

Message Guide

This Message Guide may be a little different from those you have used before.

The purpose of these Notes is not an in-depth study of the scriptures used, but rather to assist you or your Study Group as you reflect on these messages given by Charles Price.

We present questions in order to stimulate discussion. Sometimes we will give you the answer ... sometimes not. At other times a statement or a theme is presented for your consideration.

As you allow the Holy Spirit to guide the direction of your study and discussions we pray the flexibility of this Message Guide will help you as you delve more deeply into Charles' messages, and that you will unearth more lessons from the Lord that may not have been immediately obvious.

Message Guide & Questions

Nehemiah – Rebuilding The Walls

Part 1 “. . . with Tears”

Scripture: Nehemiah 1:1-11

1. Read and consider Nehemiah 1:1-11
2. Read and consider Psalm 46:5 and Nehemiah 1:9
What do these two verses tell us about the city of Jerusalem?

3. As a background for this and future discussion, what happened to Israel that precipitated these events?

4. What was similar to how Israel and Judah fared for the next 200 + years?

5. What other thing happened particularly in the North?

6. What has happened in Nehemiah 1:1-3 that triggers the start of our story?

7. Let's stop for a moment and consider the importance of city walls in the Bible times. Think of 3 things that city walls do.

8. Read and consider Proverbs 25:28. In this analogy what is being suggested?

9. Comment on the state of the church of Jesus Christ today in our Western World.

10. There are many reasons for this decline.
See if you can think of the 3 reasons that pertain to this story.

Final Thoughts

The broken city of Jerusalem represented the broken people of God.
This is what grieved Nehemiah the most,
and it is what grieves the Lord the most still today.

Message Guide & Questions

Nehemiah – Rebuilding The Walls

Part 2 – “. . . with Patience”

Scripture: Nehemiah 2:1-10

1. First of all read and consider Nehemiah 2:1-10
What do you recall from our last study concerning the backdrop of this story?

2. Now read and consider Nehemiah 1:3-4
Speaking of the people still in Judah, what 4 things stirred Nehemiah’s emotions so much that he wept?

3. What did the broken walls of the city represent?

4. There are 3 things that we will look at today that are important to us.
1. Nehemiah Identifies With The People.
Read and consider Nehemiah 1:6-7
What is Nehemiah’s prayer about: And what is it NOT about?

5. Consider the following verses in Isaiah Chapter 5; verses 8, 11, 18, 20, 21, and 22.
And what happens then in Isaiah Chapter 6?

6. Read and consider 1Timothy 1:15-16
Can you think of the well-known spiritual that is supported by this verse?

7. Having identified with the people ...

2. Nehemiah Intercedes for the place!

Read and consider Nehemiah 1:4

8. Can you identify the 2 reasons why Nehemiah was not rushing anything?

9. Nehemiah did not just sit back and expect God to do the work.

3. Nehemiah Instigated a Plan

Consider the following verses: Nehemiah 2:9, 2:11, 2:15

10. After hearing from God, patiently waiting for the right time, and then acting in complete obedience, what did Nehemiah then run into?

Read and consider Nehemiah 2:10

Final Thoughts

We will never be able to help people in a patronizing way,
or with any feelings of superiority towards those we seek to help.

We best minister when it is out of own need,
weakness, vulnerability and failures.

Only broken people can help other broken people.

God breaks us, and then gives us opportunities through circumstances,
events, health, tragedy etc.

but if we don't respond in humility,

– if we resist and toughen up and become hard,
we will not be much use.

Also, never be in a hurry with God.

If a burden is a passing whim,

it may be real today but gone tomorrow;

but if it **is** from God it will begin to sit heavily on you.

A burden that grows is a burden that shows.

Give God long enough in the secret place to wrestle things through,
and it will show in the public place.

The king could see the burden on Nehemiah's face.

Message Guide & Questions

Nehemiah – Rebuilding Your Walls Part 3 – “. . . with Purpose” Scripture: Nehemiah 2:11-20

1. As we return to this interesting story to see what the Lord would teach us from it, please read and consider Nehemiah 2:11-20.

2. In the book of Nehemiah we see two things simultaneously; do you know what they are?

3. In this section of chapter 2 there are 3 roles that God plays in Nehemiah’s life which are roles that He will also play in our lives, guiding us in major decisions we may need to make

a. God Conceived the Vision

Read and consider Nehemiah 2:12 and 13.

4. We have to be careful to interpret scripture in the right way. As an exercise read Psalm 37:4 and consider how you would interpret that. What would you say is the right way, and what would you say is the wrong way?

5. When God puts a desire in your heart He will confirm it, but you have to be patient, and understand that it may bring you trouble before it is fulfilled.

In the light of this statement consider and discuss the following:

i. Abraham _____

ii Joseph _____

iii Moses _____

iv Paul _____

6. After conceiving the vision

b. God Confirmed the Direction

Read and consider Isaiah 5:19

7. What should we be doing while waiting for things to happen according to what we feel the Lord has told us?

8. Finally:

c. God Completes the Operation.

Read what Nehemiah says in chapter 2:20

Exactly who was Nehemiah talking to here? See verse 19.

9. Can you identify two important aspects here?

The response was both: S _____ and

P _____

Final Thoughts

God is never in a hurry!

What God Commences, He Confirms and He Completes!

In our next study we will continue in this exciting story!

Message Guide & Questions

**Nehemiah – Rebuilding The Walls
Part 4 – “. . . by Serving Together”
Scripture: Nehemiah 3:1-32**

- 1. Walls have played an important part of the history of some nations. Can you think of 3 such walls?

- 2. As we have been following this story about the rebuilding of the walls of Jerusalem, and paralleling it with the current 21st century church, today we ask 2 questions. The first being: **a. Who worked there?**

- 3. Why do you think scripture records these names, sometimes with their partial family tree, and what trade they were engaged in?

- 4. As an exercise, identify the people groups mentioned, beyond those named individually, as found in the following verses: v.2, v.5 & 27, v.7, v.12, v.17, v.18, v.22, v.12, v.14, v.15, v.26, v.32

- 5. It should be noted that the nobles considered getting their hands dirty to be below their dignity. What were the consequences of some people not pulling their weight? See verses 3:19, 3:21, 3:24, 3:27 and 3:30

- 6. What was the primary motivation for all these people to be involved in rebuilding the walls? Read 2:17

7. But why was the city of Jerusalem so important? Read Psalm 46:5 and Nehemiah 1:9

8. The second question is; **b. Where did they work?**

Verse 1 tells us that they started at The Sheep gate and then worked in a counter-clockwise direction. As an exercise see if you can remember the names of the gates.

9. There were some other important aspects of where they worked. Can you recall what they were? Check out the following verses: 3:10b, 3:23, 2:23b, 3:28, 3:29 and 3:30

Final Thoughts

Until we are committed to a cause bigger than ourselves,
we will not be motivated nor energized to bless other people.
It is almost a certainty that you will encounter opposition,
even from those close to you,

One last point: read Nehemiah 4:6
The people worked with all their heart.

Consider the difference between working with all your might,
and working with all your heart.

Message Guide & Questions

Nehemiah – Rebuilding The Walls Part 5 – “. . . with Opposition” Scripture: Nehemiah 4:1-15

1. As we continue in the story of Nehemiah spearheading the work of rebuilding the walls of Jerusalem, remember that in this story we see parallels with our own lives and the church today.

Read and consider Nehemiah Chapter 4:1 - 18

2. Read 4:1, 4:7, 2:10 and 2:19
 3. There is mentioned another person and another group of people who openly opposed Nehemiah. Can you name them? Nehemiah 6:14
-
-

4. Consider the three methods of attack encountered by Nehemiah; the same as we can expect even today.

i Attacked by Derision – Ridicule

Read and consider Nehemiah 4:1-3

5. **ii Attacked by Destruction**

The situation takes a nasty turn as a coalition forms against Nehemiah.

Read Nehemiah 4:7 and then 4:8

6. This final method of attack can be the most debilitating.

iii Attack by Discouragement

Read and consider Nehemiah 4:10

7. See if you can name some of the rubble that you have to deal with that can be a source of discouragement.
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8. Discouragement is a key weapon in Satan’s arsenal.
It saps the Spirit, and drains the soul of energy.

Read and consider the following verses:

Exodus 6:9, Numbers 32:9, Ezra 4:4, Ephesians 3:13 and Nehemiah 4:10 and 12

9. So, in the face of this relentless opposition and battle, what should we do?
Read and consider Nehemiah 4:14
-
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Final Thoughts

Opposition ought not take us by surprise.
There is never any work of God
that does not take place in an environment of hostility,
one way or another.

The fact is; when we enter into **obedient service**,
we **enter into battle**.
It is not for the faint of heart.
It has always been this way.

Consider these additional scriptures:
Matthew 10:16, Luke 6:26, Galatians 1:10 and 1 Thessalonians 2:4

One last word:

Are you a discourager or grumbler; tempted to ridicule?
Then bring it to God in confession and repentance.

Become a **Builder** of the wall – not a **Battler**!

Message Guide & Questions

Nehemiah – Rebuilding The Walls Part 6 – “. . . with a Sword and a Trowel” Scripture: Nehemiah 4

1. As we have been following this story of Nehemiah spearheading the rebuilding the walls of Jerusalem, with all the difficulties and opposition that it entailed, we now come to how the people of Jerusalem responded to the opposition.

As before, we need to see how we can learn from these responses in our own lives.

To begin we need to read and reflect on the following verses:
Nehemiah 4:6-23; 6:1-9 and 15-16

2. In this study we will look at 3 responses to opposition.

i Nehemiah Prayed to God

Read and consider Nehemiah 4:4 and 4:9

3. Also read and consider closely Philippians 4:6-7

4. Having first prayed to God:

ii They Prevented the enemy

Read and consider Nehemiah 4:9

And then Nehemiah 4:16-17

5. Why would you say Nehemiah was successful?

6. We should take a quick look at just who are our enemies?
James 4 talks about the World, the Flesh and the Devil.

a. The World 1 John 2:16

b. The Flesh Galatians 5:17, Romans 8:8

c. The Devil

7. And finally:

iii They Pressed On

Read and consider Nehemiah 4:6, 4:15, 4:21, and 6:15

8. Sometimes we have to make the decision to ignore the opposition.
Read and consider Nehemiah 6:2-4

9. **Are you struggling today?
Is the enemy at your door?**

Final Thoughts

Why do we pray to God? Why does it make a difference?

Does it mean that Nehemiah and the people
ganged up on God to get some action?

Is that what prayer is?

Does God respond to volume, or intensity or urgency?

No! Prayer is very simple.

It is relating every and any situation to Him,
not to ourselves.

Prayer is expressing our dependence on God.

There is a two-fold explanation for success in the work of God.

One is divine.

The other is human.

We Pray

We Work

Work and Warfare

- go hand in hand.

Building and Battling

- go hand in hand.

Praying and Preventing

- go hand in hand.

Don't quit one for the other, they must go together!

Message Guide & Questions

**Nehemiah – Rebuilding The Walls
Part 7 – “. . . with the Word of God”
Scripture: Nehemiah 8:1-18**

1. Define what the first 6 chapters of Nehemiah were all concerned with; and then read Nehemiah 8:1-18

2. This chapter tells us how the people of God were taught the Word of God, and there is much for us to learn here.
Read and consider Chapter 8:1 – 4. What does this tell us?

3. God did not intend for us to live in isolation as a bunch of individuals.
Read and consider Hebrews 10:25

4. Why is reading God’s Word regularly so important?
Read and consider Proverbs 30:5, Matthew 4:4, 2 Timothy 3:16 and 2 Pete 1:21

5. Now read and consider Chapter 8:5 - 8. What does this tell us?

6. Finally, read and consider Nehemiah 8:9 - 12

7. Read and consider Nehemiah 8:9
What two things does the Word of God reveal?

8. Read and consider Nehemiah 9:2b

9. Now read and consider Nehemiah 9:10

10. Why did they weep?

Why did they rejoice?

Final Thoughts

Rebuilding the walls of Jerusalem was one thing,
but **what kind of people were they?**
The real concern was not about geography or real estate,
but rather **about the spiritual life of the people.**

What is your attitude to the Word of God?
Is it an **optional convenience**, or **is it vital to you?**

Very simply, we should ask 3 questions of all preaching:

1. What does it Say?
2. What does it Mean?
3. What does it Do?

Finally, all of this study leads us to the fact that:

Joy is strength!

The joy of the Lord – His joy – is our strength!
And this motivates and energizes us!

Message Guide & Questions

**Nehemiah – Rebuilding The Walls
Part 8 – “. . . Renewing the Covenant”
Scripture: Nehemiah 9:1-38**

1. Before we tackle the last study in this series on Nehemiah, discuss what you can remember of all that has gone on before.

2. Now what do they do here in Nehemiah chapter 9? Read verses 1 – 38

3. There are 2 things required in this process to renew their covenant with God. What is the first thing? Read and consider Chapter 9: verses 1 – 3

4. So they spent 6 hours a day for 7 days reading the Law of God. What two effects did that have?

5. What did they do next? Read and consider chapter 9 verses 4 – 38

6. Their consecration was in the form of a prayer that is addressed to God which intermingles 3 things:

- a. What G __ _ had done.
- b. What the P _ _ _ _ _ had done.
- c. Leading to : What N __ _ M _ _ _ _ _ H _ _ _ _ _

7. **a. What God Had Done.**

They acknowledged God as their creator in verse 6 and then went through their history of God's dealing with them.

It would be a good exercise to remind ourselves what God had done by looking at and listing individually from these verses in Nehemiah chapter 9:
v.7-8, v.8, v.9, v.10, v.11, v.12, v.13, v.15, v.20, 21

8. Then consider:

b. What The People Had Done.

Read and consider the following verses:
Nehemiah 9:16-17, v. 18, v.26, v.28, v.29, v.36

9. Finally we should look at:

c. What Now Must Happen.

Read and consider Nehemiah 9:38

10. Had God's people not tried to do this sort of thing before, but failed?
What is different this time?

Final Thoughts

The more we become aware of Christ,
the more we become aware of our sin.

We fail - but God does not!
We are weak - but He is strong

By confession we bring the strength of God to our weakness;
we bring the victory of God to our failure and defeat.

We cannot guarantee godliness in our lives beyond NOW.

- We need to live in Daily dependence on Him.
- Today's victories are not tomorrow's victories.
- Every day we have to meet with God ourselves.
- Each generation has to meet with God for themselves.

Finally, read and consider Romans 7:15 – 25

This entire series has been all about:

Rebuilding the Work of God

and in doing so

Renewing the People of God.

Leader's Message Guide & Answers

This Leader's Guide is prepared to help the Study Group Leader to keep the discussions moving along. Maybe your people will come up with different answers, or perhaps they will need a little prompting from you.

Remember, you want to encourage your people to fully participate. This is not a 'teaching session' by the Group Leader, but rather a discussion group. This may at first seem like a contradiction, but you will need the Lord to give you wisdom to keep the discussions 'on track' while also allowing the Holy Spirit to direct your path.

Leader's Message Guide & Answers

Nehemiah – Rebuilding The Walls

Part 1 “. . . with Tears”

Scripture: Nehemiah 1:1-11

1. This story focus on the Earthly city of Jerusalem, but what happens here foreshadows the Heavenly city of Jerusalem.
2. It is a city of God's ACTIVITY and of God's REPUTATION.
3. Israel had become split into two.
In the North were 10 tribes known as Israel
In the South were 2 tribes known as Judah
4. They both suffered severe persecution including invasions, deportations and being used as a buffer state between two more powerful nations.
5. The tribes of Israel in the north intermarried or mated with the Assyrians which produced the despised Samaritans, whom we meet in the New Testament.
6. Nehemiah learned from his brother Hanani the tragedy that had happened to the walls of Jerusalem.
7.
 - a. They mark the boundary of the city. They define it's reach.
 - b. They provide defense against any and all enemies.
 - c. They provide a position for attack.
8. This is important because of its parallel with today.
Read and consider Nehemiah 1:8-9.
9. The Church in the Western world today is in decline.
10.
 - a. The vast majority of people are outside of Christ.
 - b. We are no longer God-fearing.
 - c. We have substituted other Gods.

Leader's Message Guide & Answers

Nehemiah – Rebuilding The Walls Part 2 – “. . . with Patience” Scripture: Nehemiah 2:1-10

1. Nehemiah is in Susa, the capital city of Persia [Iran]
The people of Judah had been taken into captivity by Babylon, but then Babylon itself was conquered by the Persians who treated the captured people better than the Babylonians had.
2. Jerusalem was in ruins, resulting in trouble and disgrace, the walls were broken down and the gates burned.
3. The broken walls of the city represented the broken people of God who, because of their unfaithfulness to God, were scattered and in exile.
4. Nehemiah's prayer was not pointing at other people to blame.
His prayer was all about “I”, “we”, “Myself”, etc.
It was not about “They”, “Them” or “You”.
He is accepting responsibility for the situation which is a necessary first step towards correcting it.
5. Isaiah was pointing the finger at everyone else in Chapter 5, but in Chapter 6 he realizes that **he** is the problem.
6. *It's me, it's me O Lord standing in the need of prayer.
It's me, it's me O Lord standing in the need of prayer.
Not my brother nor my sister, but it's me O Lord,
Standing in the need of prayer!*
7. It is important to notice that Nehemiah was not trying for a quick fix.
Never be in a hurry with God.
8. a. Nehemiah wanted to be sure that the burden he felt was from God.
b. Nehemiah wanted to get permission from the King.
9. Nehemiah had to work out the plans and drive the project forward; but he did so with certain knowledge that what they were doing was God's will.
10. Nehemiah aroused the opposition of hell.
More about that in our next study

Leader's Message Guide & Answers

Nehemiah – Rebuilding Your Walls Part 3 – “. . . with Purpose” Scripture: Nehemiah 2:11-20

1. Remember that Nehemiah is among the Jewish exiles in Susa, the capital of Persia. His brother, Hanani and some friends have come to visit him from Jerusalem with news of the terrible state of that city. Read again Nehemiah 1:3-4
2. Broken walls leave a city weak and vulnerable to invasion.
The broken walls of Jerusalem are a picture of the broken people of God.
3. These verses should be an encouragement especially verse 13
4. The wrong way to interpret Psalm 37:4
Delight yourself in God and He will give you anything you want!

The right way to interpret Psalm 37:4

*Delight yourself in God and the desire of your heart will be **God** given.*

Not what **you** want, but what God wants for you to have.

5.
 - i. **Abraham**
As well as being old in the first place, he had to wait 25 years before he saw God's promise fulfilled.
 - ii **Joseph**
Hated by his brothers; spent time in prison for a crime he did not commit.
But read and consider Genesis 45:6-8
 - iii **Moses**
At 40 years old he knew that God would use him to deliver the people of Israel, but he still had to wait another 40 years before it happened.
 - iv **Paul**
Read and consider Acts 26:19.
Even though the Lord spoke to Paul directly and dramatically it was still some 12 years between the Lord putting something into his heart and that something becoming a reality.
6. We have already mentioned those people who had to wait many years before seeing the fulfillment of that which God had placed in their hearts.
7. This is not to be a time to fall into inactivity.
Most of all, this should be a time of preparation.
As you diligently prepare you will experience the encouragement of other things falling into place, just as Nehemiah did.
8. Nehemiah was talking to the very people who had so vociferously opposed the work -

men who had mocked him, ridiculed him, and accused him of false motives.

9. The response was both:
 - a. Spiritual - God will give us success.
 - b. Practical - We, His servants, will start rebuilding.

Leader's Message Guide & Answers

Nehemiah – Rebuilding The Walls Part 4 – “. . . by Serving Together” Scripture: Nehemiah 3:1-32

1. i. **The Great Wall of China**

It is not just one wall, but many walls totaling some 8,851 kilometers long. It was built to keep out the invading Mongolians

ii. **The Berlin Wall**

Ostensibly designed to keep the west out of East Germany, but actually its purpose was the opposite of that. It came down in 1989.

iii **The Western Wall in Jerusalem** – the Wailing Wall -

A retaining wall of Herod's temple.

2. There are some 70 people named in Nehemiah as having worked on the wall, and that is by no means the complete list.

3. Nehemiah listed these people by name, trade/craft and place of origin because 'people' were important to him, as they are to God today

- | | |
|----------|--|
| 4. v.2 | Men of Jericho |
| v.5 & 27 | Men of Tekoa |
| v.7 | Men from Gideon & Mizpah |
| v.12 | Shallum with his daughters |
| v.17 | Levites |
| v.18 | The countrymen of Leilah |
| v.22 | Priests from the surrounding region |
| v.8 | Goldsmiths and perfume makers |
| v.12 | Various rulers of the half district of Jerusalem |
| v.14 | Various rulers of the district of Beth Hakkerem |
| v.15 | Various rulers of the district of Mizpah |
| v.26 | The temple servants |
| v.32 | Merchants |

They weren't necessarily all doing what they wanted to do, nor were they working according to their trade. After all, perfume making was probably not needed in rebuilding the wall, but the perfume makers were there, doing whatever they could to help.

5. Many times it is mentioned that there were those who did extra work to make up for those who did not do their fair share. Pretty much just like today.

6. Nehemiah 2:17
*..... let us rebuild the wall of Jerusalem, and **we will no longer be in disgrace.***
7. The city of Jerusalem was the place of God's activity and God's reputation.
Rebuilding it was to restore the Glory of God.
It was their motive, but it also served their self-interest.
8. v.3 The Fish Gate
v.6 The Jeshanah Gate
v.13 The Valley Gate
v.14 The Dung Gate [you probably would not want to live near this gate]
v.15 The Fountain Gate
v.26 The Water Gate
v.28 The Horse Gate
v.31 The Inspection Gate
and then in verse 32 back to The Sheep Gate
9. I am sure you have seen the pattern.
They worked on sections of the wall that were close to where they lived, reflecting a Biblical principle found in Acts 1:8
Start at home and then work outwards from there.

Leader's Message Guide & Answers

Nehemiah – Rebuilding The Walls Part 5 – “. . . with Opposition” Scripture: Nehemiah 4:1-15

1. Trouble seems to be never far away, and Nehemiah runs into open and dangerous conflict.
2. In these verses the chief protagonists are named and you can see that they surround Nehemiah and Jerusalem.

To the North	- Sanballat and the Samaritans
To the East	- Tobiah and the Ammonites
To the South	- Geshem and the Arabs
To the West	- the men of Ashdod [Philistines]

3. The prophetess Noadiah plus the rest of the prophets. This was formidable opposition.
4. Ridicule needs no factual ammunition or even argument. It just mocks with questions that insinuate and insult.

The sense of doubt that ridicule can create leads to discouragement, which can lead to defeat even before you start. Guard against it!

5. It is said that two dogs will fight each other until a rabbit runs by, and then they join in chasing the rabbit.
Read Luke 23:12 which describes the day that Herod and Pilate became friends in their opposition to Jesus Christ.

The coalition against Nehemiah has upped the stake with the threat of physical attack and the threat to kill.

In the comfortable West in which we live this can sound like fiction, but many Christians around the world today live in constant fear of their lives just for professing Christ.

6. When there is a work of God going on, do you ever get discouraged by the rubble you have to deal with? In your own life? In serving God? Consider this.
7. Sins, habits, attitudes, too much to clear up first, you could never make it.

Work and warfare come together and is a great source of discouragement.

8. Most discouragement comes from within, from people close to us, creating fear; and fear is a debilitating power. It eats away inside you, undermining morale, sapping energy and draining you.

Fear and faith cannot co-exist in the same heart.

9. It is time to **Reawaken the Vision.**

- i **Remember the Lord!**

Is this His business or not?

If it is, then remember Him in the midst of the battles – Trust Him!

- ii **Remember the Beneficiaries!**

Whatever work God has called you to is designed to be a blessing to some other people. Do not lose sight of that.

Leader's Message Guide & Answers

Nehemiah – Rebuilding The Walls Part 6 – “. . . with a Sword and a Trowel” Scripture: Nehemiah 4

1. Nobody likes a fight, but what do we do when we find ourselves in one?
Turn the other cheek? Love our enemies?
Read and consider Colossians 3:13
2. Nehemiah was certainly a man of prayer, to which the following verses attest.
As an exercise look up and read each one.
Chapter 1:5-10, 2:4, 4:4-5, 4:9, 6:9b, 9:1-37, 13:14, 13:27b, 13:29 and 13:30b
3. We should give our situations over to God, thanking Him that He is sufficient to meet whatever need we may have.
Sadly, some people pray about things but don't give them to God. They still carry them much as before.

We need to thank Him for His presence, His sufficiency – recognizing that our problem is bigger than us but not bigger than God

If we genuinely give our situation over to God we don't need to worry because He will accept it from you; and He is not afraid, so instead of anxiety, verse 7 becomes a reality for you. Please read that verse and fully absorb it.

4. They did not just pray and then do nothing; they prayed and then they prevented.
They did their work with one hand, and held a weapon in the other.
5. Nehemiah was successful because he was doing **a work which God had initiated**.
And because God had initiated it, **God empowered it**.

The burden was in the heart of Nehemiah because it was first in the heart of God.

- 6 **a The World.**
 - i* *Sensualism* - food, sex, laziness.
 - ii* *Materialism* - love of money, priority of 'things'.
 - iii* *Egotism* - Pride – the sin of Lucifer

b The Flesh

This originates in us and depends on us; as opposed to that which originates in God and depends on Him.

Our biggest enemy is probably ourselves.

c The Devil

A living being, once the most beautiful of all God's angels, who, on account of his beauty, wanted to be equal to God. Now, cast on earth, he is roaming around like a mighty roaring lion seeking whom he may devour.

He comes in many guises and disguises. He is out to get us.

7. Taking the enemy seriously, and with protection in place, we have to get on with the task God has given us.
8. We should not allow opposition to drain us of our energy.
We should **Listen to it, Understand it**, but then **Move on**.
9. **Pray** to God
Prevent the enemy [battle with him]
Press on

And God will give you victory!

Leader's Message Guide & Answers

Nehemiah – Rebuilding The Walls Part 7 – “. . . with the Word of God” Scripture: Nehemiah 8:1-18

1. The first 6 chapters of Nehemiah were concerned with the actual Rebuilding the Walls, whereas chapters 7-13 are concerned with Renewing the Covenant.

2. **i The Scripture was Read**

3. Look again at Nehemiah 8:3.
They read aloud from daybreak "till noon." That was a long time.

It would be a good, but sobering, exercise to write down how much time we spend in a week:

- a. Watching TV.
- b. Watching movies.
- c. Watching sports – either in person or on TV.
- d. Participating in a favourite hobby.

and then compare that with how much time we spend each week reading the Word of God.

4. Reading the word of God regularly is a great way to affirm the authority of scripture. Scripture is not authoritative because of WHAT it says, but because of WHO is saying it.

The words of these scriptures speak for themselves; and we should not deprive feeding our minds and nourishing our souls.

There is no short cut to knowing the Word of God. **We have to READ it!**

5. **ii The Scripture was Explained**

It is interesting to note that the reading of scripture and the worship of God went together. They are interdependent and intrinsically linked.

Worship **sets the heart** for preaching, and
Preaching **sets the scene** for worship.

Why? Because the Word of God must always lead us to God Himself.

6. **iii The Scripture was Applied**

7. The Word of God reveals:
 - a. Who we are, and
 - b. Who God is.

Read and consider: Job 42:5; Isaiah 6:1, and then verse 5

To really see God is to really see ourselves; and that is not a pretty sight.
When we see God we see His holiness; but we see our own unholiness.
We cannot understand sin in the light of sin itself, but only in the light of God.

8. The bankrupt condition of our own humanity is always the revelation to our soul that comes from encountering God.
9. Here he tells them not to grieve, but to find joy.
Weeping and joy are both tough, deep emotions, and can live close together.
10. They wept because their sins were exposed.
They rejoiced because their sins were forgiven.

Read and consider Psalm 30:5 and Nehemiah 8:10

Leader's Message Guide & Answers

Nehemiah – Rebuilding The Walls Part 8 – “. . . Renewing the Covenant” Scripture: Nehemiah 9:1-38

1.
 - a. Nehemiah returned to Jerusalem from Susa to rebuild the walls of Jerusalem.
 - b. In Chapters 1 – 6 they accomplish the physical rebuilding of the walls
 - c. In the next 7 chapters they re-populate the city and lead the people in Spiritual Renewal.
 - d. In Chapter 8 they publicly read the Book of the Law:
 - i Making it clear.
 - ii Giving them meaning.
 - iii So the people could understand.
 - iv What does it say?
 - v What does it mean?
 - vi What does it do?

2. In chapter 9 the people engage in the process of renewing their covenant with God.

3. **i. They Confess Their Sin.**
 Look again at verses 2b – 4
 Remember in chapter 8 they had spent 6 hours publicly reading the scripture, and 6 hours in confession and worship, *confessing their sins and the wickedness of their fathers*.

4.
 - a. It revealed the Character and Glory of God – they worshipped.
 - b. It revealed their own sinfulness – they confessed.

5. **ii They Consecrated Themselves**
 To ‘consecrate’ is to ‘set apart’.
 They set themselves apart to God.

6.
 - a. What **God** had done.
 - b. What the **People** had done.
 - c. Leading to : What **Now Must Happen**

7. Despite this wonderful list there was a little word that kept cropping up;
 And that is the word **BUT . . .**

8. This makes for depressing reading when we consider that this was the response of the people in spite on God’s great works for them.

If we are honest, this should not shock us. God is never surprised by our failure – it is what He expects. It is the pattern again and again in the Old Testament where people experienced God and great victories, but then became self-reliant again.

9. In Nehemiah 10 you will see that this binding agreement was not only signed by Nehemiah, the Governor, but also by:

21 named Priests

17 named Levites

44 named Leaders..... and the rest of the people.

10. This is not a case of them **working for God**.
Nor is it a case of letting God do the work for them.
No – this is about **God and His people working together**.