

Nehemiah 12 begins with a long list of names. The names of the leading priests and Levites among the Jews. Good men who greatly contributed to the reform of the Jews. Their names are recorded with some honour. God knows His servants; He knows their **commitment** and knows their **sacrifices** that they willingly make.

Our Subject today **Commitment and Dedication- Lessons seen in Nehemias day.**

He will never forget His devoted servants. *Psalm 112:6 Surely he shall not be moved forever: the righteous shall be in everlasting remembrance.* Let the memory of the just be blessed, be maintained. It is a debt we still owe to faithful ministers to *remember those who have run the race before us, who have spoken to us the word of God.* Who toiled and laboured and gave their very lives.

Think of William Tyndale. what a debt of gratitude we owe to Him- who translated the bible into English. For this he was hunted, then betrayed by an Englishman for money, and condemned to die a heretic, Tyndale was tied to a stake, strangled with a rope and Burned outside a castle near Brussels on Oct. 6, 1536.

Look at His commitment to the Lords Work. “With a fervent zeal, and a loud voice,” he cried, “**Lord! Open the King of England’s eyes.**” His prayer was answered. Thomas Cranmer, the archbishop of Canterbury, persuaded Henry 8th to approve an official English translation of the Bible. The king licensed the publication. This became the first Bible in English to be legally sold in the country.

Think of Martin Luther. Who stood for the truth of Justification by faith alone. When threatened, He said "**Here I stand, I can do no other.**" This act of defiance cost Him great suffering- But commitment and dedication to the truth compelled Him - He could do no other.

Even in our lifetime remember the faithful Sunday school teacher. The Pastor who taught you the word of God. **God has not forgotten their Labour** of Love no matter how small it is. *Matthew 25:40 And the King will answer and say to them, 'Assuredly, I say to you, inasmuch as you did it to one of the least of these My brethren, you did it to Me.'* God is not unjust to forget our Labour of Love which you have shown toward His name. Heb 6:10

We should be mindful of those who were our leaders and spoke the word to us.

Hebrews 13. Don't forget their preaching, don't forget the example they are, and

were to us. Thank God for them, remember them in prayer. **The best way of remembering them is to walk as they walked.**

As all these names were recorded in Nehemiah who were so instrumental and contributed to bringing reform, as we read about these consecrated servants through the ages who shall never be forgotten by God. This should serve to inspire us, and stir us, to imitate their commitment.

Now the Wall was going to be dedicated. *Nehemiah 12:27 And at the dedication of the wall of Jerusalem, they sought the Levites out of all their places to bring them to Jerusalem, to keep the dedication with gladness, and with thanksgiving, and with singing, with cymbals, harps and with lyres.*

Not Just the walls, the wall surrounded the city the whole city was to be dedicated. We see the city dedicated to the honour of God, to the honour of his service. It was the place God had chosen- A place called the **Holy City**. The place where the Temple would be. It was to be a place where prayer would be offered, asking for God's presence, His favour and the blessing of God. Praises would be offered, sacrifices made.

We read of how great their dedication and commitment of the Jews had been in Solomon's day - think of the dedication in *1 Kings 8:63. And Solomon offered a sacrifice of peace offerings, which he offered to the LORD, twenty-two thousand bulls and one hundred and twenty thousand sheep. So the king and all the children of Israel dedicated the house of the LORD.*

Now again in Nehemiah's day at the dedication of the walls, it was a great and solemn thanksgiving to the Lord for his help, His great mercy in bringing the work to completion even with all the opposition, acknowledgement God helped it to be done so fast. **They devoted the city to God's honour;** they took position of it in His name. This was a Holy city the city of the great king. God had chosen to put His name there.

The Levites from all parts of the country were required to attend to dedicate the city to God. **The way they started was to begin with self.** They purified themselves. *Nehemiah 12:30 Then the priests and Levites purified themselves, and purified the people, the gates, and the wall.*

Everything, and everyone was dedicated unto the Lord. A picture and pattern for us to apply today - We are chosen of the Lord. We are His and this is how we should also be. **We devote ourselves unto Him.** If we are to put our hands to

Gods work - we cleanse our hands, but not only our hands we purify our hearts. We are reminded in- *Romans 12:1 I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that you present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable to God, which is your reasonable service.*

Paul exhorts us to HOLINESS. The Church of the Lord Jesus Christ is exhorted to be dedicated and devoted unto Him. **It's the members of the Church that make the church valuable – not the building.** The congregation of believers gives the church the true character. When the members have put off the old man and put on the Lord Jesus Christ and they reflect the Lord Jesus Christ then the beauty of Jesus Christ is seen-

It is impossible to have a beautiful church without beautiful people, Its impossible to have a holy Church without Holy people. **To be dedicated means to be fully surrendered to God, concentrated fully to Him, set apart for Him.**

In Nehemias time All the people joined in thanksgiving for Gods mercy. They didn't think it hard rather **the people greatly rejoiced.** **This song came from a sincere heart full of Joy.** We see that even the woman and children rejoiced, their praise was not despised but recorded.

Some may say, or think - isn't this level of commitment for the priests only. Yes, you could say that, but forget not that *Revelation 1:6 and has made us kings and priests to His God and Father, to Him be glory and dominion forever and ever. Amen. Or remember; you also, as living stones, are being built up a spiritual house, a holy priesthood, to offer up spiritual sacrifices acceptable to God through Jesus Christ.*

We who are born again have seen how much the Lord has done for us. We love Him much- and long to please Him and we long to be like Him. Long to be sanctified set apart for Him Long to be holy.

In the dedication of the wall, well the dedication of the city and everything in it, the priests both great and small **dedicated themselves to Holiness and to purity.**

You may think that some were distinguished priests. But in Gods eyes a big title doesn't mean much, being a descendant of a great person didn't matter, the only real difference that matters to God **is our degree of commitment devotion and holiness.**

The vessels of the Lord must be clean. Those that do the work of the Lord must be clean themselves. *2 Timothy 2:20 But in a great house there are not only*

vessels of gold and silver, but also of wood and clay, some for honour and some for dishonour.

We can interpret a great house as the church of God. There are vessels of Gold and silver and vessels of Wood and clay.

The Expositor FB Meyer writes a paragraph worth repeating - You are admitted into a great house, along the walls of which are four shelves; on the lower shelf the gold, on the second the silver, on the third the wood, and on the fourth—high, way up where you would think the dust collected—the earthen vessel.

These 4 kinds of vessels are in every congregation.

You say, “I am not gold, I am not silver, I am rather wooden if anything, or earthenware; my place is on the very top shelf,”

and when I ask - if you can tell which of those four shelves holds the vessels to honour, you say, “Oh, I think those golden or silver ones on the bottom shelf.

The Master enters. We ask “Will you tell us to-day, for our hearts are on fire to be used by you, in the foreign mission or home mission field, where ever you want us to stand, we want to be vessels of honour?”

And He says: **“I cannot tell by the outside appearance.** I must look inside.” He takes the gold, and says: **“That won’t do, it is not clean.”** He takes the silver one and **puts it back with a sad look. It is not clean.**

He looks to those upper shelves, **and takes down one of the very ordinary vessels,** and I see a smile come over His face as He lifts it, and He presses it to His lips, and says: **“This will do; this is a vessel to honour, this is a choice vessel, it is clean. “If a man cleanse himself he shall be a vessel to honour.”** “Ah, but, Master, there is nothing inside of it.” “That doesn’t matter.

The master will put inside what is needed. **He needs only want a clean vessel to put it in.”** God says, **“My child, you have failed, not because you lack the talent or power, but are lacking in the one thing, having the cleansed heart.”**

(F. B. Meyer.)

Yet we must also consider all the words of the Master. The effective servant must - *2 Timothy 2:15 Be diligent to present yourself approved to God, a worker who does not need to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth.* What use would it be for a servant caring for animals to give the cows a bone to chew, and the Dogs Straw to eat. We must be faithful and wise to give food in due season, we must rightly divide the truth- and we must be vessels of Honour – Clean. And be wise workers. Instructed ourselves es in gods Word.

If we are Gods We are known of him. – everyone who names the name of Christ must depart from iniquity. Those who want Gods comfort those who want to be fit vessels must depart from iniquity. A man must purge Himself before He can be a vessel of honour. The tree must be made good then the fruit will be good.

This dedication of the wall

Offered thanks for the completion of the work. Did Jesus not cry out on the cross, “it is finished.” We offer thanks for the finished work - He accomplished our salvation. We see how much He has done – How much He loved us, How much we are forgiven of. **Like this sinful woman from the city,** forgiven of such a bad life. *Luke 7:47 Therefore I say to you, her sins, which are many, are forgiven, for she loved much. But to whom little is forgiven, the same loves little."*

The city was to set apart the Holy City for Holy ends. An application for us to day. *1 John 3:3 And everyone who has this hope in Him purifies himself, just as He is pure.* The heart must be united to be consecrated.

Will God be served with broken cups and cracked containers? And can His altars be polluted with torn and mangled sacrifices? **Consecrated things are dedicated to Him and to Him alone.** Can you imagine that within the Holy Place there would be an altar, part of which was used for sacrifices offered to the Lord—and another portion for victims presented to Molech (associated with terrible child sacrifice)? That is absolutely impossible. **If we are not wholly consecrated unto the Lord, we are not consecrated to Him at all!** We are unconsecrated, we are polluted, we are as things accursed if we are divided in heart!

It was their desire to have God’s blessing and Him watching over all their affairs.

Everyone was involved – the wives and also the children. God had made them rejoice with great Joy. He made them cheerful and thankful. Their triumph over their enemies properly added to their Joy. The praises baffled the enemies. Gods great mercy calls for a return to great praise. **Nehemiah 12:43** *Also that day they offered great sacrifices, and rejoiced, for God had made them rejoice with great joy; the women and the children also rejoiced, so that the joy of Jerusalem was heard afar off.* In Christ we have even more reason to rejoice.

Nehemiah 12:45 And they performed the service of their God and the service of purification, as did the singers and the gatekeepers, according to the command of David and his son Solomon.

Great diligence and Joy in their hearts motivated them to do everything so well, **it was from an overflow of their heart that they served.** How acceptable this was to the Lord. How pleasing to Him. The congregation noticed their ministers were more careful, and took great pains and laboured more abundantly in the Word and in Doctrine. No one had to force the people to give to the Levites and the porters, for they gave from a glad heart, and they gave over and above what they needed. It was given with an eye to God for His honour. This Zeal and fervour and commitment would have made King David proud. The people rejoiced in their ministers. But much more than that This kind of Joyful service and dedication to God, *is a sweet-smelling aroma, an acceptable sacrifice, well pleasing to God.*

None of us can say our dedication matches His dedication to us. How True He is to us, how faithful He is to us. Really how little we do for Him who loved us so much. **When we begin to grasp His great love we are compelled to do more and more.** Our delight is in Him, our delight is to obey and do His word. We love His word more than fine gold. Oh, His ways make my heart to rejoice. He fills my heart with comfort. Oh, How I love Him because He first loved me. Psalms 32:11 Be glad in the LORD and rejoice, you righteous; And shout for joy, all you upright in heart!

Oh Lord help us to run and not be weary- Let our lives be living sacrifices unto you. May we please you in our service unto you.

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