

REBUILDING JERUSALEM. NEH. 11. 2/23/25. #19.

11 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. ³ These *are* the heads of the province who dwelt in Jerusalem. (But in the cities of Judah everyone dwelt in his own possession in their cities—Israelites, priests, Levites, Nethinim, and descendants of Solomon's servants.) ⁴ Also in Jerusalem dwelt *some* of the children of Judah and of the children of Benjamin... ²⁰ And the rest of Israel, of the priests *and* Levites, *were* in all the cities of Judah, everyone in his inheritance. ²¹ But the Nethinim dwelt in Ophel. And Ziba and Gishpa *were* over the Nethinim. ²² Also the overseer of the Levites at Jerusalem *was* Uzzi the son of Bani, the son of Hashabiah, the son of 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. ²⁴ Pethahiah the son of Meshezabel, of the children of Zerah the son of Judah, *was* the *king's* deputy in all matters concerning the people.

1. Reordering Jerusalem

- a. Jerusalem faced several problems
 - a1. There were enemies all around them
 - a2. They recommitted themselves to God, but had a long history of rebellion & faltering
 - a3. The city walls were rebuilt on a smaller scale, but its inhabitants were few
- b. During King Josiah's time the space inside the walls was about 500 acres with app. 20,000 people
 - a1. Nehemiah's walls only covered 125 acres with a population of 4,800
 - a2. The city barely covered the needs of the temple, but was woefully short on both defense & necessary craftsmen
- c. Nehemiah set about repopulating the city
 - a1. Every Levite & priest were to live in the city (there were 4 times as many priests as Levites, 1,192 vs. 285)
 - a2. All the Nethinim who provided labor for the temple were to live on Ophel (northern most hill of Jer.; Zion, Ariel, Moriah)
 - a3. 1 in 10 inhabitants were chosen by lot

- b1. These would move to Jerusalem
- b2. The burned out city was not choice real estate at this time

- a4. There were volunteers who moved into Jerusalem who would help protect the city (2ce as many Benjaminites as Jews)

- d. Josephus records that Neh. paid to build the houses for the priests & Levites from his own \$

2. The makeup of Jerusalem

- a. 3 prominent tribes at center: Judah, Levi; Benjamin
 - a1. 1 Chron. 9 records other tribes
 - a2. All the leaders were to live in Jerusalem
- b. 1 Chrn. 9 lists other names & tribes
 - a1. Every necessary craftsman were there
 - a2. The volunteers were praised by the people, but did they help them?
- c. The king provided funds for the singers, so they could beseech God on his behalf (Ezra 6:10)
 - a1. Persian kings had respect for the gods of other nations, so encouraged the worship in those nations
 - a2. The king wanted the favor of deity
- d. The rest of the population lived outside Jerusalem, often going to their ancestral homes
 - a1. Some moved to Kiriath Arba (Hebron, city of the 4 *giants*) some 20 miles south of Jer.
 - a2. Some moved as far as Beersheba, 40 mi. s.

3. Day of small beginnings

- a. From this very small start Judea & Jer. grows into the major province during Jesus' time 500 yrs. later
- b. Both Haggai (ch. 2) & Neh. (ch. 9) point out that the restart was inglorious compared to Solomon's day
 - a1. Dan. 10 Daniel was concerned about the lackluster response of Jews to return
 - a2. Acts 2 God does not need great numbers to do great things (Gideon)
- c. God took individuals & started great works (Paul, Hudson Taylor, Adoniram Judson, Mary Slessor...)
- d. Individuals directed by God can do great things