

RISE UP & BUILD

A SERIES ON THE BOOK OF NEHEMIAH

DISCUSSION GUIDE WEEK 13

WELCOME.

WORSHIP.

Sing: LORD, I NEED YOU (Matt Maher)

WORD.

Introduction: After 12 years, Nehemiah returns to Persia. But when he returned to Jerusalem, he found that the Israelites had regressed in their faith. He enforces the Law again, addressing issues like idolatry, Sabbath breaking, and foreign marriages, ensuring that God's covenant is upheld.

Scripture: Nehemiah 13

The Sunday outline Dan Allen shared:

1. **BACKSLIDING BEGINS WITH SMALL COMPROMISES (1-7).**
 - A. He returned to serve at the court of the King as he promised.
 - B. He was shocked that Eliashib compromised with the enemy, Tobiah.
 - C. He was indignant with the state of worship.
 - D. He was angered by the fact that the priests were not well-provided for.
2. **RIGHTEOUS INDIGNATION CONFRONTS COMPROMISE (8-22)**
 - A. He confronts the nobles and leaders for profaning the Sabbath.
 - B. He closes Jerusalem.
 - C. He warned merchants and priests.
3. **INITIATING REFORMS INVOLVES SEEKING GOD'S GUIDANCE (23-31).**
 - A. He finds out about people marrying unbelievers and the loss of their spiritual identity.
 - B. He confronts these families and makes them renew their covenant.
 - C. Nehemiah reflects on his actions and seeks God's forgiveness and remembrance of his faithfulness.
 - D. Nehemiah assigns people to follow through with the reforms.

1. Read Nehemiah 13:1–14. At the beginning of this passage, Nehemiah has left Jerusalem (verse 6) to fulfill the promise he made to return to the Persian court (Nehemiah 2:6) when he was originally allowed to go to Jerusalem by Artaxerxes. What happened during his absence? Try to be specific. You may have to read ahead in the story a little bit.

2. Read 1 Corinthians 10:12. When you read this verse, what comes to mind? Has there ever been a time in your life when you felt like you were standing strong against sin, but then you suddenly fell? What happened?

3. When people fall in significant ways, it is often preceded by failing privately in many other smaller ways. Because they're done in private or in the privacy of our own hearts, they often go unconfessed. But when we do this, we deceive ourselves. Living at peace with any sin will slowly harden our hearts toward God. We don't know how Eliashib got to the point where he thought his actions were ok, but his heart must have been hard toward God. If you're honest, what are some of the "respectable sins" in your own life? What are the things you know are sinful but you often live at relative peace with?

WORK.

- Read Nehemiah 13:23–31. Perhaps, the book of Nehemiah does not end the way you were expecting. But as we close out our study, let's notice the actions and posture of Nehemiah again. He prays. We will do the same. Spend some unhurried time praying through the following prompts:
 - 1) *Who is God?* Give Him glory and praise for every one of His attributes you can think of. Tell God who He is!
 - 2) *Confession.* Where has your heart been hard towards God? Where have you sinned, in big and seemingly small ways?
 - 3) *Petitions and Supplication.* What do you need? What do you fear? Where do you feel weak? Ask God for the grace to continue on in all that lies before you.
 - 4) *Who is God?* End with praise. Give God glory for who He is.