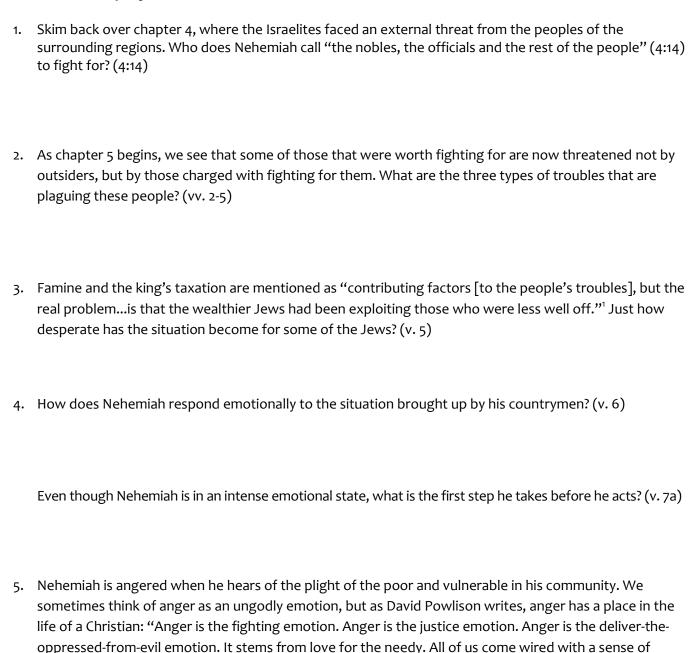
RESTORING THE BROKEN

A Study of Ezra and Nehemiah

Read Nehemiah 5:1-13.

injustice against the vulnerable?



justice."² Take a minute to stop and think about when you get angry. How often is your anger about

6.	What would Nehemiah have known about God's instruction to his per (Lev. 25:35-37; Deut. 15:7-11; 24:10-13)	eople concerning lending?
		Brothers or Brokers?
7.	What charge does Nehemiah bring against the nobles and officials? (v. 7b)	"The OT passagesprohibiting the giving of loans at interest were not intended to prohibit commercial loans but rather the charging of interest to the impoverished so as to make a profit from the helplessness of
8.	What Nehemiah reveals in verse 8 is far worse than charging interest against fellow Jews. What grave sin does he confront the nobles and officials with?	one's neighbors." ³ The nobles and officials in Nehemiah 5 are ignoring the plight and poverty of their brothers and countrymen so that they can pretend that the loans constitute business deals and thus that they are within their rights to charge interest. "The lenders were
	Think about the families in verses 5 and 8 whose children have been sold into slavery. How you would feel if you were in this situation?	behaving like pawnbrokersand harsh ones at thatinstead of like brothers." ⁴
9.	What does Nehemiah demand these nobles and officials do in response to his charges against them? (vv. 9-11)	
10.	Even though the nobles and officials agree to do as Nehemiah has said, what further step does Nehemiah take? (v. 12b)	
	Why do you think Nehemiah shakes out his robes in verse 13? Do you think he trusts these leaders?	

Read Nehemiah 5:14-19.

- 11. We already know that Nehemiah was a leader sent by the king to rebuild the city of Jerusalem (2:5-8). What office do we now find out he was appointed to by King Artaxerxes? (v. 14)
- 12. a. To what rights is Nehemiah entitled with this governmental position? (vv. 14-15)
 - b. Why does he not demand his rights? (v. 18b) (* 1 Cor. 9:1-18)
 - c. How are we as Christians to view our rights? (1 Cor. 10:23-24; Gal. 5:13)

- 13. Nehemiah's generous hospitality is not motivated by a desire to impress those around him. Who does Nehemiah want to notice his care of his people? (vv. 15b, 19)
- 14. Skim back through this chapter and your answers to question 6. Nehemiah was living out not only the letter of the law but also the generous spirit of it. What is to inform and empower how we live out our lives? (Prov. 31:8-9; Phil. 2:3-7; 1 Jn. 3:16-18)

This study has been adapted and expanded with permission from a study of the same name by Bridge Community Church, Phila., PA.

^{*} For Further Study

¹ James Montgomery Boice, Nehemiah: an Expositional Commentary (Grand Rapids: Baker Books, 2005), 61.

² David Powlison, Good and Angry: Redeeming Anger, Irritation, Complaining, and Bitterness (Greensboro: New Growth Press, 2016), 63.

³ Edwin Yamauchi, "Ezra, Nehemiah" in *The Expositor's Bible Commentary with the New International Version: 1 Kings–Job, ed.* Frank E. Gaebelein, vol. 4 (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1988), 708.

⁴ Derek Kidner, Ezra & Nehemiah: An Introduction and Commentary, Tyndale Old Testament Commentaries, ed. D. J. Wiseman (Downers Grove: InterVarsity Press, 1979), 96.