

Let's Worship God

8th-13th July 2019
Nehemiah



NEHEMIAH

pray | plan | build

Monday - Nehemiah 4:9-14 - Danger of Attack

The enemies of God's people believed that their plan to attack and kill the builders was secret, they said, 'They will not know or see until we come among them'. Their plan however, was known to the Lord, and He caused friendly Jews living nearby to hear of the wicked scheme. There was evidently a sense of alarm and panic as they rushed up to the builders to let them know what was afoot!

On hearing the news, Nehemiah did not panic but put a plan in action to deal most effectively with the situation that had presented itself.

a. He considered very carefully where the weakest part of the walls were, places where the enemy was most likely to attack. There is a lesson here in the spiritual warfare - the devil knows our weakest points and we need to be aware of them too so that we can strengthen them.

b. He made sure that the people were sufficiently well armed to be able to face the enemy. So in the spiritual battle God's people are to constantly take up the whole armour of God Eph. 6:11.

c. He stationed the people together in families. They would fight more vigorously if their own family was under threat. In our fight against spiritual wickedness it is often the family that comes under attack, and it is the responsibility of parents in the spiritual fight to protect and defend their children.

d. He reminded them that they were not fighting for themselves, and that they were not fighting by themselves. This was the Lord's battle and would be fought in the Lord's name, in the strength of the Lord and for the glory of the Lord.

Questions

1. What did Nehemiah do when he heard of an attack?
2. How can you strengthen weak areas in your life?

Prayer Points

1. Pray that we would put on the armour of God.
2. Use prayer points from your congregation.
3. Pray for family matters.

Memory Verse

"Ought you not to walk in the fear of our God to prevent the taunts of the nations our enemies?" Nehemiah 5:9b

Praise: Psalm 138 - See www.rpglobalalliance.org for Psalm tune helps.



Tuesday - Nehemiah 4:15-23 - Victory

Nehemiah had encouraged the people to be ready for the attack that their enemies were planning and to put their trust in the Lord. Whilst they were making preparation by organising themselves and by gathering together a variety of weapons, the Lord was secretly frustrating the evil plan. The attackers had planned a secret attack to catch the defenders unaware, but the Lord had ensured that the plan was revealed to Nehemiah and the defenders of Jerusalem. Even although the attack did not materialise, Nehemiah and his followers secured a very great victory:

1. The work continued v. 15. The whole purpose of the proposed attack was to prevent progress in the work. The very fact that the work carried on meant that the plan had failed.

2. The people were prepared v. 16 - 18. Some of the people carried out the building work, and some were prepared to defend should the attack come. So it is in the work of the kingdom - the sword of the Spirit to repel the attacks of the evil one (Matt. 4:1-11), and the trowel to continue strengthening and building up the kingdom.

3. The people were watchful and united v. 19 - 23. Being aware that an attack could come at any time, the people took the precautions of making arrangements to warn one another and to be watchful both night and day. So the believer in the Lord Jesus needs to be watchful both for himself and for his brethren.

4. They realised that they were doing the work of the Lord and had the confidence that the Lord himself would be fighting for them. It is easy to forget that in the struggle against the enemy of our souls 'those who are with us are more than those who are with them' 2 Kings 6:16.

Questions

1. How did the Jews gain a victory?
2. Who was fighting for the Jews?

Prayer Points

1. Give thanks that God fights for His people.
2. Use prayer points from your congregation.
3. Pray for family matters.

Memory Verse

“Ought you not to walk in the fear of our God to prevent the taunts of the nations our enemies?” Nehemiah 5:9b

Praise: Psalm 139 - See www.rpglobalalliance.org for Psalm tune helps.



Wednesday - Nehemiah 5:1-5 - Problems

At the end of chapter four there is a picture of harmony, dedication, courage, and determination to see the task completed. How quickly however, the scene changes! Chapter five begins with such serious division amongst the people that the work on the walls is brought to a standstill.

Verse one brings into view one of the saddest things that can happen within a body of God's people. They had coped with mockery and derision; they had been prepared to take up arms to defend themselves against attack and still continue to build, but when there was division and disunity, the work stopped.

It seems that there were a number of financial difficulties facing the people. Money is often a cause of disagreement within the church; mostly, it must be admitted, because there is not sufficient to finish planned work. That does not seem to be the case here for the materials for the rebuilding had been provided by the king of Persia ch.1:8-9; the problem arose because of the economic difficulties faced by the builders themselves.

The people had willingly and enthusiastically embraced the vision that Nehemiah had set before them of rebuilding the city walls and perhaps some of them had not really counted the cost. There had to be a balance between the work done on the walls and the ordinary provision that had to be made for their families.

In the work that believers do for the Lord there is always the need to remember that the most basic responsibility that God gives to the believer is to care for and to nurture the family that He has given him. (1 Tim. 5:8). It is sadly not unknown for believers to spend so much of their resources of time, money, and concern on the work of the church that their families are neglected. That should never be!

Questions

1. What is the problem in chapter 5?
2. How did this problem affect the work?

Prayer Points

1. Pray that the Lord would provide and care for His people.
2. Use prayer points from your congregation.
3. Pray for family matters.

Memory Verse

“Ought you not to walk in the fear of our God to prevent the taunts of the nations our enemies?” Nehemiah 5:9b

Praise: Psalm 140 - See www.rpglobalalliance.org for Psalm tune helps.



Thursday - Nehemiah 5:1-5 - Greed

The people had money problems, not just because they were spending all their time on the rebuilding, but because there was a famine, which made food more expensive. It was so expensive that some mortgaged their property to provide food. There was also the problem of the king's tax. Neither Nehemiah nor the people acted as if these taxes were unfair, yet they were still a hardship. The problem was so serious that some had taken out loans in order to live, and when they defaulted, they had to give up their children as servants to pay off the debt.

What made the situation even worse was that it was the wealthier members of the Jewish community who were causing the difficulties for the builders. It was not that it was illegal for people to lend money or even to sell themselves or family members into slavery (Deut 15, Lev 25:39, Exod. 22:25), but as James Philip points out 'The point of all the Levitical legislation was to stress the compassion of God, and to promote compassionate dealing one with another'. It appears that the problem here was that some people were applying the letter of the law without giving any consideration at all of the spirit of the law, and with no concern at all for the work of God that was being hindered by their greed!

The very sad thing is that God's work was being disrupted by financial considerations. If this problem could not be sorted out, the great work that Nehemiah and the people were doing would be stopped without the enemies having to do anything at all! The root of the problem here, as so often when financial matters disrupt the work of God, was a matter of the heart! If the heart is right with God, and the advancement of the kingdom of God is the first consideration, financial and indeed, other difficulties can be overcome.

Questions

1. What were the builders forced to do?
2. What was at the heart of all these problems?

Prayer Points

1. Pray that we would show compassion to each other.
2. Use prayer points from your congregation.
3. Pray for family matters.

Memory Verse

“Ought you not to walk in the fear of our God to prevent the taunts of the nations our enemies?” Nehemiah 5:9b

Praise: Psalm 141 - See www.rpglobalalliance.org for Psalm tune helps.

NEHEMIAH

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Friday - Nehemiah 5:6-13 - Sticky Situation

When Nehemiah realised what was happening and how it affected the work on the walls, his initial reaction was one of great anger. He was angry because of the action of those who were seeking to make money out of the financial difficulties of their brethren, something that was clearly against the law of God Ex. 22:25.

He was also angry because of 'their outcry' which demonstrated a lack of unity amongst the people. Unity of purpose was one of the most important things in the enormous project of rebuilding the walls, and Nehemiah knew that it could not be completed if the people were at odds with one another. This is true, not only for the time of Nehemiah, but in any work that is undertaken for God. There is nothing that pleases the devil more than seeing division, disunity, and complaining amongst those seeking to do a work for God.

Nehemiah's anger however, was very quickly turned into a more profitable direction. He did not act in anger and so make a rash or foolish decision; he took time to think about the situation so that he whatever he did would help rather than hinder the situation. There was a very real danger that if he made a wrong decision here it could exacerbate the situation and prove fatal to the work. If he stood on principle he could alienate some of the most powerful and wealthy people in the community who might well then join Sanballat and his cronies. There must have been a real temptation for him to compromise, as so many in church circles do today, rather than to stand up for what was right. Nehemiah however, was not prepared to compromise and would not sacrifice principle for the sake of expediency, no matter what the cost might be.

Questions

1. Why was Nehemiah angry?
2. What was the temptation in this situation?

Prayer Points

1. Pray for boldness and integrity for our church leaders.
2. Use prayer points from your congregation.
3. Pray for family matters.

Memory Verse

“Ought you not to walk in the fear of our God to prevent the taunts of the nations our enemies?” Nehemiah 5:9b

Praise: Psalm 142 - See www.rpglobalalliance.org for Psalm tune helps.



Saturday - Nehemiah 5:6-13 - Making Things Right

When Nehemiah had carefully considered the situation he took the very bold and courageous decision to confront the nobles and the rulers. It is clear that Nehemiah was not afraid to speak the truth and to rebuke even the most important people in the land. There was a serious problem that was inhibiting the work that God had given him to do, and Nehemiah was willing to deal with the problem head on. Nehemiah rebuked the nobles for their practice of exacting usury from their fellow Jews and reminded them of the recent history of the people. When Judah was conquered, many Jews were sold as slaves to foreigners, and many of them had been bought out of slavery by other Jews. Because of this, it was very wrong to have Jews being sold into slavery to other Jews because they couldn't pay off high-interest loans.

Having pointed out their sin, Nehemiah then challenged them about the priorities that they had in their lives. He cited his own godly example of lending grain and money without interest (v.10) and gave the reasons for it:

1. The main reason for the way that he behaved is seen in the question that he put to the nobles 'should you not walk in the fear of our God?' It was because Nehemiah feared God and longed to do the work that God had called him to do that he would sacrifice anything to see it completed.

2. Nehemiah was also concerned that the conduct of the nobles would cause the name of God to be blasphemed amongst the people (v.9).

Nehemiah also urged the nobles to make things right. He didn't just want them to feel bad about what they had done; he wanted them to make restitution. It was important for them, as it is for us, that the teaching of the Word should result in action being taken.

Questions

1. How did Nehemiah show he was willing to put God first?
2. What did Nehemiah tell the nobles to do?

Prayer Points

1. Pray for the preaching and hearing of God's Word tomorrow.
2. Use prayer points from your congregation.
3. Pray for family matters.

Memory Verse

"Ought you not to walk in the fear of our God to prevent the taunts of the nations our enemies?" Nehemiah 5:9b

Praise: Psalm 143 - See www.rpglobalalliance.org for Psalm tune helps.

The goal of Let's Worship God is to encourage and help you in your worship of God each day.

**God tells us that
Ezra read from
the book of the Law
day after day
and that
the people of God
were filled with joy!**

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If you have any queries please contact - admin@rpglobalalliance.org