

"Under Construction"

"Broken Walls"

Lesson 1: Teacher Preparation: Nehemiah 1: 1-3; 4:6-23

Memory Verse: Nehemiah 4:6 "So built we the wall; and all the wall was joined together unto the half thereof: for the people had a mind to work."

Theme of Lesson: Persistence

INTRODUCTION: Nehemiah was a good man. He had a very important job to the king of Persia. He was called a "cupbearer", which simply means that he was to taste everything before the king would in order to protect the king from being poisoned. Nehemiah's people who lived in Jerusalem were going through a very trying time. Nehemiah was in the castle doing his job when he got news that the walls of his hometown, Jerusalem, were still broken down. This made Nehemiah very upset and he wanted to help his people. Nehemiah convinced the king that he served for, to allow him to go back to Jerusalem to rebuild the walls that were no longer protecting the city.

I. THE WALLS OF JERUSALEM BROKEN vs.1:1-3

- A. Nehemiah had a visitor to the palace. Nehemiah asked how the city and people of Jerusalem were doing.
 - 1. Nehemiah learns that the walls were still broken down and the gates of the city were in ruins.
 - 2. The city of Jerusalem no longer had any protection from its enemies. Nehemiah knew that the people would be in danger.
- B. Nehemiah is heartbroken and weeps over the destruction that has happened to Jerusalem. Nehemiah prayed to Lord to show him what He would have him do.
- C. Nehemiah convinces the king to let him go back to Jerusalem

and gather the Jews to rebuild the walls of the city. The king graciously allows him to return to Jerusalem.

II. ENEMIES OPPOSE THE CONSTRUCTION OF THE WALL vs. 4: 1-5

A. A man named Sanballat heard that Nehemiah was going to build the wall again, and this made him very angry.

Note- Sanballat was the governor of Samaria, which was north of Jerusalem. He was hoping to rule over Jerusalem as well, but with Nehemiah there encouraging the people, he knew this would never happen.

1. He had great anger in his heart and he started making fun of Nehemiah and the Jews who were going to rebuild the wall.

2. Sanballat tried to scare Nehemiah away from Jerusalem and get him discouraged so the walls would not go up again.

B. Sanballat caused discouragement in the people and many of them wanted to give up. He thought that he had conquered the spirit of the Jews.

III. THE WALLS GO UP! vs. 4:6-14

A. Nehemiah continued to pray for the Jews. He did not want the people to get discouraged and he wanted the work to continue.

Note: Who do you think won? When prayer and the Lord are involved there can only be one result- victory!

B. Despite the discouragement, the people continued to work. The people received strength from the Lord and continued the work.

Note- The people refused to respond in the way that Sanballat had wanted. They were not going to quit just because they were being made fun of for doing what was right.

1. The work on the wall moved quickly. The people had their hearts and minds set on completing the job no matter what.

2. They continued to pray for the Lord's strength and trusted that he would see them through finishing the

construction.

3. Nehemiah kept the people encouraged. He reminded them of the goal of completing the wall, and that the Lord was on their side.

IV. NEHEMIAH CONTINUES TO PROTECT THE PEOPLE AND FINISH THE WALLS. vs. 4:15-23

A. Nehemiah devised a plan to protect the workers from any further harm and to ensure that the walls were built.

1. Half of the men worked on the wall, while the other half stood guard behind them.
2. This made the men feel safe and the work never stopped.
3. Nehemiah also devised a sound of alarm. If danger was near a trumpet would sound. The people had no fear and the task was finally completed.

TEACHER'S NOTE: We can learn a good lesson about persistence from Nehemiah and the Jews. Persistence means to keep on going no matter what trials may come, to endure. The Jews could have quit rebuilding the walls because they were getting bullied by Sanballat. How many times do you get made fun of for doing what is right? God expects us to do what is right no matter what. He never says it is going to be easy, but He is there to protect us. When you take your Bible to school or try to tell a friend about Jesus, there may be someone there to make fun of you and make you feel bad. Do not give up! Be persistent! As long as you are doing what God wants you to do, He will be there for you. Do not let anyone discourage you from going about the Lord's work!