

Establishing His Kingdom (Nehemiah Chapter 7)

Sunday, October 27, 2024

10:30 AM

As we work our way through the book of Nehemiah, each chapter has taught us a different principle of Establishing The Kingdom of God

- Chapter 1 - IGNITING/REIGNITING THE FIRE TO ESTABLISH THE KINGDOM
- Chapter 2 - PROTECTING THE FIRE
- Chapter 3 - TEAMWORK - THE POWER OF UNITY IN THE BODY OF CHRIST
- Chapter 4 - OVERCOMING THE OPPOSITION OF THE ENEMY
- Chapter 5 - INTERNAL TRANSFORMATION
- Chapter 6 - DEFEATING THE TACTICS OF THE ENEMY

We have already discussed two main battlefronts for ESTABLISHING THE KINGDOM OF GOD

- In The World
- In Our Hearts

Nehemiah Chapter 7 introduces us to yet another Battlefront

The Third Battlefront - Guarding The Gates of Our Families

Nehemiah 7

7 After the wall had been rebuilt and I had set the doors in place, the gatekeepers, the musicians and the Levites were appointed. 2 I put in charge of Jerusalem my brother Hanani, along with Hananiah the commander of the citadel, because he was a man of integrity and feared God more than most people do. 3 I said to them, “The gates of Jerusalem are not to be opened until the sun is hot. While the gatekeepers are still on duty, have them shut the doors and bar them. Also appoint residents of Jerusalem as guards, some at their posts and some near their own houses.”

The List of the Exiles Who Returned

4 Now the city was large and spacious, but there were few people in it, and the houses had not yet been rebuilt. 5 So my God put it into my heart to assemble the nobles, the officials and the common people for registration by families. I found the genealogical record of those who had been the first to return. This is what I found written there:

6 These are the people of the province who came up from the captivity of the exiles whom Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon had taken captive (they returned to Jerusalem and Judah, each to his own town, 7 in company with Zerubbabel, Joshua, Nehemiah, Azariah, Raamiah, Nahamani, Mordecai, Bilshan, Mispereth, Bigvai, Nehum and Baanah):

The list of the men of Israel:

8 the descendants of Parosh	2,172
9 of Shephatiah	372
10 of Arah	652
11 of Pahath-Moab (through the line of Jeshua and Joab)	2,818
12 of Elam	1,254
13 of Zattu	845
14 of Zakkai	760
15 of Binnui	648
16 of Bebai	628
17 of Azgad	2,322
18 of Adonikam	667
19 of Bigvai	2,067
20 of Adin	655
21 of Ater (through Hezekiah)	98
22 of Hashum	328
23 of Bezai	324
24 of Hariph	112
25 of Gibeon	95
26 the men of Bethlehem and Netophah	188
27 of Anathoth	128
28 of Beth Azmaveth	42
29 of Kiriath Jearim, Kephirah and Beeroth	743
30 of Ramah and Geba	621
31 of Mikmash	122
32 of Bethel and Ai	123
33 of the other Nebo	52
34 of the other Elam	1,254
35 of Harim	320

36 of Jericho	345	
37 of Lod, Hadid and Ono	721	
38 of Senaah	3,930	
39 The priests:		
the descendants of Jedaiah (through the family of Jeshua)	973	
40 of Immer	1,052	
41 of Pashhur	1,247	
42 of Harim	1,017	
43 The Levites:		
the descendants of Jeshua (through Kadmiel through the line of Hodaviah)		74
44 The musicians:		
the descendants of Asaph	148	
45 The gatekeepers:		
the descendants of		
Shallum, Ater, Talmon, Akkub, Hatita and Shobai	138	
46 The temple servants:		
the descendants of		
Ziha, Hasupha, Tabbaoth,		
47 Keros, Sia, Padon,		
48 Lebana, Hagaba, Shalmal,		
49 Hanan, Giddel, Gahar,		
50 Reaiah, Rezin, Nekoda,		
51 Gazzam, Uzza, Paseah,		
52 Besai, Meunim, Nephusim,		
53 Bakbuk, Hakupha, Harhur,		
54 Bazluth, Mehida, Harsha,		
55 Barkos, Sisera, Temah,		
56 Neziah and Hatipha		
57 The descendants of the servants of Solomon:		
the descendants of		

Sotai, Sophereth, Perida,

58 Jaala, Darkon, Giddel,

59 Shephatiah, Hattil,

Pokereth-Hazzebaim and Amon

60 The temple servants and the descendants of the servants of Solomon 392

61 The following came up from the towns of Tel Melah, Tel Harsha, Kerub, Addon and Immer, but they could not show that their families were descended from Israel:

62 the descendants of

Delaiah, Tobiah and Nekoda 642

63 And from among the priests:

the descendants of

Hobaiah, Hakkoz and Barzillai (a man who had married a daughter of Barzillai the Gileadite and was called by that name).

64 These searched for their family records, but they could not find them and so were excluded from the priesthood as unclean. 65 The governor, therefore, ordered them not to eat any of the most sacred food until there should be a priest ministering with the Urim and Thummim.

66 The whole company numbered 42,360, 67 besides their 7,337 male and female slaves; and they also had 245 male and female singers. 68 There were 736 horses, 245 mules, 69 435 camels and 6,720 donkeys.

70 Some of the heads of the families contributed to the work. The governor gave to the treasury 1,000 darics of gold, 50 bowls and 530 garments for priests. 71 Some of the heads of the families gave to the treasury for the work 20,000 darics of gold and 2,200 minas of silver. 72 The total given by the rest of the people was 20,000 darics of gold, 2,000 minas of silver and 67 garments for priests.

73 The priests, the Levites, the gatekeepers, the musicians and the temple servants, along with certain of the people and the rest of the Israelites, settled in their own towns.

It is easy for us to get lost in the names and numbers presented in Chapter 7. But like Chapter 3, there is more to be gleaned as we look deeper and allow the Holy Spirit to reveal to us the truth of His Word.

As I read and studied this chapter, I felt the Holy Spirit prompting me again and again that this chapter has to do with family. Nehemiah's family, the families of the Israelites and especially our families. Family has always been important to God. Our earthly family (both biologically and spiritually - The family we have at home and our church family) is a microcosm of the overall family of God. It's design, it's need for love, leadership, nurturing, care, compassion, unity - all point to the characteristics of our God.

God not only wants us to Establish His Kingdom in the our hearts and in the world; He wants us to be instrumental in Establishing His Kingdom in our families. In fact, He has charged us with this responsibility -as moms and dads brothers and sisters, aunts and uncles, grandma's and grandpas... As Pastors and Teachers, brothers and sisters in Christ, Spiritual moms and dads...

Deuteronomy 4:1-2, 9-14

4 Now, Israel, hear the decrees and laws I am about to teach you. Follow them so that you may live and may go in and take possession of the land the Lord, the God of your ancestors, is giving you. 2 Do not add to what I command you and do not subtract from it, but keep the commands of the Lord your God that I give you.

9 Only be careful, and watch yourselves closely so that you do not forget the things your eyes have seen or let them fade from your heart as long as you live. Teach them to your children and to their children after them. 10 Remember the day you stood before the Lord your God at Horeb, when he said to me, "Assemble the people before me to hear my words so that they may learn to revere me as long as they live in the land and may teach them to their children." 11 You came near and stood at the foot of the mountain while it blazed with fire to the very heavens, with black clouds and deep darkness. 12 Then the Lord spoke to you out of the fire. You heard the sound of words but saw no form; there was only a voice. 13 He declared to you his covenant, the Ten Commandments, which he commanded you to follow and then wrote them on two stone tablets. 14 And the Lord directed me at that time to teach you the decrees and laws you are to follow in the land that you are crossing the Jordan to possess.

Psalms 78:4-7

4 We will not hide them from their descendants; we will tell the next generation the praiseworthy deeds of the Lord, his power, and the wonders he has done. 5 He decreed statutes for Jacob and established the law in Israel, which he commanded our ancestors to teach their children, 6 so the next generation would know them, even the children yet

to be born, and they in turn would tell their children. 7 Then they would put their trust in God and would not forget his deeds but would keep his commands.

Joel 1:3

3 Tell it to your children, and let your children tell it to their children, and their children to the next generation.

Matthew 16:26

26 What good will it be for someone to gain the whole world, yet forfeit their soul (family)? Or what can anyone give in exchange for their soul (family)?

So what does Nehemiah tell us about this THIRD BATTLEFRONT - GUARDING THE GATES OF OUR FAMILIES

1. INSTILL The FEAR OF THE LORD

2 I put in charge of Jerusalem my brother Hanani, along with Hananiah the commander of the citadel, because he was a man of integrity and feared God more than most people do.

By default our children are being taught not to fear the Lord through school, friends, Social Media... If you are depending on Sunday School, or the Children's Ministry, or Wednesday night Children's & Youth Ministry to teach them all they need to know; we are failing in the responsibility that God has given us to Establish His Kingdom in their lives. What are we doing to teach them about the things of God? (This is true in our church families as well)

Psalm 34:11

11 Come, my children, listen to me; I will teach you the fear of the Lord.

Deuteronomy 11:19

19 Teach them to your children, talking about them when you sit at home and when you walk along the road, when you lie down and when you get up.

2. Set RIGHTEOUS BOUNDARIES (September 1 - Pushing The Boundaries)

3 I said to them, “The gates of Jerusalem are not to be opened until the sun is hot. While the gatekeepers are still on duty, have them shut the doors and bar them. Also appoint residents of Jerusalem as guards, some at their posts and some near their own houses.”

Not everyone will like this, nor will they understand why? But it is not to prevent them from getting outside the walls, it is to prevent the enemy from getting inside the walls.

VIDEO: Sheriff Andy Griffeth on letting children choose without any guidance, direction or boundaries

Nah, I'm afraid it don't work that way. You can't let a young 'un decide for himself. He'll grab at the first flashy thing with shiny ribbons on it, then when he finds out there's a hook in it, it's too late. The wrong ideas come packaged with so much glitter it's hard to convince him that other things might be better in the long run, and all a parent can do is say, "Wait. Trust me," and try to keep temptation away. - Sheriff Andy Griffeth on letting children choose without any guidance, direction or boundaries

3. MAINTAIN PURITY from the INFLUENCE of The World

61 The following came up from the towns of Tel Melah, Tel Harsha, Kerub, Addon and Immer, but they could not show that their families were descended from Israel:

62 the descendants of

Delaiah, Tobiah and Nekoda 642

63 And from among the priests:

the descendants of

Hobaiah, Hakkoz and Barzillai (a man who had married a daughter of Barzillai the Gileadite and was called by that name).

64 These searched for their family records, but they could not find them and so were excluded from the priesthood as unclean. 65 The governor, therefore, ordered them not to eat any of the most sacred food until there should be a priest ministering with the Urim and Thummim.

Leviticus 18:3

3 You must not do as they do in Egypt, where you used to live, and you must not do as they do in the land of Canaan, where I am bringing you. Do not follow their practices.

2 Corinthians 6:14-17

14 Do not be yoked together with unbelievers. For what do righteousness and wickedness have in common? Or what fellowship can light have with darkness? 15 What harmony is there between Christ and Belial? Or what does a believer have in common with an unbeliever? 16 What agreement is there between the temple of God and idols? For we are the temple of the living God. As God has said: "I will live with them and walk among them, and I will be their God, and they will be my people." 17 Therefore, "Come out from them and be separate, says the Lord.

Touch no unclean thing, and I will receive you."

Exodus 23:2

2 "Do not follow the crowd in doing wrong.

4. SPEND TIME TOGETHER in the Presence of The Lord

70 Some of the heads of the families contributed to the work. The governor gave to the treasury 1,000 darics of gold, 50 bowls and 530 garments for priests. 71 Some of the heads of the families gave to the treasury for the work 20,000 darics of gold and 2,200 minas of silver. 72 The total given by the rest of the people was 20,000 darics of gold, 2,000 minas of silver and 67 garments for priests.

73 The priests, the Levites, the gatekeepers, the musicians and the temple servants, along with certain of the people and the rest of the Israelites, settled in their own towns.

VIDEO: A Marriage Made In Heaven