

MAY 26

Read Nehemiah 13—Esther 2

CHAPTER 13

ON that day they read in the book of Moses in the audience of the people; and therein was found written, that the Ammonite and the Moabite should not come into the congregation of God for ever;

2 Because they met not the children of Israel with bread and with water, but hired Balaam against them, that he should curse them: howbeit our God turned the curse into a blessing.

3 Now it came to pass, when they had heard the law, that they separated from Israel all the mixed multitude.

4 ¶ And before this, Eliashib the priest, having the oversight of the chamber of the house of our God, *was* allied unto Tobiah:

5 And he had prepared for him a great chamber, where aforetime they laid the meat offerings, the frankincense, and the vessels, and the tithes of the corn, the new wine, and the oil, which was commanded *to be given* to the Levites,

and the singers, and the porters; and the offerings of the priests.

6 But in all this *time* was not I at Jerusalem: for in the two and thirtieth year of Artaxerxes king of Babylon came I unto the king, and after certain days obtained I leave of the king:

7 And I came to Jerusalem, and understood of the evil that Eliashib did for Tobiah, in preparing him a chamber in the courts of the house of God.

8 And it grieved me sore: therefore I cast forth all the household stuff of Tobiah out of the chamber.

9 Then I commanded, and they cleansed the chambers: and thither brought I again the vessels of the house of God, with the meat offering and the frankincense.

10 ¶ And I perceived that the portions of the Levites had not been given *them*: for the Levites and the singers, that did the work, were fled every one to his field.

11 Then contended I with the rulers, and said, Why is the house of God forsaken? And I gathered

them together, and set them in their place.

12 Then brought all Judah the tithe of the corn and the new wine and the oil unto the treasuries.

13 And I made treasurers over the treasuries, Shelemiah the priest, and Zadok the scribe, and of the Levites, Pedaiah: and next to them *was* Hanan the son of Zaccur, the son of Mattaniah: for they were counted faithful, and their office *was* to distribute unto their brethren.

14 Remember me, O my God, concerning this, and wipe not out my good deeds that I have done for the house of my God, and for the offices thereof.

15 ¶ In those days saw I in Judah *some* treading wine presses on the sabbath, and bringing in sheaves, and lading asses; as also wine, grapes, and figs, and all *manner of* burdens, which they brought into Jerusalem on the sabbath day: and I testified *against them* in the day wherein they sold victuals.

16 There dwelt men of Tyre also therein, which brought fish, and all manner of ware, and sold on the sabbath unto the children of Judah, and in Jerusalem.

17 Then I contended with the

nobles of Judah, and said unto them, What evil thing *is* this that ye do, and profane the sabbath day?

18 Did not your fathers thus, and did not our God bring all this evil upon us, and upon this city? yet ye bring more wrath upon Israel by profaning the sabbath.

19 And it came to pass, that when the gates of Jerusalem began to be dark before the sabbath, I commanded that the gates should be shut, and charged that they should not be opened till after the sabbath: and *some* of my servants set I at the gates, *that* there should no burden be brought in on the sabbath day.

20 So the merchants and sellers of all kind of ware lodged without Jerusalem once or twice.

21 Then I testified against them, and said unto them, Why lodge ye about the wall? if ye do so again, I will lay hands on you. From that time forth came they no *more* on the sabbath.

22 And I commanded the Levites that they should cleanse themselves, and *that* they should come *and* keep the gates, to sanctify the sabbath day. Remember me, O my God, *concerning* this also,

and spare me according to the greatness of thy mercy.

23 ¶ In those days also saw I Jews *that* had married wives of Ashdod, of Ammon, *and* of Moab:

24 And their children spake half in the speech of Ashdod, and could not speak in the Jews' language, but according to the language of each people.

25 And I contended with them, and cursed them, and smote certain of them, and plucked off their hair, and made them swear by God, *saying*, Ye shall not give your daughters unto their sons, nor take their daughters unto your sons, or for yourselves.

26 Did not Solomon king of Israel sin by these things? yet among many nations was there no king like him, who was beloved of his God, and God made him king over all Israel: nevertheless even him did outlandish women cause to sin.

27 Shall we then hearken unto you to do all this great evil, to transgress against our God in marrying strange wives?

28 And *one* of the sons of Joiada, the son of Eliashib the high priest, *was* son in law to Sanballat the Horonite: therefore I chased him from me.

29 Remember them, O my God, because they have defiled the priesthood, and the covenant of the priesthood, and of the Levites.

30 Thus cleansed I them from all strangers, and appointed the wards of the priests and the Levites, every one in his business;

31 And for the wood offering, at times appointed, and for the first-fruits. Remember me, O my God, for good.

ESTHER CHAPTER 1

NOW it came to pass in the days of Ahasuerus, (*this is* Ahasuerus which reigned, from India even unto Ethiopia, *over* an hundred and seven and twenty provinces:)

2 *That* in those days, when the king Ahasuerus sat on the throne of his kingdom, which *was* in Shushan the palace,

3 In the third year of his reign, he made a feast unto all his princes and his servants; the power of Persia and Media, the nobles and princes of the provinces, *being* before him:

4 When he shewed the riches of his glorious kingdom and the honour of his excellent majesty many

days, *even* an hundred and fourscore days.

5 And when these days were expired, the king made a feast unto all the people that were present in Shushan the palace, both unto great and small, seven days, in the court of the garden of the king's palace;

6 *Where were* white, green, and blue, *hangings*, fastened with cords of fine linen and purple to silver rings and pillars of marble: the beds *were of* gold and silver, upon a pavement of red, and blue, and white, and black, marble.

7 And they gave *them* drink in vessels of gold, (the vessels being diverse one from another,) and royal wine in abundance, according to the state of the king.

8 And the drinking *was* according to the law; none did compel: for so the king had appointed to all the officers of his house, that they should do according to every man's pleasure.

9 Also Vashti the queen made a feast for the women *in* the royal house which *belonged* to king Ahasuerus.

10 ¶ On the seventh day, when the heart of the king was merry with wine, he commanded Mehu-

man, Biztha, Harbona, Bigtha, and Abagtha, Zethar, and Carcas, the seven chamberlains that served in the presence of Ahasuerus the king,

11 To bring Vashti the queen before the king with the crown royal, to shew the people and the princes her beauty: for she *was* fair to look on.

12 But the queen Vashti refused to come at the king's commandment by *his* chamberlains: therefore was the king very wroth, and his anger burned in him.

13 ¶ Then the king said to the wise men, which knew the times, (for so *was* the king's manner toward all that knew law and judgment:

14 And the next unto him *was* Carshena, Shethar, Admatha, Tarshish, Meres, Marsena, *and* Memucan, the seven princes of Persia and Media, which saw the king's face, *and* which sat the first in the kingdom;)

15 What shall we do unto the queen Vashti according to law, because she hath not performed the commandment of the king Ahasuerus by the chamberlains?

16 And Memucan answered before the king and the princes,

Vashti the queen hath not done wrong to the king only, but also to all the princes, and to all the people that *are* in all the provinces of the king Ahasuerus.

17 For *this* deed of the queen shall come abroad unto all women, so that they shall despise their husbands in their eyes, when it shall be reported, The king Ahasuerus commanded Vashti the queen to be brought in before him, but she came not.

18 *Likewise* shall the ladies of Persia and Media say this day unto all the king's princes, which have heard of the deed of the queen. Thus *shall there arise* too much contempt and wrath.

19 If it please the king, let there go a royal commandment from him, and let it be written among the laws of the Persians and the Medes, that it be not altered, That Vashti come no more before king Ahasuerus; and let the king give her royal estate unto another that is better than she.

20 And when the king's decree which he shall make shall be published throughout all his empire, (for it is great,) all the wives shall give to their husbands honour, both to great and small.

21 And the saying pleased the king and the princes; and the king did according to the word of Memucan:

22 For he sent letters into all the king's provinces, into every province according to the writing thereof, and to every people after their language, that every man should bear rule in his own house, and that *it* should be published according to the language of every people.

CHAPTER 2

AFTER these things, when the wrath of king Ahasuerus was appeased, he remembered Vashti, and what she had done, and what was decreed against her.

2 Then said the king's servants that ministered unto him, Let there be fair young virgins sought for the king:

3 And let the king appoint officers in all the provinces of his kingdom, that they may gather together all the fair young virgins unto Shushan the palace, to the house of the women, unto the custody of Hege the king's chamberlain, keeper of the women; and let their things for purification be given *them*:

4 And let the maiden which

pleaseth the king be queen instead of Vashti. And the thing pleased the king; and he did so.

5 ¶ Now in Shushan the palace there was a certain Jew, whose name was Mordecai, the son of Jair, the son of Shimei, the son of Kish, a Benjamite;

6 Who had been carried away from Jerusalem with the captivity which had been carried away with Jeconiah king of Judah, whom Nebuchadnezzar the king of Babylon had carried away.

7 And he brought up Hadassah, that is, Esther, his uncle's daughter: for she had neither father nor mother, and the maid was fair and beautiful; whom Mordecai, when her father and mother were dead, took for his own daughter.

8 ¶ So it came to pass, when the king's commandment and his decree was heard, and when many maidens were gathered together unto Shushan the palace, to the custody of Hegai, that Esther was brought also unto the king's house, to the custody of Hegai, keeper of the women.

9 And the maiden pleased him, and she obtained kindness of him; and he speedily gave her her things for purification, with such things as

belonged to her, and seven maidens, which were meet to be given her, out of the king's house: and he preferred her and her maids unto the best place of the house of the women.

10 Esther had not shewed her people nor her kindred: for Mordecai had charged her that she should not shew it.

11 And Mordecai walked every day before the court of the women's house, to know how Esther did, and what should become of her.

12 ¶ Now when every maid's turn was come to go in to king Ahasuerus, after that she had been twelve months, according to the manner of the women, (for so were the days of their purifications accomplished, to wit, six months with oil of myrrh, and six months with sweet odours, and with other things for the purifying of the women;)

13 Then thus came every maiden unto the king; whatsoever she desired was given her to go with her out of the house of the women unto the king's house.

14 In the evening she went, and on the morrow she returned into the second house of the women, to the custody of Shaashgaz, the

king's chamberlain, which kept the concubines: she came in unto the king no more, except the king delighted in her, and that she were called by name.

15 ¶ Now when the turn of Esther, the daughter of Abihail the uncle of Mordecai, who had taken her for his daughter, was come to go in unto the king, she required nothing but what Hegai the king's chamberlain, the keeper of the women, appointed. And Esther obtained favour in the sight of all them that looked upon her.

16 So Esther was taken unto king Ahasuerus into his house royal in the tenth month, which *is* the month Tebeth, in the seventh year of his reign.

17 And the king loved Esther above all the women, and she obtained grace and favour in his sight more than all the virgins; so that he set the royal crown upon her head, and made her queen instead of Vashti.

18 Then the king made a great feast unto all his princes and his servants, *even* Esther's feast; and

he made a release to the provinces, and gave gifts, according to the state of the king.

19 And when the virgins were gathered together the second time, then Mordecai sat in the king's gate.

20 Esther had not *yet* shewed her kindred nor her people; as Mordecai had charged her: for Esther did the commandment of Mordecai, like as when she was brought up with him.

21 ¶ In those days, while Mordecai sat in the king's gate, two of the king's chamberlains, Bigthan and Teresh, of those which kept the door, were wroth, and sought to lay hand on the king Ahasuerus.

22 And the thing was known to Mordecai, who told *it* unto Esther the queen; and Esther certified the king *thereof* in Mordecai's name.

23 And when inquisition was made of the matter, it was found out; therefore they were both hanged on a tree: and it was written in the book of the chronicles before the king.

DEVOTIONAL COMMENTS

Chapter 13 records Nehemiah's second visit to Jerusalem. He found that the Jewish men had repeated the sin of taking heathen wives. In fact, some of the priests had even sinned in this way. It was now necessary for this courageous saint to face the sin and honestly judge it. He started at the house of God, when he discovered that the high priest was allied with the Jews' enemy, Tobiah. Nehemiah lost no time in throwing out Tobiah and his goods, and having the Temple chamber sanctified for its proper use.

The Book of Nehemiah closes with three prayers (verses 22,29, and 31). Nehemiah had done his work, but only God could bless it and keep it going. The time would come when Nehemiah would die, and the majority of the people would forget him. However, because of his faithfulness, God would never forget him.

The events recorded in the Book of Esther take place between Ezra 6 and 7. The third year of Ahasuerus (chapter 1:3) would be the year 483 B.C. Ahasuerus was the title of the Persian ruler, just as Pharaoh was the title of the Egyptian ruler. The Book of Esther does not mention the name of God, but the name of the king is mentioned at least 28 times.

The significance of the Book of Esther is that it testifies to the secret watchcare of Jehovah over dispersed Israel. Even though the word "Jehovah" does not appear in the book, His overruling providence is seen in every chapter.

King Xerxes ruled from 486 to 465 B.C. We can see from our reading that he was an impulsive ruler. At least four years passed between chapters 1 and 2, during which time King Xerxes went on his disastrous Greek campaign. He came home a bitter man. It was only natural that he should seek some kind of comfort in his home. In the latter part of chapter 2, King Xerxes makes Esther queen, to take the place of Vashti.

PROVERB FOR TODAY

"He that hateth dissembleth with his lips, and layeth up deceit within him" (Proverbs 26:24).

TREASURE PATH TO SOUL WINNING

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

BIRTHDAYS TODAY

**VIRGINIA STAPLES
FLORA FUDGE**

HYMN FOR TODAY

COME, THOU ALMIGHTY KING

Source unknown, c. 1757

In his book *The Knowledge of the Holy*, A.W. Tozer left these choice words regarding the Trinity: "The doctrine of the Trinity...is truth for the heart. The fact that it cannot be satisfactorily explained, instead of being against it, is in its favor. Such a truth had to be revealed; no one could have imagined it."

The doctrine of the Trinity has been controversial since the earliest days of Christianity. In A.D. 325, the Council of Nicaea affirmed its belief in the Triune Godhead. During the 16th century Reformation period, it was again denied by the Socinians. And still today many liberal theologians and groups are blatant in their denial. They often speak of God, the Father of all, Jesus, the mere man, and the divine influence of the Spirit of God. This form of blasphemy regulates each member of the Godhead to a role far less than that ascribed in the Bible.

This familiar Trinity hymn is also one of our most popular "opening hymns" for a Sunday morning worship service. It appeared anonymously in England in about 1757 to commemorate Trinity Sunday. It has been attributed by some to Charles Wesley since it first appeared in a pamphlet published by John Wesley.

This is a hymn that must always be sung with all four stanzas. To omit any of the first three would be to slight one of the members of the Godhead. The fourth stanza is a grand affirmation of the mysterious doctrine of the Trinity, that God is One yet Three and ever worthy of our love and adoration.

*Come, Thou Almighty King, Help us Thy name to sing;
Help us to praise: Father, all glorious,
O'er all victorious, come and reign over us,
Ancient of Days.*

*Come, Thou Incarnate Word, gird on Thy mighty
sword,
Our prayer attend: Come and Thy people bless,
And give Thy word success—Spirit of holiness,
In us descend.*

*Come, Holy Comforter, Thy sacred witness bear
In this glad hour: Thou who almighty art,
Now rule in ev'ry heart, and ne'er from us depart,
Spirit of pow'r.*

*To the great One in Three eternal praises be,
Hence evermore: His sov'reign majesty,*

*May we in glory see, and to eternity
Love and adore.*

ON THIS DATE IN HISTORY

1890

SPURGEON SAID, “THERE HAS NOT BEEN A SINGLE DAY BUT WHAT I HAVE HEARD TWO, THREE, OR FOUR BEING CONVERTED...FOR THE LAST TEN YEARS.”

Spurgeon believed in winning souls daily and the great Metropolitan Tabernacle practiced it. Read Acts 2:47 and you will find that soul winning is a daily ministry, *“Praising God, and having favour with all the people. And the Lord added to the church daily such as should be saved.”*

Acts 5:42, *“And daily in the temple, and in every house, they ceased not to teach and preach Jesus Christ,”* leads us to believe the same thing.

Acts 8:4, *“Therefore they that were scattered abroad went everywhere preaching the word.”*

From these verses, we can see that the job of the church is to be after souls daily and to be leading

people to a saving knowledge of Jesus Christ daily.

God give us soul-winning churches and pastors as was Spurgeon.

ON THIS DATE IN AFRICAN-AMERICAN HISTORY

1943

PRESIDENT EDWIN BARCLAY OF LIBERIA, FIRST AFRICAN PRESIDENT TO PAY AN OFFICIAL VISIT TO AN AMERICAN PRESIDENT, ARRIVED AT WHITE HOUSE.

1961

FREEDOM RIDE COORDINATING COMMITTEE ESTABLISHED IN ATLANTA.

1969

NATIONAL BLACK ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT CONFERENCE ADOPTED MANIFESTO IN DETROIT MEETING CALLING FOR \$500 MILLION IN REPARATIONS FROM WHITE CHURCHES.

A Christian Life

ADONIRAM JUDSON

1788-1850

Pioneer missionary to Burma. Adoniram Judson was the son of a Congregational minister. He taught himself to read at the age of three, and by his tenth year he knew Latin and Greek and was a serious student of theology. At the age of 16 he entered Brown University and was graduated three years later as the valedictorian of his class.

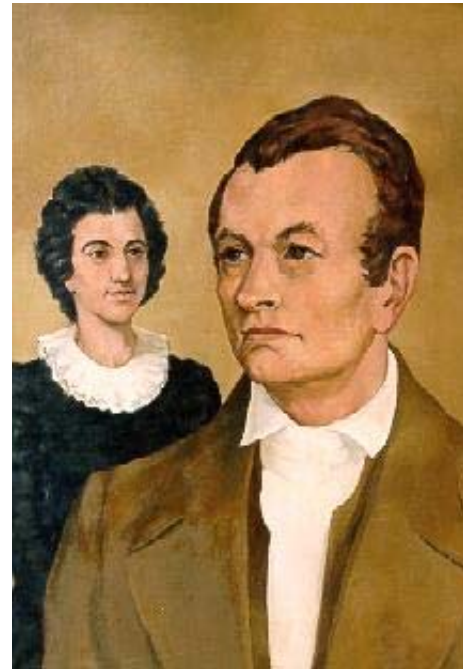
At Andover Theological Seminary he could not get away from the words of a missionary appeal, "Go ye into all the world." In 1810 he helped form the American Board of Commissioners for Foreign Missions, and, two years later, he and his new wife, Ann, sailed for India.

When the government refused to allow them to enter the country, they went to Burma, where they worked for six years before winning a convert. During those years they were plagued with ill health, loneliness, and the death of their baby son. Judson was imprisoned for nearly two years, during which time Ann faithfully visited him, smuggling to him his books, papers, and notes, which he used in translating the Bible into the Burmese language. Soon after his release from prison, Ann and their baby daughter, Maria, died of spotted fever.

Judson withdrew into seclusion into the interior, where he completed the translation of the whole Bible into Burmese.

In 1845 he returned for a visit to America, but the burning desire to win the Burmese people sent him back to the Orient, where he soon died.

As a young man, he had cried out, "I will not leave Burma, until the cross is planted here forever!" Thirty years after his death, Burma had 63 Christian churches, 163 missionaries, and over 7,000 baptized converts.



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.