

# NEHEMIAH

## Lesson 10 - Chapter 13

The wall is completed and dedicated to the Lord. The people have heard God's Word, repented and made an oath in covenant to the Lord. If this were the end of the story, it would be wonderful! But now we come to Chapter 13. Nehemiah returned to a Jerusalem where the walls are no longer crumbling, now it is the morals of the people crumbling. In this chapter we will see four outward signs of spiritual decay and, again, we will see this godly man take a courageous stand for righteousness and for his God.

Read this chapter with a heart of thanksgiving to the Lord for His Word. Pray for the Holy Spirit to open your eyes this week to areas where the truths need to be applied to your own life.

**Memory Verse** – This week's memory verse is Psalm 139:23-24.

*“Search me, O God, and know my heart; Try me, and know my anxieties;  
And see if there is any wicked way in me, And lead me in the way everlasting.”*

### **Key Word(s)**

Read through the entire chapter, looking for words or themes that are repeated. Make note of those words and their significance here.

### **Read Nehemiah 13:1- 3.**

1. Nehemiah 13:1 refers back to Nehemiah 12:27-47. Describe what had happened on that day in chapter 12.
2. We are told in Nehemiah 13:1 that they also read from the Book of Moses on that day.
  - a. From Nehemiah 13:1-2, what did they read? (see also Deuteronomy 23:3-5)
  - b. From Nehemiah 13:3, what did they do?

Note: David Guzik says the mixed multitude refers to those who wanted to associate with the people of Israel, but did not want to count the cost and make a full commitment.

**Further Study:** To learn more of the account of Balaam, read Numbers chapters 22-24.



5. The high priest was the highest position in the temple and should be a shepherd to the people. We have a better Shepherd! What do the following scriptures say about our Shepherd?

a. Psalm 23

b. John 10:11-17

6. There is one more area we should address, found in 1 Corinthians 6:19. What truth do you find in this verse?

7. Since we are the temple of the Holy Spirit, we have responsibility for that temple and for the care of our own lives. What do the following scriptures say about how we should do this?

a. Psalm 1:1-2

b. Romans 12:1-2

c. Romans 13:13-14

**Read Nehemiah 13:10-14.**

Moving Tobiah into the courts of the temple was not the only sign of spiritual back sliding. We will see the second sign of decay in Nehemiah 13:10-14.

1. What was neglected according to Nehemiah 13:10?

a. What was the result of this?

b. What had the children of Israel promised in Nehemiah 10:39?

2. From Nehemiah 13:11-13, how did Nehemiah address this problem?

3. What was the concern voiced in the words of Nehemiah's prayer in verse 14?

**Read Nehemiah 13:15-22.**

Next, we will look into the third outward sign of spiritual decay that Nehemiah found upon his return.

1. What did Nehemiah find the people doing in the following verses?
  - a. Nehemiah 13:15
  
  - b. Nehemiah 13:16
  
2. What do the following scriptures say about the Sabbath?
  - a. Exodus 20:8-11
  
  - b. Exodus 31:14
  
3. What promise did the people make when they signed the covenant in Nehemiah 10:31?
  
4. When Nehemiah saw what the people were doing on the Sabbath, he *contended* with them. What did he say to them in Nehemiah 13:17-18? You may quote or summarize his words.
  
5. Considering the scriptures in #1 and #2 above, why was Nehemiah so concerned about the breaking of the Sabbath? (You might also see Jeremiah 17:19-27.)
  
6. From Nehemiah 13:19-22, what measures did Nehemiah set about establishing to make sure the people did not dishonor the Sabbath?
  
7. We are not called to observe the Sabbath in the same way as the children of Israel, but we are called to honor our commitments to the Lord and honor Him. In what ways might we slide back or allow spiritual decay, which could be complacency or disobedience, in our own lives? How can we avoid this?

8. In the prayer of Nehemiah 13:22, what did he ask the Lord to do for him?

**Consider Nehemiah 13:23-30.**

1. What is the fourth sign of spiritual decay, found in Nehemiah 13:23?

2. What do you find in the following scriptures that confirm that these people knew that what they were doing was sin?

a. The covenant oath of Nehemiah 10:30

b. Their response to the reading of the Law in Nehemiah 13:1-3

3. We also see the effect of the pagan influence in Nehemiah 13:24.

a. What does it say about the children?

b. What does this reveal about the parents and the homes?

c. How does 2 Corinthians 6:14 apply this to us today?

4. Nehemiah's reaction reveals the seriousness of this sin.

a. What did Nehemiah do?

b. What did he remind them of with his words in verses 25-27?

c. Who is specifically mentioned and for what in Nehemiah 13:28?

d. In the prayer of verse 29, how does Nehemiah describe their sin?

5. The actions of Nehemiah in Chapter 13 could be summed up by the first sentence in verse 30.

a. Write this statement below.

b. How do you see this applying to Nehemiah's actions?

6. Nehemiah ends this Chapter and this Book with a final prayer. It is a prayer we can all agree with. Write it below from Nehemiah 13:31.

**In closing...**

1. In order to move Tobiah, the enemy, into the temple Eliashib had to move something out, namely articles important for temple worship. This gives a picture of what happens in our own lives. If we allow things of this world into our lives, they will push out things of God.

a. Can you think of examples?

b. How can you keep this from happening?

2. We have seen in this chapter how the outward signs reveal the inner spiritual condition. What can we do to keep our spiritual condition holy and our outward signs, or fruit, representing our Lord rightly?

3. Since this is the end of the book and the last lesson, take time to think over the study, maybe even look back at your past lessons, and make note here of things you want to apply to your life from the example of Nehemiah.

4. We have seen that Nehemiah was a man of prayer, so it seems appropriate to end this study with prayer. Write a prayer here praising the Lord for Who He is and thanking Him for His Word and for the work He has done in you through this study.

***Memory Verse***

*“Search me, O God, and know my heart; Try me, and know my anxieties;  
And see if there is any wicked way in me, And lead me in the way everlasting.”*

*Psalm 139:23-24*