

Nehemiah – Leadership Principles

Lesson 5 – Success comes from God

Leader Notes

Read or have someone read the paragraph below before going into the questions.

Every individual and organization needs stability. Then actions can lead to productive outcomes. The people who had returned from Babylon had moved away from Jerusalem because it lacked protection. Now that Jerusalem was secure they could come back to property that had belonged to their ancestors.

1. 7:1-3

a. What some steps Nehemiah took to bring about some stability?

The people mentioned in this verse would guard the temple, preserve ritual purity, and look after furniture and supplies (1 Chron. 26:12-19; 2 Chron. 8:14). (1)

Nehemiah now turned his attention to organizing an orderly administration of the restored city. Two reliable, godly men were entrusted with governing the city. Nehemiah's brother Hanani seems to have filled a position similar to that of a mayor. Hananiah was responsible for military and police operations in the city. Strong security measures and military alertness had to continue, since a sneak attack was still a possibility. (2)

Nehemiah instructed that the gates were to be closed before the afternoon, when the heat of the day could induce sleep in the weary guards. This was a precaution against attack during the time when guards would have been the least alert, a tactic employed in ancient times by attacking troops. For Nehemiah to issue a command to take this precaution demonstrates that he was still concerned about a possible attack by Sanballat and his allies (cf. 4:1-23; 6:1-19). (3)

b. What are some leadership principles that he is applying?

Verse 1 – Restoring spiritual things first.

Verse 2 – Restoring orderly government which will support spiritual practices.

Verse 2 – He was delegating duties and responsibility to good God-fearing people.

Verse 3 – Prepared-ness.

2. 7:4-5

- a. How do these verses point to stability?

Nehemiah is keenly aware of God's work in his life. On this occasion he notes that it was God who gave him the idea to gather the leaders and the people together to take a census.

- b. How does this help in bringing about God's plan for Israel and His promise of a Savior?

Nehemiah's motive is godly: to complete the restoration of Jerusalem as God had promised through the prophets (Jer. 31:27-40; Dan. 9:25-27). He was thereby preparing for the ultimate hope of Israel, the coming of the Messiah (Mal. 3:1-4), who would be born in Bethlehem during another census (Micah 5:2; Luke 2:1-7).

3. 7:70-73

- a. Verses 70-72 – How does what happens in these verses play an important role in stability?

The gifts for the temple not only testify to the generosity of the people, but also to their relative affluence, although much of their wealth probably was given to them by their neighbors, as requested in the decree of Cyrus.

This would ensure the possibility of support for spiritual activities.

- b. Verse 73 – What is the end result spoken of here?

The final notice in this list is that people have settled in their own towns. This is also a reclaiming of God's promise through Jeremiah to bring the people back to the land He had once given them so that they could take possession of it (Jer. 30:3; see also Jer. 16:15; 24:6; 27:22; 29:10-14). By reclaiming their ancestral property, they were acknowledging God's faithful fulfillment of His promise.

4. Why is some sense of stability important in your life?

Answers will vary. Thank those who share. Don't force anyone to share.

