



Unit 8 Guide

SERIES: LESSONS ON THE POWER OF COMBINED EFFORT

Lesson #8: “Joining Together to Stay Focused”

Nehemiah 6:15-7:5, 66-73

Announcements and opening prayer.



Connect: an opportunity for people to immediately interact and connect with each other; icebreaker/attention getters. **Icebreaker:** What is the most powerful thing you have ever seen?

There are incredible forces like tsunamis, hurricanes, earthquakes, floods, lightening, and tornados. There's nuclear power and even magnetic pulses that can knock people down. Solar flares are so powerful they could one day take out our communications. A solar flare on January 20, 2005 released the highest concentration of protons ever directly measured taking only 15 minutes after observation to reach Earth, indicating a velocity of approximately one-half light speed. Power is an incredible thing to behold. However the good news is that we represent the greatest power in existence. There is no power that even comes close to the power of the Almighty God, the Creator of all life. To witness His power is breath-taking!

The Bottom Line: God's hand on us calls for rejoicing and praise because the witness to His power through us is unmistakable!

LESSON PLAN



Denotes “Apply”

Background: The wall in Jerusalem was completed on the 25th of *Elul*, August/September, 445 B.C.; since the project lasted 52 days, it must have commenced on the fourth of *Ab*, July/August 445 B.C.

Question - How beautiful and complete do you think God wants you and me to build this church? How much of our heart is that going take for God to work out His full power among the people in this city?

If we show this city the full power of God working in us, His hand upon us, greater things will take place than you or I could even begin to imagine! Lives broken beyond repair will be repaired! It all starts within each one of us saying “yes” to God. “Yes, God. I will be part of Your solution! I will be the somebody that is doing something Great by Your power!”

Read Nehemiah 6:15-7:3

1. What happened to all the enemies of the Jewish people when they heard about the completion of the wall around Jerusalem?

- What do you think could happen to this community if our capital campaign is an incredible success when the entire world is crying out, “You can’t do this for God in the middle of the financial crisis affecting the world today?”

- In what ways do you think God wants us to be like those following Nehemiah’s leadership?

2. Why were the people in the nations surrounding Judea so afraid when they had been so tough and bold and mean?

- When have you seen God working so powerfully in a church’s life or a Christian’s life that their enemies had to say it could only have been the hand of God?

3. What did the nobles of Judah keep doing during the days when Nehemiah was trying to lead in the rebuilding of the walls?

Nehemiah added a footnote that in the days of building the wall, the nobles of Judah who refused to work (3:5) were in alliance and correspondence with Tobiah because, although his ancestors were Ammonites (2:19), he had married into a respectable Jewish family. Shemaiah was from the family of Arah (Ezra 2:5); his son Jehohanan was the son-in-law of Meshullam who shared in the work of building (Neh. 3:4, 30). According to 13:4, the high priest, Eliashib, was related to Tobiah (which is a Jewish name). The meddling of these nobles, by trying to play both sides through reports to Tobiah and to Nehemiah (v. 19), only widened the breach as Tobiah escalated efforts to frighten the governor. So we see that some of God’s people were not very godly.

Read Nehemiah 7:4-5

4. What does God put in Nehemiah’s heart and why?

- What difference does it make for God to have His people joined together and united? How is that a blessing to the saved and the unsaved? What does that have to do with us gathering in the name of Christ to be salt and light?

Read Nehemiah 7:66-73

So we see there were 42,360 people + 7,337 menservants and maidservants + 245 men and women singers = 49,942 or approx. 50,000 people who had joined with Nehemiah to build this wall and restore God's glory and unify His people! That's the size of Loveland, CO.

5. Who was the governor leading in organizing the people of Judea?
6. Notice some of the heads of the families gave to the treasury to start rebuilding the economy. What did Nehemiah give to boost the economy?

1000 drachmas of gold = 19 pounds of gold. I have no idea what gold was worth back then, but only the rich could afford to possess gold, so let's look at today's market. On October 13, 2009, Gold was 1,069 per ounce X 12 = \$12,828, per pound. 19 pounds today would be a mere \$243,732 or you could say Nehemiah put in about a quarter of a million dollars in gold. He also gave 50 bowls, 530 garments for the priests, imagine what that would cost!

7. Nehemiah may very well have inspired the sacrificial giving to the economy by the wealthy to help build God's nation. What did some of the collective heads of the families come up with to give?

20,000 drachmas of gold, 375 lbs. = today \$4,810,500! Plus 2,200 minas of silver = 1 1/3 tons = \$17.88 per ounce X 12 = \$214.66 per pound = \$590,315 today! Then they gave 67 garments for the priests.

- ➊ What difference do you think it makes when the leadership sets the example of sacrificial giving?
- ➋ Does this example of the hand and the heart of God relate to our Greater Things campaign? How?



Interactive Teaching Ideas: ideas for learner-focused teaching. Ask the class to discuss at each table the following assignment and then share the results from each table: Read Acts 2:42-47 and 4:32-37. Discuss how the heart of the early church was bound together as one heart. Share how these truths can be applied to our church to call down God's blessing and our love for one another.



Going Deeper/Homework:

Memory Verse: "They devoted themselves to the apostles' teaching and to the fellowship, to the breaking of bread and to prayer" (Acts 2:42).