

Nehemiah 11-12 – Thursday, November 2nd, 2017

Nehemiah 11 -- 1 Now the leaders of the people dwelt at Jerusalem; the rest of the people cast lots to bring one out of ten to dwell in Jerusalem, the holy city, and nine-tenths were to dwell in other cities. 2 And the people blessed all the men who willingly offered themselves to dwell at Jerusalem.

- The chapter begins by telling us about all those who willingly gave up their comfortable lives in Persia to relocate to Jerusalem.
- This because the numbers of those already there was dangerously low in the sense that they were vulnerable to enemy attack.
- It's interesting to note how that all of those who willingly offered themselves to relocate to Jerusalem were blessed as a result.

Mark 10:29–30 (NKJV) — 29 So Jesus answered and said, “Assuredly, I say to you, there is no one who has left house or brothers or sisters or father or mother or wife or children or lands, for My sake and the gospel’s, 30 who shall not receive a hundredfold now in this time—houses and brothers and sisters and mothers and children and lands, with persecutions—and in the age to come, eternal life.

3 These are the heads of the province who dwelt in Jerusalem. (But in the cities of Judah everyone dwelt in his own possession in their cities—Israelites, priests, Levites, Nethinim, and descendants of Solomon’s servants.) 4 Also in Jerusalem dwelt some of the children of Judah and of the children of Benjamin. The children of Judah: Athaiah the son of Uziah, the son of Zechariah, the son of Amariah, the son of Shephatiah, the son of Mahalalel, of the children of Perez; 5 and Maaseiah the son of Baruch, the son of Col-Hozeh, the son of Hazaiah, the son of Adaiiah, the son of Joiarib, the son of Zechariah, the son of Shiloni. 6 All the sons of Perez who dwelt at Jerusalem were **four hundred and sixty-eight valiant men**. 7 And these are the sons of Benjamin: Sallu the son of Meshullam, the son of Joed, the son of Pedaiiah, the son of Kolaiah, the son of Maaseiah, the son of Ithiel, the son of Jeshaiiah; 8 and after him Gabbai and Sallai, **nine hundred and twenty-eight**. 9 Joel the son of Zichri was their overseer, and Judah the son of Senuah was second over the city. 10 Of the priests: Jedaiah the son of Joiarib, and Jachin; 11 Seraiah the son of Hilkiah, the son of Meshullam, the son of Zadok, the son of Meraioth, the son of Ahitub, was the leader of the house of God. 12 Their brethren who did the work of the house were **eight hundred and twenty-two**; and Adaiiah the son of Jeroham, the son of Pelaliah, the son of Amzi, the son of Zechariah, the son of Pashhur, the son of Malchijah, 13 and his brethren, heads of the fathers’ houses, were **two hundred and forty-two**; and Amashai the son of Azarel, the son of Ahzai, the son of Meshillemoth, the son of Immer, 14 and their brethren, mighty men of valor, were **one hundred and twenty-eight**. Their overseer was Zabdiel the son of one of the great men. 15 Also of the Levites: Shemaiah the son of Hasshub, the son of Azrikam, the son of Hashabiah, the son of Bunni; 16 Shabbethai and Jozabad, of the heads of the Levites, had the oversight of the business outside of the house of God; 17 Mattaniah the son of Micha, the son of Zabdi, the son of Asaph, the leader who began the thanksgiving with prayer; Bakbukiah, the second among his brethren; and Abda the son of Shammua, the son of Galal, the son of Jeduthun. 18 All the Levites in the holy city were **two hundred and eighty-four**. 19 Moreover the gatekeepers, Akkub, Talmon, and their brethren who kept the gates, were **one hundred and seventy-two**. 20 And the rest of Israel, of the priests and Levites, were in all the cities of Judah, everyone in his inheritance. 21 But the Nethinim dwelt in Ophel. And Ziha and Gishpa were over the Nethinim. 22 Also the overseer 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 in charge of the service of the house of God. 23 For it was the king’s command concerning them that a certain portion should be for the singers, a quota day by day. 24 Pethahiah the son of Meshezabel, of the children of Zerah the son of Judah, was the king’s deputy in all matters concerning the people.

- Here we’re provided the list of names along with total numbers and a delineation of tribes, gatekeepers, Levite’s and singers.
- As we saw in the previous chapter God takes notice and wants us to also take note of those willing to lay everything on the line.
- So too is this true for us, God takes notice of that which we’re willing to do, laying our lives on the line in total surrender to Him.

Luke 9:23–24 (NKJV) — 23 Then He said to them all, “If anyone desires to come after Me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross daily, and follow Me. 24 For whoever desires to save his life will lose it, but whoever loses his life for My sake will save it.

It was the martyred missionary Jim Elliot who famously said, “He is no fool who gives what he cannot keep to gain that which he cannot lose.” He also perhaps less famously said, “Wherever you are - be all there.”

25 And as for the villages with their fields, some of the children of Judah dwelt in Kirjath Arba and its villages, Dibon and its villages, Jekabzeel and its villages; 26 in Jeshua, Moladah, Beth Pelet, 27 Hazar Shual, and Beersheba and its villages; 28 in Ziklag and Meconah and its villages; 29 in En Rimmon, Zorah, Jarmuth, 30 Zanoah, Adullam, and their villages; in Lachish and its fields; in Azekah and its villages. They dwelt from Beersheba to the Valley of Hinnom. 31 Also the children of Benjamin from Geba dwelt in Michmash, Aija, and Bethel, and their villages; 32 in Anathoth, Nob, Ananiah; 33 in Hazor, Ramah, Gittaim; 34 in Hadid, Zeboim, Neballat; 35 in Lod, Ono, and the Valley of Craftsmen. 36 Some of the Judean divisions of Levites were in Benjamin.

- The chapter ends with yet another listing, this time it’s concerning all the villages with their fields outside the city of Jerusalem.
- One commentator suggested that these were the ones who were unwilling to move into Jerusalem, choosing to do this instead.
- While there may be some merit to this thought, the fact remains; they were still willing to give up their lives in order to do this.

- The first twenty-six verses of this chapter is another list, which has those returning to Jerusalem with Zerubbabel and Joshua.
- It's important to note that they had returned to Jerusalem some 90-years earlier, and their families were now established there.
- To me, this speaks to the importance of making godly decisions when it comes to the ramifications for the generations to follow.

Nehemiah 12 -- 1 Now these are the priests and the Levites who came up with Zerubbabel the son of Shealtiel, and Jeshua: Seraiah, Jeremiah, Ezra, 2 Amariah, Malluch, Hattush, 3 Shechaniah, Rehum, Meremoth, 4 Iddo, Ginnethoi, Abijah, 5 Mijamin, Maadiah, Bilgah, 6 Shemaiah, Joiarib, Jedaiah, 7 Sallu, Amok, Hilkiyah, and Jedaiah. These were the heads of the priests and their brethren in the days of Jeshua. 8 Moreover the Levites were Jeshua, Binnui, Kadmiel, Sherebiah, Judah, and Mattaniah who led the thanksgiving psalms, he and his brethren. 9 Also Bakbukiah and Unni, their brethren, stood across from them in their duties. 10 Jeshua begot Joiakim, Joiakim begot Eliashib, Eliashib begot Joiada, 11 Joiada begot Jonathan, and Jonathan begot Jaddua. 12 Now in the days of Joiakim, the priests, the heads of the fathers' houses were: of Seraiah, Meraiah; of Jeremiah, Hananiah; 13 of Ezra, Meshullam; of Amariah, Jehohanan; 14 of Melichu, Jonathan; of Shebaniah, Joseph; 15 of Harim, Adna; of Meraioth, Helkai; 16 of Iddo, Zechariah; of Ginnethon, Meshullam; 17 of Abijah, Zichri; the son of Minjamin; of Moadiah, Piltai; 18 of Bilgah, Shammua; of Shemaiah, Jehonathan; 19 of Joiarib, Mattenai; of Jedaiah, Uzzi; 20 of Sallai, Kallai; of Amok, Eber; 21 of Hilkiyah, Hashabiah; and of Jedaiah, Nethanel. 22 During the reign of Darius the Persian, a record was also kept of the Levites and priests who had been heads of their fathers' houses in the days of Eliashib, Joiada, Johanan, and Jaddua. 23 The sons of Levi, the heads of the fathers' houses until the days of Johanan the son of Eliashib, were written in the book of the chronicles. 24 And the heads of the Levites were Hashabiah, Sherebiah, and Jeshua the son of Kadmiel, with their brothers across from them, to praise and give thanks, group alternating with group, according to the command of David the man of God. 25 Mattaniah, Bakbukiah, Obadiah, Meshullam, Talmon, and Akkub were gatekeepers keeping the watch at the storerooms of the gates. 26 These lived 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.

27 Now at the dedication of the wall of Jerusalem they sought out the Levites in all their places, to bring them to Jerusalem to celebrate the dedication with gladness, both with thanksgivings and singing, with cymbals and stringed instruments and harps. 28 And the sons of the singers gathered together from the countryside around Jerusalem, from the villages of the Netophathites, 29 from the house of Gilgal, and from the fields of Geba and Azmaveth; for the singers had built themselves villages all around Jerusalem.

- This is interesting for a number of reasons not the least of which is that the Levites were the ones to lead the people in worship.
- Another reason this is interesting is because of all the instruments, which as one noted that there are 22 mentioned in scripture.
- The reason I point this out is because it speaks to the paramount importance of praise and worship in the life of God's people.

30 Then the priests and Levites purified themselves, and purified the people, the gates, and the wall.

- I don't know if the importance of the principle woven into the fabric of this verse can ever be overstated related to ones purity.
- Notice the priests and the Levites purified themselves first, before they could ever be the instruments in purifying the people.
- In other words, we cannot effectively lead God's people, especially in worship, if we are not walking in purity before the Lord.

Psalm 24:3-5 (NKJV) — 3 Who may ascend into the hill of the LORD? Or who may stand in His holy place? 4 He who has clean hands and a pure heart, Who has not lifted up his soul to an idol, Nor sworn deceitfully. 5 He shall receive blessing from the LORD, And righteousness from the God of his salvation.

1 John 1:9 - If we confess our sins, He is faithful and just to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness.

31 So I brought the leaders of Judah up on the wall, and appointed two large thanksgiving choirs. One went to the right hand on the wall toward the Refuse Gate. 32 After them went Hoshai and half of the leaders of Judah, 33 and Azariah, Ezra, Meshullam, 34 Judah, Benjamin, Shemaiah, Jeremiah, 35 and some of the priests' sons with trumpets—Zechariah the son of Jonathan, the son of Shemaiah, the son of Mattaniah, the son of Michaiah, the son of Zaccur, the son of Asaph, 36 and his brethren, Shemaiah, Azarel, Milalai, Gilalai, Maai, Nethanel, Judah, and Hanani, with the musical instruments of David the man of God. And Ezra the scribe went before them. 37 By the Fountain Gate, in front of them, they went up the stairs of the City of David, on the stairway of the wall, beyond the house of David, as far as the Water Gate eastward. 38 The other thanksgiving choir went the opposite way, and I was behind them with half of the people on the wall, going past the Tower of the Ovens as far as the Broad Wall, 39 and above the Gate of Ephraim, above the Old Gate, above the Fish Gate, the Tower of Hananel, the Tower of the Hundred, as far as the Sheep Gate; and they stopped by the Gate of the Prison. 40 So the two thanksgiving choirs stood in the house of God, likewise I and the half of the rulers with me; 41 and the priests, Eliakim, Maaseiah, Minjamin, Michaiah, Elioenai, Zechariah, and Hananiah, with trumpets; 42 also Maaseiah, Shemaiah, Eleazar, Uzzi, Jehohanan, Malchijah, Elam, and Ezer. The singers sang loudly with Jezrahiah the director. 43 Also that day they offered great sacrifices, and rejoiced, for God had made them rejoice with great joy; the women and the children also rejoiced, so that the joy of Jerusalem was heard afar off.

- Now this is what I call a worship service. Would to God that our praise and worship would be so joyful it's heard from afar off.

44 And at the same time some were appointed over the rooms of the storehouse for the offerings, the firstfruits, and the tithes, to gather into them from the fields of the cities the portions specified by the Law for the priests and Levites; for Judah rejoiced over the priests and Levites who ministered. 45 Both the singers and the gatekeepers kept the charge of their God and the charge of the purification, according to the command of David and Solomon his son. 46 For in the days of David and Asaph of old there were chiefs of the singers, and songs of praise and thanksgiving to God. 47 In the days of Zerubbabel and in the days of Nehemiah all Israel gave the portions for the singers and the gatekeepers, a portion for each day. They also consecrated holy things for the Levites, and the Levites consecrated them for the children of Aaron.

- The chapter ends with the continued expression of worship, which is their bringing the tithes and offerings into the storehouse.