

Nehemiah Chapters 11-12

I. Jesus attracted people who knew they needed Grace. Luke 15:1-10.

A. Joy in heaven over one repentant sinner...God is in the restoration/salvation business!

II. Why? Because we are such failures!

- A. The storyline of the Old Testament reveals God's faithfulness in spite of consistent human failure. He keeps restoring his sinning people.
- B. Ever since the golden calf incident at Sinai (Ex.32) Israel has tended to faithlessness and idolatry. (Acts 7. Stephen's indictment of Jewish history)
- C. Against all odds, God did fulfill his promise that Israel would have land, people, and an international presence. This came under David and the early Solomon years. (1K1-10)
- D. But Solomon fell into idolatry and the subsequent history of Israel revealed that, even though they promised to be faithful, they could not and would not keep the Mosaic Covenant (outlined in Deuteronomy).
- E. As YHWH had warned them (Deut. 28-32), they experienced the greatest disciplinary action recorded in the Bible...The Babylonian Exile (586-516 BC)

III. The Exile (Babylonian Captivity) is the great discipline of the OT.

A. **The reason for the Exile: Breaking Covenant with YHWH for 350 years. (Deut.28-32) See all the writing prophets.**

- 1. Blatant Idolatry.
- 2. Ignoring Sabbath. (70 sabbath years never kept 2 Chr 36:21)
- 3. Social Injustice.
- 4. Superstitious Faith: (ceremonialism)
- 5. No real loyalty to the Lord's instructions (Mk.12:28-31; Matt.23)

B. **The extent of the Exile: 70 years (Jer.29:10-11; 2 Chr 36:21)**

- 1. The beginning of the Exile. 586 BC
 - a) An early "deportation" of some high-quality young people. 605 BC
 - (1) Daniel and his friends were taken.
 - b) Another limited deportation in 597 BC.
 - (1) Ezekiel and a large percentage of Judah were taken
 - c) Nebuchadnezzar destroyed Jerusalem and the Temple. **586 BC**
- 2. The end of the Exile: 70 years later.
 - a) 538 BC. Cyrus decree to go home. Ezra 1:1.
 - (1) Though many stayed in Babylon. Esther, Mordechai
 - b) **516 BC.** The 2nd Temple is dedicated!

C. **Ezra-Nehemiah is the record of restoration following discipline.**

1. **This is the last chapter of the story of the Old Testament.**

2. **Three "returns" from the Captivity. 538-444 BC**

- a) 538 BC, led by Sheshbazzar. Put down first roots. About 50,000 people (Ezra 2:64-65)
 - (1) Started the temple, quit, then re-started and finished it around in 515BC.
 - (2) Haggai and Zechariah served in this time (c.520)
 - (3) Then, some 80 years later...
- b) 458 BC, led by Ezra. A theological foundation. (about 5,000 people)
 - (1) They supplied more to the temple and set the foundation theologically.
 - (2) But still no wall, no actual permanent identity in the land.
 - (3) Then 13 years later...
- c) 444 BC, led by Nehemiah. A structural and material security.
 - (1) Together with Ezra shaped the actual personality of the nation.
 - (2) Malachi served during this period

D. The Temple has been rebuilt under Zerubbabel and Joshua. 520-515 BC

1. 520 BC Temple started (Haggai, Zechariah)
2. 516-15 BC Temple completed. Ezra 6:13-22

E. The Wall has been rebuilt under Nehemiah. 6:15-19

1. Nehemiah came in 445 and took 52 days to complete the wall (6:15)
2. Walls, Foundations, Gates.

F. The Covenant has been re-affirmed under Ezra and Nehemiah. Neh. 8-10

1. Spiritual Renewal through the Covenant Word. Ch.8
 - a) Ch 8. Ezra reads the Law and explains it.
 - b) Ch 9. The prayer of repentance.
(1) *Revival was on! People responded emotionally. 9*
 - c) Ch 10. The people renew the covenant. Walk in God's Torah. **10:29**
 - (1) Purity in marriage. 10:30 (no pagan marriages)
 - (2) Sabbath keeping. 10:30-31
 - (3) Tithing, giving to the ministry. 10:32-39

IV. Now, picking up from chapter 7. Chapter 11:1-12:47

A. They need to populate the city of Jerusalem. 6:15-7:6

1. One in ten conscripted to live in Jerusalem. 1-2
2. Specific names and genealogical records. 3-24
 - a) Chiefs of the provinces, 3-6
 - (1) 468 valiant men.
 - b) Leaders in the city. 7-9
 - c) Priest/warriors. 10-14.
 - (1) 128 Mighty men of valor. 14
 - d) Levites. 284. 15-18
 - e) Gatekeepers. 172
 - f) Singers. 22-24

B. And they need to dedicate the Wall. 12:27-47

1. Joyful Praise. Music and singing are always present in worship. 27-30
 - a) Praise/Worship, vocal and with instruments. Ps.33:1-3; Eph.5:18-21
2. Two great choirs. 12:31-43
3. Praise and Worship restored in the Temple. 44-47

V. Why this Joy? _____.

A. _____ Luke 15:7; Rom.8:31-39

B. _____ Phil.2:12-13; Eph.2:8-10

C. _____ . Lk.19:9-10