



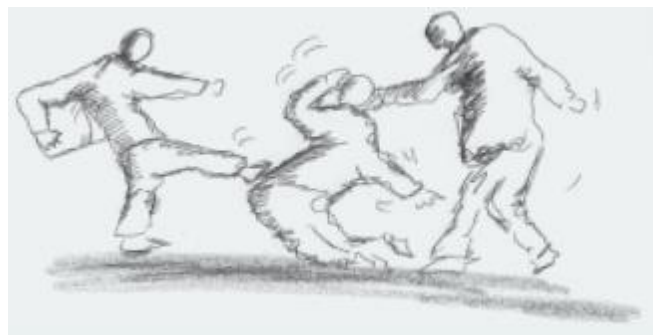
B REVEALING WHAT THE BIBLE SAYS

Fighting injustice



Why use this Bible study?

This Bible study can help you explore how injustice may occur in times of disaster response, and how we can respond in a biblical way.



Nehemiah chapter 5

Background

The situation in this chapter occurred during the rebuilding of the wall of Jerusalem. It reminds us that even in a process of reconstruction and rehabilitation, the rich may use the situation to exploit the poor. As well as opposition from Sanballat, Tobiah and friends, the people were being badly treated by their own nobles and officials. After some thought, Nehemiah confronted them about their behaviour (verses 6–11) and was able to reform the situation.

Nehemiah's leadership is an example to churches to speak out boldly against injustice and to raise awareness of the issues that are making people poor.



Key points

- The poor complain of being oppressed by the rich (Nehemiah 5:1-5).
- Nehemiah removes the oppression (Nehemiah 5:6-13).
- He sets an example of compassion for poor people (Nehemiah 5:14-19).



Questions for discussion

- In Nehemiah 5, how were the rich exploiting the poor? How does Nehemiah respond? In what ways could poor people be exploited during the reconstruction phase following a windstorm or mudslide?
- The church can help to ensure that at all stages of disaster recovery, the poor are protected from exploitation and helped to find ways out of their poverty. What practical actions could your church undertake to ensure that poor people are not exploited?
- How can the church ensure that the poorest people are not missed out when there is a distribution of relief goods by the government or by NGOs?

Awareness-raising

Children & youth

Climate & environment

Conflict & peace-building

Corruption & governance

Disaster risk management

Discrimination & inclusion

Food & livelihoods

Gender & sexual violence

Health & HIV

Influencing decision-makers

Migration & trafficking

Water, sanitation & hygiene

- What does your church need in order to become more confident and effective in speaking out on behalf of poor people?



Notes

This Bible study was first published in: Tearfund (2011) *Disasters and the local church* - http://tilz.tearfund.org/en/themes/disasters/disasters_and_the_local_church/

Related tools

- B – Advocacy work (Bible study) [*B: Influencing decision-makers-1*]
- B – Being an advocate (Bible study) [*B: Influencing decision-makers-2*]
- B – The role of the church in advocacy (Bible study) [*B: Influencing decision-makers-4*]
- C1 – Ways of taking action [*C1: Awareness-raising-1*]
- C1 – Making the most of meetings with decision-makers [*C1: Influencing decision-makers-4*]
- C1 – Mobilising people [*C1: Influencing decision-makers-2*]

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