



Week 3 - Days 14 - 21 - NOTES



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NEHEMIAH 13 – A LEADERSHIP CRISIS

Nehemiah's first stay lasted twelve years. We are not given the time frame but scholars estimate that he was gone only a year or two. Imagine his horror when he returned to see all that the people had covenanted to do was now being neglected. They were again intermarrying, neglecting the tithes and offerings, and profaning the Sabbath. This is an emotional chapter, one that points out the importance of having strong godly leaders. As you study this chapter pray for the leadership at the Rock Church. One final point to sear into your minds; God rewards the finishers not the starters; we must complete the work that God has given us!

-v 1 – The reason the Moabites and Ammonites were alienated
– see Deut. 23:3-5

Ammon and Moab were born from the incestuous union of Lot and two of his daughters (Gen. 19:30–38), and their descendants were the avowed enemies of the Jews.

-v 2 – The Balaam scenario is found in Numbers 22-25. Sexual immorality still causes the people of God to stumble today and that was the bottom-line of Balaam's strategy.

-v 3 – Nehemiah encounters Tobiah once again - Tobiah had been an enemy of Nehemiah, opposing the wall-building (2:10-19 ; 4:3 , 7 ; 6:1 , 12 , 17 , 19); but now that Nehemiah was gone (13:6) Tobiah the Ammonite not only returns but actually moves into the Temple.





-v 3 – “they separated all the “mixed multitude” from Israel.

It was the “mixed multitude” that gave Moses so much trouble (Ex. 12:38; Num. 11:4-6). The mixed multitude is composed of unsaved people who want to belong to the fellowship of God’s people without trusting the Lord or submitting to His will. They want the blessings but not the obligations and their appetite is still for the things of the world.

A word to remember: We must be geared to the times but anchored to the Rock. We must not imitate the world in order to witness to the world.

-v 6 – We notice here that Nehemiah had returned to Babylon but we are not given a time frame. Artaxerxes is referred here as the King of Babylon and that is because of the fact that the Persian dynasty’s rule extended over the entire region.

-v 8 – Like Jesus – Nehemiah had to cleanse the temple, and it appears he did it on his own.

-v 10 – What did they neglect”

- 1) The Temple tax
- 2) The wood offering
- 3) The first fruit offering
- 4) Their tithes

. When God’s people start to decline spiritually, one of the first places it shows up is in their giving. “For where your treasure is, there will your heart be also” (Matt. 6:21). The





believer who is happy in the Lord and walking in His will have a generous heart and wants to share with others. Giving to others is one secret of staying alive and fresh in the Christian life. If all we do is receive, then we become reservoirs; and the water can become stale and polluted. But if we both receive and give, we become like channels; and in blessing others, we bless ourselves. American psychiatrist Dr. Karl Menninger said, "Money-giving is a good criterion of a person's mental health. Generous people are rarely mentally ill people." Someone wrote in *Modern Maturity* magazine, "The world is full of two kinds of people, the givers and the takers. The takers eat well—but the givers sleep well."

-v 13 - Note the different types that were responsible; however note also that their common link was their faithfulness. (See 1 Cor. 4:2).

-v 17-22 - Here we have the neglect of the Sabbath.

Again Nehemiah met the problem with a rebuke and action (cf. vv. 11-13). He rebukes their Sabbath desecration (calling it a wicked thing; cf. v. 7), Nehemiah had the city doors . . . shut on the Sabbath, beginning on Friday evening, with guards posted to see that merchandise was not brought in. Even so, some merchants stayed all night outside the walls, perhaps hoping people would slip outside in the darkness to purchase their



goods. When Nehemiah heard of this, he threatened to use force against them.

-v 23 - Nehemiah dealt with the problem by first expressing his horror that such a thing should be done in Israel (Neh. 13:25). In a similar situation, Ezra had plucked his own hair and beard (Ezra 9:3); but Nehemiah plucked the hair of some of the offenders! Ezra had dissolved the mixed marriages (Ezra 10), but Nehemiah only rebuked the offenders and made the people promise that they would not do it again. Nehemiah also delivered a sermon, reminding the people that Solomon, one of Israel's greatest kings, was ruined by marrying foreign women (Neh. 13:26; 1 Kings 11:4-8). In Solomon's case, his mixed marriages were a threat to the throne and the kingdom; and in Nehemiah's day, mixed marriages even threatened the priesthood. The Law of Moses was clear, but both the priests and the common people had deliberately disobeyed it. Nehemiah then purified the priests and made certain that only those who were qualified served (Neh. 13:30). However, the problem with the priests was not completely settled, for the Prophet Malachi had to deal with disobedient priests in his day (Mal 1-2). How important it is that we take a stand for separation from sin "and having done all, to stand" (Eph. 6:13).

-v 24 - God's people and the people of the world can be identified by their language!

-v 25 - Nehemiah's behavior here indicated the severity of the sin. He knew God would not tolerate this type of sin





MILES' SERMON OUTLINE

How to Make the Dream Come True
Nehemiah 13: 4-31

I. Keeping the Dream on Track

1. _____ becomes more important than _____
2. Loss of _____ of God's _____

2. HOW CAN WE STAY ON COURSE?

1. God's _____ must be our _____
2. God's _____ must be our _____
3. God's _____ must be our _____
4. God's _____ must be our _____





SMALL GROUP DISCUSSION QUESTIONS (13)

1. Discuss the Sermon, and some things that stuck out to you.
2. Why were the Jews commanded to stay separate and not intermarry?
3. What does it mean to be holy?
4. What promises had Israel made and was not following through on?
5. What are the teachings of Balaam?
6. What is a “mixed multitude”? Is this a concern for us here at the Rock?
7. How can we be relevant to our culture and not a part of it?
8. What things automatically set people apart?
9. What made Nehemiah such a good leader?
10. What lessons will you take away from this book?
11. Why is it so hard to finish things?

