

LG | AnswerGuide

[Nehemiah 6 – Self Guided]

WARM-UP (10 mins)

Prepare your mind to receive God's word. Take a moment to be silent. Pray for your mind to be still amidst the noise to receive God's Word.

(Briefly flip through chapters 1-5 to recall how we arrive in chapter 6. Now, read chapter 6.)

ILLUMINATE (40 mins)

Open your Bibles to the primary text.

1. Sanballat, Tobiah and Gesham urgently requested a meeting with Nehemiah in the opening verses of chapter 6, why?

They knew that Nehemiah and the Jews were very close to completing the construction of the wall. All that remained was to set up the doors in the gates. Their window of opportunity to prevent the Jews from establishing themselves once again in Jerusalem was quickly closing.

2. How did Nehemiah respond to the enemy's repeated requests to meet? Are you realistic about the enemy's attempt to thwart what God has called you to?

Nehemiah declined all requests to meet because he knew that God had called him to this task.

Anytime a believer pursues the will of God in their life, the enemy will be near and attempt to disrupt the work of God (1 Peter 5:8-9). Nehemiah had his eyes fixed on the command of God and it kept him out of the snares of the devil.

3. Nehemiah went from being cupbearer to the King to the governor of a city of rubble. Yet he said, "I cannot stop, I am doing a great work." How did Nehemiah's work get deemed a "great work"? Currently, would you describe your life's work as a great work?

Nehemiah's work was not great because he was stacking stones. Nehemiah's work was great because it was the will of God. His work was great because he was dedicated to God's name, God's promises, and God's people. If you love the Lord your God with all your heart, soul and mind. And if you love your neighbor as yourself, you are doing great work (Matt. 22:37-39).

4. What takes place in verses 6-7? How does Nehemiah respond? How do you typically respond to rumors about you? How does Nehemiah's response help direct us when we are falsely accused?

Sanballat is spreading rumors about Nehemiah in attempt to frighten him and manipulate the situation. Nehemiah responds by standing in truth and rejecting the claims. In verse 9, he diagnoses their motives and continues his work, asking God to “strengthen his hands.”

5. What takes place in verses 10-11? What do we know about what is required to enter the temple of God? What equipped Nehemiah to rightly handle this situation and spare his life?

Nehemiah knew that priests were only permitted to enter the temple only if certain criteria were first met (time of year, washings, sacrifices, etc.). No one was permitted to simply walk into, much less hide in the temple. Nehemiah knew God’s word. He knew God would never request him to do something expressly forbidden in the word of God. If you want to know the will of God...know God’s word.

6. How long did it take for Nehemiah and the people to finish the wall? How was this received by their enemies? What can we learn from this great feat?

It took 52 days to complete the wall. Nehemiah’s enemies were fearful of the God who helped him and the people complete this monumental task. We can know that if God is with us, great things we can accomplish.

7. Verses 17-18 gives us a glimpse into the greater cultural issue that is present within Judah? Based on this verse, what do you think has happened?

The Jewish nobility have intermarried with non-Jews, specifically Tobiah. Ezra was strongly against intermarriage (see Ezra 9-10), which is likely why Tobiah is against the continuity of Ezra’s work through Nehemiah’s and the people.

8. In your own words, how would you explain the book of Nehemiah (chapter 1-6) to someone else?

[This is an opportunity to internalize the Bible and to help us to become better storytellers for our kids, etc.]

KIDS EMPHASIS

Regardless of what people around you think or even say, God decides what is most important in life. God’s plan should be our plan; love God and love others. The Bible is our map and the Holy Spirit is our compass!

Questions to discuss with kids...

1. What do you think is most important as we live our lives?
2. How does Nehemiah show his love for God and love for others?

PRAY

Use this time to pray specifically. Pray for the needs of others; locally and abroad.