

NEHEMIAH 13:14, 22 ,28, 31 – Remember Me, O My God!

4/13/19 Sat Morn Prayer – P. Twente, 714 425-9221; ptwente@gmail.com

BREATHE ON ME, BREATH OF GOD – Edward Hatch – York College Concert

*Breathe on me, Breath of God, Fill me with life anew, That I may love what Thou dost love, And do what Thou wouldst do.
Breathe on me, Breath of God, Until my heart is pure, Until with Thee I will one will, To do and to endure.
Breathe on me, Breath of God, Till I am wholly Thine, Until this earthly part of me Glows with Thy fire divine.
Breathe on me, Breath of God, So shall I never die, But live with Thee the perfect life Of Thine eternity.*

Nehemiah Chapter 13 – Nehemiah's Final Reforms

There is a time break of about 12 years between chapters 12 and 13. **During his absence, the people returned to their former ways, led by the high priest Eliashib** (Neh_13:4-5). **Such a defection called for the needed reforms of verses Neh_13:10-30.** It was during Nehemiah's absence that Malachi also wrote his prophetic book indicting both priests and people for their sinful defection. Possibly having heard of Eliashib's evil, Nehemiah returned to Jerusalem (Neh_13:4-7). Nehemiah 13 was the last portion of the OT to be written. **We see the almost unbelievable failure of those who had so recently signed a covenant in committing the same sins that they had committed not to do!** We recognize that **if we could be saved by our own promises, by our own commitment to Jesus, then His death would have been unnecessary. We aren't saved by some vow we make, or some leaf we turn over, but by trusting in who Jesus is, and what He has done to save us.**

Nehemiah Chapter 13 – Nehemiah's Four Prayers:

Neh 13:4-13 Now before this, Eliashib the priest, having authority over the storerooms of the house of our God, was allied with Tobiah. [5] And he had prepared for him a large room, where previously they had stored the grain offerings, the frankincense, the articles, the tithes of grain, the new wine and oil, which were commanded to be given to the Levites and singers and gatekeepers, and the offerings for the priests. [6] But during all this I was not in Jerusalem, for in the thirty-second year of Artaxerxes king of Babylon I had returned to the king. Then after certain days I obtained leave from the king, [7] and I came to Jerusalem and **discovered the evil that Eliashib had done for Tobiah, in preparing a room for him in the courts of the house of God.** [8] And it grieved me bitterly; therefore I threw all the household goods of Tobiah out of the room. [9] Then I commanded them to cleanse the rooms; and I brought back into them the articles of the house of God, with the grain offering and the frankincense. [10] **I also realized that the portions for the Levites had not been given them; for each of the Levites and the singers who did the work had gone back to his field.** [11] **So I contended 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 all Judah brought the tithe of the grain and the new wine and the oil to the storehouse. [13] And I appointed as treasurers over the storehouse 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 considered faithful, and their task was to distribute to their brethren.

Neh 13:14 **Remember me, O my God, concerning this, and do not wipe out my good deeds that I have done for the house of my God, and for its services!**

- **Remember me, O my God** What a man of prayer we see here. Three time, he repeats, once after each rebuke.
- We his pattern of prayer and action. Here he reflects with comfort and much satisfaction upon what he had done for the house of God and the offices thereof; it pleased him to think that he might help reform what was amiss.
- Note and practice how Nehemiah turned to the Lord. In humility he prays, **Remember me**, not **Reward me!**
- **Do not wipe out my good deeds**, not **Publish them, Record them.** Yet he was rewarded and his good deeds were recorded; for God does more than we are able to ask. **Nehemiah is also intimating, I'm not caring about what any man thinks of me, although I'm making many look bad, just what You think of me!!!**

Neh 13:15-21 In those days I saw people in Judah treading wine presses on the Sabbath, and bringing in sheaves, and loading donkeys with wine, grapes, figs, and all kinds of burdens, which they brought into Jerusalem on the Sabbath day. And I warned them about the day on which they were selling provisions. [16] Men of Tyre dwelt there also, who brought in fish and all kinds of goods, and sold them on the Sabbath to the children of Judah, and in Jerusalem. [17] Then I contended with the nobles of Judah, and said to them, "What evil thing is this that you do, by which you profane the Sabbath day? [18] Did not your fathers do thus, and did not our God bring all this disaster on us and on this city? Yet you bring added wrath on Israel by profaning the Sabbath." [19] So it was, at the gates of Jerusalem, as it began to be dark before the Sabbath, that I commanded the gates to be shut, and charged that they must not be opened till after the Sabbath. Then I posted some of my servants at the gates, so that no burdens would be brought in on the Sabbath day. [20] Now the merchants and sellers of all kinds of wares lodged outside Jerusalem once or twice. [21] Then I warned them, and said to them, "Why do you spend the night around the wall? If you do so again, I will lay hands on you!" From that time on they came no more on the Sabbath.

Neh 13:22 And I commanded the Levites that they should cleanse themselves, and that they should go and guard the gates, to sanctify the Sabbath day. **Remember me, O my God, concerning this also, and spare me according to the greatness of Your mercy!**

- **...commanded the Levites..** – First, Nehemiah had employed his own servants in the work of keeping the gates.
- He now assigned the duty to the Levites, which properly belonged to them, since the object of the regulation was the due observance of the Sabbath.

- Now again, being a man of constant prayer, he prays again - **Remember me, O my God, concerning this also**, When we have received the gift of God, our hearts seek to respond and we do things for the Lord, serving the Lord.
- Anytime a stand is taken for the Lord, we know there will be resistance from those being effected. Nehemiah must have gotten a strong reaction each time he contended with those involved.
- **We see him again going to prayer! How we need to do this!** Notice he asks the **Lord to remember his works, but to be spared on the greatness of His mercy! Our works are an indication of the genuineness of our faith. Our blessings and salvation are only because of the greatness of His mercy!**

Neh 13:23-28 *In those days I also saw Jews who had married women of Ashdod, Ammon, and Moab. [24] And half of their children spoke the language of Ashdod, and could not speak the language of Judah, but spoke according to the language of one or the other people. [25] So I contended with them and cursed them, struck some of them and pulled out their hair, and made them swear by God, saying, "You shall not give your daughters as wives to their sons, nor take their daughters for your sons or yourselves. [26] Did not Solomon king of Israel sin by these things? Yet among many nations there was no king like him, who was beloved of his God; and God made him king over all Israel. Nevertheless pagan women caused even him to sin. [27] Should we then hear of your doing all this great evil, transgressing against our God by marrying pagan women?" [28] And one of the sons of Joiada, the son of Eliashib the high priest, was a son-in-law of Sanballat the Horonite; therefore I drove him from me.*

Neh 13:29 *Remember them, O my God, because they have defiled the priesthood and the covenant of the priesthood and the Levites.*

- **Remember them, O my God, because they have defiled....!** Again, as Nehemiah did back in chapter **6:14** with Tobiah and Noadiah, Nehemiah gave them over to the Lord, for Him to handle them in their defiling **the priesthood and covenant of the priesthood and the Levites.**
- Another of Nehemiah's 14 prayers recorded in this Book, what a man of prayer! **A great example for us!**

Neh 13:30 Thus I cleansed them of everything pagan. I also assigned duties to the priests and the Levites, each to his service,

Neh 13:31 *and to bringing the wood offering and the firstfruits at appointed times. Remember me, O my God, for good!*

- Even though the people failed miserably in not doing three things: The taking of daughters or giving sons to intermarry with outlandish, foreigners. (**Neh 10:30**), buy and sell on the Sabbath (**Neh 10:31**), and support the work of God with money as He commanded (**Neh 10:32-39**), which things they had agreed in signing the covenant not many years earlier, Nehemiah has a clear conscience. He again prays! **Remember me, O my God:** At the end of it all, Nehemiah knew he did his best to make the people of God strong, safe, and secure. .
- The book closes with three prayers (**Neh 13:22**, **Neh 13:29**, **Neh 13:31**). Nehemiah has done his work, but only God can bless it and keep it going. Nehemiah would one day die, people would forget him. God would never forget.

SUMMARY:

- **During Nehemiah's absence, the people returned to their former ways, led by the high priest Eliashib. Such a defection called for the needed reforms of verses Neh_13:10-30.**
- **We see the almost unbelievable failure of those who had so recently signed a covenant in committing the same sins that they had committed not to do!**
- **We recognize that if we could be saved by our own promises, then Jesus' death would have been noble, but unnecessary. We aren't saved by some vow we make, but by trusting in who Jesus is, and what He has done!**
- **Prayer and confession, important as they are, are no substitutes for obedience.**
- **What about my relationship with men? Nehemiah's actions are demonstrating that he is not caring about what any man thinks of him, although he making many look bad, but just what God thinks!!!**
- **What an example Nehemiah's prayer life and his swift and brave actions are for us! Is there any similarity to that in my prayer life and our actions?**

"Amazing Grace" – Newton – sung by Judy Collins

1. *Amazing grace! How sweet the sound That saved a wretch like me! I once was lost, but now I'm found; Was blind, but now I see.*
2. *'Twas grace that taught my heart to fear, And grace my fears relieved; How precious did that grace appear The hour I first believed.*
3. *Through many dangers, toils and snares, we have already come; 'Twas grace hath brought me safe thus far, And grace will lead us home.*
4. *When we've been there ten thousand years, Bright shining as the sun, We've no less days to sing God's praise Than when we'd first begun. (Repeat verse 1)*

Pray for World Leaders, especially their salvation, including: Xi Jinping – China; Narendra Modi- India; Donald Trump – USA; Joko Widodo - Indonesia; Jair Bolsonaro - Brazil; Arif Alvi - Pakistan; Muhammadu Buhari - Nigeria; Hasina Wazed - Bangladesh; Vladimir Putin- Russia; Lopez Obrador – Mexico; Benjamin Netanyahu – Israel; Angela Merkel – Germany; Theresa May – U.K.; Kim Jong-un – North Korea; Moon Jae-in – South Korea.

Please Note: You may see/download past notes/audio of the Bible Prayer Devotionals by going to: www.ptwente.com