

king's chapel

Community Group Discussion Guide

Week of March 22, 2015

This Week's Focus: Nehemiah, through the help of God, fends off opposition allowing the completion of the wall.

This Week's Text: Nehemiah 6

"Like Nehemiah, we must learn to evaluate new opportunities in light of God's higher call upon our lives. We need to remember that staying focused means sometimes saying no." **M. Roberts (Commentary on Ezra, Nehemiah, Esther)**

"Therefore, since we are surrounded by so great a cloud of witnesses, let us also lay aside every weight, and sin which clings so closely, and let us run with endurance the race that is set before us, looking to Jesus, the founder and perfecter of our faith, who for the joy that was set before him endured the cross, despising the shame, and is seated at the right hand of the throne of God." **Hebrews 12:1-2**

Related Texts: Nehemiah 4; Matthew 5:14-16; Romans 5:6, 8:35-39

Observations and Questions for Discussion:

- What in the text/sermon was most illuminating or helpful? Why?
- Explain the story that is unfolding in Nehemiah 6.
- According to verses 1-4 why did Sanballat, Tobiah, and Geshem request a meeting with Nehemiah? Rather than oppose the entire community, they focused their efforts directly on Nehemiah. Why do you think they did this?
- Nehemiah discerned Sanballat, Tobiah, and Geshem's intentions and denied their requests to meet. Why did he refuse to meet with them? Why was it important that he remain on task? In other words, what was his perspective regarding the reconstruction of the wall?
- Nehemiah did not allow himself to be deterred. What are some things that typically keep you distracted from Gospel mission? What are some practical ways you can remove these distractions?
- The letters to Nehemiah eventually turned to threats. What was true, what was distorted, and what was outright false about Sanballat, Tobiah, and Geshem's claims?
- How did Nehemiah respond to the threatening statements? Reference verses 8-9.

- Nehemiah was a strong leader who recognized that his strength came from his God. Discuss the need to daily rely on God's divine strength.
- In verses 10-13 we learn that the opposition party hired Shemaiah to deceive Nehemiah. Who was Shemaiah? Why did he try to deceive Nehemiah?
- How was Nehemiah able to discern Shemaiah's intentions? How can we be on-guard against deception?
- The enemy's goal was to induce fear in Nehemiah and in turn, render him and the people of Israel ineffective. When has fear taken you off mission? How can the Gospel reinvigorate us to live on God's mission of world-wide redemption?
- Though Sanballat, Tobiah, Geshem, and Shemaiah are named in this passage, who is the real Enemy? How can we successfully withstand his attacks? Reference Ephesians 6:10-20.
- Despite constant opposition, Israel completed the reconstruction of Jerusalem's walls in 52 days. How were they able to finish this task in such a short amount of time?
- How did the surrounding nations respond to the completion of the wall? Reference verse 16. Compare this to the shame and derision that Israel experienced prior to the rebuilding effort.
- What greater plan of God does the reconstruction of Jerusalem's wall point to? Reference Matthew 5:14-16. What does this teach us about the nature of God? Reference Romans 5:6-11.
- According to verses 17-19, opposition continued even after the walls were completed. What assurance do we have that we can endure in the midst of trials, hardships, opposition and strife? Reference Romans 8:31-39.

Next Week's Text: Nehemiah 7