

Small Group Material: New Walls, New Heart 3

The Team Begins

Welcome (10 mins)

Which do you prefer and why? Choose one of a) individual or team sports b) living on your own or living w others c) self employment or working as part of a team.

Word (40 mins)

Leaders' notes: Nehemiah gathers his people for the work ahead. Everyone is known, named and involved. It is not a one man project! The builders use the skills they have, but are not always the obvious choice - God wants them all. Involvement in rebuilding is not necessarily based on skill, but the heart the people have for the work. The state of hearts is not based on merit or activity but who we are in Christ. God can do great things with willing hearts.

Read Nehemiah ch 3.1-32 (*Tell your reader to just keep going and not worry about the tricky words. There is no right way to say them!*)

1. What was the response to Nehemiah's challenge (cf 2.17-20)?
2. What professional groups or classes of the Jewish community participated in Nehemiah's winning team (v1,8,9,15,16,17,18,22,28,31,32)?
3. What, if any, distinctions do you see between the clergy and the laity?
4. Give each person in the group 'charge' of one of the ten gates. Ask them to give in their own words a 30 second progress report on their section! **1.** Sheep Gate v1-2; **2.** Fish Gate v3-5; **3.** Old Gate or Jeshanah Gate v6-8; **4.** Valley Gate v13; **5.** Dung Gate v14; **6.** Fountain Gate v15; **7.** Water Gate v26; **8.** Horse Gate v28; **9.** East Gate v29 **10.** Inspection Gate v31-32;
5. What is interesting about Eliashib and his fellow priests? v1,22, Shallum's group.
6. Why do you think the nobles of Tekoa refuse to work? What did that mean for the men of Tekoa, v5, 27?
7. What do you learn from the fact that Nehemiah knew who worked next to whom? What does this tell us about the organisation and

co-operation involved in this nationwide effort to build the wall?
How much of the wall was repaired during this time, v13?

8. Nehemiah's name is conspicuous by its absence from this chapter. What do you suppose Nehemiah was doing during this time while others were 'doing the work'?

For discussion: What attitudes and actions from Nehemiah's team of wall builders describe Christians who want to build the Kingdom of God? What should we avoid and what do you think is more important than all the others? cf Romans 12.1 & 11. How could you demonstrate this attitude at home, at work, at school and at church? Do you know of anyone like the nobles of Tekoa who want the benefits of the project without doing the work (no names!!)? What do we learn from Nehemiah about how to deal with them?

Do you feel a part of Team JC? When do you feel this most? Is there anything you could do to feel more a part of Team JC?

Worship (15 mins)

Put on 'Build your kingdom here':

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=8awpRHg5waw> by Rend Collective.

Stand up, turn it up loud, join in, dance if you want to!! And enjoy it!
Turn it into praise...!!!

or (for the more sedate groups) clap joyfully and loudly for Jesus!!

Witness (20 mins)

Pray for this 'building of the kingdom' in the hard places of the world. On Open Doors World Watch List Eritrea is no 5 and Sudan no 6.

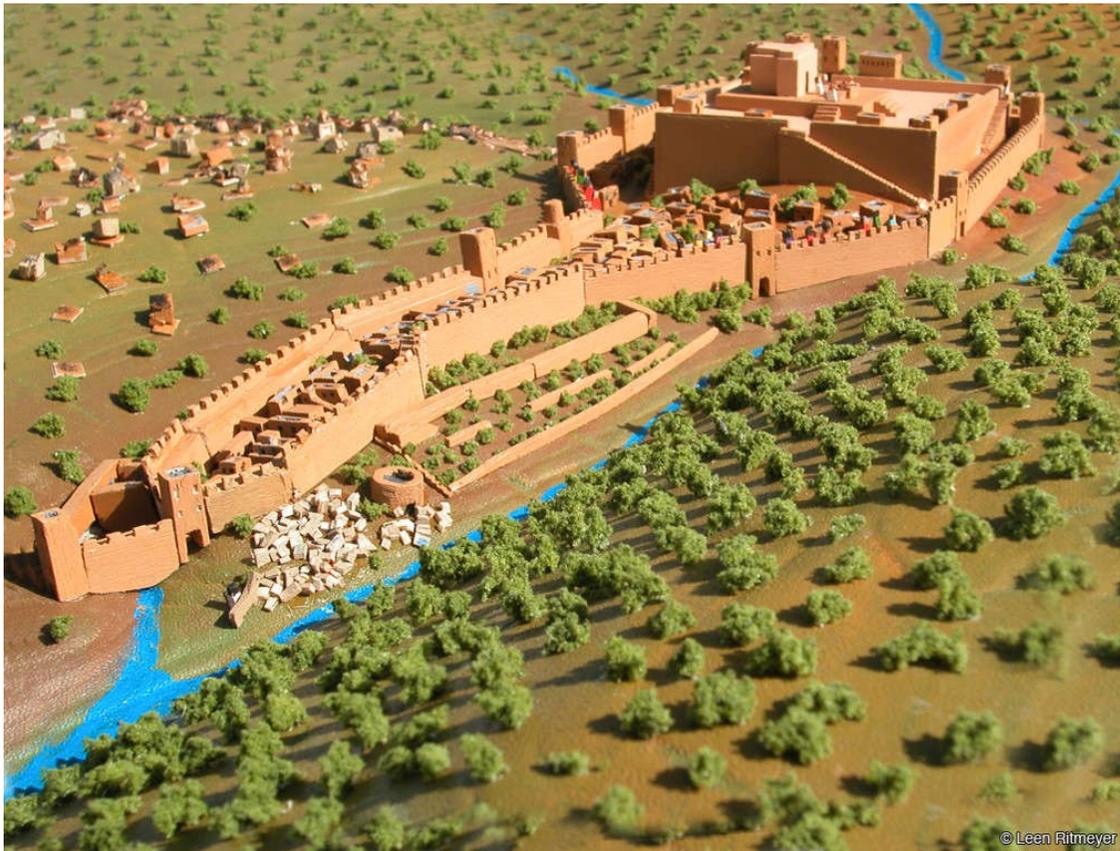
Here's a link to the page on Eritrea:

<https://www.opendoorsuk.org/persecution/countries/eritrea/> Read the information about Eritrea. Scroll down to the video and play it.

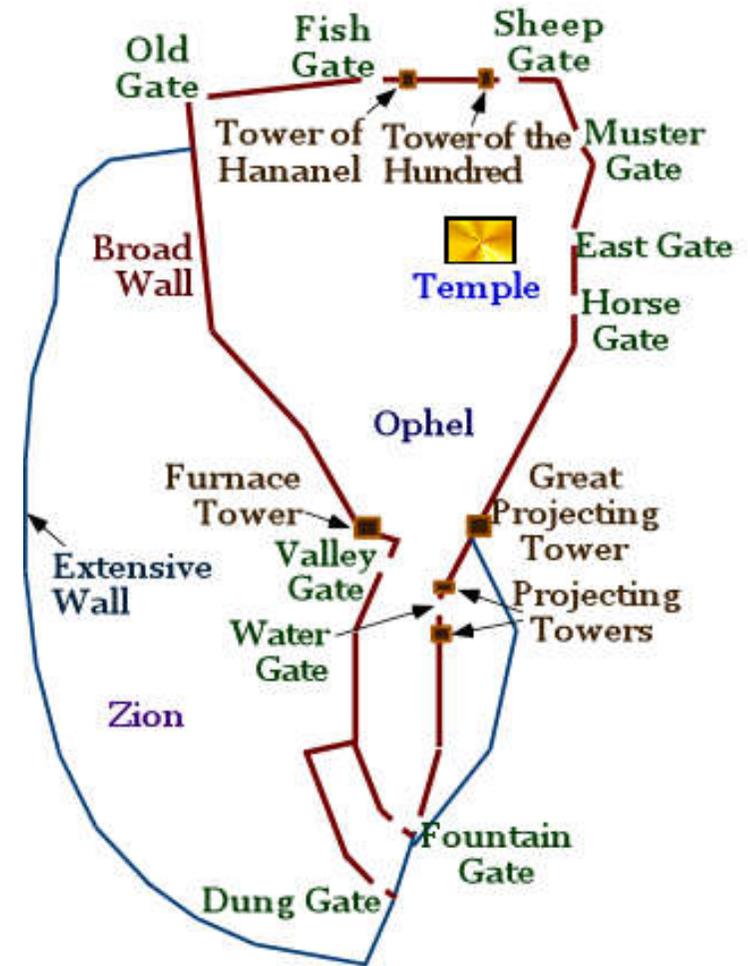
Here's the link to Sudan:

<https://www.opendoorsuk.org/persecution/countries/sudan/> Again, read the information and watch the video. Turn these into prayer for those who really struggle as they build the kingdom.

Advance warning. Collection week for Samaritan's Purse Operation Christmas Child (Shoe Box appeal!) is 11-18th November...



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NEHEMIAH'S JERUSALEM