

Nehemiah 10-11 –2 March 2023

“Tangible Trust, Concrete Commitment”

Introduction

*Under the leadership of Nehemiah, Israel has completed the rebuilding of the wall of Jerusalem

*They’ve protected themselves from their enemies & put themselves into a position to flourish

*In Chap 8-9 we saw the supernatural results of coming to the Word of God in humility – revival!

*Closing Chap 9 we heard Israel dedicate themselves to making a written agreement w/ God to serve Him

*Let me tell you what they DIDN’T agree to do:

*Didn’t agree to never sin again or be perfect

*Didn’t enter an “if / then” agreement (tit for tat)

*Let’s look at how they dedicated to serve God & ask ourselves if we can commit to the same

***So here’s 5 aspects to their covenant with God**

Chap 10 opens by honoring the names of those in agreement with God that have just experiences revival (Chap 10:1-27)

Read Chap 10:1-8

1. Governmental leaders & priests (23)

Read Vs 9-13

1. Levites (18)

Read Vs 14-27

1. Leaders of the people
2. These are they that heard the Word of God & brought their brokenness to God confessing their great sin and found God's great grace
3. They were willing to sign a covenant to be servants to the Lord and make it real & public
 - a. We're willing to sign a 30-year mortgage but would hesitate to agree to serve God!?!
4. They didn't realize when they committed that their names would be honored in the best-seller of all time and for eternity!

1st aspect of the covenant: Follow the Word of God in general (Chap 10:28-29)

Read Chap 10:28-29

1. So this is an agreement with consequence (curse) if not obeyed
2. So they're committing in general
3. Not assuming they'll be perfect, but humbly wanting to obey

2nd aspect of the covenant: Don't dilute the circle of believers with unbelievers (Chap 10:30)

Read Chap 10:30

1. Second responsibility of the covenant is to not pollute the family with idolatry & false worship
2. They dealt with this extensively in Ezra 9-10 which was just a few years before this timing
3. This isn't about excluding skin color or culture, it's about excluding the worship & service to false gods

3rd aspect of the covenant: Trust God in our finances (Chap 10:31)

Read Chap 10:31

1. Third responsibility of the covenant is to allow good opportunities to pass by in order to observe something BETTER, the Sabbath
2. We're always tempted to take matters into our own hands to better ourselves
 - a. Abraham – took Hagar for a son
 - i. Cost him money in the end
 - b. Jacob – Stole birthright & blessing for gain
 - i. Cost him money from lost reputation in end
3. When we give freely to God, he can THEN easily multiply what's left b/c we've leave ourselves in the place of being able to be blessed

4th aspect of the covenant: Support the work of the ministry (Chap 10:32-39)

Read Chap 10:32-34

1. Fourth responsibility of the covenant is to support the work of the Lord at the Temple
2. Specifically, to bring money (1/3 shekel) & wood to keep the altar going
 - a. Money and wood together would make up the 1/2 shekel required in the law

Read Vs 35-37

1. Specific support they commit to give is to tithe
2. Money is a very tangible way to express faith

Read Vs 38-39

1. Even the Levites that received the people's tithes for their only income also tithed
2. They tithed to the priests that served
3. Provide means for worship, fellowship & discipleship to continue and flourish!

5th aspect of the covenant: Be willing to give time and their very life (Chap 11:1-36)

Read Chap 11:1

1. Jerusalem would continue to be a target of attack by God's enemies so they needed more population to defend it
2. Leaders set good example by willingly staying
3. As an agricultural people, they could make more money living in the countryside
4. >10% of all Israel will then be in Jerusalem
 - a. God got a tithe of their money now He wants even a tithe of them
5. Interesting Jerusalem is first called holy here
 - a. More than 1000 yrs before Islam began
6. The casting of lots is determining God's will
 - a. In Joshua's day they cast lots for the land they would get, but this just fulfilled the prophecy of Jacob from 450 years earlier
 - b. So the dice are loaded

Read Vs 2

1. So they all see this as a material sacrifice in staying at Jerusalem
 - a. But it'll be a spiritual blessing
 - b. This is what it is to be a servant of the Lord

Read Vs 3-24

1. There're around 3,000 names here all together
2. Remember, there were only about 50,000 that came back from the Persian territories

Read Vs 25-30

1. Other cities of Judah that were settled

Read Vs 31-36

1. Other cities of Benjamin settled

Conclusion

So all of their brokenness was taken to the Word of God (which they believed) confessing their sins and asking for the grace of God

It's all brought them to the place of real commitment and trust in God, very tangible faith

Would you put your name down on paper for this?

- 1. I will follow the Word of God**
- 2. I will not allow idolatry into my circle of control**
- 3. I will trust God with my finances**
- 4. I will support the work of the ministry at my local church**
- 5. I will be ready to give my time and my very life as God leads**