

SERMON SERIES COMPANION STUDIES  
FOR SMALL GROUPS



# LET'S REBUILD!

A SERIES FROM THE BOOK OF NEHEMIAH

REBUILDING LIFE, CHURCH, AND COMMUNITY

STUDY 10

## Worshiping the King Together

SERMON TEXT: NEHEMIAH 12  
COMPANION STUDY TEXT: PSALM 96

## Getting Started

If you haven't done so already, share this PDF, or the link to this study, with other members of your group.

After greeting one another, take a minute or two of silence together and offer an opening prayer. If you don't all know one another already, invite each group member to share their name.

## Opening Question

What was your first concert, or, what musical experience (either as a participant or audience member) had the greatest impact on you?

## Purpose of This Week's Study

A renewed appreciation for and practical engagement in worshipping God in expansive ways.

### INTRODUCTION TO THIS WEEK'S STUDY

Under Nehemiah's leadership, the Israelites have rebuilt the wall around the city and resettled within, returned to studying the Scriptures and observing festivals, confessed their sins, and made vows to obey God moving forward. Jerusalem and the temple have been restored – it's time to celebrate!

A ceremony to dedicate the wall was planned, with parades of leaders and musicians walking on top of the wall around the city and joining together at the temple along with all the women and children to sing, give thanks, and celebrate. It's said that "The sound of rejoicing in Jerusalem could be heard far away" (Nehemiah 12:43).

Worshipping together is an important tradition among the people of God. The book of Psalms is a collection of hymns and prayers that the followers of God have been using for many centuries to influence and direct worship, and today we will be looking more closely at a psalm focused on praising and celebrating God together, even as the people of Nehemiah's time did at the dedication of the wall.

## Scripture Reading

Invite two people from your group to take turns reading the following Psalm aloud:

### PSALM 96 (NIV)

- <sup>1</sup> Sing to the Lord a new song;  
sing to the Lord, all the earth.
- <sup>2</sup> Sing to the Lord, praise his name;  
proclaim his salvation day after day.
- <sup>3</sup> Declare his glory among the nations,  
his marvelous deeds among all peoples.
- <sup>4</sup> For great is the Lord and most worthy of praise;  
he is to be feared above all gods.
- <sup>5</sup> For all the gods of the nations are idols,  
but the Lord made the heavens.
- <sup>6</sup> Splendor and majesty are before him;  
strength and glory are in his sanctuary.
- <sup>7</sup> Ascribe to the Lord, all you families of nations,  
ascribe to the Lord glory and strength.
- <sup>8</sup> Ascribe to the Lord the glory due his name;  
bring an offering and come into his courts.
- <sup>9</sup> Worship the Lord in the splendor of his holiness;  
tremble before him, all the earth.
- <sup>10</sup> Say among the nations, "The Lord reigns."  
The world is firmly established, it cannot be moved;  
he will judge the peoples with equity.
- <sup>11</sup> Let the heavens rejoice, let the earth be glad;  
let the sea resound, and all that is in it.
- <sup>12</sup> Let the fields be jubilant, and everything in them;  
let all the trees of the forest sing for joy.
- <sup>13</sup> Let all creation rejoice before the Lord, for he comes,  
he comes to judge the earth.  
He will judge the world in righteousness  
and the peoples in his faithfulness.

## For Reflection & Discussion

1. What is the psalmist asking hearers of this passage to do? Who (or what) is this request directed to? What case does the psalmist make for why they should do this?
2. This passage invites “all you families of nations” and “all the earth” to come together to praise and worship God together. How has your experience worshiping together with others impacted your faith and relationship with God? How do you think it affects those outside of our church community to see people coming together to joyfully interact with God in this way?
3. As the variety of psalms attest, there are many, many ways to worship. What are some of the ways mentioned in this passage? In what ways do this and other psalms invite us to use our voices to express worship to God?
4. Verse 9 says to “Worship the Lord in the splendor of his holiness; tremble before him, all the earth.” The word *tremble* here is a translation of the Hebrew word *hûl*, which can also be translated to mean *to dance, to twirl, to whirl about*. How does this alternate translation change your understanding of this psalm and the attitude we are to come to worship with? In what ways do this and other psalms invite us to use our physical bodies to express worship to God?
5. What are your favorite ways to participate in worship? Think outside the box — any situation where you join with others to bring glory to God can be worship. (Examples might be volunteering together, experiencing nature with your children, joining protests in support of justice, creative practices that display the beauty of creation, etc.)

## For Prayer Ministry

As we transition to ministry time, let’s continue exploring some unconventional ways to participate in worship. As a group, brainstorm some ways you can gather to praise and proclaim God’s glory that don’t include a traditional music service? Maybe you’d like host a dinner party and pack meals for unhoused neighbors, clean up a neighborhood park together, or care for elders by taking flowers or treats to a local nursing home. Schedule some time in the next month to put your idea into practice.

Close out today’s meeting with some time to worship and pray together. Spend a few moments in quiet prayer, asking God, *What can I do to bring You glory?* Pay attention to any words, images, or other impressions that come up during this time and share with the group if you’re comfortable. End by playing a joyful worship song your group can enthusiastically sing together in praise.

## For Further Reflection & Action Outside of Group

- Look for opportunities to volunteer or get involved with [Vineyard Columbus](#) outreach programs.
- Check out the selection of books on worship at our [Bookstore](#).