

Nehemiah (God is Faithful)

February 19, 2023

Pastor Jarrod Adkins

Nehemiah 7

1 Now when the wall had been built and I had set up the doors, and the gatekeepers, the singers, and the Levites had been appointed, 2 I gave my brother Hanani and Hananiah the governor of the castle charge over Jerusalem, for he was a more faithful and God-fearing man than many. 3 And I said to them, "Let not the gates of Jerusalem be opened until the sun is hot. And while they are still standing guard, let them shut and bar the doors. Appoint guards from among the inhabitants of Jerusalem, some at their guard posts and some in front of their own homes." 4 The city was wide and large, but the people within it were few, and no houses had been rebuilt.

5 Then my God put it into my heart to assemble the nobles and the officials and the people to be enrolled by genealogy. And I found the book of the genealogy of those who came up at the first, and I found written in it:

6 These were the people of the province who came up out of the captivity of those exiles whom Nebuchadnezzar the king of Babylon had carried into exile. They returned to Jerusalem and Judah, each to his town.

66 The whole assembly together was 42,360, 67 besides their male and female servants, of whom there were 7,337. And they had 245 singers, male and female. 68 Their horses were 736, their mules 245, 69 their camels 435, and their donkeys 6,720.

- The singers and the Levites were there to lead the people in worship; the walls were not rebuilt so the people of Jerusalem could look at nice walls. They were rebuilt so they could worship God with greater glory and freedom than ever before.
- Nehemiah wanted to know who was already with him and so the God led him to take a census. Cf. **Ezra 2**
- There were only about 2% of the Jews who were carried away into exile by the Babylonians who came back. This list was important because each of these people was important to God.

Cf. **Isaiah 43:1; Jeremiah 1:5; Psalm 91:14; 139; Matthew 10:29-31; John 10:3**

Nehemiah 8

1 And all the people gathered as one man into the square before the Water Gate. And they told Ezra the scribe to bring the Book of the Law of Moses that the Lord had commanded Israel. 2 So Ezra the priest brought the Law before the assembly, both men and women and all who could understand what they heard, on the first day of the seventh month. 3 And he read from it facing the square before the Water Gate from early morning until midday, in the presence of the men and the women and those who could understand. And the ears of all the people were attentive to the Book of the Law. 4 And Ezra the scribe stood on a wooden platform that they had made for the purpose. And beside him stood Mattithiah, Shema, Anaiah, Uriah, Hilkiyah, and Maaseiah on his right hand, and Pedaiah, Mishael, Malchijah, Hashum, Hashbaddanah, Zechariah, and Meshullam on his left hand. 5 And Ezra opened the book in the sight of all the people, for he was above all the people, and as he opened it all the people stood. 6 And Ezra

blessed the Lord, the great God, and all the people answered, "Amen, Amen," lifting up their hands. And they bowed their heads and worshiped the Lord with their faces to the ground. 7 Also Jeshua, Bani, Sherebiah, Jamin, Akkub, Shabbethai, Hodiah, Maaseiah, Kelita, Azariah, Jozabad, Hanan, Pelaiah, the Levites, helped the people to understand the Law, while the people remained in their places. 8 They read from the book, from the Law of God, clearly, and they gave the sense, so that the people understood the reading.

9 And Nehemiah, who was the governor, and Ezra the priest and scribe, and the Levites who taught the people said to all the people, "This day is holy to the Lord your God; do not mourn or weep." For all the people wept as they heard the words of the Law. 10 Then he said to them, "Go your way. Eat the fat and drink sweet wine and send portions to anyone who has nothing ready, for this day is holy to our Lord. And do not be grieved, for the joy of the Lord is your strength." 11 So the Levites calmed all the people, saying, "Be quiet, for this day is holy; do not be grieved." 12 And all the people went their way to eat and drink and to send portions and to make great rejoicing, because they had understood the words that were declared to them.

- Book of the Law of Moses refers to the first five books of the Bible (Genesis, Exodus, Leviticus, Numbers, and Deuteronomy); aka Pentateuch (Hebrew) or Torah (Greek).
- The Word was read and given sense to the people. Their immediate response was mourning and weeping. The word of God was doing its intended work. 2 Timothy 3:16 tells us two things that the word of God is profitable for: reproof and correction. This can show the divide between God's holiness and our depravity.
- The people felt sad because they were aware of their own sin. **But Ezra, Nehemiah, and the Levites encouraged them that they could walk in joy because God was doing a great work.**

2 Timothy 2:13 *if we are faithless, he remains faithful—for he cannot deny himself.*

Discipleship Homework:

The reading of the Pentateuch (the first five books of the Bible) made Israel realize their desperate need for God—this is the motivation behind revival. Even though God does want us to be obedient to His commands, it comes from a place of seeking the Lord first.

Matthew 22:36-38

36 “Teacher, which is the great commandment in the Law?” 37 And he said to him, “You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind. 38 This is the great and first commandment.

One of the greatest ways to seek the Lord in this way is through prayer. Use the prayer resources on the Church Hub to spend time loving God and seeking to know Him in a deeper way.

**These resources and more will also be available in printable versions in our lobby Sunday.*