

## COURAGEOUS LEADERS PROTECT THE VULNERABLE

*Nehemiah 5:1-19*

By Josh McNall

**Introduction:** Abuse and exploitation are, sadly, all too common. Each time a new scandal hits the news, a common question runs as follows: “Why didn’t someone speak up!?” “Why didn’t someone in leadership *do* something!?”

This week, Nehemiah’s leadership is tested by a threat that comes not from enemy fighters or foreign interests—but from inside the people of God. Israel’s nobles and officials are exploiting and enslaving the poor. What will Nehemiah do?

By examining this ancient story, we’ll seek insight into God’s heart for vulnerable people. And we’ll find practical answers on how we can be the kind of leaders who notice exploitation, speak up, act justly—and build a bigger table (Neh 5:17) so that all may see God’s holy love.

1. **Nehemiah reveals the sad reality that God’s people sometimes treat each other with the same “dog-eat-dog” mentality displayed by non-believers.**

*Nehemiah 5:1-8*

2. **Faithful Christian leaders are willing to see exploitation, speak up, and do something about it.**

*Nehemiah 5:9-10*

**3. Confronting abuse or exploitation starts by practicing what you preach in little, local areas of leadership.**

*Nehemiah 5:11-16*

**4. For Nehemiah, confronting injustice was not *just* about making bold, public pronouncements—it was also about building a bigger “table” so all people can taste and see God’s goodness.**

*Nehemiah 5:17-19*