

Filling the Void of Leadership

Nehemiah 10—13

In the thirty-second year . . .

Some time later . . .

When Nehemiah returns to Jerusalem, he finds the Israelites making several mistakes:

Mistake #1, The _____

Nehemiah 13:1–3

The broken promise:

Mistake #2, _____ in the Temple

Nehemiah 13:4–5

The broken promise:

Mistake #3, _____ in the Fields

Nehemiah 13:10–13

The broken promise:

Mistake #4, _____ the Sabbath

Nehemiah 13:15–22

The broken promise:

Mistake #5, A Mockery of _____

Nehemiah 13:23–28

The broken promise:

Life Applications:

For the Family

Review our story so far:

Nehemiah went to Jerusalem to repair the walls around the city. Despite opposition from their enemies, they completed the wall in 52 days! Nehemiah appointed good leaders so Jerusalem would be a safe place where God could be worshiped. The people then gathered together and Ezra the scribe read from God's law. The people repented from their sin, and worshipped together. They made a promise to God that they would be obedient.

(This week's story is from Nehemiah 13. Read it and then lead your family in a discussion about what happened.)

Explain that the people made promises to obey God. But while Nehemiah was gone, they broke these promises. Nehemiah found out and came back and confronted them. He had to work very hard to make things right.

Talk together about what happens when we break promises. Think of a time when someone broke a promise to you, or a time when you broke a promise to someone else.

Talk together about why we break promises:

It seems easier to break the promise than to keep it. The people didn't take care of the temple. When Nehemiah returned, he had to take drastic action to make things right. It is harder to clean up the mess of a broken promise than to keep it in the first place.

We think that no one will find out. Nehemiah had left. How would he know they weren't keeping the Sabbath? But when he did find out, he had to take drastic action to make things right. It is easier to keep a promise, than to hide a broken promise.

We get talked into it by others. When the Israelites married into other cultures, they were persuaded to worship idols, and other sins. It is better to obey God, and keep our promises, than to let other people talk us into breaking them.

Pray together that God will help you keep your promises. Tell him how thankful you are that he always keeps his promises.