



Lesson 160

Nehemiah Rebuilds the Wall – Part 1

Story Elements

- | | |
|--|--|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Setting: circa 446 BC in Susa and Jerusalem.• Main Characters: God, Nehemiah, and King Artaxerxes• Plot: Nehemiah's prayers are answered when he is given royal permission to rebuild | <ul style="list-style-type: none">the walls of Jerusalem.• Key word(s): “ _____ ” (4:14)• Climax: Nehemiah 2:4 <i>Then the king said unto me, For what dost thou make request? So I prayed to the God of heaven.</i> |
|--|--|

Background

1. Around 606 BC, Nebuchadnezzar had conquered Jehoiakim, made Judah a vassal state, and carried away thousands of Jews into Babylonian captivity.
 - (a) About 70 years later, Cyrus decreed that _____ may return to their homeland.¹
 - (b) In 538 BC, Zerubbabel and Joshua led the first colony of the Jewish resettlement, in 458 BC Ezra led the second colony, and in _____ BC Nehemiah led the third colony.
 - i. Before moving to Jerusalem, Nehemiah served King Artaxerxes, who was the stepson of _____.
 - ii. As the king's _____, Nehemiah was a trusted servant and a skilled civil leader.

Nehemiah Prays to God

2. (1:1-3) In the month Chisleu (November/December) one of Nehemiah's relatives, Hanani, returned from a trip to Jerusalem. Hanani and other men from Jerusalem described the city's condition to Nehemiah: *“The remnant that are left of the captivity there in the province are in great affliction and reproach: the wall of Jerusalem also is broken down, and the gates thereof are burned with fire.”* Nehemiah _____ when he heard the condition of the homeland he had never known. And then he prayed. (1:4-11)
 - (a) (vv 4-6) Nehemiah's prayer began with praising God for his _____.
 - (b) (vv 6-7) He then begged an audience with God and confessed the sins of his nation, acknowledging that God's _____ upon Israel was just and right.
 - (c) (vv 8-10) He then “reminded” God that the same promise of judgment came with a promise of _____ (Deu. 4:25-31).
 - (d) (v 11) With his faith focused on God's _____, Nehemiah asked that God grant him mercy in the sight of the king as a fulfillment of his promise to the Jews in the Law of Moses.

Nehemiah Petitions the King

3. (2:1-3) Four months later, Nehemiah was still contemplating the fate of his people.
 - (a) The king noticed his sad countenance and inquired about it (showing such emotion in front of the king was considered improper). Nehemiah apologetically explained, *“Why should not my*

¹cf. Ezra 1:1; Jer. 25:11; 29:10-14

countenance be sad, when the city, the place of my fathers' _____, lieth waste, and the gates thereof are consumed with fire?"

(b) (2:4-5) Artaxerxes asked "What is your request?" Knowing the importance of such an offer, Nehemiah prayed silently and made his request: "If it please the king, and if thy servant have found favour in thy sight, that thou wouldest send me unto Judah, unto the city of my fathers' sepulchres, that I may _____ it."

4. (2:6-8) Artaxerxes granted Nehemiah's request. The king also gave him the appropriate documents for traveling ambassadors, a contingent of mounted guards, and permission to use the lumber from the royal forests for construction. Nehemiah attributed all these blessings to God, saying, "The king granted me, according to the good _____ of my God upon me."

Nehemiah Prepares to Rebuild

5. (2:9-10) There were two reasons Nehemiah needed royal documents and mounted guards:

(a) The journey to Jerusalem was long and _____.

(b) The governors beyond the river were enemies of Israel, like Sanballat the Horonite (possibly a Moabite who governed _____) and Tobiah the _____ (governor of the lands east of the Jordan river). These bitter enemies of Israel were displeased with the Jews efforts to rebuild Jerusalem (cf Ezra 4:7-23).

6. (2:11-16) After arriving in Jerusalem, Nehemiah kept the purpose of his visit a secret for three days. At _____, he surveyed the condition of the city's walls to decide the best course of action.

Application

7. Nehemiah shows the power of faith in God's Word coupled with _____. He trusted in God's promise to restore the Jews to the Promised Land if they would repent and turn from their sin. With deep contrition, Nehemiah confessed his sins and those of his nation. God heard his prayer, and once again God used a godly Jew with a close relationship with a Gentile king to bring deliverance to His people.

Matthew 21:22 And all things, whatsoever ye shall ask in prayer, believing, ye shall receive.

Notes: _____

Answer Key: Key word(s): "prayed" • 1. a) Jews; b) 445; i) Esther; ii) cupbearer • 2. wept; a) faithfulness; b) punishment; c) redemption; d) Word • 3. a) sepulchres; b) build • 4. hand • 5. a) dangerous; b) Samaria; Ammonite • 6. night • 7. prayer

How to use this worksheet for personal Bible study: (1) Read the Bible passage given in the **Story Elements** section. (2) Read through the worksheet and try to fill in the blanks without looking at the **Answer Key**. (3) Check your answers with the key and make the necessary corrections. Keep in mind that some answers are a matter of opinion, and often more than one answer is correct. (4) Write down your own thoughts, applications, and questions for further study in the **Notes** section.