

Recap of 8/4/19 (Nehemiah 13:1-3):

1. A period of approximately two or more years intervenes between Nehemiah 12 & 13. (see Nehemiah 5:14 and 13:6,7). He had returned to Persia after serving 12 Years as governor of Judah (444-432 B.C.) Chapter 13 describes what he found when he returned. So many of the commitments made by the Jews in his first term fell by the wayside while he was gone. They had reneged on their agreement with God, which was called a “binding agreement” in chapter 10. Turns out that the hardest thing facing Nehemiah was not rebuilding the wall but rebuilding the spiritual life and commitment of the people.

2. As expressed in the The One-Year Study Bible NLT:

“The book of Nehemiah is about rebuilding the wall of a great city, but it is also about rebuilding a people’s dependence on God. Ezra and Nehemiah worked hard to rebuild the Temple and the city walls. They sought to restore worship and to restore God’s people. So, the end of Nehemiah is a bit of a letdown. We expect to see a confident and committed people. Instead, we see them flirting with foreign people and forsaking their worship of God. The events in Nehemiah are some of the last events recorded in the Old Testament. Despite Nehemiah’s strong leadership, the people of Israel were still prone to forget their purpose and disobey God.”

3. Spiritual growth is a continual challenge-it’s easy to go backward. In spiritual matters it’s not enough to intend to change, we must follow through with practical steps, beginning with the importance of knowing the Word of God.

4. The first challenge which faced Nehemiah in 13:1-3 was the failure of the people to separate from the people of the land, in particular the Ammonites and Moabites, based upon Deuteronomy 23:3-6. When the people heard this reading from Moses, Word of God had its effect and they were obedient and separated themselves from them.

5. **“We can never tell what will happen when we open up our Bible. But the more we do so, the more good things are likely to happen.”** (Hughes)