

Nehemiah

The message of Nehemiah is restoration. It records how God moved Nehemiah to lead the people to rebuild the walls of Jerusalem in approximately 446 BC. As the story unfolds, we see God restore godly leadership to Israel, restore the walls of Jerusalem, restore the broken faith of the people, restore a sense of community and heritage as God's people, and restore the people's knowledge of the God's word and their desire to love and obey God.

Theme	Chap	Event	Summary Verse(s)
Preparation	1	Nehemiah is caught in the tension of two worlds: cupbearer to the king and brother to the exiles.	1:4 When I heard these things I sat down and wept. For some days I mourned and fasted and prayed before the God of heaven.
	2	Nehemiah faces three moments where he must rely on the word of God and speak out boldly.	2:4 The king said to me, "What is it you want?" Then I prayed to the God of heaven, 5 and I answered the king,
Restoration of the wall	3	The community is diverse and inclusive and begins serving God by working where God has already put them.	3:23 Beyond them Benjamin and Hasshub made repairs in front of their house; and next to them Azariah son of Maaseiah the son of Ananiah made repairs beside his house.
	4	The community faces opposition, including their own internal voices of ridicule and shattered faith.	4:14 "Don't be afraid of them. Remember the Lord who is great and awesome and fight for your brothers, your sons and your daughters, your wives and your homes." 4: 17 Those who carried materials did their work with one hand and held a weapon in the other.
	5	Nehemiah rebukes the wealthy for taking advantage of the poor and calls them back to fearing God.	5:9 "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?"
	6	Nehemiah's enemies seek to kill him and he resists because he knows that God is fighting for him. The wall is finished.	6:16 When all our enemies heard about this, all the surrounding nations were afraid and lost their self-confidence, because they realized that this work had been done with the help of our God.
	7	The wall is finished. The city is safe, but not yet "alive" again.	7:4 Now the city was large and spacious, but there were few people in it, and the houses had not yet been rebuilt.
Restoration of the people	8	The people long to know God so they ask Ezra the priest to teach them the Law.	8:12 Then all the people went away to eat and drink, to send portions of food and to celebrate with great joy, because they now understood the words that had been made known to them.
	9	The people acknowledge they are sinful like every generation before them. God is faithful, while they are faithless.	9:33 In all that has happened to us, you (God) have been just; you have acted faithfully, while we did wrong.
	10	The people vow to keep God at the center of their lives.	10:39: "We will not neglect the house of our God."
	11	The people move back into Jerusalem both by choice and by draft.	11:1 Now the leaders of the people settled in Jerusalem, and the rest of the people cast lots to bring one out of every ten to live in Jerusalem, the holy city, while the remaining nine were to stay in their own towns.
	12	The people joyously dedicate the wall of Jerusalem with a parade of song and thanksgiving.	12:43 And on that day they offered great sacrifices, rejoicing because God had given them great joy. The women and children also rejoiced. The sound of rejoicing in Jerusalem could be heard far away.
	13	Years later Nehemiah returns to Jerusalem to find the people have broken their vows.	13:31 Remember me with favor, O my God.