

Supplementary Materials for KOOL Journal for Parents/Adults

Week 17: 14 May to 20 May, 2018 (pp. 138 – 145)

14 May to 20 May, 2018: Nehemiah Chapter 11:20 – 13:3.

Watch videos:

- **Consistent Celebrations** (Neh. 12:27-43), <http://www2.bhpublishinggroup.com/QR/GetzBible/0480/> (11.43 min.)
- **A Reciprocal Ministry** (Neh. 12:44-47), <http://www2.bhpublishinggroup.com/QR/GetzBible/0481/> (10.32 min.)

Review Verse of the Week **Nehemiah 12:27**

At the dedication of the wall of Jerusalem... the Levites ...were brought to Jerusalem to celebrate joyfully the dedication with songs of thanksgiving and with the music of cymbals, harps and lyres.

Date/Read	Reflection and Response (R & R)
Mon. 14 May Neh. 11:20— 12:26 {Neh. 11:20-36}	<p>The returned community, though consisting mainly of members of the two tribes, represented the entire people of Israel. The ground, however, which they occupied, was not the whole land, but that which had constituted the kingdom of Judah. The Israelites stayed in the cities, houses, and estates enjoyed by their ancestors, while the priests and Levites lived in the cities given out of the several tribes.</p> <p>R & R:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Note the different roles in the up-keeping of the Temple and its services (Levites, priests, temple workers, singers, gatekeepers, plus a king's agent in charge of public administration). What roles do we play in the building up of the church? • Several mentions were made about Levites responsible for leading the singing and prayer, the songs of thanksgiving and playing musical instruments (11:17, 23; 12:8, 27, 28, 31, 42). Review Col. 3:16 on the importance of music in our worship: to communicate biblical truths that both edify one another and express our praise and thanksgiving to God. How can we ensure music and singing have their rightful place in our worship services, CG meetings or in family devotions at home? • The many priests and Levites named in chapter 12 were eminent in their day among the returned Jews. Have you read biographies of some giants of faith in present times and learnt from them? If not, why not start soon? <p>Notes:</p> <p>11:21 – The temple servants lived in quarters upon the wall of Jerusalem on the summit of the hill of Ophel (Neh.3:26), near the Temple where they were to do the servile work of the Temple.</p> <p>11:22-23 – Asaph's descendants were singers who had to reside in Jerusalem (unlike other Levites and priests who came up to Jerusalem by turns) to take care of the 'business' of the liturgical worship and the organization necessary for the</p>

	regular rotation of Levitical service. Asaph himself was the director of music, the leader in beginning the thanksgiving at prayer (11:17). The singers' daily tasks were regulated by the king (Artaxerxes) including the portion due the singers every day (Neh. 12:47). There were royal regulations stating how the clans should take turns in leading the Temple music each day.
Tue. 15 May Neh. 12:27—30 {Neh. 12:27-30}	<p>In the ceremony for the dedication of the Jerusalem wall and the city, Nehemiah placed the whole circuit of the wall under divine protection, confessing in this solemn act the intrinsic worthlessness of mere walls and bulwarks, unless God lends them strength and makes them a protection against their enemies. The ceremonial purification of the priests, Levites and the people was a prelude to purifying the gates and the wall by being sprinkled. The Levites (12:22) and the Levitical singers (12:28) were summoned from all parts of the country/region near Jerusalem respectively to lead in the celebration.</p> <p>R & R:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> How should we observe the “purification” or dedication of our houses/flats as a place for God’s use when we or our children first move into them? Is God’s provision acknowledged in our “house-warming” parties? <p>Notes: 12:27 – The dedication of a city wall was a new thing in Israel; but it had been customary from a remote time to dedicate houses (Deut. 20:5). Natural piety extended this practice to parts of the wall as they get rebuilt by the priestly order (Neh.3:1). Nehemiah followed the pattern of Solomon's dedication of the Temple as he had made the service altogether one of praise and thanksgiving and had employed in it cymbals, trumpets, psalteries, and harps (2 Chro.5:13, 20).</p>
Wed. 16 May Neh. 12:31—43 {Neh. 12:40-43}	<p>The dedication of the city wall was characterized by joy, praise and singing (Neh. 12: 24, 27-29, 35-36, 40-43). The dedication consisted of a solemn ceremony, in which the leading authorities, accompanied by the Levitical singers, and by a vast number of people, marched in imposing procession round the city walls, and, pausing at intervals to engage in united praises, prayer for God’s continued presence and favour on "the holy city", and sacrifices (12:43).</p> <p>R & R:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> How often do we pray for our own city Singapore that it be used by God to bless the nations around us or the foreign talents/workers within the country? Use the map on p.4 to follow the routes taken by the two choirs during the dedication of Jerusalem’s Wall, starting from the Dung Gate at the bottom end of the map (Neh.12:31-40). Does it remind us of the prayer walks to claim Teban Gardens for the Lord? Do we actively take part in this community service of the church to bless and reach out to the residents of Teban Gardens?
Thu. 17 May Neh. 12:44—47 {Neh. 12:44-47}	<p>Nehemiah repeatedly mentioned David (12:45) who began the custom of using choirs in worship (12:46; 1 Chro. 23:4-5). Not only was the Temple service restored to something like that of David’s era, the people generally (‘Judah’) were ready to support amply the priests and Levites as well as the singers and the gatekeepers according to ‘the law’ due to their appreciation of their religious services. Hence the need of men to take charge of the treasuries of the first-fruits and tithes (both their collection and proper distribution).</p>

	<p>R & R:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • In what ways can we ensure we have good governance in place to manage properly the assets of our church and our Community Services Centre: can we contribute (if we have the financial expertise), or assist in evaluating programmes/budgets/financial statements? • Though responsibilities of spiritual leaders under the new covenant are different, the same principle of caring for their material support applies (1 Tim. 5:17-18). How can we fulfill this responsibility and give generously out of a cheerful heart? <p>Notes:</p> <p>12:43 – “On that day” is not an allusion to the day of rejoicing in the previous verse but a general definition of time like the reference to “in those days” in Neh.13:15 & 23.</p> <p>12:43, 47 – The Levites were to receive the first 10th and the priests were to receive a 10th of the Levites’ provisions (Numbers 18:26-30).</p>
<p>Fri. 18 May</p> <p>Neh. 13:1—3 {Neh. 13:1-3}</p>	<p>Nehemiah’s final reforms took place upon his return from the Persian court to Jerusalem as during his long absence some errors and abuses had crept in. The first reform probably arose from one of the periodic public readings of the law, when the people’s attention was directed to some violations of it, which called for immediate correction. In this instance, it was the inter-marriages between the Israelites and the foreigners (Moabites), admitting them into the assembly of God which was strictly prohibited by God (Num. 25:1-3).</p> <p>R & R:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Great benefits result from the public reading and teaching of God’s Word: “For the word of God is living and active and sharper than any two-edged sword, and piercing as far as the division of soul and spirit, of both joints and marrow, and able to judge the thoughts and intentions of the heart.” (Heb. 4:12). Do we take immediate steps to correct any errors of our ways when illuminated by God’s Word? <p>Notes:</p> <p>13:1 – “On that day” (probably the season of the Feast of Tabernacles and not the day of the dedication of the wall and city), portions were selected to be read from the book of Moses and specially Deuteronomy 23.</p> <p>13:1 – “...there it was found written” seems to imply that the nation at large had no knowledge of the law that no Ammonite or Moabite could have legal standing in the assembly of God, even to their 10th generation (Deut. 23:3-6).</p>
<p>Sat./Sun. 19–20 May</p>	<p>Despite having included in the “binding agreement” (Neh.9:38) the vow not to inter-marry (Neh. 10:30), once again the Israelites again had to be reminded to cut off from such families.</p> <p>R & R:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Are there any ungodly “soul ties” or relationships we have to cut to honour God?

References

<https://bibleprinciples.org/pf-search-book/> (search videos by book and click on Nehemiah)

<http://biblehub.com/commentaries/nehemiah/13-1.htm>

Tyndale House Publishers, **Chronological Life Application Study Bible**, 2004.

