

Restoring Unity Nehemiah 5

I. Internal Problems – 5:1-5

1. Great outcry dividing the Jews – 1
Brethren cried out against brethren
2. Families were under economic stress – 2-4
As they worked daily on the wall bills piled up
Some had large families to feed – 2
There was a drought driving prices up – 3
Some were forced into mortgaging property - 3
The King's taxes were also due – 4
3. Fellow Jews took advantage of situation - 5
They took advantage of Jewish brethren
Took their land under mortgage – 3
They borrowed money to pay the King's taxes – 4
Children taken into servitude for unpaid debts – 5
They had no means to redeem their children
Their resources were in other hands
4. Such disunity will hinder the work

II. Nehemiah's Response – 5:6-13

1. He was very angry at these abuses – 6
Righteous anger moved him to action
2. He consulted with himself – 7
Needed time to think it through, cool down
3. He rebuked those who were guilty – 7-9
He said "We are a redeemed people" – 8
What you are doing is not good - 9
The law forbid charging interest – Lev. 25:35-38
The law forbid enslaving brethren – Lev. 25:39-44
We expose ourselves before our enemies - 9
4. Challenged them to make things right – 10-11
Stop interest, restore their land and the interest
Stop selling them food for a profit
5. The Noble's positive response – 12-13
Made restitution & promised not to do it again
Nehemiah had them make a solemn oath

III. Nehemiah's Example – 5:14-19

His rebuke was backed up by his consistency

1. He took no support as Governor – 14-15
He refused because his fear of God
His desire was to do what pleased God
2. He continued to work on the wall – 16
3. He did not buy land for himself – 16
He did not serve for personal gain
4. He fed many people at his table – 17-18
150 Jews plus other people that visited
In spite of food needed he did not take support
5. He was sensitive to the situation – 18
Did not want to increase burden on God's people
6. He wanted only God's approval – 19