

OWNED

WEEK 1 | How God Builds

PRAYER

Dear Lord and Heavenly Father,

There is so much for me to learn and I pray that I would have a teachable spirit. Thank you for the Scriptures, for Nehemiah the scribe, and Eliashib the high priest, who faithfully carried out the work you gave them to do with a willing spirit and joyful heart. They became such good examples of faithfulness to emulate. Thank you for the gifts and graces that you have given me. I pray that I would carry out the work that you have called me to do faithfully, and for your glory. This I ask in Jesus' name, Amen.

[Prayer Knowing Jesus](#)

WARM UP

(OPTIONAL)

What is your favourite piece of art, and why?

PRAYER



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WORD

¹⁵ So the wall was finished on the twenty-fifth day of the month Elul, in fifty-two days. ¹⁶ And when all our enemies heard of it, all the nations around us were afraid and fell greatly in their own esteem, for they perceived that this work had been accomplished with the help of our God. ¹⁷ Moreover, in those days the nobles of Judah sent many letters to Tobiah, and Tobiah's letters came to them. ¹⁸ For many in Judah were bound by oath to him, because he was the son-in-law of Shecaniah the son of Arah: and his son Jehohanan had taken the daughter of Meshullam the son of Berechiah as his wife. ¹⁹ Also they spoke of his good deeds in my presence and reported my words to him. And Tobiah sent letters to make me afraid.

¹ Now when the wall had been built and I had set up the doors, and the gatekeepers, the singers, and the Levites had been appointed, ² I gave my brother Hanani and Hananiah the governor of the castle charge over Jerusalem, for he was a more faithful and God-fearing man than many. ³ And I said to them, "Let not the gates of Jerusalem be opened until the sun is hot. And while they are still standing guard, let them shut and bar the doors. Appoint guards from among the inhabitants of Jerusalem, some at their guard posts and some in front of their own homes." ⁴ The city was wide and large, but the people within it were few, and no houses had been rebuilt.

[NEHEMIAH 6:15-19; 7:1-4](#)

"The church needs pastors and leaders who sacrifice for God's people, not take advantage of them. We see in Nehemiah an unusually humble leader that serves others at a great cost to himself. A few examples that pepper the book:

- Nehemiah leaves the comfortable refuge of Susa, a winter retreat for Persian kings, out of concern for God's people.
- He also confronts the wealthy and influential citizens of Jerusalem, and calls them to account for exacting interest from the common people. They were even taking some of their fellow Judahites' children as slaves for the repayment of outstanding debts. Risking his own influence as a leader, he brings the heat and protects the vulnerable in the community.
- In Nehemiah 5, Nehemiah the governor hosts hundreds of people for daily meals in his home—on his own dime. Out of compassion for the people, he didn't demand the governor's food allowance.

The gospel shines brightest when those who proclaim it advocate for the vulnerable among them. Nehemiah teaches us what sacrificial, Christ-like leadership looks like.

- [Jaime Owens, 5 Reasons you should Preach through Nehemiah](#)

GUIDE QUESTIONS

(NUMBERED ACCORDING TO LEVEL OF DEPTH AND READINESS TO SHARE)

1. On a scale from 1-10 (1 = none at all; 10 = extreme), how would you rate your ability to trust God to step out of your comfort zone? Why have you rated yourself this way?
2. God builds REVELATIONALLY. Has it been revealed to you how much you need to trust God with everything you have? Have you fully put your trust in him? Why or why not?
3. God builds RELATIONALLY. As much as Nehemiah was able to build a team, he was also able to recognise when people had every intent to tear down what he was called to build. Do the people you have close relationships with build you up or tear you down when they comment on how you live your life?
4. God builds GENERATIONALLY. Will what you are investing your time, talent, and treasure in outlast you for generations to come? Why or why not?

If you are not yet a follower of Jesus, would you choose today to trust him? Will you enable him to have all authority as the one who calls the shots in your life? Would you like to enter into a saving relationship with God through Jesus?

Ask your Life Group leader to lead you in prayer to receive Christ. You can pray this prayer:

Dear Lord Jesus, I know that I am a sinner, and I ask for your forgiveness. I believe you died for my sins and rose from the dead. I turn from my sins and invite you to be the master of my life. I want to trust and follow you as my Lord and Saviour. I declare that I am yours, and you are mine. In Jesus name, Amen.

NOTES