

Nehemiah – A Study in Real Leadership¹

Nehemiah

PROPOSITION: The life and work of Nehemiah demonstrate the meaning of real leadership.

INTRODUCTION:

1. Nebuchadnezzar took what was left of the nation of Israel into Babylonian captivity which lasted seventy years.
2. In 536 B.C. Cyrus the Great, king of Persia, made the great “Emancipation Proclamation.”
 - a. This decree allowed all the Jews who wanted to do so to return to their homeland.
 - b. Approximately eighty years later, Ezra led 7,000 more of the Jews back to the homeland. His work was that of reformation.
 - c. Approximately, thirteen years after that, we have the great work of reformation and restoration by Nehemiah.
3. We remember Nehemiah because of his great work in rebuilding the wall around the city of Jerusalem.
4. This lesson examines the life and work of this great man of God, especially as they demonstrate the meaning of real leadership.

DISCUSSION: Nehemiah’s Leadership Qualities

1. Nehemiah was a man of deep compassion (1:4).
2. He was a man who recognized his responsibility to do something – to do what he could do (2:5).
3. He had the authority to do the job that God wanted him to do (2:7-9).
4. He sought neither personal gain nor glory. He sought the welfare of Israel (2:10).
5. Before taking action, he carefully surveyed the situation, gathered the facts, studied the facts, and made the plans (2:11-15).
6. He was a man of prayer (1:4; 2:4; 4:9).
7. He was careful not to say anything or do anything that would jeopardize his work (2:16).
8. He sought the full cooperation of the people in whose behalf he would be working (2:17, 18).
9. He would not be deterred by the scorn of the enemies, or by the force of the opposition, but steadfastly looked to God (2:19, 20).
10. He carefully systematized the work to be done (chp. 3).
11. He did not stop nor slow down the work because of oppositions (4:3, 4, 16-18).
12. He was careful to protect the work and the workers (4:20).
13. He realized and stressed that he and the people were instruments in the hand of God (4:20).
14. He was a man of confident faith, and he was a strong believer in the providence of God (2:8, 18, 20; 4:20).
15. He would not stop the work to take time to talk with the enemies (6:2-4).

¹ Roy C. Deaver, “Nehemiah – A Study in Real Leadership,” *Studies in Ezra, Nehemiah, and Esther* (Denton, TX: Valid Publications, 1992), pp. 384-392. Adapted by Andy Kizer.

16. He would not be intimidated by the lies of the enemies (6:5-9).
17. He was able to detect false prophets, and he refused to be made afraid (6:10-14).
18. He was a man who knew how to delegate responsibilities (7:1-3).
19. He was properly concerned about teaching the people God's law (8:1-9).
20. He would not tolerate fellowshiping the sinner (13:4-11, 28).
21. He was deeply grieved when people disobeyed God's law (13:8, 28-30).
22. He was careful to point out the sins of the people. His preaching was plain, pointed, and powerful, both to the Israelite and to the non-Israelite (13:15-21).

CONCLUSION:

1. As we ponder these thoughts about Nehemiah and his work, may God help us to learn the many Scriptural principles and characteristics involved in real leadership.
2. Let elders of God's people (and those who would strive to qualify to become elders) learn these lessons well.