

Nehemiah 3-5 –9 February 2023

“Endure Hardness To Flourish”

Introduction

- *Nehemiah begins in 445 BC, 15 years after Ezra came
- *Entire book takes place in just a 12-year span
- *Zerubbabel rebuilt temple (worship); Ezra rebuilt people (teaching) & Nehemiah now rebuild city (flourishing)
- *Chap 2 ended w/ Nehemiah stirring up the people to begin the working of rebuilding the wall
- *Any time the Christian wants to flourish into God’s best for their life the enemies of our soul will rise up
- *Moving from surviving to thriving involves setting a course and then enduring that hardness that comes
- *Today let’s look at 3 ways to endure hardness on the road to flourishing**

1st way to endure hardness is to expect to bear your own burden (Chap 3)

Read Chap 3:1-2

1. Sheep Gate = Lamb of God on the cross
2. Men of Jericho that cursed city

Read Vs 3-5

1. Fish Gate = Jesus making us fishers of men
2. Nobles didn't work, having a poor witness
 - a. Fish Gate area speaks of evangelism
 - b. Wouldn't allow Jesus to make them fishers

Read Vs 6-12

1. Old Gate = Grounded in eternal truths (Jer 6:16)
 - a. The constant search for something new is frustrating & leads to dissatisfaction
2. Goldsmith, Pharmacists, & daughters
 - a. All those that walked in the old paths
 - b. Vs 11: Malchijah is a restored sinner from Ezra 10:31 that went back to the old paths

Read Vs 13

1. Valley Gate = trials & forming humility

Read Vs 14

1. Dung Gate = confession & cleansing of sin
2. II Cor 7:1 – As we come closer to perfection

Read Vs 15-25

1. Fountain Gate - running water pics the H.S.
 - a. Read John 7:37-39, also see Jer 2:13
2. Vs 20 – Zabbai is noted for his vigor & passion, so the Holy Spirit thru him is recorded forever

Read Vs 26-27

1. Water Gate = The Word of God (where they brought in the drinking water)
 - a. Ezra will teach the Word from a pulpit from the Water Gate in Neh 8
 - b. Read Psm 119:9 – Cleansing of the Word
2. Vs 27 – In spite of their leaders not helping, the Tekoites repaired a **SECOND** piece of wall

Read Vs 28

1. Horse Gate = Animal of warfare
2. When the Word of God goes out it will naturally produce friends **AND** enemies

Read Vs 29-30

1. Eastern Gate – 1st gate opened in the morning as the light first begins to shine over horizon
2. We're in the war now, but we look to the east for His coming again
3. Last thing Jesus said is “I am the Bright & Morning Star, surely I come quickly” (Rev 22)

Read Vs 31-32

1. Miphkad Gate = Designated place where the army would appear to be counted or judged
2. II Cor 5:10 – We must all appeared at the Judgement Seat of Christ

So as each worked together and did their own part, then the whole came along much better

1. Read Gal 6:3-5 & 7-8
2. There's very practical cause and effect here
3. We all have a certain amt of hardness to endure

2nd way to endure hardness is to expect to be attacked from outside (Chap 4)

Read Chap 4:1-2

1. They were mocked b/c they were weak and wanting to worship God
2. Read I Cor 2:3-5 – Admit it when they're right
 - a. B/c we're weak, we rely on Christ in us

Read Vs 3

1. Tobiah's scoffing was saying that the work being accomplished would not be effective to help
2. If God can bring a baby from Sarah's dead womb, He can strengthen this wall

Read Vs 4-6

1. Anger b/c they know enemy is provoking God
2. Pray and work; ask the Lord to defeat your enemies and keep you mind on the work

Read Vs 7-9

1. Now they're praying against, not just mocking, but a potential attack

Read Vs 10-12

1. A new concern that needs addressed; the workers are getting depleted physically & the enemy is planning a sneak attack
2. Read II Cor 12:7-10 – These are the moments that faith becomes sight as we see God work

Read Vs 13-14

1. So the everyday person is armed & encouraged to trust God b/c they're building for a godly cause

Read Vs 15-18

1. Equipped & prepared to fight spiritually (vs 9), mentally (vs 14) & physically (vs 16)

Read Vs 19-20

1. Ready to adjust to help all those around us

Read Vs 21-23

1. 24/7 vigilance and readiness
2. The plan will always need adjusting based on adversarial conditions

3rd way to endure hardness is to expect to be weakened from within (Chap 5)

Read Chap 5:1-5

1. B/c of a famine in the land many are concerned b/c they're not able to pay the bills back home
2. They want to leave off the work of the wall to go back home and work for 4 reasons
 - a. Vs 2: Large family thus enter poverty quick
 - b. Vs 3: Mortgaged homestead & are worried
 - c. Vs 4: Gone into debt to honor the king
 - d. Vs 5: They're worried b/c this could make their kids indentured servants for generations
3. Read II Tim 2:3-4 – As a soldier there's a certain giving up of some comforts of this temp life for the eternal good
 - a. As Lot's wife, 'no one putting their hand to the plough & looking back is fit for the kingdom of God' (Luke 9:62)

Read Vs 6-7

1. He rebuked Jewish leaders for charging interest money, making it harder to get out of debt

2. This was against Law of Moses (Lev 25:35-36)

Read Vs 8

1. Nehemiah was setting example of buying Jews back from slave poverty & they all should do it

Read Vs 9-11

1. He says: restore lands & stop charging interest
 - a. We seem to think if we could just lie & cheat around the edges a little then we could get ahead – think of Ananias & wife Acts 5
2. The point; they should do everything in their power to not harm their fellow Jews

Read Vs 12-13

1. They make a formal agreement even before the priests with a punishment if not obeyed

Read Vs 14-15

1. In time of hardship – everyone should pitch in, especially the leaders by example

Read Vs 16

1. Also leading by example in the work itself

Read Vs 17-18

1. Role-modelling benevolence & help for others

Read Vs 19

1. He's not looking for credit or to brag about this, he's simply telling how he set the example

Conclusion

So we too should expect as we prepare to flourish into the kingdom of God, that we'll need to endure hardness

1. **Expect to bear our own burdens**
 - a. Without exception we all have work to do
2. **Expect to be attacked from outside**
 - a. Trust God to show us how to adjust fire
3. **Expect to be attacked from inside**
 - a. Be example to others of endurance & love