

# Nehemiah, Profile of Strength<sup>1</sup>

Nehemiah 1-13

PROPOSITION: Nehemiah possessed several characteristics that made him a great leader.

## **INTRODUCTION:**

1. No society will rise above its leaders.
2. Leaders must be of the highest sort of character.
3. First, a leader must learn how to lead.
4. Some Old Testament characters were great leaders of which Nehemiah was one.
5. Nehemiah epitomized every characteristic a great leader must have.

## **DISCUSSION:**

### **I. First, notice what Nehemiah did *not* do.**

- A. He did not compromise.
  1. Sanballat, a Samaritan (4:2), and Tobiah, an Ammonite (4:3), showed their disapproval of Nehemiah's appointment and scornfully asked if he intended to rebel against the king of Persia.
  2. When the restoration was seen to be progressing rapidly, their indignation knew no bounds.
  3. Their efforts were defeated by the vigilance and prudence of Nehemiah.
  4. The enemies, Sanballat and Tobiah, wanted a "unity meeting" with Nehemiah in one of the villages on the plain of Ono (6:2).
  5. Had Nehemiah left the work, he would have been going "down" in more than one way.
- B. He did not antagonize.
  1. Nehemiah did what he could to solve grievances.
  2. He led the people to repentance (5:9-11).
  3. He held them to their promises (5:13).
- C. He did not apostatize.
  1. He fulfilled his responsibilities until the work was done.
  2. The people had a mind to work because Nehemiah did (4:6).
  3. The wall was built and completed in fifty-two days (6:15).
  4. Any work can be accomplished when everyone does his work.

### **II. Now look at what he *did* do.**

- A. He agonized.
  1. Upon learning of the condition of God's city and people, he suffered greatly (1:4-6).
  2. Elders are brought to tears over sinful conditions that creep into the Lord's church.

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<sup>1</sup> Richard L. Curry, "Nehemiah, Profile of Strength," *Great Lessons from Old Testament Characters* (Memphis, TN: Memphis School of Preaching, 1990), pp. 315-321. Adapted by Andy Kizer.

3. We must not be complacent!
- B. He analyzed.
1. Nehemiah sought to go to the source of their problems.
  2. He found it to be sin and rebellion (1:7).
  3. The solution was to rise up and build.
- C. He organized.
1. No great work is done by chance.
  2. Nehemiah asked for four things (2:7, 8):
    - a. Appointment to governor,
    - b. A troop of cavalry,
    - c. Letters to satraps for unhindered passage,
    - d. A letter to Asaph for timber.
  3. Next, he acquired all the information he could get (2:12-16).
  4. He allocated (or delegated) the work (3:1-32).
- D. He supervised.
1. He got into the work and did the work also (5:16).
  2. He encouraged others to work (4:14, 15).
  3. Leaders today must take the lead as well as encourage others.

### **CONCLUSION:**

1. Nehemiah was one of God's truly great leaders.
2. Leaders today need to be more like he was; yet, one does not have to be a recognized leader to imitate his good characteristics.