

Welcome to the Sermon Based Life Group Lesson that can help you lead a great group Bible study and discussion time based on the sermon you heard last week at NEW RIVER.



Discussion time for week of April 23, 2017

## TOPIC: Nehemiah

THOUGHTS: The Old Testament story of Nehemiah is a story of God building back or restoring fellowship and blessing with His people. Pastor Jeff shared an intro to the story this week and we will dig into the actual text of Nehemiah from the Bible next week. This week, use the passage from Psalm 80 to discuss having a heart that is ready for ways God wants to rebuild things in us as believers and as a church.

BIBLE VERSES: Psalm 80

## QUESTIONS

### Open It

1. \*What metaphor, imagery, or illustration would you use to describe your spiritual journey?
2. What do you think of when you hear the word revival?

### Explore It

3. What appeal did the Israelites make to the Lord in this prayer? ([80:1-3](#))
4. How is the Lord described in the psalm? ([80:1-19](#))
5. What refrain is repeated in this poem, and what is the effect of the repetition? ([80:3, 7, 19](#))
6. How did the psalm writer explain God's inaction? ([80:4](#))
7. Why did the Israelites lament over God's actions? ([80:4-7](#))
8. How did Israel feel about God's inaction? ([80:4-19](#))
9. How were the Israelites treated by their neighbors? ([80:6](#))
10. In what ways was Israel a transplanted vine? ([80:8-11](#))
11. \*What imagery did the psalm writer use to describe Israel's condition? ([80:8-16](#))
12. What was different about Israel's situation at the time of this prayer? ([80:12-13, 16](#))
13. What specific request did the psalm writer present to the Lord? ([80:14-15](#))
14. \*What did Israel recognize about God's power? ([80:16](#))
15. What prayer concludes the poem? ([80:16-19](#))
16. How did Israel promise to respond to God's deliverance? ([80:17-18](#))
17. \*What vow did Israel make to God? ([80:18](#))

### Get It

18. What does this passage reveal about God's character?
19. How did the Israelites demonstrate their dependence on God?
20. What are the benefits of remembering God's deeds for us in the past?
21. How does this psalm encourage you about your present situation?
22. In what way do you need to be restored or revived by the Lord?
23. \*In what areas of your life do you need to depend more on the Lord for guidance and help?
24. What does it mean to call on the name of the Lord?
25. What did Israel plan to do in response to God's deliverance?
26. How has God shown His faithfulness to you in the past?
27. \*How should we respond to God's salvation and help?

### Apply It

28. \*With whom could you pray and invite God to revive your relationship with the Lord?
29. How could you and your family remind yourselves each day this week about what God has done for you?
30. What small step of faith could you take to demonstrate your commitment to trust the Lord with all the details of your life?

## PSALM 80

In his prayer that the Lord would restore and save Israel, the psalmist lamented the awful calamity brought on them by their enemies. He described the blessing and cursing of the nation as a vine that flourished and was then destroyed. He repeated the refrain ([vv. 3, 7, 19](#)) that God should turn and save them.

### **A. Appeal to Israel's Shepherd ([80:1-3](#))**

[80:1-2](#). The psalmist appealed to the Lord, the **Shepherd** (cf. [23:1](#); [28:9](#)) of His people, the sheep, to help the tribes in their distress. The Lord is pictured sitting **enthroned** in the temple above the gold-covered **cherubim** (cf. [99:1](#); [1 Kings 6:23-28](#)) over the ark of the covenant. **Joseph**, representing the Northern Kingdom, and **Benjamin**, representing the Southern Kingdom, were Rachel's two sons; **Ephraim** and **Manasseh**, Joseph's sons, were her grandsons.

[80:3](#). The psalmist then prayed that **God** would **restore** and save His people by His grace. This refrain recurs in [verses 7, 19](#). The concept of divine favor is expressed by the image of one's **face** shining on another, like a beaming countenance of approval (cf. [Num. 6:25](#); and [comments](#) on [Ps. 4:6](#)).

### **B. Discipline from God ([80:4-7](#))**

[80:4-7](#). The psalmist lamented the fierce discipline **God** had brought on His **people**. He cried out to God, asking **how long** (cf. [comments](#) on [6:3](#)) His **anger** would be directed against them. The situation was as if **God** (like a Shepherd) had been feeding His people **tears**. He had brought painful calamity on them so that they wept uncontrollably (expressed in hyperbole that their tears were drunk **by the bowlful**). But the most painful aspect of God's chastening was that Israel's **enemies** mocked them (cf. [79:10](#)).

Again the refrain expressed the desire that God would **restore** His people by His favor (cf. [80:3, 19](#)).

### **C. Removal of blessing ([80:8-14b](#))**

[80:8-11](#). The psalmist pictured Israel as **a vine** that God brought from **Egypt** and **planted** in the land. It flourished so that it spread to the **mountains** in the south, to the **cedars** of Lebanon in the north, to **the Sea** (the Mediterranean to the west) and to **the River** (the Euphrates) on the east.

[80:12-14b](#). However, this prosperity had withered. By a rhetorical question the writer lamented that God had **broken down** the **walls** of the nation to enable others to plunder her. The Hebrew word for "walls" (also used in [89:40](#); [Isa. 5:5](#)) does not mean city walls but walls around vineyards. The enemies who plundered Israel are here described as **boars** and beasts.

The figure of Israel as a vine may have been prompted by [Genesis 49:22](#). It is used also in [Isaiah 5:1-7](#); [27:2-6](#); [Jeremiah 2:21](#); [12:10](#); [Hosea 10:1](#). Jesus spoke of Himself as a Vine ([John 15:1](#), [5](#)) for He, being the promised Seed, represented and fulfilled God's purposes for Israel. Where she failed, He succeeded.

The first two lines of [Psalm 80:14](#) are a refrain similar (but different in wording) to [verses 3, 7, 19](#).

### **D. Promise of obedience ([80:14c-19](#))**

[80:14c-16](#). Asaph continued to speak of the **vine**, lamenting that **the root** that had been **planted** and **the son** who had grown had been destroyed (**cut down**). "Son," a literal rendering of the Hebrew, refers to the nation that sprang from "the root." So "son" could be rendered "branch" (cf. NIV marg.). Again (cf. [comments](#) on [v. 12](#)) this imagery may come from [Genesis 49:22](#). The Hebrew term "son" is also used for the nation in [Exodus 4:22](#) and [Hosea 11:1](#). Again the New Testament ([Matt. 2:15](#)) applied a prophet's words ([Hosea 11:1](#)) to Christ the Seed as the Representative of Israel.

[80:17-19](#). The psalmist prayed that God's **hand** would restore them. **The man at Your right hand** may allude to Benjamin, which means "son of the right hand." **The son of man** refers to Israel (again as a son). Asaph said that if **God** would bless His own, the people would be faithful to Him.

Once more the psalm includes the refrain which requests that God would restore His people by His favor (cf. [vv. 3, 7](#)).

The Bible Knowledge Commentary: An Exposition of the Scriptures by Dallas Seminary Faculty.