

A.L.I.V.E. Bible Study
Sunday, October 4, 2020
Nehemiah 5

1. What happened in Sunday's Bible Study in Nehemiah 3-4?
 - a. The rebuilding of the wall was going well, the families were each building a section and they had it built to half its height.
 - b. There was opposition and criticism aimed at discouraging the workers.
 - c. The workers continued, but they had to stand and defend one another and sometimes work with one hand while they held their sword with the other.

2. What is happening now in chapter 5, according to verses 1-5?
 - a. Famine.
 - b. Taxes to the King and governors.
 - c. Fellow Israelites who have resources are charging high interest on loans made to the Israelites who are struggling.
 - d. The Israelites are forced to sell their children into slavery and mortgage their family's land in order to find food to survive.

3. How did Nehemiah respond to these complaints and this activity, according to 5:6-11?
 - a. He was angry.
 - b. He told them they were exacting usury from their brothers.
 - c. He pointed out that they had freed their own people from other nations who held them in slavery, but they now treated their own people the way they had been treated by others.
 - d. He declared that they should be helping one another rather than capitalizing on their brothers' poverty.
 - e. He asked them to give back the collateral that they had taken and the interest that they had charged.

4. How did the Israelites respond when Nehemiah confronted them about their actions, according to verses 12-13? _____

5. Do you think the Jews knew that what they were doing was wrong?
 - a. Obviously, how could they think this was ok?
 - b. I'm not sure. It seems like after years of exile living among people who had different cultures, customs, and morals they had become more like the people around them than God's people and Zerubbabel, Zechariah, Haggai, Ezra, Nehemiah and the other priests, prophets, and leaders are trying to establish a completely counter-cultural way of living and completely change the way people think. This is a big task and perhaps many people didn't realize how ungodly their behavior was.
 - c. Their quick response of obedience suggests that they were inclined to obey when God revealed something that needed to change. This might suggest that they were not previously aware that what they were doing was wrong.

6. What did Nehemiah do to model this change, according to 5:14-19? _____

7. In what ways might we be guilty of taking advantage of each other the way the Israelites were doing here? _____

8. How do we respond when things like this are brought to our attention? _____