

Nehemiah 6: Participant Guide

SCRIPTURE READING QUESTIONS

Before diving into the group discussion, consider these four questions as you read the text:

- **What does this passage say about God, who He is, and what He does (Father, Son, and Spirit)?**
- **What does this passage teach me about me?**
- **What comfort/challenge can I take away from this passage?**
- **How will I respond or live differently because of what I've read?**

PART 1: THE FOUNDATION

Loving God's People (The Community Lens) In Nehemiah 6, Sanballat, Tobiah, and Geshem try to lure Nehemiah away from the wall to harm him and create false rumors to discredit his leadership. Our "One New Family" identity is preserved when we stand united, discern deceptive distractions, and refuse to let outside pressure or gossip divide or derail the community.

- **Key Question:** "How are you pursuing authentic community with other believers right now?"
- **Key Question:** "What gets in the way of community with other believers?"

Looking to God's Word (The Truth Lens) This chapter exposes our true "Wealth in Christ"—a secure identity grounded in God's truth rather than human opinion or fear. When Shemaiah tries to trick Nehemiah into sinning by hiding in the temple, Nehemiah tests the advice against God's Word and recognizes it is not from God.

- **Key Question:** "How is God's Word challenging you?"
- **Key Question:** "What can you do to prioritize God's Word?"

PART 2: THE WALK

Listening to God's Voice (The Prayer Lens) When confronted with intimidation tactics and rumors meant to weaken their hands, Nehemiah turns immediately to God in prayer: "Now, God, strengthen my hands" (Nehemiah 6:9, CSB). Walking in the Spirit requires us to quiet the loud voices of fear and false accusations so we can hear God's voice and receive His strength.

- **Key Question:** "How is God directing you?"
- **Key Question:** "What do you need to quiet in your life to hear God better?"

Living Sent (The Mission Lens) Nehemiah responds to his distractors with laser focus: "I am doing a great work and cannot come down" (Nehemiah 6:3, CSB). Prioritizing "sending capacity over seating capacity" means staying focused on the mission God has given us in our everyday spaces without being sidelined by good-sounding compromises or opposition.

- **Key Question:** "What everyday opportunity have you used to point someone to Jesus?"
- **Key Question:** "What opportunities did you miss to tell someone about Jesus?"

GROUP PRAYER & SUMMARY

- **Closing Thought:** Nehemiah 6 shows that when God's people stay focused on His mission, rely on His truth to expose lies, and pray for strength, even hostile onlookers will recognize that the work was accomplished with the help of God (Nehemiah 6:16, CSB).
- **Final Action:** Identify one major distraction or fear currently pulling your focus away from God's calling, and practice Nehemiah's response this week by declaring, "I am doing a great work and cannot come down".

PAGE 3: FACILITATOR CHEAT SHEET

The Structural Lens

Indicative vs. Imperative: The theological framework centers on the **Indicative** that "this work had been accomplished with the help of our God" (v. 16). The **Imperative** (the call to action) is to remain steadfast, discern deceit, and refuse to compromise. Remind the group that our perseverance doesn't stem from sheer willpower, but from knowing that God is the one accomplishing His work through us.

Facilitation Tips

- **Identifying Modern Distractions:** Group members may struggle to relate to physical threats, but they easily experience spiritual distraction. Help them explore how "good" opportunities, busyness, or fear of man function like Sanballat's invitations to Ono (v. 2) to pull us away from kingdom priorities.
- **Discerning Spiritual Deception:** Point out how Shemaiah used religious-sounding language and a apparently pious setting (hiding in the temple) to induce fear (v. 10). Guide the group to discuss how to filter advice through Scripture rather than letting fear or convenience dictate their decisions.

Leader Insights

- **Community:** The nobles of Judah were secretly sending letters to Tobiah (v. 17–19), creating internal division. True "One New Family" community requires single-minded loyalty to Christ rather than compromise with worldly influences.
- **Truth:** Nehemiah recognized that entering the inner temple as a non-priest violated God's Word (v. 13). The "Truth Lens" serves as our protection against spiritual traps, even when they come from self-proclaimed prophets.
- **Prayer:** Nehemiah's brief prayer—"Now, God, strengthen my hands" (v. 9)—shows that prayer isn't always long or formal; it can be an immediate, in-the-moment cry for grace during spiritual warfare.
- **Mission:** Finishing the wall in 52 days silenced the enemies and brought glory to God (v. 15–16). Our ultimate "sending capacity" shines when our steadfast work forces a skeptical world to recognize God's hand at work.