

This evening, we're looking at the book of Nehemiah, Nehemiah chapter 11. And as we approach the word of our God, let's go to our God together in prayer. Our Father, we praise you for the truth and the power of your word. We know that each and every passage of your word is truly inspired and is profitable. And we pray that you would use this passage in our lives. Father, we ask that you would give us grace, much grace to me as I needed in reading many difficult names and grace to us as we hear and receive your word in many names that we would understand your good and your great purposes. We ask for your spirit's help. We come to you in our savior's name and for his glory we pray, amen. Tonight we're looking at Nehemiah, Nehemiah chapter 11, the word of our God. Now the leaders of the people lived in Jerusalem and the rest of the people cast lots to bring one out of 10 to live in the city, excuse me, to live in Jerusalem, the holy city, while nine of 10 remained in the other towns. And the people blessed all the men who willingly offered to live in Jerusalem. These are the chiefs of the province who lived in Jerusalem, but in the towns of Judah, everyone lived on his property. In their towns, Israel, the priests, the Levites, the temple servants, and the descendants of Solomon's servants. And in Jerusalem lived certain of the sons of Judah and of the sons of Benjamin, of the sons of Judah. Athaiah, the son of Uzziah, the son of Zechariah, the son of Amariah, the son of Shiptetiah, the son of Mahaal, the sons of Perez, and Maasaiah, the son of Baruch, the son of Colhazen, the son of Hazaiah, son of Adaiah, son of Joyadarib, son of Zechariah, son of Shilloneite, The sons of Perez who lived in Jerusalem were 468 valiant men. And these are the sons of Benjamin, Salu, the son of Meshulam, the son of Joab, the son of Padiah, the son of Kaliah, the son of Masaiah, the son of Ithiel, the son of Jesaiah, and his brothers, the men of valor, 928. Joel, the son of Zechariah, was their overseer, and Judah, the son of Hasenu, was second over the city. Of the priest, Judiah, the son of Joarib, Jachin and Saraiah, the son of Hilkiah, son of Meshulam, the son of Zadok, the son of Merioth, the son of Ahitab, ruler of the house of God, and their brothers who did the work of the house, 822. And Adaiah, the son of Jehoram, son of Peleiah, son of Amzi, the son of Zechariah, son of Pashur, the son of Machijah and his brothers, heads of the father's houses. And Amasiah, the son of Azarel, son of Ahazzi, son of Nebuchadnezzar, Mesh-hil-amoth, son of Im-mer, and their brothers, mighty men of valor, 128. Their overseer was Zab-diel, son of Hage-dolem. And of the Levites, Shemaiah, son of Hashab, son of Azrikam, son of Hashabiah, son of Buni, or Buni, and Shabathiah. And Jezebel of the chiefs of the Levites, who were over the outside work of the house of

God. And Mataniah, the son of Micah,  
the son of Zabdi, the son of Asaph, who was the leader of  
the praise, who gave thanks. And Bakukiah, the second among  
his brothers. And Adah, the son of Shammuah,  
Son of a... Gagel, son of Jeduthun, all the  
Levites in the holy city were 284. The gatekeepers, Akub, Tamon,  
and their brothers who kept watch at the gates were 172. And the  
rest of Israel and of the priests and the Levites were in all the  
towns of Judah, everyone in his inheritance. But the temple servants  
lived on. Aphel and Zihah and Gishpah were  
over the temple servants. The overseer of the Levites in  
Jerusalem was Uzzi son of Banai, son of Hashabiah, Hashabiah. son of Mata, Naya, son  
of Micah,  
sons of Ashraf, the singers over the work of the house of God. For there was a  
command from  
the king concerning them and a fixed provision for the singers  
as every day required. "'And Pethahiah, son of Mesh-hezabel,  
son of Zerah, "'the son of Judah, was at the king's side "'in all  
matters concerning the people. "'And as for the villages with  
their fields, "'some of the people of Judah live in Keriath-arba,  
"'in its villages, and in Debon, in its villages, "'and in Zechazel,  
Jacobzel, in its villages, and in Jeshua, and in Mola Doth,  
and Beth Pellet, and in Hazar Sha'al, and Beersheba in its  
villages, in Zikling, and in, and in, and in, and in, in Makona  
and its villages, in Imremon, and in Zorah, in Jarmuth, Zanath,  
Adulam and their villages, Wakesh and its fields, and Azakah and  
its villages. And they encamped from Beersheba  
to the valley of Hinden, And the people of Benjamin also live  
from Geba onward to Mishmash, Ajai, Bethel and its villages,  
Anathoth, Nab, Ananiah, Hazor, Ramath, Gitaim, Hadid, and certain  
divisions of the Levites and Judah were assigned to Benjamin. But we find here that  
God is  
faithful. God is faithful to his word of  
promise. Now, we're not used to passages  
with all these names. I saw a couple of you, if it  
weren't for my bad pronunciation, you would have been asleep because  
we're not used to the names. But to the people of God in this  
day, finding their name, And the list among those had returned  
to the land and were now to live in Jerusalem and in the villages  
and towns surrounding the capital city was very significant. You see, God keeps his  
word,  
not a promise of his falls to the ground. What he promises,  
he fulfills. What he says, he will keep. That is one thing you can bank  
on. You can't bank on the stock market. You can't bank without flaw on  
the gold market or the bond market or the price. of grain, but we  
can trust that what God has said, he will fulfill. And one of the  
great blessings of the covenant is that the giver of the covenant  
has chosen to give land to his people. For the Lord himself  
ultimately is their portion. He is our satisfaction, but in  
the Lord Jesus, he too has given us blessing upon blessing. And we find this gift of

land

referred to several times in our Bibles. Think of the way in which the way in which Abram, in the book of Genesis, God came to him, you know, leave your country, your people and your father's household and go to the land that I show you. And then the Lord appeared again to Abram and said to him, a few verses later in Genesis chapter 12, to your offspring, or the word seed, I will give this land. And then the Lord entered into a covenant with Abram. And he said, this is sometime later, now in Genesis 15, to your descendants, I will give this land from the wadi of Egypt to the great river, the Euphrates, the land of the Kenites, the Kenizzites, the Kadamites, the Hittites, the Perizzites, the Raphaites, that's a type of misspell, a mispronunciation. The Amorites, the Canaanites, the Jurgisites, and the Jebusites, all the ites, they are promised to give the land of these people. And the Lord promised to give this promise, not only to Abraham, but to his descendants after him, those who would follow. He confirmed this promise of the gift of land. Think of Isaac. He gave a promise in Genesis chapter 26, verse three. And then to Isaac's son, Jacob in 28, verse 13. In terms of the land on which you are lying, he promised to give him the land. And Jacob, as we know, was later renamed Israel. And his descendants would be called the children of Israel or the 12 tribes of Israel. And that's just the book of Genesis.

Consider the book of Exodus, the land flowing as a land with milk and honey. It's a remarkable thing. The Lord promises, I will establish your borders in Exodus chapter 23. from the Red Sea to the Mediterranean Sea, from the desert to the Euphrates River, I will give into your hands the people who live in the land and you will drive them out before you. And do not make a covenant with them or with their gods. Do not let them live in your land or they will cause you to sin against me because they worship their gods and their gods will be a snare to you. And it continues, even into the book of Deuteronomy, where the Lord confirmed his promise of the gift of land, if his people would be faithful in the covenant. But we find that the people were not faithful. They did not love and obey the Lord. They married Canaanites, the pagans, all these different ites of people who served other gods. And they worshiped these other gods instead of the true and living God. And the Lord promised them most reluctantly, but tenderly he warned them that if they disobeyed, that they would be removed from the land. And that is what we find in the scriptures, in the great Exodus of their being taken captive. And it's a more involved story than I'm saying, but we don't have time for all of it tonight. And now we find the people back in the land. They've been brought back and

they have rebuilt the temple. And God has called them to repopulate the land. But I wanna jump ahead. We looked a little bit back in the history of the Bible. Sometimes it's helpful to go beyond where you are in a passage and see a New Testament understanding of the lines of promise that you find. For the apostle Paul speaks of this promise, this promise to Abraham. He understands that there was indeed not many seeds, but there was one seed. And that seed is Christ himself. The promises in Galatians chapter two, Galatians chapter three, the promises were spoken to Abraham and to his seed. Scripture does not say, and to seeds, meaning many people, but to your seed, meaning one person who is Christ. And so we have the promise that this land And this promise of generations ultimately finds its fulfillment in the person and in the work of Jesus Christ and in the community of those who have faith in Christ. We find also in the New Testament reference to those who had gone before in the book of Hebrews chapter 11. And after listing the many who live faithfully before God with courage and full of obedience, we read, these all died in faith, not having received the things promised, but having seen them and greeted them from afar and having acknowledged that they were strangers and exiles on the earth. For people who seek thus make it clear that they are seeking a homeland. And if they had been thinking of that land from which they had gone out, they would have had opportunity to return. But as it is, they desire a better country that is a heavenly one. Therefore, God is not ashamed to be called their God as he has prepared them for a city. And then we come to our final book of the Bible, where indeed there is a city. Heaven itself is described as the city of God. Indeed a place where there is no temple for it is a temple of the presence of God. And it is a land of promise to all who trust in Jesus Christ. God keeps his promises. He keeps his word. So far in our study in the book of Nehemiah, in chapters one to six, we've learned about the construction project of rebuilding the walls. In the last few weeks, especially in chapters eight through 10, we've seen the rebuilding of the people, that their lives would be built on the truth of the Lord and in covenant love and fellowship and faithfulness to the Lord. And now after God has so, after they have renewed themselves to the Lord and given themselves to the worship of his great name, it's so interesting that now the gift of land, is spoken of, and the people go in to live and to dwell in this place, that people who have given themselves, who are set aside from the nations, that they might worship the Lord, that they might live for His glory and praise. And here we're given a description. of that city and of that land. We learn in the opening two verses of this chapter, something of the leaders. There's great intention

in establishing godly, good leaders, that these were leaders who were committed to the Lord and to His word, and to the covenant that they had sworn that they would give themselves to follow and to worship the Lord. Even as we read last week, that they would give themselves on the Sabbath, on the holy day to the Lord. And they obligated themselves to their commitments to worship the Lord, to bring to the house of the Lord what he had called, but also to worship him and to bring him their joyful, grateful praise. And so we find here leaders, people who are willing to serve, those who made a sacrifice to live in the city of Jerusalem and help defend it from would-be attackers. It may not seem a sacrifice to go and to live in the city, the capital city of Jerusalem, But we read later that in the different villages, we're in verse 25, as for the villages with their fields is where the family land was. They left their farms, they left their work to go into the city. Now, I know some people love to go to a big, big city, but the people of God here are agricultural people. They have farms, they have land, they have families on these farms and these lands. And it was considered a real, a sacrifice of honor and devoted love to the Lord to be a leader in the city of Jerusalem. But we learned something else here about the repopulation of the city. And that is in addition to the leaders, there was a system in which one out of 10 of the people would be selected to also live in We read, and the rest of the people cast lots to bring one out of 10 to live in Jerusalem, the holy city, with nine out of 10 remained in the other towns. There's a few references in the Old Testament to the casting of lots. The book of Proverbs makes a reference to this and how that God is altogether sovereign in the outcome of the casting of a die. And we find even some references in the New Testament when important decisions were made. But while it was a valid practice at that time, God has now given us his word. He's given us his own spirit who illumines our minds with the scriptures and gives us an ability to make decisions. And we are not to be casting lots and making decisions for our lives today. But it was what was appropriate at this time in the revelation of scripture. And by the casting of lots, one out of 10 made their way. And this was something the casting of the lots made it to be something ordered by God. It wasn't favorable to one tribe over another. It's something that also led to a lack of promoting discord among the people. or people politicking for their own kinfolk or family to have a greater place in the capital city. It all worked out for the common good. And the concern here is for the glory and honor of the Lord, not for personal prestige or power. How important that is with Christ's people and in Christ's church today. It is what we do, we want to do for the honor and the praise of the Lord. It isn't about you,

it isn't about me. It's ultimately about our Savior and honoring Him and worshiping Him and delighting in Him. And these lots removed any impartiality. It was a self-denial for God's glory. And in this list, there are a number of other interesting features we read of the descendants of Perez and Zareph who were It's a very sad chapter in the life of God's people. In Genesis 28, you can read that later on your own, but it demonstrates how God brought good out of evil, that he is the one who is at work. that he is greater than sin, that he's accomplishing things for his glory is such a great and a glorious reminder. As we think about our lives, we need to remember that God is a God who keeps his word. that the promises that he has made that are not yet fulfilled will most certainly be fulfilled. The promises we read of the coming, the return of our triumphant savior will come to pass. God's promised blessings to his people and judgment on the wicked The promise of our one day having glorified bodies and even the very presence of sin being removed from us. The promise that we'll be with Him forever in unbroken fellowship and glory with all who have gone before. We too are called to be a people who live according to his word, his word of promise. And just as these brothers and sisters began to enter into a portion of that promise, as the city of Jerusalem is repopulated, along with the surrounding towns and villages set up to be repopulated outside of the city of Jerusalem, We too are to know that God will accomplish his good and his great purposes, that he's even able to use the adversity, perhaps even the sin of yesterday to bring glory to his name for today and tomorrow and for all eternity. Well, let's give him our praise. Let's go to him and extol him that we might praise him for who he is, for all that he has done and for his majestic character. So let's come to him with joyful praise in our minds and from our hearts. Let's pray to the Lord together as Scotty Crawford leads us off.