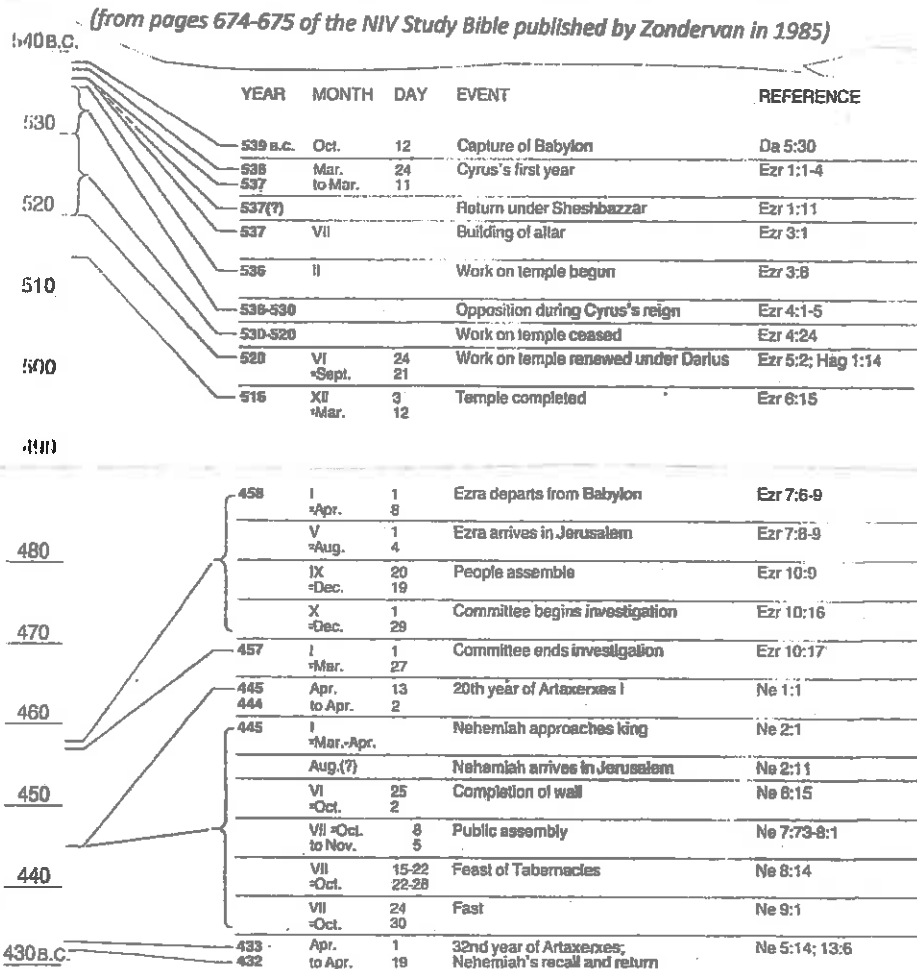


Assignment for Nehemiah 10

(to be discussed on March 11, 2020)

Chronology: Ezra-Nehemiah Review



Using the above time chart as reference and doing a little math, fill in the following blanks.

- The books of Ezra and Nehemiah cover a time span of _____ years.
- The rebuilding of the temple in Jerusalem began in _____.
- Building came to a halt for _____ years.
- Temple was completed in _____, thus a span of _____ years before construction ended.
- Nehemiah arrived in Jerusalem in _____.
- It took only _____ for the walls around Jerusalem to be rebuilt.
- Different commentaries have varying views on when Nehemiah returned to the King's Court in Persia after the walls were rebuilt. For sure, he was appointed Governor of Judea for a 12 year term, but it is not agreed whether he was located in Jerusalem during this time or governed from a distance in Persia. He was recalled to court for at least a short time of a couple years.
- For sure he came back to Jerusalem in _____ for the dedication of the wall - which occurred at least _____ years after it was completed!!
- When he returned, Nehemiah encountered regression in the land.** For the third time in the years of Ezra and Nehemiah interacted with the people, the same issues had resurfaced. Later in your homework, you will be identifying those 3 issues.

Patterns Through History

God's Faithfulness through Man's Straying

Reread Nehemiah 9 - The 442 BC confession of the Israelites of their sin through history (especially verses 6-37).
What pattern do you see? (Similar confession in 457 BC recorded in Ezra 9)

- Verses 6-15 (list at least 8 things that God did or provided for Children of Israel)

Fill in short phrases for the verses below.

- Verses 16- 17a BUT _____
- Verses 17b- BUT followed by series of things God did
- Verse 26- BUT
- Verse 27 a – God did what
- Verse 27 b - BUT -
- BUT – verse 28a
- THEN – verse 28b “In your great compassion, you _____ them _____ after _____
- Verse 29 BUT
- Verse 30 -31 For many years, you were _____

- Verse 33 Sinful people admitted that “In all that has happened to us, you have been _____; you have acted _____ while we _____.
- Verse 36 BUT
- Verse 38 AND NOW, we promise once again, but this time we REALLY mean it and will guarantee that by making a _____, putting it in _____, and having our leaders (lay and religious both) affix their _____ to it.

WOW, God, this must impress you. But what are they depending on for strength to obey THIS TIME? Why would it be any different?

Peek ahead to Nehemiah 13:6-11, After Nehemiah returns from time back at the King's court in Persia, what does he learn has happened in his absence?

1. Care of the temple (13:6-11)

2. Sabbath behavior (13:15-18)

3. Intermarriage (13:23-27)

How does Nehemiah react?

Oaths, Vows, Binding Agreements – Empty Promises?

So quickly, the people violated their oath. It is interesting to note what has been said in commentaries and Bible notes about oaths, binding promises, vows. When God makes them toward people, we can count on them. But people are very apt to violate and renege.

List some synonyms for these kinds of serious promises?

Look up definition of an oath in a dictionary (or vow or binding promise) and write it out below.

In Chapter 10 of Nehemiah, count how many time the word WE appears. _____

List verbs or phrases that follow the pronoun WE in these verses – indicating actions that “we will do”

Do they have the capacity for all these actions? _____ Where does strength come from to follow through as a believer? Are they acknowledging that they need anything beyond giving their word?

Interestingly, a Bible dictionary observes that “Nowhere in the Old Testament do we find the making of vows regarded as a religious duty . But the fulfilling of a vow (once made) was considered a sacred and binding duty. Read Deuteronomy 23:21-22. The Practice of making vows or solemn promises to God deliberately and freely to perform some good work was ancient among the Israelites.” A vow was as binding as an oath.

One Old Testament illustration is a reminder not to make vows lightly. Read Judges 11:29-39 and summarize what happened in Jephthah’s case.

Summarize Peter’s experience in Matthew 5:33-37.

Write out James 5:12.

Does this mean we are not to make commitments or take firm stands? _____ What is to be our confidence in taking stands or making commitments? Read | Corinthians 10:11-13

Cheap Grace

"Cheap Grace" The people have been forgiven so many times, they are taking it for granted. What is the problem of sinning when you know God will forgive and restore? Right down Lamentations 3:23.

What phrase is repeated 4 times in Psalm 107? (verses 6, 13, 19, and 28)

What would the people experience at these moments of deliverance? Isn't it something we all long for?

Write out Psalm 107:29-30.

These are wonderful verses of promise and comfort. How might they be taken advantage of?

The concept of cheap grace is addressed in the New Testament by Paul. Read Romans 6:19 and 7:14-25. What did Paul have to say about this?

What is different in the New Testament times after Jesus death and resurrection? What are things available to us that weren't present for Old Testament Israelites?

How do we balance verses like I John 1:9 with not seeking cheap grace?

Intermarriage

There are many references in both the Old Testament and the New Testament about intermarriage outside the congregation of believers. It is a major concern for Ezra and Nehemiah because the people had been spread out in exile and entered into many "mixed marriages." It had to be revisited 3 times during this relatively brief time due to ongoing noncompliance.

Why does God take it so seriously and command against it? List reasons given in following verses

- Deuteronomy 7:1-6

- Deuteronomy 11: 18-21

- King Solomon's experience. I Kings 3:5-9: Solomon asked for _____ and God gave it to him (I Kings 4:29) BUT what happened?
 1. I Kings 3:1: Before he had even asked for wisdom, what had he already done?

 2. Then, as time passed, what did he do? (I Kings 11:1-8)

 3. What were the consequences (I Kings 11:9-13)

Read II Corinthians 6:14-18. List four areas of practical, day-to-day concern ("what" questions) mentioned in verses 14-16 regarding attempted close fellowship with nonbelievers?

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.
- 4.

In modern day, mobility throughout the world has made for much contact between cultures and belief systems. What is now considered politically correct regarding "intermarriage?"

It is an issue in the evangelical community as well. How do we approach it? How much say do any of us have in whom one of our children marries?

What can we, should we do?

Ponder and share in your group, if you are comfortable, experiences you have observed or experienced in your extended family or friendship circles.

Songs

Worship leaders sometimes talk about vertical and horizontal lyrics to songs. **Vertical** are directed to God and reflect who He is and what He has done. Many of the Psalms are examples of that as are songs such as "Great Is Thy Faithfulness." I have thought about song lyrics as I review our tendency to make promises and depend on our own strength to fulfill them.

Horizontal songs convey more of our human experience and response to this Almighty God. There are great horizontal songs. However there can be a subtle shift to what I do for God, the effort I will expend. There can be a sense of "I can and I will" as opposed to "I am weak but He is able." We can actually leave exhausted, almost having had an emotional high that we realize we cannot sustain.

My intention is not to be critical of songs but to suggest this is another area where we might check our hearts- are we veering toward what **I can do for God** versus focusing on **dependence on God and awe at what He does for us.**

Read through the lyrics of some familiar "horizontal songs" below. Highlight titles of one that keep your eyes and hearts focused on what He has done. Underline phrases in others that could reinforce a sense of what I will and can do, maybe minimizing the source of the necessary to sustain the heart felt words.

Christ liveth in me

- 1 Once far from God and dead in sin,
No light my heart could see;
But in God's Word the light I found,
Now Christ liveth in me.

Christ liveth in me,
Christ liveth in me;
Oh! what a salvation this,
That Christ liveth in me.
- 2 As rays of light from yonder sun,
The flow'rs of earth set free,
So life and light and love come forth
From Christ living in me.
- 3 As lives the flow'r within the seed,
As in the cone the tree,
So, praise the Christ of truth and grace,
His Spirit dwell^eth in me.
- 4 With longing all my heart is filled,
That like Him I may be,
As on the wondrous thought I dwell
That Christ liveth in me.

Until My Voice Is Gone

No other name's above all other names
No other throne rules over every nation
No other God deserves our highest praise

[Verse 2]

No other death could buy our sweet redemption
No other blood could wash away our shame
No other cross could lead to resurrection
No other God deserves our highest praise

[Chorus 1]

So I'll raise my hands until my strength has faded
Stand in honour 'til my knees give way
I will lift my voice and shout a grateful song
I will sing, I will sing until my voice is gone
Until my voice is gone

[Verse 3]

No other hope can make our hearts courageous
No other peace can make us stand up brave
No other Love has earned our full affection
No other God deserves our highest praise

[Chorus 1]

So I'll raise my hands until my strength has faded
Stand in honour 'til my knees give way
I will lift my voice and shout a grateful song
I will sing, I will sing until my voice is gone
Until my voice is gone

[Bridge]

So when we've exhausted every single way
With our bodies weak and with our voices strained
You are still the song in us that never ends
We can't help but stand and start it all again
So when we've exhausted every single way
With our bodies weak and with our voices strained
You are still the song in us that never ends
We can't help but stand and start it all again

[Chorus 2]

So I'll raise my hands until my strength has faded
Stand in honour 'til my knees give way
I will lift my voice and shout a grateful song
I will sing, I will sing until my voice is gone
I will lift my hands until my strength has faded
Stand in honour 'til my knees give way
I will lift my voice and shout a grateful song
I will sing, I will sing until my voice is gone
I will sing, I will sing until my voice is gone

Fount of Every Blessing

Come Thou fount of every blessing
Tune my heart to sing Thy grace
Streams of mercy never ceasing
Call for songs of loudest praise

Teach me some melodious sonnet
Sung by flaming tongues above
Praise the mount, I'm fixed upon it
Mount of Thy redeeming love

Here I raise my Ebenezer
Here by Thy great help I've come
And I hope by Thy good pleasure
Safely to arrive at home

Jesus sought me when a stranger
Wandering from the fold of God
Here to rescue me from danger
Interposed His precious blood
(Precious blood)

Oh, that day when freed from sinning
I shall see Thy lovely face
Clothe it then in blood washed linen
How I'll sing Thy sovereign grace

Oh, to grace how great a debtor
Daily I'm constraint to be
Let Thy goodness like a fetter
Bind my wandering heart to Thee

Prone to wander, Lord I feel it
Prone to leave the God I love
Here's my heart, oh take and seal it
Seal it for Thy courts above

Here's my heart
Oh, take and seal it
Seal it for Thy courts above

I Have Decided to Follow Jesus

I have decided to follow Jesus;
I have decided to follow Jesus;
I have decided to follow Jesus;
No turning back, no turning back. Though I
may wonder, I still will follow;
Though I may wonder, I still will follow;
Though I may wonder, I still will follow;
No turning back, no turning back. The
world behind me, the cross before me;
The world behind me, the cross before
me;
The world behind me, the cross before
me;
No turning back, no turning back. Though
none go with me, still I will follow;
Though none go with me, still I will follow;
Though none go with me, still I will follow;
No turning back, no turning back.

DC Talk - My Will Lyrics

I'm setting the stage for the things I love
And I'm now the man I once couldn't be
And nothing on earth could now ever move
me

I now have the will and the strength a man
needs

It's my will, I'm not moving
'Cause if it's Your will, then nothing can shake
me

And it's my will to bow and praise You
I now have the will to praise my God

Complexity haunts me for I am two men
Entrenched in a battle that I'll never win
My discipline fails me, my knowledge it fools me
But You are my shelter, all the strength that I need

It's my will, I'm not moving
'Cause if it's Your will, then nothing can shake me
And it's my will to bow and praise You
I now have the will to praise my God

I'm learning to give up the rights to myself
The bits and the pieces I've gathered as wealth
Could never compare to the joy that You bring me
The peace that You show me is the strength that I need

It's my will, I'm not moving
'Cause if it's Your will, then nothing can shake me
And it's my will to bow and praise You
I now have the will to praise my God

P.S. These are
all songs that

I like!



How Shall We Then Live?

There is a book by this title written by Francis Schaeffer. The question comes up over and over . If we can't in our own strength live the Christian life, what are we to do? There is cause for humility but not for hopelessness. In large group discussion next week, we will discuss things God has provided for us and things He promises to make real. For now, jot down what some of these things are.

When a child is attempting to conquer an obstacle or face a fear or find rescue, there are at least 4 things he/she might do in relationship to seeking help from a parent:

- Hide in safety of parent and refuse to budge
- Hold hand
- Be carried
- Carefully follow directions given – like step here on safe rock, walk in my foot prints in deep snow, trusting that parent will not let him /her slip.

Can you think of parallels for our walk with God?

Change My Heart Oh God

Change my heart oh God
Make it ever true
Change my heart oh God
May I be like You

Change my heart oh God
Make it ever true
Change my heart oh God
May I be like You

You are the potter
I am the clay
Mold me and make me
This is what I pray

Change my heart oh God
Make it ever true
Change my heart oh God
May I be like You

"Man's attitude toward God's word is one of the ultimate criteria of his spirituality."

Wycliffe Bible Commentary

