

April 7, 2019

U Turn Nehemiah 12:44-13:31 Pastor Kirk Gambrell

Vol. 9 Num. 14

Using This Study

❶ EXAMINE His Word

What does God SAY? Open your time with prayer. The words God uses to communicate matters, so go back and pay close attention to the details that are emphasized or repeated in the passage.

❷ EXPLORE His Word

What does God MEAN? Asking questions of the text helps surface how the details relate to the message God wants to communicate.

❸ EMBRACE His Word

Why does it MATTER to me? Embrace God by responding to what you discover in His word in faith and obedience.



This week we will look at the last section of Nehemiah. The wall has been built, the worship of God has been restored and, the people have celebrated the great work that God has done. Then Nehemiah leaves to return to the king. While he is gone the people forget the oath that they made in chapter 10. They forsake the house of God, they forget the Sabbath and, they marry foreign women. When Nehemiah returns he gives a harsh rebuke and draws the people back to God. In this last chapter we see the Old Testament cycle of sin abbreviated because of Nehemiah's return. When Nehemiah rebukes them they are able to turn back to God before more severe consequences. Join us this week as we see the people turn back to God and remember that God is always ready for us to turn back to Him. We can have confidence in God's lovingkindness and forgiveness.



Nehemiah 12:44-13:31 (NASB)

⁴⁴ On that day men were also appointed over the chambers for the stores, the contributions, the first fruits and the tithes, to gather into them from the fields of the cities the portions required by the law for the priests and Levites; for Judah rejoiced over the priests and Levites who served. ⁴⁵ For they performed the worship of their God and the service of purification, together with the singers and the gatekeepers in accordance with the command of David *and* of his son Solomon. ⁴⁶ For in the days of David and Asaph, in ancient times, *there were* leaders of the singers, songs of praise and hymns of thanksgiving to God. ⁴⁷ So all Israel in the days of Zerubbabel and Nehemiah gave the portions due the singers and the gatekeepers as each day required, and set apart the consecrated *portion* for the Levites, and the Levites set apart the consecrated *portion* for the sons of Aaron.

Foreigners Excluded

13 On that day they read aloud from the book of Moses in the hearing of the people; and there was found written in it that no Ammonite or Moabite should ever enter the assembly of God, ² because they did not meet the sons of Israel with bread and water, but hired Balaam against them to curse them. However, our God turned the curse into a blessing. ³ So when they heard the

law, they excluded all foreigners from Israel.

Tobiah Expelled and the Temple Cleansed

⁴ Now prior to this, Eliashib the priest, who was appointed over the chambers of the house of our God, being related to Tobiah, ⁵ had prepared a large room for him, where formerly they put the grain offerings, the frankincense, the utensils and the tithes of grain, wine and oil prescribed for the Levites, the singers and the gatekeepers, and the contributions for the priests. ⁶ But during all this *time* I was not in Jerusalem, for in the thirty-second year of Artaxerxes king of Babylon I had gone to the king. After some time, however, I asked leave from the king, ⁷ and I came to Jerusalem and learned about the evil that Eliashib had done for Tobiah, by preparing a room for him in the courts of the house of God. ⁸ It was very displeasing to me, so I threw all of Tobiah's household goods out of the room. ⁹ Then I gave an order and they cleansed the rooms; and I returned there the utensils of the house of God with the grain offerings and the frankincense.

Tithes Restored

¹⁰ I also discovered that the portions of the Levites had not been given *them*, so that the Levites and the singers who performed the service had gone away, each to his own field. ¹¹ So

I reprimanded the officials and said, "Why is the house of God forsaken?" Then I gathered them together and restored them to their posts. ¹²All Judah then brought the tithe of the grain, wine and oil into the storehouses. ¹³In charge of the storehouses I appointed Shelemiah the priest, Zadok the scribe, and Pedaiah of the Levites, and in addition to them was Hanan the son of Zaccur, the son of Mattaniah; for they were considered reliable, and it was their task to distribute to their kinsmen. ¹⁴Remember me for this, O my God, and do not blot out my loyal deeds which I have performed for the house of my God and its services.

Sabbath Restored

¹⁵In those days I saw in Judah some who were treading wine presses on the sabbath, and bringing in sacks of grain and loading *them* on donkeys, as well as wine, grapes, figs and all kinds of loads, and they brought *them* into Jerusalem on the sabbath day. So I admonished *them* on the day they sold food. ¹⁶Also men of Tyre were living there *who* imported fish and all kinds of merchandise, and sold *them* to the sons of Judah on the sabbath, even in Jerusalem. ¹⁷Then I reprimanded the nobles of Judah and said to them, "What is this evil thing you are doing, by profaning the sabbath day? ¹⁸Did not your fathers do the same, so that our God brought on us and on this city all this trouble? Yet you are adding to the wrath

on Israel by profaning the sabbath."

¹⁹It came about that just as it grew dark at the gates of Jerusalem before the sabbath, I commanded that the doors should be shut and that they should not open them until after the sabbath. Then I stationed some of my servants at the gates *so that* no load would enter on the sabbath day. ²⁰Once or twice the traders and merchants of every kind of merchandise spent the night outside Jerusalem. ²¹Then I warned them and said to them, "Why do you spend the night in front of the wall? If you do so again, I will use force against you." From that time on they did not come on the sabbath. ²²And I commanded the Levites that they should purify themselves and come as gatekeepers to sanctify the sabbath day. *For this also remember me, O my God, and have compassion on me according to the greatness of Your lovingkindness.*

Mixed Marriages Forbidden

²³In those days I also saw that the Jews had married women from Ashdod, Ammon *and* Moab. ²⁴As for their children, half spoke in the language of Ashdod, and none of them was able to speak the language of Judah, but the language of his own people. ²⁵So I contended with them and cursed them and struck some of them and pulled out their hair, and made them swear by God, "You shall not give your daughters to their sons, nor take of their daughters for

your sons or for yourselves.²⁶ Did not Solomon king of Israel sin regarding these things? Yet among the many nations there was no king like him, and he was loved by his God, and God made him king over all Israel; nevertheless the foreign women caused even him to sin. ²⁷ Do we then hear about you that you have committed all this great evil by acting unfaithfully against our God by marrying foreign women?" ²⁸ Even one of the sons of Joiada, the son of Eliashib the high priest, was a son-in-law of Sanballat the Horonite, so I drove him away from me. ²⁹ Remember them, O my

God, because they have defiled the priesthood and the covenant of the priesthood and the Levites.

³⁰ Thus I purified them from everything foreign and appointed duties for the priests and the Levites, each in his task, ³¹ and *I arranged* for the supply of wood at appointed times and for the first fruits. Remember me, O my God, for good.

● EXAMINE His Word (Observation) (For personal preparation)

What does God SAY? Prayerfully note significant details and terms emphasized in the foregoing passage.

1. Who is involved in the text? Author, audience, main characters.
2. Where and when is this taking place? Geography and timeline.
3. What actions are carried out or commanded? Look for the verbs.
4. Is there anything repeated?

5. What is emphasized?

6. Is there anything in these passages that is related to other areas of scripture?

7. Are there things to be noted that are alike or unlike such as similes and metaphors?

🕒 EXPLORE His Word (Interpretation) (For Community Group discussion)
What does God MEAN?

8. Why did Eliashib the priest give Tobiah a room in and why is this a bad thing?

9. Why do you think the people allowed the house of God to be forsaken?

10. Why was it evil to buy and sell goods on the Sabbath?

11. What was the key problem with marrying foreign women?

12. What did Nehemiah do to get the people to turn back to God?

③ EMBRACE His Word (Application) (For Community Group discussion)
Why does this MATTER to me?

13. How can we make sure that we are not forsaking the house of God?

14. What does it mean for us to keep the Sabbath today? Is this still a requirement? Is there a spirit of the law that we should follow?

15. After making a mistake and turning from God what does it take for us to come back to Him?

Summarize your thoughts on the passage

Write about what God wants you to KNOW, to FEEL, and to DO...

Sermon Notes