

Getting Our Work Done¹

Overview of Nehemiah

I. Perception of Need (1:1-3)

- A. Nehemiah was many miles from Jerusalem (v. 1).
- B. He had opportunity to inquire of his homeland (v. 2).
- C. He was given an eyewitness report (v. 3).
- D. Application: People must know a need exists before it can be addressed (cf. Acts 16:25-34).

II. Prayer (1:4)

- A. Not just a little, but “many days”
- B. There is power in prayer (cf. Acts 4:31; 8:22; James 5:16; Eph. 6:18, 19).

III. Penitence (1:6, 7)

- A. Nehemiah didn't blame his sorry state on his ancestors.
 - 1. The children of Israel have sinned. Both my father's house and I have sinned against you (v. 6).
 - 2. Nehemiah admitted a failure to keep the commandments, statutes, and ordinances of God (v. 7).
- B. The sad state of affairs in many congregations is due to the sin of the forefathers as well as those now living.
- C. Many churches and elderships need to repent, not so much for what they've done, but for what they failed to do.
 - 1. Failure to maintain watch over the local flock, silently allowing members to drift away
 - 2. Quietly allowing “problem children” to fall away or go elsewhere
 - 3. Failure to practice church discipline

IV. Promise (1:8-11)

- A. “God, you kept your promise to punish the disobedient.”
- B. “But, God, remember also your promise to gather and restore your people if they will return to you.”
- C. We are given exceeding great and precious promises:
 - 1. “My word will not return to me void.”
 - 2. “I am with you always.” “I will never leave or forsake you.”
 - 3. “Seek ye first the kingdom of God and his righteousness.”

V. Preparation (2:1-18)

- A. Any task or effort of consequences requires planning.
- B. Nehemiah needed to see the situation for himself.
- C. Nehemiah thoroughly investigated the needs.
- D. Generating excitement may create interest, but won't see a job through to completion.

¹ Lesson by Todd Clippard, Hamilton, AL, n.d. Adapted by Andy Kizer (06/21/2012).

- E. Preparation includes making sure you have the right personnel and the means to do the job properly (Luke 14:26-33).

VI. Persistence (2:19-6:14)

- A. From the outset, Nehemiah faced opposition.
 - 1. Personally mocked and falsely accused (v. 19; cf. v. 10).
 - 2. Workers mocked and ridiculed (4:1-3)
 - 3. Threat of physical attack (4:7-9)
- B. There was even trouble from within (5:1-13).
- C. Deceit and subterfuge (6:1-14)

VII. Perfection (6:15-13:31)

- A. The walls were completed in fifty-two days, but there was still work to be done.
 - 1. Ezra 3 – Temple foundation laid but not finished (cf. Isa. 44:28)
 - 2. Haggai
- B. Application
 - 1. The new birth is the beginning of an ongoing process
 - 2. The restoration is a continual goal, needing to be improved and guarded.