



## Lesson 161

# Nehemiah Rebuilds the Wall – Part 2

### Story Elements

- **Text:** Nehemiah 2:17-4:23; 6:1-7:4
- **Setting:** circa 445 BC in Jerusalem.
- **Main Characters:** God, Nehemiah, Sanballat, Tobiah, and Geshem
- **Plot:** Nehemiah's faith inspires his fellow Jews to rebuild the walls of Jerusalem.
- **Key word(s):** " \_\_\_\_\_ "
- **Climax:** Nehemiah 4:14 *And I looked, and rose up, and said unto the nobles, and to the rulers, and to the rest of the people, Be not ye afraid of them: remember the Lord, which is great and terrible, and fight for your brethren, your sons, and your daughters, your wives, and your houses.*

### Review

1. About 70 years after the Babylonians captivity began, Cyrus decreed that Jews may return to their homeland.<sup>1</sup> In 445 BC, Nehemiah led a colony to of returning Jews to Jerusalem.
  - (a) Before moving to Jerusalem, Nehemiah served Artaxerxes as the king's \_\_\_\_\_.
  - (b) When Nehemiah heard of Jerusalem's abysmal condition he wept and \_\_\_\_\_. God answered his prayers by giving him the emperor's permission to begin construction on Jerusalem's walls.
  - (c) Upon arrival in Jerusalem, Nehemiah did not reveal the purpose of his visit and \_\_\_\_\_ surveyed the city's walls to formulate the best plan of action.

### The Sword and the Trowel

2. (2:17-20) Having surveyed the city, Nehemiah made his intentions know to Jerusalem's citizenry saying, *"Ye see the distress that we are in, how Jerusalem lieth waste, and the gates thereof are burned with fire: come, and let us build up the wall of Jerusalem, that we be no more a \_\_\_\_\_."*
  - (a) As the people rallied to work, so did their enemies rally to oppose them. Sanballat, Tobiah, and Geshem the Arab began to jeer the rebuilding effort.
  - (b) (3:1-32) Eliashib the High Priest, and his fellow priests set the example by being the first to set their hands to the work. They repaired the Sheep Gate and the wall up to the Tower of Hananeel. Their finished section was consecrated as it was the gate closest to the \_\_\_\_\_. Other clans worked on different sections between the different gates of Jerusalem.
3. (4:1-6) As the work progressed, opposition intensified – yet the workers continued because *"the people had a mind to \_\_\_\_\_."* (4:6)
  - (a) (4:6-23) When the wall was connected all the way around the city and finished to half its height, the enemies of Israel not only mocked their labor but threatened to \_\_\_\_\_ the city.
  - (b) Nehemiah continued to encourage the people and build their faith saying, *"Be not ye afraid of them: remember the Lord, which is great and terrible, and fight for your brethren, your sons, and your daughters, your wives, and your houses."* (4:15) Nehemiah was forced to cut his work force in half – putting one half to labor on the wall and the other to keep watch against invaders. The workmen worked with a tool in one hand and a \_\_\_\_\_ in the other (vv 16-18).

<sup>1</sup>cf. Ezra 1:1; Jer. 25:11; 29:10-14)

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## Enemies Within and Without

4. (6:1-4) As the wall neared completion, Sanballat, Tobiah, and Geshem tried earnestly to sabotage the efforts – they even attempted to eliminate Nehemiah.
  - (a) They invited Nehemiah to a meeting in the plains of Ono where they intended to \_\_\_\_\_ him. Nehemiah's response was, “*I am doing a great work so that I cannot come down.*”
  - (b) (6:5-9) Then Sanballat and Tobiah tried to intimidate Nehemiah by sending an accusatory open letter. Open letters were sent “to inferiors, or persons who are to be treated contemptuously ...Nehemiah, accustomed to the punctillious ceremonial of the Persian court, would at once notice the want of the usual formality and know that it was from designed \_\_\_\_\_.”<sup>2</sup>
  - (c) (6:10-14) Nehemiah's enemies became so desperate that they even hired false prophets and prophetesses to attempt to scare him into leaving. Nehemiah's response was “*Should such a man as I \_\_\_\_\_?*”
5. (6:17-19) Not only did Nehemiah have enemies from without, but he had many from within. Several families of the nobles of Judah (cf. 3:5) were loyal to Tobiah because they were linked in \_\_\_\_\_. They made sure to speak well of Tobiah in front of Nehemiah and to tell Tobiah of all that Nehemiah had said.
6. (6:15-16; 7:4) In spite of all the trouble and turmoil Nehemiah faced, the wall was finished in 52 days – in August/September of 445 BC. The fear of Israel once again began to fall upon their enemies because “they perceived that this work was wrought of our \_\_\_\_\_.”

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## Application

7. One of Nehemiah’s greatest strengths was his habit of interjectory \_\_\_\_\_ (cf. 2:4; 4:4-5, 5:19, 6:14). Spurgeon, remarking on Nehemiah’s interjectory prayers, said, “The prayers that come leaping out of the soul — the gust of strong emotion, fervent desire, lively faith— these are the truly spiritual; and no prayers but spiritual prayers will God accept.”
8. Nehemiah constantly attributed whatever success he enjoyed to God. Here we see a man who obeyed the commands to do all that we do with all our \_\_\_\_\_ and to give all glory to God.

*1 Corinthians 10:31 Whether therefore ye eat, or drink, or whatsoever ye do, do all to the glory of God.*

**Notes:** \_\_\_\_\_  
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**Answer Key:** Key word(s): “build” • 1. a) cupbearer; b) prayed; c) secretly • 2. reproach; b) temple • 3. work; a) attack; b) weapon • 4. a) kill; b) disrespect; c) flee • 5. marriage • 6. God • 7. prayer • 8. might

**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.

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<sup>2</sup> Jamieson, Robert, A. R. Fausset, and David Brown. *Commentary Critical and Explanatory on the Whole Bible*. Vol. 1. Oak Harbor, WA: Logos Research Systems, Inc., 1997. Print.