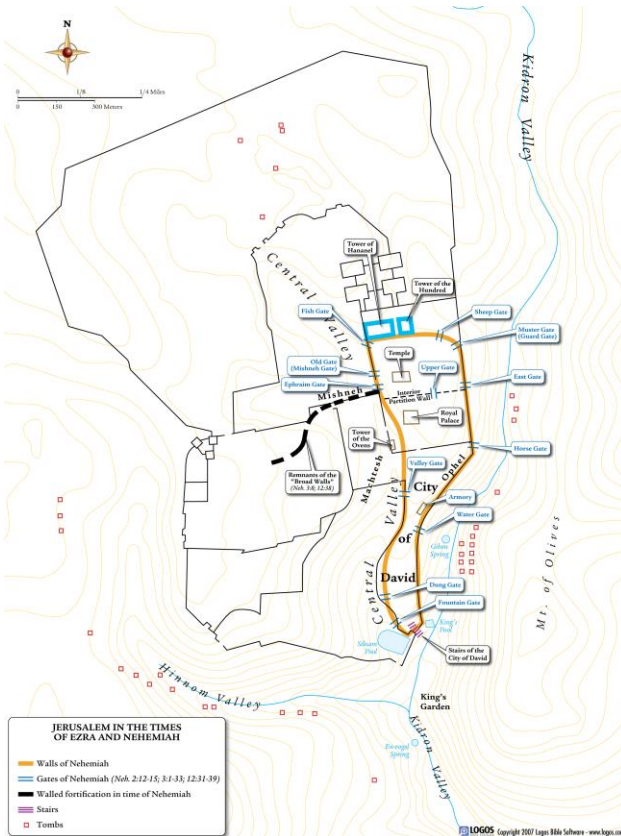


# hope COMMUNITY CHURCH

Offer Hope. Grow in Community. Be the Church.

## January 8, 2023 Nehemiah 12:27-47: Sing!

Around 430 BC, Nehemiah organized people to move into Jerusalem's walls and start rebuilding their houses. About 400 years later, Jesus came to Jerusalem. The city was bigger in the time of Jesus (the black lines on the map below):



Hezekiah's tunnel and the Pool of Siloam



This basically says: “This is where Hezekiah’s teams came together to complete the tunnel.”

2000-Year-old steps of the Pool of Siloam



*He also repaired the wall of the Pool of Siloam, by the King’s Garden... (Nehemiah 3:15)*



*“Go,” he told him, “wash in the Pool of Siloam” (this word means “Sent”). So the man went and washed, and came home seeing. (John 9:7)*

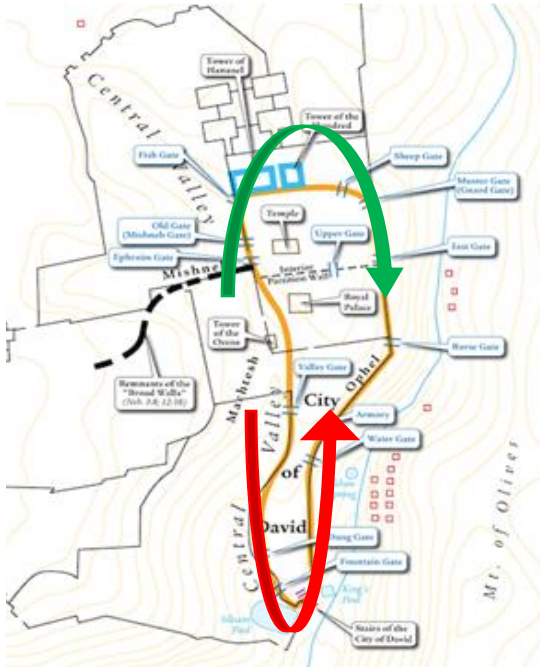
## Read Nehemiah 12:27-30

A search was made for Levites and musicians from all the surrounding areas and towns. They wanted to dedicate and celebrate the fact that the wall had been rebuilt and God was restoring this holy city of Jerusalem on Mount Zion.

## Nehemiah 12:31-37

*Tobiah the Ammonite, who was at his side, said, “What they are building—even a fox climbing up on it would break down their wall of stones!” (Nehemiah 4:3)*

Now they are up singing and dancing on the wall.



## Nehemiah 12:40, 42b-43

It was a great celebration, and the rejoicing could be heard from far away.

*Walk about Zion, go around her,  
count her towers,  
consider well her ramparts,  
view her citadels,  
that you may tell of them  
to the next generation.*

*For this God is our God for ever and ever;  
he will be our guide even to the end. (Psalm 48:12-14)*

*<sup>1</sup> When the LORD restored the fortunes of Zion,  
we were like those who dreamed.*

*<sup>2</sup> Our mouths were filled with laughter,  
our tongues with songs of joy.*

*Then it was said among the nations,  
“The LORD has done great things for them.”*

*<sup>3</sup> The LORD has done great things for us,  
and we are filled with joy.*

*<sup>4</sup> Restore our fortunes, LORD,  
like streams in the Negev.*

*<sup>5</sup> Those who sow with tears  
will reap with songs of joy.*

*<sup>6</sup> Those who go out weeping,  
carrying seed to sow,  
will return with songs of joy,  
carrying sheaves with them. (Psalm 126)*

How about us? How about you?

Are you filled with joy in the Lord?

Do you invest towards God being continually praised in your house, family, in your church?

*Joy is not a requirement of Christian discipleship; it is a consequence. It is not what we have to acquire in order to experience life in Christ; it is what comes to us when we are walking in the way of faith and obedience. (Eugene Peterson)*

*Rejoice in the Lord always. I will say it again: Rejoice!  
(Philippians 4:4)*

## **Chuck Swindoll**

We simply do not sing as often as we ought, and therein lies the blame and the shame.

Allow me to offer a few corrective suggestions:

- Whenever and wherever you sing, concentrate on the words. If it helps, close your eyes. Let yourself get so lost in the accompanying melody that you momentarily forget where you are and what others might think. Frankly, I find it impossible to praise my Lord in song at the same time I feel self-conscious.
- Make a concentrated effort to add one or two songs to your day. Remind yourself periodically of the words of a chorus or hymn you love and add them to your driving schedule or soap-and-shower time.
- Sing often with a friend or members of your family. It helps melt down all sorts of invisible barriers. Singing before grace at mealtime in the evening is so enjoyable, but I warn you, you may become addicted.
- Blow the dust off your record player and put on some beautiful music in the house. The family atmosphere will change for the better if you do this occasionally. And don't forget to sing along, adding harmony and "special effects."
- Never mind how beautiful or pitiful you may sound. Sing loud enough to drown out those defeating thoughts that normally clamor for attention. Release yourself from that cage of introspective reluctance—SING OUT! You are not auditioning for the choir; you're making melody with your heart.
- If you listen closely when you're through, you may hear the hosts of heaven shouting for joy. Then again, it might be your neighbor . . . screaming for relief.

# HOME GROUP QUESTIONS...

1. Read this quote together:

*... generally the religions of the world are grim things. It is only in biblical religion that the people of God are characteristically joyful and express their joy in great singing.*

*Christians write hymns. They sing them in their services.*

*Christians write choruses, and although the sentiments and music of some of them may be theologically and aesthetically dreadful, they are nevertheless generally joyful.*

*Christian musicians compose great oratorios.*

*Why is this? Obviously because Christianity is itself joyous. It is a response to the great acts of God on our behalf, particularly in the life, death, and resurrection of Jesus Christ, which secured our salvation. (James Montgomery Boice)*

2. What sticks out in this quote to you? Do you agree or disagree with it? How are you at living a joyous Christian life? What do you suppose would help you become more joyous? How could our group help you with that?
3. Reread Psalm 126
4. Are there times in your life you feel like the psalm writer? Has the Lord done great things for you? Has God provided streams in the Negev for you? How do you understand vs 5-6?