

## Nehemiah 7

Then it was, when the wall was built and I had hung the doors, when the gatekeepers, the singers, and the Levites had been appointed, 2 that I gave the charge of Jerusalem to my brother Hanani, and Hananiah the leader of the [a]citadel, for he was a faithful man and feared God more than many.

3 And I said to them, “Do not let the gates of Jerusalem be opened until the sun is hot; and while they stand guard, let them shut and bar the doors; and appoint guards from among the inhabitants of Jerusalem, one at his watch station and another in front of his own house.”

4 Now the city was large and spacious, but the people in it were few, and the houses were not rebuilt. 5 Then my God put it into my heart to gather the nobles, the rulers, and the people, that they might be registered by genealogy. And I found a register of the genealogy of those who had come up in the first return, and found written in it:

6 These are the people of the province who came back from the captivity, of those who had been carried away, whom Nebuchadnezzar the king of Babylon had carried away, and who returned to Jerusalem and Judah, everyone to his city.

Nehemiah 7-12 : after the city walls are completed, the work is not done yet. The city must be repopulated.

Jerusalem is God’s city, therefore it is important to choose with care who are going to live in God’s city as God’s people.

Nehemiah 7: God’s people being restored as a communion: God’s people as a unity.

This is needed to prepare for the coming of the Messiah.

The people have to recognize the dangers and resist them. The enemies are still lurking.

The city gates can only open when it is safe. Safety for God’s people is more important than money.

God’s people is and must be a special people.

That also means that they will be constantly attacked and need a good defense.

Men of integrity are needed to lead and protect the people.

### Question 1:

**God wants His people to be led by man of integrity. Men who deserve the respect of the community. It is a blessing if God gives these men to His church. Do we recognize this blessing? How do we treat these brothers? Do we show them respect or do we criticize them at will?**

Not many people lived in the city. Most of the workers came from surrounding villages.

See 11:2 : one out of every ten people went to live in the city. They were commended. It was a sacrifice. It required a commitment to the safety of the city of God.

Therefore: careful selection is needed.

Many evil people were living in Canaan among the Jews and they should be kept out of the city.

Nehemiah found the registers of the people who returned. That is an important tool for the selection.

From those who according to the genealogy belong to God's people, God chooses by the lot who is going to be in the holy city.

In the NT, all believers are chosen and called to be God's holy people. 1 Peter 2:9-10!

*But you are a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, His own special people, that you may proclaim the praises of Him who called you out of darkness into His marvelous light; 10 who once were not a people but are now the people of God, who had not obtained mercy but now have obtained mercy.*

This requires total dedication!

### **Question 2:**

**Do we show our full dedication to the work of God? How do we see that in our own life? And how can we even do better?**

Those serving in the temple receive a separate mention here. The worship service for God is important.

The worship service to God is central in the life of God's people.

Now God is being worshiped not in Jerusalem, but all over the earth. God's people themselves are the temple of God. Not the church buildings.

But also now the worship service requires our attention.

Vs 61-73

*And these were the ones who came up from Tel Melah, Tel Harsha, Cherub, [r]Addon, and Immer, but they could not identify their father's house nor their lineage, whether they were of Israel: 62 the sons of Delaiah, the sons of Tobiah, the sons of Nekoda, six hundred and forty-two; 63 and of the priests: the sons of Habaiah, the sons of [s]Koz, the sons of Barzillai, who took a wife of the daughters of Barzillai the Gileadite, and was called by their name.*

*64 These sought their listing among those who were registered by genealogy, but it was not found; therefore they were excluded from the priesthood as defiled. 65 And the [t]governor said to them that they should not eat of the most holy things till a priest could consult with the Urim and Thummim.*

*66 Altogether the whole assembly was forty-two thousand three hundred and sixty, 67 besides their male and female servants, of whom there were seven thousand three hundred and thirty-seven; and they had two hundred and forty-five men and women singers. 68 Their horses were seven hundred and thirty-six, their mules two hundred and forty-five, 69 their camels four hundred and thirty-five, and donkeys six thousand seven hundred and twenty.*

*70 And some of the heads of the fathers' houses gave to the work. The [u]governor gave to the treasury one thousand gold drachmas, fifty basins, and five hundred and thirty priestly garments.*

71 Some of the heads of the fathers' houses gave to the treasury of the work twenty thousand gold drachmas, and two thousand two hundred silver minas. 72 And that which the rest of the people gave was twenty thousand gold drachmas, two thousand silver minas, and sixty-seven priestly garments.

73 So the priests, the Levites, the gatekeepers, the singers, some of the people, the Nethinim, and all Israel dwelt in their cities.

When the seventh month came, the children of Israel were in their cities.

God's rules must be followed.

God gave His rules to Moses regarding the priests.

Priests must be clean, their descent is important.

Verse 64: those who could not prove their descent, should be excluded from the service until God Himself gave certainty.

The worship service is not a place to experiment.

God punishes self-willed worship, see Nadab and Abihu, Ananias and Saphira.

God determines how He wants to be worshiped. It is not important how we feel about it, but how God tells us to worship Him!

### **Question 3:**

**If you look at our worship service to God, can you show that this is in accordance with the will of God as He revealed to us in the New Testament? See for instance Acts 2:42, 4:32-35; 1 Corinthians 11:23-29; Ephesians 5:18-21; Colossians 3:12-17. What do these texts teach us about the worship service? Is it just for each of us going through the motions (through the order of worship: pray, listening to the preaching and singing our songs, etc.) every Sunday or is it more?**

God's people is a communion and as a communion they worship God. Then God will bless His people.

It is the gracious hand of God, which builds the church throughout all ages, and all over the world. He tells us how to worship Him.

Therefore let us be faithful to Him and obey His will, and then we will receive His blessing.