

Culture Changers, Culture Creators: A Study of the Book of Nehemiah

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10	November 29	Nehemiah 12:27-47	45
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Introduction

The year is 597 B.C. and Jerusalem is a pile of rubble, a city razed and robbed of its wealth, and Israel is a disgrace among the nations. God's chosen people had failed to uphold His standard and the Lord allowed havoc to be wreaked on them because of it. King Nebuchadnezzar of Babylon had conquered and destroyed the city and taken its wealthiest and most prominent citizens captive, leaving only a remnant of people living in poverty and shame.

But, God. About 100 years earlier, the Lord, through the prophet Isaiah, foretold of the coming fall of Babylon, Israel's deliverance, the return of the exiles, and the reestablishment of His Glory in Israel.

Isaiah 43:5-7: ⁵ Fear not, for I am with you; I will bring your offspring from the east, and from the west I will gather you. ⁶ I will say to the north, Give up, and to the south, Do not withhold; bring my sons from afar and my daughters from the end of the earth, ⁷everyone who is called by my name, whom I created for my glory, whom I formed and made."

Isaiah 44:21-23: ²¹ Remember these things, O Jacob, and Israel, for you are my servant; I formed you; you are my servant; O Israel, you will not be forgotten by me. ²² I have blotted out your transgressions like a cloud and your sins like mist; return to me, for I have redeemed you. ²³ Sing, O heavens, for the Lord has done it; shout, O depths of the earth; break forth into singing, O mountains, O forest, and every tree in it! For the Lord has redeemed Jacob, and will be glorified in Israel.

Isaiah 45:1, 4: ¹ Cyrus is my anointed king. I take hold of his right hand. I give him the power to bring nations under his control. I help him strip kings of their power to go to war against him. I break city gates open so he can go through them. ⁴ Cyrus, I am sending for you by name. I am doing it for the good of the family of Jacob. They are my servant. I am doing it for Israel. They are my chosen people.

God said it and it was so. In 539 B.C., Cyrus the Great invaded and defeated Babylon. After Babylon's fall, the Lord called Zerubbabel, Ezra, and Nehemiah to lead the Israelites' return from exile and the rebuilding of Jerusalem, fulfilling Isaiah's prophecy.

The exiles returned, the temple and city walls were rebuilt, and the Law, God's standard, was reestablished in Israel.

This study focuses on the Book of Nehemiah and his efforts to rebuild the wall. But Nehemiah, along with Zerubbabel, and Ezra, weren't just rebuilding the temple or a city, they were vessels God used to rebuild and restore His people. They weren't just teaching and holding the people accountable to the Law, they were restoring and upholding God's standard. They changed the culture, which was devoid of the presence and glory of God and created it anew. They were Culture Changers and Culture Creators.

In Nehemiah, we see a leader who was so moved in his heart for God's people, that he gave up his position of prominence in the palace in exchange for hard physical labor and intense opposition in a insignificant place with a disgraced people who didn't matter to anyone but God.

For the next several weeks, we will dig deep into the scriptures, while also reviewing the Factory Church's sermon series, "Culture Changers, Culture Creators" to learn about Nehemiah's work. In doing so, may Holy Spirit move on your heart for His people. You too are a vessel, sent to rebuild and restore in places where the enemy has laid siege, razed, robbed, and left God's people in spiritual poverty and shame. **You** are called to rebuild and restore His people. **You** are called to uphold His standard. **You** are called to change a culture devoid of the presence and glory of God and create it anew. Dear Believer, **you are a Culture Changer and a Culture Creator.**

Scripture Study Skills

INFORMATION: Before diving in and studying a passage of Scripture, it is first good to step back and gather a bit of background information. This helps to keep the passage you are considering in its correct context. A good place to begin (where possible) is to note the AUTHOR (Who was the human writer of this passage?), the AUDIENCE (Who was this intended for?) and the AIM (What was the author's main reason for writing?).

SUMMARIZATION: In just a sentence or two, use your own words to sum up what the author is saying in the portion of Scripture that you are studying. Summarizing helps you to focus on the text and better understand what the author is communicating.

OBSERVATION: Observation involves digging deeper into the passage at hand, taking time to reflect and ponder and notice details that might not stand out at first glance. During the observation process, more insight is gained into the meaning of the text and the implications it has for everyday life. Observation helps us to slow down and see beneath the surface, and is a means of gaining nourishment for the soul.

INVESTIGATION: Investigation takes the time to go beyond the given passage. If observation is going deeper, then investigation is going wider - using cross-references or a concordance to consider other places in the Bible that address similar topics, using dictionaries (English, Greek, or Hebrew) to look up word meanings, and using study Bibles or commentaries or other translations to gain greater understanding into anything that seems unclear or confusing. (See p. for a list of some helpful study resources)

APPLICATION: Application is where observing transitions to obeying. The goal of application is not to create a list of rules to govern our behavior or to generate a "to-do" or a "to-don't" list, but rather, to consider what it looks like to apply the truths of this passage in everyday life. This part of the study process considers how the passage

applies to our thoughts, our desires and our actions as followers of Christ. Application asks the question, "God, by your grace, how would you have me walk in this truth?"

EXALTATION: This is arguably the highest goal of studying Scripture - to discover praiseworthy truths about God in His Word and then use those truths as fuel for worship. To glorify God by proclaiming His greatness through the truths revealed in the passage at hand.

MEDITATION: Meditation is where a particular verse or thought from the passage is pulled out to ponder and pray over beyond the Bible study time. As you dwell on this truth throughout your day(s), you gain food for your own soul, and also nourishment to share with those God places in your path.

CONVERSATION: This is not a separate category, but from start to finish, as you are studying a passage of Scripture, have an ongoing conversation with God. Ask Him to give you understanding. Ask Him to give you a greater hunger and love for His Word. Ask Him what it looks like, in your current life circumstances, to embrace and apply what He is saying. Thank Him for His Spirit, who gives you the strength to obey. And pray the truths of this passage over others in your life, asking God to minister to them and to help them genuinely know Him. love Him, and walk in relationship with Him.

Week One Passage

Nehemiah 1:1-11(NIV)

¹ The words of Nehemiah son of Hakaliah:

In the month of Kislev in the twentieth year, while I was in the citadel of Susa, ² Hanani, one of my brothers, came from Judah with some other men, and I questioned them about the Jewish remnant that had survived the exile, and also about Jerusalem.

³ They said to me, “Those who survived the exile and are back in the province are in great trouble and disgrace. The wall of Jerusalem is broken down, and its gates have been burned with fire.”

⁴ When I heard these things, I sat down and wept. For some days I mourned and fasted and prayed before the God of heaven. ⁵ Then I said:

“Lord, the God of heaven, the great and awesome God, who keeps his covenant of love with those who love him and keep his commandments, ⁶ let your ear be attentive and your eyes open to hear the prayer your servant is praying before you day and night for your servants, the people of Israel. I confess the sins we Israelites, including myself and my father’s family, have committed against you. ⁷ We have acted very wickedly toward you. We have not obeyed the commands, decrees and laws you gave your servant Moses.

⁸ “Remember the instruction you gave your servant Moses, saying, ‘If you are unfaithful, I will scatter you among the nations, ⁹ but if you return to me and obey my commands, then even if your exiled people are at the farthest horizon, I will gather them from there and bring them to the place I have chosen as a dwelling for my Name.’

¹⁰ “They are your servants and your people, whom you redeemed by your great strength and your mighty hand. ¹¹ Lord, let your ear be attentive to the prayer of this your servant and to the prayer of your servants who delight in revering your name. Give your servant success today by granting him favor in the presence of this man.”

I was cupbearer to the king.

Week One Sermon

One Person That's For Real

Please take the time to watch the sermon associated with this passage. Focus on **7:06-18:39 mins** or watch the entire sermon, if you like:

<https://www.thefactoryministries.org/podcast/one-person-thats-for-real/>

Week One Questions

1. In a sentence or two, how would you sum up what is taking place in this passage?
2. What are two or three things that stood out to you from this section of Nehemiah? (This could be a word or phrase that captured your attention, wise counsel to follow, a warning to heed, truth that is counter-cultural, or anything else that you observed)
3. What does God reveal about Himself in this passage? How might embracing this truth (or truths!) strengthen your relationship with Him?
4. Is there anything in this passage that seems unclear or that you need to further investigate? (This would be a good time to consult a study Bible, cross-references, or a commentary.)

5. In what ways does the truth contained in the passage and sermon apply to your life today? How might living out this truth impact the culture around you?

6. You don't have to hold the title "leader" in order to have been called by God to lead. Think about your spheres of influence. Think about those things that grieve your heart. What people group(s) has God called you to lead?

7. Using the truths found in this section of passage and the sermon, write out a personal prayer expressing praise and thanksgiving to God, and asking Him for help to be a "doer" and not just a "hearer" of the Word.

Week Two Passage

Nehemiah 2:1-10

¹ In the month of Nisan, in the twentieth year of King Artaxerxes, when wine was before him, I took up the wine and gave it to the king. Now I had not been sad in his presence. ² And the king said to me, “Why is your face sad, seeing you are not sick? This is nothing but sadness of the heart.” Then I was very much afraid. ³ I said to the king, “Let the king live forever! Why should not my face be sad, when the city, the place of my fathers' graves, lies in ruins, and its gates have been destroyed by fire?” ⁴ Then the king said to me, “What are you requesting?” So I prayed to the God of heaven. ⁵ And I said to the king, “If it pleases the king, and if your servant has found favor in your sight, that you send me to Judah, to the city of my fathers' graves, that I may rebuild it.” ⁶ And the king said to me (the queen sitting beside him), “How long will you be gone, and when will you return?” So it pleased the king to send me when I had given him a time. ⁷ And I said to the king, “If it pleases the king, let letters be given me to the governors of the province Beyond the River, that they may let me pass through until I come to Judah, ⁸ and a letter to Asaph, the keeper of the king's forest, that he may give me timber to make beams for the gates of the fortress of the temple, and for the wall of the city, and for the house that I shall occupy.” And the king granted me what I asked, for the good hand of my God was upon me.

⁹ Then I came to the governors of the province Beyond the River and gave them the king's letters. Now the king had sent with me officers of the army and horsemen. ¹⁰ But when Sanballat the Horonite and Tobiah the Ammonite servant heard this, it displeased them greatly that someone had come to seek the welfare of the people of Israel.

Week Two Sermon

Palpable Passion

Please take the time to watch the sermon associated with this passage. Focus on **12:25 - 21:23 mins** or watch the entire sermon, if you like:

<https://www.thefactoryministries.org/podcast/palpable-passion/>

Week Two Questions

1. In a sentence or two, how would you sum up what is taking place in this passage?
2. What are two or three things that stood out to you from this section of Nehemiah? (This could be a word or phrase that captured your attention, wise counsel to follow, a warning to heed, truth that is counter-cultural, or anything else that you observed)
3. What does God reveal about Himself in this passage? How might embracing this truth (or truths!) strengthen your relationship with Him?
4. Is there anything in this passage that seems unclear or that you need to further investigate? (This would be a good time to consult a study Bible, cross-references, or a commentary.)

Week Three Passage

Nehemiah 2:11-20

¹¹ So I went to Jerusalem and was there three days. ¹² Then I arose in the night, I and a few men with me. And I told no one what my God had put into my heart to do for Jerusalem. There was no animal with me but the one on which I rode. ¹³ I went out by night by the Valley Gate to the Dragon Spring and to the Dung Gate, and I inspected the walls of Jerusalem that were broken down and its gates that had been destroyed by fire. ¹⁴ Then I went on to the Fountain Gate and to the King's Pool, but there was no room for the animal that was under me to pass. ¹⁵ Then I went up in the night by the valley and inspected the wall, and I turned back and entered by the Valley Gate, and so returned. ¹⁶ And the officials did not know where I had gone or what I was doing, and I had not yet told the Jews, the priests, the nobles, the officials, and the rest who were to do the work.

¹⁷ Then I said to them, "You see the trouble we are in, how Jerusalem lies in ruins with its gates burned. Come, let us build the wall of Jerusalem, that we may no longer suffer derision." ¹⁸ And I told them of the hand of my God that had been upon me for good, and also of the words that the king had spoken to me. And they said, "Let us rise up and build." So they strengthened their hands for the good work. ¹⁹ But when Sanballat the Horonite and Tobiah the Ammonite servant and Geshem the Arab heard of it, they jeered at us and despised us and said, "What is this thing that you are doing? Are you rebelling against the king?" ²⁰ Then I replied to them, "The God of heaven will make us prosper, and we his servants will arise and build, but you have no portion or right or claim in Jerusalem."

Week Three Sermon

There Must Be a Leader Who Takes the Responsibility, But Not the Glory

Please take the time to watch the sermon associated with this passage. Focus on **14:53** - **26:26 mins** or watch the entire sermon, if you like:

<https://www.thefactoryministries.org/podcast/there-must-be-a-leader-who-takes-the-responsibility-but-not-the-glory/>

Week Three Questions

1. In a sentence or two, how would you sum up what is taking place in this passage?
2. What are two or three things that stood out to you from this section of Nehemiah? (This could be a word or phrase that captured your attention, wise counsel to follow, a warning to heed, truth that is counter-cultural, or anything else that you observed)
3. What does God reveal about Himself in this passage? How might embracing this truth (or truths!) strengthen your relationship with Him?
4. Is there anything in this passage that seems unclear or that you need to further investigate? (This would be a good time to consult a study Bible, cross-references, or a commentary.)

Week Four Passage

Nehemiah 4:1-14

¹ Now when Sanballat heard that we were building the wall, he was angry and greatly enraged, and he jeered at the Jews. ² And he said in the presence of his brothers and of the army of Samaria, “What are these feeble Jews doing? Will they restore it for themselves? Will they sacrifice? Will they finish up in a day? Will they revive the stones out of the heaps of rubbish, and burned ones at that?” ³ Tobiah the Ammonite was beside him, and he said, “Yes, what they are building—if a fox goes up on it he will break down their stone wall!” ⁴ Hear, O our God, for we are despised. Turn back their taunt on their own heads and give them up to be plundered in a land where they are captives. ⁵ Do not cover their guilt, and let not their sin be blotted out from your sight, for they have provoked you to anger in the presence of the builders.

⁶ So we built the wall. And all the wall was joined together to half its height, for the people had a mind to work.

⁷ But when Sanballat and Tobiah and the Arabs and the Ammonites and the Ashdodites heard that the repairing of the walls of Jerusalem was going forward and that the breaches were beginning to be closed, they were very angry. ⁸ And they all plotted together to come and fight against Jerusalem and to cause confusion in it. ⁹ And we prayed to our God and set a guard as a protection against them day and night.

¹⁰ In Judah it was said, “The strength of those who bear the burdens is failing. There is too much rubble. By ourselves we will not be able to rebuild the wall.” ¹¹ And our enemies said, “They will not know or see till we come among them and kill them and stop the work.” ¹² At that time the Jews who lived near them came from all directions and said to us ten times, “You must return to us.” ¹³ So in the lowest parts of the space behind the wall, in open places, I stationed the people by their clans, with their swords, their spears, and their bows. ¹⁴ And I looked and arose and said to the nobles and to the officials and to the rest of the people, “Do not be afraid of them. Remember the Lord, who is great and awesome, and fight for your brothers, your sons, your daughters, your wives, and your homes.”

Week Four Sermon

Your Resolution Must Be Greater Than Your Opposition

Please take the time to watch the sermon associated with this passage. Focus on **5:50 - 20:00 mins** or watch the entire sermon, if you like:

<https://www.thefactoryministries.org/podcast/your-resolution-must-be-greater-than-your-opposition/>

Week Four Questions

1. In a sentence or two, how would you sum up what is taking place in this passage?
2. What are two or three things that stood out to you from this section of Nehemiah? (This could be a word or phrase that captured your attention, wise counsel to follow, a warning to heed, truth that is counter-cultural, or anything else that you observed)
3. What does God reveal about Himself in this passage? How might embracing this truth (or truths!) strengthen your relationship with Him?
4. Put yourself into the passage. How would you have felt and responded?

Week Five Passage

Nehemiah 4:15-23

¹⁵ When our enemies heard that it was known to us and that God had frustrated their plan, we all returned to the wall, each to his work. ¹⁶ From that day on, half of my servants worked on construction, and half held the spears, shields, bows, and coats of mail. And the leaders stood behind the whole house of Judah, ¹⁷ who were building on the wall. Those who carried burdens were loaded in such a way that each labored on the work with one hand and held his weapon with the other. ¹⁸ And each of the builders had his sword strapped at his side while he built. The man who sounded the trumpet was beside me. ¹⁹ And I said to the nobles and to the officials and to the rest of the people, "The work is great and widely spread, and we are separated on the wall, far from one another. ²⁰ In the place where you hear the sound of the trumpet, rally to us there. Our God will fight for us."

²¹ So we labored at the work, and half of them held the spears from the break of dawn until the stars came out. ²² I also said to the people at that time, "Let every man and his servant pass the night within Jerusalem, that they may be a guard for us by night and may labor by day." ²³ So neither I nor my brothers nor my servants nor the men of the guard who followed me, none of us took off our clothes; each kept his weapon at his right hand.

Week Five Sermon

Your Resolution Must Be Greater Than Your Opposition

Please take the time to watch the sermon associated with this passage. Focus on **33:41** - **50:00 mins** or watch the entire sermon, if you like:

<https://www.thefactoryministries.org/podcast/your-resolution-must-be-greater-than-your-opposition/>

Week Five Questions

1. In a sentence or two, how would you sum up what is taking place in this passage?
2. What are two or three things that stood out to you from this section of Nehemiah? (This could be a word or phrase that captured your attention, wise counsel to follow, a warning to heed, truth that is counter-cultural, or anything else that you observed)
3. What does God reveal about Himself in this passage? How might embracing this truth (or truths!) strengthen your relationship with Him?
4. Is there anything in this passage that seems unclear or that you need to further investigate? (This would be a good time to consult a study Bible, cross-references, or a commentary.)

Week Six Passage

Nehemiah 5:1-19

¹ Now the men and their wives raised a great outcry against their fellow Jews. ² Some were saying, “We and our sons and daughters are numerous; in order for us to eat and stay alive, we must get grain.”

³ Others were saying, “We are mortgaging our fields, our vineyards and our homes to get grain during the famine.”

⁴ Still others were saying, “We have had to borrow money to pay the king’s tax on our fields and vineyards. ⁵ Although we are of the same flesh and blood as our fellow Jews and though our children are as good as theirs, yet we have to subject our sons and daughters to slavery. Some of our daughters have already been enslaved, but we are powerless, because our fields and our vineyards belong to others.”

⁶ When I heard their outcry and these charges, I was very angry. ⁷ I pondered them in my mind and then accused the nobles and officials. I told them, “You are charging your own people interest!” So I called together a large meeting to deal with them ⁸ and said: “As far as possible, we have bought back our fellow Jews who were sold to the Gentiles. Now you are selling your own people, only for them to be sold back to us!” They kept quiet, because they could find nothing to say.

⁹ So I continued, “What you are doing is not right. Shouldn’t you walk in the fear of our God to avoid the reproach of our Gentile enemies? ¹⁰ I and my brothers and my men are also lending the people money and grain. But let us stop charging interest! ¹¹ Give back to them immediately their fields, vineyards, olive groves and houses, and also the interest you are charging them—one percent of the money, grain, new wine and olive oil.”

¹² “We will give it back,” they said. “And we will not demand anything more from them. We will do as you say.”

Then I summoned the priests and made the nobles and officials take an oath to do what they had promised. ¹³ I also shook out the folds of my robe and said, “In this way may God shake out of their house and possessions anyone who does not keep this promise. So may such a person be shaken out and emptied!”

At this the whole assembly said, “Amen,” and praised the Lord. And the people did as they had promised.

¹⁴ Moreover, from the twentieth year of King Artaxerxes, when I was appointed to be their governor in the land of Judah, until his thirty-second year—twelve years—neither I nor my brothers ate the food allotted to the governor. ¹⁵ But the earlier governors—those preceding me—placed a heavy burden on the people and took forty shekels of silver from them in addition to food and wine. Their assistants also lorded it over the people. But out of reverence for God I did not act like that. ¹⁶ Instead, I devoted myself to the work on this wall. All my men were assembled there for the work; we did not acquire any land.

¹⁷ Furthermore, a hundred and fifty Jews and officials ate at my table, as well as those who came to us from the surrounding nations. ¹⁸ Each day one ox, six choice sheep and some poultry were prepared for me, and every ten days an abundant supply of wine of all kinds. In spite of all this, I never demanded the food allotted to the governor, because the demands were heavy on these people.

¹⁹ Remember me with favor, my God, for all I have done for these people.

Week Six Sermon

When The Church Just Doesn't Know

Please take the time to watch the sermon associated with this passage. Focus on **6:33 - 29:11 mins** or watch the entire sermon, if you like:

<https://www.thefactoryministries.org/podcast/when-the-church-just-doesnt-know/>

Week Six Questions

1. In a sentence or two, how would you sum up what is taking place in this passage?
2. What are two or three things that stood out to you from this section of Nehemiah? (This could be a word or phrase that captured your attention, wise counsel to follow, a warning to heed, truth that is counter-cultural, or anything else that you observed)
3. What does God reveal about Himself in this passage? How might embracing this truth (or truths!) strengthen your relationship with Him?
4. Is there anything in this passage that seems unclear or that you need to further investigate? (This would be a good time to consult a study Bible, cross-references, or a commentary.)

Week Seven Passage

Nehemiah 8:1-18

¹ And all the people gathered as one man into the square before the Water Gate. And they told Ezra the scribe to bring the Book of the Law of Moses that the Lord had commanded Israel. ² So Ezra the priest brought the Law before the assembly, both men and women and all who could understand what they heard, on the first day of the seventh month. ³ And he read from it facing the square before the Water Gate from early morning until midday, in the presence of the men and the women and those who could understand. And the ears of all the people were attentive to the Book of the Law. ⁴ And Ezra the scribe stood on a wooden platform that they had made for the purpose. And beside him stood Mattithiah, Shema, Anaiah, Uriah, Hilkiah, and Maaseiah on his right hand, and Pedaiah, Mishael, Malchijah, Hashum, Hashbaddanah, Zechariah, and Meshullam on his left hand. ⁵ And Ezra opened the book in the sight of all the people, for he was above all the people, and as he opened it all the people stood. ⁶ And Ezra blessed the Lord, the great God, and all the people answered, "Amen, Amen," lifting up their hands. And they bowed their heads and worshiped the Lord with their faces to the ground. ⁷ Also Jeshua, Bani, Sherebiah, Jamin, Akkub, Shabbethai, Hodiah, Maaseiah, Kelita, Azariah, Jozabad, Hanan, Pelaiah, the Levites, helped the people to understand the Law, while the people remained in their places. ⁸ They read from the book, from the Law of God, clearly, and they gave the sense, so that the people understood the reading.

This Day Is Holy

⁹ And Nehemiah, who was the governor, and Ezra the priest and scribe, and the Levites who taught the people said to all the people, "This day is holy to the Lord your God; do not mourn or weep." For all the people wept as they heard the words of the Law. ¹⁰ Then he said to them, "Go your way. Eat the fat and drink sweet wine and send portions to anyone who has nothing ready, for this day is holy to our Lord. And do not be grieved, for the joy of the Lord is your strength." ¹¹ So the Levites calmed all the people, saying, "Be quiet, for this day is holy; do not be grieved." ¹² And all the people went their way to eat and drink and to send portions and to make great rejoicing, because they had understood the words that were declared to them.

Feast of Booths Celebrated

¹³ On the second day the heads of fathers' houses of all the people, with the priests and the Levites, came together to Ezra the scribe in order to study the words of the Law. ¹⁴ And they found it written in the Law that the Lord had commanded by Moses that the people of Israel should dwell in booths during the feast of the seventh month, ¹⁵ and that they should proclaim it and publish it in all their towns and in Jerusalem, "Go out to the hills and bring branches of olive, wild olive, myrtle, palm, and other leafy trees to make booths, as it is written." ¹⁶ So the people went out and brought them and made booths

for themselves, each on his roof, and in their courts and in the courts of the house of God, and in the square at the Water Gate and in the square at the Gate of Ephraim. ¹⁷ And all the assembly of those who had returned from the captivity made booths and lived in the booths, for from the days of Jeshua the son of Nun to that day the people of Israel had not done so. And there was very great rejoicing. ¹⁸ And day by day, from the first day to the last day, he read from the Book of the Law of God. They kept the feast seven days, and on the eighth day there was a solemn assembly, according to the rule.

Week Seven Sermon

We Need The Word

Please take the time to watch the sermon associated with this passage. Focus on **16:24** - **37:00 mins** or watch the entire sermon, if you like:

<https://www.thefactoryministries.org/podcast/we-need-the-word/>

Week Seven Questions

1. In a sentence or two, how would you sum up what is taking place in this passage?
2. What are two or three things that stood out to you from this section of Nehemiah? (This could be a word or phrase that captured your attention, wise counsel to follow, a warning to heed, truth that is counter-cultural, or anything else that you observed)
3. What does God reveal about Himself in this passage? How might embracing this truth (or truths!) strengthen your relationship with Him?
4. Is there anything in this passage that seems unclear or that you need to further investigate? (This would be a good time to consult a study Bible, cross-references, or a commentary.)

Week Eight Passage

Nehemiah 9:1-25

¹ Now on the twenty-fourth day of this month the people of Israel were assembled with fasting and in sackcloth, and with earth on their heads. ² And the Israelites separated themselves from all foreigners and stood and confessed their sins and the iniquities of their fathers. ³ And they stood up in their place and read from the Book of the Law of the Lord their God for a quarter of the day; for another quarter of it they made confession and worshiped the Lord their God. ⁴ On the stairs of the Levites stood Jeshua, Bani, Kadmiel, Shebaniah, Bunni, Sherebiah, Bani, and Chenani; and they cried with a loud voice to the Lord their God. ⁵ Then the Levites, Jeshua, Kadmiel, Bani, Hashabneiah, Sherebiah, Hodiah, Shebaniah, and Pethahiah, said, "Stand up and bless the Lord your God from everlasting to everlasting. Blessed be your glorious name, which is exalted above all blessing and praise.

⁶ "You are the Lord, you alone. You have made heaven, the heaven of heavens, with all their host, the earth and all that is on it, the seas and all that is in them; and you preserve all of them; and the host of heaven worships you. ⁷ You are the Lord, the God who chose Abram and brought him out of Ur of the Chaldeans and gave him the name Abraham. ⁸ You found his heart faithful before you, and made with him the covenant to give to his offspring the land of the Canaanite, the Hittite, the Amorite, the Perizzite, the Jebusite, and the Girgashite. And you have kept your promise, for you are righteous.

⁹ "And you saw the affliction of our fathers in Egypt and heard their cry at the Red Sea, ¹⁰ and performed signs and wonders against Pharaoh and all his servants and all the people of his land, for you knew that they acted arrogantly against our fathers. And you made a name for yourself, as it is to this day. ¹¹ And you divided the sea before them, so that they went through the midst of the sea on dry land, and you cast their pursuers into the depths, as a stone into mighty waters. ¹² By a pillar of cloud you led them in the day, and by a pillar of fire in the night to light for them the way in which they should go. ¹³ You came down on Mount Sinai and spoke with them from heaven and gave them right rules and true laws, good statutes and commandments, ¹⁴ and you made known to them your holy Sabbath and commanded them commandments and statutes and a law by Moses your servant. ¹⁵ You gave them bread from heaven for their hunger and brought water for them out of the rock for their thirst, and you told them to go in to possess the land that you had sworn to give them.

¹⁶ "But they and our fathers acted presumptuously and stiffened their neck and did not obey your commandments. ¹⁷ They refused to obey and were not mindful of the wonders that you performed among them, but they stiffened their neck and appointed a

leader to return to their slavery in Egypt. But you are a God ready to forgive, gracious and merciful, slow to anger and abounding in steadfast love, and did not forsake them. ¹⁸ Even when they had made for themselves a golden calf and said, 'This is your God who brought you up out of Egypt,' and had committed great blasphemies, ¹⁹ you in your great mercies did not forsake them in the wilderness. The pillar of cloud to lead them in the way did not depart from them by day, nor the pillar of fire by night to light for them the way by which they should go. ²⁰ You gave your good Spirit to instruct them and did not withhold your manna from their mouth and gave them water for their thirst. ²¹ Forty years you sustained them in the wilderness, and they lacked nothing. Their clothes did not wear out and their feet did not swell.

²² "And you gave them kingdoms and peoples and allotted to them every corner. So they took possession of the land of Sihon king of Heshbon and the land of Og king of Bashan. ²³ You multiplied their children as the stars of heaven, and you brought them into the land that you had told their fathers to enter and possess. ²⁴ So the descendants went in and possessed the land, and you subdued before them the inhabitants of the land, the Canaanites, and gave them into their hand, with their kings and the peoples of the land, that they might do with them as they would. ²⁵ And they captured fortified cities and a rich land, and took possession of houses full of all good things, cisterns already hewn, vineyards, olive orchards and fruit trees in abundance. So they ate and were filled and became fat and delighted themselves in your great goodness.

Week Eight Sermon

What Do You Do About Your Sin

Please take the time to watch the sermon associated with this passage. Focus on **6:06 - 19:02 mins** or watch the entire sermon, if you like.

<https://www.thefactoryministries.org/podcast/what-do-you-do-about-your-sin/>

Week Eight Questions

1. In a sentence or two, how would you sum up what is taking place in this passage?
2. What are two or three things that stood out to you from this section of Nehemiah? (This could be a word or phrase that captured your attention, wise counsel to follow, a warning to heed, truth that is counter-cultural, or anything else that you observed)
3. What does God reveal about Himself in this passage? How might embracing this truth (or truths!) strengthen your relationship with Him?
4. Is there anything in this passage that seems unclear or that you need to further investigate? (This would be a good time to consult a study Bible, cross-references, or a commentary.)

Week Nine Passage

Nehemiah 9:26-37

²⁶ “But they were disobedient and rebelled against you; they turned their backs on your law. They killed your prophets, who had warned them in order to turn them back to you; they committed awful blasphemies. ²⁷ So you delivered them into the hands of their enemies, who oppressed them. But when they were oppressed they cried out to you. From heaven you heard them, and in your great compassion you gave them deliverers, who rescued them from the hand of their enemies.

²⁸ “But as soon as they were at rest, they again did what was evil in your sight. Then you abandoned them to the hand of their enemies so that they ruled over them. And when they cried out to you again, you heard from heaven, and in your compassion you delivered them time after time.

²⁹ “You warned them in order to turn them back to your law, but they became arrogant and disobeyed your commands. They sinned against your ordinances, of which you said, ‘The person who obeys them will live by them.’ Stubbornly they turned their backs on you, became stiff-necked and refused to listen. ³⁰ For many years you were patient with them. By your Spirit you warned them through your prophets. Yet they paid no attention, so you gave them into the hands of the neighboring peoples. ³¹ But in your great mercy you did not put an end to them or abandon them, for you are a gracious and merciful God.

³² “Now therefore, our God, the great God, mighty and awesome, who keeps his covenant of love, do not let all this hardship seem trifling in your eyes—the hardship that has come on us, on our kings and leaders, on our priests and prophets, on our ancestors and all your people, from the days of the kings of Assyria until today. ³³ In all that has happened to us, you have remained righteous; you have acted faithfully, while we acted wickedly. ³⁴ Our kings, our leaders, our priests and our ancestors did not follow your law; they did not pay attention to your commands or the statutes you warned them to keep. ³⁵ Even while they were in their kingdom, enjoying your great goodness to them in the spacious and fertile land you gave them, they did not serve you or turn from their evil ways.

³⁶ “But see, we are slaves today, slaves in the land you gave our ancestors so they could eat its fruit and the other good things it produces. ³⁷ Because of our sins, its abundant harvest goes to the kings you have placed over us. They rule over our bodies and our cattle as they please. We are in great distress.

Week Nine Sermon

What to Do About Your Sin

Please take the time to watch the sermon associated with this passage. Focus on **19:03** - **33:00 mins** or watch the entire sermon, if you like.

<https://www.thefactoryministries.org/podcast/what-do-you-do-about-your-sin/>

Week Nine Questions

1. In a sentence or two, how would you sum up what is taking place in this passage?
2. What are two or three things that stood out to you from this section of Nehemiah? (This could be a word or phrase that captured your attention, wise counsel to follow, a warning to heed, truth that is counter-cultural, or anything else that you observed)
3. What does God reveal about Himself in this passage? How might embracing this truth (or truths!) strengthen your relationship with Him?
4. Is there anything in this passage that seems unclear or that you need to further investigate? (This would be a good time to consult a study Bible, cross-references, or a commentary.)

Week Ten Passage

Nehemiah 12:27-47

²⁷ And at the dedication of the wall of Jerusalem they sought the Levites in all their places, to bring them to Jerusalem to celebrate the dedication with gladness, with thanksgivings and with singing, with cymbals, harps, and lyres. ²⁸ And the sons of the singers gathered together from the district surrounding Jerusalem and from the villages of the Netophathites; ²⁹ also from Beth-gilgal and from the region of Geba and Azmaveth, for the singers had built for themselves villages around Jerusalem. ³⁰ And the priests and the Levites purified themselves, and they purified the people and the gates and the wall.

³¹ Then I brought the leaders of Judah up onto the wall and appointed two great choirs that gave thanks. One went to the south on the wall to the Dung Gate. ³² And after them went Hoshaiah and half of the leaders of Judah, ³³ and Azariah, Ezra, Meshullam, ³⁴ Judah, Benjamin, Shemaiah, and Jeremiah, ³⁵ and certain of the priests' sons with trumpets: Zechariah the son of Jonathan, son of Shemaiah, son of Mattaniah, son of Micaiah, son of Zaccur, son of Asaph; ³⁶ and his relatives, Shemaiah, Azarel, Milalai, Gilalai, Maai, Nethanel, Judah, and Hanani, with the musical instruments of David the man of God. And Ezra the scribe went before them. ³⁷ At the Fountain Gate they went up straight before them by the stairs of the city of David, at the ascent of the wall, above the house of David, to the Water Gate on the east.

³⁸ The other choir of those who gave thanks went to the north, and I followed them with half of the people, on the wall, above the Tower of the Ovens, to the Broad Wall, ³⁹ and above the Gate of Ephraim, and by the Gate of Yeshanah, and by the Fish Gate and the Tower of Hananel and the Tower of the Hundred, to the Sheep Gate; and they came to a halt at the Gate of the Guard. ⁴⁰ So both choirs of those who gave thanks stood in the house of God, and I and half of the officials with me; ⁴¹ and the priests Eliakim, Maaseiah, Miniamin, Micaiah, Elioenai, Zechariah, and Hananiah, with trumpets; ⁴² and Maaseiah, Shemaiah, Eleazar, Uzzi, Jehohanan, Malchijah, Elam, and Ezer. And the singers sang with Jezrahiah as their leader. ⁴³ And they offered great sacrifices that day and rejoiced, for God had made them rejoice with great joy; the women and children also rejoiced. And the joy of Jerusalem was heard far away.

Service at the Temple

⁴⁴ On that day men were appointed over the storerooms, the contributions, the firstfruits, and the tithes, to gather into them the portions required by the Law for the priests and

for the Levites according to the fields of the towns, for Judah rejoiced over the priests and the Levites who ministered. ⁴⁵ And they performed the service of their God and the service of purification, as did the singers and the gatekeepers, according to the command of David and his son Solomon. ⁴⁶ For long ago in the days of David and Asaph there were directors of the singers, and there were songs of praise and thanksgiving to God. ⁴⁷ And all Israel in the days of Zerubbabel and in the days of Nehemiah gave the daily portions for the singers and the gatekeepers; and they set apart that which was for the Levites; and the Levites set apart that which was for the sons of Aaron.

Week Ten Sermon

Let's Bring Praise and Worship

Please take the time to watch the sermon associated with this passage. Focus on **5:00 - 27:35 mins** or watch the entire sermon, if you like.

<https://www.thefactoryministries.org/podcast/lets-bring-praise-and-worship/>

Week Ten Questions

1. In a sentence or two, how would you sum up what is taking place in this passage?
2. What are two or three things that stood out to you from this section of Nehemiah? (This could be a word or phrase that captured your attention, wise counsel to follow, a warning to heed, truth that is counter-cultural, or anything else that you observed)
3. What does God reveal about Himself in this passage? How might embracing this truth (or truths!) strengthen your relationship with Him?
4. Is there anything in this passage that seems unclear or that you need to further investigate? (This would be a good time to consult a study Bible, cross-references, or a commentary.)

Week Eleven Passage

Nehemiah 13:1-30

¹ On that day they read from the Book of Moses in the hearing of the people. And in it was found written that no Ammonite or Moabite should ever enter the assembly of God, ² for they did not meet the people of Israel with bread and water, but hired Balaam against them to curse them—yet our God turned the curse into a blessing. ³ As soon as the people heard the law, they separated from Israel all those of foreign descent.

⁴ Now before this, Eliashib the priest, who was appointed over the chambers of the house of our God, and who was related to Tobiah, ⁵ prepared for Tobiah a large chamber where they had previously put the grain offering, the frankincense, the vessels, and the tithes of grain, wine, and oil, which were given by commandment to the Levites, singers, and gatekeepers, and the contributions for the priests. ⁶ While this was taking place, I was not in Jerusalem, for in the thirty-second year of Artaxerxes king of Babylon I went to the king. And after some time I asked leave of the king ⁷ and came to Jerusalem, and I then discovered the evil that Eliashib had done for Tobiah, preparing for him a chamber in the courts of the house of God. ⁸ And I was very angry, and I threw all the household furniture of Tobiah out of the chamber. ⁹ Then I gave orders, and they cleansed the chambers, and I brought back there the vessels of the house of God, with the grain offering and the frankincense.

¹⁰ I also found out that the portions of the Levites had not been given to them, so that the Levites and the singers, who did the work, had fled each to his field. ¹¹ So I confronted the officials and said, “Why is the house of God forsaken?” And I gathered them together and set them in their stations. ¹² Then all Judah brought the tithe of the grain, wine, and oil into the storehouses. ¹³ And I appointed as treasurers over the storehouses Shelemiah the priest, Zadok the scribe, and Pedaiah of the Levites, and as their assistant Hanan the son of Zaccur, son of Mattaniah, for they were considered reliable, and their duty was to distribute to their brothers. ¹⁴ Remember me, O my God, concerning this, and do not wipe out my good deeds that I have done for the house of my God and for his service.

¹⁵ In those days I saw in Judah people treading wine presses on the Sabbath, and bringing in heaps of grain and loading them on donkeys, and also wine, grapes, figs, and all kinds of loads, which they brought into Jerusalem on the Sabbath day. And I warned them on the day when they sold food. ¹⁶ Tyrians also, who lived in the city, brought in fish and all kinds of goods and sold them on the Sabbath to the people of Judah, in Jerusalem itself! ¹⁷ Then I confronted the nobles of Judah and said to them, “What is this evil thing that you are doing, profaning the Sabbath day? ¹⁸ Did not your fathers act in this way, and did not our God bring all this disaster on us and on this city? Now you are bringing more wrath on Israel by profaning the Sabbath.”

¹⁹ As soon as it began to grow dark at the gates of Jerusalem before the Sabbath, I commanded that the doors should be shut and gave orders that they should not be opened until after the Sabbath. And I stationed some of my servants at the gates, that no load might be brought in on the Sabbath day. ²⁰ Then the merchants and sellers of all kinds of wares lodged outside Jerusalem once or twice. ²¹ But I warned them and said to them, "Why do you lodge outside the wall? If you do so again, I will lay hands on you." From that time on they did not come on the Sabbath. ²² Then I commanded the Levites that they should purify themselves and come and guard the gates, to keep the Sabbath day holy. Remember this also in my favor, O my God, and spare me according to the greatness of your steadfast love.

²³ In those days also I saw the Jews who had married women of Ashdod, Ammon, and Moab. ²⁴ And half of their children spoke the language of Ashdod, and they could not speak the language of Judah, but only the language of each people. ²⁵ And I confronted them and cursed them and beat some of them and pulled out their hair. And I made them take an oath in the name of God, saying, "You shall not give your daughters to their sons, or take their daughters for your sons or for yourselves. ²⁶ Did not Solomon king of Israel sin on account of such women? Among the many nations there was no king like him, and he was beloved by his God, and God made him king over all Israel. Nevertheless, foreign women made even him to sin. ²⁷ Shall we then listen to you and do all this great evil and act treacherously against our God by marrying foreign women?"

²⁸ And one of the sons of Jehoiada, the son of Eliashib the high priest, was the son-in-law of Sanballat the Horonite. Therefore I chased him from me. ²⁹ Remember them, O my God, because they have desecrated the priesthood and the covenant of the priesthood and the Levites.

³⁰ Thus I cleansed them from everything foreign, and I established the duties of the priests and Levites, each in his work;

Week Eleven Sermon

Guard Your Gates

Please take the time to watch the sermon associated with this passage. Focus on **10:30 - 29:31 mins** or watch the entire sermon, if you like.

<https://www.thefactoryministries.org/podcast/guard-your-gates/>

Week Eleven Questions

1. In a sentence or two, how would you sum up what is taking place in this passage?
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