

"On the Way" 365 Bible Reading Plan

NEHEMIAH 5

Nehemiah 5

Nehemiah five gives the account of the continued oppression from chapter four. Let's get up to date from Nehemiah two. After the great beginning of chapter two and the work and wall assignments to the different families in chapter three, the threats against Nehemiah and the people of Jerusalem intensified in chapter four. There were serious threats that could not be taken lightly, so Nehemiah *prepared for battles from the enemy, but did not stop the work*. A plan was developed for everyone to work but have his weapon with him and be ready to come to the defense of an attack at any time. Nehemiah received a commitment for the people who loved Jerusalem and were part of the work, but lived outside the city, to move inside and stay there until this great work was accomplished. It had to be a concentrated effort of all the people.

Chapter five opens with an unusual development. The people working were being oppressed and their lands taken away by the wealthy and religious leaders as they left their fields and normal work and worked on the rebuilding project. They complained to Nehemiah, and he confronted those of their own people who were

oppressing the people financially and Nehemiah demanded mercy and forgiveness of high interest rates and abusive financial practices such as usury. The leaders responded positively and gave back what had been seized and unethically taken from the people and God continued to bless the work that had begun.

Nehemiah saw that the people were doing the very best they could, so Nehemiah refused to take what the King of Persian allowed Nehemiah to take as an allowance for himself and his workers. In other words, in our modern equivalency, it would be like a governor suspending the taxes needed to run the governor's office. This brought great relief to the people and allowed the incredible work to be accomplished. This happened for a period of twelve years under the legal administration of Nehemiah and his cohorts. Nehemiah had other means of providing for the work of his administration and the Bible does not give the source of that income.

Prayer and Action Steps

Nehemiah is a man of prayer and a man of action. Sometimes God's people emphasize one to the exclusion of the other. In order to accomplish God's work, it takes both prayer and obedience

Date _____ Scripture _____

- *Read the chapter. If you have time, read it again.*
- *Highlight, underline or circle the Key Verse or Verses of the chapter.*
- *Ask yourself these questions as you read through the chapter.*

Is this historical narrative, analogy, metaphor, allegory, or some other element of speech or communicating truth?

What is the Context? Old Testament? New Testament? What is the writer speaking or writing about? To whom is he writing?

Is this a clear passage of Scripture (can only be interpreted one way)? Or could the passage be interpreted legitimately, in two or more ways, according to grammar and context?

Does the passage teach a Biblical Precept; that is, tells you something to be, do or act?

Are there principles in this chapter that if followed, would require me to change my attitudes or actions?

Does the passage give a Biblical Pattern that is followed here and other places in the Bible?
