

Wycliffe Associates

Bible Translation Reviewers' Guide

Nehemiah

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1:1-11

Background: A Jew named Nehemiah lived in Persia and worked for King Artaxerxes. Nehemiah received a report that the walls around Jerusalem were broken down. Nehemiah returned to Jerusalem to help rebuild the city walls.

Part 1

Tell in your own words what you just read in these verses.

- ☐ Nehemiah asked about what happened to the Jews who escaped captivity. [1:1-2]
- ☐ Nehemiah wept when he heard how those who survived the captivity were troubled and disgraced. [1:3-4]
- ☐ Nehemiah prayed and cried to the Lord and begged God to hear his prayers. [1:5-6]
- ☐ Nehemiah confessed the sins the people had committed. [1:6-7]
- ☐ Nehemiah asked God to have mercy on the people. [1:8-11]

Part 2

Answer the following questions.

1. Who wrote the book of Nehemiah? [1:1]
Nehemiah the son of Hakaliah wrote the book of Nehemiah.
2. When did Nehemiah ask Hanani and some people from Judah about the Jews who had escaped, the remnant of the Jews who were there, and about Jerusalem? [1:1-2]
He asked them in the month of Kislev, in the twentieth year.
3. What did Hanani and some people from Judah reply? [1:3]
They replied that those who remained in the province were in great trouble and disgrace because Jerusalem's walls and gates were broken and burned.
4. What did Nehemiah do when he heard about the condition of Jerusalem? [1:4]
He sat down and wept, and for days he continued grieving and fasting and praying.
5. How did Nehemiah pray and what did he say? [1:5]
He begged God and praised him for his greatness and for keeping the covenant and love to those who loved him.
6. What did Nehemiah request while praying before the God of heaven? [1:5-6]
He requested that Yahweh would listen to his prayer.
7. What did Nehemiah confess while praying before the God of heaven? [1:6-7]
Nehemiah confessed the sins of the people of Israel and his own sins and the sins of his family.
8. How did Nehemiah describe the sins of the people? [1:7]
Nehemiah said they had acted very wickedly against Yahweh and had not kept Yahweh's commandments, statutes, and rules.

Nehemiah 1:1-11 continued

9. What did Nehemiah request while praying before the God of heaven? [1:8-9]

He requested that Yahweh would call to mind the word he commanded Moses when he said, if they returned to him and followed and did his commandments, Yahweh would gather them and bring them to that place where He had chosen to make his name remain.

10. What did Nehemiah remind the God of heaven? [1:10]

He reminded God that they were his servants and his people whom God had rescued by His great power and strong hand.

11. What did Nehemiah request while praying before the God of heaven? [1:11]

He requested that Yahweh would listen to his prayer, and to the prayer of his servants who honored his name, and that Yahweh would give success and grant mercy to him.

12. To whom did Nehemiah serve as cupbearer? [1:11]

Nehemiah served as cupbearer to the king.

Comment Section:

2:1-8

Part 1

Tell in your own words what you just read in these verses.

- ☐ Nehemiah was sad as he served wine to the king. [2:1-2]
- ☐ Nehemiah explained to the king why he was sad. [2:2-3]
- ☐ Nehemiah asked to have permission to go to Judah and rebuild the wall. [2:4-5]
- ☐ The king granted his request. [2:6]
- ☐ Nehemiah also asked for letters to permit him to travel to Judah and build the wall. [2:7-8]

Part 2

Answer the following questions.

1. In what month did Nehemiah give wine to Artaxerxes the king? [2:1]
In the month of Nisan, in the twentieth year of the king.
2. What did the king notice about Nehemiah's face? [2:2]
He noticed that Nehemiah's face was sad.
3. Why do you think Nehemiah was sad? [2:3]
Because the city of his fathers' tombs was in ruins and its gates were destroyed.
4. When the king asked what Nehemiah wanted him to do, what did Nehemiah do? [2:4]
Nehemiah prayed to the God of heaven.
5. After he prayed, how did Nehemiah answer the king? [2:5]
He said if it seemed good to the king, and if he had done well for the king, that he be allowed to go to Judah and rebuild the wall.
6. What did Nehemiah want the king to permit him to do? [2:5]
To go to Judah to rebuild the city of his fathers' tombs.
7. How did the king respond to Nehemiah? [2:6]
He asked how long Nehemiah would be gone and when he would return.
8. What did Nehemiah ask the king to send with him? [2:7]
He asked for letters to the governors in the Province Beyond the River to permit him to pass through their territory.
9. What else did Nehemiah ask for? [2:8]
He asked for a letter for Asaph, the keeper of the king's forest, to get timber for rebuilding the city.

Comment Section:

2:17-20

Background: Nehemiah traveled to Judah with the orders from the king, but when Sanballat the Horonite and Tobiah the Ammonite servant heard this, it displeased them greatly that someone had come to seek the welfare of the people of Israel. Nehemiah rose at night and inspected the walls of the city.

Part 1

Tell in your own words what you just read in these verses.

- ☐ Nehemiah described to the rulers the condition of Jerusalem and its wall. [2:17]
- ☐ The people said that they would rise and build the wall. [2:18]
- ☐ Sanballat, Tobiah, and Geshem mocked the people of Judah and showed them contempt. [2:19]
- ☐ Nehemiah answered Sanballat, Tobiah, and Geshem boldly, telling them that the God of heaven would give them success. [2:20]

Part 2

Answer the following questions.

1. What did Nehemiah tell the people? [2:17]
He told them to look and see the trouble they were in and how Jerusalem was in ruins.
2. Why do you think Nehemiah encouraged the people to rebuild the wall of Jerusalem? [2:17]
So that they would not be a disgrace any longer.
3. When Nehemiah told the people that the good hand of his God was on him and told them about the words the king had spoken to him, what did they say and do? [2:18]
They said they would rise and build, and they strengthened their hands for the good work.
4. What did Sanballat, Tobiah, and Geshem say when they heard about the work that Nehemiah had planned? [2:19]
They mocked and ridiculed the workers and asked if they were rebelling against the king.
5. How did Nehemiah respond to Sanballat, Tobiah, and Geshem when they heard about the work, and mocked and ridiculed the workers? [2:20]
Nehemiah responded by saying that God would give them success; that they were God's servants; and that Sanballat, Tobiah, and Geshem had no share, no right, and no historic claim in Jerusalem.

Comment Section:

4:1-9

Background: The workers repaired the gates that were in the wall.

Part 1

Tell in your own words what you just read in these verses.

- ☐ Sanballat became very angry when he heard about the building of the wall. [4:1]
- ☐ When Sanballat and Tobiah taunted the Jews, Nehemiah prayed for God because their taunts angered the builders. [4:2-5]
- ☐ Nehemiah and his people built the wall to half its height. [4:6]
- ☐ Some people came together to fight against Nehemiah and his people. [4:7-8]
- ☐ Nehemiah and his people prayed for God to protect them day and night. [4:9]

Part 2

Answer the following questions.

1. Who mocked the Jews when they heard the Jews were building the wall? [4:1-3]
Sanballat and Tobiah mocked the Jews.
2. Why do you think Nehemiah asked God not to cover over the iniquity of Sanballat and Tobiah? [4:4-5]
Perhaps because they despised the Jews and provoked the builders to anger.
3. What did Nehemiah say was the reason the Jews built the wall? [4:6]
He said because the people had a desire to work.
4. How do you think Sanballat, Tobiah, the Arabians, the Ammonites, and the Ashdodites felt when they heard how the Jews were succeeding? [4:7]
They burned with great anger.
5. What happened when Sanballat, Tobiah, the Arabians, the Ammonites, and the Ashdodites conspired together? [4:8]
They came to fight against Jerusalem and cause confusion.
6. When Sanballat, Tobiah, the Arabians, the Ammonites, and the Ashdodites came to fight against Jerusalem, what did the builders and people do? [4:9]
They prayed to their God and set a guard to protect them.

Comment Section:

5:1-9

Background: The Jews who lived near Nehemiah came from all directions and spoke to him ten times, warning him about the schemes their enemies were making against them. So Nehemiah positioned people in the lowest parts of the wall in the exposed areas, and he positioned each family with their swords, spears, and bows.

Part 1

Tell in your own words what you just read in these verses.

- ☐ The people cried out against some of their fellow Jews. [5:1]
- ☐ Nehemiah was angered by what was being done to these people during a famine. [5:2-6]
- ☐ Nehemiah appealed to the nobles and officials about the situation. [5:7-9]

Part 2

Answer the following questions.

1. Who raised an outcry against their fellow Jews? [5:1]
The people and their wives raised a great outcry.
2. What do you think was their great concern? [5:2]
They said there were many of them and they needed grain to eat and stay alive.
3. What were others saying during that time? [5:3]
They said that they were mortgaging their fields, vineyards, and houses to get grain during the famine.
4. What did others say about money? [5:4]
They said they had borrowed money to pay taxes on their fields and their vineyards.
5. How did they describe their flesh and blood? [5:5]
They said their flesh and blood was the same as their brothers and their children the same as their brother's children.
6. What other statements did they use in [5:5]?
They said they were forced to sell their sons and daughters to become slaves, and that some of their daughters had already been enslaved. They added it was not in their power to help it because other men now owned their fields and vineyards.
7. How did Nehemiah feel when he heard their complaints? [5:6]
He was very angry.
8. After Nehemiah thought about this, what did he say to the nobles and officials? [5:7]
He said that they were taking interest from their own brothers, then he held an assembly against them.

Nehemiah 5:1-9 continued

9. What did Nehemiah say to the great assembly? [5:8]

He told them that according to their ability they had brought back their Jewish brothers from slavery who had been sold to the nations.

10. What did Nehemiah accuse them of doing? [5:8]

Selling their brothers so that they would be sold back to them.

11. Nehemiah told them what they were doing was not good and then asked what? [5:9]

He asked if they should not walk in the fear of their God to prevent the taunts of their enemies.

Comment Section:

5:14-19

Background: Nehemiah told the men who were exacting interest from their brothers to stop this practice and also to return their fields, their vineyards, their olive orchards, and their houses and the percentage of the money, the grain, the new wine, and the oil that was exacted from them. Nehemiah also made the priests swear they would stop these practices. All the assembly said, "Amen," and they praised Yahweh, and the people did as they had promised.

Part 1

Tell in your own words what you just read in these verses.

- ☐ Nehemiah recalled what he had done in the past twelve years. [5:14]
- ☐ Nehemiah did not do as the former governors before him because he feared God. [5:15]
- ☐ Nehemiah never ate from the table of abundance because the people that labored needed to eat. [5:17-18]
- ☐ Nehemiah asked God to remember him because of all the good he did for the people. [5:19]

Part 2

Answer the following questions.

1. How long did Nehemiah govern the land of Judah? [5:14]
He governed for twelve years.
2. What did neither Nehemiah and his brothers not do during that time? [5:14]
They did not eat any of the food provided for the governor.
3. What did the former governors who were before Nehemiah take from the people? [5:15]
They took forty shekels of silver for their daily food and wine.
4. Why do you think Nehemiah did not take the food provided for the governor? [5:15]
Because he feared God.
5. Did Nehemiah buy any land as he worked on the wall? [5:16]
No, he did not buy any land.
6. Who ate at Nehemiah's table? [5:17]
Those who ate at Nehemiah's table were the Jews and the officials, 150 men, and also those who came to them from among the nations who were around them.
7. What food was prepared for those who ate at his table? [5:18]
One ox, six choice sheep, and birds were prepared each day, and abundant wine every ten days,
8. Why did Nehemiah ask God to remember him for good? [5:19]
He asked God to do this because of all that Nehemiah had done for the people.

Comment Section:

6:15-19

Background: When Sanballat, Tobiah, and Geshem the Arabian and the rest of the enemies of Judah heard that they had rebuilt the wall and that there were no longer any sections left broken open, they asked Nehemiah to come and meet them outside of Jerusalem. Nehemiah knew they intended to harm him, so he refused to go to them.

Part 1

Tell in your own words what you just read in these verses.

- ☐ Nehemiah reported that the wall was finished. [6:15]
- ☐ The enemies were fearful because they knew the work was done with the help of God. [6:16]
- ☐ Some of the nobles of Judah sent letters to have Tobiah try to frighten Nehemiah. [6:17-19]

Part 2

Answer the following questions.

1. How long did it take to finish repairing the wall? [6:15]
It was completed in fifty-two days.
2. Why do you think their enemies became afraid when they heard the wall was finished? [6:16]
Because they knew the work was done with the help of God.
3. Who sent letters to whom? [6:17]
The nobles of Judah sent letters to Tobiah.
4. Why were the people of Judah bound by an oath to Tobiah? [6:18]
They were bound by an oath because he was the son-in-law of Shekariah son of Arah.
5. To whom was his son Jehohanan married? [6:18]
To the daughter of Meshullam son of Berekiah.
6. What were the letters from Tobiah meant to do to Nehemiah? [6:19]
The letters from Tobiah were sent to Nehemiah to frighten him.

Comment Section:

8:1-8

Background: When the wall was finished and the doors were set in place, Nehemiah gave instructions on when the gates to Jerusalem could be open and when they should be shut.

Part 1

Tell in your own words what you just read in these verses.

- ☐ Ezra read the book of the law of Moses to the people from morning to midday. [8:1-5]
- ☐ The people responded when Ezra opened the book of the law and blessed Yahweh. [8:5-6]
- ☐ The Levites helped the people understand the Law of God. [8:7-8]

Part 2

Answer the following questions.

1. Where were the people gathered? [8:1]
All the people were gathered in the open area in front of the Water Gate.
2. What did the people ask Ezra? [8:1]
They asked Ezra to bring the book of the law of Moses.
3. What day did Ezra bring the law to the people? [8:2]
He brought the law on the first day of the seventh month.
4. Who was included in the assembly? [8:2-3]
Men, women, and all who could hear and understand.
5. Where did Ezra face when he read from the law? [8:3]
He faced the open area in front of the Water Gate.
6. How long did Ezra read? [8:3]
He read from early morning until midday.
7. How do you think the people responded? [8:3]
All the people listened attentively to the book of the law.
8. Where did Ezra stand when he read from the law? [8:4]
He stood on a high wooden platform.
9. Was Ezra standing by himself when he read from the law? [8:4]
No, several men were standing on both his right side and his left side.
10. What did the people do when Ezra opened the book of the law? [8:5]
All the people stood up.

Nehemiah 8:1-8 continued

11. What did the people do when Ezra blessed Yahweh? [8:6]

All the people lifted up their hands, answered "Amen, Amen!" and worshiped Yahweh.

12. What did the Levites do while Ezra was reading the Law of God? [8:7-8]

They helped the people understand what was being read.

Comment Section:

9:1-8

Background: Nehemiah, Ezra the priest and scribe, and the Levites who were interpreting told the people to not mourn or weep because the day was a holy day to Yahweh. The people learned by reading the book of the law that they were to build and live in shelters during the festival of the seventh month. The people observed the festival for seven days in obedience to the law of Yahweh.

Part 1

Tell in your own words what you just read in these verses.

- ☐ When the people assembled together, they fasted, wore sackcloth, and confessed their sins. [9:1-3]
- ☐ The Levites praised Yahweh and told the people to do the same. [9:4-8]

Part 2

Answer the following questions.

1. What did the assembled people of Israel do on the twenty-fourth day of the month? [9:1-2]
The people fasted, wore sackcloth, and had dust on their heads. They also separated themselves from all foreign people and confessed their sins.
2. What did they stand and do? [9:3]
They stood and read from the book of the law of Yahweh, and they confessed and bowed down before Yahweh their God.
3. What did the Levites do? [9:4]
The Levites stood on the stairs and called out loudly to Yahweh their God.
4. What instructions did the Levites give to the people? [9:5]
The Levites told them to stand up and give praise to Yahweh forever and ever.
5. What other praise did the Levites give to Yahweh in front of the people? [9:6]
They said Yahweh alone made heaven, made earth and everything on it, and gave life to all.
6. How did he refer to Yahweh in 9:7?
Yahweh is the God who chose Abram, brought him out of Ur of the Chaldeans, and gave him the name Abraham.
7. What did Nehemiah write about Abraham? [9:8]
He wrote that Yahweh found Abraham's heart faithful before him.
8. Why do you think Yahweh kept his promise to Abraham? [9:8]
Yahweh kept his promise because Yahweh is righteous.

Comment Section:

12:37-43

Background: There was much joy in Jerusalem when the wall was dedicated to Yahweh. The priests and Levites purified themselves and then purified the people, the gates, and the wall. Two large choirs were assembled to sing thanks to Yahweh.

Part 1

Tell in your own words what you just read in these verses.

- ☐ One choir went up to the Water Gate on the east, while the other choir went on the wall to the Gate of the Guard. [12:37-39]
- ☐ The choirs gave thanks in the house of the God. [12:40]
- ☐ The priests took their place, and the choirs sang. [12:41]
- ☐ From far away, people could hear the great rejoicing in Jerusalem. [12:43]

Part 2

Answer the following questions.

1. What were the two large choirs that Nehemiah appointed, supposed to do? [12:37-38]
The two large choirs were supposed to give thanks.
2. What did Nehemiah do? [12:38]
He followed the choir on the wall.
3. Who took their place in the house of God? [12:40]
Both choirs who gave thanks took their place in the house of God.
4. What did the priests do? [12:41]
The priests took their place.
5. Who directed the singers? [12:42]
The singers sang with Jezrahiah as director.
6. Why did the priests and the singers offer great sacrifices that day and rejoice? [12:43]
They offered great sacrifices that day and rejoiced because God had made them rejoice with great joy.
7. Who rejoiced with the singers? [12:43]
The women and children also rejoiced.

Comment Section:

13:19-27

Background: Nehemiah returned to Artaxerxes, king of Babylon, but when he returned to Jerusalem, he found that Eliashib the priest had appointed storerooms in the house of God to Tobiah. When Nehemiah saw this, he threw all Tobiah's household articles out of the storeroom and had it purified. The people had also violated the Sabbath, and the portion was no longer given to the Levites.

Part 1

Tell in your own words what you just read in these verses.

- ☐ Nehemiah had his servants, and the Levites keep merchants from entering Jerusalem on the Sabbath. [13:19-22]
- ☐ He saw Jews who married foreign women of Ashdod, Ammon, and Moab, and their children spoke a different language. [13:23-24]
- ☐ Nehemiah confronted the people and reminded them how foreign wives caused King Solomon to sin. [13:25-26]

Part 2

Answer the following questions.

1. How did Nehemiah prevent people from coming into Jerusalem on the Sabbath? [13:19]
Nehemiah commanded that the doors be shut, and they should not be opened until after the Sabbath.
2. What were the servants to do at the gate? [13:19]
They were to make sure no load was brought in on the Sabbath.
3. Who camped outside Jerusalem? [19:20]
The merchants and sellers of all kinds of wares were camped outside of Jerusalem.
4. How do you think Nehemiah responded to the merchants? [19:21]
He warned them that if they did so again, he would lay hands on them.
5. Did the merchants come back? [19:21]
No, they did not.
6. What did Nehemiah say to the Levites? [19:22]
He commanded them to purify themselves and to guard the gates.
7. What did he ask of God? [19:22]
He asked God to have mercy on him.
8. What did Nehemiah see in those days? [19:23]
He saw that Jews had married women of Ashdod, Ammon, and Moab.
9. Did any of the children from these marriages speak the language of Judah? [19:24]
No none of them knew how to speak the language of Judah.

Nehemiah 13:19-27 continued

10. How did Nehemiah confront the Jews who married women of Ashdod, Ammon, and Moab? [19:25]
He confronted and cursed them, hit some of them, and pulled out their hair.
11. What did Nehemiah make the Jews swear to not do? [19:25]
He made them swear by God that they would not give their daughters to the sons of Ashdod, Ammon, and Moab, or take their own daughters for their sons, or for themselves.
12. What did Nehemiah write about what happened to King Solomon of Israel? [19:26]
His foreign wives caused him to sin.
13. How did he describe King Solomon? [19:26]
No other king was like Solomon, he was loved by God, and God made him king over all Israel.
14. What question did Nehemiah ask the Jews in verse [19:27]?
He asked if they should all listen to them and do great evil and act unfaithfully against our God by marrying foreign women.
15. How did Nehemiah want God to call him to mind? [13:31]
Nehemiah wanted God to call him to mind for good.

Comment Section: