

Handout Nehemiah Lesson 4

Chapters 1-6 reveal that Nehemiah is an ideal example of a Servant of God. Keep in mind that he was not a prophet, prince, noble, priest, or a clan leader. He was an ordinary layman who was born in captivity, probably physically disfigured by pagans to serve a pagan king but called by God to a special mission. Nehemiah never blamed God for his sufferings but had a reverent fear of offending God and submitted his life to His service.

| Nehemiah's Actions as God's Servant in Chapters 1-6 | God's Actions in Response in Chapters 1-6 |
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| Prays for God's people (1:4-5, 6 twice, 11 twice, 17; 2:4; 3:36-37; 4:3; 5:19; 6:14) | God hears the prayers of His servant and preserves His covenant people (1:5; 6:12) |
| Plans for the welfare of God's people (2:6-8; 4:11-17) and gives God credit his successes and their protection (6:16) | Directs the actions of His servant (2:8b, 12, 18) |
| Perseveres against obstacles to God's plan (4:9, 23) and fears offending God (5:15; 7:2) | Paves the way for His servant's success and thwarts his enemies (4:15, 20) |
| Works for unity among the people (5:10, 11) | Unity among His people pleases God (5:9, 13) |
| Guided by God's spirit, he perceives falsehood and remains faithful (6:2, 8, 12; 7:5) | Guides His servant in wisdom and righteous acts (5:6-19) |

Nehemiah Part One Continued:

Reorganization of Jerusalem (7:1-3)

Registration of citizens of Jerusalem (7:4-73)

Nehemiah Part Two (7:6-13:31)

I. Historical Review and Obedience to the Covenant Through Restoration of the Law (7:6-9:37)

A. A review of the list of the first exiles to return with Sheshbazzar (7:6-72)

B. Ezra's reading and interpretation of the Law (8:1-18)

II. Nehemiah's Reaffirmation of the Covenant (9:1-10:39)

II. Obedience to the Covenant (11:1-13:31)

A. Resettlement of the Citizens (11:1-36)

B. Register of the Priests and Levites (12:1-26)

C. Dedication of Jerusalem's Wall (12:27-47)

D. Spiritual Restoration of the Covenant People (13:1-31)

The three returns of exiles mentioned in the Books of Ezra and Nehemiah:

1. Sheshbazzar's group of exiles set out for Jerusalem soon after King Cyrus's Edict of Return in 539 BC and arrived not later than about 538/7 BC.
2. Ezra's group of exiles left Babylon in the 7th year of King Artaxerxes in 458 BC.
3. Nehemiah's group made the journey in the 20th year of King Artaxerxes in 445 BC.

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