

We will now begin the thirteenth lecture on the Book of Ezra and the Book of Nehemiah. /We will begin with Nehemiah chapter 10. /Chapter 10 speaks about the covenant and agreement. /The names of those who entered into a covenant with God and sealed it /are in verses 1-27.

/Read verses 1-27. /Those who sealed it were: Nehemiah the governor, the son of Hacaliah. Zedekiah, Seraiah, Azariah, Jeremiah, Pashhur, Amariah, Malkijah, Hattush, Shebaniah, Malluch, Harim, Meremoth, Obadiah, Daniel, Ginnethon, Baruch, Meshullam, Abijah, Mijamin, Maaziah, Bilgai and Shemaiah. These were the priests. The Levites: Jeshua son of Azaniah, Binnui of the sons of Henadad, Kadmiel, and their associates: Shebaniah, Hodiah, Kelita, Pellaiah, Hanan, Mica, Rehob, Hashabiah, Zaccur, Sherebiah, Shebaniah, Hodiah, Bani and Beninu. The leaders of the people: Parosh, Pahath-Moab, Elam, Zattu, Bani, Bunni, Azgad, Bebai, Adonijah, Bigvai, Adin, Ater, Hezekiah, Azzur, Hodiah, Hashum, Bezai, Hariph, Anathoth, Nebai, Magpiash, Meshullam, Hezir, Meshezabel, Zadok, Jaddua, Pelatiah, Hanan, Anaiah, Hoshea, Hananiah, Hasshub, Hallohesh, Pilha, Shobek, Rehum, Hashabnah, Maaseiah, Ahiah, Hanan, Anan, Malluch, Harim and Baanah.

/Some of these names are difficult to pronounce. /Yet, it is honorable to have their names recorded on this list.

/They sealed the agreement, saying that they would never sin again. /They promised /and resolved not to leave God, /not to be arrogant, /not to be disobedient, /and sealed it.

/This was the list of the people who repented of their sins /and established a covenant and sealed it. /Who was the first to seal it? /Nehemiah the governor and Zedekiah the scribe first sealed the agreement. /Zedekiah the scribe was the scribe of the time.

/Next, 21 priests sealed the agreement. /Next, 17 Levites sealed the agreement. /Next, 44 leaders of the people sealed the agreement. /There was a characteristic to the names of those who sealed the agreement.

/There were many names that were similar to the name "Jehovah." /Those who had such names acted accordingly. /This was God's grace. /It was honorable to be included in this list.

/In verses 28-39, /all the people made a promise to God. /First, in verses 28-29, /the people promised to keep the commands and regulations.

/Verses 28-29. /"The rest of the people-- priests, Levites, gatekeepers, singers, temple servants and all who separated themselves from the neighboring peoples for the sake of the Law of God, together with their wives and all their sons and daughters who are able to understand--all these now join their brothers the nobles, and bind themselves with a curse and an oath to follow the Law of God given through Moses the servant of God and to obey carefully all the commands, regulations and decrees of the LORD our Lord.

/The governor first repented, made a covenant according to God's word, and sealed it. /The people, /the priests, /the Levites, /the gatekeepers, /the singers, /and the temple servants all promised to observe the Law of God.

/The people separated themselves from foreign peoples and resolved to observe the Law of God. /They needed to stop making compromises with foreign peoples if they wanted to live by God's word. /Foreign customs would enter the land if the people had relations with foreign peoples.

/Then their children would chase after foreign customs. /The children would serve despicable foreign gods. /Thus, they were to separate themselves from foreign peoples. /The people also resolved to live fully by God's word.

/Verse 28 says, "who are able to understand." /They were spiritually intelligent and filled with knowledge about God's word. /It says that those with faith bonded themselves with an oath.

/They promised to live by the Law of God. /They believed that they would receive God's curse if they didn't observe the Law. /Second, in verse 30, they promised not to marry foreigners.

/Verse 30. /"We promise not to give our daughters in marriage to the peoples around us or take their daughters for our sons.

/First, they promised in their covenant with God /that they would keep God's commands, regulations, and degrees. /Second, they promised that they would not marry foreigners.

/Deuteronomy 7:3-4 say, /"Do not intermarry with them. /Do not give your daughters to their sons /or take their daughters for your sons, /for they will turn your sons away /from following me /to serve other gods, /and the LORD's anger will burn against you /and will quickly destroy you."

/The Israelites promised that they would not intermarry with foreign peoples. /This was the movement of repentance that led them back to God's word. /God's purpose in giving them this law was not to forbid intermarriage.

/This was a preventive measure so that the Israelites would not adopt foreign gods. /Therefore, marriage is very important. /People received religious influence through marriages.

/Today, we believers of the New Testament period must not marry unbelievers. /The teachings of the New Testament are the same. /2 Corinthians 6:14 says, /do not be yoked together with unbelievers. /Believers' faith will grow weak if they marry unbelievers.

/Then, there will be many cases in which the believer will compromise with sin. /It is important that we believers show concern for our children's marriages. /Our children will

suffer harm in their faith if they marry unbelievers.

/Marriage is not something we can treat lightly. /It is an important matter that involves ups and downs. /If we marry unbelievers, we will be influenced by them.

/We will also end up following the customs of the world. /It is easy for believers to be influenced by unbelieving ideologies and fall. /Third, verse 31 says, the people promised to observe the Sabbath.

/Verse 31. /"When the neighboring peoples bring merchandise or grain to sell on the Sabbath, we will not buy from them on the Sabbath or on any holy day. Every seventh year we will forgo working the land and will cancel all debts.

/The Israelites resolved to keep the Sabbath. /The Israelites said that they would not buy merchandise or grain if the foreign peoples brought them on the Sabbath.

/In the New Testament period, the Sabbath was changed to Sundays. /The grounds for this is in Matthew 28:1. /Acts 2:1. /Revelation 1:10. /Hence, we must keep Sundays as the Sabbath.

/The day was changed to Sundays, but we must still observe the truth of keeping the Sabbath. /Why must we have physical rest on the Sabbath? /It is because the whole day must be devoted to worshiping God.

/No one can wholeheartedly take part in worship if he is physically tired. /Why must we have physical rest on the Sabbath? /Second, it is because the day can be compared to eternal rest. /The day can be compared to rest in the afterlife.

/Therefore, we must not work on Sundays. /We must not sell goods on Sundays. /We must not play arcade games on Sundays. /We must keep Sundays holy. /Exodus 20:8-11 speaks about the Sabbath. /Deuteronomy 5:12-15. /Isaiah 58:13, 14.

/Fourth, the people promised in verse 31 that they would observe the seventh year. /The people promised to carry out the regulations of the seventh year. /This is also known as sabbatical. /On the seventh year, the people did not farm.

/The people canceled all their brothers' debts. /Leviticus 25:4. /Deuteronomy 15:1, 2. /What was the regulation of the sabbatical? /It symbolized the canceling of all sins of all sinners through the coming of Jesus Christ.

/Today, we too have received cancellation of all our sins through Jesus Christ. /Therefore, we too must forgive our brothers' sins. /There was also a purpose for the sabbatical system.

/The system was made so that the people would not oppress the poor, but rather, help them. /If someone was poor and unable to pay back his debt, his debt was to be deducted.

/Fifth, verses 32-33. /The people promised to give a third of a shekel for the service of the house of God.

/Verses 32-33. /"We assume the responsibility for carrying out the commands to give a third of a shekel each year for the service of the house of our God: for the bread set out on the table; for the regular grain offerings and burnt offerings; for the offerings on the Sabbaths, New Moon festivals and appointed feasts; for the holy offerings; for sin offerings to make atonement for Israel; and for all the duties of the house of our God.

/The people each agreed to give a third of a shekel each year for the service of the house of God. /The money was used for the temple and for God's works. /One shekel is 11.4 grams. /Hence, a third of a shekel would be about 3.8 grams.

/Yet, Exodus 30:13-16 says something different. /It says there to give half a shekel to God. /Then they does it say a third of a shekel here? /The reason was that the people at the time faced great difficulties, and there were famines.

/In today's New Testament time, the temple is not a building. /The temple is the believers. /We do need places of worship. /However, there is something else that we must first do. /We must first became sanctified, so that we can have God in our hearts.

/We need faith, obedience, and sacrifice. /In verse 33, the people were to give bread, /grain offerings, /and burnt offerings to God. /Twelve loaves of bread were prepared in the holy place every Sabbath.

/The priests ate the bread in the holy place. /The bread symbolized Jesus, the bread of life. /The grain offering was given with grains. /This signified the offering of the people's labor and sacrifice.

/The burnt offering signified one's devotion. /Verse 33 says, "for the offerings on the Sabbaths, New Moon festivals and appointed feasts." /This meant that they were to give offerings. /In the Old Testament times, livestock were given as offerings.

/In the New Testament period, it signifies believers' devotion in Christ. /Today, we believers must first offer ourselves to God in Christ. /However, believers nowadays do not care about devotion.

/Believers think that giving materials to God will make God happy. /In verse 34, the Israelites made a sixth promise. /The people promised to cast lots to determine who will contribute wood to the temple.

/Verse 34. /"We-- the priests, the Levites and the people-- have cast lots to determine when each of our families is to bring to the house of our God at set times each year a contribution of wood to burn on the altar of the LORD our God, as it is written in the Law.

/In Leviticus 6:8-13, /the priests, the Levites, and the people cast lots /and brought wood to the house of God at set times each year. /The people contributed wood to the temple according to the Law to burn on the altar.

/In this way, wood was needed to burn offerings on the altar to God. /Wood was offered as a promise to faithfully give offerings to God. /This signified the burnt offering.

/There will always be sin in this world. /Therefore, offerings were to be continuously burnt at the altar. /However, Jesus came to this earth for this. /Jesus came and at once became the sin offering and burnt offering.

/Hence, Jesus' sacrifice had eternal effect. /Therefore, the regular burnt offerings of the Old Testament symbolized the coming Christ. /The seventh thing the people promised is in verse 35. /The people promised to give the first fruits of their crops and of every tree.

/Verse 35. /"We also assume responsibility for bringing to the house of the LORD each year the firstfruits of our crops and of every fruit tree.

/The people promised to give the first fruits of their crops and of every fruit tree to God. /They gave to God what belonged to God. /This meant that they gave the best things to God.

/The eighth thing the people promised is in verse 36. /The people promised to give the firstborn of their sons and of their cattle.

/Verse 36. /"As it is also written in the Law, we will bring the firstborn of our sons and of our cattle, of our herds and of our flocks to the house of our God, to the priests ministering there.

/The people promised to offer their firstborn sons and the firstborn of their cattle to God. /Exodus 13:2. /Numbers 8:17.

/They gave the firstborn of their sons and of their cattle to God. /It is right to give the firstborn to God. /The ninth thing the people promised is in verses 37-39. /The people promised to give tithes.

/Verses 37-39. /"Moreover, we will bring to the storerooms of the house of our God, to the priests, the first of our ground meal, of our [grain] offerings, of the fruit of all our trees and of our new wine and oil. And we will bring a tithe of our crops to the Levites, for it is the Levites who collect the tithes in all the towns where we work. A priest descended from Aaron is to accompany the Levites when they receive the tithes, and the Levites are to bring a tenth of the tithes up to the house of our God, to the storerooms of the treasury. The people of Israel, including the Levites, are to bring their contributions of grain, new wine and oil to the storerooms where the articles for the sanctuary are kept and where the ministering priests, the gatekeepers and the singers stay. "We will not

neglect the house of our God."

/The people promised to give tithes from all their earnings to God. /We too must give wholly give our tithes to God. /How can we wholly give our tithes to God? /We must know that all our income comes from God and we must be thankful.

/Then we must give a tenth of our income to God. /We must also acknowledge that the remaining nine-tenths also belong to God. /We must properly use the nine-tenths before God.

/Malachi 3:8-9 says, /anyone who does not give tithes to God robs God. /Thus, they will be under a curse. /When the Levites received tithes from the people, /they were to give a tenth of the tithes to God.

/Therefore, pastors must, of course, give tithes to God. /In this way, believers must give to God what belongs to God. /Then the house of God will flourish. /We must also build our spiritual temples. /This means that we must grow in our own faith.

/Nehemiah 11 tells about the residential towns of the people. /In verses 1-9, /they separated those who would live in Jerusalem and those who would live in other towns.

/Read verse 1. /Now the leaders of the people settled in Jerusalem, and the rest of the people cast lots to bring one out of every ten to live in Jerusalem, the holy city, while the remaining nine were to stay in their own towns.

/The leaders of the people settled in Jerusalem. /The rest of the people cast lots, and one out of every ten of them settled in Jerusalem. /The remaining nine stayed in their own towns.

/Why did they do this? /The Jerusalem temple and city were all rebuilt. /Hence, they needed people to serve God in the temple and also protect the city. /However, the people at the time wanted to return to their own towns where they had their own jobs.

/The Israelites' enemies constantly threatened Jerusalem because they did not want them to prosper. /Jerusalem was also a newly established city, and therefore, there were a lack of houses and ways of living.

/There were also many leaders in Jerusalem, and anyone who remained in the city would remain under their rule. /Hence, the people cast lots. /People cast lots before the apostolic age as a way of figuring out God's will. /Proverbs 16:33.

/When Saul became king, he was chosen by the casting of lots. /Judas Iscariot was replaced through the casting of lots. /Yet, now, we must find God's will through the Bible.

/Verse 2. /The people commended all the men who volunteered to live in Jerusalem.

/There were people other than the tenth who were chosen to live in Jerusalem /who volunteered to live in the city. /They were commended and they were blessed.

/They were commended because they loved Jerusalem and volunteered to live in the city. /Today, anyone who loves the spiritual Jerusalem and desires to live there will be blessed.

/In verses 3-6 /are the names of the descendants of Judah who stayed in Jerusalem. /Many people settled in their own properties. /Only the descendants of Judah, Benjamin, /the priests, and the Levites remained in Jerusalem.

/Among the descendants of Judah who lived in Jerusalem, /verse 6 says, the descendants of Perez numbered 468. /They were all warriors. /Their leaders were Athaiah and Maaseiah. /They were all able men.

/This fulfilled Jacob's prophecy in Genesis chapter 49. /Jacob compared Judah's descendants to a lion. /That was fulfilled here. /Athaiah and Maaseiah's forefathers were recorded up to the fifth and seventh generations.

/These leaders wanted to reveal their genealogies. /This taught that the world of faith includes genealogies. /Paul reminded Timothy of his line of faith. /2 Timothy 1:5 /tells us that Timothy came from a line of faith.

/In verses 7-9 /is the number of the descendants of Benjamin who lived in Jerusalem. /Benjamin's descendants numbered 928 men. /The leaders were Gabbai and Sallai. /The chief officer was Joel. /In this way, the tribes of Judah and Benjamin lived in Jerusalem.

/Their number was 1,396 in total. They lived in Jerusalem and protected the city. /The number would have most likely been bigger if women and children were counted.

/In verses 10-14, /it tells us about the work assigned to priests and their number. /The priests who lived in Jerusalem were divided into three categories. /Seraiah the priest and his descendants numbered 822. /Adaiah and his descendants numbered 242.

/Amashsai and his descendants numbered 128. /The leaders of the people were chosen by lots to live in Jerusalem, /which was the result of God's special intervention.

/In verses 15-18, /it tells us about the Levites who did the outside work of the temple and its number. /The number of Levites who were chosen by lots to remain in Jerusalem was 284. /In verse 16, it says that they had charge of the outside work of the house of God.

/To have "charge" means that they were responsible for the management of the work. /The outside work consisted of cutting lumber, /bringing water, /repairing the temple building, and cleaning. /Temple work consisted of administrative work and outside work.

/In verses 19-21, /it tells us about the gatekeepers and the rest of the Israelites.
/Gatekeeping was a difficult and lowly job. /However, the job was honorable and beautiful because they protected the house of God.

/In verses 22-24, /it tells us about those who were responsible for the service of the temple and those who ruled as the king's agent. /A man named Uzzi /became the chief officer of the Levites in Jerusalem, and he was responsible for the service of the temple.

/In verses 25-36, /it tells us about the descendants of Judah and Benjamin who lived in their fields. /The rest of the descendants of Judah, who did not live in Jerusalem, /lived in other towns and villages.

/They each returned to their hometowns. /Most of the people who returned from Babylon were descendants of Judah and Benjamin. /God's kingdom continued to exist through the tribes of Judah and Benjamin.

/Here, we will conclude the thirteenth lecture on Ezra and Nehemiah. /Thank you.