

Nehemiah

Chapter 5

Nehemiah Helps the Poor

Now the men and their wives raised a great outcry against their Jewish brothers. ² Some were saying, “We and our sons and daughters are numerous; in order for us to eat and stay alive, we must get grain.” ³ Others were saying, “We are mortgaging our fields, our vineyards and our homes to get grain during the famine.” ⁴ Still others were saying, “We have had to borrow money to pay the king’s tax on our fields and vineyards. ⁵ Although we are of the same flesh and blood as our countrymen and though our sons are as good as theirs, yet we have to subject our sons and daughters to slavery. Some of our daughters have already been enslaved, but we are powerless, because our fields and our vineyards belong to others.”

⁶ When I heard their outcry and these charges, I was very angry. ⁷ I pondered them in my mind and then accused the nobles and officials. I told them, “You are exacting usury from your own countrymen!” So I called together a large meeting to deal with them ⁸ and said: “As far as possible, we have bought back our Jewish brothers who were sold to the Gentiles. Now you are selling your brothers, only for them to be sold back to us!” They kept quiet, because they could find nothing to say. ⁹ So I continued, “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? ¹⁰ I and my brothers and my men are also lending the people money and grain. But let the exacting of usury stop! ¹¹ Give back to them immediately their fields, vineyards, olive groves and houses, and also the usury you are charging them—the hundredth part of the money, grain, new wine and oil.” ¹² “We will give it back,” they said. “And we will not demand anything more from them. We will do as you say.” Then I summoned the priests and made the nobles and officials take an oath to do what they had promised. ¹³ I also shook out the folds of my robe and said, “In this way may God shake out of his house and possessions every man who does not keep this promise. So may such a man be shaken out and emptied!” At this the whole assembly said, “Amen,” and praised the LORD. And the people did as they had promised. ¹⁴ Moreover, from the twentieth year of King Artaxerxes, when I was appointed to be their governor in the land of Judah, until his thirty-second year—twelve years—neither I nor my brothers ate the food allotted to the governor. ¹⁵ But the earlier governors—those preceding me—placed a heavy burden on the people and took forty shekels ^a of silver from them in addition to food and wine. Their assistants also lorded it over the people. But out of reverence for God I did not act like that. ¹⁶ Instead, I devoted myself to the work on this wall. All my men were assembled there for the

work; we did not acquire any land. ¹⁷ Furthermore, a hundred and fifty Jews and officials ate at my table, as well as those who came to us from the surrounding nations. ¹⁸ Each day one ox, six choice sheep and some poultry were prepared for me, and every ten days an abundant supply of wine of all kinds. In spite of all this, I never demanded the food allotted to the governor, because the demands were heavy on these people. ¹⁹ Remember me with favor, O my God, for all I have done for these people.

5:1 wives. The situation was so serious that the wives joined in the protest as they ran short of funds and supplies to feed their families. They complained not against the foreign authorities but against their own countrymen who were taking advantage of their poorer brothers at a time when all were needed for the defense of the country. (CSB)

Families of common people were being oppressed by economic practices of nobles and officials (v 7). (TLSB)

Jewish brothers. Fellow Judeans. (TLSB)

5:2 grain. About six to seven bushels would be needed for a man to feed his family for a month. (CSB)

Perhaps the time spent working on the walls took farmers away from raising crops, or there may have been several bad harvests resulting in a famine (v 3). (TLSB)

The complaints probably came when the project was well over half done. Nehemiah 6:15 states that the rebuilding of the wall took 52 days and ended on 25 Elul (October 2, 445 BC). Therefore, the work began on 4 Ab (August 12, 445 BC). (CC)

This was a particularly critical time for those who farmed. The month of Ab saw the continued harvest of grapes and the end of the fig harvest. Elul brought the end of the grape harvest and the first part of the olive harvest. Moreover, it would soon be Tishri and time to begin sowing the fields with grain crops. The men who had temporarily stopping farming in order to work on the wall were forfeiting their own labor on their crops, leaving it to their wives and children to complete these tasks without them. (CC)

Given the economic pressures on the people mentioned in their complaints, those who were rebuilding the wall were doing so sacrificially, at considerable cost to themselves. Nehemiah records three complaints that the builders began to raise (5:2-5). The first (5:2) does not mention land holdings and, therefore, may have come from those who were artisans, such as goldsmiths, perfumers, and merchants mentioned in Nehemiah 3. They would have neglected their businesses and may have been running low on funds to support themselves and

their families. They were asking for rations to sustain them for the rest of the project. (CC)

5:3 *mortgaging*. Even those who had considerable property were forced to mortgage it, benefiting the wealthy few (cf. Isa 5:8). In times of economic stress the rich got richer, and the poor got poorer. (CSB)

Necessary in order for the poor to buy food. (TLSB)

The second complaint came from landholders who were forced to mortgage their land, since their reserves were also running low. Apparently, their reserves had been already somewhat depleted due to a recent famine. (CC)

famine. The economic situation was aggravated by the natural conditions that had produced a famine. Some 75 years earlier the prophet Haggai had referred to a time of drought, when food was insufficient (Hag 1:5–11). Such times of distress were considered to be expressions of God’s judgment (Isa 51:19; Jer 14:13–18; Am 4:6). Famines were common in Palestine. They occurred in the time of Abraham (Ge 12:10), Isaac (Ge 26:1), Joseph (Ge 41:27, 54), Ruth (Ru 1:1), David (2Sa 21:1), Elijah (1Ki 18:2), Elisha (2Ki 4:38) and Claudius (Ac 11:28). (CSB)

5:4-5 The third complaint came from landholders as well. These men had been forced to sell some of their daughters into debt slavery and had already lost their fields and vineyards. That they needed to borrow more through selling their children into slavery was occasioned by the imperial tax, which was considerable. (CC) Yamauchi notes:

To pay the taxes and survive many of the poor had to borrow, often at exorbitant interest rates. In the Persian period the rates rose sharply from 20 percent under Cyrus and Cambyses up to 40 to 50 percent at the end of the fifth century BC. (CC)

Debt slavery was not prohibited in the OT, but there were limits placed on it so that the poor would retain some rights. Israelites who were sold into slavery were to be set free in the seventh, Sabbatical Year, and the Jubilee Year, when all debts were also to be canceled (Ex. 21:2-11; Lev. 25:1-55; Deut. 15:1-18). (CC)

The unrest because of mounting hardship threatened to do what Sanballat and his allies were unable to do – stop the construction of Jerusalem’s wall. Nehemiah would now be forced to confront the enemy with the people – the sins of those who heartlessly enriched themselves at the expense of their vulnerable neighbors, even though they were fellow members of God’s holy people. (CC)

5:4 tax. It is estimated that the Persian king collected the equivalent of 20 million darics a year in taxes. Little was ever returned to benefit the provinces, because most of it was melted down and stored as bullion. Alexander the Great found at Susa alone 9,000 talents (about 340 tons) of coined gold and 40,000 talents (about 1,500 tons) of silver stored as bullion. As coined money was increasingly taken out of circulation by taxes, inflation became rampant. The acquisition of land by the Persians and its removal from production also helped produce a 50 percent rise in prices during the Persian period. (CSB)

Aram word translated “tribute” in Ezr 4:13; 7:24. Levied by the Persian king on subjugated peoples. (TLSB)

5:5 our flesh ... our children. Both rich and poor were Judeans. (TLSB)

slavery. In times of economic distress families would borrow funds, using family members as collateral. If a man could not repay the loan and its interest, his children, his wife, or even the man himself could be sold into bondage. An Israelite who fell into debt, however, would serve his creditor as a “hired worker” (Lev 25:39–40). He was to be released in the seventh year (Dt 15:12–18), unless he chose to stay voluntarily. During the seven-year famine in Egypt, Joseph was approached by people who asked him to accept their land and their bodies in exchange for food (Ge 47:18–19). The irony for the Israelites was that at least as exiles in Mesopotamia their families were together, but now, because of dire economic necessity, their children were being sold into slavery. (CSB)

Families were forced to sell their children as slaves in order to pay debts or buy food. (TLSB)

5:6 WHEN I HEARD THEIR OUTCRY – He was prepared to stop and listen. He saw the complainers as people, not as statistics; and they were more important than his production schedule. He knew from long experience that people who are deeply concerned over some personal misfortune or hardship cannot give of their best. He, therefore, encouraged them to air their grievances. (Nehemiah and the Dynamics of Effective Leadership – p. 82)

Social and economic inequities (vv. 1-5) deeply troubled Nehemiah and threatened the stability of the community. (TLSB)

I was very angry. Sometimes it becomes necessary to express indignation against social injustice (cf. Mk 11:15–18; Eph 4:26). (CSB)

5:7 I PONDERED – Nehemiah probed beneath the surface issues to the real cause of their predicament. (Nehemiah and the Dynamics of Effective Leadership – p. 83)

ESV has “took counsel with myself,” which meant that he maulled it over in his mind as to what to do. (TLSB)

Nehemiah wisely did not vent his anger in precipitous action. Instead he thought the situation over carefully before accusing the upper classes of breaking the Law of Moses by lending money at interest to fellow Israelites. Their action was in violation of, for example, Ex. 22:25-27; Lev. 25:35-37; Deut. 23:19-20; 24:10-14. (CC)

usury. See notes on Ex 22:25–27; Lev 25:36; Dt 23:20. Josephus (*Antiquities*, 4.8.25) explains: “Let it not be permitted to lend upon usury to any Hebrew either meat or drink; for it is not just to draw a revenue from the misfortunes of a fellow countryman. Rather, in consoling him in his distress, you should reckon as gain the gratitude of such persons and the recompense that God has in store for an act of generosity.” (CSB)

LARGE MEETING – Mass meeting of all the people (Ezra 10:1). (TLSB)

5:8 BOUGHT BACK – Nehemiah and other leaders such as Ezra had brought Judeans back from captivity in Babylon. (TLSB)

Jewish brothers who were sold. An impoverished brother could be hired as a servant, but he was not to be sold as a slave (Lev 25:39–42). (CSB)

to the Gentiles. The sale of fellow Hebrews as slaves to foreigners was forbidden (Ex 21:8). (CSB)

They could get a better price by selling them to foreigners, because the six year limit of servitude was not observed by non-Israelites. (PBC)

kept quiet. Their guilt was so obvious that they had no rebuttal or excuse (cf. Jn 8:7–10). (CSB)

By pointing out that their abusive actions were not only inhumane, but also violated the Word of God, Nehemiah was able to strip the creditors of any defense. (CC)

5:9 *not right*. Failure to treat others, especially fellow believers, with compassion is an insult to our Maker and a blot on our testimony (cf. Pr 14:31; 1Pe 2:12–15). (CSB)

When the debtor could produce no reply to Nehemiah’s words, their silence was an admission of their inexcusable guilt.

Nehemiah’s response is to go to the heart of the problem. (Nehemiah and the Dynamics of Effective Leadership – p. 80)

WALK IN THE FEAR OF OUR GOD – Then Nehemiah appealed to their status as people of God living under the Gospel. The fear of Yahweh can denote fear of God’s wrath (Prov. 24:21-22). Most often, however, it also denotes a positive, filial relationship to God through faith that causes a redeemed person to want to please the heavenly Father (Prov. 8:13). God, who bestows blessings for temporal and eternal life and leads people to wisdom, initiates, sustains, and completes this positive relationship. This objective saving relationship with God is established by Christ, the Wisdom of God. (CC)

Thus the fear of Yahweh is first and foremost a filial initiated by God when He reckons sinners as righteous by His grace alone and simply through faith (Gen. 15:5; Is. 53:11; Hab. 2:4). Believers in the one true and triune God are justified and have this positive relationship with God, who has forgiven them and made them His children. Of all the books of the OT, Proverbs most often speaks of this filial relationship with God by using phrases with “to fear” God or “the fear” of Yahweh. It is God alone who first promised this relationship through the conquering Seed of Eve (Gen. 3:15). He established this relationship with His people when He called their ancestor Abraham (Gen. 17:7; Deut. 29:14-15). He then delivered His chosen people from Egypt, instituted His covenant with them, and graciously promised to be their God. (Ex. 6:7; Lev. 11:45; 22:32-33; 25:38; Num. 15:41; Jer. 11:4). This Gospel relationship to Yahweh is encapsulated by Nehemiah in the phrase “the fear of our God.” (CC)

Nehemiah, therefore, appealed to the leaders to live lives that demonstrated their faith in the gracious, triune God who had made them His people. This correspondence between the fear of God and one’s walk in life is mentioned in several passages in the OT (Deut. 8:6; 10:12; 13:4; Pss. 86:11; 128:1; Prov. 14:2; 2 Chron. 6:31) and was to be the visible hallmark of every Israelite’s faith. The NT conveys this same emphasis as Christ Himself is “the way” (John 16:6) and believers are to “walk in Him” (Col. 2:6). (see also, e.g., Rom. 4:12; 6:4; Eph. 2:10; 4:1; Col. 1:10; 1 John 1:7; 2 John 6) (CC)

AVOID REPROACH – Social inequities found in Judah invited ridicule of neighboring nations. (TLSB)

5:10 LENDING – Nehemiah set an example by lending money and grain without charging interest (v. 7). (TLSB)

Nehemiah did not simply call on others to repent and live in the light of the Gospel. As a true leader, when confronted with a sin in which he himself had participated, he admitted that he, his family, and members of his administration were among those who were guilty of lending money for profit. This confession of sin demonstrated his true contrition. Moreover, he showed true repentance and faith when he included himself in the mandate to live in a new way that conforms to God’s Word. Most likely Nehemiah was not just speaking rhetorically

or because of collective guilt he bore as head of the people who had sinned. Nehemiah must have been among the more wealthy in Jerusalem to have made such loans and to have been able to afford to forgive them, especially considering the daily expense he had as governor (see Neh. 5:17-18). (CC)

let the exacting of usury stop! The OT condemns the greed that seeks a profit at the expense of people (Ps 119:36; Isa 56:9–12; 57:17; Jer. 6:13; 8:10; 22:13–17; Eze. 22:12–13; 33:31). In view of the economic crisis facing his people, Nehemiah urges the creditors to relinquish their rights to repayment with interest. (CSB)

Although the Bible does not directly speak to the topic, it does leave us with two principles to follow. On the one hand, we are to do everything in our power to help those in real need. On the other hand, we are not to encourage the laziness of parasites who would live off the labors of others. (PBC)

5:11 *grain, new wine and oil.* See notes on 10:37; Dt 7:13. (CSB)

USURY – ESV has “percentage.” This was the interest paid on money that had been loaned and it was to be returned. (TLSB)

Nehemiah’s call for reparations to the debtor by the creditors was comprehensive. It included restoration of property (fields, vineyards, olive trees, houses) that had been forfeited on defaulted loans as well as the payments received as interest on the loans (money or payment in kind). (CC)

5:12 *priests.* They witnessed oaths sworn by nobles and officials. (TLSB)

The wisdom and effectiveness of Nehemiah’s leadership is shown in the creditors’ pledge not only to return the property and repay the interest charged, but also their pledge not to seek any additional interest. However, Nehemiah was well aware that in any group some will try to find ways around the letter of the law. Therefore, he took two further actions to impress upon the people the seriousness of their pledge. First, he called the priests to administer oaths to each creditor, solemnizing the pledge, most likely by invoking God Himself to ensure that all of His people complied. Second, Nehemiah also took on the character of a prophet, many of whom performed symbolic actions that reinforced the message of their prophecies (e.g., 1 Kings 11:29-39; Jer. 13:1-11; Ezek. 4:1-5:4). (CC)

5:13 *shook out the folds of my robe.* Symbolizing the solemnity of an oath and reinforcing the attendant curses for its nonfulfillment. (CSB)

Used like a pocket. Nehemiah’s words interpret the meaning of this symbolic gesture, calling on God to punish anyone who broke his promise. (TLSB)

Nehemiah symbolically shook out the folds of his robe, calling on God to enforce the oath by shaking out from the land any creditor who did not keep his word. These two actions insured the response of the people both vocally (“amen”) and in actually carrying out their pledge. (CC)

Since the folds near the waist were used as pockets, this gesture was the equivalent of us turning our pockets inside out to show that we don’t have a penny in them. Here the action was a dramatic way of symbolizing the judgment which God would bring on those who oppressed the poor. (PBC)

Amen. See 8:6; Nu 5:22; see also note on Dt 27:15. (Not simply approval but a solemn, formal assertion that the people accept and agree to the covenant and its curses and blessings.) (CSB)

praised the LORD. Spontaneous outpouring of praise because of the favorable outcome of the assembly. (TLSB)

5:1–13 Governor Nehemiah addresses the problems caused by excessive interest rates and taxes and sets an example of generosity for the leaders. In politics, words are cheap but goodwill is rare and good deeds are rarer still. When people are unfairly burdened, we can follow Nehemiah’s example by relieving them, whether by providing for fairer laws or by helping them directly. At all times, let us give praise to Christ, who sets more than a good example, for He freely bore our debt of sin and guilt. • We praise Your generous ways, O Lord, and thank You for Your mercy. Amen. (TLSB)

5:14 *appointed.* By King Artaxerxes. (TLSB)

thirty-second year. From Apr. 1, 433 B.C., to Apr. 19, 432. Nehemiah served his first term as governor for 12 years before being recalled to court (13:6), after which he returned to Jerusalem (13:7) for a second term whose length cannot be determined. (CSB)

food allotted to the governor. See v. 18. Provincial governors normally assessed the people in their provinces for their support. But Nehemiah, like Paul (1Co 9; 2Th 3:8–9), sacrificed even what was normally his in order to serve as an example to the people. (CSB)

This allowance, granted by the Persian government, would have been a drain on the resources of the province (cf. 1 Kings 2:7). Nehemiah’s ability to pay the maintenance of his official household suggests he was a man of considerable personal wealth. (TLSB)

Nehemiah tells the reader that he waived the food allowance for all twelve years of his tenure as governor. This was in contrast to previous governors who taxed the people the equivalent of forty shekels per day for their provisions and allowed

the minor officials who served under them to add further to this tax burden (Neh. 5:15). (CC)

In order for a man to be a leader he must have followers. And to have followers, he must have their confidence. Hence the supreme quality for a leader is unquestionable integrity. (Nehemiah and the Dynamics of Effective Leadership – p. 89)

5:15 *governors*. The Hebrew for this word is used of Sheshbazzar (Ezr 5:14) and Zerubbabel (Hag 1:1, 14; 2:2) as well as of various Persian officials (Ezr 5:3, 6; 6:6–7, 13; 8:36; Ne 2:7, 9; 3:7). Nehemiah was not referring here to men of the caliber of Zerubbabel. Some believe that Judah did not have governors before Nehemiah and that the reference here is to governors of Samaria. But new archaeological evidence, in the form of seals and seal impressions, confirms the reference to the previous governors of Judah. (CSB)

heavy burden. It was customary Persian practice to exempt temple personnel from taxation, which increased the burden on lay people. (CSB)

assistants. If the governors themselves used extortion, their underlings often proved even more oppressive (cf. Mt 18:21–35; 20:25–28). (CSB)

reverence for God. Those in high positions are in danger of abusing their authority over their subordinates if they forget that they themselves are servants of a superior “Master in heaven” (Col 4:1; cf. Ge 39:9; 2Co 5:11). (CSB)

Nehemiah several times expressed his reverence and devotion to God (2:8, 18; 4:14; 5:9). (TLSB)

5:16 *did not acquire any land*. Nehemiah’s behavior as governor was guided by principles of service rather than by opportunism. (CSB)

Nehemiah also notes that both he and his officials worked the wall. This seems to be what he considered his greatest accomplishment as governor. It not only occupies the first six chapters of Nehemiah, but it is also the only accomplishment he singles out here in this summary. In conjunction with this he notes that “we” – probably meaning he and his officials – had not acquired any land. This implies that he devoted all of his resources to his service to the people. In particular, this probably refers to not gaining any land from defaults on loans he may have given to poorer Judeans. He thereby kept faith with the pledged discussed in 5:9-13. (CC)

Dwight D. Eisenhower said, “In order for a man to be a leader he must have followers, he must have their confidence. Hence the supreme quality for a leader is unquestionable integrity. Without it, no real success is possible, no matter whether it is on a section gang, a football field, in an army, or in an office. If a

man's associated find him guilty of phoniness, if they find that he lacks forthright integrity, he will fail. His teachings and actions must square with each other. The first great need, therefore, is integrity and high purpose." (Nehemiah and the Dynamics of Effective Leadership – pp. 88-89)

Real reverence for God leads to uprightness of life (Proverbs 8:13). It brings us to a place in our experience where we gladly do His will (Eccl. 12:13), and it places us in a position where we can enjoy the blessings of His love (Deut. 5:29; Ps. 147:11) (Nehemiah and the Dynamics of Effective Leadership – p. 90)

In this respect Nehemiah is an example to believers today. We also have the greater example of our Lord Jesus, who did come to be served, but to serve and give his life as a ransom for many. (PBC)

5:17-18 These two verses outline the great expense that Nehemiah has as a governor, as he was expected to supply provisions for members of his administration as well as visiting officials in the Persian Empire. The daily amount of food is impressive and seems more than could be eaten by 150 men. However, they were joined by others, and Nehemiah's table probably saw several hundred people on a daily basis. Yet despite this, Nehemiah exacted no additional taxes. Instead he exercised restraint in order to lessen the people's burden. This is further confirmation that Nehemiah was quite wealthy and must have had other means of income, perhaps including his family's estate in Judea (cf. 2:3). (CC)

5:17 *ate at my table.* As part of his social responsibility, a ruler or governor was expected to entertain lavishly. A text found at Nimrud has Ashurnasirpal II feeding 69,574 guests at a banquet for ten days. When Solomon dedicated the temple, he sacrificed 22,000 cattle and 120,000 sheep and goats, and held a great festival for the assembly for 14 days (1Ki 8:62–65). We are not told how many he fed (cf. 1Ki 4:27). (CSB)

at my table 150 men. Probably included his servants. (TLSB)

5:18 *Each day.* The meat listed here would provide one meal for 600–800 persons, including the 150 Jews and officials of v. 18. Cf. Solomon's provisions for one day (1Ki 4:22–23). (CSB)

choice sheep. Cf. Mal 1:8. (CSB)

poultry. Chickens were domesticated in the Indus River Valley by 2000 B.C. and were brought to Egypt by the time of Thutmose III (15th century B.C.). They were known in Mesopotamia and in Greece by the eighth century B.C. The earliest inscriptional evidence for Palestine is the seal of Jaazaniah (dated c. 600 B.C.), which depicts a fighting rooster. (CSB)

5:19 *Remember me.* See note on 1:8; cf. Heb 6:10. Perhaps Nehemiah's memoirs (see Introduction to Ezra: Literary Form and Authorship) were inscribed as a memorial that was set up in the temple. A striking parallel to Nehemiah's prayer is found in a prayer of Nebuchadnezzar: "O Marduk, my lord, do remember my deeds favorably as good [deeds]; may (these) my good deeds be always before your mind." (CSB)

King Hezekiah expressed a similar request. (TLSB)

This section closes with a short prayer where Nehemiah implores God to "remember." Previously, Nehemiah had called on God to "remember" words He had spoken to Moses (1:8-9), and He had called on the people to "remember" God and His Word (4:14). Now he petitions God to "remember" him and his good works, a kind of prayer he will also include later (13:14, 22, 31). For God to "remember" is the same as for God not to wipe out Nehemiah's acts of faith and love (13:1). Nehemiah would accompany one of his later prayers for God to "remember" with the request for God to spare him (13:22), which means that God would mercifully forgive his sins. These passages can be compared to the petition of the penitent thief on the cross, "Jesus, remember me when you come into your kingdom" (Luke 23:42), a prayer that Christ answered with the promise of paradise (Luke 23:43). The NT also promises that God will remember the good deeds of believers and reward them by His grace. (E.g, Mt. 25:20-23; Lk. 19:16-19, 26); Rev. 14:13; 19:8). (CC)

Here Nehemiah offers the good that he did for the people as evidence of "the fear (our) of God" (5:9, 16) that was in his heart. Nehemiah is not claiming to have earned God's favor – and in fact, he does not pray that he deserves any blessing. Instead he asks God to remember him in light of God's promise to bless those who love him, and keep his commandments (Ex. 20:6; Deut. 7:9; Lk. 1:50). Thus it is not trust in his own merits before God, but faith in God's promise that moves Nehemiah to utter these short prayers. They have an eschatological perspective because they look forward to the Last Day and the universal judgment after the second advent of Jesus Christ. Only then will God raise all the dead, condemn unbelievers to everlasting damnation, and conduct believers into eternal life in the new creation. At that time He will publicly recount and reward the believers' "acts of faith, which He will remember. (E.g., Is. 66:18-22; Ps. 58:11; Prov. 22:4; Dan 12:2-3; Mt. 5:12; 25:34-40; 2 Jn. 8) (CC)

my good. Nehemiah was eager for God's blessing on what he had done. (TLSB)

5:14–19 Nehemiah sets an excellent example for his countrymen of generosity that honors the Lord, our Maker As the Lord grants you opportunity, lead others by good example. Call for the Lord's blessing. He who blessed you through Baptism and faith in His name will provide for your every need in Christ. • Grant me a heart for sincere service, O Lord, that I may bless my neighbors and colleagues. Amen. (TLSB)