

From Ruin to Revival

A Study of the Book of Nehemiah

LESSON FIVE Introduction: No test is more revealing than the test of **opposition**. In chapter 4 we learned that Nehemiah faced opposition in two forms: *contempt* and *conspiracy*. As difficult as outside pressure is, greater still is *conflict* within. As it's been said, "We have met the enemy and he is **US**."

1. The **conflict** between the people (v.1-5).

- a. Their **finances** were faulty.
 - i. **Large families** with no provisions.
 - ii. **Mortgaged properties** with no assets.
 - iii. **Enslaved workers** with no remedy.
- b. The **factors** were few.
 - i. **Famine**.
 - ii. **Taxation**.
 - iii. **Exploitation**.

2. Nehemiah's **correction** of the Jews (v.6-11).

- a. It was **passionate** (v.6).
- b. It was **thought out** (v.7).
- c. It was **biblical** (v.7, 9).
 - i. There are related biblical **passages**.
 - **Exodus 22:25**.
 - **Deuteronomy 23:19-20a**.
 - **Leviticus 25:35-41**.
 - ii. There are related biblical **principles**.

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- It was not wrong to **lend money**.
 - It was not wrong to **lend for interest** to a Gentile.
 - It was wrong to charge **a needy brother** interest.
 - It was wrong to **enslave a needy brother**.
- d. It was **sensible** (v.8).
- e. It was **silencing** (v.8b).
- f. It was **demanding** (10-11).
- i. It demanded **repentance**.
 - Because of their disobedience to **God's precepts**.
 - Because of **their disinterest** in the people of God.
 - ii. It demanded **response**.
3. **The Jews' commitment to the people (v.12-13).**
- a. The **promise** by the lenders.
 - b. The **picture** of the liar.
 - c. The **praise** to the Lord.
4. **Nehemiah's confirmation to the people (v.14-19).**
- a. Nehemiah had a **divine appointment** as governor (v.14a, 16a).
 - b. Nehemiah did not **demand assistance** as governor (v.14b-15).
 - c. Nehemiah did have a **definite anticipation** as governor (v.19).

Conclusion: Our response to this lesson should be twofold. First, let us not hold our freedom and riches in Christ above those still in spiritual poverty. Second, let us assist those in the family of God who are struggling financially. Let's turn our eyes on those in need, reaching out in compassion. For tomorrow, it may be us in need of assistance.