Having A Basic Understanding of Some Old Testament Truths

Part 77 – The Sealing of the Covenant Through Nehemiah's Prayer (Nehemiah 10-13)

1. Define the term "Tirshatha" (will require the use of a Bible dictionary – the Strong's # is 8660).
This term is used five times: **Ezra 2:63**, **Nehemiah 7:65**, **Nehemiah 7:70**, **Nehemiah 8:9**, and **Nehemiah 10:1**.
Strong's definition: "8660 Tirshatha' teer-shaw-thaw' of foreign derivation; the title of a Persian deputy or governor:--Tirshatha."
BDB Definition: "1) Tirshatha—governor; 1a) a title used by the Persian governor in Judea; 1a1) Nehemiah used this title; Part of Speech: noun masculine".

2. What was done when everyone had knowledge and understanding?
"And the rest of the people, the priests, the Levites, the porters, the singers, the Nethinims, and ***all they that had separated themselves from the people of the lands unto the law of God, their wives, their sons, and their daughters, every one having knowledge, and having understanding****"* (**Nehemiah 10:28;** cf. **Deuteronomy 7:1-4**, **I Kings 11:3-8**, **Ezra 10:3**, **Ezra 10:10-11**, and **Nehemiah 9:2**).

3. What curse and oath did the children of Israel enter into?
"(29) They clave to their brethren, their nobles, and entered into a curse, and into an oath, to walk in God's law, which was given by Moses the servant of God, and to observe and do all the commandments of the LORD our Lord, and his judgments and his statutes; (30) And that we would not give our daughters unto the people of the land, nor take their daughters for our sons: (31) And if the people of the land bring ware or any victuals on the sabbath day to sell, that we would not buy it of them on the sabbath, or on the holy day: and that we would leave the seventh year, and the exaction of every debt" (**Nehemiah 10:29-31**).
How would making an oath with God also be a curse? Consider: **Deuteronomy 27:26** and **Deuteronomy 30:15-20**.

4. Did the children of Israel make any ordinances to care for the work of the house of God?
Yes: *"(32) Also we made ordinances for us, to charge ourselves yearly with the third part of a shekel for the service of the house of our God; (33) For the shewbread, and for the continual meat offering, and for the continual burnt offering, of the sabbaths, of the new moons, for the set feasts, and for the holy things, and for the sin offerings to make an atonement for Israel, and for all the work of the house of our God"* (**Nehemiah 10:32-33**).

5. When the children of Israel were to give unto the Lord, was it from their leftovers?
No: *"(34) And we cast the lots among the priests, the Levites, and the people, for the wood offering, to bring it into the house of our God, after the houses of our fathers, at times appointed year by year, to burn upon the altar of the LORD our God, as it is written in the law: (35) And to bring the* ***firstfruits*** *of our ground, and the firstfruits of all fruit of all trees, year by year, unto the house of the LORD: (36) Also the* ***firstborn*** *of our sons, and of our cattle, as it is written in the law [****Exodus 13:1-2****] , and the* ***firstlings*** *of our herds and of our flocks, to bring to the house of our God, unto the priests that minister in the house of our God: (37) And that we should bring the* ***firstfruits*** *of our dough, and our offerings, and the fruit of all manner of trees, of wine and of*

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oil, unto the priests, to the chambers of the house of our God; and the tithes of our ground unto the Levites, that the same Levites might have the tithes in all the cities of our tillage. (38) And the priest the son of Aaron shall be with the Levites, when the Levites take tithes: and the Levites shall bring up the tithe of the tithes unto the house of our God, to the chambers, into the treasure house. (39) For the children of Israel and the children of Levi shall bring the offering of the corn, of the new wine, and the oil, unto the chambers, where are the vessels of the sanctuary, and the priests that minister, and the porters, and the singers: and we will not forsake the house of our God" (**Nehemiah 10:34-39**).
God expected the first fruits (**Exodus 22:29**, **Exodus 23:16**, **Exodus 34:26**, and **Proverbs 3:9**).

6. What was done to choose those who would live in Jerusalem?
"(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 city, and nine parts to dwell in other cities. (2) And the people blessed all the men, that willingly offered themselves to dwell at Jerusalem" (**Nehemiah 11:1-2**).

7. Who was "the ruler of the house of God"?
*"**Seraiah** the son of Hilkiah, the son of Meshullam, the son of Zadok, the son of Meraioth, the son of Ahitub, was the ruler of the house of God"* (**Nehemiah 11:11**).
We saw this language in **II Chronicles 35:8**.
Jarius and Crispus were rulers of the synagogue (**Luke 8:41** and **Acts 18:8**).

8. Who was "the principal to begin the thanksgiving in prayer"?
*"And **Mattaniah** the son of Micha, the son of Zabdi, the son of Asaph, was the principal to begin the thanksgiving in prayer: and Bakbukiah the second among his brethren, and Abda the son of Shammua, the son of Galal, the son of Jeduthun"* (**Nehemiah 11:17**).

9. Who was over the Nethinims?
*"(20) And the residue of Israel, of the priests, and the Levites, were in all the cities of Judah, every one in his inheritance. (21) But the Nethinims dwelt in Ophel: and **Ziha and Gispa** were over the Nethinims"* (**Nehemiah 11:20-21**).
The Nethinims could not prove they were of Israel (**Nehemiah 7:60-61**).
This is what we know about the Nethinims: *"Also of the Nethinims, whom David and the princes had appointed for the service of the Levites, two hundred and twenty Nethinims: all of them were expressed by name"* (**Ezra 8:20**).
Ziha was of the Nethinims (**Nehemiah 7:46**) while nothing else is written about Gispa.
These would not be taxed (**Ezra 7:24**).

10. Who was the overseer of the Levites?
*"The overseer also of the Levites at Jerusalem was **Uzzi** the son of Bani, the son of Hashabiah, the son of Mattaniah, the son of Micha. Of the sons of Asaph, the singers were over the business of the house of God"* (**Nehemiah 11:22**).

11. What was Ezra in the days wherein Nehemiah was the governor?
"These were in the days of Joiakim the son of Jeshua, the son of Jozadak, and in the days of Nehemiah the governor, and of Ezra the priest, the scribe" (**Nehemiah 12:26**).

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12. Why were the Levites sought out during the time when the wall was dedicated?
"And at the dedication of the wall of Jerusalem they sought the Levites out of all their places, to bring them to Jerusalem, to keep the dedication with gladness, both with thanksgivings, and with singing, with cymbals, psalteries, and with harps" (**Nehemiah 12:27**).

13. Were all of the singers dwelling in Jerusalem?
No: *"(28) And the sons of the singers gathered themselves together, both out of the plain country round about Jerusalem, and from the villages of Netophathi; (29) Also from the house of Gilgal, and out of the fields of Geba and Azmaveth: for the singers had builded them villages round about Jerusalem"* (**Nehemiah 12:28-29**).

14. Was there any work done to purify the people?
"And the priests and the Levites purified themselves, and purified the people, and the gates, and the wall" (**Nehemiah 12:30**).

15. Did princes in Judah lead prayers?
Yes: *"**Then I brought up the princes of Judah upon the wall, and appointed two great companies of them that gave thanks**, whereof one went on the right hand upon the wall toward the dung gate… And the other company of them that gave thanks went over against them, and I after them, and the half of the people upon the wall, from beyond the tower of the furnaces even unto the broad wall… So stood the two companies of them that gave thanks in the house of God, and I, and the half of the rulers with me"* (**Nehemiah 12:31; 38; 40**).

16. Were women and children present during times of worship?
*"Also that day they offered great sacrifices, and rejoiced: for God had made them rejoice with great joy: **the wives also and the children rejoiced**: so that the joy of Jerusalem was heard even afar off"* (**Nehemiah 12:43**).

17. Do you see any indication that there was an accounting process for the monies and goods contributed to God's work?
"And at that time were some appointed over the chambers for the treasures, for the offerings, for the firstfruits, and for the tithes, to gather into them out of the fields of the cities the portions of the law for the priests and Levites: for Judah rejoiced for the priests and for the Levites that waited" (**Nehemiah 12:44**).

18. When did the pattern begin for the singers and the porters to keep the ward of their God and the ward of the purification?
*"(45) And both the singers and the porters kept the ward of their God, and the ward of the purification, according to **the commandment of David, and of Solomon his son**. (46) For **in the days of David and Asaph of old** there were chief of the singers, and songs of praise and thanksgiving unto God"* (**Nehemiah 12:45-46**; cf. **I Chronicles 23:25-28**).

19. During whose days were the singers and Levities supported properly?
*"And all Israel **in the days of Zerubbabel, and in the days of Nehemiah**, gave the portions of the singers and the porters, every day his portion: and they sanctified holy things unto the Levites; and the Levites sanctified them unto the children of Aaron"* (**Nehemiah 12:47**).

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20. What caused Israel to separate from "all the mixed multitude"?
"(1) On that day they read in the book of Moses in the audience of the people; and therein was found written, that the Ammonite and the Moabite should not come into the congregation of God for ever; (2) Because they met not the children of Israel with bread and with water, but hired Balaam against them, that he should curse them: howbeit our God turned the curse into a blessing. (3) Now it came to pass, when they had heard the law, that they separated from Israel all the mixed multitude" (**Nehemiah 13:1-3**).

21. What was Eliashib up to during the time Nehemiah was gone?
"(4) And before this, Eliashib the priest, having the oversight of the chamber of the house of our God, was allied unto Tobiah: (5) And he had prepared for him a great chamber, where aforetime they laid the meat offerings, the frankincense, and the vessels, and the tithes of the corn, the new wine, and the oil, which was commanded to be given to the Levites, and the singers, and the porters; and the offerings of the priests. (6) But in all this time was not I at Jerusalem: for in the two and thirtieth year of Artaxerxes king of Babylon came I unto the king, and after certain days obtained I leave of the king" (**Nehemiah 13:4-6**).
It really stinks when someone is supposed to be on guard, but they are really letting the wolves in (**Isaiah 56:10-11**).
Tobiah was an enemy (**Nehemiah 2:11; 2:19; 4:7**, etc.).

22. What did Nehemiah do concerning Eliashib's error when he returned?
"(7) And I came to Jerusalem, and understood of the evil that Eliashib did for Tobiah, in preparing him a chamber in the courts of the house of God. (8) And it grieved me sore: therefore I cast forth all the household stuff of Tobiah out of the chamber. (9) Then I commanded, and they cleansed the chambers: and thither brought I again the vessels of the house of God, with the meat offering and the frankincense" (**Nehemiah 13:7-9**).
Does this remind you of someone (**Matthew 21:12-13**)?

23. Were the Levites and singers continuing to receive the support they needed in chapter thirteen?
No: *"And I perceived that the portions of the Levites had not been given them: for the Levites and the singers, that did the work, were fled every one to his field"* (**Nehemiah 13:10**).

24. Why did Nehemiah contend with the rulers and what had to change because of their failure?
Since the Levites and singers were not supported, the house of God had been forsaken so they could support their families in the fields. Now, this has to be reversed: *"(11) Then contended I with the rulers, and said, Why is the house of God forsaken? And I gathered them together, and set them in their place. (12) Then brought all Judah the tithe of the corn and the new wine and the oil unto the treasuries. (13) And I made treasurers over the treasuries, Shelemiah the priest, and Zadok the scribe, and of the Levites, Pedaiah: and next to them was Hanan the son of Zaccur, the son of Mattaniah: for they were counted faithful, and their office was to distribute unto their brethren. (14) Remember me, O my God, concerning this, and wipe not out my good deeds that I have done for the house of my God, and for the offices thereof"* (**Nehemiah 13:11-14**).

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25. Did Nehemiah return to find that they were honoring the Sabbath?
No: *"(15) In those days saw I in Judah some treading wine presses on the sabbath, and bringing in sheaves, and lading asses; as also wine, grapes, and figs, and all manner of burdens, which they brought into Jerusalem on the sabbath day: and I testified against them in the day wherein they sold victuals. (16) There dwelt men of Tyre also therein, which brought fish, and all manner of ware, and sold on the sabbath unto the children of Judah, and in Jerusalem. (17) Then I contended with the nobles of Judah, and said unto them, What evil thing is this that ye do, and* ***profane the sabbath day****? (18)* ***Did not your fathers thus, and did not our God bring all this evil upon us, and upon this city? yet ye bring more wrath upon Israel by profaning the sabbath****. (19) And it came to pass, that when the gates of Jerusalem began to be dark before the sabbath, I commanded that the gates should be shut, and charged that they should not be opened till after the sabbath: and some of my servants set I at the gates, that there should no burden be brought in on the sabbath day. (20) So the merchants and sellers of all kind of ware lodged without Jerusalem once or twice. (21) Then I testified against them, and said unto them, Why lodge ye about the wall? if ye do so again, I will lay hands on you. From that time forth came they no more on the sabbath. (22) And I commanded the Levites that they should cleanse themselves, and that they should come and keep the gates, to sanctify the sabbath day. Remember me, O my God, concerning this also, and spare me according to the greatness of thy mercy"* (**Nehemiah 13:15-22**).

26. We began chapter thirteen seeing the separation from "the mixed multitude". We also saw that marriages were ended in previous contexts (9:2 and 10:28). Did they keep themselves from the heathens in marriage as they had in the past?
No: *"(23) In those days also saw I Jews that had married wives of Ashdod, of Ammon, and of Moab: (24) And their children spake half in the speech of Ashdod, and could not speak in the Jews' language, but according to the language of each people"* (**Nehemiah 13:23-24**).

27. How "fired up" was Nehemiah over the present errors of the people?
"(25) And ***I contended with them, and cursed them, and smote certain of them, and plucked off their hair, and made them swear by God****, saying, Ye shall not give your daughters unto their sons, nor take their daughters unto your sons, or for yourselves. (26) Did not Solomon king of Israel sin by these things? yet among many nations was there no king like him, who was beloved of his God, and God made him king over all Israel:* ***nevertheless even him did outlandish women cause to sin.*** *(27) Shall we then hearken unto you to do all this great evil, to transgress against our God in marrying strange wives? (28) And one of the sons of Joiada, the son of Eliashib the high priest, was son in law to Sanballat the Horonite:* ***therefore I chased him from me.*** *(29) Remember them, O my God, because they have defiled the priesthood, and the covenant of the priesthood, and of the Levites"* (**Nehemiah 13:25-29**).

28. As we conclude this book, do we find Nehemiah concerned only about himself?
He is concerned about himself, but others as well: *"(30)* ***Thus cleansed I them*** *from all strangers, and appointed the wards of the priests and the Levites, every one in his business; (31) And for the wood offering, at times appointed, and for the firstfruits.* ***Remember me, O my God, for good****"* (**Nehemiah 13:30-31**).

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