

DISCIPLESHIP GROUPS

Our Mission: Reaching Out to Leaders Who Can Change the World.

23 – 27 July 2007

NEHEMIAH: MAN OF PRAYER & ACTION!

#1: A GODLY RESPONSE TO BAD NEWS

INTRODUCTION If you could ask for one major change in your country, community and/or family, what would it be? Why?

TRAINING OBJECTIVE To discuss Nehemiah's Godly response to bad news.

OBSERVATION/INTERPRETATION

Read Nehemiah 1:1-11

Note: Nehemiah continues the history of the Jews upon their return from exile in Babylon. Nehemiah went to Jerusalem in 445 B.C. and led the people in repairing the walls. With Ezra, he provided leadership for the people. A recurring theme of this book is the description of the importance of prayer. Nehemiah was the King of Persia's trusted confidant, similar to a presidential appointee in Washington, DC or an executive officer in the Pentagon. As cupbearer his sole responsibility was to prevent the king from being poisoned.

- What does Hannani report concerning Jerusalem?
- Why were city walls so important in those days, and what did they represent?
- How does Nehemiah respond to the news, and what does that tell us about him?
- How is his response different from most people's when problems arise?
- What do the opening phrases of Nehemiah's prayer tell us about God? About Nehemiah's attitude and relationship with God?
- What does Nehemiah confess? Why does he make this confession?
- What promise does Nehemiah claim? How is this promise related to his situation?
- What does he ask from God for himself?
- When is it OK to pray for success? When is it not OK?
- What can we learn about prayer from Nehemiah?

APPLICATION

- What need(s) are you burdened about? Ask God for wisdom for how you should respond.

A SHORT HISTORY OF THE JEWISH PEOPLE UP TO NEHEMIAH

2090 *Abraham enters Canaan*

1446 *Exodus from Egypt*

1406 *Hebrews enter the Promised Land (Canaan)*

1050 *Saul becomes the first King*

959 *The Temple in Jerusalem is completed*

930 *The Kingdom of Israel is divided*

722 *Israel (the Northern Kingdom) falls to Assyria*

587 *Judah (the Southern Kingdom) falls to Babylon and the Temple is destroyed*

539 *Persia conquers Babylon*

538 *Cyrus allows Zerubbabel to lead first return of exiles back to Jerusalem*

516 *The second Temple is completed*

458 *Ezra leads second return of exiles to Jerusalem*

445 *Nehemiah returns to Jerusalem to rebuild the wall*

[Beginning of the Golden Age in Greece; the Parthenon was built in 448 BC.]

