

## THE BOOK OF NEHEMIAH

### "Appointment for Service"

Nehemiah 7:1-4

#### Introduction

1. Problems, frictions, and opposition were all part of the work of God even in O.T. times (6:1-19). To deny this sort of activity in the Lord's work is to be unreal. It is to be expected, BUT the child of God forges ahead in spite of difficulty, resting only on the Lord.

2. Positive leadership is evidenced in the opening verses of this chapter. When one work is done, it is not to assume that it is the end, but rather the commencement for more work! Note, the areas of leadership offered by Nehemiah:-

#### 1. PREPARATION v. 1

##### a. Accomplishment

Two items are listed here as having been done: the building of the walls and the setting up of the doors. Only God knows how much is behind these few words in the text, but the work was now done (cf. 6:15).

##### b. Appointment

1) Porters The verb used with the three nouns here is the one which means to "visit, fall upon, or give oversight." The porter is a "gate-keeper." Nehemiah knew that building was not the end of the job. A watch had to be set now! So it is in the household of faith always--constant guard of the truth (cf. 1 Cor. 5:11; 2 John 2:10,11). To say you receive all who are Christ's is not so keen after all (2 Tim. 2:19). Better watch with porters, brother!

2) Singers To watch may become a rather dull activity, hence, Nehemiah has some men to "sing." This is the sound of praise in the assembly (Psa. 105:1-4; Eph. 5:19, 20; Col. 3:16). Orthodoxy without a song becomes a dirge.

3) Levites These were the men charged with keeping the sanctuary. They were men of service unto the Lord. For us today, one must add to the guard and the singer, the function of service to the Lord. It involves the element of worship. Walls and doors--YES, but let's have all these other appointments too!

## 2. INSTRUCTION

### a. Designations

Two men are appointed here for responsible positions and service: Hanani means "gracious" and was a brother of Nehemiah. Do not accuse Nehemiah of nepotism! The other was Hananiah which means "Jehovah is gracious." This man was governor of the palace. He was co-ruler of the city of Jerusalem with Nehemiah's brother.

### b. Explanations

Two characteristics are listed concerning Hananiah: he was faithful and fearful before God. These are not qualities sought by the world, but for God's politics they are top priorities.

## 3. INJUNCTION

### a. Negative

Clear indication is given concerning the gates. They were to be open when the sun was hot and closed all other times. Appointed times were given by Nehemiah to the men assigned to guard and rule Jerusalem.

### b. Positive

Not only were there to be special workers (v.1) and men assigned leadership roles (v. 2), but others were to help in watching and every person for his own house! The entire nation was marshalled for protection. No one just lived in Jerusalem! What a testimony concerning an assembly of God's people today (1 Cor 12:1-11; Eph. 4:11).

## 4. FRUSTRATION

### a. About the city

Nehemiah complains (happily) that the city is large. Actually, the Hebrew text says "large on every side." It was also great. This posed problems!

### b. About the people

Those living in Jerusalem were very few. Many did not desire to live in the city under the sad conditions. How much like the people of God today IF things are not just right in the assembly!

### c. About the houses

Walls up, gates built, but no houses! Apparently, Nehemiah strikes at a general apathy in the city. There was need for an energetic excitement for God!

Conclusion The labor of the Lord never gets to a place of rest. It is always a challenge for forward growth and progress. Our job is laid out before us until He comes! Christianity is not stagnation, but growth (2 Pet. 3:18).