

BOOK-A-MONTH CLUB

~ July ~

Nehemiah with C.D. Davis

The book of Nehemiah is an exciting book to read and study! As we read, we learn the importance of prayer, planning and cooperation when we are doing God's work. We also learn how to handle those who would try to keep us from doing the will of God. Charles Swindoll, an excellent writer with great insight to what is going on, says that the Book of Nehemiah is a book about leadership. If we read carefully about the way in which Nehemiah got a most difficult work done well, and it was done in 52 days, we cannot but agree with him. Much is to be learned about leadership.

As we begin our reading of the book, I would like to just give you some things to be looking for as you read. Have a great month reading a really exciting book!

Chapter 1:

1. Notice the reaction of Nehemiah when he learned of the conditions of Jerusalem. Then read carefully his prayer of confession and request before going to make his request before the king.
2. What was his position before the King?

Chapter 2:

1. What did the king notice about Nehemiah when he came before him that was different than normal?
2. What did Nehemiah do before making his request of the king?
3. Note how God answered Nehemiah's prayer in the answer the king gave him.
4. Make note of the names Sanballat and Tobiah, as they will be a big part of the remainder of the book.
5. Why do you suppose Nehemiah stayed in Jerusalem three days before beginning his work?
6. What did he find on his nocturnal ride around Jerusalem?
7. Now, he was ready to begin his work. How was his request to rebuild the wall received?
8. What did Sanballat and Tobiah do? Notice Nehemiah's answer to them.

Chapter 3:

This can be the most boring of the chapters in this book. However, if you will pay close attention to the ones who were doing the work (some of them neighbors; the positions some of them held; the number of professions that these people held etc.), it becomes much more interesting. Try drawing a circle representing the wall. And then write down the people and where they worked on the wall. They all had a common aim – to rebuild the wall, so none of these differences were of importance to them. Also note that the wall (for the most part) went from the ground up simultaneously, as each group or family did its work. Sanballat and Tobiah were not unaware that these things took place.

Chapter 4:

1. When Sanballat heard about the wall, what affect did it have on him?
2. Nehemiah prayed. Look closely at the content of his prayer.
3. They did not stop their building, and soon one-half of the height of the wall was rebuilt. How were the people working? What does this say about the way we should serve today?
4. What was the next threat of Sanballat and Tobiah? How did they set up to be ready for the fight if it came, and yet be ready to do their work building the wall?

Chapter 5:

In what areas of their lives were the poor asking for help? To whom did Nehemiah address the things that needed to be done to solve the problem of the poor?

Chapter 6:

1. Sanballat, upon learning the walls were so near finished, asked Nehemiah to come meet with them to discuss the matter. What answer did Nehemiah send to him? After this happened 4 times, Nehemiah prayed to God. Note carefully what he included in his prayer.
2. FIFTY-TWO DAYS!!!!!!! (verse 15) When we see projects being done around us today, with the latest in building equipment, etc. how many things do we see finished in this period of time, especially if it is a major task like the building of these walls? Why was it possible for this to happen?

Chapter 7:

The gates are kept locked and guards are set. Then a list of exiles is given who returned.

Chapter 8:

The people gathered at the square before the Water Gate, and told Ezra to bring out the book of the Law of Moses. Ezra stood on a high wooden platform which was built for the occasion. I'm going to pose a series of questions to help you get the most out of this chapter, and ask you to make application of these to our worship today.

1. What did the people do when Ezra began to read?
2. What did the Levites do?
3. What kind of day did they proclaim it to be?
4. How were the people to act because of this?
5. What did Nehemiah say was the strength of the people?
6. Why did the people get limbs and make booths for them to live in?

Chapter 9:

Read carefully verses 2-6 and note what the Israelites did. Then, read through verse 37, as the history of the children of Israel is given. Count the number of times Israel turned back to her evil ways. Note the attributes of God that are shown to the Israelites during this time. In verse 38, note their reaction.

Chapter 10:

In verses 1-27, note those who set their seals to the binding agreement. Yet, this is not the whole story. The rest of the chapter contains the rest of the story, as it talks about what the rest of the people are going to do. Now, underline the last sentence of the chapter: "**We will not neglect the house of our God.**" Will you join me in tasking this oath for the church today? Truly, this is a challenging chapter for us all!

Chapters 11 and 12:

What an exciting and memorable time for the children of Israel! They all came to Jerusalem and joined in this dedication. Read slowly and carefully all that went into the dedication of the wall – then imagine yourself being right in the middle of it! Let's learn from this something that celebration and dedication is all about!

Chapter 13:

Meanwhile, Nehemiah had to return to his job as cupbearer for the King. It is amazing how soon the children of Israel, once again left their promises to be faithful to those things which were written in the law. As we read this chapter and see all the things Israel had done, then read how Nehemiah reacted once again by turning the people back to God (please make it a point to read this chapter carefully!) we can understand why he closes the book by beseeching God to "Remember me with favor, O my God."