

Nehemiah: The Heart of a Builder

“You’ve Got to be Kidding ...”

Nehemiah 13

Rev. Lawrence Yuen
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After building, God's people start to forget God's presence and all that God's been doing for them. All that the wall symbolizes is crumbling. Nehemiah gets very angry. Why?

1. Ungodly leaders are in the wrong place doing the wrong things. Worship and tithing cease. (vv. 1-14)

Leadership's place:

Anger's place:

2. Ungodly attitudes towards work are undermining God's heart and the people's heart for Sabbath. (vv. 15-22)

Work's place:

Sabbath's place:

3. Ungodly relationships are distancing the people's hearts from God and His Word. (vv. 23-31)

Study Questions to go Deeper ...

After governing Judea for 12 years, Nehemiah returns to Susa. While away, the people slowly abandon their covenant (10:28-39) turning their back on God and His law. They install Tobiah into the temple while shutting down temple services and stopping all tithing. They work on the Sabbath and marry worshipers of false gods, so diluting their faith and forsaking God's law.

1. Why was God so adamant about no Ammonite or Moabite come into the assembly of God? (see Num 22-25) Does this mean there is no redemption for these people? (see Ruth)
2. How does your consistency in being in Scripture affect your daily obedience to Jesus?

3. What's Nehemiah's first reaction as he sees Tobiah living in the temple? What would be a righteous motivation for his anger? What would be an unrighteous motivation?
4. What gets you more angry: an offense against God or an offense against you? Why?
5. What emotions rise to your own sin when you offend God? What sin in your life makes you angry? Where have you let in Ammonites/Tobiah's?
6. What's your natural response when you hear Nehemiah physically kick Tobiah out of the temple? Has God ever called you to stand up and defend the Gospel?
7. When are you prone to unrighteous anger? How about an unrighteous response to righteous anger? At what times are you passive when you should be angry?
8. In what way is breaking the Sabbath a heart condition? What does this show in the hearts of the people in Jerusalem?
9. When do you take Sabbath? What distracts you from taking a Sabbath day? What deeper issues are revealed by our casual view of the Sabbath?
10. In what areas of our life are we prone to repeat the kind of backsliding behaviour that draws us away from God? What does it look like to repent and glorify Jesus from this point forward?
11. How does Nehemiah respond to the people breaking the Sabbath? Is it surprising? Would you feel comfortable rebuking a brother or sister in Christ? Why or why not? What offenses would stir you to rebuke someone? In what areas of your life do you need a rebuke?
12. What are deeper, long range consequences of disobeying in the areas of wrong leadership, tithing, Sabbath, and unholy relationships? Consider Solomon (vs 26).
13. What are deeper, long range blessings God bestows to those who obey?
14. What elements of the gospel do you see in Nehemiah 13? Do you stand up for the name of Jesus? How has Nehemiah impacted your view of God and your world? What attributes of God have you seen displayed in the book of Nehemiah?