Nehemiah Intro

Nehemiah 1:1-4

1. Intro
   1. Nehemiah is a great character from Biblical history
   2. He was not a priest, or exceptional sin his life
   3. But God had a big plan for him.
   4. Nehemiah was prompted to build the wall:
      1. Because God awakens him to become aware of the need
      2. Because the city was in trouble and shame
      3. God needed leaders to step up!
   5. Key Verse: Nehemiah 2:8
   6. Theme: Pray and Act
      1. Be willing to see the need, and be a part of the fix
      2. Be a part of God’s action plan, the greatest adventure of our lives!
   7. In our study, we will see the great leadership of Nehemiah, but that is not the point
   8. We will see the great God of the Bible doing His work through ordinary people!
   9. Last week we finished 2 Corinthians:
      1. **God did not give you HIS SPIRIT just to be a tag along accessory to your preplanned life.**
      2. **God Gave you HIS SPIRIT to overwhelm your SELF, so that SELF does not interfere with the power and work of God in your life!**
   10. We see this truth lived out in the life of Nehemiah.
2. Text
   1. Setting:
      1. Babylonian captivity
      2. 13 years after Ezra
      3. Probably around 425 bc the writing of the book would have been completed
      4. The Temple is now complete
   2. Verse 1:
      1. Nehemiah’s name: The Lord Comforts
      2. The 20th year: the 20th year of the rule of Artaxerxes
      3. The words of Nehemiah: presumed writer, but could have been written by Ezra using the memoirs of Nehemiah, silicate in style to Ezra.
      4. Written from the capital of the Persian empire in modern day Iran.
      5. Month of Chislev: November and December on the Gregorian calendar
   3. Verse 2:
      1. Hanani: Jewish brother, not necessarily brother in the sense that they had the same mother.
      2. Nehemiah seeks news from the promised land
   4. Verse 3:
      1. The report: Remnant remaining in Jerusalem is in great trouble and shame
      2. Trouble: they are in a desperate way, without protection
      3. Shame: The city did not reflect the Glory of God as it was intended.
         1. The city was a symbol
         2. The temple was rebuilt 13 years before, but there was a mix of joy and sorrow
         3. The question is why?

Ezra 3:10And when the builders laid the foundation of the temple of the LORD, the priests in their vestments came forward with trumpets, and the Levites, the sons of Asaph, with cymbals, to praise the LORD, according to the directions of David king of Israel. 11And they sang responsively, praising and giving thanks to the LORD,

“For he is good,

for his steadfast love endures forever toward Israel.”

And all the people shouted with a great shout when they praised the LORD, because the foundation of the house of the LORD was laid. 12But many of the priests and Levites and heads of fathers’ houses, old men who had seen the first house, wept with a loud voice when they saw the foundation of this house being laid, though many shouted aloud for joy, 13so that the people could not distinguish the sound of the joyful shout from the sound of the people’s weeping, for the people shouted with a great shout, and the sound was heard far away.

Ezra 6:16 16 And the people of Israel, the priests and the Levites, and the rest of the returned exiles, celebrated the dedication of this house of God with joy.

* + 1. The wall is broken down, The gates destroyed: current recognition of the situation
  1. Verse 4: The response:
     1. Nehemiah wept and mourned
     2. He was in great distress, but why now?
     3. As he became aware, He felt the beginnings of a responsibility that was placed on him.

1. Points
   1. Becoming Aware of a Situation
      1. So much had been accomplished, but more was to be done
      2. The Second Temple was completed, but all was not complete
      3. Celebrate the Good things that God has done! And recognize there is more to do.
      4. GOD HAD A PLAN: time and testimony
         1. Gods timing is always perfect
         2. And His plan will build the testimony
      5. Educate yourself on the situations around you.
      6. Situational awareness is important if we are going to awaken the direction of God in our ministry:
         1. It is hard to have situational awareness while staring at a phone screen.
         2. It is also impossible to have ministry situational awareness without being involved in the ministry.
   2. Becoming Aware in your Spirit
      1. Nehemiah had lived in the opulence and luxury of the house of Artaxerxes, but had to be aware that something was not right in Jerusalem
      2. Why now? Why was he broken and weeping now?
      3. God awakens His plan in you at the time of His choosing.
         1. Nehemiah was grieved
         2. Not because of a new turn of events, but because it was time!
         3. God’s time is all we need to focus on.
      4. Could Nehemiah have been blinded by the comfortable position he was in? It’s possible
         1. What can we learn from that?
         2. God can get our attention!
   3. Becoming Aware of a Calling
      1. Leadership is a calling that cannot be ignored
      2. Action requires bravery and humility
      3. The calling of God is sometimes appears heavy
      4. Jesus said, “My burden is light.”
      5. We are not meant to accomplish this in our own strength, but in the power of God alive in us.
      6. We see the gospel in this!
         1. Nehemiah saw the wall as a protection and a testimony
         2. The wall was symbolic, but important in the completion of the temple
         3. You are the temple, and you need walls of protection
         4. The center of it is the gospel!
2. Close
   1. The gospel illustration in Nehemiah:
      1. Nehemiah saw the wall as a protection and a testimony
      2. The wall was symbolic, but important in the completion of the temple
      3. You are the temple, and you need walls of protection
      4. The center of it is the gospel!
   2. The wall was built:
      1. In 52 days
      2. In a way that included God’s intervention and hard work
      3. They trusted and served
      4. They prayed and worked
      5. They didn’t rest until it was complete

Nehemiah 1

1The words of *[a](https://www.esv.org/Neh10.1)*Nehemiah the son of Hacaliah.

Now it happened in the month of *[b](https://www.esv.org/Zc7.1)*Chislev, *[c](https://www.esv.org/Neh2.1)*in the twentieth year, as I was in *[d](https://www.esv.org/Es1.2%3BEs1.5%3BEs2.3%3BEs2.5)*Susa the citadel,

2 that *[e](https://www.esv.org/Neh7.2)*Hanani, one of my brothers, came with certain men from Judah. And I asked them concerning the Jews who escaped, who had survived the exile, and concerning Jerusalem.

3And they said to me, “The remnant there in the province who had survived the exile is in great trouble and *[f](https://www.esv.org/Neh2.17)*shame. *[g](https://www.esv.org/Neh2.13%3B2K25.10)*The wall of Jerusalem is broken down, *[h](https://www.esv.org/Neh2.3%3BNeh2.13%3BNeh2.17)*and its gates are destroyed by fire.”

4As soon as I heard these words I *[i](https://www.esv.org/Ezr9.3)*sat down and wept and mourned for days, and I continued fasting and praying before the *[j](https://www.esv.org/Neh2.4)*God of heaven.