

## Nehemiah 12:44-13:14 – Broken Promises

The wall had been rebuilt and they had a dedication service for the wall. Jerusalem had been properly populated. After extended exposure to God's Word, the people of Israel committed themselves to following God's law and their leaders signed an oath. They swore to provide for the temple service. They said "We will not neglect the house of our God" (Nehemiah 10:39). The end of chapter 12 talks about how that pledge was fulfilled by providing for the temple and those who ministered there.

### Read Nehemiah 12:44-47.

Verse 44 starts with "On that day" (ESV). Other versions like KJV and NIV have "At that time". When did verses 44-46 occur? The priests and Levites could not perform the temple services and also be farmers. Farming is a full time job. How did God provide for the priests and Levites? How did Judah feel about the priests and Levites? (12:44-46)

What were the duties of the priests, Levites, singers and gatekeepers according to verses 44-46? Which people were recognized for organizing the temple worship and the singers and gatekeepers? (12:44-46)

In verse 47, both Zerubbabel and Nehemiah were mentioned. What was true about provisions for the singers, gatekeepers, Levites and priests during their time? Zerubbabel was governor during the building of the second temple and arrived in Judah about 90 years before Nehemiah. (12:47)

### Read Nehemiah 13:1-3.

Verse 1 starts with "On that day" (ESV, KJV, NASB, NIV). A small number of versions have "At that time". When did verses 1-3 occur? Was it on the day the wall was dedicated or was it at a different time? (13:1-3)

Just as on the Feast of Trumpets, the Feasts of Booths and the 24<sup>th</sup> day of the seventh month, there again was a public reading from God's Word. Part of the reading must have included Deuteronomy 23:3-6. What did the people learn from God's Word? How did the people apply God's Word? (13:1-3)

### Read Nehemiah 13:4-9.

Who was Eliashib the priest? Some people think that this Eliashib was the high priest. Others think this was a different Eliashib who was a priest. See Nehemiah 3:1,20 and 13:28. Who was Tobiah? See Nehemiah 2:10,19 and 6:12-19. (13:4)

Should Eliashib have been related to Tobiah? How does verse 4 relate to verse 3? (13:3-4)

What did Eliashib do for Tobiah? Why do you think Eliashib did this for Tobiah? (13:4-5)

Based on Nehemiah 2:1, Nehemiah first went to Jerusalem in the 20<sup>th</sup> year of King Artaxerxes. In the 32<sup>nd</sup> year of King Artaxerxes, Nehemiah returned to the king. From verse 6, why was Eliashib able to get away with what he did? We are not told how long Nehemiah remained with the king before he asked to return to Jerusalem. What did Nehemiah do when he found out about the chamber that Eliashib had given to Tobiah? (13:6-9)

**Read Nehemiah 13:10-14.**

Given what Eliashib did in verses 4-5, it is not surprising to learn in verse 10 that the portions for the Levites had not been given to them. What happened to the Levites and singers since they did not receive their portions which were prescribed by God's Law? (13:10)

Remember that in Nehemiah 10:39 the people said, "We will not neglect the house of our God". What question did Nehemiah confront the officials with? How did Nehemiah fix the problem of provisions for the Levites? (13:11-13)

What did Nehemiah ask of God in verse 14?

The people had taken an oath with a curse that they would not neglect the temple. How long did it take them to break this promise? When someone promises to do something, we should expect them to fulfill their promise. What does experience and Nehemiah 13:4-13 teach us about people keeping or not keeping their promises?