

# Come Help Us!

Zoe Christian Fellowship of Whittier

Darnella Ferguson, Small Groups Ministry Coordinator

**Objective:** God can use ordinary people to make an extraordinary impact on the lives of others. Nehemiah is a prime example!

## **Key Scriptures:**

### ***Act 16:9-10 NIV***

*9 During the night Paul had a vision of a man of Macedonia standing and begging him, "Come over to Macedonia and help us." 10 After Paul had seen the vision, we got ready at once to leave for Macedonia, concluding that God had called us to preach the gospel to them.*

## **Week 1:**

### **Nehemiah's Response:**

#### ***Nehemiah 1:1-4 NIV***

*1 The words of Nehemiah son of Hakaliah:*

*In the month of Kislev in the twentieth year, while I was in the citadel of Susa, 2 Hanani, one of my brothers, came from Judah with some other men, and I questioned them about the Jewish remnant that had survived the exile, and also about Jerusalem.*

*3 They said to me, "Those who survived the exile and are back in the province are in great trouble and disgrace. The wall of Jerusalem is broken down, and its gates have been burned with fire."*

*4 When I heard these things, I sat down and wept. For some days I mourned and fasted and prayed before the God of heaven.*

**Group Discussion: Take a moment to reflect on those in our current society, who do not have family connections, resources, love, peace, and support.**

**How does that impact you?**

**Have you ever asked God to break your heart for the things that break His?**

Nehemiah's initial response to the unfavorable news he'd received about the critical condition of the Jewish people outwardly displayed his heartbreak. As stated above in Nehemiah 1:4, Nehemiah wept, mourned, fasted and prayed before God. Once Nehemiah began to mirror the essence of God's heart, it caused a domino effect that would unlock and expose the course of his life's purpose.

In Psalm 82:13, God has commanded us to, "*Defend the weak and the fatherless; uphold the cause of the poor and the oppressed*". The Jewish people were in an oppressed state and needed help. Crisis has a

## Come Help Us! – OCTOBER 2022

way of appearing that there is no way out. Some of us have been subjected to crisis situations in various seasons of our lives. Satan wants us to believe there is no way out, but we all know he's the father of lies. The word of God says so in John 8:44, "You belong to your father, the devil, and you want to carry out your father's desires. He was a murderer from the beginning, not holding to the truth, for there is no truth in him. When he lies, he speaks his native language, for he is a liar and the father of lies".

The way out of the crisis requires the unmatched outpouring of the Holy Spirit. The Holy Spirit is our helper. Per John 14:15-18, "If you love Me, keep My commandments. And I will pray the Father, and He will give you another Helper, that He may abide with you forever— the Spirit of truth, whom the world cannot receive, because it neither sees Him nor knows Him; but you know Him, for He dwells with you and will be in you. I will not leave you orphans; I will come to you". Additionally, Isaiah 44:3 states, "For I will pour out water on the thirsty land and streams on the dry ground; I will pour out my spirit on your offspring and my blessing on your descendants". In this case, the thirsty, dry land represents the crisis, and the Holy Spirit is the thirst-quenching answer.

*Take a moment to read **Acts 2:11-18***

**Group Discussion:** Are you in need of thirst quenching from the Holy Spirit regarding a current crisis in your life or in the life of someone you know right now? *If so, pause and pray.*

**Thoughts/Revelation:**

---

---

---

---

## **Week 2:**

### **Nehemiah's Heartbreak Leads to Action:**

***Nehemiah 2:2-3 NIV***

*In the month of Nisan in the twentieth year of King Artaxerxes, when wine was brought for him, I took the wine and gave it to the king. I had not been sad in his presence before, 2 so the king asked me, "Why does your face look so sad when you are not ill? This can be nothing but sadness of heart."*

Last week, we learned of Nehemiah's broken heart. As seen above, his heartbreak was so visible that it caused King Artaxerxes to take notice. The word of God states that Nehemiah was afraid to admit his heartbreak to the king, but he continued in prayer, moved with intention and favor followed.

**Group Discussion:** Can you recall a time when you felt a sense of urgency to take-action in response to something you felt passionate about? What are you passionate about today? Please share.

---

---

---

---

## Come Help Us! – OCTOBER 2022

Nehemiah began to verbalize his plan of action in Nehemiah 2:4-5, and it states, 4 The king said to me, “What is it you want?” Then I prayed to the God of heaven, 5 and I answered the king, “If it pleases the king and if your servant has found favor in his sight, let him send me to the city in Judah where my ancestors are buried so that I can rebuild it.”

In many cases, God uses his people as vessels to carry out assignments. Are you willing to allow God to use you? Do you have interest in being in support of a larger vision?

***Nehemiah’s heartbreak went from sadness and tears > prayer and fasting > verbalizing the plan > taking actionable steps.***

Nehemiah’s actionable steps began with research. This research provided more clarity and further prepared him for the strategy God had given him. He quietly and systematically examined the crisis up close and in so doing, he became a supernatural building inspector.

### ***Nehemiah 2:11-15***

*I went to Jerusalem, and after staying there three days 12 I set out during the night with a few others. I had not told anyone what my God had put in my heart to do for Jerusalem. There were no mounts with me except the one I was riding on.*

*13 By night I went out through the Valley Gate toward the Jackal Well and the Dung Gate, examining the walls of Jerusalem, which had been broken down, and its gates, which had been destroyed by fire. 14 Then I moved on toward the Fountain Gate and the King’s Pool, but there was not enough room for my mount to get through; 15 so I went up the valley by night, examining the wall. Finally, I turned back and reentered through the Valley Gate.*

### **Nehemiah’s actionable steps:**

- 1. Before he left the king’s presence, he set security in place.**
  - a. Nehemiah 2:7 states, I also said to him, “If it pleases the king, may I have letters to the governors of Trans-Euphrates, so that they will provide me safe-conduct until I arrive in Judah?”
- 2. He planned for supplies and resources.**
  - a. Nehemiah 2:8 states, “And may I have a letter to Asaph, keeper of the royal park, so he will give me timber to make beams for the gates of the citadel by the temple and for the city wall and for the residence I will occupy?” And because the gracious hand of my God was on me, the king granted my requests.
- 3. As stated previously, he conducted research of the crisis up close.**

### **Thoughts/Revelation:**

---

---

---

---

### **Week 3:**

#### **The Work Began:**

Many of us are quite familiar with the term, ‘there’s strength in numbers’. Take a moment to read I *Corinthians 12:12-27*, as it paints a clear picture of how we all have a part in the body of Christ. Nehemiah fully grasped this concept, as reality and it led to the next step in his actionable plan.

**Nehemiah began to mobilize teams and inspired them to carry out the assignment with full understanding that the hand of God was on him.**

- a. *Nehemiah 2:17-18 states, 17 Then I said to them, “You see the trouble we are in: Jerusalem lies in ruins, and its gates have been burned with fire. Come, let us rebuild the wall of Jerusalem, and we will no longer be in disgrace.” 18 I also told them about the gracious hand of my God on me and what the king had said to me. They replied, “Let us start rebuilding.” So, they began this good work.*

Nehemiah led the work, but he was not alone in his efforts to rebuild the walls. God provided a team of destiny helpers to work alongside him, and they were ready to work. The unique thing about the workers is that they were not necessarily skilled contractors and developers. They, too, were ordinary people who were simply receptive to the call and shared Nehemiah’s compassion – Ex: goldsmiths, perfume makers, priests, rulers of districts, etc., yet God used them to do the extraordinary.

The word of God speaks of this in scripture:

#### ***Matthew 9:35-38***

*35 Jesus went through all the towns and villages, teaching in their synagogues, proclaiming the good news of the kingdom and healing every disease and sickness. 36 When he saw the crowds, he had compassion on them, because they were harassed and helpless, like sheep without a shepherd. 37 Then he said to his disciples, “The harvest is plentiful but the workers are few. 38 Ask the Lord of the harvest, therefore, to send out workers into his harvest field.”*

#### ***Read Nehemiah 3:32 – Many workers pitched in to help!***

Along the journey, Nehemiah further exhibited his desire to stop the cycle of oppression. Throughout his opposition, he managed to direct his attention to helping the poor, as seen in Nehemiah chapter 5. He had a special ear to the cries of those in need.

#### ***Nehemiah 5:3-13***

*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 fellow Jews and though our children 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.”*

## Come Help Us! – OCTOBER 2022

*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 charging your own people interest!” So I called together a large meeting to deal with them 8 and said: “As far as possible, we have bought back our fellow Jews who were sold to the Gentiles. Now you are selling your own people, 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 us stop charging interest! 11 Give back to them immediately their fields, vineyards, olive groves and houses, and also the interest you are charging them—one percent of the money, grain, new wine and olive 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 their house and possessions anyone who does not keep this promise. So may such a person be shaken out and emptied!”*

*At this the whole assembly said, “Amen,” and praised the Lord. And the people did as they had promised.*

**Group Discussion:** Do you believe God can use you to do the extraordinary? Have you witnessed this first-hand in your life or in the life of another? Explain.

Extraordinary – remarkable, exceptional, astonishing, very unusual, amazing

**Thoughts/Revelation:**

---

---

---

---

## **Week 4:**

### **Nehemiah Finished the Wall:**

#### ***Nehemiah 7:1-4***

*After the wall had been rebuilt and I had set the doors in place, the gatekeepers, the musicians and the Levites were appointed. 2 I put in charge of Jerusalem my brother Hanani, along with Hananiah the commander of the citadel, because he was a man of integrity and feared God more than most people do. 3 I said to them, “The gates of Jerusalem are not to be opened until the sun is hot. While the gatekeepers are still on duty, have them shut the doors and bar them. Also appoint residents of Jerusalem as guards, some at their posts and some near their own houses.”*

**Group Discussion:** What is one word you would use to describe Nehemiah’s characteristics? Do you see any of those characteristics within yourself? Please explain.

## Come Help Us! – OCTOBER 2022

Nehemiah was a true leader. Completion of the wall had finally come, but Nehemiah did not stop there. He took a very comprehensive approach and began to set things in order. He paid close attention to the details. He positioned gatekeepers and guards to protect the God-ordained vision and by doing so, honored the work of the people. He was intentional about the need and proper security was one of those measures. Musicians were stationed to give God glory. He was also led of the Holy Spirit to conduct a census to document family connections. The people became responsible for one another. In fact, the residents were appointed as guards. The Jewish people were deemed defeated when Nehemiah arrived, but his willingness to take the initiative to help, made a significant impact and allowed them to stand on their own two feet.

### **Additional Commentary:**

#### ***Read Nehemiah 7:5-73***

Nehemiah knew that the safety of a city, under God, depends more upon the inhabitants than upon its walls. Every good gift and every good work are from above. God gives knowledge, he gives grace; all is of him, and therefore all must be to him. What is done by human prudence, must be ascribed to the direction of Divine Providence. But woe to those who turn back from the Lord, loving this present world! and happy those who dedicate themselves, and their substance, to his service and glory!  
(Christianity.com)

\*\*\*Lastly, as we walk through this life, take time to meditate on the scriptures below. Be the light God has called you to be. There is, indeed, something extraordinary about you!

#### ***Luke 6:31-36***

*31 Do to others as you would have them do to you.*

*32 "If you love those who love you, what credit is that to you? Even sinners love those who love them. 33 And if you do good to those who are good to you, what credit is that to you? Even sinners do that. 34 And if you lend to those from whom you expect repayment, what credit is that to you? Even sinners lend to sinners, expecting to be repaid in full. 35 But love your enemies, do good to them, and lend to them without expecting to get anything back. Then your reward will be great, and you will be children of the Most High, because he is kind to the ungrateful and wicked. 36 Be merciful, just as your Father is merciful.*

### **Thoughts/Revelation:**

---

---

---

---