

Conclusion of Nehemiah

1. Nehemiah was a regular guy who had a heart for God's mission
2. He sought the Lord and was courageous
3. He called the people to rebuild according to God's plans – which included *doing it together*
4. Opposition comes, they respond

The wall is finished – the celebration and dedication

- They remembered the whole story –prayed, repented and praised God
- They committed themselves to the Lord for the future

Nehemiah 9:26–32 (NLT) 26 “But despite all this, they were disobedient and rebelled against you. They turned their backs on your Law, they killed your prophets who warned them to return to you, and they committed terrible blasphemies. 27 So you handed them over to their enemies, who made them suffer. But in their time of trouble they cried to you, and you heard them from heaven. In your great mercy, you sent them liberators who rescued them from their enemies. 28 “But as soon as they were at peace, your people again committed evil in your sight, and once more you let their enemies conquer them. Yet whenever your people turned and cried to you again for help, you listened once more from heaven. In your wonderful mercy, you rescued them many times! 29 “You warned them to return to your Law, but they became proud and obstinate and disobeyed your commands. They did not follow your regulations, by which people will find life if only they obey. They stubbornly turned their backs on you and refused to listen. 30 In your love, you were patient with them for many years. You sent your Spirit, who warned them through the prophets. But still they wouldn't listen! So once again you allowed the peoples of the land to conquer them. 31 But in your great mercy, you did not destroy them completely or abandon them forever. What a gracious and merciful God you are! 32 “And now, our God, the great and mighty and awesome God, who keeps his covenant of unfailing love, do not let all the hardships we have suffered seem insignificant to you. Great trouble has come upon us and upon our kings and leaders and priests and prophets and ancestors—all of your people—from the days when the kings of Assyria first triumphed over us until now.

See Nehemiah 9:38, 12:27, & 13:4-11

1. Notice the cycle we find in the scriptures

Israel's Cycle of Falling Away

- A. *Idolatry and Disobedience*: The gradual decline in faithfulness, leading to idolatry and disobedience to God's commands.
- B. *Oppression*: The Israelites being oppressed by neighboring nations.
- C. *Crying Out to the Lord*: The people of Israel seeking help from God.
- D. *God sends salvation through a leader*
- E. The people and land experience rest
- F. The cycle begins again

2. Notice the enemy plays the long game – changes tactics

The Tactics of the Devil

- A. *Deception*: The devil uses cunning strategies to twist the truth and mislead people, making them question God's word (John 8:44).
- B. *Temptation*: He tempts individual with lies and offers worldly power to lead them away from God's truth (Matthew 4:1-11).
- C. *Disguise*: The devil disguises himself as an angel of light, making it difficult for believers to recognize his true nature (1 John 4:8).
- D. *Manipulation*: He manipulates human behavior and desires, exploiting weaknesses such as pride and lust to lead people into sin (Genesis 3:1).
- E. *Oppression*: The devil afflicts and oppresses believers, seeking to bring them down and lead them away from their faith (1 Peter 5:8).

3. In order to finish well we must continually renew our hearts

- Principles- If you're not building and protecting you are declining over time
- Left to ourselves we are in decline- the second law of thermodynamics applies to the whole world

1 Peter 5:6–14 (NLT) 6 So humble yourselves under the mighty power of God, and at the right time he will lift you up in honor. 7 Give all your worries and cares to God, for he cares about you. 8 **Stay alert! Watch out for your great enemy**, the devil. He prowls around like a roaring lion, looking for someone to devour. 9 Stand firm against him, and be strong in your faith. Remember that your family of believers all over the world is going through the same kind of suffering you are. 10 In his kindness God called you to share in his eternal glory by means of Christ Jesus. So after you have suffered a little while, he will restore, support, and strengthen you, and he will place you on a firm foundation. 11 All power to him forever! Amen. 12 I have written and sent this short letter to you with the help of Silas, whom I commend to you as a faithful brother. My purpose in writing is to encourage you and assure you that what you are experiencing is truly part of God’s grace for you. Stand firm in this grace. 13 Your sister church here in Babylon sends you greetings, and so does my son Mark. 14 Greet each other with a kiss of love. Peace be with all of you who are in Christ.

A New Testament principle- Our part:

Revelation 2:1–7 (NIV) 1 “To the angel of the church in Ephesus write: These are the words of him who holds the seven stars in his right hand and walks among the seven golden lampstands. 2 I know your deeds, your hard work and your perseverance. I know that you cannot tolerate wicked people, that you have tested those who claim to be apostles but are not, and have found them false. 3 You have persevered and have endured hardships for my name, and have not grown weary. 4 Yet I hold this against you: You have forsaken the love you had at first. 5 **Consider (Remember)** how far you have fallen! **Repent and do (redo)** the things you did at first. If you do not repent, Or Else --I will come to you and remove your lampstand from its place. 6 But you have this in your favor: You hate the practices of the Nicolaitans, which I also hate. 7 Whoever has ears, let them hear what the Spirit says to the churches. To the one who is victorious, I will give the right to eat from the tree of life, which is in the paradise of God.

- A. Remember
- B. Repent
- C. Redo
- D. Remind others (Nehemiah)

Join us in our next series for *Who We Are* (1 Peter 2:4-11)



Sample Small Group Questions
<https://bit.ly/GroupDiscussionQuestions>



The Overtime Podcast
bit.ly/RLoverTime



Series Resources
bit.ly/RLcurrentseries