



NEHEMIAH: *Chapter 7 & 8*

Week 5 | June Dixon

When the Walls Are Finished, What Comes Next?

The spiritual work begins. The walls have been rebuilt, but Jerusalem still needs to be rebuilt as a people of God.

There are four movements in this lesson. We will look at the **Protection** of the Victory, the **Preservation** of the People, the **Priority** of the Word, and the **Practice** of Worship.

I. GOD'S PROTECTION OVER WHAT HE HAS REBUILT (Nehemiah 7:1-4)

Nehemiah's odd instruction: The gates were not to be opened until the sun was hot (well up) and the doors were to remain shut. The city still needed protection. Nehemiah wanted both physical barriers and human supervision.

Then he appoints Hanani and Hananiah to govern over Jerusalem. Notice the reason given for Hananiah: He was "a man of integrity who feared God more than most people do." Nehemiah wasn't looking for someone who was simply capable, experienced, or influential. He wanted someone whose life was governed by reverence for God as was reflected in the way that he lived. A person who fears God is concerned about: God's standards, God's reputation, God's people, God's commands, and God's approval rather than simply protecting his own position.

Biblical fear includes reverence, awe, respect, submission, recognizing God's holiness and authority, and wanting to please Him. It gives us a proper view of who God is, which then changes how we respond to sin, obedience, temptation, responsibility, and decisions. Instead of "Does what I am doing seem ok to me?", it's "am I pleasing God in what I am doing"? So Hananiah wasn't merely a man who believed in God; he was a man who took God seriously. What better leader could Nehemiah have looked for?

II. PRESERVATION OF THE PEOPLE (Nehemiah 7:5-73)

A Finished Wall Doesn't Mean a Finished Work-- In the second section of our study today, (Nehemiah 7:5–73), Nehemiah deals with— Remembering who belongs to God's people. God knows His covenant people, and He has not forgotten them.

The Bible repeatedly emphasizes that God knows those who belong to Him. Jesus said in John 10:14: "I know my own sheep, and they know me." And in John 10:27–28: "His sheep hear His voice, He knows them, and He gives them eternal life". What comfort do you find in knowing that God knows His people individually? A key point here: We are called to remember our identity and responsibilities as God's people.

III. PRIORITY OF THE WORD (Nehemiah 8:1-12)

As we transition into chapter 8, we are going to first see the people gather around the word.

The people have: rebuilt the wall, restored the gates, established leadership, and organized the community; But something is still desperately needed. They need God's Word. And this is where chapter 8 becomes the heart of this lesson.

The people listened attentively--for hours. That should make us stop and think. What does our response to God's Word reveal about our spiritual hunger? Is God's word a priority in our lives? Our appetite for Scripture is one indication of our desire to know God. That doesn't mean a Christian will always feel hungry for Scripture. There are seasons when we are tired, distracted, discouraged, or spiritually dry. But God's Word remains necessary even when our feelings aren't cooperating.

First, we saw the people gather around. Second, we see the word explained.

Notice four things: They read God's Word; They explained God's Word; and then they helped people understand God's Word. That is essentially what Bible teaching should do. Not merely: "Here is what I think." But "Here is what God's Word says, here is what it means, and here is how we should respond." Then, fourth we see that the word produced conviction. Nehemiah 8:9–12 — joy, obedience, and worship. The people wept.

But then something surprising happens. Nehemiah tells them: Don't weep. Instead, they are told to celebrate. Why? Because this day was holy. And then comes that tremendous statement: "Don't be dejected and sad, for the joy of the LORD is your strength!" (v10)

Nehemiah says: THE JOY OF THE LORD IS YOUR STRENGTH. This deserves special emphasis. Nehemiah doesn't say: "Your circumstances are your strength." Or "Your

accomplishments are your strength.” Or “Your ability to control yourself is your strength.” He says: The joy of the LORD is your strength.” Christian strength ultimately comes from God. That’s especially important when we’re confronted with our own weakness.

IV. PRACTICE OF WORSHIP (Nehemiah 8:13-18)

The people discovered something they had neglected.

On the second day, Oct 9, the leaders gathered again with Ezra to study the Law. They discovered instructions concerning the Festival of Shelters/Booths. And then they obeyed. This gives us another important principle: Knowing God’s Word should lead to doing God’s Word.

James 1:22 says: “Don’t just listen to God’s word. You must do what it says.” The people didn’t merely say: “That’s interesting.” They said, essentially: “God said it. Let’s obey it.”

The people Heard God’s Word, they Understood God’s Word, they were convicted by God’s Word, they Obeyed God’s Word and ultimately, they Experienced joy. That is a wonderful picture of healthy Christian discipleship.

WEEK 5

NEHEMIAH:

Chapters 7 & 8

DON'T BE DEJECTED AND SAD, FOR THE JOY OF THE LORD
IS YOUR STRENGTH!

Nehemiah 8:10 NLT



Day One

NEHEMIAH 7

The Protection of the Victory



GROUNDWORK |

PRAY | *Begin your time of study with prayer.*

Ask the Lord to quiet your heart and invite the Holy Spirit to guide you as you study God's Word.

READ | *Read the following text for your time of study.*

Nehemiah 7:1-4

Write down any key verse(s):

OBSERVE | *Observe what the passage says.*

Some questions to consider as you make observations are—

- What is the main Idea?

- Are there any repeated words or phrases?

- Why did Nehemiah give such specific instructions about the gate?

- Why wasn't finishing the wall enough?

Write down what you observe from the text:

APPLY | *Apply it to your life.*

Some questions to consider as you make applications are—

- What does this passage teach us about God or His character?

- What does this passage teach about man and how does it apply to my life today?

- Are there any areas in my life that this text particularly applies to? If so, how?

- What is God speaking to me after reading this passage of Scripture?

- What changes do I need to make after reading this passage of Scripture?

Write down anything the Lord reveals to you from the truth of His Word:



BUILDING BLOCK |

What is the one truth you want to remember from today's reading of Chapter 7:1-14?



FIRM FOUNDATION |

Spend a few moments in prayer before the Lord. If there was a verse from the passage that spoke to you, pray that verse back to the Lord. Ask Him to specifically recall to your heart and mind anything you just read that He wants to teach you. Write anything He reveals to you below:



Day Two

NEHEMIAH 7

The Preservation of the People



GROUNDWORK |

PRAY | *Begin your time of study with prayer.*

Ask the Lord to quiet your heart and invite the Holy Spirit to guide you as you study God's Word.

READ | *Read the following text for your time of study.*

Nehemiah 7:5-73

Write down any key verse(s):

OBSERVE | *Observe what the passage says.*

Some questions to consider as you make observations are—

- What is the main idea in these verses?

- Are there any repeated words or phrases?

- Why do you think Nehemiah refers to God as my God in verse 5?

- How do you think Barzillai felt when he was told he could not minister as a priest and why was he told this?

- Are the people in verse 3 fearful or watchful? What was the difference?

Write down what you observe from the text:

APPLY | *Apply it to your life.*

Some questions to consider as you make applications are—

- What does this passage teach us about God or His character?

- What does this passage teach about man and how does it apply to my life today? In our Christian lives, how can we remain alert (perhaps to temptation) without becoming preoccupied with it?

- Are there any areas in my life that this text particularly applies to? If so, how?

- What is God speaking to me after reading this passage of Scripture?

- What changes do I need to make after reading this passage of Scripture?

Write down anything the Lord reveals to you from the truth of His Word:



BUILDING BLOCK |

What is the one truth you want to remember from today's reading of Chapter 7:4-73?



FIRM FOUNDATION |

Spend a few moments in prayer before the Lord. If there was a verse from the passage that spoke to you, pray that verse back to the Lord. Ask Him to specifically recall to your heart and mind anything you just read that He wants to teach you.



Day Three

NEHEMIAH 8

The Priority of the Word



GROUNDWORK |

PRAY | *Begin your time of study with prayer.*

Ask the Lord to quiet your heart and invite the Holy Spirit to guide you as you study God's Word.

READ | *Read the following text for your time of study.*

Nehemiah 8:1--11

Write down any key verse(s) that speak to you:

OBSERVE | *Observe what the passage says.*

Some questions to consider as you make observations are—

- What is the main idea of this passage?

- Are there any repeated words or phrases?

- Why do the people ask Ezra to bring out the book of the law?

- In verse six, what followed the hearing of the word?

Write down what you observe from the text:

APPLY | *Apply it to your life.*

Some questions to consider as you make applications are—

- What does this passage teach us about God or His character?

- What does this passage teach about listening to people, and how does it apply to my life today?

- Are there any areas in my life that this text particularly applies to? If so, how?

- What changes do I need to make after reading this passage of Scripture?

Write down anything the Lord reveals to you from the truth of His Word:



BUILDING BLOCK |

What is the one truth you want to remember from today's reading?



FIRM FOUNDATION |

Spend a few moments in prayer to the Lord. If there was a verse from the passage that spoke to you, pray that verse back to the Lord. Ask Him to specifically recall to your heart and mind anything you just read that He wants to teach you. Write anything He reveals to you below:



Day Four

NEHEMIAH 8 The Practice of Worship



GROUNDWORK |

PRAY | *Begin your time of study with prayer.*

Ask the Lord to quiet your heart and invite the Holy Spirit to guide you as you study God's Word.

READ | *Read the following text for your time of study.*

Nehemiah 8:13-18

What key words do you see?

OBSERVE | *Observe what the passage says.*

Some questions to consider as you make observations are—

- What is the main idea of this passage? Why did the leaders return the next day to study God's Word more carefully?

- What did the people discover that they had neglected?

- Why do you think the people did not keep the discovery to themselves? The people announced the instructions throughout their towns.

- The people went out and built shelters in verse 16. What does their response teach us about the relationship between hearing God's Word and obeying it?

Write down what you observe from the text:

APPLY | *Apply it to your life.*

Some questions to consider as you make applications are—

- What does their desire to understand God's word teach us about spiritual growth in verses 13 and following?

- How can we be familiar with the Bible and still overlook something God wants us to practice?

- When God's Word teaches us something important, how can we encourage others without becoming judgmental or acting as though we are spiritually superior?

- Why is it sometimes easier to agree with a biblical teaching than to put it into practice?

- Why is it important for Christians to remember what God has done for us, especially when life becomes difficult?

- What is one way we can intentionally remember God's faithfulness during the week?

Write down anything the Lord reveals to you from the truth of His Word:



BUILDING BLOCK |

What is the one truth you want to remember from today's reading?



FIRM FOUNDATION |

Spend a few moments in prayer before the Lord. If this verse spoke to you, pray that verse back to the Lord. Ask Him to specifically recall to your heart and mind anything you just read that He wants to teach you. Write anything He reveals to you below:
