

DEEP WATERS MEN'S DISCIPLESHIP-LEADERSHIP TRAINING
Lesson Ten: The City Secured and the Walls Dedicated
Nehemiah 11:1-12:47

Revival has now come to Jerusalem. It began when the people hungered for the Word of God. And that hunger was translated into two consequences. First, they sensed their sinful state both past and present. Then they made not only a verbal but a written oath before God that they would obey what they had heard from the Word. And so God blessed them in their obedience.

That brings us to these two chapters which are united by the listing of a lot of names – meaningless names to us today – but significant names during the time of Nehemiah.

Nehemiah 11:1-2 – Jerusalem is settled

Questions: Why was there a need to move people into Jerusalem?

1. To make the city less vulnerable to attack
2. To provide personnel for services at the temple
3. To make the city stronger and more beautiful as the capital city of the province

Verse 1: Casting of lots

1. The leaders of the city were the first to volunteer for assignment within the city
2. Still there was a need for people – people who could manage the day-to-day affairs of the city: merchants and day-laborers
3. To make determinations, lots were cast:
Proverbs 16:33 – The lot is cast into the lap, but its every decision is from the LORD.

Josephus wrote in his Antiquities of the Jews 11.5.8 – “Nehemiah, seeing that the city had a small population, urged the priests and Levites to leave the countryside and move to the city and remain there, for he had prepared houses for them at his own expense.”

Nehemiah 11:3-12:26 – Register of Jewish citizens

1. Residents of Jerusalem – Nehemiah 11:3-24
 - a. Rulers, priests, Levites, porters, temple servants, officials appointed by the king
 - b. Verse 6 – “brave” – could also be translated as “men of substance” or “outstanding men” – denoting wealth, strength, ability as well as bravery
 - c. They had responsibilities:

- Verse 14 - “brave warriors” - their task was probably the defense of Jerusalem

Haggadolim - “the great” - probably refers to a “leading family”

- Verse 16 - “Outside work of the house of God” - supplies and maintenance
- Verse 17 - “thanksgiving and prayer” - this was a temple function
- Verse 19 - “gatekeepers” - these would be the gates to the temple itself
- Verse 22-23 - “singers” - music was an integral part of the temple services

“their daily activity” = Hebrew “a day’s matter on its day” - worship was planned for set times

- Verse 24 - This person advised the Persian king on the affairs of the people

d. Truth: Things must be done decently and in order

1 Peter 4:10 - Each one should use whatever gift he has received to serve others,

faithfully administering God’s grace in its various forms.

1 Corinthians 14:40 - But everything should be done in a fitting and orderly way.

2. Residents outside of Jerusalem - Nehemiah 11:25-36

These had journeyed back to their ancestral homes, in the land of Benjamin (north of Jerusalem) and in Judea. Also in Idumea (those residing in Kiriath Arba and Beersheba)

3. Priests and Levites of the Return under Zerubbabel - Nehemiah 12:1-9

It is good to remember those who have faithfully labored before us

Hebrews 11 - for an example

Verse 9 - “stood opposite them in the services” - this indicates an antiphonal singing

Psalm 136:1-26

Let’s practice some antiphonal worship:

4. Post-exilic high priests - Nehemiah 12:10-11

5. Priests and Levites after Zerubbabel - Nehemiah 12:12-26

a. Heads of priestly houses - verses 12-21

b. Heads of Levitical families – verses 22–26

Nehemiah 12:27–43 – Dedication of the Walls

Verses 27–30 – Describe the emotional preparation for the dedication; certainly included music

and possibly meals together – much like Jesus did before going to Gethsemane.

Verse 27 – “dedication” = Hebrew word “Hanukkah”

Verse 27 – Cymbals were used in religious ceremonies:

1 Chronicles 16:42 – Heman and Jeduthun were responsible for the sounding of the trumpets and cymbals and for the playing of the other instruments for sacred song.

1 Chronicles 25:1 – David, together with the commanders of the army, set apart some of the sons of Asaph, Heman and Jeduthun for the ministry of prophesying, accompanied by harps, lyres and cymbals.

2 Chronicles 5:12 – All the Levites who were musicians – Asaph, Heman, Jeduthun and their sons and relatives – stood on the east side of the altar, dressed in fine linen and playing cymbals, harps and lyres. They were accompanied by 120 priests sounding trumpets.

2 Chronicles 29:25 – He stationed the Levites in the temple of the LORD with cymbals, harps and lyres in the way prescribed by David and Gad the king’s seer and Nathan the prophet: this was commanded by the LORD through his prophets.

Harps were also used in religious ceremonies:

2 Samuel 6:5 – David and the whole house of Israel were celebrating with all their might before the LORD, with songs and with harps, lyres, tambourines, sistrams and cymbals.

Psalms 150:3 – Praise him with the sounding of the trumpet, praise him with the harp and lyre.

Verse 30 – Purification

People purified themselves by bathing and washing their clothes

clothes.
Numbers 8:21 – The Levites purified themselves and washed their

Numbers 19:19 – The man who is clean is to sprinkle the unclean person on the third and seventh days, and on the seventh day he is to purify him. The person being cleansed must wash his clothes and bathe with water, and that evening he will be clean.

Walls were purified by the sprinkling of blood – 2 Chronicles 29:20–24

Verses 31–34 – The Procession

Began at the Valley Gate, which was on the west side;
Ezra’s group – which consisted of a choir (Hebrew word means “thanksgiving”), a civic leader, seven priests, and eight Levites, plus one half of the people – they march on the wall in a counter-clockwise manner – south to east to the temple mount.

Nehemiah’s group – which consisted of a choir, a civic leader, seven priests, and eight Levites, plus one half of the people – they march on the wall in a clockwise manner – west to north to the temple mount.

Oh the memories this walk must have produced as they thought back to those weeks of building

Interesting note: Ezra, because he was a priest and scribe, led one group; Nehemiah did not lead the second group, but it was led by the choir

Verses 40–43 – The Dedication Ceremony

1. Psalms of praise were sung – possible Psalm 122, for example
2. Music was an important aspect of worship – 1 Chronicles 16:8–11
Give thanks to the LORD, call on his name; make known among the nations what he has done. Sing to him, sing praise to him; tell of all his wonderful acts. Glory in his holy name; let the hearts of those who seek the LORD rejoice. Look to the LORD and his strength; seek his face always.
3. Offering of sacrifice – probably most were of the peace offering type
4. It was a celebration for the entire family – verse 43

(Note: How often have we seen the entire family involved in work, in study, in prayer, and now in celebration? God does desire that the family share together)

Nehemiah 12:44–47 – Organization of temple support

Verse 44 – Nehemiah took this moment when the people were enthusiastic to begin to

implement what they had agreed to in the oath they had signed.
Nehemiah knew that you had to strike while the fire was still hot.

Final Homework Assignment for this term: Reread the book of Nehemiah. Make a list of those important principles found within this story that have been especially meaningful to you. List them in order of priority – from most important to least important. Then for those two you have listed as most important, write

an action plan as to how you can begin to cultivate those in your own life, in the life of your family, and in your business and church communities.