

LG | LeaderGuide

[Nehemiah 3]

WARM-UP (10 mins)

Prepare our minds to receive God's word.

- How was everyone's week? [Does everyone know each other? Any introductions needed?]
- Anything new in your lives'? Are there any burdens we need to pray for or victories we can celebrate together?
- When reflecting on the message this past Sunday, what most resonated with you?

ILLUMINATE (40 mins)

Open your Bibles to the primary text. If you do not have a Bible, your leader can provide one.

1. Read our primary text. Who can summarize what has happened in the opening chapters of Nehemiah to get us to chapter 3? What are the key events?

[Men from Judah come, Nehemiah hears news and weeps, confesses, prays/fasts, Kings asks him why he is sad, Nehemiah gives plan/requests, etc.]

2. Upon first reflection, chapter 3 seems like a list of names of people who built a wall, but we can learn some things from this text. Looking at a map of Jerusalem during Nehemiah's time, what are your observations?

Jerusalem was not a very large place. Without a wall, they would be very vulnerable.

3. After reading chapter 3, how would you describe the effort of the rebuilding of the wall?

Organized or aimless? Did Nehemiah have "buy in" from the people? What occupations were represented amongst the people?

Their effort was very organized. Family units were given sections to repair and all were working together to complete the construction. This effort was not exclusive to men, even daughters were working hard to bring the project to completion (v.12). Many occupations/trades were represented amongst the people, including goldsmiths, perfumers and merchants (v.8, v.32).

4. In the opening verses, we see that Eliashib built the sheep gate and consecrated it. Why do you think this gate was consecrated apart from the others? Why Eliashib?

The sheep gate is likely where sacrifices were brought into the city and it would have been consecrated for this reason. Eliashib would have been the one to initiate the consecration since he was a priest.

5. Did the wall have to be built from the ground up? How does this text help us gain a better picture of the condition of the wall?

There are verses that say portions of the wall were rebuilt and other verses that say that the wall was repaired. Some portions of the wall needed more attention than others.

6. As the city walls were being rebuilt and restored, what was the status of the rest of the city? In what order was the city rebuilt and who was responsible for each phase? What period of Jerusalem's history is this referred to?

Under the leadership of Zerubbabel and Joshua, the altar was restored first then the foundation of the temple was laid. Twenty years later (516 B.C.) the temple was rebuilt, giving this period the name the Second Temple period. Nehemiah arrived later (444-420? B.C.) to complete the repair of the walls.

7. Why is a discussion of Nehemiah and a wall important for us today?

In the grander narrative of Scripture God is protecting his people, reminding them of their need for faithfulness in keeping the Torah (Mosaic Law) and their faithfulness in keeping worship. If we don't understand the history of the temple and God's people, we will not understand the root of our salvation and the significance of Jesus making us the temple of God under the New Covenant. For us today, we have a responsibility as the church for every one of us to be engaged/pulling our weight and to be unified across race, background, age, socio-economic status, working for the common good of God, His kingdom, and His people. Israel was united by birth, but we are united by the Spirit of Christ.

PRAY

Use this time to pray specifically. What does tonight's conversation lead you to pray for? What burdens have been presented in conversation?