

6 – THE CITY & THE PRIEST (NEHEMIAH 7:1-10:39)

I. The Census (Nehemiah 7:1-73)

A. The Security of the City (Nehemiah 7:1-4)

- When the walls and gates were completed, Nehemiah gave his brother the charge of the city.
- His brother, Hanani, was chosen because he was faithful man who feared God.
- Nehemiah gave instructions concerning when to open the gates and who would stand guard.
- The city was large at this time and spacious, because the inhabitants and homes were few.

B. The Registry of the First Returnees (Nehemiah 7:5-73)

- The Lord moved Nehemiah's heart to gather the nobles, the rulers and the people.
- He gathered them so that they might be registered by genealogy.
- Nehemiah found a register of genealogy with those who were a part of the first return.
- The writer then lists the names and numbers within the register of the first returnees.
- The writer states that the total number of returnees was 42,360.
- An accounting was also given of the moneys given by the heads of the houses in Jerusalem.

II. The Ministry of Ezra (Nehemiah 8:10:39)

A. The Reading of the Law (Nehemiah 8:1-18)

- The people gathered in an open square and Ezra the Priest was told to bring the Law of Moses.
- Ezra stood an open platform above the people and opened the Book of the Law.
- When the Book was opened, the people stood to their feet.
- When the book was read, they instructed the people to help them understand the reading.
- Nehemiah and Ezra declared the day holy to the Lord and told them not to sorrow.
- On the second day, the people responded to the reading by celebrating the Feast of Tabernacles.

B. The Confession of Sin (Nehemiah 9:1-37)

- After celebrating the Feast on the 24th day, the people separated themselves from the foreigners.

The Return To The Land: A Survey of Ezra, Nehemiah & Esther

- The people assembled with fasting, dressed in sackcloth and with dust on her heads.
- The people stood and confessed their sins and the iniquities of their fathers.
- They read the Book of the Law for part of the day and then confessed and worship.
- A group of Levites offered a prayer of confession to the Lord on behalf of the people.

C. The People's Covenant (Nehemiah 9:38-10:39)

- The leaders, priests and Levites made a covenant with the Lord and sealed it.
- The passage lists those who placed their name on the document.
- The rest of the people joined with these brethren and entered into the covenant as well.
- By entering into the covenant, they entered into a curse and an oath to walk in God's Law.
- They swore not to give their own daughters to the peoples of the land nor take their daughters.
- They swore not to sell or do business on the Sabbaths.
- They also made ordinances concerning a Temple tax for the service in Temple.
- They also made an ordinance concerning the collection of firstfruits and tithes.