

Nehemiah 1 Meet Nehemiah!
CCH All Age Service pre ACM 09/02/20

V5. Been Talking about what passionate about! What about Nehemiah?

- 1) **Passionate about Building!** N the builder!
 - If know anything about book (may not)
 - He led the people in rebuilding city walls of Jerusalem 444BC
 - It's a great read. Something really concrete about this book!
- 2) **Passionate about Lists**
 - Really practical guy!
 - People have lists-
 - list of what to buy/ what to do/ what to tell ppl!
 - list of lists!
 - N a list guy! Serious lists... Listed
 - Lists the gates ch 3 inc Fish gate to Dung gate (pooh!)
 - Lists the people who returned to the city in ch 7
 - Lists the people who committed to return to God
 - Lists those living in Jerusalem.
- 3) **Passionate about leadership**
 - He's a wise leader who gets the job done!
 - Learn about teamwork and conflict and resilience.
- **So is this what book is about?** These things? No missing something.
 - Not a book about building (ppl do turn to it when they have a church building project!)
 - Not a book just full of lists? (That would be boring).
Not even a leadership manual (though some use it in that way).
- **2 key passions about Nehemiah help us understand book...**

1) He's passionate about God!

- We learn a lot in v1.
- **The man:** We meet Nehemiah and his family tree in v1.
- **The date:** is around Dec 446BC in our calendar.
- **The place:** Susa- in modern day Iran. Geography boffins?
 - So It's a tough start. Neh is a captive in a foreign land.
 - See his day job end of chapter. Important civil servant.
 - But think refugees, think prisoners of war. Prob lived there all life.
 - Ppl of God rebelled and God sent King of Babylon to take them into captivity. What's called the Exile.
 - Ezra has already returned with some people to rebuild Temple, but N is still in Persia.

- And then his brother comes back from Jerusalem.
 - And there's some tragic news.
 - (prob not original destruction Jer- 140 yrs earlier.
 - Building of walls had been stopped by king (read in Ezra 4).
 - Walls are more important than an army cos protect city.
 - V2-V4. Nehemiah reacts.
- Now of course you'd be sad if your house was blown down, like those scenes in hurricanes or earthquakes. Or burnt down gas explosion.
- But Neh never lived there. Home has been in Susa.
 - Doesn't say cushy job. Happy here.
 - Look after no1. So long as I'm OK.
 - Committed to his roots.
- But it's more than that.
- Jerusalem was where God's people lived, and where God symbolically lived in the Temple.
- So when Jerusalem looked broken, God looked broken.
 - Hint in word v4 brother uses: disgrace.
- **▲ Kids-** Lightning McQueen sponsored by Rust- Eze.
 - So if he looks good, Rust eze looks good.
 - Not good for sponsors if disgrace: crashes water fountain.
- Jerusalem belongs to God. Points to God.
 - So it's a big thing if walls broken down. God looks bad.
 - N wants Jerusalem to be built up for God's sake, and God's people! Jerusalem disgrace God in disgrace.
- **This I believe is key to Nehemiah!**
 - His passion for God.
 - He's concerned about God's name.
 - Get a taste in word brother uses v4. Disgrace.
 - Get more in v11.
 - Throughtout book. Look out for it! Passion for God.
 - It matters to him when people are slack about godliness.
 - It matters to him when city in ruins.
 - It matters to him when people not taking a rest day.
 - It matters to him when people marrying wrong person.
 - **COS MATTERS TO HIM ABOUT GOD!**
 - So a really important thing for N to go back and build walls.
- **➡ Now we don't have building project!** (perhaps one day!)
 - But God's building is his people.
 - So as NT believers we can learn about God building his church- his people.
 - And he does it through his Word by his Spirit.

- Building in numbers- adding new bricks to the building,
- But more so, building up his people. Edification.
- Paul tells us to build one another up.
- And we don't build walls today to separate people.
- Like president trump's wall with
- Christian church is not about keeping people out, about welcoming people in, through introducing them to Jesus.
- But if there is to be a wall of distinction, perhaps it is our lives to be distinct and godly.
- So if we are to be passionate about God we will be passionate about seeing his church built up.
 - So good to be doing Nehemiah together.
 - We'll learn lessons about church building
 - And kingdom building.
 - Who can you ask
 - It matters.
 - It's dishonouring to God to see graph of attendance.
 - See buildings turned into flats (I know not buildings!)

We're going to sing a song: [Brick after Brick](#) by Sovereign Grace. Thing I want you to notice first of all, who is the master builder! Come back to this- it's God, building on the cornerstone of Jesus Christ. **Join in with chorus!**

2) He's passionate about prayer.

- So N is passionate about God, and restoring the walls. He's got an opportunity to do something about it as cupbearer to the king. He's a doer an action man, does he get straight to work?
- No first he prays. For some days.
- V4.
 - Sat down and wept
 - FOR SOME DAYS!
 - Mourned
 - Fasted- Jesus assumes his followers do this in S on Mt.
 - Prayed
- Wont' go into great detail here, other great and short prayers that we will return to in depth, including famous arrow prayer v2.
- You'll see the prayer is a mix of focusing on 4 things.
 - **Focusing on God**. (v5-6a)
 - He has a big God
 - "Everything is awesome"- Lego movie

- Not! God of the universe!
- That's who we talk to !
- **Focusing on saying sorry** (v6b-7)
 - We do this every week at church.
 - Day we stop sinning is day we can stop confessing.
 - Going to do it after sermon in a song.
 - Even after come to faith say sorry.
 - Not just coin unlocks the goodies in vending machine.
 - Heartfelt and very personal
 - Not just looking to others.
- **Focusing on the Bible** (8-10)
 - Looks back to promises- here in Deut.
 - Pray the Scriptures.
- **Focusing on the specific request (v11).**
 - Can you see a way. Ask God.
 - If God has promised
 - Provision
 - Protection
 - Pardon ask for them.
- Not a bad model for us. (others too!)
- As conclude. Another thing to try and do?
 - **No- come to Jesus**. HE IS THE KEY!
 - He was passionate for God.
 - As we spend time with him, and pray his prayer.
 - "your kingdom come, HALLOWED BE YOUR NAME".
 - When we come to trust Jesus, we are united with him.
 - And we ask for his passion for God, and for prayer to come to us.
 - TO give us the same concern for His glory.
 - To give us same concern for state of his people/the lost/
 - Lord please give me a greater passion for you and for people to know you.
 - Finish with man called Henry Martyn.
 - "I could not endure existence if Jesus was not glorified; it would be hell to me if He were to be always thus dishonoured"!
- Let's pray.