

## Nehemiah 13:10-14

### Forsaking the House of God

- Last wk: After 12 yrs as governor, Nehemiah returned to Artaxerxes. Cat away, mice ... Eliashib → Tobiah, *double crime*; Nehemiah returns and...
  - Challenge to us: any righteous anger bubbling in there?
  - This wk: right on the heels, v10, “I also realized” or “I also discovered...”
- **Pray**. I pray that zeal for Your house would eat us up! Make us a faithful people.
- **v10**, The problem is ***discovered***.
  - Having thrown Tobiah the Ammonite’s household goods out of temple storeroom, Nehemiah *makes another unwelcome discovery*.
    - Not normal number of people working in the temple. *Scaled down work force*.
    - Speculation: notices, asks, “Levites, singers gone back to farms outside Jerus...”
  - Ch 10, entered into covenant → bring firstfruits/tithes to provide for priests/Levites.
    - Ch 11, Jerusalem: priests (1,192); Levites (456) → *Levites/singers/gatekeepers*.
    - Ch 12, dedicate the wall, seek out Levites from all their places, 12:29, “for the singers had built themselves villages all around Jerusalem.” → **2 large choirs**.
  - **12:44**. Well served. *Late chapters filled with activities of Levites*. Faithfully doing.
    - Favorite: Ch 8, Ezra reads, v7, Levites “helped the people to understand the Law”, v8, “they gave the sense, and helped them to understand the reading.”
    - Our text today is a ***partial unraveling*** of this. Why partial?
      - Sequence: either priests/Levites, or priests, Levites/singers/gatekeepers.
      - Our text says Levites and singers → gone back to fields.  
No mention of ***priests, gatekeepers***. *I am arguing they are still on job*.
- **v11**, Nehemiah ***responds***. We know Nehemiah as a man of action, so he is!

- He rebukes the leaders, *who had not done their duty*, gathers Levites/singers and *puts them back on the job*.
- I see this so clearly connected with last week's text.
  - Eliashib the high priest takes holy space in temple → Tobiah the Ammonite.
  - By removing provisions, declared "I don't value this!" *Then others act likewise*.
  - But Nehemiah is not going to let them deflect blame. ***It was their duty, failed***.
- Look at what says: "Why is the house of God forsaken?"
  - Do you think the rulers *immediately accepted that analysis?* I don't... Shocked!
  - Jeremiah 17:9, "The heart is deceitful above all things, and desperately wicked; who can know it?"
  - I think: "At least priests, gatekeepers... Sacrifices happening... Can't afford..."
    - Reality: just what entered into a "sure covenant" not to do! Nehemiah 10:39, "For the children of Israel and the children of Levi shall bring the offering of the grain, of the new wine and the oil, to the storerooms where the articles of the sanctuary are, where the priests who minister and the gatekeepers ***and the singers are***; and *we will not neglect the house of our God*."
    - My guess is that the *impact was not immediately felt*. Can limp along, BUT.
  - Brothers/sisters: we are just like this! *Make compromises, justify in our minds*.
- Praise God for Nehemiah, who continues to be the one → ***absolute moral clarity***, and who ***fears God enough*** to *act* and *set things right!* Increase his tribe!
- **v12-13**, The ***results***. Broad repentance. Going one way (wrong), turn around, return...
  - "All Judah" brings the tithe to the storehouse. Nehemiah appoints 4 men – priest, scribe, Levite, and an assistant (Lit "the hand of") – all known → proven, faithful.
    - Collect, account for, distribute to their brethren.
    - What Nehemiah does. Appoints faithful men. **7:1-3**. Knows, trusts → faithful.

- What all godly leaders **must do**. Acts 6:3, "...brethren, seek out from among you seven men of good reputation, full of the Holy Spirit and wisdom, whom we may appoint over this business." 2 Timothy 2:2, "And the things that you have heard from me among many witnesses, commit these to faithful men who will be able to teach others also."
  - When the Lord's people need to fill positions of trust, look for **faithfulness first**, other things like gifting next.
- Malachi, shortly before Ezra or during the time of Nehemiah, **3:8-12**.
  - Again, self-deception. Robbing God but deny it? Can't see it...
  - This was the reality, this was what was being overturned and set back in order.
  - What see → related to conference. How so? Eliashib → rulers → all Judah.
    - 1 Corinthians 5:6b-7a, "...Do you not know that a little leaven leavens the whole lump? 7 Therefore purge out the old leaven..."
    - This is why we can't afford **not** to deal w sin. In our hearts, lives, brethren.
- **v14**, "**Remember** me, O my God!"
  - Book of Nehemiah: "Remember me" 4x (3 in this ch); "Remember enemies" 2x.
  - Asking "Where is Jesus in text?" Here He is! How so? If marks our transgressions...
    - But for those saved by faith, through blood, every act → temple remembered!
    - Consider precious promise, Hebrews 6:10, "For God is not unjust to forget your work and labor of love which you have shown toward His name, in that you have ministered to the saints, and do minister."
- Applications:
  - 1. Partial obedience is **disobedience**. Where are we doing that? Attack half-measur.
  - 2. Leaders of families: Where have we, by our actions, declared "I don't value this?"
  - 3. Does your giving represent obedience to and honor for the Lord?
  - 4. Should you be called on to fill a position of trust among the Lord's people?
  - 5. Will God remember your good deeds, or wipe them out?