

Nehemiah 13: Housecleaning for Godliness

Introduction:

1. Read Nehemiah 13 carefully, considering its five sections. Read it again carefully.
2. Every male here is or will be a leader of a wife, children, grandchildren, church, etc.
3. There are few leaders in the Bible like Nehemiah; we are told considerable about him.
4. A leader must be vigilant about compromise in his sphere of duty and keep it clean.

CLEANING UP FRIENDS (1-3)

- A. Bible reading, whether public or private, is essential to us knowing God's will.
- B. God had cursed these people, and though an explanation is given, it is not necessary.
- C. When the regathered Jews heard this warning, they got rid of all their worldly friends.
 1. For there to be worldly friends to get rid of ... they must have had them. Shame!
 2. Nehemiah 8 describes a wonderful preaching service with similar results (8:13-18).

Application #1: When you hear something from God's word, do you do it with zeal?

Application #2: Do you, your wife, or children have friends from the mixed multitude?

Application #3: Do you grasp David's seriousness about this matter in his life (Ps 101)?

Application #4: Remember the subtle danger of unlike friends (I Cor 15:33; Pr 13:20).

CLEANING UP THE CHURCH (4-9)

- A. Eliashib had befriended and accommodated Tobiah, a cursed Ammonite (2:10).
- B. This enemy of God had altered God's temple to make room for his pagan friend.
- C. How did this occur? While Nehemiah was gone on business to report to Artaxerxes.
- D. This matter grieved Nehemiah sore, meaning in the vernacular that he was very upset.
- E. But he did not stop with being grieved – he did something – he threw the stuff out!
- F. He did not stop with just getting rid of the problem – he replaced it with God's stuff.

Application #1: Error can happen by those that should know better. Hate it anyway!

Application #2: We as a church must avoid evil alliances, and so must you individually.

Application #3: When gone or distracted with other duties, the mice must be checked!

Application #4: Do you get sorely grieved, do you sigh, for the errors of men (Ezek 9:4)?

Application #5: What do you need to throw out of your home? What should replace it?

Application #6: Do you know why I had to preach sermons against Reformed Baptists?

GIVING & SUPPORTING THE MINISTRY (10-14)

- A. Nehemiah considered (and perceived) about the financial situation of the church.
 - B. He rebuked the rulers and put the Levites and singers back in their appointed places.
 - C. He ordained *faithful* men to take charge of the financial duties. Are you such a man?
 - D. Nehemiah served God with zeal; due to it, he asked to be remembered (Ps 18:20-24).
- Application #1: Consider the church, ministry, and poor financially (Ps 41:1; Pr 28:27).*
- Application #2: Are you aware and insightful enough to recognize discrepancies?*
- Application #3: God convicted your pastor of Isaiah 32:8 – do you share his conviction?*
- Application #4: You will need God's help, not if, but when; will He recall you? for what?*

REMEMBERING THE SABBATH (15-22)

- A. Nehemiah was always looking, and he was not fooled or swayed by public practice.
 - B. When he saw something wrong, he testified against it; he did not choose to be silent.
 - C. He did not pick on the poor traders doing business, but the nobles leading the city.
 - D. He brought to bear the history of God's people, which is our teacher (I Cor 10:6-11).
 - E. He took practical measures to stop the evil and to keep it from happening again.
 - F. He paid a price by assigning his own men to watch the gates until a new policy.
 - G. When some took steps to avoid his rules, he threatened them with violence. Glory!
 - H. Again, we have the inspired prayer of a righteous man for God to see and remember.
- Application #1: It is your duty, as mine, to exhort and warn (I Thes 5:14; Heb 10:24-25).*
- Application #2: When you see something wrong, if it is not a liberty, testify against it.*
- Application #3: Do you know the Bible so you can raise examples of sin from its history?*
- Application #4: When you make a change in policy, are you wise enough to find sneaks?*
- Application #5: Are you wise as a serpent to devise practical blocks to sin in your family?*
- Application #6: Are you man enough to threaten violence (and follow thru) against sin?*

AFFINITY WITH THE WORLD (23-31)

- A. Nehemiah always inspected the activities and situation around him and saw affinity.
 - B. He did not care that children were involved – he was not effeminately sentimental.
 - C. Consider his violence against this horrible sin, just as God has been with the Flood.
 - D. Again he brought to bear the Biblical history of Solomon's great error in this matter.
 - E. He was not open to listening to their excuses, justification, or reasons for such sinning.
 - F. The high priest's grandson had married Sanballat's daughter. Josephus – Mt. Gerizim?
 - G. Nehemiah ignored the status of both parties to this abominable marriage (II Chr 18:1).
 - H. This great man shows the right use of imprecatory prayer against the enemies of God.
 - I. For the third time in this chapter, Nehemiah asked God to remember him for good.
- Application #1: Be vigilant. Look critically around you. Especially at all relationships.*
- Application #2: Marriage in the Lord is incredibly important, and you must enforce it.*
- Application #3: You may have to take strong measures to marry your children in Christ.*
- Application #4: Reject what your child might say. Solomon probably had his reasons!*
- Application #5: No matter the reputation or status of either party – hate all such affinity.*
- Application #6: Marriage starts with dating, dating with friends, friends with contacts.*
- Application #7: You remember what happened to Dinah due to lazy father and brothers.*

Conclusion:

1. Here is the inspired record of a great leader, and you should want to be just like him.
2. God has made you leaders of wives, children, grandchildren, church, neighbors, etc.
3. You are responsible to look, inspect, draw conclusions, and correct whatever is wrong.
4. Revival and worship pleasing to God often require housecleaning to get rid of junk.
5. When the junk has been thrown out, then replace it with godly inputs for family profit.
6. May God bless the vigilant, faithful, and zealous ones in the day of their calamity.