

# *Great Commission*



Baptist Church

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**A Book of Rebuilding For a  
New Beginning  
Life Group Curriculum**

**April – June 2021**

# **The Book of Nehemiah**

**April - June 2021**

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**Summary /Overview of the Book of Nehemiah**

**Lesson I**

**Date:** April 4, 2021

**Lesson Scriptures:** Nehemiah 8: 1-8

**Reading and Hearing the Law**

**Lesson Aim:** The student will learn that it is important to openly receive, revere, desire and respect the word of God above all.

**Open It**

1. When or in what circumstances do you find it easy to be enthusiastic about what you are doing?

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**Explore It**

1. Why did the people of Israel assemble at the Water Gate?

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2. What did the people want Ezra to read?

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3. What did the people do when Ezra opened the Book of the Law?

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4. How did Ezra and the people of Israel respond to the reading of the Law?

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**Get It**

1. How would you describe Israel's view of God's written Word?

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2. In what specific ways are Israel's actions in this passage a good model for us today?

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3. Why is it important for believers to meet corporately?

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4. In what ways do you think you should change your attitude toward reading the Bible?

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### **Apply It**

1. What gift of praise or worship can you offer the Lord today?

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**Summary:** The people telling Ezra to bring the book of the Law demonstrates that the Spirit of God was at work even before the reading of God's word. Generally, people only gather together for the things of God after the Spirit has moved them, because they do not desire God's word unless moved to do so. This is not the first time that God's word caused a revival in the people. Under King Hezekiah, there was a revival and restoration which lasted during his reign (2 Chr. 29:3-19) After the revival Hezekiah restored temple worship and Judah went through a brief period of respite from apostasy.

If you attend to the hearing of God's word, (Church) it is evident that the Spirit is working in you or with you. We need to keep in mind that it is important to cooperate with that word and do not resist it. We should all have a personal 'revival' within ourselves renewing our strength in our faith to come to God's waiting arms. God has a purpose for our lives and His reaching out to us is intentional. Ezra opened the word and all the people stood up (v. 5). This is showing us an example of the respect that we should have for God and his Word to us. When this was done, Ezra was not down in the crowd, but up and elevated above everyone (v. 4) so that all could see and hear. Those who understood were to help others to understand (v. 7) We should not keep His word to ourselves because we are blessed and others are blessed through hearing, learning, and applying His word to our lives. Just as the people showed respect to the Word of God when Ezra read it, we should follow the example too. This should not be done because people are watching, but it should be done, because of the mighty works and grace that God our mighty Creator has done and given us in our undeserving state. When we become hearers of His word, we no longer have excuses as to why we are not doers of His word.

## Lesson II

**Date:** April 11, 2021

**Lesson Scriptures:** Nehemiah 8: 9-18

### Responding to the Word of God

**Lesson Aim:** The student will learn that there is more than just hearing the Word. After hearing, there is responding, which is action.

#### Open It

1. What events or occasions do people celebrate nowadays?

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#### Explore It

1. Why did the leaders declare the day sacred?

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2. Why were the people of Israel weeping?

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3. How had the events of this day changed the lives of the people of Israel?

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4. Why did the leaders of Israel gather on the second day of the month?

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5. How did the people react to the newly discovered instructions?

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#### Get It

1. Generally speaking, how should we respond to God's Word?

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2. What prompts you to praise and worship the Lord?

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3. What steps can we take to be sensitive to the message of God's Word?

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4. What is one message from Scripture or one biblical command that you need to take more seriously?

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### **Apply It**

1. What specific changes do you want to make in your Bible reading habits this week?

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### **Summary:**

After hearing the Word, the Spirit of God was once again on the move. It had now been revealed how far away the people had strayed. It became evident in how they wept over what they heard. They were given encouragement not to mourn or weep because this was a holy day to the Lord. Ezra, Nehemiah and the Levites did not want the people to mourn even though it is a good thing to be sad under the conviction of the Holy Spirit, through the Word of God. Yet if the sense of conviction is greater than the sense that God is doing a good and holy work, then tears are not good. What they heard touched their emotions and they were remorseful over their past disobedience and contrite over their sins. After being encouraged to rejoice in the Lord, our source of strength, the response and action took place. We should be remorseful when we break God's laws, yet we should not fall apart and dwell on our actions. God wants us to move forward and bounce back because there may be one that is in darkness and may come to Christ because of your actions. What we have here is an emotional response to the Word (v. 09-12) and a volitional response (v. 13-18) which were led by the intellectual response in verses 1-8. If the Word of God can have such a tremendous impact on their community, how much of an impact can it have on us? We should keep in mind that after hearing God's Word, it is not for us to just go home and do nothing. That is not a necessary response that God requires from us. Our knowledge of our sin should never be bigger than our knowledge of Jesus Christ as our savior. We are great sinners,.....but he is an even greater Savior.



### **Lesson III**

**Date:** April 18, 2021

**Lesson Scriptures:** Nehemiah 9: 1-15

## **The Importance of Seeking God Part 1**

**Lesson Aim:** To understand who God is in this chapter-who He is, what He does for His people, and what His people must do for Him.

### **Open It**

1. What did you think of history when you were in school?  
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2. When has it been helpful for you to look back at your past and think about what you've gone through?  
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### **Explore It**

1. How did the Israelites demonstrate their spirit of repentance?  
\_\_\_\_\_
2. What instructions did the Levites offer the people?  
\_\_\_\_\_
3. What reason did the Levites give to explain why God made a covenant with Abraham?  
\_\_\_\_\_
4. How did the people of Israel view God's laws?  
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### **Get It**

1. What sinful pattern did Israel repeat?  
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2. What motivated the leaders of Israel to confess their sins to the Lord?

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3. Why is it our tendency to remember God only in the good times?

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4. If you wrote a passage about your own history of walking with the Lord, what themes would you see?

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### **Apply It**

1. How can you thank the Lord today for His forgiveness?

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### **Summary:**

The Feast of the Tabernacles had ended, but the people lingered to hear more of the Word of God. Feasting had turned to fasting as the Word brought conviction and people started confessing their sins and seeking God's forgiveness. A true prayer of confession always results in separation from sin. It brings about a realization that a need exists for the people of God to be called back into a right relationship with Him. Next, they worshipped Him. True worship involves many elements: hearing the scriptures, praising God, praying, confessing sin, and separating ourselves from that which displeases God. The Word of God reveals the God of the Word. The better we know scripture and respond to them, the better we know God and become like Him. In the scripture, God speaks to us and in prayer and praise, we speak to Him. Finally, the people separated themselves from the world as they drew near to the Lord. Separation without devotion to the Lord becomes isolation, but devotion without separation is hypocrisy. His chosen people were called to be devoted to Him and to be holy by hearing and obeying His Word. A sure sign of true revival following brokenness of heart (confession) is reflection on the goodness of God. When our pride is cast down and our hearts are humble before God, we can begin to see Him for who He is- and how good He is -Creator, Sustainer of the universe, provider, supplier, chooser, forgiver, merciful etc. Are our hearts tuned to praise God as the one from whom all blessings flow?

**Lesson IV**

**Date:** April 25, 2021

**Lesson Scriptures:** Nehemiah 9: 16-38

**The Importance of Seeking God Part 2**

**Lesson Aim:** To understand who God is in this chapter-who He is, what He does for His people, and what His people must do for Him.

**Open It**

1. What's something you've learned the hard way despite clear warnings from others?

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**Explore It**

1. What mistake did Israel's forefathers make?

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2. How did the Lord reveal His will to the nation of Israel?

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3. Why did the Lord allow Israel to be oppressed by their enemies?

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4. What request did the Levites present to the Lord?

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**Get It**

1. In what concrete ways has the Lord demonstrated His love for you?

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2. Why does the Lord deserve our praise?

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3. How does remembering God's provision for you in the past encourage you?

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4. What should we do to restore our relationship with the Lord whenever we realize we have been acting selfishly?

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5. How can we be sure God will continue to forgive us?

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### **Apply It**

1. When can you take some time this week for confession and recommitment to obeying God?

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**Summary:** In Nehemiah 9:16-18, Nehemiah tells us how the nation responded to all that God had done for them. Reflection occurs when true confession has been done. They refused to bow to His authority, listen to His Word or obey His will. They tried to take matters in their own hand and appoint a new leader to take them back to Egypt. Even though they were a stiff-necked people they reflected on the fact that God was forgiving, gracious and compassionate, slow to anger and abounding in love and He did not desert them. How could these people turn their backs on God after all He had done for them? We too can ponder this question as we reflect on our spiritual lives. In verses 19-22, they reflected on Israel's wilderness experience and how God provided for them and gave them victories over their enemies. In vv. 23-30, they reflected on God's promises to multiply His people and give them good land.

Against the dark background of Israel's unfaithfulness shines the bright light of the faithfulness of God. When Israel obeyed Him, He was faithful to bless, when they disobeyed Him, He was faithful to chasten; when they asked for mercy, He was faithful to forgive. God is willing to give His people many privileges but will not give them the privilege of sinning and having their own way. He is a God that keeps His promises even if we are unfaithful.

Surely this great God deserves our loving obedience. Perhaps the time has come for a new beginning in our own spiritual walk. Perhaps it is time for us to fully accept God's will for our lives so that we have a heartfelt relationship with Him.

**Lesson V**

**Date:** May 2, 2021

**Lesson Scriptures:** Nehemiah 10: 1-30

**A Covenant of Commitment Signed**

**Lesson Aim:** The student will be encouraged to be doers of the Word of God.

**Open It**

1. Why is it important to support the house of God?

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**Explore It**

1. What was done by the people named in Nehemiah 10:1-27?

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2. Why did the people separate themselves from their neighbors?

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3. With what general oath did the people bind themselves?

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4. What did they promise to do in Nehemiah 10:30?

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**Get It**

1. What prompted the Israelites to renew their commitment to God?

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2. When have difficult circumstances in your life motivated you to seek the Lord?

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3. How can it be helpful to write a declaration of commitment to God?
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### **Apply It**

1. When could you set aside some time to write down your commitment to serve the Lord?
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**Summary:** Today's lesson is a continuance from verse 28 in chapter 9. Nehemiah writes, "And because of all this we make a sure *covenant*, and write *it*; and our princes, Levites, *and* priests, seal *unto it*" and gives the reader all the participants who agreed in chapter 10. The King James Version Bible translated the English *covenant* from the Hebrew word *amanah*. According to Brown-Driver-Briggs, the Hebrew word is best translated as *we are plighting faith*. The word *plighting* suggests a sincere pledge or promise. The people of God made a promise to be faithful to the Almighty God. Deuteronomy chapter 28 records the blessings and curses for Israel's obedience and disobedience to the LORD. The leaders, Levites, and priest wrote and sealed this promise.

The first biblical principle is that the LORD demands His children to be Holy (Exodus 19:5.6; 1 Peter 15 -17). Nehemiah chapter 10 verses 1 – 27 list all the participants who swore to be obedient to the God of their salvation. These individuals set an example to the rest of the people. The Hebrew word for holy means to be separated or set apart. As believers, we have been set apart from the world. This lets us know that no one is exempt from the judgment of the LORD. A person's occupation or status in their local assembly or community does not give them special treatment before Yahweh.

The second biblical principle teaches us about the sufficiency of scripture. In verses 28 -30, all of God's people agreed to be obedient to the Law of God. They understood the consequences for disobedience because the LORD revealed them in his Law. The LORD allowed his people to be exiled in Babylon because of their disobedience. Ezra, the priest and scribe, was the LORD's instrument to teach the people the word of God. He was a gift to the people because they were as sheep wandering without a shepherd. The pastor-teacher is a gift to the church (Eph 4:11). The LORD has placed Godly leaders in both testaments to ensure his people would not perish for lack of knowledge (Hosea 4:6). This divine act assists the believer to learn the word of God and to experience its power. The scriptures are sufficient when rightly applied and obeyed.

**Lesson VI**

**Date:** May 9, 2021

**Lesson Scriptures:** Nehemiah 10: 31- 39

**The Stipulations of the Covenant**

**Lesson Aim:** The student will learn about biblical stewardship.

**Open It**

1. What New Year's resolutions have you made, and how well have you kept them?

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**Explore It**

1. How did the people plan to keep the Sabbath holy?

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2. What offerings did the people promise to give to the Lord?

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3. Why was it necessary for the people to bring offerings to the temple?

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**Get It**

1. What methods can we use to keep ourselves accountable to the promises we make to the Lord?

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2. What commitments did the people make to worship?

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3. How can we demonstrate thankfulness to the Lord for His forgiveness?

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## Apply It

1. How can you show a commitment to regular worship?
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**Summary:** In last week's lesson, the people of God promised to obey all the commandments of the LORD. This week's lesson focuses on Nehemiah 10 verses 31 -39. These verses places emphasis to the promises made by the children of God and their commitment to upkeep the temple of God. The main biblical principle is that the people of God have an obligation to take care of the house of God. Since the LORD has blessed them with resources, they were accountable to how they used their resources. When Israel practiced those principles, everyone was blessed including the widows and poor. Below is a list of promises made by all the people of God:

- Promise to observe the Sabbath v.31
- Promise to upkeep the Temple of God v.32
- Promise to make atonement for Israel and all the work of God v.33
- Promise for each family to bring wood to burn on the altar v.34
- Promise to bring the first fruits of crops, fruit trees, first born v.35
- Promise to bring a tenth of everything the land produces v.37
- Promise for the Priest to bring a tenth to the temple of God v.38
- Promise for all of Israel and sons of Levi to bring a tenth v.39
- Promise together not to neglect the Temple of God v.39

Disobedience to God results in curses which includes famine, plagues, and captivity to name a few. Israel's failure to obey the LORD's commandments resulted in curses (Malachi 3:10). Also, they allowed outsiders to sell things at the temple on the Sabbath. Their ancestors disobeyed God by not letting the land rest on the seventh year. They failed to observe the Sabbath. The nation of Israel was a notorious offender in violating these commandments. Jesus Christ drove out the money changers who were buying and selling there (Mark 11:15-19; Luke 19:45-48; John 2:12-25). Every generation seemed to miss the mark. Even today, the Church (although distinct from Israel) has a responsibility to upkeep the house of God. Many Christians have their own opinion on how they should give, but it often has no scriptural basis. The LORD cares about our attitude towards giving (1 Cor. 16:1-2; 2 Cor. 9:6-7). It is important that we give cheerfully and systematically to the LORD at our local assemblies. Today is a good opportunity for each of us to practice these principles.



## **Lesson VII**

**Date:** May 16, 2021

**Lesson Scriptures:** Nehemiah 11: 1-19

### **Settling in Jerusalem**

**Lesson Aim:** The student will learn about the sovereignty of God and our responsibility.

#### **Open It**

1. What do you think are the benefits of settling and having a home?

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#### **Explore It**

1. Where did the leaders of the people live?

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2. What method did they use in order to choose the people?

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3. Who did the people bless and why?

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#### **Get It**

1. Why would people not want to live in Jerusalem?

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2. What stands out about the many names that are given here?

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3. What were the Levites duties as they moved into the city of Jerusalem?

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4. What were the gate keeper's responsibility as they moved into the city of Jerusalem?
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### **Apply It**

1. How can you commit to settle at the house of the Lord?
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**Summary:** Nehemiah chapter 11 gives us information on the people who settled in Jerusalem. Nehemiah writes in verse 1, "And the rulers of the people dwelt at Jerusalem: the rest of the people also cast lots, to bring one of ten to dwell in Jerusalem the Holy Spirit, and nine parts to dwell at Jerusalem." The leaders of the people resided in Jerusalem. The people cast lots to determine who would live in Jerusalem. Casting lots was the method used to bring ten percent of the people into Jerusalem. This method was ordained by God in certain situations. We learn how the sovereignty of God and man's responsibility can co-exist without conflict. Jehovah has predestined certain events, but man is accountable to respond in faith. In today's lesson, we see God's people responding by faith. This is the first biblical principle.

Below is a timeline of events of all the activities contained in verses 1-19 of people responding by faith:

- Leaders of the people settled in Jerusalem
- People cast lots to determine who will live in Jerusalem
- People blessed all who volunteered to live in Jerusalem
- Providential leaders who settled in Jerusalem
- Descendants of Judah who settled in Jerusalem
- Descendants of Benjamin who settled in Jerusalem
- From the Priests who settled in Jerusalem
- From the Levites who settled in Jerusalem
- The gatekeepers who settled in Jerusalem

Nehemiah writes in verse 2, "And the people blessed all the men, that willingly offered themselves to dwell at Jerusalem." The King James Version translated the English word *blessed* from the Hebrew verb *barak* which means *blessings* in the form of gratitude in this context. The people commended those who voluntarily decided to live in Jerusalem. As believers, we should be grateful and bless those who dedicate their lives by living for the LORD. Each believer must be willing to use their gift according to the measure of faith the LORD has given them (Roman 12:3). This is the second biblical principle. There are numerous believers throughout the world serving the LORD in both foreign and domestic places. The LORD's purpose and plan will be done on earth and in heaven (Matthew 6:9-13).

**Lesson VIII**

**Date:** May 23, 2021

**Lesson Scriptures:** Nehemiah 11: 20-36

**The Remaining People Settling in Other Cities**

**Lesson Aim:** The student will be encouraged to trust the plan of the Almighty God.

**Open It**

1. Who has the most power and status in our society?

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2. What have you seen leaders use their power to accomplish?

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**Explore It**

1. Where did the priest and Levites settle?

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2. Where did the temple servants settle?

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3. Who were the Persian singers supported by?

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4. Why are we told about the 'king's representative'?

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5. Why did some Levites move from Judah to Benjamin?

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**Get It**

1. Why do you think our civil leaders ought to have morals?

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2. Are you willing to sacrifice the comforts of your surroundings to serve someone else?
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3. Who was blessed by the people for living in Jerusalem?
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### **Apply It**

1. Where can we volunteer ourselves this month at church that will be valuable in building up God's Kingdom?
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**Summary:** This week's lesson is a continuation from last week. Nehemiah writes in verse 20, "And the residue of Israel, of priests, and the Levites, were in all the cities of Judah, every one in his inheritance." The King James Version Bible translated the English word *residue* from the Hebrew noun *shear* which means remainder, remnant, or rest of the survivors in this context. The writer informs us that the remaining Israelites, priests, and Levites populated the surrounding towns around Jerusalem based on their inheritance. This helps us to understand that the LORD's plan is good regardless of location. This is the first biblical point. Jehovah has sovereignly placed his people in other places to carry out his sovereign plan. He has not left us to ourselves to figure out life, but he has graciously given us His Word to follow and obey. King Solomon writes, "Trust in the LORD with all your heart; and lean not unto thine own understanding. In all thy ways acknowledge Him, And he shall direct they paths" (Proverbs 3:5-6).

Nehemiah writes in verse 23, "For it was the king's commandment concerning them, that a certain portion should be for the singers, due for every day." According to Elliot's Commentary for English Readers, "It seems that Artaxerxes had gone beyond the exemption of Ezra 7:24, and given them a daily allowance, which it was the business of Uzzi to see to." It is amazing to see how the LORD used a heathen king to financially help his people. This is why prayer and studying the word of God is essential in a believer's daily walk. Jehovah declares that "the silver and gold is mine" (Haggai 2:8). What is an impossible feat with man is not impossible with the Almighty God. He is involved from start to finish. This is the second biblical point. The believer is called to respond by faith by being obedient to the LORD. The hymnal written by Alan Jackson titled, "Leaning on the Everlasting Arms" emphasizes the trust we must have in the LORD. We will accomplish more not by might nor by power, but by Spirit (Zechariah 4:6). It is important that we as believers practice these principles especially during a time of political unrest and a global crisis. Let us settle in the places that the LORD has ordained and worship Him in Spirit and in truth (John 4:24).

**Lesson IX**

**Date:** May 30, 2021

**Lesson Scriptures:** Nehemiah 12: 1-30

**Preparation For The Celebration**

**Lesson Aim:** The student will understand that their gift is needed to serve in the body of Christ.

**Open It**

1. Are you prepared to use your gift and serve where the church needs you to serve?

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**Explore It**

1. What is the difference between the two groups of Priests and Levites mentioned?

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2. For what purpose did people gather at Jerusalem?

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3. How did they celebrate?

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4. Describe what the people of Jerusalem had to be thankful for and glad about at that time.

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**Get It**

1. Why was celebrating God's faithfulness important for the people?

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2. Why is it important for us today, to celebrate God's faithfulness?

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3. What attributes of God does your family celebrate?

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4. What attributes of God does your church celebrate?

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### **Apply It**

1. What can you do this week to show God that you appreciate His faithfulness?

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**Summary:** In the resettling of Jerusalem, there is a strong lesson for us: we must serve in the most-needed places. Within the church, all kinds of needs exist. There is a need for ministers of the gospel and a host of associate workers. There is a constant need for people to count the offerings, to maintain the property and buildings, and to serve as technicians, musicians, and security men. In addition, office staff, ministerial staff, teachers, and volunteers are needed. Think of all who serve on the committees of the church and reach out to visit the shut-ins, the hospitalized, and the lost and unchurched of the community. Just within the local church, a great range of needs exist that must be filled by both volunteers and professional ministers.

Within society in general, the number and diversity of needs are mind-boggling, never-ending. Think of the orphans, widows, widowers, prisoners, brokenhearted, backslidden, diseased, suffering, hungry, and dying. Think of the lawless, the abusers, and the violent within society. Think of those who are without Christ and have no personal relationship with God. When all the needs within a society are heaped together, the weight is staggering. And the number of people in need makes the task overwhelming. But the needs can be met if enough of us will step forth to serve in the most-needed places. Listen to what God's Holy Word says about reaching out in service to meet the needs of the world: **Matt. 5:16** - "Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father which is in heaven". **Matt. 9: 37-38** - "Then saith he unto his disciples, The harvest truly *is* plenteous, but the labourers *are* few; Pray ye therefore the Lord of the harvest, that he will send forth labourers into his harvest".

**Lesson X**

**Date:** June 6, 2021

**Lesson Scriptures:** Nehemiah 12: 31-47

**Dedication of the Wall**

**Lesson Aim:** The student will learn that in our celebration, the focus is on the giver and not the gifts.

**Open It**

1. What positive effects can we see from working in unity?

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**Explore It**

1. What did Nehemiah do after the celebration was done?

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2. Why did men need to be appointed for this task

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3. What was the job of the priests and Levites?

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4. What do we learn from verse 46 about the importance of thanksgiving and praise?

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5. What is the significance [of] the reference to David and Solomon?

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**Get It**

1. Why did the Levites need to purify themselves?

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2. How can we purify ourselves today?

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3. What do you think motivated Nehemiah to form two large choirs to give thanks and start at opposite ends of the city to finally come together at the Water Gate?

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### **Apply It**

1. Who is one person who could help keep you accountable in your spiritual life?

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2. In what way can you renew your commitment to a day of worship?

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**Summary:** it was at this time at the joyful celebration, that the religious workers were organized to conduct permanent worship services at the temple. Custodians were appointed to be in charge of the offerings, tithes, and storerooms (v.44). Throughout the land the people were to provide food and money to support the priests and Levites. The priests and Levites had already been appointed, but a significant statement is made about them in these verses: they performed their service faithfully both in personal conduct and in ministry. They lived pure, clean lives, and they faithfully performed their service for the LORD, ministering to the people and helping to meet their spiritual needs (v.30). As a result, the people throughout the nation were well pleased with the priests and Levites. The singers and gatekeepers also faithfully performed their service for the LORD and His house, the temple (vv.45-46). Two facts in particular are mentioned: they fulfilled their duties exactly as prescribed by David and Solomon, and they followed the custom of having choir directors as described by David and Asaph. Lastly, all the people were faithful in supporting the priests and Levites (v.47). Under the leadership of both Zerubbabel and Nehemiah, the people proved faithful in supporting the religious workers. Even the Levites scattered throughout the cities and villages of the nation were faithfully supported. Everyone of God's people need to be faithful, consistent in their duty. No task ever gets done unless a person diligently works to complete the task. Thus, being loyal and reliable are absolutely essential in order to achieve anything worthwhile in life. No matter who we are, we must be faithful in the task assigned us.



**Lesson XI**

**Date:** June 13, 2021

**Lesson Scriptures:** Nehemiah 13:1-14

**Purifying and Reassignments in the Temple**

**Lesson Aim:** The student will learn that when Christians get off track in doing God’s will, purification must take place before the work of the Lord continues so that the work may be blessed.

**Open It**

1. How can we as believers experience daily spiritual reviving?

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**Explore It**

1. What did the Israelites discover when they read the Book of Moses at the celebration?

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2. What did the people do in response to what they discovered in the Book of Moses?

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3. What evil deed had Eliashib the priest done?

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4. How did Nehemiah react to Eliashib’s sin?

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5. What had forced the Levites to return to their own fields?

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**Get It**

1. Who has helped keep you accountable in your Christian walk?

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2. What are the benefits to having a friend in whom to confide about spiritual things?
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3. What responsibility do you think Christians have to keep each other accountable?
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### **Apply It**

1. Who is one person who could help keep you accountable in your spiritual life?
- 

**Summary:** God's people had allowed sin to creep in. They had gotten so far away from the covenant that they made with God only two chapters ago. The high priest had allowed the enemy to set up residence in the temple. As saints we sometimes allow the world to move into the temple and we start to take on their music, actions, lingo and lifestyles.

The Israelites failed to keep their commitment to provide for the Levites and others that served in the ministry – so they had neglected the Lord's work by leaving to go back working in the fields. My brothers and sisters, we do the same thing. When we stop tithing, giving offerings and supporting the work of the ministry. Therefore, many leaders are forced to work secular jobs instead of being able to devote themselves to ministry, prayer and studying the word of God.

Nehemiah knew some purification needed to take place, for God to be pleased. He prayed that God would help him. He took a stand and chose to right a wrong. Nehemiah had to re-establish order, give specific assignments and responsibilities, get the people to recommit and establish accountability. Nehemiah had a desire to see God's Temple be restored to a holy place. Nehemiah did not just see something wrong and looked the other way, but he acted and did something about it. Saints let us be like Nehemiah.

**Lesson XII**

**Date:** June 20, 2021

**Lesson Scriptures:** Nehemiah 13: 15-31

**The Violation of the Sabbath**

**Lesson Aim:** The student will learn, that as a child of God, we must learn to guard our Sabbath.

**Open It**

1. How do you like to spend your weekends?

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2. How do you like to spend Sundays?

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**Explore It**

1. Of what sins were the people of Israel guilty?

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2. What action did Nehemiah take to ensure Israel kept the Sabbath holy?

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3. How did Nehemiah react to Israel's sin of intermarriage with foreigners?

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**Get It**

1. What does this story reveal about the attitude we should have toward worshiping God?

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2. In what ways do you think Christians today tend to neglect worship?

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3. What have you learned from this story about respecting the Sabbath?

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4. In what ways should our treatment of the Sabbath differ from Old Testament law?
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### **Apply It**

1. How can you show respect for worship?  

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2. In what way can you renew your commitment to a day of worship?  

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**Summary:** The people of Judah were not to work, nor their animals. They were not to buy or sell on the sabbath because it was to be a day of sanctification. The sabbath was to be a day of rest, a day to commune with God before business or harvest (Ex. 34:21). No necessary work was to be done. Therefore, God's people had violated the sabbath law. We as Christians are not under the law of the sabbath like the Israelites, but we are obligated to make honoring God more important than making money (ex. Working overtime, fishing, washing our cars, and running around being too busy and no time for God, when we could be worshipping on Sunday). A lot of us on Sunday wants to do what self wants to do instead of spending quality time with God. If Sunday is a workday for you, then your day of worship, honoring God and resting would be another say of the week. The idea is that on your day off, that you get involved in a bible study on Wednesday night or committing that day to spend time in praying, reading, and studying His word. Therefore, we have no excuse as believers, we must set aside quality time to commune with God.

Nehemiah was upset that the leaders were allowing these transgressions to go on, so he again rebuked them for turning that which was sacred into something that was common. They also intermarried, which God had forbidden them to do. They became unequally yoked – combining holiness with paganism, believers with unbelievers. God calls his people to be holy, for He is holy – it applied then, now and forevermore. So Nehemiah always asked God for help and favor, for his desire was to serve and please God. Is this your desire?

**Lesson XIII**

**Date:** June 27, 2021

**Lesson Scriptures:**

**Summary /Overview of the book of Nehemiah**

*Lesson Aims, Summaries by Annette Brown, Dip. TH., Rev. Joseph Ellzey Jr. B.S., Earline Franklin, Rev. Terrence Howard TH.M., Victor Kirkpatrick, Dip. TH., and Bobby J. Williams Sr., Diploma (SBI) 2021*

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