

## The Organization of a Godly Leader Nehemiah 3 (1-8 for Text)

It is no secret that leadership presents its own set of challenges, and those who lead within the church are not exempt. Pastors in particular, and those in leadership positions within the church, often feel overwhelmed by the challenges associated with Kingdom work. According to research by Lifeway, 54% of pastors find their work overwhelming.<sup>i</sup> Someone once said, “Most pastors are not overworked, they are under organized.” Could that be true of pastors and those who lead others within the church? Could the anxiety and stress be attributed to a lack of organization? While good organization cannot alleviate every difficulty leaders face, it certainly can provide a healthy structure within the church to accomplish the task at hand.

After spending a few weeks in Nehemiah, surely you will agree that he was an effective leader. Our text today reveals another significant aspect of Nehemiah’s leadership. Not only was he able to influence others and motivate them to engage in a worthy endeavor, he was also able to organize many people to effectively accomplish an enormous task.

One could possess many attributes of effective leadership, but if a leader is unable to organize the work and those serving in the work, the leadership skill possessed will be of little value. One must learn to effectively organize the task at hand, as well as effectively organize teams of workers to engage in the work. As we examine the chapter before us today, we will discover the [organizational abilities](#) leaders need to possess. Let’s consider: [The Organization of Godly Leaders](#). Nehemiah modeled this in:

**I. The Division of the Work** – Had we taken the time to read the entire chapter and analyzed the information, we would have discovered that there were 41 different teams at work around the city, rebuilding the walls. Such an enormous task required many workers. Nehemiah effectively organized 41 teams to spread out around the city, working together as individual teams and as a corporate workforce to rebuild the walls that lay in disrepair.

- Remember, the wall was some two miles around, encompassing around 90 acres of land. Nehemiah began his description on the north end of the city wall at the sheep gate, and worked counterclockwise around the wall. Such a task required many teams, strategically placed along the wall.
- Effective leaders must be able to assess the task at hand and formulate a plan to complete the task. Often, this requires dividing the work among individuals or teams to engage in the work so that it can be completed in a timely fashion. Can you imagine Nehemiah trying to rebuild two

miles of city wall by himself? The task before us is great and leaders need to effectively evaluate the task and divide the work among others willing to assist.

**II. The Delegation of the Work (1-12)** – Following the creation of teams to divide the wall into manageable sections, Nehemiah delegated the work expected of the teams. This was necessary for timely completion, but it was also done with purpose and beneficial. Nehemiah delegated:

**A. To Create Unity (2-5ff)** – As we examine the text, we find a phrase repeated many times: [And next unto him...](#) The individuals named in the text were team leaders. Each team worked beside another team. They were quite literally working shoulder to shoulder with one another.

- This served to create a sense of unity among the people and, no doubt, brought encouragement to those laboring on the wall. Each day they gathered for work next to those who shared the same burden and vision. Working side by side created a sense of community and commitment. Each team realized others were depending upon them to complete their portion of the wall.

- Effective leaders are aware of the need and benefit of unity. God can and does use individuals at times, but more often He chooses to use us collectively. Unity creates a sense of community and commitment within the church as well. Others assist us in the work and we realize their dependence upon us for the accomplishment of the greater task.

**B. According to Ability (8)** – [Next unto him repaired Uzziel the son of Harhaiah, of the goldsmiths. Next unto him also repaired Hananiah the son of one of the apothecaries, and they fortified Jerusalem unto the broad wall.](#) Nehemiah delegated according to individual ability. We find that Uzziel was a goldsmith and Hananiah was an apothecary (a maker of perfume). This was strategic organization. Nehemiah was aware of the giftedness of the people and used them in areas where their gifts could be effectively used in the reconstruction.

- Effective leaders know their people and their spiritual giftedness. They delegate tasks according to these gifts. It would be unwise to expect one of our men who is good at building and working with his hands to serve in the nursery, never having the opportunity to use his gifts and talents, and vice-versa. [Eph.4:11-12 – And he gave some, apostles; and some, prophets; and some, evangelists; and some, pastors and teachers;](#) <sup>12</sup> [For the perfecting of the saints, for the work of the ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ.](#)

**C. To encourage Community** (5, 7) – Nehemiah records that the Tekoites, Gibeonites, and men of Mizpah also engaged in the work. These were workers who dwelt outside the city walls, coming from other towns and villages. Tekoa was twelve miles south of Jerusalem; Gideon and Mizpah were just to the northwest of the city. These men realized the value of Jerusalem's strength and security. A strong Jerusalem would help provide peace and stability for their homes and families. Nehemiah was able to put together a coalition of workers, all engaged in the work in community with one another.

➤ The church must not underestimate the value of community and working together for the cause of Christ. Effective leaders will be aware of this and strive to cast a vision that encourages others to support the work of ministry in its entirety. You may not have any youth in your family, but you can work alongside others in support of youth ministry. God may not be leading you to go on mission overseas, but you can pray and encourage others who are led to go. Leaders must realize that particular groups and specific ministries are not islands unto themselves, but all part of the greater work of the church. [Rom.12:5 – So we, being many, are one body in Christ, and every one members one of another.](#) [1 Cor.1:10 – Now I beseech you, brethren, by the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, that ye all speak the same thing, and that there be no divisions among you; but that ye be perfectly joined together in the same mind and in the same judgment.](#)

**D. To engage Corporately** (12, 26) – Nehemiah was ahead of his time in regard to leadership principles. Although women were often overlooked and suppressed within society, Nehemiah welcomed their support and found a position for them to work alongside their fathers on the wall. He also willingly used the Nethinims, who were historically water haulers (Joshua 9). None were overlooked or left out. All who wanted to engage in the work were given a position.

➤ Effective leaders realize the need to encourage participation with as many as possible. We don't all have the same gifts, but there are no insignificant positions within the church. Consider those who serve as greeters. They may not be on the platform on Sunday morning, but they have the privilege of being the first person a visitor encounters. The significance of their position cannot be underestimated. Every believer is gifted in some way by the Holy Spirit. As leaders, we must seek to learn their gifts and employ them accordingly.

**III. The Recognition of the Work** – Finally, we discover that Nehemiah was mindful of the work being accomplished and those who were contributing. He purposely recognized those who were committed. Consider:

**A. The Workers are Honored** – While Nehemiah doesn't mention every single individual who served, he does recognize 75 people who served as team leaders. Their names are eternally recorded in Scripture. If in no other way, their mention in Nehemiah's account of the rebuilding efforts acknowledged their contributions to the work.

➤ Effective leaders are not self-centered, nor are they afraid to share the praise. Good leaders will acknowledge those who serve in ministry, publicly recognizing their efforts. Hans Finzel stated, "Compliments by their very nature are highly biodegradable and tend to dissolve hours or days after we receive them – which is why we can always use another" (*The Top Ten Mistakes Leaders Make*, p. 63).

**B. The Lord is Glorified (6:16)** – [And it came to pass, that when all our enemies heard thereof, and all the heathen that were about us saw these things, they were much cast down in their own eyes: for they perceived that this work was wrought of our God.](#) It is evident that Nehemiah was an effective leader, one who could influence, motivate, and organize. While he was thankful for the work of all the people, he knew that ultimately God had worked through each one to accomplish the task. God alone deserved the praise, glory, and honor for the rebuilding efforts.

➤ Godly leaders must never lose sight of their dependence upon the Lord. If we accomplish anything of value, whether it be individually or corporately, God is worthy of the recognition and praise. He is the vine; we are the branches. Apart from Him we can do nothing, but through Him we can bring forth much fruit!

**Conclusion:** Has God called you to a position of leadership? Is there anyone in your circle that you influence? If so, you are a leader. Are you serving in a way that pleases the Lord? Do you need the Lord's guidance in organizing your team? Are you willing to delegate and allow others to use their gifts for the glory of God and the good of the church? Seek the Lord for the help you need as you serve Him and lead others. Please, join me in praying that God will continue to raise up leaders in our generation. We need those who will be committed to serving the Lord and bold in their witness for Him.

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<sup>i</sup> [4 Hidden Struggles Most Pastors Face - Lifeway Research](#)