**Day 1 – Troubled times?**

Read Nehemiah 4:1 – 6

1. How did Nehemiah’s enemies try to stop the building of the wall?
2. How did Nehemiah respond to this (look in v.4 and v.6)?
3. How do we react when ridiculed for doing the Lord’s work?

Read Nehemiah 4:7 – 9

1. What did Nehemiah’s enemies try next?
2. How did Nehemiah respond (2 things)?
3. What is similar to his previous reaction?

Read Nehemiah 4:10 – 14

1. What issues are now facing Nehemiah?
2. How are they different to the previous ones? How are they similar?
3. How does Nehemiah respond? How is his response similar to previously?

Read Nehemiah 4:15 – 23

1. When there is a lull in the opposition, what does Nehemiah make sure the people are doing (v.15)?
2. What is the difference in the builders now from the start of the chapter?

Throughout this chapter we again see Nehemiah trusting in God to protect his people and the building of the wall, but he also acts. How does this speak to us today and how we approach things?

**Day 2 – Trouble within**

Read Nehemiah 5:1 - 5

1. Who are the men and their wives crying out against (v.1)?
2. Why are they crying out?

Read Nehemiah 5:6 - 13

1. How does Nehemiah react to this news?
2. Why do you think he reacts like this?
3. In there verses we are given a model for bad leadership. What are the marks of the bad leaders here (what are their motives)?
4. Whose approval and view should they be concerned about (v.9)?
5. What is the reason given behind why they should think like this?

Read Nehemiah 5:14 - 19

1. What does Nehemiah’s leadership look like?
2. Contrast Nehemiah’s leadership with those from the previous section. Which type of leader would you prefer to have ruling over you?
3. Which type of leader would you rather be?
4. We will probably all lead others at some point in our lives. How can we prepare to be a leader more like Nehemiah than the other officials?
5. How can we help and encourage leaders over us to be Nehemiah-like leaders?
6. What can you do today or this week to help or encourage or challenge those leading you?

**Day 3 – Wisdom in face of scheming**

*Today we see further challenges that Nehemiah faces in doing the Lord’s work and how he responds.*

Read Nehemiah 6:1 - 19

1. How do Nehemiah’s enemies try to stop the building of the wall?
2. How does Nehemiah respond to the requests?
3. What wisdom is Nehemiah showing here? Think about how we might respond if an enemy sent a supposedly kind greeting to meet. How can we tell whether it is an opportunity or a trick?
4. What was the purpose of the messages that Nehemiah’s enemies were sending (v.9)?
5. Nehemiah works out the purpose. What is his response?
6. God’s work to complete the walls was complete. What did the other nations think at this point (v.16)?

Read Nehemiah 7:1 – 3

1. Who were the first people put in place by Nehemiah?
2. Why do you think these were particularly important? (Hint: For Levites, look to Numbers 18:1-8 and think about their specific role in the Israelite community)
3. What requirements did Nehemiah have for the most important job that he gave out (to Hannaniah)?
4. Is this what we think of as the most valuable thing?

**Day 4 – What’s in a name?**

*We have reached the point where the walls have been rebuilt. The city can be defended and restored. But there is a problem…*

Read Nehemiah 7: 4 – 5

1. What is the problem?
2. What does this encourage Nehemiah to do?

*This record would have meant that the people knew who they were related to. This would have been important as they were returning from exile. Forming a sense of community and calling was vital.*

1. Do we have the same sense of importance of knowing who we belong to as part of the church, present and past, and knowing the mission of the church?
2. Write down what has challenged you.

Read Nehemiah 7:6 – 73 (yes, a long list of names but keep going!)

1. How many of these names do you recognise?

*Most of these names just appear in records like this in Nehemiah, Ezra and Chronicles. Yet God chose to record them in Scripture to be recorded forever. We may not know who they are, but God does.*

1. How does this make you feel about how God might use you?
2. How many were there (v.68)?

*There are not many but God kept a remnant to return from exile, to worship again in Jerusalem, to be the nation that God would grow and through which the promised king would come. God’s plans might look weak to us at times, but they do not fail.*

**Day 5 – How to respond to God’s word**

*Today we see how the Israelites view Scripture. I think it will challenge us.*

Read Nehemiah 8:1

1. Why were the Israelites gathering?
2. Who told them they had to gather?

Read Nehemiah 8:2 – 3

1. How long was the Book of the Law read for?
2. How did the people respond to it being read for so long?

Read Nehemiah 8:4 - 6

1. What was the response when the Book of the Law was read?
2. Is that what we expect to happen every time we read the Bible?

Read Nehemiah 8:7 – 8

1. What was the job of the Levites as the Book was being read?
2. What do we do if there is part of the Bible that we don’t understand?

Read Nehemiah 8:9 – 12

1. What were the people commanded to do and not to do on this holy day?
2. Where were the people to find their strength? Is this where we look for strength?

Read Nehemiah 8:13 – 18

1. When the leaders found a command written in the Book of the Law, how did they respond?
2. Is this how we respond when we see a command in the Bible? Or do we find a way to ignore it or think it is not relevant today?

**Day 6 – An honest view with a marvellous God**

Read Nehemiah 9:1 – 37 (quite long but do read it all and read it slowly. You may want to read it twice)

1. Write down all the things that it says that God has done for His people.
2. Write down all the things that God has done for us.
3. Write down how the people have treated God.
4. Write down how we have treated God.
5. Write down what these verses say about the character of God.
6. What difference is there between how we treat God and how the Israelites had treated God?
7. What difference is there in the grace and mercy that God shows us compared to the Israelites?
8. Read v.1 – 4 again. When the Israelites stopped and thought about how they had treated God, what did it lead them to do?
9. Read v.5 again. When they saw God and remembered his promises, what was their reaction?
10. Do we have this serious view of sin? Why not spend time now, confessing your sin and saying sorry to God?
11. Read 1 John 1:9 and 1 John 3:1. Thank God that he has forgiven your sin. Thank God that he purifies you. Thank God that because he forgives you, you can come to him and be called a child of God!

**Day 7 – Recommitting to the Lord**

*Today’s passage is in response to what the Israelites had remembered yesterday and is a commitment to follow the Lord again.*

Read Nehemiah 9:38 – 10:29

1. Who was at this gathering to commit to the Lord?
2. What did they sign to do?
3. Who did not agree?

Read Nehemiah 10:30 - 31

1. What commitments did the Israelites make to ensure that God was going to remain their focus?
2. How would these commitments have help that? (You may want to think about what would have happened if they had not had these commitments.)

Read Nehemiah 10:32 - 39

1. This is the longest section of the commitments. What is this section concerned with?
2. Read v. 35. Which part of the crops and fruit are to be brought to the Lord?
3. Do we give to the Lord first or do we do what we want first and then think about giving to the Lord (giving can be money, time, thoughts, commitments)?
4. Think back to yesterday. Why had the people gone into exile? Read v. 39 again. What have we seen in the last few days that has led to this change of heart in the Israelites?