

Lesson 8, NEHEMIAH 11 & 12

We are coming to the end of Nehemiah. The city of Jerusalem that was deserted and a ghost town for 70 years was reestablished, and the Temple was rebuilt. This is a picture of our being brought back to a new relationship with Jesus Christ, the reigniting of our faith. Time passed for the ancient Hebrews, and they failed to put up the defensive wall to secure their sacred city. Enter Nehemiah who by God's sovereignty and his faithfulness rebuilt the walls to fortify the city of God. This represents our putting up defenses to combat those worldly attitudes and stumbling blocks. These attitudes can keep us from God's best in our lives. Now the wall is complete but there is a problem.

1. The returning Jews had settled throughout the Promised Land. Looking back to Nehemiah 7:4, what is the problem? How does Nehemiah decide to solve it? See Nehemiah 11:1-2. If this is a picture of ministry to the Lord, what does it tell you about our heart attitude to succeed? Why do you think it is so important for Jerusalem to be fully occupied? What are you doing to build up your church and be an active member of God's kingdom?

2. The tribes of Judah and Benjamin seem to provide the "able men". Two nuggets of interest amidst all these names are found in the story of Perez found in Genesis 38 and the story of the fall of the tribe of Benjamin is recorded in Judges 19. Perez' beginning was compromised by an unlawful union, and the tribe of Benjamin practiced lewd and shameful behavior. Yet both of their descendants are willing fighters for Jerusalem. What does this tell you about who God uses for his kingdom work? See 1 Corinthians 1:26-30.

3. As we identify the different roles of those who ministered in Jerusalem, who would be their counterparts in our church today:

Priests who carried on the work for the temple

Heads of families

Able men under an officer

Levites who did outside work for the house of God

Director who led in thanksgiving and prayer

Gatekeepers

Temple servants

Chief officer of the singers to regulate their daily activity.

King's agent for all activities relating to the people.

(Do not get hung up on this, just have fun with it.)

4. Read chapter 12:1-24. This is a record of all those past faithful men who had worked to reestablish Jerusalem. Who is the last name mentioned in verse 24?

5. Read the rest of chapter 12. This is the rededication of the wall. Who led the two different processions? What is your sense as you read through these verses? This must have been a glorious festival of thanksgiving. Has there been a time in your church when you felt the cumulative joy of the people?

6. What does Nehemiah 12:47 say about the people? Malachi was the prophet during this time. What does he say in Malachi 3:10-12?

Application: Read 1 Corinthians 12:4-11. What do you think your spiritual gift is? Pray and ask the Lord Jesus to reveal to you his unique gift for building up the body of Christ.

Prayer: God of all wonder and power, how we long to serve you and work alongside you for your glory. Give each of us a sense of our unique calling. Put a passion in our heart to go deeper with you so that we are more than able to do all you ask of us. We pray this in the name of your most precious gift, your Son Jesus. Amen.