

Saturday, August 13, 2022

From Darren:

Nehemiah 5:14-7:73 — October 2: My son was born and Nehemiah finished rebuilding the wall around Jerusalem

Ps 33:1-11 — “the unfailing love of the LORD fills the earth”

Pro 21:8:10 — I almost laughed out loud at verse 9

1 Corinthians 8:1-13 — “while knowledge makes us feel important, it is love that strengthens the church”

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Nehemiah 5:14-7:73

5 14 For the entire twelve years that I was governor of Judah—from the twentieth year to the thirty-second year of the reign of King Artaxerxes —neither I nor my officials drew on our official food allowance.

15 The former governors, in contrast, had laid heavy burdens on the people, demanding a daily ration of food and wine, besides forty pieces of silver. Even their assistants took advantage of the people. But because I feared God, I did not act that way.

16 I also devoted myself to working on the wall and refused to acquire any land. And I required all my servants to spend time working on the wall.

17 I asked for nothing, even though I regularly fed 150 Jewish officials at my table, besides all the visitors from other lands!

18 The provisions I paid for each day included one ox, six choice sheep or goats, and a large number of poultry. And every ten days we needed a large supply of all kinds of wine. Yet I refused to claim the governor’s food allowance because the people already carried a heavy burden.

19 Remember, O my God, all that I have done for these people, and bless me for it.

6 1 Sanballat, Tobiah, Geshem the Arab, and the rest of our enemies found out that I had finished rebuilding the wall and that no gaps remained—though we had not yet set up the doors in the gates.

2 So Sanballat and Geshem sent a message asking me to meet them at one of the villages in the plain of Ono. But I realized they were plotting to harm me,

3 so I replied by sending this message to them: “I am engaged in a great work, so I can’t come. Why should I stop working to come and meet with you?”

4 Four times they sent the same message, and each time I gave the same reply.

5 The fifth time, Sanballat’s servant came with an open letter in his hand,

6 and this is what it said: “There is a rumor among the surrounding nations, and Geshem tells me it is true, that you and the Jews are planning to rebel and that is why you are building the wall. According to his reports, you plan to be their king.

7 He also reports that you have appointed prophets in Jerusalem to proclaim about you, ‘Look! There is a king in Judah!’ “You can be very sure that this report will get back to the king, so I suggest that you come and talk it over with me.”

8 I replied, “There is no truth in any part of your story. You are making up the whole thing.”

9 They were just trying to intimidate us, imagining that they could discourage us and stop the work. So I continued the work with even greater determination.

10 Later I went to visit Shemaiah son of Delaiah and grandson of Mehetabel, who was confined to his home. He said, "Let us meet together inside the Temple of God and bolt the doors shut. Your enemies are coming to kill you tonight."

11 But I replied, "Should someone in my position run from danger? Should someone in my position enter the Temple to save his life? No, I won't do it!"

12 I realized that God had not spoken to him, but that he had uttered this prophecy against me because Tobiah and Sanballat had hired him.

13 They were hoping to intimidate me and make me sin. Then they would be able to accuse and discredit me.

14 Remember, O my God, all the evil things that Tobiah and Sanballat have done. And remember Noadiah the prophet and all the prophets like her who have tried to intimidate me.

15 So on October 2 the wall was finished—just fifty-two days after we had begun.

16 When our enemies and the surrounding nations heard about it, they were frightened and humiliated. They realized this work had been done with the help of our God.

17 During those fifty-two days, many letters went back and forth between Tobiah and the nobles of Judah.

18 For many in Judah had sworn allegiance to him because his father-in-law was Shecaniah son of Arah, and his son Jehohanan was married to the daughter of Meshullam son of Berekiah.

19 They kept telling me about Tobiah's good deeds, and then they told him everything I said. And Tobiah kept sending threatening letters to intimidate me.

7 1 After the wall was finished and I had set up the doors in the gates, the gatekeepers, singers, and Levites were appointed.

2 I gave the responsibility of governing Jerusalem to my brother Hanani, along with Hananiah, the commander of the fortress, for he was a faithful man who feared God more than most.

3 I said to them, "Do not leave the gates open during the hottest part of the day. And even while the gatekeepers are on duty, have them shut and bar the doors. Appoint the residents of Jerusalem to act as guards, everyone on a regular watch. Some will serve at sentry posts and some in front of their own homes."

4 At that time the city was large and spacious, but the population was small, and none of the houses had been rebuilt.

5 So my God gave me the idea to call together all the nobles and leaders of the city, along with the ordinary citizens, for registration. I had found the genealogical record of those who had first returned to Judah. This is what was written there:

6 Here is the list of the Jewish exiles of the provinces who returned from their captivity. King Nebuchadnezzar had deported them to Babylon, but now they returned to Jerusalem and the other towns in Judah where they originally lived.

7 Their leaders were Zerubbabel, Jeshua, Nehemiah, Seraiah, Reelaiah, Nahamani, Mordecai, Bilshan, Mispar, Bigvai, Rehum, and Baanah. This is the number of the men of Israel who returned from exile:

8 The family of Parosh 2,172

9 The family of Shephatiah 372

10 The family of Arah 652

11 The family of Pahath-moab (descendants of Jeshua and Joab) 2,818

12 The family of Elam 1,254

13 The family of Zattu 845

14 The family of Zaccai 760

- 15 The family of Bani 648
- 16 The family of Bebai 628
- 17 The family of Azgad 2,322
- 18 The family of Adonikam 667
- 19 The family of Bigvai 2,067
- 20 The family of Adin 655
- 21 The family of Ater (descendants of Hezekiah) 98
- 22 The family of Hashum 328
- 23 The family of Bezai 324
- 24 The family of Jorah 112
- 25 The family of Gibbar 95
- 26 The people of Bethlehem and Netophah 188
- 27 The people of Anathoth 128
- 28 The people of Beth-azmaveth 42
- 29 The people of Kiriath-jearim, Kephirah, and Beeroth 743
- 30 The people of Ramah and Geba 621
- 31 The people of Micmash 122
- 32 The people of Bethel and Ai 123
- 33 The people of West Nebo 52
- 34 The citizens of West Elam 1,254
- 35 The citizens of Harim 320
- 36 The citizens of Jericho 345
- 37 The citizens of Lod, Hadid, and Ono 721
- 38 The citizens of Senaah 3,930
- 39 These are the priests who returned from exile: The family of Jedaiah (through the line of Jeshua) 973
- 40 The family of Immer 1,052
- 41 The family of Pashhur 1,247
- 42 The family of Harim 1,017
- 43 These are the Levites who returned from exile: The families of Jeshua and Kadmiel (descendants of Hodaviah) 74
- 44 The singers of the family of Asaph 148
- 45 The gatekeepers of the families of Shallum, Ater, Talmon, Akkub, Hatita, and Shobai 138
- 46 The descendants of the following Temple servants returned from exile: Ziha, Hasupha, Tabbaoth,
47 Keros, Siaha, Padon,
48 Lebanah, Hagabah, 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 Nezhiah, and Hatipha.
- 57 The descendants of these servants of King Solomon returned from exile: Sotai, Hassophereth, Peruda,
58 Jaalah, Darkon, Giddel,
59 Shephatiah, Hattil, Pokereth-hazzebaim, and Ami.

60 In all, the Temple servants and the descendants of Solomon's servants numbered 392.
61 Another group returned at this time from the towns of Tel-melah, Tel-harsha, Kerub, Addan, and Immer. However, they could not prove that they or their families were descendants of Israel.
62 This group included the families of Delaiah, Tobiah, and Nekoda—a total of 642 people.
63 Three families of priests—Hobaiah, Hakkoz, and Barzillai—also returned. (This Barzillai had married a woman who was a descendant of Barzillai of Gilead, and he had taken her family name.)
64 They searched for their names in the genealogical records, but they were not found, so they were disqualified from serving as priests.
65 The governor told them not to eat the priests' share of food from the sacrifices until a priest could consult the LORD about the matter by using the Urim and Thummim—the sacred lots.
66 So a total of 42,360 people returned to Judah,
67 in addition to 7,337 servants and 245 singers, both men and women.
68 They took with them 736 horses, 245 mules,
69 435 camels, and 6,720 donkeys.
70 Some of the family leaders gave gifts for the work. The governor gave to the treasury 1,000 gold coins, 50 gold basins, and 530 robes for the priests.
71 The other leaders gave to the treasury a total of 20,000 gold coins and some 2,750 pounds of silver for the work.
72 The rest of the people gave 20,000 gold coins, about 2,500 pounds of silver, and 67 robes for the priests.
73 So the priests, the Levites, the gatekeepers, the singers, the Temple servants, and some of the common people settled near Jerusalem. The rest of the people returned to their own towns throughout Israel.
In October, when the Israelites had settled in their towns,

Psalm 33:1-11

33 1 Let the godly sing for joy to the LORD ; it is fitting for the pure to praise him.
2 Praise the LORD with melodies on the lyre; make music for him on the ten-stringed harp.
3 Sing a new song of praise to him; play skillfully on the harp, and sing with joy.
4 For the word of the LORD holds true, and we can trust everything he does.
5 He loves whatever is just and good; the unfailing love of the LORD fills the earth.
6 The LORD merely spoke, and the heavens were created. He breathed the word, and all the stars were born.
7 He assigned the sea its boundaries and locked the oceans in vast reservoirs.
8 Let the whole world fear the LORD, and let everyone stand in awe of him.
9 For when he spoke, the world began! It appeared at his command.
10 The LORD frustrates the plans of the nations and thwarts all their schemes.
11 But the LORD 's plans stand firm forever; his intentions can never be shaken.

Proverbs 21:8-10

21 8 The guilty walk a crooked path; the innocent travel a straight road.
9 It's better to live alone in the corner of an attic than with a quarrelsome wife in a lovely home.
10 Evil people desire evil; their neighbors get no mercy from them.

1 Corinthians 8:1-13

8 1 Now regarding your question about food that has been offered to idols. Yes, we know that “we all have knowledge” about this issue. But while knowledge makes us feel important, it is love that strengthens the church.

2 Anyone who claims to know all the answers doesn’t really know very much.

3 But the person who loves God is the one whom God recognizes.

4 So, what about eating meat that has been offered to idols? Well, we all know that an idol is not really a god and that there is only one God.

5 There may be so-called gods both in heaven and on earth, and some people actually worship many gods and many lords.

6 But for us, There is one God, the Father, by whom all things were created, and for whom we live. And there is one Lord, Jesus Christ, through whom all things were created, and through whom we live.

7 However, not all believers know this. Some are accustomed to thinking of idols as being real, so when they eat food that has been offered to idols, they think of it as the worship of real gods, and their weak consciences are violated.

8 It’s true that we can’t win God’s approval by what we eat. We don’t lose anything if we don’t eat it, and we don’t gain anything if we do.

9 But you must be careful so that your freedom does not cause others with a weaker conscience to stumble.

10 For if others see you—with your “superior knowledge”—eating in the temple of an idol, won’t they be encouraged to violate their conscience by eating food that has been offered to an idol?

11 So because of your superior knowledge, a weak believer for whom Christ died will be destroyed.

12 And when you sin against other believers by encouraging them to do something they believe is wrong, you are sinning against Christ.

13 So if what I eat causes another believer to sin, I will never eat meat again as long as I live—for I don’t want to cause another believer to stumble.