

God protected Nehemiah until the wall was completed •
Nehemiah 5:1–7:73a

READ

Nehemiah 5:1–6:19

EXPLAIN

The truth of Nehemiah 5:1–7:73

When God raises up godly leaders, Satan tries to tear them down. Nehemiah was a godly leader. He showed this when he confronted the Jews who were loaning money to their countrymen, then enslaving them when they could not pay the exorbitant interest (Neh 5:1–5). These Jewish leaders ignored God's law (Lev 25:36–37) because they did not **fear** God (Neh 5:9). So Nehemiah urged them: with enemies all around, wasn't this a

time to be in awe of God, be afraid of just punishment, and give God the honor He deserves? They could say nothing against Nehemiah (5:8), for his life confirmed his words (5:8, 10, 14–15). As Nehemiah lived with integrity, God protected him from Satan's attacks. God kept Nehemiah from falling into Sanballat's trap (6:1–4). He strengthened Nehemiah when Sanballat spread lies about him (6:5–9). He enabled Nehemiah to discern the false prophecies designed to discredit him (6:10–13). Finally, the wall was completed in just 52 days, and the confidence of Nehemiah's enemies crumbled. Even they realized that God's sovereign hand had helped Nehemiah accomplish His purpose (6:15–16).

DAY 3 CONTINUED ON NEXT PAGE

ASK 

1. What did the rich Jews do?
They were oppressing the poor Jews by making them pay high interest.
2. How did Nehemiah stop the rich Jews from sinning?
He rebuked them, called them to fear God, and proved it by his integrity.
3. How else did Nehemiah's enemies try to stop the wall?
They tried to trap Nehemiah, they spread lies, and they tried to ruin his character.
4. How long did it take to rebuild the walls of Jerusalem?
The wall was finished in 52 days.

DISCUSS 

1. What are some ways you demonstrate a healthy fear of God? How does this shape your character? How does your character (reputation) either strengthen or weaken what you say?
2. How does Satan try to stop you from doing God's will? Who is able to give you victory (1 Cor 10:13; 1 John 4:4)?

DAY 4

: An overseer must be above reproach • 1 Timothy 3:2

READ 

1 Timothy 3:1-7

EXPLAIN **The truth of 1 Timothy 3:2**

What does it mean to be above reproach? It means to be like Nehemiah. No one could bring a valid accusation against him. His fellow Jews could say nothing harmful about him (Neh 5:8), for he spoke with integrity. His life backed up his words. He was generous (5:8, 10) and selfless (5:14-15), two godly qualities that gave weight to his words. Even his enemies were unable to bring a charge against him. Because he lived by faith in God, Nehemiah never gave his enemies an opportunity to slander his character or question his courage. As a result, even the enemies acknowledged God's glory (Neh 6:16). Every elder in the church must be like Nehemiah (1 Tim 3:1-2), but all Christians, including you, are called to this too (Phil 2:15). That way, when people slander you, they will be put to shame and the name of Christ will be honored (1 Pet 3:16). Like Nehemiah, do what is honorable, so that even the enemies of God will acknowledge His glory (2:11).

ASK 

1. How is Nehemiah an illustration of a godly leader?
He was above reproach. No one, not even his enemies, could find anything bad about him.
2. Did Nehemiah provide a good example for his people?
Yes. He acted with integrity (sincerity, honesty) in every situation.
3. What does God require of every leader in His church?
That they be above reproach, free from any obvious sin.
4. What is the result of living with integrity?
God is honored, and even His enemies acknowledge His glory.

DISCUSS 

1. Are there any areas of your life that are not above reproach?
2. Why does God hold church leaders to such a high standard?

DAY 5

Created in Christ Jesus for good works • Ephesians 2:10

READ

Ephesians 2:1–10

EXPLAIN

The truth of Ephesians 2:10

As God's power motivated the Jews to work hard on the walls, so God's power in your life produces good works through you, if your faith is in Him. So when you grow weary, remember where your strength lies. God is your help and your shield (Ps 33:20), your rock, salvation, and fortress (62:2). If you fear Him and trust Him, you will never be shaken (62:6). He is with you wherever you go (Matt 28:20), empowering you to accomplish the good works that He has prepared for you (Eph 2:10). These good works do not earn your salvation; rather, they are the result of your salvation, produced by God's grace in you (2:8–9; cf. Phil 2:12–13; Jas 2:16–26). These works are evidence that you are God's disciple (John 15:8). So as you grow in godliness and do good works, you will boast in God alone (Eph 2:9), because you know that every good work comes from Him (Jas 1:17). Anything good that you do is simply evidence of His grace in you (1 Cor 15:10a). So go and work hard, because God's grace is with you (1 Cor 15:10b).

ASK

1. Are your good works the basis of salvation?
No. They prove that salvation already exists.
2. Who has prepared good works for believers?
God. He planned them before time began.
3. Should believers boast about their good works?
No. They come from God; He has prepared them.

DISCUSS

1. When you get tired of doing good, do you have any favorite Scripture passages that remind you of God's grace and power to help you?
2. Do you enjoy doing good, even if it is hard at times? When you do good, is it because you love God (as opposed to doing it just because you feel like you have to)? If you answer no to either of these, have you considered whether you are truly saved?

NEXT WEEK

Israel refused to be ruled by God

Nehemiah 7:73b–13:31

