

homes outside the walls and move to Jerusalem. Such men were commended for doing so (Neh. 11:2).

### *Thinking about community in a church*

- **How does this apply to a local church? In what ways is a church like Jerusalem?** Wait for responses. Learners may suggest that it has walls, has people, the people have responsibilities or jobs within the church, there are people outside whom we would like to have inside, sometimes we keep figurative gates closed and don't let people in or make them feel welcome.

### **Wrapping It Up**

- **Just as Jerusalem was more than a wall and houses, our church is more than walls and rooms. Christ has called us together to serve Him together. When we do that, then we are building real community here in our church.**

- Call on someone to lead the class in prayer.

- **What creates community in a city or in a church?** Wait for responses. Learners may suggest that people with common backgrounds or common goals coming together, working together, spending time together can create community.

- **What can we do as members of our church to make it a place of community rather than just a place?** Wait for responses. Learners may suggest getting to know one another, helping others get involved in meaningful ways, spending time with one another.



### **Faith at Home**

Consider what you and your family are doing to build community within your own local church. Are you spending time with other families, eating in one another's homes, meeting one another's needs? What could you do to take a step forward in that area during the next few weeks?

# Teacher's Toolbox

*Getting your class into God's Word  
and God's Word into your class*

**ExcitingBibleStudy.com**

**Bible Series**

**Nehemiah 7**

February 1, 2015

Prepared by David Williams

PO Box 628, Liberty, TX 77575 972-814-5378

[davidwilliams@ExcitingBibleStudy.com](mailto:davidwilliams@ExcitingBibleStudy.com)

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**HOW TO USE TEACHER'S TOOLBOX:** Make a four-page folded teacher's leaflet from the first two sheets by printing two-sided (or by putting the blank sides together). The other two sheets are for duplicating, displaying, distributing, or otherwise using as called for in the lesson plan.



**Faith at Home** – A specific application of today's Bible passage to family life, to be used for individual reflection, family discussion, or class activity.



### **Getting Started**

#### *Describing memories*

- **Tell us something you remember about the place you grew up in – something about the community, the buildings, the culture, the people. Be brief. Just a sentence or two about the place you grew up.** Let several volunteers respond.

- **Some people grew up in small towns, some grew up in big cities, some grew up on farms or ranches. Wherever we grew up, one of the things we probably remember about the place is the other people who lived there. People are what give a place its personality, its character.**

- **In today's study we will find Nehemiah changing his focus from building a wall to building a community, from putting rocks together to putting people together.**

- Have learners turn to Nehemiah 7. Call on someone to lead the class in prayer for the study.

## Exploring God's Word

### Study guide

● Give each person a pencil and a copy of the following study guide, but without the suggested answers given here in parentheses (duplicate Item 1).

### Study Guide

#### *Nehemiah 7:1*

1. What had been accomplished already? (the wall rebuilt and the doors hung)
2. As Nehemiah moved forward with his plan to develop Jerusalem as a viable community, what were the first appointments he made? (gatekeepers, singers, Levites)

#### *Nehemiah 7:2*

3. Whom did Nehemiah place “in charge of Jerusalem”? (his brother Hanani, and Hananiah, the commander of the citadel)
4. Why did Nehemiah choose those two men as leaders? (his brother Hanani was the first to tell Nehemiah about the wall being broken down, according to Neh. 1:1-3; Hananiah was a commander, a man of integrity, and feared God)

#### *Nehemiah 7:3*

5. What rules did Nehemiah set regarding the gates of the city? (don't open until the sun is hot; keep the gates shut and barred)

6. Where did Nehemiah position residents who served as guards for the city? (some at guard posts and some near their own houses)

#### *Nehemiah 7:4-5*

7. Why did Nehemiah assemble the people to register them? (God put it into his heart)

#### *Nehemiah 7:6-68*

8. What did Nehemiah discover about the number of the following?

<u>(4,289)</u>	Priests
<u>(74)</u>	Levites
<u>(148)</u>	Singers
<u>(138)</u>	Gatekeepers
<u>(392)</u>	Temple Servants
<u>(42,360)</u>	Whole Company
<u>(7,337)</u>	Servants
<u>(245)</u>	Singers
<u>(736)</u>	Horses
<u>(245)</u>	Mules
<u>(435)</u>	Camels
<u>(6,720)</u>	Donkeys

#### *Nehemiah 7:70-72*

9. Who gave to the treasury? (some of the heads of families, the governor, the rest of the people)

#### *Nehemiah 7:73*

10. The priests, Levites, gatekeepers, singers, and temple servants all worked in Jerusalem. Where did they live? (in their own towns)

● Have learners work in pairs to fill in their study guides. After 10

minutes, lead the class to go over all the answers.

### Thought questions

- Use the following thought questions to generate discussion related to the passage. Cut apart Item 2 and distribute the questions. Let those holding the questions to read them aloud (in any order) and wait for class members to discuss. The one asking the question may not answer it until at least three other people have commented.
- Do not call for another question until there has been sufficient discussion of the one already asked.
  - It's easy to understand why Nehemiah appointed gatekeepers immediately, and we can understand why Levites were also among the first to be put into place. But why singers?
    - Nehemiah chose two men to be in charge of Jerusalem – one was his brother and the other a man of integrity who feared God. What criteria do most people today use when they are choosing people to be community or political leaders?
      - Why do you think Nehemiah ordered the gatekeepers to keep the doors shut and barred until the heat of the day?
        - What do you think Nehemiah's motive was in appointing residents of the city to serve as guards at various posts and near their own houses?

- What problems could result from the city having “few people” in it?
- What do you think Nehemiah learned from the registration of all the people? How do you think he used that information?
- Why do you think so many of the essential personnel of Jerusalem lived outside Jerusalem?

### Making It Personal

#### *Thinking about community*

● **The rebuilding of Jerusalem was not just a construction project. Nehemiah realized his job was not about a wall or even a city; it was about people and community.**

**For the city to be viable, it had to be more than wood and stone; it had to be made of flesh and blood. People were needed to inhabit the space, to fill it with work and love and laughter and faith. The city needed people to live in her and to love her.**

**Jerusalem had to be more than just a wall surrounding buildings. The wall could never keep enemies out. The people had to stand guard, open and shut the gates, keep a watchful eye for those who might try to break in and destroy them.**

**Neither could the wall hold people in or draw new people inside. We learn later than some had to sacrificially leave their**

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6. Where did Nehemiah position residents who served as guards for the city?

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7. Why did Nehemiah assemble the people to register them?

## *Nehemiah 7:6-68*

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- \_\_\_\_\_ Gatekeepers
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- \_\_\_\_\_ Whole Company
- \_\_\_\_\_ Servants
- \_\_\_\_\_ Singers
- \_\_\_\_\_ Horses
- \_\_\_\_\_ Mules
- \_\_\_\_\_ Camels
- \_\_\_\_\_ Donkeys

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