

## 7 – THE DEDICATION & REFORMS (NEHEMIAH 11:1-13:31)

### I. The Residents of Jerusalem & Judah (Nehemiah 11:1-12:26)

#### A. In Jerusalem (Nehemiah 11:1-24)

- The leaders of the people dwelt in Jerusalem.
- The people casts lots so that one out of every ten chosen would dwell in Jerusalem.
- The other nine would dwell in the others cities and villages.
- The writer lists the heads of the province who dwelt in Jerusalem.
- The writer also lists the priests and the Levite orders that dwelt in Jerusalem.
- The number of priests who worked in the Temple was 1,192.
- The number of Levites who dwelt in the Jerusalem was 284.
- The number of gatekeepers who dwelt in Jerusalem was 172.
- The total number of those who dwelt in Jerusalem was 3,044.
- The rest of the priests and Levites dwelt in the cities and villages of Judah.

#### B. In Judah & Benjamin (Nehemiah 11:25-36)

- The writer lists those who dwelt in certain villages in Judah and Benjamin.

#### C. The Priest and Levites (Nehemiah 12:1-26)

- The writer lists the priests and the Levites who came up with Zerubbabel.
- The writer then lists the descendants of the priests and the Levites to that point.

**Historical Note:** Darius the Persian (Darius II Ochus)

Darius II Ochus was illegitimate son of Artaxerxes I by a Babylonian concubine. After Artaxerxes I died, there a quick succession of murderous attempts to seize the throne by his brothers, who were legitimate heirs. As the illegitimate heir, Darius rebelled and seized the throne, becoming the seventh ruler of the Medo-Persian empire. He ruled from 432-404 B.C. The empire disintegrated at an accelerated pace during his reign after it suffered revolts in several areas such a Sardis, Media, Egypt and Cyprus. It is probably during the Darius II reign that Nehemiah returned again to Jerusalem to find many abuses had arisen there among the Jews.  
See: Nehemiah 12:22; 13:6-11.

### II. The Dedication of the Wall (Nehemiah 12:27-47)

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- They sought out the Levites from Judah and Benjamin to come to Jerusalem for the dedication.
- The Levites were brought so that they could celebrate with singing and instruments.
- The priests and Levites purified themselves, the people, the walls and the gates.
- Nehemiah appointed two large thanksgiving choirs that were positioned to move along the wall.
- One choir was moved in one direction on the wall and the other moved in the other direction.
- The two choirs then stood in the Temple with Nehemiah and half of the rulers.
- They also offered great sacrifices and rejoiced loudly throughout the city.

## III. Nehemiah's Reforms (Nehemiah 13:1-31)

### A. The Issue with Foreigners (13:1-3)

- On the day of the dedication, they found a prohibition written in the Book of a Law.
- It was written in the Law that no Ammonite or Moabite could ever come into the assembly.
- This was because Ammon and Moab did not provide for Israel's needs in the wilderness.
- Rather they hired Balaam to curse Israel, but the Lord turned their curse into a blessing.
- Upon hearing this, the Jews separated the mixed multitude from Israel.

### B. The Issue with Tobiah (13:4-9)

- There was a priest who had authority over the Temple storerooms and was allied with Tobiah.
- This priest prepared a large room for Tobiah in the storerooms.
- Now Nehemiah had returned to the service of Artaxerxes I during the 32<sup>nd</sup> year of his reign.
- Nehemiah returned to Shushan in 433 B.C. until he was sent back as governor.
- After a unrecorded period of time, Nehemiah received permission to leave again from Darius II.
- When Nehemiah returned to Jerusalem, he discovered the evil that this priest had done.
- This grieved Nehemiah and he had Tobiah's goods thrown out of the Temple storeroom.
- Nehemiah then had the storerooms cleansed and the Temple articles returned to them.

### C. The Issue with Officials in Judah (13:10-14)

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- Nehemiah became aware that the portions had not been given to the Levites.
- This caused the Levites and singers to return to fields to the neglect of the Temple.
- Nehemiah confronted the rulers and appointed treasurers for the task.
- Nehemiah prayed that the Lord would remember his service for the Temple.

### D. The Issue with Sabbath (13:15-22)

- Nehemiah also witnessed the people working on the Sabbath.
- he also witnessed men from Tyre selling and doing business on the Sabbath.
- Nehemiah contended with the rulers for profaning the Sabbath day.
- Nehemiah had the gates of the city shut the day before the Sabbath.
- He had his servants enforce that no burdens would be brought in on the Sabbath.
- The city gates were reopened on the day following the Sabbath.
- The merchants camped outside of the city until Nehemiah warned them.
- The merchants came no more on the Sabbath after that.
- The Levites were given the responsibility to guard the gates on the Sabbath.

### E. The Issue with Marriage Commitments (13:23-31)

- Nehemiah saw Jewish men who were married to women from Moab, Ammon and Ashdod.
- Their children spoke only the language of their mothers and not the language of Judah.
- Nehemiah confronted these men and physically assaulted them.
- He made them swear by the Lord not intermarry with the nations as he confronted them.
- He drove away the grandson of the High Priest who had married Sanballat's daughter.
- Nehemiah prayed that God would remember their sin because they defiled the priesthood.
- Nehemiah also prayed that he had cleansed the priests and the Levites of everything pagan.
- He asked God to remember him for the good that he done.