

“Praise & Give Thanks To God”
Nehemiah 11-12
6/1/25
Message 10

Introduction

- Title Of The Message: “Praise & Give Thanks To God”

- **Illustration – Birds**

- **One of the JOYS of being out on the Bike**
 - Hear / See Nature
 - The Other day – the birds singing their hearts out!
- **BUT - Have you ever wondered why birds sing?**
 - Think about that for a moment...
 - Think about what they are up against on any given day
 - In reality they are concerned about the same things we are
 - Each day they have to Deal With
 - Need for Provision
 - Taking care of themselves and their families
 - They go off to work – search for food.
 - They are concerned about Shelter –
 - Making sure the nest is in good condition
 - To them it is a
 - Bird eat Bird world out there!

- They are concerned about protection for the themselves and their families
 - Cats – Sylvester and Tweety are a real deal...
- My point is this
 - When you consider the birds
 - Their challenges and responsibilities are not that much different from ours
 - BUT Despite all of that – they sing
 - Why?!
 - Perhaps the words of Jesus give us some insight

Matthew 6:26 (NKJV)

26 Look at the birds of the air, for they neither sow nor reap nor gather into barns; yet your heavenly Father feeds them. Are you not of more value than they?

- Maybe that is why the birds sing –
 - They realize
 - Their lives are in His Hands
- **Nehemiah 11-12**
 - Is All About Worshiping Jesus
 - Celebrating what God has done for them

• Review – A Running Start

- **Chapter 1-6**

- ALL About - **Rebuilding The WALL**

- **Chapters 7-13**

- **All About - Restoring the PEOPLE**

- We move from Rebuilding the Walls / CITY
 - To Rebuilding the PEOPLE – Spiritually

- **Chapter 7-8**

- The Priority Of God's Word

- **Chapter 9**

- God's Amazing Grace seen in Revival

- **Chapter 10**

- Revival = Covenant Made
 - The people are making a commitment to be SOLD OUT – Taking the Plunge
- The Dedication Was Made Public vv. 1-27
- A Strong Decision Was Made to Obey vv. 28-39
 - 1st Promise Not To Intermarry vv. 28-30
 - 2nd Promise To Not Do Business On The Sabbath v. 31
 - 3rd Promise To Give Support To The Work Of God vv. 32-34
 - 4th Promise To Give Your First Fruits vv. 35-39

• **Now this Morning we will look at 3 POWERFUL TRUTHS to Praise & Give Thanks to God**

- Giving Ourselves To God (11-12:1-26)
- Giving Praise & Thanksgiving For What God Has Done (12:27-43)
- Giving Our Gifts To God (12:44-47)

Giving Ourselves To God (11:1-36 - 12:1-26)

• **First: Context**

- **1st Chapter 11-12 - Gives Us Another List of Names**
 - **So Far in Nehemiah...**
 - Chapter 3
 - Covered who worked on the wall
 - Chapter 7
 - Covered who returned with Zerubbabel
 - Chapter 8
 - Covered who was at the Bible Study
 - Chapter 10
 - Covered 84 men who set their seals to the dedication / covenant
 - Now Chapter 11
 - Covers those who dwelt in Jerusalem
 - **Reason For these List**
 - People are IMPORTANT TO GOD
 - 1st God keeps track of Individuals.

- They're not just people, but individuals.
- God is keeping track of YOU
- 2nd God keeps track of your ministry / sacrifice...
 - God sees everything you have done for HIM
 - He will NEVER forget it

▪ Chapter 11

- This LIST of people are those who were occupying the city and working there
- We will see 5 groups are mentioned
 - Mentioned not because they were famous in Biblical history
 - But each name represents
 - A GROUP that was important in God's Work
- 2nd To Bring One Out of Ten to Dwell in Jerusalem vv. 1-2

Nehemiah 11:1–2 (NKJV)

1 Now the leaders of the people dwelt at Jerusalem; the rest of the people cast lots to bring one out of ten to dwell in Jerusalem, the holy city, and nine-tenths were to dwell in other cities.

2 And the people blessed all the men who willingly offered themselves to dwell at Jerusalem.

▪ 1st Time to Repopulate The City (Jerusalem)

- 1st This was a concern for Nehemiah in Chapter 7

Nehemiah 7:4 (NKJV)

4 Now the city was large and spacious, but the people in it were few, and the houses were not rebuilt.

- Purpose to Repopulate The City
 - Without people living there it would be difficult to defend
 - Who would man the walls, gates, & watchtowers.
- So You See
 - It wasn't enough to see the city walls rebuilt and the spiritual renewal of the people of Jerusalem
 - There had to be people living there
- Application
 - Leadership Quality
 - NEED to see Things before others
 - Many times, a gift from God
 - Sometimes the gift of experience
- 2nd So the GOAL - Get MORE people into the city
 - Review History
 - The City had been laid to waste and pretty much empty for 70 years
 - Now about 50,000 came back Rebuilt the Temple Wall, city
 - But if no one lived in the city it was for nothing
 - Face it – It's also Easier to LIVE in the country

- Been Said
 - God Made a Garden – Man made Cities...
 - A lot of People preferred the country – More Peaceful
 - But we must get people in the city
 - So a lottery was held.
 - Those selected moved to Jerusalem to re-populate the city.
 - NOW Some volunteered to resettle in the capital.
 - These were given special honor by their neighbors & leaders.
- **2nd It was Be a Sacrifice - To dwell at Jerusalem at that time**
 - You had to re-order your view of material things
 - You had to give up land in your previous region and take up some kind of new business in Jerusalem.
 - You had to re-arrange your social priorities
 - Certainly leaving some friends and family behind in your old village.
 - You had to have a mind to endure the problems in the city
 - It had been a ghost town for 70 years, and was now basically a slightly rebuilt, somewhat repopulated ghost town.

- The city didn't look all that glorious and it needed work.
- You had to live knowing you were a **Target for the Enemy**

• **Second: 5 Groups Of People vv. 11:2-12:26**

○ **1st The Volunteers v. 2**

Nehemiah 11:2 (NKJV)

2 And the people blessed all the men who willingly offered themselves to dwell at Jerusalem.

▪ **Yes - There was a draft**

- 1 in 10
- But in the mist of the draft
 - There were those who said WE WANT to be here

▪ **These volunteers are Special to God and the people BLESSED**

- Those who just were willing to show up
 - Be a part of what was going on!
 - The Reality
 - Easy to stay home – kick back
- But God takes note of those who say –
 - Let's go for it without being asked
 - Those who Volunteer to serve – No compensation

- You love the Lord and want to be used – He takes notice

- **Application**

- Churches RUN on Volunteers
 - They see their part in the body and fill it (1 Cor. 12)
- They see a need and say –
 - God has put this on my heart – I will take care of it
- In the Consumer churches
 - Most see needs and ask,
 - Why doesn't someone take care of that?...
- Calvary Chapels
 - Make needs known
 - NEVER push – or at least don't push too hard –
 - Encourage YES – Push NO
 - If you have to be talked into a ministry
 - You can be talked out of it
 - You will also quite as soon as it becomes hard
 - I would prefer to have the volunteers than the 1 in 10
 - People NEED to catch God's VISION

- My life is not my own and learn to serve others
- Not just volunteer for a “duty”
- BUT surrender your life forever and fulfill your ministry

○ **2nd Group those who worked in the Temple v. 10 - The Priest**

Nehemiah 11:10 (NKJV)

10 Of the priests: Jedaiah the son of (JOY uh rib) Joiarib, and (JAY kin) Jachin;

▪ **We See – The Priest who worked in the temple**

- Those who are “PAID” to work in the ministry

▪ **IMPORTANT**

- We understand God purpose in this paid position
 - They served the nation in worshiping God
 - Temple duties
 - Not allowed to own property
 - They were taken care by the rest of the nation
 - Feed / Provided for

▪ **Application –**

- **Paid Pastors in a church**
 - This is where we get our start on this subject
 - But Paul makes it very clear in the NT pastor are to be supported

- **Sadly – There is some confusion as to Pastors Duties**

- 1st The world's Philosophy has crept into the church
 - So Paid means
 - He does ALL the work
 - The body just shows up and enjoys having everything taken care
- 2nd The success / growth of the church depends on the pastor
 - Pastor has to GROW the church that's his job
 - So the pastor better work on skills... it's all about his performance
 - Some treat the church is like it's a small business
 - Pastor better do his job and build the church

- **We see this NO where in the Bible**

- What we see in the Bible
 - The church is a body – Each part must do it share (1 Cor. 12)
 - That the God is really the one that brings growth
 - Through Each part of the body DOING it's SHARE

- **Major Problem when we see the church as a business**
 - When then see the people sitting in the chairs
 - As an Audience
 - Customers that need to be taken care
 - So you better not offend
 - If this pressure is put on pastor
 - This will lead to pastor COMPROMISING to keep the church full!
 - You see we LIVE in a Results-Oriented Society
 - Produce as we have defined succuss or your out
 - Illustration
 - You will even see this at pastor's conferences
 - How people got saved...
 - How many people got baptized...
 - How many new families have you picked up...
 - How big is the congregation / offering
 - You will never hear a pastor give a praise report

- That he preached a message and 5 families walk out
 - Or that there are families in the community that want to run him out of Town...
- Yet when the early church got persecuted
 - THEY PRAISED GOD
- Here is the Biblical order
 - The church is a body
 - Every part does their share – Causes Growth
 - Pastor job briefly
 - FEED
 - Spiritual needs of the sheep (Tend)
 - Equip the saints for the work of ministry
 - Tozer
 - A.W. Tozer pastored for 30 years (1928-1959) but never grew a large church – WHY?!
 - 1st Focus on Spiritual Depth over Numerical Growth
 - Emphasis on Prayer and Personal Relationship with God
 - Tozer was a man of deep prayer, and he prioritized fostering a genuine, personal relationship with God in his ministry.

- This often meant emphasizing personal piety and spiritual disciplines over attracting large crowds through entertainment or social activities. (And this turns many away)

- 2nd Prophetic Ministry

- Tozer was a prophetic voice, often challenging the church to prioritize spiritual depth over worldly trends.
- This might have resonated deeply with some but might not have been as appealing to a broad audience.

- 3rd Focus on Spiritual Content

- His strength lay in the spiritual content and prophetic nature of his messages, rather than showmanship or crowd-pleasing techniques.

- **3rd Those who were working outside the temple vv. 15-16**

Nehemiah 11:15–16 (NKJV)

15 Also of the Levites: (shih MAY yuh) Shemaiah the son of (HASS shuhb) Hasshub, the son of (az RIGH kam) Azrikam, the son of (HASH uh BIGH uh) Hashabiah, the son of (BUHN igh (eye) Bunni;

16 (SHAB ih thigh) Shabbethai and (JAHZ uh bad) Jozabad, of the heads of the Levites, **had the oversight of the business outside of the house of God;**

- **Most People attending a church will work OUTSIDE the church**

- They Lead
 - Children's Ministry
 - Youth Ministry

- Home Group Study
- Worship
- Administrative
- Etc...
- Without these incredible Volunteers churches would fold up!
- **4th Group Prayed with Thanksgiving v. 17**

Nehemiah 11:17 (NKJV)

17 (MAT uh NIGH uh) Mattaniah the son of (MIGH kuh) Micha, the son of (ZAB digh) Zabdi, the son of Asaph, **the leader who began the thanksgiving with prayer;**)BAK byoo KIGH uh) Bakkukiah, the second among his brethren; and Ab-da the son of (SHAM yoo uh) Shammua, the son of (GAY lal) Galal, the son of (jih DYOO thuhn) Jeduthun.

▪ **Prayer Warriors – A GREAT MINISTRY we ALL can DO**

- A church that is not a PRAYING Church is a PLAYING church
 - A church without prayer had LOST Focus and Purpose
- We NEED
 - Corporate Prayer Meeting
 - Meeting here at the church given over to prayer
 - Examples
 - Wednesday Nights – MEN
 - Sunday morning – All church Prayer Meeting
 - Sunday after service - House of Prayer

- People pray at home
 - No one even knows about – Great prayer warriors
- **5th Group – The Singers vv. 22-23**

Nehemiah 11:22–23 (NKJV)

22 Also the overseer of the Levites at Jerusalem was UHZ igh (eye) Uzzi the son of (BAY Nigh) Bani, the son of (HASH uh BIGH uh) Hashabiah, the son of (MAT uh NIGH uh) Mattaniah, the son of Micha, of the sons of Asaph, **the singers in charge of the service of the house of God.**

23 For it was the king's command concerning them that a certain portion should be for the singers, a quota day by day.

- The Worshippers – Important in God's economy

- Those that lead us in worship are a blessing from God

• Third: We learn 2 things from this section

- **1st Your ministry is Marked by God**

Hebrews 6:10 (NKJV)

10 For God is not unjust to forget your work and labor of love which you have shown toward His name, in that you have ministered to the saints, and do minister.

1 Corinthians 15:58 (NKJV)

58 Therefore, my beloved brethren, be steadfast, immovable, always abounding in the work of the Lord, knowing that your labor is not in vain in the Lord.

- So first lesson we are reminded that God Doesn't forget our service

- **2nd Your Rewards**

- Determined not by Fan - Fare – but by Obedience & Faithfulness

- Well done good ...faithful....

Giving Praise & Thanksgiving For What God Has Done (12:27-43)

• **First: Context**

○ **It is time to Dedicate the Wall**

- The wall is built
 - The gates are hung.
 - The City Well defended, beautiful city, filled with people
- It is time to Celebrate

○ **Our Lord is into Celebrations**

- Examples
 - First Miracle – Wedding Feast
 - First Activity after Rapture
 - To be a wedding celebration Not a Funeral
- We As a church need to be CELEBRATING

Psalm 47:1–2 (NKJV)

1 Oh, clap your hands, all you peoples! Shout to God with the voice of triumph!
2 For the LORD Most High is awesome; He is a great King over all the earth.

- Sing Out 116 times in the scriptures
- Rejoice 195 times
- Praise 267 times
- Gladness 48 times

- Shout 48 times
- Listen the Lord likes to see his people celebrating!

• **Second: The Dedication - Celebration vv. 12:27-43**

Nehemiah 12:27–30 (NKJV)

27 *Now at the dedication of the wall of Jerusalem they sought out the Levites in all their places, to bring them to Jerusalem to celebrate the dedication with gladness, both with thanksgivings and singing, with cymbals and stringed instruments and harps.*

28 *And the sons of the singers gathered together from the countryside around Jerusalem, from the villages of the (nih TAHF uh thigh) Netophathites,*

29 *from the house of Gilgal, and from the fields of Ge-ba and (AZ may veth) Azmaveth; for the singers had built themselves villages all around Jerusalem.*

30 *Then the priests and Levites purified themselves, and purified the people, the gates, and the wall.*

○ **1st They sought out the Levites in all their places, to bring them to Jerusalem vv. 27-29**

▪ **The Levites had many responsibilities in Israel**

- But one of the most important jobs that they had was to lead the people in songs of worship and praise to God!

▪ **To celebrate the dedication with gladness, both with thanksgivings and singing**

- More often they sang with musical instruments.
- Here cymbals and stringed instruments and harps are specifically mentioned.
- There are at least twenty-two different musical instruments mentioned in the Bible, including the harp, the lyre (an ancient guitar), horns, trumpets, flutes, tambourines, drums, cymbals, and bells.

○ **2nd NOTE - Several key ingredients in this worship service**

- **1st Before they started they purified themselves v. 30**

Nehemiah 12:30 (NKJV)

30 *Then the priests and Levites purified themselves, and purified the people, the gates, and the wall.*

- **There was a ritual of purification that would have involved the offering up of a Sacrifice**
 - They Purified themselves so that they could Worship & Rejoice
- **Application - NOW We DON'T need to offer a Sacrifice to Worship & Rejoice**
 - Because we have been purified
 - The Work of Christ – Position Purified – Righteous today in God's eyes
 - Now Practically – we still sin –
 - But God has made it so simple for us to be cleansed again –
 - Confess your failings, your sins, your mistakes. Admit them. Do not hide them.
 - Do not blame somebody else for them. Do not gloss them over. Confess them. Faithful to forgive & cleanse
 - 1 John 1:9
 - Come as You are – BUT REPENT
 - GO TO CHURCH ANYWAY
 - If you're having sex before marriage, go to church anyway.

- If you are a drug addict trying to beat addiction, go to church anyway.
- If you were out drunk all night the night before, go to church anyway.
- If you aren't sure what gender you prefer, go to church anyway.
- If you can't quit that disgusting habit, go to church anyway.
- CHURCH is a HOSPITAL for the BROKEN, LOST, EMPTY, CONFUSED, DESPERATE, and REJECTED.
- Every sinner has a future, and every saint has a past.
- How do we break the chains of addiction and bondage?
- By prayer...
- Prayer for you.
- Prayer with you!
- There isn't a single person in the 4 walls of the church that doesn't have something they hate or regret about their past.
- We've all made mistakes and will continue to
- BUT His Grace is enough.
- There are things that I'd never want to admit out loud about myself, but God knows.
- And He loves me nonetheless.

- So whatever you've done, whatever you're doing, whatever you will do... it might just change your life if...
- YOU GO TO CHURCH ANYWAY.

▪ **2nd Aspect of their Celebration is that it was marked by Joy v. 27**

Nehemiah 12:27 (NKJV)

27 Now at the dedication of the wall of Jerusalem they sought out the Levites in all their places, to bring them to Jerusalem to celebrate the dedication with gladness, both with thanksgivings and singing, with cymbals and stringed instruments and harps.

▪ **GLADNESS / JOY**

- In Verse 27, "The Levites brought to Jerusalem to celebrate joyfully"

▪ **Note that the emphasis was on joyful praise on the part of all the people.**

- Singing is mentioned 8 times in this chapter
- Thanksgiving 7 times
- Rejoicing 7 times
- Musical instruments 3 times.

▪ **True celebration is the expression of joy.**

- A general attitude of joy ought to characterize all Christians.
 - But It is amazing to me how many Christians never appear to be joyful.

- Weirsbe; “Some Christians look like they have been soaked in embalming fluid!”

- There are times of sorrow and sadness, of course
 - BUT Christians ought frequently to exude a sense of joy because we have something to be joyful about.
 - We have been set free – We are Purified

- **3rd Aspect of their celebration was that they marched on and around the wall vv. 31-43**

Nehemiah 12:31–43 (NKJV)

31 So I brought the leaders of Judah up on the wall, and appointed two large thanksgiving choirs. One went to the right hand on the wall toward the Refuse Gate.

32 After them went Hoshaiah and half of the leaders of Judah,

33 and Azariah, Ezra, Meshullam,

34 Judah, Benjamin, Shemaiah, Jeremiah,

35 and some of the priests' sons with trumpets—Zechariah the son of Jonathan, the son of Shemaiah, the son of Mattaniah, the son of Michaiah, the son of Zaccur, the son of Asaph,

36 and his brethren, Shemaiah, Azarel, Milalai, Gilalai, Maai, Nethanel, Judah, and Hanani, with the musical instruments of David the man of God. And Ezra the scribe went before them.

37 By the Fountain Gate, in front of them, they went up the stairs of the City of David, on the stairway of the wall, beyond the house of David, as far as the Water Gate eastward.

38 The other thanksgiving choir went the opposite way, and I was behind them with half of the people on the wall, going past the Tower of the Ovens as far as the Broad Wall,

39 and above the Gate of Ephraim, above the Old Gate, above the Fish Gate, the Tower of Hananel, the Tower of the Hundred, as far as the Sheep Gate; and they stopped by the Gate of the Prison.

40 So the two thanksgiving choirs stood in the house of God, likewise I and the half of the rulers with me;

41 and the priests, Eliakim, Maaseiah, Minjamin, Michaiah, Elioenai, Zechariah, and Hananiah, with trumpets;

42 also Maaseiah, Shemaiah, Eleazar, Uzzi, Jehohanan, Malchijah, Elam, and Ezer. **The singers sang loudly** with Jezrahiah the director.

43 **Also that day they offered great sacrifices, and rejoiced, for God had made them rejoice with great joy; the women and the children also rejoiced, so that the joy of Jerusalem was heard afar off.**

- **Two Choirs**

- One led by Ezra
- The other by Nehemiah
- They split up and go in opposite directions singing on the wall – marching – ending up at the Temple

- **By marching on the walls**

- The people had an opportunity to see the results of their labors
 - They had a Chance to see what God had done
 - Show that foxes would not break the wall ☺

Giving Our Gifts To God (12:44-47)

- **First: Some were appointed v. 44**

Nehemiah 12:44 (NKJV)

44 And at the same time some were appointed over the rooms of the storehouse for the offerings, the firstfruits, and the tithes, to gather into them from the fields of the cities the portions specified by the Law for the priests and Levites; for Judah rejoiced over the priests and Levites who ministered.

- **1st This was a day of giving.**

- People brought their offerings, firstfruits, tithes to the storehouse of the Levites
 - Just as they promised to do (10:32-39)

- **2nd Some of the Levites were appointed to supervise the collecting of the produce and the storing of it in the temple.**

- Keep in mind that these tithes and offerings represented the support of the temple workers so that they could serve the Lord.

- **Second: Kept the charge of their God and the charge of the purification vv. 45-46**

Nehemiah 12:45–46 (NKJV)

45 Both the singers and the gatekeepers kept the charge of their God and the charge of the purification, according to the command of David and Solomon his son.

46 For in the days of David and Asaph of old there were chiefs of the singers, and songs of praise and thanksgiving to God.

- **This was a day of purity.**

- It was an ongoing concern, not a one-time ceremony.

- **Third: They also consecrated holy things for the Levites v. 47**

Nehemiah 12:47 (NKJV)

47 In the days of Zerubbabel and in the days of Nehemiah all Israel gave the portions for the singers and the gatekeepers, a portion for each day. They also consecrated holy things for the Levites, and the Levites consecrated them for the children of Aaron.

- **It was a day of consecration.**

- Holy things were set apart for the Levites, speaking of the separation unto God.

Closing

- Worship Of God Involves

- Giving Ourselves To God (11-12:1-26)
- Giving Praise & Thanksgiving For What God has Done (12:27-43)
- Giving Our Gifts To God (12:44-47)

Communion

- First: Remember (Looking Back at what Jesus did)
- Second: Repent / Reflect (Looking Within) 1 Cor. 11:27-28
- Third: Rejoice (Looking Forward) 1 Cor. 11:26
- Fourth: Reconcile (Looking Around) 1 Cor. 11:29, 33-34

1 Corinthians 11:23–26 (NKJV)

23 *For I received from the Lord that which I also delivered to you: that the Lord Jesus on the same night in which He was betrayed took bread;*

24 *and when He had given thanks, He broke it and said, “Take, eat; this is My body which is broken for you; do this in remembrance of Me.”*

25 *In the same manner He also took the cup after supper, saying, “This cup is the new covenant in My blood. This do, as often as you drink it, in remembrance of Me.”*

26 *For as often as you eat this bread and drink this cup, you proclaim the Lord’s death till He comes.*