

Word notes Sunday 12/6/2011 Tony Hodge
Nehemiah and the Holy Spirit

Summary (read this bit out to remind cell members what was said on Sunday)

Key Text: Nehemiah 1:1 & 1:11

Nehemiah's "memoirs" are an encouraging account of how a man of God sets out on a mission to rebuild the walls of Jerusalem. We could leave the story there or look deeper to see how it relates to ourselves. Nehemiah's name meaning "Jehovah comforts and his position of closeness to the throne and being sent to rebuild the dwelling place of God reminds us of the work of the Holy Spirit. What other aspects of the Old Testament story support this?

1. His name – Nehemiah means Jehovah comforts, The Holy Spirit is "The Comforter" (Jn 14:16, 17).
2. As Cupbearer he has access to the throne room brings life-giving food and drink, – the same Spirit who raised Christ is in us (Rom 8:11).
3. Nehemiah rebuilt the walls after the temple was restored, the Holy Spirit rebuilds our lives after salvation, (Ezek 36:26, 2).
4. In their work among the people both:
 - a. wait for God's timing (Neh 2:11, Acts 1:4).
 - b. come with resources and power to be effective and -
 - c. enable the people to defeat their enemies (Neh 2:17 & 2:20, Acts 1:8).
 - d. restore relationship with God through the Word (Neh 8, John 14:26) leading to repentance (Neh 9).
 - e. bring unity to the body (Neh 2:17, Eph 4:4)
 - f. give the people work to do (Neh 3, Acts 1:8)
 - g. equip the people for battle (Neh 4:16-18 & Eph 6:10-18)

The end result in Nehemiah's day was peace and security within and a restored city without giving evidence of the living God. For us the Holy Spirit brings peace and security within as we allow him to restore our heart mind and spirit and a new person on the outside. The evidence of our renewed life and testimony demonstrates the Good News of Jesus to the world.

As we continue to study the book of Nehemiah let's look for ways in which the Holy Spirit aids us and works within us and be open to him.

Application (this is the bit where cell members get to participate. Lead discussions around these points)

A number of people responded to the calls for ministry, for salvation, recommitment and more of the Holy Spirit. Ask if any in the cell group have a testimony they can share from Sunday.

Jesus promised the Father would send the Holy Spirit (eg Lk 11:9-13, Jn 14:26, Acts 1:8) – who was this promise for? Does Peter's use of the scriptures in Acts 2:16-18 help answer this? What about Acts 2:38 – what are the important words here that tell us who will receive the Holy Spirit? (*Hint to leader: Make sure you include the word "all"*).

For each of the following scriptures in the Gospels what promise regarding the Holy Spirit is made to us?

- a. Matt 3:11, Mk 1:8 Lk 3:16, Jn 1:33
- b. Lk 11:13
- c. Matt 28:19, Mk 13:11, Lk 12:12, Jn 14:26
- d. Jn 14:16
- e. Jn 14:17
- f. Jn 15:26, 16:14
- g. Jn 16:13

Read Acts 2:38 and Acts 8:16,17. These illustrate the two ways in which people receive the Holy Spirit. Does anyone recognise they need prayer now to receive the Spirit? If so pray for them. Also pray for any who want to open up more of their life to him.

Witness (this is the bit where the cell talks and prays about how to share the Good News)

Nehemiah Week 1 was about prayer: the starting point for all our service.

Nehemiah Week 2 was about developing a vision and a plan.

This Week: Continue discussions on how to “go into all the world”.