

MAY 23

Read Nehemiah 5–7

CHAPTER 5

AND there was a great cry of the people and of their wives against their brethren the Jews.

2 For there were that said, We, our sons, and our daughters, *are* many: therefore we take up corn *for them*, that we may eat, and live.

3 *Some* also there were that said, We have mortgaged our lands, vineyards, and houses, that we might buy corn, because of the dearth.

4 There were also that said, We have borrowed money for the king's tribute, *and that upon* our lands and vineyards.

5 Yet now our flesh *is* as the flesh of our brethren, our children as their children: and, lo, we bring into bondage our sons and our daughters to be servants, and *some* of our daughters are brought unto bondage *already*: neither *is it* in our power *to redeem them*; for other men have our lands and vineyards.

6 ¶ And I was very angry when I heard their cry and these words.

7 Then I consulted with myself,

and I rebuked the nobles, and the rulers, and said unto them, Ye exact usury, every one of his brother. And I set a great assembly against them.

8 And I said unto them, We after our ability have redeemed our brethren the Jews, which were sold unto the heathen; and will ye even sell your brethren? or shall they be sold unto us? Then held they their peace, and found nothing *to answer*.

9 Also I said, It *is* not good that ye do: ought ye not to walk in the fear of our God because of the reproach of the heathen our enemies?

10 I likewise, *and* my brethren, and my servants, might exact of them money and corn: I pray you, let us leave off this usury.

11 Restore, I pray you, to them, even this day, their lands, their vineyards, their oliveyards, and their houses, also the hundredth *part* of the money, and of the corn, the wine, and the oil, that ye exact of them.

12 Then said they, We will restore *them*, and will require nothing of them; so will we do as thou sayest. Then I called the priests, and took an oath of them, that they should do according to this promise.

13 Also I shook my lap, and said, So God shake out every man from his house, and from his labour, that performeth not this promise, even thus be he shaken out, and emptied. And all the congregation said, Amen, and praised the LORD. And the people did according to this promise.

14 ¶ Moreover from the time that I was appointed to be their governor in the land of Judah, from the twentieth year even unto the two and thirtieth year of Artaxerxes the king, *that is*, twelve years, I and my brethren have not eaten the bread of the governor.

15 But the former governors that *had been* before me were chargeable unto the people, and had taken of them bread and wine, beside forty shekels of silver; yea, even their servants bare rule over the people: but so did not I, because of the fear of God.

16 Yea, also I continued in the work of this wall, neither bought

we any land: and all my servants *were* gathered thither unto the work.

17 Moreover *there were* at my table an hundred and fifty of the Jews and rulers, beside those that came unto us from among the heathen that *are* about us.

18 Now *that* which was prepared *for me* daily *was* one ox *and* six choice sheep; also fowls were prepared for me, and once in ten days store of all sorts of wine: yet for all this required not I the bread of the governor, because the bondage was heavy upon this people.

19 Think upon me, my God, for good, *according* to all that I have done for this people.

CHAPTER 6

NOW it came to pass, when Sanballat, and Tobiah, and Geshem the Arabian, and the rest of our enemies, heard that I had builded the wall, and *that* there was no breach left therein; (though at that time I had not set up the doors upon the gates;)

2 That Sanballat and Geshem sent unto me, saying, Come, let us meet together in *some one of* the villages in the plain of Ono. But they thought to do me mischief.

3 And I sent messengers unto them, saying, I *am* doing a great work, so that I cannot come down: why should the work cease, whilst I leave it, and come down to you?

4 Yet they sent unto me four times after this sort; and I answered them after the same manner.

5 Then sent Sanballat his servant unto me in like manner the fifth time with an open letter in his hand;

6 Wherein *was* written, It is reported among the heathen, and Gashmu saith *it, that* thou and the Jews think to rebel: for which cause thou buildest the wall, that thou mayest be their king, according to these words.

7 And thou hast also appointed prophets to preach of thee at Jerusalem, saying, *There is* a king in Judah: and now shall it be reported to the king according to these words. Come now therefore, and let us take counsel together.

8 Then I sent unto him, saying, There are no such things done as thou sayest, but thou feignest them out of thine own heart.

9 For they all made us afraid, saying, Their hands shall be weakened from the work, that it be not

done. Now therefore, *O God*, strengthen my hands.

10. Afterward I came unto the house of Shemaiah the son of Delaiah the son of Mehetabeel, who *was* shut up; and he said, Let us meet together in the house of God, within the temple, and let us shut the doors of the temple: for they will come to slay thee; yea, in the night will they come to slay thee.

11 And I said, Should such a man as I flee? and who *is there*, that, *being* as I *am*, would go into the temple to save his life? I will not go in.

12 And, lo, I perceived that God had not sent him; but that he pronounced this prophecy against me: for Tobiah and Sanballat had hired him.

13 Therefore *was* he hired, that I should be afraid, and do so, and sin, and *that* they might have *matter* for an evil report, that they might reproach me.

14 My God, think thou upon Tobiah and Sanballat according to these their works, and on the prophetess Noadiah, and the rest of the prophets, that would have put me in fear.

15 ¶ So the wall was finished in the twenty and fifth *day* of *the*

month Elul, in fifty and two days.

16 And it came to pass, that when all our enemies heard *thereof*, and all the heathen that *were* about us saw *these things*, they were much cast down in their own eyes: for they perceived that this work was wrought of our God.

17 ¶ Moreover in those days the nobles of Judah sent many letters unto Tobiah, and *the letters* of Tobiah came unto them.

18 For *there were* many in Judah sworn unto him, because he *was* the son in law of Shechaniah the son of Arah; and his son Johanan had taken the daughter of Meshulam the son of Berechiah.

19 Also they reported his good deeds before me, and uttered my words to him. *And* Tobiah sent letters to put me in fear.

CHAPTER 7

NOW it came to pass, when the wall was built, and I had set up the doors, and the porters and the singers and the Levites were appointed,

2 That I gave my brother Hanani, and Hananiah the ruler of the palace, charge over Jerusalem: for he *was* a faithful man, and feared God above many.

3 And I said unto them, Let not

the gates of Jerusalem be opened until the sun be hot; and while they stand by, let them shut the doors, and bar *them*: and appoint watches of the inhabitants of Jerusalem, every one in his watch, and every one *to be over* against his house.

4 Now the city *was* large and great: but the people *were* few therein, and the houses *were* not builded.

5 ¶ And my God put into mine heart to gather together the nobles, and the rulers, and the people, that they might be reckoned by genealogy. And I found a register of the genealogy of them which came up at the first, and found written therein,

6 These *are* the children of the province, that went up out of the captivity, of those that had been carried away, whom Nebuchadnezzar the king of Babylon had carried away, and came again to Jerusalem and to Judah, every one unto his city;

7 Who came with Zerubbabel, Jeshua, Nehemiah, Azariah, Raamiah, Nahamani, Mordecai, Bilshan, Mispereth, Bigvai, Nehum, Baanah. The number, *I say*, of the men of the people of Israel *was this*;

8 The children of Parosh, two thousand an hundred seventy and two.

9 The children of Shephatiah, three hundred seventy and two.

10 The children of Arah, six hundred fifty and two.

11 The children of Pahathmoab, of the children of Jeshua and Joab, two thousand and eight hundred *and* eighteen.

12 The children of Elam, a thousand two hundred fifty and four.

13 The children of Zattu, eight hundred forty and five.

14 The children of Zaccai, seven hundred and threescore.

15 The children of Binnui, six hundred forty and eight.

16 The children of Bebai, six hundred twenty and eight.

17 The children of Azgad, two thousand three hundred twenty and two.

18 The children of Adonikam, six hundred threescore and seven.

19 The children of Bigvai, two thousand threescore and seven.

20 The children of Adin, six hundred fifty and five.

21 The children of Ater of Hezekiah, ninety and eight.

22 The children of Hashum, three hundred twenty and eight.

23 The children of Bezai, three hundred twenty and four.

24 The children of Hariph, an hundred and twelve.

25 The children of Gibeon, ninety and five.

26 The men of Bethlehem and Netophah, an hundred fourscore and eight.

27 The men of Anathoth, an hundred twenty and eight.

28 The men of Bethazmaveth, forty and two.

29 The men of Kirjathjearim, Chephirah, and Beeroth, seven hundred forty and three.

30 The men of Ramah and Geba, six hundred twenty and one.

31 The men of Michmas, an hundred and twenty and two.

32 The men of Bethel and Ai, an hundred twenty and three.

33 The men of the other Nebo, fifty and two.

34 The children of the other Elam, a thousand two hundred fifty and four.

35 The children of Harim, three hundred and twenty.

36 The children of Jericho, three hundred forty and five.

37 The children of Lod, Hadid, and Ono, seven hundred twenty and one.

38 The children of Senaah, three thousand nine hundred and thirty.

39 ¶ The priests: the children of Jedaiah, of the house of Jeshua, nine hundred seventy and three.

40 The children of Immer, a thousand fifty and two.

41 The children of Pashur, a thousand two hundred forty and seven.

42 The children of Harim, a thousand and seventeen.

43 ¶ The Levites: the children of Jeshua, of Kadmiel, *and* of the children of Hodevah, seventy and four.

44 ¶ The singers: the children of Asaph, an hundred forty and eight.

45 ¶ The porters: the children of Shallum, the children of Ater, the children of Talmon, the children of Akkub, the children of Hatita, the children of Shobai, an hundred thirty and eight.

46 ¶ The Nethinims: the children of Ziha, the children of Hashupha, the children of Tabbaoth,

47 The children of Keros, the children of Sia, the children of Padon,

48 The children of Lebana, the children of Hagaba, the children of Shalmal,

49 The children of Hanan, the children of Giddel, the children of Gahar,

50 The children of Reaiah, the children of Rezin, the children of Nekoda,

51 The children of Gazzam, the children of Uzza, the children of Phaseah,

52 The children of Besai, the children of Meunim, the children of Nephishesim,

53 The children of Bakbuk, the children of Hakupha, the children of Harhur,

54 The children of Bazlith, the children of Mehida, the children of Harsha,

55 The children of Barkos, the children of Sisera, the children of Tamah,

56 The children of Neziah, the children of Hatipha.

57 ¶ The children of Solomon's servants: the children of Sotai, the children of Sophereth, the children of Perida,

58 The children of Jaala, the children of Darkon, the children of Giddel,

59 The children of Shephatiah, the children of Hattil, the children of Pochereth of Zebaim, the children of Amon.

60 All the Nethinims, and the children of Solomon's servants, *were* three hundred ninety and two.

61 And these *were* they which went up *also* from Telmelah, Tel-haresha, Cherub, Addon, and Immer: but they could not shew their father's house, nor their seed, whether they *were* of Israel.

62 The children of Delaiah, the children of Tobiah, the children of Nekoda, six hundred forty and two.

63 ¶ And of the priests: the children of Habaiah, the children of Koz, the children of Barzillai, which took *one* of the daughters of Barzillai the Gileadite to wife, and was called after their name.

64 These sought their register *among* those that were reckoned by genealogy, but it was not found: therefore were they, as polluted, put from the priesthood.

65 And the Tirshatha said unto them, that they should not eat of the most holy things, till there stood *up* a priest with Urim and Thummim.

66 ¶ The whole congregation together *was* forty and two thousand three hundred and threescore,

67 Beside their manservants and their maidservants, of whom *there were* seven thousand three

hundred thirty and seven: and they had two hundred forty and five singing men and singing women.

68 Their horses, seven hundred thirty and six: their mules, two hundred forty and five:

69 *Their* camels, four hundred thirty and five: six thousand seven hundred and twenty asses.

70 ¶ And some of the chief of the fathers gave unto the work. The Tirshatha gave to the treasure a thousand drams of gold, fifty basons, five hundred and thirty priests' garments.

71 And *some* of the chief of the fathers gave to the treasure of the work twenty thousand drams of gold, and two thousand and two hundred pound of silver.

72 And *that* which the rest of the people gave *was* twenty thousand drams of gold, and two thousand pound of silver, and three-score and seven priests' garments.

73 So the priests, and the Levites, and the porters, and the singers, and *some* of the people, and the Nethinims, and all Israel, dwelt in their cities; and when the seventh month came, the children of Israel *were* in their cities.

DEVOTIONAL COMMENTS

Chapter 5 is a sad chapter, for in it we see the Jews selfishly preying upon one another. There is no building in this chapter.

There were great economic burdens upon the Jews, not only because of the famine, but because of the taxes and tributes. The Jews were being robbed by their own people, through mortgages and servitude. Nehemiah reacted to this crisis by first being angry because his people were so spiritually backslidden as to rob one another. He saw it as a spiritual problem rather than an economic problem.

He consulted his own heart in verse 7, and certainly prayed to God for wisdom. He then rebuked the people, reminding them of God's goodness to the nation. "We have been set free by the Lord," he argued. "Will you now put one another in bondage again?" He appealed to the Old Testament Law as he commanded them to restore their ill-gotten profits.

In chapter 6 the people went back to work and so did the enemy. This time Sanballat and his men aimed their attacks at Nehemiah. He faced guile, slander, and threats. God's people will never fully realize here on earth the special temptations and testings they must face day after day. Spiritual leadership is a costly thing. Nehemiah rejected Sanballat's invitation for a friendly meeting because he realized God's servants should be separated and should never walk in the counsel of the ungodly (Psalm 1).

Verse 15 records that the walls were completed on the 25th day of the sixth month. It had taken a total of 52 days to complete the rebuilding. And the people had worked during the hottest part of the year. Through it all, God was glorified and the enemy was embarrassed!

PROVERB FOR TODAY

"Speak not in the ears of a fool: for he will despise the wisdom of thy words" (Proverbs 23:9).

TREASURE PATH TO SOUL WINNING

ASSIGNMENT 17: For today's memory verses, follow instructions on page 11.

HAPPY BIRTHDAY TO

BERTA MAE WALTON

HYMN FOR TODAY

HOLY SPIRIT, FAITHFUL GUIDE

Words and music by

Marcus M. Wells, 1815-1895

One of the Holy Spirit's ministries is to lead us each day wherever our heavenly Father desires us to best represent Him. When vital decisions must be made, the Holy Spirit can open the Scriptures to us and illuminate our minds. By the faithful guidance of the Holy Spirit, we come to love and follow the will of God for our daily living.

Many of our troubles occur because we fail to take counsel from the Holy Spirit and the Bible. Instead of first praying and seeking guidance, we act and then ask God to bless our actions. We must learn the lesson continually that effective Christian living is totally dependent upon an awareness and appreciation of the Holy Spirit's intimate presence in our lives; we must have a willingness to be directed and confronted by Him.

"Holy Spirit, Faithful Guide" was written and composed by an American farmer, Marcus M. Wells. He gave the following account for its writing:

"On a Saturday afternoon in October, 1858, while at work in my cornfield near Hardwick, New York, the sentiment of this hymn came to me. The next day, I finished the hymn and wrote a tune for it and sent it to Professor I.G. Woodbury."

The hymn appeared in the next month's issue of Woodbury's periodical, *The New York Musical Pioneer*. These tender words still minister to us today:

Holy Spirit, faithful Guide, ever near the Christian's side,

*Gently lead us by the hand, pilgrims in a desert land;
Weary souls fore'er rejoice, while they hear that sweetest voice*

Whisp'ring softly, "Wand'rer come! Follow Me, I'll guide thee home."

*Ever-present, truest Friend, ever near Thine aid to lend,
Leave us not to doubt and fear, groping on in darkness drear;*

*When the storms are raging sore, hearts grow faint,
and leaps give o'er,*

Whisper softly, "Wand'rer come! Follow Me, I'll guide thee home."

When our days of toil shall cease, waiting still for sweet release,

Nothing left but heav'n and prayer, knowing that our names are there,

Wading deep the dismal flood, pleading naught but Jesus' blood,

Whisper softly, "Wand'rer come! Follow Me, I'll guide thee home."

ON THIS DATE IN HISTORY

1498

GIROLAMO SAVONAROLA WAS BURNED AT THE STAKE IN FLORENCE, ITALY.

Savonarola was an Italian reformer whose story was one of the greatest in the history of Christian martyrs. While the fire was being prepared, he was asked if he expected to die in peace.

He replied, "My Saviour, though innocent, died for my sins, and should I not give up this poor body out of love to Him?" He was told that he was excluded from the militant and triumphant church. He replied, "From the church militant thou mayest, but from the church triumphant thou canst not."

He was hanged and then burned for his crime which was "reforming the government and cleansing the temple." It is said that Savonarola on one occasion sat in his pulpit for five hours waiting for the power of God to come on him. Would God today the power of God would come upon our preachers.

1948

CHRISTOPHER BALFE (LUCKY BALDWIN) DIED AT WILLIAMSBAY, WISCONSIN.

He was one of the great soul winners of the 20th century. From 1912 to 1948 he was chaplain of the House of Correction at the Bridewell Prison and Cook County Jail of Chicago. His prison converts numbered over twelve thousand. He influenced Chicago for many years. It is said that he was a personal soul winner. Be sure to witness to someone and win someone to Christ today.

1926

NORMAN NELSON WAS BORN IN DENVER, COLORADO.

Nelson has been used of God to be a Gospel soloist and has served as a missionary with Overseas Crusades in the Philippines. Pray for your song leader

today. Many times the unsung hero is the music director. Pray for God's blessings to rest upon your music director and music directors everywhere. How long has it been since you wrote your music director a letter of appreciation? Do so today. God will bless you for it.

1965

HENRY HALLEY DIED IN CHICAGO, ILLINOIS.

Halley was the compiler and author of the famous HALLEY'S HANDBOOK OF THE BIBLE. Over two million copies have been sold. Why not thank God today for Halley's Bible Handbook.

1788

SOUTH CAROLINA WAS ADMITTED TO THE UNION.

Pray for Christian friends from South Carolina and the work of the Lord Jesus Christ there. Perhaps you know some of them personally.

ON THIS DATE IN AFRICAN-AMERICAN HISTORY

1878

ATTY. JOHN HENRY SMYTH NAMED MINISTER TO LIBERIA.

1921

SHUFFLE ALONG, FIRST OF A SUCCESSION OF POPULAR MUSICALS FEATURING BLACK TALENT, OPENED AT THE 63RD STREET MUSIC HALL, NEW YORK CITY.

1920

METHODIST EPISCOPAL CHURCH CONFERENCE, MEETING IN DES MOINES, IOWA, ELECTED TWO BLACK BISHOPS MATTHEW W. CLAIR OF WASHINGTON, D.C., AND ROBERT E. JONES OF NEW ORLEANS.

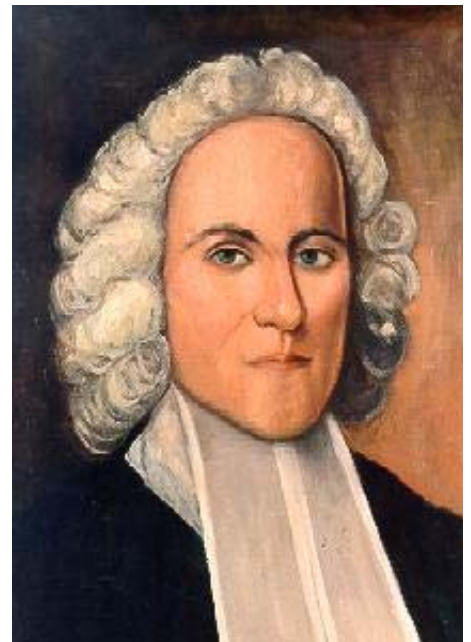
A Christian Life

JONATHAN EDWARDS

1703-1758

American theologian and philosopher. Jonathan Edwards was born in Connecticut. At the age of 13, after having mastered Latin, Greek, and Hebrew, he entered Yale, and was graduated at the age of 17. Soon after his graduation, he was converted to Jesus Christ. He served pastorates in Massachusetts during the Great Awakening, a tremendous revival which began through the influence and preaching of George Whitefield, William Tennant, and others. This revival ran from 1734 to 1744, with mass conversions adding 50,000 converts to the churches of New England.

Edwards preached a sermon, *Sinners in the Hands of an Angry God*, during which strong men fell as though shot and women became hysterical. Through his preaching, thousands were converted to the Lord Jesus Christ.



The Treasure Path to Soul Winning

MEMORY VERSE TOPIC FOR THIS WEEK:

DIFFICULT PROBLEMS SOLVED: "THE CHRISTIAN LIFE IS HARD AND DIFFICULT"

(Assignment 17)

Please recite all three components of each of these five verses aloud, five times each morning, and five times each evening, for seven days. The three components of each verse are: Subject, Scripture Reference, and Scripture Text. (For more details, see "The Treasure Path to Soul Winning" link back on the DailyKJV page.)

() Proverbs 13:15

Good understanding giveth favour: but the way of transgressors is hard.

() Proverbs 3:17

Her ways are ways of pleasantness, and all her paths are peace.

() Matthew 11:30

For my yoke is easy, and my burden is light.

() Isaiah 41:10

Fear thou not; for I am with thee: be not dismayed; for I am thy God: I will strengthen thee; yea, I will help thee; yea, I will uphold thee with the right hand of my righteousness.

() Isaiah 41:11

Behold, all they that were incensed against thee shall be ashamed and confounded: they shall be as nothing; and they that strive with thee shall perish.