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## NOTES TO THE LEADERS

This study guide is meant for both individual and group use. To get the most of it as a group, the leader needs to adequately prepare before the study time. Below are a few hints on how to lead a Bible Study.

### BEFORE THE MEETING

1. Study the passage prayerfully until God speaks to you through it.
2. Go through the questions and study to learn what God may be saying to you personally and to the group. In this guide, you will find three types of questions.

Observations of facts from the passage.

Interpretation – Questions of meaning or understanding of facts

Application – Questions for personal or group application of the facts.

3. Pray for both the study and each included in your group.

### DURING MEETING.

- i. Create a free and cheerful atmosphere where each member feels free to participate.
- ii. Have the passage read aloud by one or more members.
- iii. Make a brief introduction to the study.

(One is included at the beginning of each study).

- iv. Proceed with the questions. Be flexible. Rephrase questions if need be, but keep discussion centered on the passage. Strict to the Bible as your authority.
- v. Watch the time so that you cover the study adequately and have time for prayer and sharing.
- vi. Aim at each member leaving the study with at least one specific application.
- vii. Encourage members to prepare individually for the next study.

### AFTER THE MEETING.

1. Be sensitive to any needs of members that should be attended to and make any necessary follow up.

2. Encourage members to meet each other informally during the week and to share their experiences.

## SCRIPTURE MEMORY

Encourage members to memorize the verse(s) given at the end of each study during the week. Check one another at the next group meeting.

### NOTE.

This study is based on the new International version of the Bible.

The actual wordings of various verses may vary depending on which version of the Bible you are using. This however should not affect the benefit from the studies.

## NOTES TO THE MEMBERS.

“The whole body which is joined and held together by every supporting ligament, grows and builds itself up in love, when each part does its work. “Ephesians 4:16.

For our small group to grow and build itself up each member must do his part. Here are some suggestions.

### 1. Prepare

#### a) The group study.

Going through the study questions before hand will lead you into a deeper personal discovery of truth. This will help you relate God’s word more to your life’ It will also help you be a better participant rather than a spectator during the group discussions.

#### b) Daily Quiet times

Your own personal walk with the Lord will greatly affect the group. Meeting Jesus daily will make you a better group member.

c) Your Hearty.

The group study may be exciting or boring depending on your attitude. Always come with an expectant and joyful spirit.

2. Participate.

(a) In the Discussion.

Each members discoveries are important. (Corinthians 12:12-30). If you are shy, take courage to speak. If you are talkative, let others speak first.

(b) In the groups activated.

The small group includes more than Bible study. It also includes prayer, Fellowship and witness. Do your part to encourage each other.

(c) With one other member.

Try to get to know one other member well, perhaps as a prayer partner.

3. Pray

Above all else, pray for your group, your leader, and yourself that together you will grow to maturity in Christ. (Ephesians 4: 11-13).

## **PREFACE**

Nehemiah - REBUILDER FOR THE LORD.

### **A BOOK OF COMFORT**

Nehemiah means, "God has comforted" And surely this book is a book of comfort.

For 70 years, the walls of Jerusalem had lain in ruin and disrepair and the people of Israel had been exiled in Captivity, Punished for the sins they had committed. But now, God brings back to Jerusalem, strengthens their hands for the work, and restores Jerusalem and its people to what God had intended. Many times, we find ourselves in similar situations. We look around and everything had fallen apart.

What once was beautiful is now ugly. What once was useful is now useless. Surely, we long to see what is in ruins rebuilt and restore. As you study Nehemiah, allow God to comfort all things now again. Allow him to restore, strengthen and establish you as he did for Nehemiah.

## A BOOK OF CHALLENGE

In Nehemiah, we see not only a person, whom God has comforted, but also a servant of God and a leader of people.

In (Part 1) of this study, series (studies) 1-6). Nehemiah “ rebuilds the walls of Jerusalem “ in the midst of ridicule, threats, opposition, internal strife and corruption, Nehemiah leads his people fearlessly to carry on with the work God has given them. He mobilizes them, rallies and encourages them, helps and prays for them until the walls are rebuilt. When we are called to do a difficult and demanding task, let us remember Nehemiah’s leadership and carry out task as he did.

((PART 11) STUDIES 7-10). Finds Nehemiah not just rebuilding the walls, but also even rebuilding the people of Jerusalem.

They have been refugees in exile and captivity for 70 years and the people had many spiritual, physical and emotional needs. Nehemiah longs to see the people restored. We have these small crying needs in our world today where nearly every country faces the problem of refugees. Even in our churches, we have people who need to be built up in the Lord. It is not enough to build buildings or programs. We need to build people.

As you study the last part of Nehemiah, consider how you can be a leader in the task of rebuilding people for the glory of God.

### **1. CALLED TO THE WORK**

**Nehemiah 1-2:8.**

#### INTRODUCTION.

There is a flood of refugees in many countries of the world today. Imagine yourself to be one of these refugees. You hear reports of your home country’s political and economic struggles. What different reactions would this news arouse in you? Nehemiah found

himself in similar situations. For 70 yrs in the Jews had been in captivity. Some in Babylon like Daniel and Nehemiah. However, there was a remnant that remained in Jerusalem. Let us learn how Nehemiah is called to the task of rebuilding the walls of Jerusalem.

## STUDY

Understanding the work Neh. 1:1-4.

1. What kind of report did Nehemiah receive about Jerusalem and how did he respond?
2. Why would this report necessitate such a response from him?
3. Suppose you were in Nehemiah's situation, how would you have responded and why?

Entrusted it to God. Neh. 1:5-11.

4. Describe the different aspects of Nehemiah's prayer
5. Why is each part of his prayer so important?
6. How does this prayer challenge us for that time when we hear bad news?

Talking the opportunity Neh. 2:1-8

7. How did Nehemiah approach the King and what was the result?
8. Twice in this portion (vs. 5,7). Nehemiah uses the phrase "if it please the King ....." What attitude towards authority does this suggest?
9. How does Nehemiah's example challenge our attitude towards authority?

## MEMORY VERSE.

"With this in mind, we constantly pray for you, that our God may count you worthy of his calling, and that by his power he may fulfill every good purpose of yours and every act prompted by your faith". (2 Thessalonians 1:11).

## 2. PREPARATION FOR THE WORK

Nehemiah 2:9-20.

### INTRODUCTION.

When you are given a different task to do, why is it so important to make proper preparations before you actually begin to do the work? Let us see how Nehemiah prepared for the difficult task of rebuilding the walls of Jerusalem.

### STUDY

Expect opposition. Nehemiah 2: 9-10.

1. When Nehemiah arrived in Jerusalem with the King's letter to the governors, what was the reaction of Sanballat and Tobiah?
2. Given that this was the very beginning of Nehemiah's mission, how could such a reaction easily discourage him?
3. Have you been discouraged by others at the onset of a difficult task? Knowing that we are fighting a spiritual battle, how should you prepare for the expected opposition from the enemy?

ASSESS THE TASK Nehemiah 2:11-16.

4. What strategy did Nehemiah use to evaluate the extent of the task?
5. What is significant about the time, method and people involved in this evaluation stage?
6. Unfinished projects tend to characterize our society today. What lessons have you learnt from Nehemiah's life concerning assessing the task before embarking on it ?

Mobilize support Neh. 2:17-20.

7. After evaluating the damage, what different challenges does Nehemiah give to the

- People to rally them for the task ahead?. What challenges did he face ?.
8. Why would each of these challenges be so effective ?.
  9. What quality of leadership do you notice in Nehemiah with respect to;
    - (a) Involving others in the task ?.
    - (b) Responding to ridicule (19-20) ?.
    - (c) How have you exercised such qualities?.

#### MEMORY VERSE

“Yet the Lord longs to be gracious to you, he rises to show you compassion. For the Lord is a God of Justice. Blessed are all those wait for him”. (Isaiah 30;18).

### **3. DIVISION OF THE WORK.**

**(NEHEMIAH 3:1-32).**

#### INTRODUCTION

Think a minute of all the work that your Christian Fellowship needs or wants to do. Now consider how many people are actually doing the work. QUESTION. Why is it so difficult to involve everybody to help with the work? Why doesn't everyone participate?. Let us prepare ourselves to receive a challenge from the example of team work in this Chapter. Could we be like Nehemiah and the people of Jerusalem?

#### STUDY

The task specified.

1. what observation do you make about the division of work in terms of individuals involved and the different tasks assigned to them/

2. What kind of planning must have been involved for Nehemiah to organize sub-task specifications?
3. What improvement do you need to make as per as specifying tasks is involved when delegating duties?

The magnitude apportioned

4. What criteria did Nehemiah use to assign the amount of work to various people according to the following versions?
  - i. Vs 1, 8, 12, 17, 32.
  - ii. Vs 21, 23 -24, 26, 28-30
  - iii. Vs 2, 5, 7, 27
5. The phrase “next to him”, “next to them”, “next to that”, are used about 28 times in the chapter. What do you think was significance of this pattern?
6. How can we create such a team spirit in our fellowships to ensure that every person is involved and no one is overworked?

Special talents identified (8-19; 22; 31-32)

7. What special categories of people are mentioned in these passages?
8. Why do you think Nehemiah needed to involve such categories of people in the rebuilding of his walls?
9. What have you observed as the reasons of some peoples talents, gifts and skills not being used in your fellowship / church?
10. What are you going to do about it?

#### MEMORY VERSE

“Each one should use whatever gift he/she has received to serve others, faithfully administering Gods’ grace in its various forms”

#### **4. EXTERNAL OPPOSITION**

Nehemiah 4: 1-23

#### INTRODUCTION

What examples of ridicule have you experienced as you worked on different projects? Ridicule can be so disheartening and how you respond to it can determine the outcome and success of your project. Let us try to identify with Nehemiah as he faces so much ridicule and opposition and let us discover how he stands up against it.

## STUDY

### **Opposition by ridicule 4: 1-6**

1. How did Sahballat and Tobiah ridicule the Jews and what was their response?
2. To what extent were the Jews affected by this kind of opposition?
3. Imagine yourself as one of the Jews working hard on this wall. How could Sahballot's and Tobia's ridicule affect you? How does the response of Nehemiah and the people encourage you?

### Opposition by conspiracy 4: 7-15

4. Describe the new strategy used in the opposition and its effects on some of the Jews. How did Nehemiah and his people finally respond?
5. What is the significance of vs 14?
6. What important principles do you learn from this passage about how to effectively face opposition?

### United they stood 4: 16-23

7. What measures did Nehemiah take to effectively resist the opposition? What were the results?
8. Why would each one of these measures be important?
9. (i) What oppositions are you currently facing in the work of God?  
  
(ii) What measures can you take to resist that opposition and carry on with the work?

## MEMORY VERSE

“For our struggle is not against flesh and blood, but against the rulers, against the authorities, against the powers of dark world and against spiritual forces of evil in the heavenly realms”  
(Ephesians 6:12)

## 5. INTERNAL OPPOSITION

### INTRODUCTION

When people work diligently together on a demanding or difficult project, what types of internal problems commonly arise? What kinds of complaints are often voiced? What might be some of the reasons for such internal strife and tension? Let us consider together how Nehemiah sought to resolve such internal problems in their work of rebuilding the walls of Jerusalem and let us be eager to follow his example.

### STUDY

The crisis revealed

1. What were the complaints of the people?
2. Do you think these complaints were genuine? How could you contribute in opposing the work?
3. (i) What kinds of complaints have you heard from any member of your fellowship/ church?  
  
(ii) Whether genuine or not, how does a grumbling or complaining heart affect team spirit in your church / fellowship?

Corrective measures taken 5: 14-19

4. What was Nehemiah's approach in handling of the crisis and what impact did it have?
5. Why was his approach so effective?
6. From Nehemiah's example, how might we best resolve some of the crisis in our churches?

Leading by example 5: 14-19

7. Compare and contrast the leadership styles of Nehemiah and all the other governors.
8. How do you think Nehemiah maintained his integrity as a leader inspite of corrupt predecessors?
9. What specific action can we take as leaders to serve our people and help them finish a task rather than load it over them and cause them to lose heart?

#### MEMORY VERSE

“Bear with each other and forgive whatever grievances you may have against one another. Forgive as the Lord forgave you”.

(Colossians 3: 13)

#### 6. FINISHING THE WORK

Nehemiah 6: 1-19

#### INTRODUCTION

Our Christian fellowship/ churches have set a number of goals for ourselves this year. Perhaps as individuals, we have done the same. What difficulties are we facing in actually reaching these goals? Why is it so hard to finish a job once we have stated it? Let us compare notes with Nehemiah.

#### STUDY

By resisting malice 6:1-9

1. How did Nehemiah respond to people and the methods used to oppose him?
2. Why would these people resort to attacking Nehemiah as a person?

3. (i) What quality of Nehemiah's character impress you in the light of what he was facing?
- (ii) How would you put it into practice?

#### Withstanding false prophets 6: 10-14

4. What further traps were laid against Nehemiah and how did he overcome them?
5. What is the significance of vs. 12-13?
6. Remaining sensitive and obedient to God's spirit especially so in the midst of problems or trials. What can we do to maintain sensitivity and obedience in God's spirit in our Christian walk?

#### Final triumph 6: 15-19

7. When the work was finished how did the enemy perceive the success of the project and why?
8. What might have caused Nehemiah's enemies to realize God's involvement in the work?
9. (i) What tasks do we have that we can define as "great" and need to be finished and what problems are likely to divert us from finishing them?
- (ii) What can we learn from Nehemiah's life that can help us finish the tasks?

#### MEMORY VERSE

"However I consider my life worth nothing to me, if only I may finish the race and complete the task the Lord Jesus has given me, the task of testifying to the Gospel of God's grace".

(Acts 20:24)

#### **7. A RETURN TO FELLOWSHIP**

Nehemiah 7:1-5; 7:73-8:18

## INTRODUCTION

When people give of themselves, so much to complete a project, when the project is finished so are the people one sees this often with church buildings. When the building is finally completed after years of hard work, the people are too tired to do the even greater work of now filling the new building with people. Though Nehemiah has now completed rebuilding the walls of Jerusalem (part I, studies 1-6), he now sets out to rebuild the people themselves. (Part II, studies 7-10). Let us learn well from his example.

## STUDY

By serving others 7: 1-5

1. What kinds of duties were specified to specific people and for what reasons?
2. Why do you think Nehemiah appointed these people for the above tasks at this point in time?
3. Sometimes after the completion of a major project, the tendency is to rest, relax and rejoice. What significant lessons does Nehemiah's apparent contrary action teach you?

Through public exposition of Scripture 7: 73- 8:12

4. What steps did Nehemiah and Ezra take to re-introduce scripture to the people and what was the impact?
5. What is the significance each of the steps outlined in vs. 7-8?
6. How can your fellowship/ church and as an individual be helped to better understand God's word so that you can do what it says?

In co-operate celebration 8:13-18

7. What was the origin characteristics and motives of this celebration?
8. Of what significance is vs. 14 and 15 as far as celebration of this feast is concerned?
9. (i) Vs. 17 says that Israel had not rejoiced like this since the days of Joshua (800 years)! What is the danger of ignoring God's word (or part of it) for so long?

(ii) What can you do in your fellowship/ church to avoid this?

#### MEMORY VERSE

“The ordinances of the Lord are sure and altogether righteous. They are more precious than gold; than much pure gold; they are much sweeter than honey, than honey from the comb”.

(Psalm 19: 9 10)

### **8. REDEDICATING THE PEOPLE**

Nehemiah 9: 1-10, 39

#### INTRODUCTION

As you think back over your life, recalling God’s commitment to him, how would you describe that relationship? What would be the highlights of God’s activity/ of your activity? To what extent would you be moved to praise and confess?

Ezra led the people of Israel into several hours of prayers recalling Gods activity and theirs since creation and the days of Abraham. Let us study this prayer of praise and confession and be moved to prayer ourselves.

#### STUDY

As perquisites for commitment 9: 1-37

1. Describe the nature and contents of Ezra’s prayer.
2. Why was confession the major emphasis in Nehemiah’s prayer?
3. In what ways do we neglect God’s holiness or His money in our walk with Him?

A sign of commitment 9: 38 – 10: 27

4. What categories of people sealed the covenant on behalf of everyone and for what reasons?
5. Why do you think these particular people were considered significant in the sealing of the covenant? Of what importance was it to seal the rededication covenant?
6. (i) How can you ensure that your commitment to the Lord is both firm and real?  
  
(ii) What adjustments do you need to make?

The expectation of commitment 10: 28-39

7. What were the expectations of the people either as individuals or as a nation?
8. What was the value of each of these expectations?
9. How could you plan to practice such commitments to Bible reading which lead to confession, praise and rededication (commitment) to God as:
  - a. A person
  - b. A fellowship /church/ parish/ partnership

#### MEMORY VERSE

“If my people who are called by my name will humble themselves and pray and seek my face and turn from their wicked ways, then I will hear from you heaven and will forgive their sins and will heal their land”.

## **9. ESTABLISHING THE PEOPLE**

NEHEMIAH 11: 1-12:47

#### INTRODUCTION

As we look at these two chapters, we see they are full of names. You may be thinking, “surely we could not find any blessing here”, but wait these two chapters are much apart

of God's word as all the other chapters of Nehemiah. So let us look for God's blessing even in this unlikely place.

## STUDY

### Re-establishing families and human homes

1. Describe how and where the various categories of people were settled.
2. What is the significance of actually listing names of specific people or (families) that settle in Jerusalem and other surrounding towns and villages?
3. (i) What does this say about God's interest in each individual and group in our churches?  
  
(ii) How are individuals and families important in building up the body of Jesus Christ?

### Restoring co-operate worship 12: 27-43

4. How were various groups of people and individuals involved in the preparation and dedication of the walls of Jerusalem?
5. Why was each of these stages important?
6. Apart from just working together, the Israelites also had time to worship God as a group in praise and thanksgiving. How can we improve our co-operate worship sessions as congregations

### Re-instituting giving as worship 12: 44-47

7. When giving was re-instituted, what were the methods, standards, frequency and motives for it?
8. Why do you think it was timely to re-introduce those virtues among the Israelites?
9. (i) Read 12:47 again. To what extent have you been faithful in giving of your resources as a form of worship to God?  
  
(ii) List the people (person) or Christian organization you would like to support regularly so that the work of God can continue.

## MEMORY VERSE

“But who am I and who are my people that we should be able to give as generously as this? Everything comes from you and we have given you only what comes from your hand”.

2 chronicles 29:14

## PURIFYING THE PEOPLE

### INTRODUCTION

As we come to our last sturdy, we have witnessed a truly Godly and humble leader and a strong dedicated fellowship. They have rebuilt the walls of Jerusalem in a spirit of togetherness in the midst of great opposition. They have rebuilt their own lives in a spirit of humility and obedience. However, as so often happens, corruption creeps in. let us watch Nehemiah faithfully keep on working to see his people pure and clean. May we do the same.

### STUDY

Remember the covenant 13: 4 -9; 15 – 22

1. What was the evil committed by the following people and what radical steps did Nehemiah take?
  - (i) Elishiab and Tobiah (vs. 4 – 9)
  - (ii) The men of Judah (vs. 15 – 22)
2. Remember that earlier on the people had made a covenant with God. Why was each of these practices so demanding?
3. (i) In what areas of your life have you acted as these people?
  - a. As an individual
  - b. As a church/ parish/ presbytery

(ii) How do you hope to be different?

Fulfill your responsibility 13: 10 -14; 23 - 31

4. (a) What mistakes were committed by the priests, Levites and the people of Judah as a whole?  
  
(b) What changes did Nehemiah introduce to correct the situation?
5. What is the significance of vs. 10, 11?
6. (a) Responsibility and Trustworthiness go together in any form of service. To what extent can you be counted as a responsible and trustworthy servant?  
  
(b) What help do you require?

Re- examine your relationships 13; 1-3, 23 - 29

7. Describe the wrong relationships and their consequences referred to in these passages. How did Nehemiah handle them?
8. Vs. 25 – 27, describe Nehemiah’s reaction to these practices. Would you consider his response as balanced or not? Why?
9. (a) One of the sins that had led many “giants” of faith to fall is sexual sin. What are some of the wrong relationships taking lace in our churches that may lead to such?  
  
(b) What radical step would you take to correct the situation?

MEMORY VERSE

“Create in me a pure heart, Oh God, and renew a steadfast spirit within me. Do not cast me from your presence or take your holly Spirit from me”.

Psalms 51: 10 – 11