

NEHEMIAH - CHAPTER 6

NOTES FROM LARGE GROUP DISCUSSION

DATE _____

V1-9. FOCUSED AND PURPOSED FOR ACTION NOT DISTRACTION

- DISTRACTION- IS A THING THAT PREVENTS GIVING FULL ATTENTION TO SOMETHING ELSE
- ACTION-SOMETHING DONE OR PERFORMED, ACT, DEED, A PROCESS OR STATE OF BEING
 - WE CAN BE OUR OWN BIGGEST DISTRACTION- THEY CAN COME FROM OUR HEARTS
 - EXPECT DEVIOSNESS FROM THOSE WHO DESPISE GOD'S WORK-
- V1 - WHEN THE GATES AND DOORS ARE NOT SET, YOU ARE STILL UNPROTECTED
 - WALLS ARE ABOUT 99% DONE-ENEMY PLOTS ARE NOW DESPERATE
- V2 - ONO-JUST NORTH OF JERUSALEM ONO-JUST NORTH OF JERUSALEM
 - A SERIES OF PERSONAL CHARACTER ATTACKS BEGIN AND CONTINUE-MEANT TO HARM
- V3-4 - FEAR ECHOS, AND DISTRACTIONS KNOCK AND CONTINUALLY INTERRUPT
 - FEAR OF GOD ALSO ECHOES (PROCLAIMS/PRAYS), AND JESUS ALSO KNOCKS
- V5 - OPEN LETTER IS AN INSULT FROM ONE GOVERNOR TO ANOTHER.
 - AN OPEN LETTER WOULD HAVE BEEN SIMILAR TO SOMETHING TO BE POSTED MADE PUBLIC-NOT PERSONAL AS IF SEALED. AS IF TO INDIRECTLY SAY "EVERYONE KNOWS"
 - 5TH COLUMNS ARE REAL-TOBIAH WAS ONE- & NEHEMIAH SAW RIGHT THROUGH THE FANCY LETTER AND THE BIG CONFERENCE WITH THE POWERFUL PEOPLE
- V 6-7 - NEHEMIAH REFUSES TO FALL INTO THE ACCEPTANCE TRAP (ATTACK-RUMORS)
 - WE HAVE DEEP DESIRE TO BE ACCEPTED
 - THE ENEMY WILL TEMPT WITH PRESSURE TO MAKE ALL KINDS OF PERSONAL SACRIFICES IN ORDER FOR NOTHING MORE THAN THE APPROVAL OF MAN
 - WE NEED TO KNOW WHO AND WHOSE WE ARE
 - DON'T SACRIFICE TRUTH FOR ACCEPTANCE
 - "ALL WORLDVIEWS ARE THE SAME"-NOT INTELLECTUALLY HONEST
 - "WE ALL END UP IN THE SAME PLACE"-WE DON'T EVEN BELIEVE HEAVEN LOOKS THE SAME, MUCH LESS AGREE THERE IS ONLY ONE WAY THERE
 - TOLERANCE: THERE IS A LAW OF NONCONTRADICTION-ABSOLUTES ARE REAL
 - THERE IS NOTHING MORE HISTORICALLY TRUE OR PROPHETICALLY ACCURATE THAN CHRISTIANITY
 - IT COMMANDS OUR ATTENTION AND REQUIRES OUR SURRENDER
- V8 - *Falsehoods usually carry their own reputations and sting themselves -CS Lewis*
 - YOUR BLAMELESS LIFE WILL BE YOUR BEST DEFENSE AND THOSE WHO HAVE SEEN IT WILL NOT ALLOW YOU TO FALL QUICKLY- DON'T BE AFRAID TO CALL A LIAR A LIAR.
 - MOST OF THE TIME WHEN AN ACCUSATION IS MADE ABOUT YOU, YOU DON'T HAVE TO SAY ANYTHING-TRUTH, DISCERNMENT, AND HONEST EARS GO HAND IN HAND

Is the LORD urging you toward silence in a particular situation?

Where right now would your silence prove to be more powerful and fruitful than your words?

- V9 - COURAGE IS FEAR THAT HAS SAID ITS PRAYERS-IT IS NOT THE ABSENCE OF FEAR

** When all our enemies heard about this, all the surrounding nations were afraid and lost their self-confidence, because they realized that this work had been done with the help of our God." Nehemiah 6:16*

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- HE DOESN'T PRAY GOD GET ME OUT OF HERE, HE PRAYS FOR THE STRENGTH HE NEEDS TO ENDURE: SILENCE MY FEAR-STRENGTHEN MY HANDS
- YOUR PRAYERS DON'T HAVE TO BE LONG TO BE SPIRITUAL-SPONTANEOUS PRAYER

Where in your life right now does God want you to pray for strength to endure rather than ask for a way out?

V10-14. THERE IS ALWAYS AN ADVERSARY DIRECTING HIDE

- V10-12 - "SPIRITUAL ARGUMENTS" APPEAL (ATTACK-DECEIT)
 - WHEN LEADERSHIP CAN BE TAKEN OUT THERE IS A LOT OF COLLATERAL DAMAGE
 - NEHEMIAH HAD A HUGE TARGET ON HIS BACK, AND SO DO OUR LEADERS
 - ACCEPT PEOPLE DON'T FIGHT FAIR: SHEEP CLOTHED LIKE SHEEP-SOME ARE WOLVES
- THERE WILL BE TIMES WHERE EVEN RELIGIOUS LEADERS ASK YOU TO DO SOMETHING THAT IS WRONG-DON'T DO IT
- V13 - THERE IS A FEAR THAT WILL LEAD YOU TO SIN-JAMES 4:17 WHEN WE KNOW THE RIGHT THING TO DO AND DON'T DO IT, THAT IS SIN.
- IT IS BETTER TO LOSE YOUR LIFE THROUGH OBEDIENCE THAN
- V14 - HE PRAYS & TRUSTS GOD'S JUSTICE-YOU DEAL WITH IT GOD
 - BUT I PRAYED..... NOTHING REVEALS OUR HEARTS MORE THAN OUR PRAYER
 - THE ABSENCE OF IT NEHEMIAH'S PRAYER IS THE ABSENCE OF HIS PRIDE, AND THE ABSENCE OF HIS PRIDE IS BECAUSE OF HIS PRAYER

V15-16. MISSION ACCOMPLISHED

- V15 - EVEN THOUGH IT TOOK 70 YEARS TO REBUILD THE TEMPLE, AND THE WALLS WERE BROKEN DOWN FOR NEARLY A CENTURY, THIS EFFORT WAS COMPLETE IN 52 DAYS.
 - ALL WHO SURROUNDED COULD NOT DENY GOD HELP TO ACCOMPLISH THE TASK
 - THE HAND OF GOD, AND THE HELP OF GOD, AND ANSWERED PRAYER ARE ALL EVIDENT TO UNBELIEVING ONLOOKERS

What is a work that the LORD has done in your life that God's hand could not be denied?

- GOD OPPOSES THE PROUD AND GIVES GRACE TO THE HUMBLE
 - LEARNING TO LIVE IN SILENCE INSTEAD OF SHOUTING ABOUT THE JOB WE DID
 - GOD CAN MAKE OUR SHOULDERS BROAD ENOUGH, OUR HEARTS STRONG ENOUGH, AND OUR MINDS EXPANSIVE ENOUGH TO DO THE WORK HE CALLS US TO DO
- V16 - THEY FELL AT THEIR OWN ESTEEM-THEY JUST DROP AT THE REALITY OF THE GREATNESS OF GOD AND THE SMALLNESS OF THEM

V17-19. BEHIND THE SCENES

- V18 - THE INTERMARRIAGES WERE ALSO PART OF THE LOYALTIES TOWARD TOBIAH
 - NEHEMIAH EXPOSES HIS CHARACTER (ATTACK-FALSE REPORTS, INTIMIDATION)

V1-4. CONSOLIDATION AND DELEGATION

- V1 - MOVING FORWARD-THE SIGNIFICANCE OF CHURCH MEMBERSHIP IS ON DISPLAY HERE
- WHEN GOD BUILDS A CITY, IT IS WITH PEOPLE-WHO DO WE HAVE, HOW CAN WE USE THEM?
- V2 - THOSE WHO FEARED GOD MORE THAN MOST WERE CHOSEN-MEN OF CHARACTER
- V3 - A NEW FORMAT-DELEGATING AUTHORITY-GATEKEEPERS/ELDERSHIP
 - POSTING RESPECTABLE MEN AS GUARDS FOR THE UNRESTORED CITY

"When all our enemies heard about this, all the surrounding nations were afraid and lost their self-confidence, because they realized that this work had been done with the help of our God." Nehemiah 6:16

NEHEMIAH 6-7

SMALL GROUP STUDY QUESTIONS

TO DISCUSS ON _____

PART 1: NEHEMIAH SAYS NO TO UNDUE PRIVILEGE

Nehemiah was undoubtedly wealthy and living in prosperity. To gather all that he did, and feed and bless them each day as he did, from his own expense, he was certainly not choosing to live a peasant lifestyle. We saw the benefits were outstanding in his position, so much that they were a burden to the people. Yet, we see his selfless character in his generosity to step back from what is burdensome and unhelpful and bless others.

What does LUKE 9:24-25 say we are at risk of losing if we seek to gain everything this world offers?

The world we live in will never stop whispering more. What does ROMANS 12:1-2 say we need to do in order to not conform to this world? Why?

Renewing your mind is vital to not conforming to the ways of this world. PHILLIPIANS 4:8, COLOSSIANS 3:1-2, & ROMANS 5:8 are my favorite verses to realign my thoughts. Read them and circle the one that shifts your thoughts the most.

Write DEUTERONOMY 8:18 in your own words.

Nehemiah had a lot of stuff... But he was a man of integrity, so the stuff didn't have him. He knew that he had been blessed by God to be a blessing to others. He knew the source of his ability, wealth, & strength.

What does JAMES 4:4 declare is one way that we can become an enemy of God?

What do you think could be an area of your life that an onlooker might think you are a friend of this world?

As you go about your week, write down specific areas you are tempted to live for the things this world has to offer below. Watch for things that subtly whisper the unnecessary MORE... power, position, money, material things, food. Revisit the scripture you circled above and let the word of God renew your mind with each temptation you face.

LORD, I desire to live a transformed life. Strengthen me to not conform to all this world has to offer me as I learn how to live joyfully with less than the world shouts I deserve.

NEHEMIAH 6-7

PART 2: NEHEMIAH SAYS NO TO PRIDE, EGO, AND SELF GLORY

52 day completion could have promoted a posture of incredible pride after nearly a century of destruction and a 70 year work to rebuild the temple, yet in many texts we see Nehemiah laser focused on the glory of God. God used a man so focused on divine glory and not his own to show His divine glory to all around him. We are invited to enter into the same work with resurrection power on display for the world!

Where does GALATIANS 5:25-26 say that our sinful desires and passions are if we are in Christ?

Read EPHESIANS 4:22-24.

What does VERSE 22 say our natural self is corrupted by?

What does VERSE 24 say our new self is created to be like?

And what is the human action involved in VERSE 23 that is required?

PROVERBS 3:5-6 may be familiar scripture to us, but we often stop recalling it before VERSE 7. What three things does it heed us to do?

Describe Moses' face and actions in EXODUS 34:29-35 after he met with God:

How I hope several of the biblical themes woven into this great story are starting to come alive throughout the entirety of the scriptures! Glory is unwaveringly one of my favorites.. 2 CORINTHIANS 3 is dear to my heart. It humbles me to remember the only glory in me, worth anything at all, comes from beholding my LORD with an unveiled face, and it challenges me when I remember that the potential for the world to see God's glory is far greater as ministers of the new covenant than it was in Nehemiah's day. Record something you learned anew from reading this chapter, or a question you might have:

What did Jesus look like when Peter, John, and James beheld Him in all His glory in MARK 9:1-13

Who does JOHN 3:30 say needs to become greater/increase? And who less/decrease?

Write 1 CORINTHIANS 10:31 below: Underline the word all.

LORD, use this world and us to show and share Your glory. When we don't know what else to pray, may our hearts simply bow and say... Your glory, not mine this day.

NEHEMIAH 6-7

PART 3: NEHEMIAH SAYS NO TO MINDLESSNESS

Nehemiah had a natural measure of healthy skepticism not an unhealthy cynicism. Trusting in God did not stop him from being vigilant, sensible, and responsible. He was mindful, intentional, and aware of the world around him. He didn't wander or waver from the task at hand, and he discerned

What do the upright walk in according to HOSEA 14:9?

What does PROVERBS 28:2 say the characteristics are of a ruler of a land with stability and order?

What does PROVERBS 20:5 say is like deep waters? Who draws them out?

How does PROVERBS 12:11 say we will have in plenty if we pursue worthless things?

How does someone of understanding walk according to PROVERBS 15:21?

What does EPHESIANS 5:8-10 say about how we are to walk and what we are to discern?

Who does EPHESIANS 2:10 say that we are?

We are not called to walk around and exist in some state of Christian cluelessness. There is a real enemy, a real battle, and real work to be done. We need to be mindful in order to accomplish it. Engaging a healthy measure of skepticism is not sinful when trying to discern motives of man, but meanwhile we can place our confidence in knowing what HEBREWS 4:12 says about the word of God. Write it below:

Prone to wander to wander, LORD, I feel it... Prone to leave this God I love...
Here is my heart, LORD, take and seal it... Seal it for thy courts above!

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PART 4: NEHEMIAH SAYS NO TO DISTRACTION & INTIMIDATION

Think of any life that has made a difference, made a mark in some way. Whether for evil or for good, they were focused, NOT DISTRACTED in that work. Learning to say no to the inferior for the sake of the best is something that God wants us all to grow in.

What does EPHESIANS 5:15-16 encourage us to do with our time?

If we serve Christ, what does GALATIANS 1:10 say we will not gain?

What are the attributes of the one who is kept in perfect peace according to ISAIAH 26:3?

Read LUKE 10:38-42

What does VERSE 40 say Martha was distracted by?

What does VERSE 42 say that Mary chose?

What does VERSE 39 say that Mary did?

What did Jesus say in VERSE 42 was needed?

Distractions can come in all a variety of forms. We can distract ourselves, be distracted by others, and even be distracted by good things. We must remember not to forsake what is good for what is best. Sisters in Christ, we are not required to do a million things to the glory of God, but praise God we can do a few! What specifically has distracted you from doing the work He has for you?

LORD, use this world and us to show and share Your glory. When we don't know what else to pray, may our hearts simply bow and say... Your glory, not mine this day.