

May 26th, 2022AM- Pastor Kevin Olivier

Nehemiah 3 – “God Takes Note”

- A. Scripture tells us that God keeps note of the doings of every man, woman, & child who ever lived.
1. **Rev 20** tells us that all the dead, great & small, will stand before God who will sit upon His great white throne of judgment.
 - a. Books will be opened; in particular *the book* of life will be opened.
 - b. Everyone will be **“judged from the things which were written in the books, according to their deeds” (v12).**
 2. Today’s text records some of the things God took note of during the days of Nehemiah as he led his fellow Israelites to rebuild the walls of Jerusalem.
- B. Because the good hand of God was upon Nehemiah (**2:8**), King Artaxerxes released him from his duties as **“cupbearer to the king” (1:11)** to go & serve as governor for approximately 12 years to help rebuild the walls of Jerusalem. After inspecting the wall at night, he convinced his countrymen to get to work.

How we are to labor for the kingdom of God.	I. <u>HOW THE WORK WAS DONE</u> II. <u>WHO DID THE WORK</u>
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I. HOW THE WORK WAS DONE

- A. There are at least 6 examples of people making repairs in front of, beside, or opposite their homes.
1. This was a wise decision on Nehemiah’s part.
 2. Working besides their homes was essential for each father to be ready & present to defend his family in case of an invasion. The necessity for such defense becomes more evident in **Neh 4**.
 3. Just as God ordained the Jewish people to have work beside their dwellings, consider whether or not God has ordained kingdom work in the area where you live.
 - a. Some feel more comfortable going overseas to witness Christ in a foreign land for a summer mission trip. Why not witness Christ where He has presently planted you?
 - b. Seek to make an influence for Christ in your present calling or occupation.
- B. For the vast majority of the Jews, they worked with great diligence.
1. Baruch in **v20** reportedly worked **“zealously.”** He was not alone.
 2. **Neh 4:6** says that, **“the people had a mind to work.”**
- C. Their motivation to work was for their own safety— their own, direct benefit.
1. Those who endured hard labor under Solomon complained to their new king— Solomon’s son Rehoboam (**1 Ki 12:4**).
 2. Each section of wall added protection to their families & for the section of the city where each family labored.
- D. Like these saints of old who endured strenuous labor in lifting & moving heavy, large stones & mortar, God remembers your labors for the sake of His kingdom. → Turn to **Heb 6:9-12**.

II. WHO DID THE WORK

A. This chapter tells us how people of every walk of life— virtually every occupation did the very strenuous work on the wall.

1. Those who labored included priests (**vv1 & 22**), goldsmiths (**vv8 & 31**), perfumers (**v8**), governing officials (**vv12 & 14-19**), Levites (**v17**), & temple servants (**v26**).
 - a. This is only the list of occupations chapter 3 mentioned. Those of many other callings were involved in the work.
 - b. Many had to work outside of their skillset or area of expertise.
 - c. This was no doubt possible because of skilled foremen who supervised the work, giving necessary training where it was needed.
 - d. God calls you to move outside of your comfort level to do what is necessary.
2. This text is a lovely example of religious & political leaders (“officials”) being willing to labor besides others in strenuous, physical labor.
 - a. Jesus said in **Mat 20:26-28**: **“whoever wishes to become great among you shall be your servant, & whoever wishes to be first among you shall be your slave; just as the Son of Man did not come to be served, but to serve, & to give His life a ransom for many.”**
 - b. A pastor or governor should never think he is beyond getting his hands dirty or getting outside to sweat for this sake of those whom he serves.
 - c. Some pastors forget this. The word “minister” in the OT & NT is often translated as “servant” when used as a noun.

B. In **Neh 3:12** **“Shallum... the official of half the district of Jerusalem, made repairs, he & his daughters.”**

1. I often cite scholars to help bring light & help support my interstation. Today, I am citing a negative example of what Spence & Jones wrote: “It seems to be almost impossible that women were pressed into the service, especially when it was one of so much danger (ch. 4:13–21).”¹
3. We should take **v12** at face value. You have to do bible-gymnastics to get around the fact that women worked on the wall of Jerusalem.

C. There is one example of Tekoite **“nobles”** who **“did not support the work”** (**v5**).

1. **Prov 10:26**: **“Like vinegar to the teeth & smoke to the eyes, so is the lazy one to those who send him.”** I am sure Nehemiah experienced great aggravation with these men.
2. Nehemiah took note & so did the Lord to record this for all of God’s saints to read for thousands of years.
3. So that you don’t get the impression that all the **“nobles”** or rulers were lazy, of the occupations mentioned prior as laboring to rebuild the wall, the **“officials”** (i.e. governing officials) make up the largest group.

Review, further application, & conclusion:

- Fruitful soil that receives the Word produces fruit (**Mat 13**).
- **Eph 2:10**: **“For we are His workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared beforehand so that we should walk in them.”**

¹ Spence-Jones, H. D. M., ed. (1909). [Nehemiah](#) (p. 28). Funk & Wagnalls Company.