

NEHEMIAH: Chapter 13

Week 8 | Candace Jerkins

Recognizing God's Best

Knowing God's word changes everything.
-knowing impacts our spending
-knowing impacts our thinking
-knowing keeps us from compromising what's best

We're picking up 10 to 12 years later. Nehemiah left Jerusalem and had gone back to his duties in the Persian court. He gets back and sees and hears all kinds of disappointing things. He discovers all the spiritual reforms/victories the people had seen were essentially undone during his absence.

What happened to God's people? They had compromised.

I. RECOGNIZE THE COMPROMISE

Biblical compromise: making concessions that deviate from God's commands

Theres a reason God gave clear instructions.
-He knows best.
-He knows the temptation for his people to compromise.

A. Used resources improperly

-foreigners allowed in their assemblies: Ammonites and Moabites

Why this wasn't best: An Israelite was part of God's covenant by birth, but an Ammonite or Moabite were not. They needed to reject the gods of their people and embrace One true God.

This wasn't an exclusion to a private club but an open invitation to come but come the right way.

God's ways are best for a reason! This was a form of God's love, care and protection.

-temple neglect: The temple was being misused, priest allowing Tobiah, an enemy, to occupy a room meant for offerings

Why this wasn't best: breakdown of religious practices, compromised the purity of worship, fostered disobedience to God's laws, ultimately affected the community's relationship with God

Temple: foreshadowing of greater spiritual realities, to the person and work of Jesus

God's ways are best for a reason! Proper temple use mirrored God's love, care and protection.

B. Ignored the Sabbath

Why this wasn't best: The sabbath was created for rest. It was created for man's good.

Sabbath is a gift that God has given us.

"*It's not just a day off; it's a divine appointment. In keeping the Sabbath, we acknowledge God's creative work and the rhythm He established. We step away from our busy lives to recharge spiritually and physically, realizing that our worth is not found in our labor, but in our relationship with God*." (Bible Hub)

God's ways are best for a reason! The sabbath was a form of God's love, care and protection.

C. Intermarrying

Why this wasn't best: Israelites were marrying foreign women, which distracted them and turned away from their faith

God's ways are best for a reason! This was a form of God's care and protection.

If they had only recognized all that God had done for them. God had been so faithful and good to the Israelites!

-God miraculously delivered them from slavery under Pharaoh, leading them to freedom and the Promised Land.... demonstrating His love, care and protection.

-God made a covenant with them at Mount Sinai, giving them the Law and establishing them as His chosen people.... demonstrating His love, care and protection.

-God provided manna and quail during their 40 years in the desert... demonstrating His love, care and protection.

-God enabled the Israelites to conquer the Promised Land , fulfilling His promise.... demonstrating His love, care and protection.

-God raised judges like Deborah and Gideon to rescue the Israelites from oppression, showing His ongoing commitment to their welfare.... demonstrating His love, care and protection.

Why compromise when his love, care and protection is so evident and great?!!!

*What areas of compromise are you flirting with? Justifying?

II. RECOGNIZE THE CALLING

Nehemiah knew God had called him to lead these people, and we see that played out through the book...

- God gave him a burden.
- God gave him clear direction.
- God revealed prophetic promises.
- God confirmed his will.

A calling doesn't mean cake walk. Most of the time it means doing hard but necessary things.

*What has he called you to?

We too have a calling if we're saved because we are not just saved for heaven but saved for a purpose!

  - what holy burden is God stirring in your heart?
  - what direction is he leading you? (pray, wait for clarity)
  - what does scripture say? (take every inner prompting to Scripture because God's call will never contradicts His word.
  - what open doors are available?

The same grace that saved you is the same grace that enables you to live the life that He calls you to.

These chapters show us that restored walls were not the final goal. God cared more about the hearts of the people.

*What is he doing in your heart today?
*Nehemiah recognized his calling… do you?

III. RECOGNIZE THE NEED TO CONTEND

Contend: to engage in a struggle or conflict for a purpose, truth, or righteousness
Compromise happens when God's people don't contend.

"*Contending is a vital aspect of Christian life. As believers, we are called to engage in spiritual struggles, advocating for truth, and standing firm in faith. Through prayer, support, and mutual encouragement, we can strengthen our faith together*."

A. Contend for Purity

When faced with difficulties and temptation, do you compromise or contend for purity?

- Pray consistently
- Study Scripture daily.

B. Contend for Unity

When faced with difficulties and temptation, do you isolate or contend for unity?

Winning spiritual battles rarely happens in isolation. Getting away from the people of God and the Word of God causes us to drift back into old actions and habits and leads to compromise.

- Surround yourself with fellow believers
- Participate in worship and fellowship regularly

*What areas do you need to contend in your own life?

As the chapter closes, Nehemiah knew he did his best to make the people of God strong, safe, and secure.

- also led them to be pure, worshipful, and obedient

- but it was up to them to personally continue to contend for purity and unity
    - say no to sin
    - say no to self
    - say yes to God's best

*Nehemiah is a restorer who rebuilds the walls of Jerusalem, symbolizing the restoration of God's people. His leadership points us to Jesus, who restores the broken relationship between God and man.

*Nehemiah prays and intercedes for the people of Israel, asking for God's favor and forgiveness. His leadership points us to Jesus who intercedes on behalf of man.

*Nehemiah leads the people with wisdom and integrity, guiding them through challenges. His leadership points us to Jesus as the Good Shepherd who leads His flock.

*Nehemiah implements reforms to bring the people back to the covenant with God. His leadership points us to Jesus who calls for spiritual renewal.

Nehemiah's efforts point us to Jesus.

- its Jesus's mercies that never fail
- its Jesus' faithfulness that never gives up on us

Through repentance and faith, God's people were given another chance to live according to His Word and reflect His holiness.

"*May we be women who lead like Nehemiah…" Undeterred from your purpose, unyielding in integrity and unceasing in prayer*." (CSB Women's Study Bible)

Resources: biblehub.com, biblegateway.org, blueletterbible.org, CSB Women's Study Bible

WEEK 8

NEHEMIAH: *Chapter 13*

REMEMBER THIS GOOD DEED, O MY GOD, AND DO NOT FORGET ALL THAT I HAVE FAITHFULLY DONE FOR THE TEMPLE OF MY GOD AND ITS SERVICES.

Nehemiah 13:14 NLT



Day One

NEHEMIAH 13

Nehemiah 13

GROUNDWORK |

PRAY | ***Begin your time of study with prayer.***

Ask the Lord to quiet your heart and invite the Holy Spirit to guide you as you study God's Word.

READ | ***Read the following text for your time of study.***

Nehemiah 13

Read slowly and "ponder" what is happening.

Make notes of what stands out as you read.

Write down any key verse(s):

_____

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BUILDING BLOCK |

What is the one truth you want to remember from today's reading?

_____

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If there was a verse from the passage that spoke to you, pray that verse back to the Lord. Ask Him to specifically recall to your heart and mind anything you just read that He wants to teach you. Write anything He reveals to you below:

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Day Two

NEHEMIAH 13

Nehemiah 13:1-14

GROUNDWORK |

PRAY | ***Begin your time of study with prayer.***

Ask the Lord to quiet your heart and invite the Holy Spirit to guide you as you study God's Word.

READ | ***Read the following text for your time of study.***

Nehemiah 13:1-14

Write down any key verse(s):

_____

_____

_____

OBSERVE | ***Observe what the passage says.***

Some questions to consider as you make observations are—

- What is the main idea of this passage?

  _____

  _____

  _____

- Are there any repeated words or phrases?

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- What is being read?

_____

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_____

- What is being realized?

_____

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_____

- Where was Nehemiah?

_____

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_____

- How did Nehemiah respond to the people?

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_____

- What does this communicate to us about his leadership?

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Write down what you observe from the text:

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APPLY | *Apply it to your life.*

Some questions to consider as you make applications are—

- What does this passage teach us about God or His character?

  _____

  _____

  _____

- What does this passage teach about man and how does it apply to my life today?

  _____

  _____

  _____

- Are there any areas in my life that this text particularly applies to? If so, how?

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  _____

- What is God speaking to me after reading this passage of Scripture?

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- What changes do I need to make after reading this passage of Scripture?

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Write down anything the Lord reveals to you from the truth of His Word:

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BUILDING BLOCK |

What is the one truth you want to remember from today's reading of God's Word?

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FIRM FOUNDATION |

Spend a few moments in prayer before the Lord. If there was a verse from the passage that spoke to you, pray that verse back to the Lord. Ask Him to specifically recall to your heart and mind anything you just read that He wants to teach you. Write anything He reveals to you below:



Day Three

NEHEMIAH 13

Nehemiah 13:15-22

GROUNDWORK |

PRAY | ***Begin your time of study with prayer.***

Ask the Lord to quiet your heart and invite the Holy Spirit to guide you as you study God's Word.

READ | ***Read the following text for your time of study.***

Nehemiah 13:15-22

Write down any key verse(s) that speak to you:

_____

_____

_____

OBSERVE | ***Observe what the passage says.***

Some questions to consider as you make observations are—

- What is the main idea of this passage?

  _____

- Are there any repeated words or phrases?

  _____

  _____

  _____

- What other compromises are being revealed?

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_____

- Why are they detrimental to the people?

_____

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- What other verses in scripture confirm God's commands about these things?

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Write down anything else you observe from the text:

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APPLY | ***Apply it to your life.***

Some questions to consider as you make applications are—

- What does this passage teach us about God or His character?

_____

_____

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- What does this passage teach about man and how does it apply to my life today?

_____

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- Are there any areas in my life that this text particularly applies to? If so, how?

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- What is God speaking to me after reading this passage of Scripture?

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- What changes do I need to make after reading this passage of Scripture?

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Write down anything the Lord reveals to you from the truth of His Word:

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BUILDING BLOCK |

What is the one truth you want to remember from today's reading of God's Word?

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FIRM FOUNDATION |

Spend a few moments in prayer before the Lord. If there was a verse from the passage that spoke to you, pray that verse back to the Lord. Ask Him to specifically recall to your heart and mind anything you just read that He wants to teach you. Write anything He reveals to you below:

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Day Four

NEHEMIAH 13

Nehemiah 13:23-31

GROUNDWORK |

PRAY | ***Begin your time of study with prayer.***

Ask the Lord to quiet your heart and invite the Holy Spirit to guide you as you study God's Word.

READ | ***Read the following text for your time of study.***

Nehemiah 13:23-31

Write down any key verse(s):

_____

_____

_____

OBSERVE | ***Observe what the passage says.***

Some questions to consider as you make observations are—

- What is the main idea of this passage?

  _____

- Are there any repeated words or phrases?

  _____

  _____

  _____

- What other compromises are being revealed?

  _____

  _____

  _____

- Identify all the action words used to describe Nehemiah's responses to the compromise? (ex. purge, purify)

  _____

  _____

  _____

- Why are these actions also necessary in our life?

  _____

  _____

  _____

- What changes do I need to make after reading this passage of Scripture?

  _____

  _____

  _____

Write down what you observe from the text:

_____

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APPLY | *Apply it to your life.*

Some questions to consider as you make applications are—

- What does this passage teach us about God or His character?

_____

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_____

- How does compromise impact our calling?

_____

_____

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- What has God called you to?

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- What are your next steps?

_____

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- Are you going to sit, soak and sour or surrender your days? Explain your answer.

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Write down anything the Lord reveals to you from the truth of His Word:

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BUILDING BLOCK |

What is the one truth you want to remember from today's reading of God's Word?

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FIRM FOUNDATION |

Spend a few moments in prayer before the Lord. If there was a verse from the passage that spoke to you, pray that verse back to the Lord. Ask Him to specifically recall to your heart and mind anything you just read that He wants to teach you. Write anything He reveals to you below:

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