

**Nehemiah: Rebuilding Walls**  
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## Reflective Journaling

You will find space within each lesson of this study guide for reflective journaling. Reflective journaling is a way to read the Scriptures, gaining not only head knowledge but heart knowledge-- sinking deep through allowing the Word to read you. I encourage you to use the space in the books to apply each Scripture to your life and to the main themes of the week.

# Compelled to Pray

Nehemiah 1:4 | Lesson 1

## Meditation

*When I heard these things, I sat down and wept.. For some days I mourned and fasted and prayed before the God of heaven..*

Nehemiah 1:4

## Main Theme

*As you read the Main Theme, underline the words or thoughts most meaningful to you..*

True to God's promise of judgment, the Assyrians scattered the ten northern tribes of Israel in 722 B.C, and around 605-586 B.C. the Babylonians destroyed Jerusalem. Israel had persisted in being unfaithful to God, and judgement was meted out. During the captivity of the Jews, leadership changed from the Babylonians to the Persians. The book of Nehemiah begins with Persian King Cyrus returning God's people to Jerusalem to rebuild the temple.

Zerubbabel and Joshua led the first return, and Ezra

led the second return around 458 B.C. Nehemiah chronicles the third return to rebuild the wall around Jerusalem (445 B.C.). At one time it was believed that the books of Ezra and Nehemiah were one book. The story begins when King Cyrus entrusted Nehemiah, his cupbearer and confidant, to lead the effort to rebuild the walls of Jerusalem. Nehemiah's brother had reported to Nehemiah that those who survived the exile who were now in Jerusalem were in trouble and disgrace, and the walls of Jerusalem were broken down and the gates had been burned. The lack

of a city wall meant that the people were defenseless against their enemies. Nehemiah, whose name means "the Lord comforts," mourned and fasted for days as he sought the Lord concerning the demise of his Jewish brethren. As we study the book of Nehemiah together, we will be observing a powerful model of a Godly leader. He was a man of character, compassion, prayer, and; above all, he trusted God completely. He was willing to leave his honored position in the king's court to go to Jerusalem and face a risky and difficult task. This week's study focuses on Nehemiah's powerful prayer life modeling for us that all seemingly impossible tasks begin on our knees. He began his prayer with acknowledging God's greatness: *O Lord, God of heaven, the great and awesome God, who keeps His covenant of love with those who love Him and obey His commands, let your ear be attentive...*

Nehemiah's obedience and love for the Lord enabled Him to step out in faith, and together with God's people, the walls were built in just 52 days! My prayer for you is that the Lord will use this study to repair the damaged "walls" of your life and fortify you against the enemies' assaults, drawing you into the protection of the Lord.

## Lesson Focus

Read Nehemiah 1.

### I. Acknowledging God's Greatness

- Day One and Day Two
- Key Passage: Nehemiah 1:11
- Read the Key Passage and write down your personal insights.

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**33**

Nehemiah models prayer for us in a compelling way. His prayer contains four significant elements:

- Devotes days to fasting and prayer as he waits on the Lord to lead him.
- Acknowledges that God is an awesome, covenant-keep-ing God.
- Repents of his sins and the sins of the Israelites,
- Reminds the Lord of His promises to the Israelites if they return to Him.

After Nehemiah’s commitment to pray and fast, the door is opened for him to share with the King of Persia concerning the predicament of the Jewish people. When we wait on the Lord with prayer and fasting, acknowledging His greatness and His promises to us, God opens doors that no man can open. Today during my prayer time I asked the Lord to open a door for me to have a conversation with one of my daugh-ters. I knew that I had to wait on the timing of the Lord and the wisdom of the Lord. He opened the door later that day, and I was aware of the goodness and faithfulness of the Lord. So often I try to resolve conflicts and help with solutions, when I have forgotten to pray. I was reminded today that the

Lord longs for His children to allow Him to bring resolution to the conflict and bring solutions to our problems. This week, take your problems to the Lord in prayer using Nehe-miah’s model, and trust in His faithfulness to *be attentive to your prayer (Nehemiah 1:11)*..

What stood out to you as you read the Key Box?

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**Exodus 19:5**

What did God tell Moses at Mount Sinai concerning His cove-nant with His people?

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Applying this passage to your life, what is your part and what is God’s part in the answering of your prayer?

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**Judges 2:1-5**

What did the Lord say about His covenant with the Israelites and how did they disobey him?

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Applying this Scripture to your life, in what way have you disobeyed the Lord and what was the result of “breaking covenant”?

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**Philippians 4:6-7**

What is the anecdote to anxiety?

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How does Nehemiah model this in his prayer?

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**II. Repentance**

- Day Three and Day Four
- Key Passage: Nehemiah 1:6
- Read the Key Passage and write down your personal insights.

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A key component of Nehemiah’s prayer was repentance.

He identified with the sins of the people and repented both for his own sins and for theirs in their unfaithfulness toward God. Israel’s history was replete with God’s people turning from God to idolatry and pagan practices. Repeatedly the Lord reminded them that if they turned back to Him, He would redeem them. Time and time again we see this pattern repeated: unfaithfulness and disobedience, turning back to God, and God redeeming His people. Nehemiah confessed their sins of disobedience against God’s commands that were given to Moses (v.7). God has promised us as well that if we return to Him in repentance he will heal and deliver us: *...if*

*my people who are called by my name will humble themselves and pray and seek my face I will hear from heaven and will forgive their sin and will heal their land (II Chronicles 7:14).. Nehemiah repented and reminded God of His promise to gather His people back when they turned to Him in repentance.*

What stood out to you as you read the Key Box?

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**II Chronicles 7:14**

What did God promise to do for the people if they sought Him in prayer?

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Journal a prayer of repentance in the area where you need restoration.

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**Matthew 3:2**

The first thing John the Baptist said in the Desert of Judea was of repentance. Why do you think those were his first words?

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**II Corinthians 7:8-10**

What is the difference between godly sorrow and worldly sorrow?

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How are you able to tell that Nehemiah's repentance was sincere?

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**Romans 2:1-4**

What leads us to repent?

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Why do you think repentance as modeled by Nehemiah is a key component to prayer?

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**Acts 26:20 & Luke 3:8**

What do the Scriptures in Acts 26 and Luke 3 say should follow repentance?

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**III. Prayer of Faith**

- Day Five and Day Six
- Key Passage: Psalm 6:9
- Read the Key Passage and write down your personal insights.

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**33** Faith was a key component of Nehemiah’s prayer; he did not doubt that God would be faithful to His promises. Nehemiah knew of the unfaithfulness of the Israelites to God, but he also knew of God’s faithfulness to them throughout the years. He reminds the Lord of His promise to return the exiles to Jerusalem so that He could have a dwelling place. Jesus commended people for their faith indicating that their faith had been a catalyst for God’s response. Nehemiah knew that God was consistent, faithful, and trustworthy and so he placed his faith in God, not in the circumstances at hand. It is so easy for us to look at the circumstances that we are praying about instead of being like Nehemiah and looking to God and His faithfulness to hear and answer our prayer. The writer of Hebrews puts it this way: *Let us fix our eyes on Jesus, the author and perfecter of our faith (Hebrews 12:2)*. Nehemiah looked to God for the solution to the problems in Jerusalem. He had compassion on the people in Jerusalem who were in trouble and disgrace facing a city with broken-down walls, and yet rather than seeking his

own solutions, he sought the Lord and was certain that God would be attentive to His prayer and provide them with a solution. We, like the city of Jerusalem, have “broken-down” walls in our lives: broken relationships, inability to receive God’s love, and financial stress. It is tempting to try to find our own solutions. The Lord is looking to raise up a people who, like Nehemiah, will turn to God in prayer and trust that God will be faithful to His promises.

What stood out to you as you read the Key Box?

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**Matthew 9:35-37**

What moved Jesus to act on behalf of the helpless, harassed people?

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How do we see Nehemiah exemplify compassion on the people of Israel?

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**Matthew 17:20**

What does Matthew say concerning a prayer of faith?

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What mountain do you have in your life that requires an extra measure of faith?

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How does Nehemiah exemplify that he trusted God to answer his prayer?

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**James 1:6**

When we ask God for wisdom in prayer, what does this passage in James say we must do?

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**Romans 10:16-17**

How do we grow our faith?

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This week, write out your prayer requests using Nehemiah's model of remembering God's promises and trusting His Word. Report back to the group the fruit of your prayers.

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**Life Application**

- »» Acknowledge God's greatness.
- »» Seek God through repentance.
- »» Increase your faith by meditating on God's promises.

**Prayer**

Lord, give me compassion to see the needs of others and a willing heart to fast and pray. Like Nehemiah, give me a humble heart to repent and to trust that You will hear my prayers. Help me not to doubt, but increase my faith so that I will not be anxious but will pray with conviction knowing that You are an awesome and great God abounding in love and faithfulness. In Jesus' name, Amen.

