

Nehemiah Chapter 10

- Chapter 9 ends with the children of Israel wanting to enter into a covenant with the Lord, once again promising to serve and obey him.
 - Chapter 10 begins with a listing of those leaders, princes, Levites, and priests who are recorded as committing to this new or renewed covenant with the Lord.
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V: 1-27 The list starts of with Nehemiah the “Tirshatha” their title for the Governor. As this list of names is presented is doesn’t mean that much to us, just a list of names.

- Again these listing of names attest to the fact that these were real men, living out real lives, making history.
- If nothing else these men, these 24 priests, 16 Levites, and 44 chiefs / leaders go down in history as having committed their ways to the Lord. That’s not a bad list to be on!

V: 28 The rest of the people, the general population - all who had separated / consecrated themselves, “everyone having knowledge, and having understanding;

- Joined in on the agreement.

V: 29 They “clave” to their brethren, their nobles / leaders - they were united as one.

- The first result of revival is unification of the brethren.

Jesus said:

John 13:35 “By this shall all men know that ye are my disciples, if ye have love one to another.”

- Love is the proof. A person can claim to be righteous, spiritual, insightful, and prophetic, but if there’s not love, that person is simply blowing hot air, and according to **1 Corinthians 13:1–3** they are annoying!
- Entering into a curse? And into an oath? To walk in God’s law.
- The oath is that they are promising to walk in obedience to God’s Word, specifically the Law. We know that promising to keep the law in a certain sense is foolish - because no man can keep the Law.

James 2:10 “For whosoever shall keep the whole law, and yet offend in one point he is guilty of all.”

- When the children of Israel came into the promised land at one point they were brought to the city of Shechem. (Valley)

Deuteronomy 27:11-13 “¹¹And Moses charged the people the same day, saying, ¹²These shall stand upon mount Gerizim to bless the people, when ye are come over Jordan; Simeon, and Levi, and Judah, and Issachar, and Joseph, and Benjamin: ¹³And these shall stand upon mount Ebal to curse; Reuben, Gad, and Asher, and Zebulun, Dan, and Naphtali.”

- The two groups on their respective mountains: Joshua read the Law before the people. As he read the blessings that would happen when the people were obedient to the Word of God - then the group on Mt. Gerizim would shout out “blessed is the man who obeys the voice of the Lord.”
- But when Joshua would read the curses that would come upon those that were disobedient to the Word of God then the group on Mt. Ebal would yell out “Cursed is that man!”

Joshua 8 They actually did this.

- So as the Law was read the blessings and the cursings would be pronounced back and forth.

Jesus declared:

Luke 11:28 “... blessed are they that hear the Word of God, and keep it.”

James 1:25 “But whoso looketh into the perfect law of liberty, and continueth therein, he being not a forgetful hearer, but a doer of the work, this man shall be blessed in his deed.”

- The 2nd result of revival is a renewed commitment to the Word of God. They did that, they committed to being obedient to the Word of God, taking action, doing the Word of God:

1 John 3:18 “My little children, let us not love in word, neither in tongue; but in deed and in truth.”

- This doesn't just mean loving other's like loving other people; but it points to loving God in truth through our actions.

V: 30 The 3rd result of revival is sanctification. Being in the world, but not of the world, willing to be separate from the world, sanctified unto God.

- Practicalities: Now we get into some specifics which have been a weakness to them in the past: specifically that they will not give their daughters in marriage to

the people / non-Jews around them, nor will they take of their daughters for their sons in marriage.

- They separated themselves, they sanctified themselves, now they are in part defining what that means.

Deuteronomy 7:3-4 “³Neither shalt thou make marriages with them; thy daughter thou shalt not give unto his son, nor his daughter shalt thou take unto thy son. ⁴For they will turn away thy son from following Me, that they may serve other gods: so will the anger of the Lord be kindled against you and destroy thee suddenly.”

The New Testament equivalent of this is:

2 Corinthians 6:14-18 “¹⁴Be ye not unequally yoked with unbelievers: for what fellowship hath righteousness with unrighteousness? And what communion hath light with darkness? ¹⁵And what concord hath Christ with Belial? Or what part hath he that believeth with an infidel? ¹⁶And what agreement hath the temple of God with idols? For ye are the temple of the living God; as God hath said, I will dwell in them, and walk in them; and I will be their God, and they shall be My people. ¹⁷Wherefore come out from among them, and be ye separate, saith the Lord, and touch not the unclean thing; and I will receive you, ¹⁸and will be a Father unto you, and ye shall be my sons and daughters, saith the Lord Almighty.”

- Sanctification is total devotion to God, no matter what the cost. When a man and woman get married, they separate themselves from all other possible mates and give themselves completely to each other. It is a total commitment motivated by love. It is a balanced decision - we separate from others to the one who is to be our life's mate, thus we separate ourselves to God.
- They separated from the people around them, but they were united, they cleaved to their brethren in promising to obey the Word of God. Separation that ignores God or other believers is isolation, and this will eventually lead to sin.

V: 31 They committed themselves to keeping the Sabbath, which in part meant not purchasing food or supplies from those that sold them on the Sabbath.

- The non-Jews in the area had no restrictions on business or activities based on the Sabbath, it didn't apply to them.
- The Sabbath also meant that the land got a rest every 7 years (which was part of why they were in captivity for 70 years, 700 years worth of Sabbaths), it also meant that they were to forgive all debts every 7 years.
- Some of these were issues that they had dealt with more recently in their history, marrying non-Jewish women and exacting usury from their brethren.

V: 32-33 The 4th result of revival is a renewed determination to worship God.

- They committed to paying their Temple tax, which apparently they had not been.

Exodus 30:13-16 “¹³This they shall give, every one that passeth among them that are numbered, half a shekel after the shekel of the sanctuary: (a shekel is twenty gerahs) an half shekel shall be the offering of the Lord. ¹⁴Every one that passeth among them that are numbered, from twenty years old and above, shall give an offering unto the Lord. ¹⁵The rich shall not give more, and the poor shall not give less than half a shekel, when they give an offering unto the Lord, to make an atonement for your souls. ¹⁶And thou shalt take the atonement money of the children of Israel, and shalt appoint it for the service of the tabernacle of the congregation; that it may be a memorial unto the children of Israel before the Lord, to make an atonement for your souls.”

- Did God need this money? The Temple tax was a reminder to the people that God had redeemed them and paid the price to set them free, and that they belonged to Him.
- This Temple tax was used to support the ministry of the Temple, to ensure that the needed things would be provided - the shewbread, the meat offerings, and the burnt offerings and sin offerings that were all prescribed for specific times.

V: 34 They cast lots to determine who would bring the needed wood for the various burnt offerings - scheduled through the year to make sure there was a steady supply to conduct the sacrifices.

- The wood itself was considered an offering.

1 Corinthians 15:58 “Therefore, my beloved brethren, be ye steadfast, unmoveable, always abounding in the work of the Lord, forasmuch as ye know that your labour is not in vain in the Lord.”

- I believe in the same sense that anything given to the Lord, to facilitate His will, to please Him is never given in vain - the Lord knows and He remembers.

V: 35-37 Besides the minimal support of the Temple tax, there were the tithes and offerings, the firstfruits - the first, the best of our increase both of our ground, and trees, orchards, sons, vines, flocks cattle, firstfruits, as opposed to the left overs.

- The firstfruits of their agriculture: Typically they've gone through the winter months living on what you've harvested in the previous year. Spring comes around and it's time to start tilling the land, planting, wheat, corn, barley - watering - taking care of the vines, or the orchards.

- It all takes time, and during that whole time looking forward to the harvest. But the first part, the part you're looking forward to the most - that is the "first fruit" which is to be given to the Lord.
- There's the issue of self control, saving it for the Lord, there's the issue of trust & faith, knowing that the Lord will provide enough for both the sacrifice to the Lord, and having enough left over for your needs. The issue of always putting God first in our lives.

Tithe = 1/10th or 10% it's the "first tenth..."

Genesis 14:17-20 Melchizedek king of Salem came out to meet Abraham after his victory over Chedorlaomer and the 5 kings of the plains. Melchizedek brought out bread and wine, the elements of communion. And after blessing Abraham (the greater always blesses the lesser) - then Abraham gave Melchizedek "tithes of all."

- In our text this morning we see that the children of Israel are seeking to honor God, they're re-committing their lives to being obedient to His Word and having a right relationship with God - and part of that for them, and for us involves giving God their firstfruits and tithing.

Malachi 3:8-10 "8Will a man rob God? Yet ye have robbed Me. But ye say, wherein have we robbed Thee? In tithes and offerings. 9Ye are cursed with a curse: for ye have robbed Me, even this whole nation. 10Bring ye all the tithes into the storehouse, that there may be meat in mine house, and prove me now herewith, saith the Lord of hosts, if I will not open you the windows of heaven, and pour you out a blessing, that there shall not be room enough to receive it."

Proverbs 3:9-10 "9Honor the Lord with thy substance, and with the firstfruits of all thine increase: 10So shall thy barns be filled with plenty, and thy presses shall burst out with new wine."

- Giving to God is an act of worship. We are to give and to worship Him joyfully!

2 Corinthians 9:7 "Every man according as he purposeth in his heart, so let him give; not grudgingly, or of necessity: for God loveth a cheerful giver."

- The biggest issue in all of this isn't money, or the amount, the biggest issue is that of the heart.

Jesus said:

Matthew 6:21 "For where your treasure is, there will your heart be also."

1 Timothy 6:17-19 "17Charge them that are rich in this world, that they be not high minded, nor trust in uncertain riches, but in the living God, who giveth us richly all

things to enjoy; ¹⁸That they do good, that they be rich in good works, ready to distribute, willing to communicate; ¹⁹Laying up in store for themselves a good foundation against the time to come, that they may lay hold on eternal life.”

1 Corinthians 16:1-2 “¹Now concerning the collection for the saints, as I have given order to the churches of Galatia, even so do ye. ²Upon the first day of the week let every one of you lay by him in store, as God has prospered him, that there be no gatherings when I come.”

- **Tithing can be a great blessing, but those who tithe need to avoid 3 dangers.**
 1. Giving with the wrong motive, out of duty, fear, or greed. (Now God has to bless me...)
 2. Thinking that you can do whatever they please with the remainder - it all belongs to God, we are just stewards.
 3. Giving only the “tithe” and neglecting other love offerings to the Lord.
- Bear in mind that they brought all of this up because they wanted to be right with God, they wanted to be obedient - but it is also a good lesson for us.

V: 38 The priests that received of the tithes to live on and minister to their families were to “**tithe of the tithes,**” tithing of what they had received.

- Our fellowship does the same thing. We tithe of our income back to other ministries, in particular we as a fellowship tithe to “The Shepherd’s Light” a para church ministry of CC Tel Aviv that ministers to the homeless in Israel. We support “Chosen People Ministries” - in fact we will be having one of their representatives come and speak once again here in November. We also use part of our church tithe to help support KWLK as an outreach into our community. So as a fellowship we tithe in various ways.

V: 39 10% is a basic starting point, everyone should tithe, mention is also made of “offerings” which is above or apart from tithing.

- They were committed to “**not forsaking the house of God.**” Seeing to it that the needs were met.
- **If we are walking rightly with the Lord then we will give to the Lord, seeking to honor and love God, and in the process to support the ministry of the church where God has put us.**
- They are trying to walk rightly with the Lord:

Psalm 51:10-12 “¹⁰Create in me a clean heart, O God; and renew a right spirit within me. ¹¹Cast me not away from thy presence; and take not thy holy spirit from me. ¹²Restore unto me the joy of thy salvation; and uphold me with thy free spirit.”