

Nehemiah Bible Study Questions | Summer 2026

Introductory preparation

When studying scripture, context is key to understanding. There are two options from the bible project we recommend for preparation.

The Book of Ezra-Nehemiah Guide

<https://bibleproject.com/guides/book-of-ezra-nehemiah/>

Ezra-Nehemiah Overview

<https://bibleproject.com/videos/ezra-nehemiah/>

Accessible commentary recommendation

‘[Nehemiah For You](#)’ by Eric Mason produced by the Good Book Company.

Session 1 | Nehemiah 1

1. v1-3, Nehemiah sets the scene. The lack of a city wall meant God's people were defenceless against their enemies meaning they were in great trouble. It demonstrates the consequence of Israel's rebellion against God causing the people to feel disgrace. Clearly God has appointed Nehemiah to bring comfort, which is the meaning of his name. What does this say about the kindness of God?
2. In v4 we see Nehemiah's response, for days he mourned, fasted and prayed. During the exile fasting was commonplace. What causes you to mourn, fast and pray for our church and society?
3. In v5-11 we see 5 steps to Nehemiah's prayer:
 - a) He begins by declaring the nature of God and his covenantal love.
 - b) This leads to requesting God's attentiveness and listening ear, (repeated again at the end).
 - c) Now Nehemiah identifies with the sinfulness of his people in confession.
 - d) Followed by asking God to remember his promise to Moses.
 - e) Ending by asking God for favour and success as Nehemiah planned to seek the King's help.

How does this pattern of praying help us to pray?

4. The last line states simply 'I was cupbearer to the King'. What positions of responsibility has the Lord given you in your families, work, friendship groups and

church? For the benefit of others in the place the Lord has positioned you, what would be your prayer for success and favour?

Session 2 | Nehemiah 2:1-8

1. In v1-2 Nehemiah can't hide his sadness even though it was festival time. The King noticed and rightly identified this as a sadness of heart. The king could have ignored Nehemiah's emotions, but he didn't. What does this tell us about their relationship and Nehemiah's vulnerability? What can we learn from their relationship?
2. At the end of v2 to the start of v4 we see Nehemiah's facing his fear and taking courage resulting in getting the King's full attention. There is a beautiful picture of authenticity in community. How can this be developed in Kingdom Communities and other areas of our lives?
3. The end of v5-8 Nehemiah sends an arrow prayer and brave requests of the King which were granted. Nehemiah gives the glory to God for his success. What do we learn about Godly courage from this situation? Where are you seeking and seeing the gracious hand of God in your life and those who are following Jesus with you?

Session 3 | Nehemiah 2:9-20

1. In v12-16, why does Nehemiah choose to survey the state of the broken walls by himself at night? What does this say about the nature of how God sometimes leads us?
2. In v17-18, what do you think the ruined walls of the city represent in our lives and the life of the nation? What does seeing them clearly enable?
3. Looking at v17-18, why had the rebuilding work not already started, and what equivalently stops the work of the kingdom in and through our lives?
4. Who do Sanballat, Tobiah and Gershom represent in our lives and that of our church in their opposition to God's work of building (v19-20)? How does Nehemiah's response to them show us the way to deal with this opposition (and what doesn't he do that shows us the wrong ways to deal with it?)

5. Consider v20. Looking wider across the witness of Scripture, what does God promise to give us success in as we step forward in faith and courage? Seeing this, what might you need to step forward afresh today into today?

Session 4 | Nehemiah 3

1. Why did each one of these names in this passage get recorded in Scripture, and in similar lists elsewhere in it? What does this say to how we honour those who've gone before us in the faith?
2. Each person in this passage rebuilt part of the wall, and the whole rebuilding was a collective effort. What does this say to how we do life together as a church on mission, and our personal role in this?
3. V5 speaks of the nobles who wouldn't get involved in rebuilding. Why do you think this is, and what might equivalently stop us from getting involved in what God calls us all to?
4. Some of the sections rebuilt are more prestigious than others, some are larger than others. What does this say to the nature and dignity of our gifts and calling in the church's life and mission? (Perhaps think about Matthew 25:14-30, and who you are in this parable.)
5. What, as a result of studying this passage, is God calling you to commit or recommit to today?

Session 5 | Nehemiah 4:1-9

1. Looking back at the book of Nehemiah (especially Nehemiah 2:10&19) and also at this passage, why do you think Sanballat, Tobiah and others opposed the rebuilding of the wall of Jerusalem? What does this say to us about the nature of opposition to God's work we experience today?
2. Identify the ways in which the enemies of the work speak to undermine the work of rebuilding in this passage. What are the equivalent things we recognise in our life as coming from enemy opposition? How good are you at recognising them?
3. (v4) This raw prayer is honest and heart-felt. But do you think it's something we should or could pray? Where is the right place for this type of prayer, if any, and what difference does the coming of Jesus make to how we pray about those who oppose God's work?
4. How does v9 speak to the balance of prayer and practical action in crisis situations? Which one of these do you lean to in times of crisis and which do you need to develop?

Session 6 | Nehemiah 4:10-23

1. As the problem continue for Nehemiah and others, count the number of issues that need to be overcome to keep going in doing God's work in this passage. What does their number and variety say to you in your discipleship and work of kingdom mission? How does it relate to John 15:18-20 and Acts 14:22?
2. In the passage, how does Nehemiah deal with all the issues and problems? What do you notice about this that is challenging for how you deal with problems in life?
3. Who or what takes the role of Nehemiah for us in this passage when we face challenges and need encouragement (e.g. v14) and practical direction (e.g. v19-20) to walk through challenges? Reflecting on this, what do you need to do for Jesus to be this person more in your life?
4. Re-reading the passage: how would it have *felt* to be working on the rebuilding in the circumstances this passage describes? What temptations would you have faced, and how does this relate to temptations you face in your life and the call to endurance?

Session 7 | Nehemiah 5

1. Looking at v1-5, where is the outcry about need and against injustice seen here in Nehemiah's time, seen today? What stops us hearing its voice, and what do we need to do to hear it clearer?
2. Anger is a powerful force (v6). Thinking about both Nehemiah's strong anger here, and times when Jesus was recorded to be angry, what is it right to get angry about, and what are the limits to this? How should good anger be expressed, and what stops it becoming bad anger?
3. Considering v7-9, though we could look at injustice in the world around us, the look needs to start with the people of God, as here. Where is there a need to sort out injustices in the church, and what is God calling you to in this?
4. In this passage Nehemiah models an integrity in his usage of wealth that seeks to alleviate the plight of the poor and intervene in injustice (v10, 14-18). What is God calling you to do with the wealth you have, little or large, to do the same?
5. Looking at v19, do you think it is right for Nehemiah to pray this to God? If so, what might such a prayer look like in your life, and what would the answer to it look like as well?

Session 8 | Nehemiah 8:1-12

1. (In Nehemiah's context, why was it so important for the people to hear from the book of the Law that this event is organised like this (v1-4)? What does this say to our relationship with Scripture today, and why we are to cultivate one?
2. Looking at v7-8, what are the equivalents to these interpreters of the Scripture in our lives as a church? What role should they play in our hearing and understanding of Scripture, and what stops you making the most of this?
3. Considering v9, why is there such weeping in response to Scripture? Does your experience this deep contrition in your life in response to its words, and if not, why not?
4. In v10-12, how is the 'joy of the Lord your strength'? What does this mean in Nehemiah's context, and also in ours?

Session 9 | Nehemiah 9

1. In Neh 9, this great prayer of the OT (one of the '999' prayers alongside Ezra 9 and Daniel 9), centres with a long recounting of God's dealings with his people back to him (v7-31). Why do they remind God of this, and what does this mean for our prayer lives today? What history do you sometimes need to recount back to God in your prayers?
2. Where in this prayer of v5-37 do they actually ask God for something in this prayer? What does this say to our prayer life?
3. In v36-37, they equate the sins of former generations as their own – hence the ongoing suffering of harsh overlords despite their return from exile. When is there a need for the right ownership of previous generation's and other people's sins in our prayer and confession? How does this chime with what Jesus does for us on the cross?
4. This prayer of confession and intercession is largely in preparation for an act of new commitment to the God (v38), which is expanded upon in Chapter 10. What is the relationship between prayer, confession, repentance, and renewed commitment in your life? How does Jesus's finished work on the cross help this?

Session 10 | Nehemiah 13:1-22

1. Considering v1-3, how has the exclusion of people from the community of faith changed from the NT church through to today? Why was this exclusion important in Nehemiah's time and where does some form of exclusion still apply today (see e.g. Matthew 18:17, 1 Corinthians 5:9-13). How does this challenge what we understand by inclusivity in the church – where are its limits?

2. In v4-9, how do you think Tobiah managed to do this provocative thing, and what was he trying to do in doing so? Does that explain Nehemiah's actions in v9, and can you relate this to Jesus's actions in the temple in Matthew 21:12-13? How does this apply to you on a personal level?

3. In v10-11 and v15-18, how do you think these subtle sins slipped into common practise? What does this say about our lives and need for vigilance, and what helps us spot likewise happening in them?

4. Give the sheer number of moral issues Nehemiah has to deal with in this chapter, despite all he's done, what does this say about the nature and power of sin? How does Jesus deal with sin more effectively than Nehemiah in this passage? What despite this remains similar in our time, however?