

REBUILD

NEHEMIAH

NEHEMIAH, PART 1: "IF THIS IS IT?"

The book of Nehemiah is not actually about people rebuilding walls; it's about God rebuilding people. Sometimes we need to zoom out to get the bigger picture on what God is doing in and all around us.

BIG IDEA: If it breaks your heart, be a part of fixing it.

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

** Remember the goal is to use the questions to generate discussion, not to complete every one.*

1. What is one challenge you are facing during this season of your life?
2. Chris said that "COVID uncovered for all of us a sense of longing for something more. More than just focusing on us, our stuff, and our things. We long to make a difference." Have you ever asked the question, "Is this all there is to life?" Have you ever struggled for something bigger? A sense of purpose?
3. *With your Bible or Bible App, read [Nehemiah 1:1-3](#).*

¹ These are the memoirs of Nehemiah son of Hacaliah. In late autumn, in the month of Kislev, in the twentieth year of King Artaxerxes' reign, I was at the fortress of Susa. ² Hanani, one of my brothers, came to visit me with some other men who had just arrived from Judah. I asked them about the Jews who had returned there from captivity and about how things were going in Jerusalem. ³ They said to me, "Things are not going well for those who returned to the province of Judah. They are in great trouble and disgrace. The wall of Jerusalem has been torn down, and the gates have been destroyed by fire." [Nehemiah 1:1-3 \(NLT\)](#)

4. How did Nehemiah, who was living in Persia, learn about the conditions of those living in Jerusalem? What were some of the challenges the Jews living in Jerusalem were experiencing?
5. *Rebuilding begins with realizing that things are broken.* What's broken in our culture that you'd love to see rebuilt? What brokenness do you see in your life that you would love to see God restore and heal? What would 'rebuilt' look like?
6. *We all have something that we are rebuilding in our lives.* God's purpose for our life is often born when a person is gripped by the tension between *what is* and *what should be*. Nehemiah was gripped by *what should be* for those living in Jerusalem and the reality of what actually was. Are you gripped by a particular tension? If so, take a minute to describe your dilemma. What breaks your heart? What is the solution? What should be? Where could your heart be more tender?
7. *With your Bible or Bible App, read [Nehemiah 1:4-10](#).*

⁴ When I heard this, I sat down and wept. In fact, for days I mourned, fasted, and prayed to the God of heaven. ⁵ Then I said, "O LORD, God of heaven, the great and awesome God who keeps his covenant of unfailing love with those who love him and obey his commands, ⁶ listen to my prayer! Look down and see me praying night and day for your people Israel. I confess that we have sinned against you. Yes, even my own family and I have sinned! ⁷ We have sinned terribly by not obeying the commands, decrees, and regulations that you gave us through your servant Moses. ⁸ "Please remember what you told your servant Moses: 'If you are unfaithful to me, I will scatter you among the nations. ⁹ But if you return to me and obey my commands and live by them, then even if you are exiled to the ends of the earth, I will bring you back to the place I have chosen for my name to be honored.' ¹⁰ "The people you rescued by your great power and strong hand are your servants.

8. What was Nehemiah's first response when he heard the news?
9. What does Nehemiah's prayer reveal about his view of himself and of God?
10. When Nehemiah prays, he begins not with his *problems*, but with *praising God* (verse 5). Why do you think Nehemiah did this? Is this the example you and I take when problems come our way? Why or why not?
11. List everything you observe from verses 5-11 about the character of God.
12. Next comes *confession* (verses 6-7), acknowledging that the ultimate cause of brokenness is sin. Whose sin did Nehemiah confess (verses 6-7)? What was that sin? Why is confession important to God and what is our confidence? (John 3:20-21 & 1 John 1:9)
13. Nehemiah then moves to God's *promises*. Why did Nehemiah remind God of the promises that He had made to Moses?
14. How do you think prayer prepared Nehemiah to lead his people?
15. *With your Bible or Bible App, read [Nehemiah 1:11](#).*

¹¹ O Lord, please hear my prayer! Listen to the prayers of those of us who delight in honoring you. Please grant me success today by making the king favorable to me. Put it into his heart to be kind to me." In those days I was the king's cup-bearer. [Nehemiah 1:11 \(NLT\)](#)

16. The last part of verse 11 gives us insight into Nehemiah's job and position: *In those days I was the king's cup-bearer*. Being a cup-bearer for the king was a high-ranking office in the royal courts. It was Nehemiah's duty to serve wine and to ensure the king wasn't poisoned. When necessary, he would ensure the king's safety by drinking some of his wine before serving it. Think of it as a bodyguard or secret service to the king. He was willing to lay his life down for the king, and that relationship put Nehemiah in a position to be used by God.
17. What influence and position to you hold that God might use you in an amazing way for His plan and purpose for your life?
18. What is one thing you can do this week to begin to identify what breaks your heart? What can this group do to help and support you?

MOVING FORWARD

*Rebuilding begins with realizing that things are broken, and we all have something that we are rebuilding in our lives. What breaks your heart? What needs to be done around you? What breaks the heart of God? Are you concerned about the things that concern God? Are you wrestling with the tension of *what is* and *what should be*?*

CHANGING YOUR MIND

When I heard this, I sat down and wept. In fact, for days I mourned, fasted, and prayed to the God of heaven. [Nehemiah 1:4 \(NLT\)](#)