

NEHEMIAH

Lesson 3 - Chapter 3

Prayer and strong leadership were the aspects of Nehemiah's character that we saw in Chapters one and two. Now, in chapter three, he is not mentioned at all! Why? Because it is true that God had called Nehemiah to lead this work, but many hands would be needed to accomplish it. As we see the Jews come together, working next to one another to complete this great task, we will also see an example of how the body of Christ should work together today.

Let your purpose in this study of Nehemiah be not only to gain knowledge, but to apply it to your life. With this in mind, begin your study with a prayer asking the Lord to open your mind to learn from His Word and to enable you to apply what you are learning.

Memory Verse – This week's memory verse is Colossians 3:17.

“And whatever you do in word or deed, do all in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God the Father through Him.”

Key Word(s)

Read through the entire chapter, looking for words or themes that are repeated. Make note of those words and their significance here. We will give you a few to start with this week.

1. Notice the repetition of “*next to*” and “*after*”. How many times do you see each of these? What does this tell you about the work described in this chapter?

2. How often do you find the word “*built*” and the word “*repaired*”? This gives a good picture of what is being done in this chapter!

3. Any others?

The Gates of the City of Jerusalem

In Chapter three the details of the actual work on the wall are given. It will help to have a picture of the wall and where each group is working, so there is a map provided as the last page of this lesson. As you read through the Chapter, find the verse where each gate is mentioned and label as many gates as you can on the map with the appropriate verse number.

Read Nehemiah 3:1-5.

1. What section of the wall is mentioned first, in verse 1, as they begin the work to rebuild?

- a. Who is working on this section?
- b. What did they do after they “*built*” it?
- c. Write a definition for this word.

Note: Perhaps this section was consecrated as a symbol of consecrating the work of rebuilding the wall, or perhaps it was due to the significance of this particular gate. It is important to know that the sheep being brought into the city to be sacrificed in the temple were brought in through this Sheep Gate. J. Vernon McGee points out this was probably the gate that Jesus walked through most of the time.

2. In Nehemiah 3:5, who are we told did not join in this work to rebuild?

- a. Why do you think this might be?
- b. How might this effect the attitude of the others?

3. The refusal of some to work could have affected the work of the others here at the beginning, but instead we see something else. Colossians 3:17 describes the attitude of the work of the priests and the rest of the workers in Nehemiah 3.

- a. Write the verse from Colossians 3:17, our memory verse this week, below.
- b. How does this effect the way you might complete the work you are called to do?

Read Nehemiah 3:6-12.

As we continue to read about the workers who are rebuilding the wall, let’s look closer at some details that are included.

1. Throughout Nehemiah 3 we see the words “*next to*” repeated often. What significance do you see in these words?

2. Look again at these words, “*next to*”. Notice that in verse 1 the priests were working right there “*next to*” the others. Now look just in Nehemiah 3:6-12 and write as many different types of people as you can find who were working next to one another.

a. What does this tell you about the people?

b. What was the result of all these different people working together?

c. What do you find in Galatians 3:28 about the equality of all in the body of Christ?

3. Read Ephesians 4:16.

a. How does Ephesians 4:16 apply to the situation we read of in Nehemiah 3?

b. What is the result in the body of Christ when we all work “*next to*” one another, doing the job God has given us to do?

Read Nehemiah 3:13-27.

As you continue in this chapter, you will see more of those words “*next to*” and you will begin to also see “*after him*”. These words show a definite cooperation and planning in the work process. In verse 17 and 18 you can also find the word “*under*”, showing that specific organization for leadership was established, too. The work on the wall was clearly done in good order.

1. There are many scriptures that speak of the importance of God’s order in our lives today.

a. Consider Psalm 37:23. Write the verse out below

b. What encouragement do you find in the next verse, Psalm 37:24?

2. How does Psalm 133:1 apply to the work we have seen on the wall so far?

Read Nehemiah 3:28-30.

1. In these verses we still see the people working together, one after the other, but there is another detail included.

a. What do you notice about *where* the work is being done for the groups mentioned in this section?

b. How would this affect a person's motivation to work?

2. In Nehemiah they are rebuilding a physical wall in front of their physical home, but we also have a "home" that needs a wall of protection.

a. What would you say constitutes your "*own house*"?

b. What are some walls that can protect it?

Read Nehemiah 3:31-32.

1. We have seen that God's work has a plan and an order, so let's look for that order in these last verses.

a. Where does the work on the wall end in verse 32?

b. Where did the work begin in Nehemiah 3:1?

Read the "Note" on page 2 of this lesson to recall the information about this gate and the comment from J. Vernon McGee. With this consideration, we might look at this gate as representing the sacrifice of the Lamb, the Cross!

2. With that in mind, what significance do you see with beginning and ending this rebuilding of the wall at this particular gate?

3. What importance do you see in this same picture for the rebuilding of our lives that were broken down by sin?

In closing...

1. What did you glean from this lesson that you can apply to your own life in the following areas?

a. How we are to work in the body of Christ...

b. The attitude we should operate in as we serve the Lord...

2. As we looked at the rebuilding of the wall in front of the worker's homes, we also considered the walls around our own home. What specific areas do you need to strengthen? How will you begin the work to do that?

Memory Verse

“And whatever you do in word or deed, do all in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God the Father through Him.”

Colossians 3:17