

Saturday, August 17

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Nehemiah 12:27 - 13:31

12 27 For the dedication of the new wall of Jerusalem, the Levites throughout the land were asked to come to Jerusalem to assist in the ceremonies. They were to take part in the joyous occasion with their songs of thanksgiving and with the music of cymbals, harps, and lyres. **28** The singers were brought together from the region around Jerusalem and from the villages of the Netophathites. **29** They also came from Beth-gilgal and the rural areas near Geba and Azmaveth, for the singers had built their own settlements around Jerusalem. **30** The priests and Levites first purified themselves; then they purified the people, the gates, and the wall. **31** I led the leaders of Judah to the top of the wall and organized two large choirs to give thanks. One of the choirs proceeded southward along the top of the wall to the Dung Gate. **32** Hoshaiah and half the leaders of Judah followed them, **33** along with Azariah, Ezra, Meshullam, **34** Judah, Benjamin, Shemaiah, and Jeremiah. **35** Then came some priests who played trumpets, including Zechariah son of Jonathan, son of Shemaiah, son of Mattaniah, son of Micaiah, son of Zaccur, a descendant of Asaph. **36** And Zechariah's colleagues were Shemaiah, Azarel, Milalai, Gilalai, Maai, Nethanel, Judah, and Hanani. They used the musical instruments prescribed by David, the man of God. Ezra the scribe led this procession. **37** At the Fountain Gate they went straight up the steps on the ascent of the city wall toward the City of David. They passed the house of David and then proceeded to the Water Gate on the east. **38** The second choir giving thanks went northward around the other way to meet them. I followed them, together with the other half of the people, along the top of the wall past the Tower of the Ovens to the Broad Wall, **39** then past the Ephraim Gate to the Old City Gate, past the Fish Gate and the Tower of Hananel, and on to the Tower of the Hundred. Then we continued on to the Sheep Gate and stopped at the Guard Gate. **40** The two choirs that were giving thanks then proceeded to the Temple of God, where they took their places. So did I, together with the group of leaders who were with me. **41** We went together with the trumpet-playing priests—Eliakim, Maaseiah, Miniamin, Micaiah, Elioenai, Zechariah, and Hananiah— **42** and the singers—Maaseiah, Shemaiah, Eleazar, Uzzi, Jehohanan, Malkijah, Elam, and Ezer. They played and sang loudly under the direction of Jezrahiah the choir director. **43** Many sacrifices were offered on that joyous day, for God had given the people cause for great joy. The women and children also participated in the celebration, and the joy of the people of Jerusalem could be heard far away. **44** On that day men were appointed to be in charge of the storerooms for the offerings,

the first part of the harvest, and the tithes. They were responsible to collect from the fields outside the towns the portions required by the Law for the priests and Levites. For all the people of Judah took joy in the priests and Levites and their work. **45** They performed the service of their God and the service of purification, as commanded by David and his son Solomon, and so did the singers and the gatekeepers. **46** The custom of having choir directors to lead the choirs in hymns of praise and thanksgiving to God began long ago in the days of David and Asaph. **47** So now, in the days of Zerubbabel and of Nehemiah, all Israel brought a daily supply of food for the singers, the gatekeepers, and the Levites. The Levites, in turn, gave a portion of what they received to the priests, the descendants of Aaron.

13 1 On that same day, as the Book of Moses was being read to the people, the passage was found that said no Ammonite or Moabite should ever be permitted to enter the assembly of God. **2** For they had not provided the Israelites with food and water in the wilderness. Instead, they hired Balaam to curse them, though our God turned the curse into a blessing. **3** When this passage of the Law was read, all those of foreign descent were immediately excluded from the assembly. **4** Before this had happened, Eliashib the priest, who had been appointed as supervisor of the storerooms of the Temple of our God and who was also a relative of Tobiah, **5** had converted a large storage room and placed it at Tobiah's disposal. The room had previously been used for storing the grain offerings, the frankincense, various articles for the Temple, and the tithes of grain, new wine, and olive oil (which were prescribed for the Levites, the singers, and the gatekeepers), as well as the offerings for the priests. **6** I was not in Jerusalem at that time, for I had returned to King Artaxerxes of Babylon in the thirty-second year of his reign, though I later asked his permission to return. **7** When I arrived back in Jerusalem, I learned about Eliashib's evil deed in providing Tobiah with a room in the courtyards of the Temple of God. **8** I became very upset and threw all of Tobiah's belongings out of the room. **9** Then I demanded that the rooms be purified, and I brought back the articles for God's Temple, the grain offerings, and the frankincense. **10** I also discovered that the Levites had not been given their prescribed portions of food, so they and the singers who were to conduct the worship services had all returned to work their fields. **11** I immediately confronted the leaders and demanded, "Why has the Temple of God been neglected?" Then I called all the Levites back again and restored them to their proper duties. **12** And once more all the people of Judah began bringing their tithes of grain, new wine, and olive oil to the Temple storerooms. **13** I assigned supervisors for the storerooms: Shelemiah the priest, Zadok the scribe, and Pedaiah, one of the Levites. And I appointed Hanan son of Zaccur and grandson of Mattaniah as their assistant. These men had an excellent reputation, and it was their job to make honest distributions to their fellow Levites. **14** Remember this good deed, O my God, and do not forget

all that I have faithfully done for the Temple of my God and its services. **15** In those days I saw men of Judah treading out their winepresses on the Sabbath. They were also bringing in grain, loading it on donkeys, and bringing their wine, grapes, figs, and all sorts of produce to Jerusalem to sell on the Sabbath. So I rebuked them for selling their produce on that day. **16** Some men from Tyre, who lived in Jerusalem, were bringing in fish and all kinds of merchandise. They were selling it on the Sabbath to the people of Judah—and in Jerusalem at that!**17** So I confronted the nobles of Judah. “Why are you profaning the Sabbath in this evil way?” I asked. **18** “Wasn’t it just this sort of thing that your ancestors did that caused our God to bring all this trouble upon us and our city? Now you are bringing even more wrath upon Israel by permitting the Sabbath to be desecrated in this way!” **19** Then I commanded that the gates of Jerusalem should be shut as darkness fell every Friday evening, not to be opened until the Sabbath ended. I sent some of my own servants to guard the gates so that no merchandise could be brought in on the Sabbath day. **20** The merchants and tradesmen with a variety of wares camped outside Jerusalem once or twice. **21** But I spoke sharply to them and said, “What are you doing out here, camping around the wall? If you do this again, I will arrest you!” And that was the last time they came on the Sabbath. **22** Then I commanded the Levites to purify themselves and to guard the gates in order to preserve the holiness of the Sabbath. Remember this good deed also, O my God! Have compassion on me according to your great and unfailing love. **23** About the same time I realized that some of the men of Judah had married women from Ashdod, Ammon, and Moab. **24** Furthermore, half their children spoke the language of Ashdod or of some other people and could not speak the language of Judah at all. **25** So I confronted them and called down curses on them. I beat some of them and pulled out their hair. I made them swear in the name of God that they would not let their children intermarry with the pagan people of the land. **26** “Wasn’t this exactly what led King Solomon of Israel into sin?” I demanded. “There was no king from any nation who could compare to him, and God loved him and made him king over all Israel. But even he was led into sin by his foreign wives. **27** How could you even think of committing this sinful deed and acting unfaithfully toward God by marrying foreign women?” **28** One of the sons of Joiada son of Eliashib the high priest had married a daughter of Sanballat the Horonite, so I banished him from my presence. **29** Remember them, O my God, for they have defiled the priesthood and the solemn vows of the priests and Levites. **30** So I purged out everything foreign and assigned tasks to the priests and Levites, making certain that each knew his work. **31** I also made sure that the supply of wood for the altar and the first portions of the harvest were brought at the proper times. Remember this in my favor, O my God.

1 Corinthians 11:1 - 16

11 **1** And you should imitate me, just as I imitate Christ. **2** I am so glad that you always keep me in your thoughts, and that you are following the teachings I passed on to you. **3** But there is one thing I want you to know: The head of every man is Christ, the head of woman is man, and the head of Christ is God. **4** A man dishonors his head if he covers his head while praying or prophesying. **5** But a woman dishonors her head if she prays or prophesies without a covering on her head, for this is the same as shaving her head. **6** Yes, if she refuses to wear a head covering, she should cut off all her hair! But since it is shameful for a woman to have her hair cut or her head shaved, she should wear a covering. **7** A man should not wear anything on his head when worshiping, for man is made in God's image and reflects God's glory. And woman reflects man's glory. **8** For the first man didn't come from woman, but the first woman came from man. **9** And man was not made for woman, but woman was made for man. **10** For this reason, and because the angels are watching, a woman should wear a covering on her head to show she is under authority. **11** But among the Lord's people, women are not independent of men, and men are not independent of women. **12** For although the first woman came from man, every other man was born from a woman, and everything comes from God. **13** Judge for yourselves. Is it right for a woman to pray to God in public without covering her head? **14** Isn't it obvious that it's disgraceful for a man to have long hair? **15** And isn't long hair a woman's pride and joy? For it has been given to her as a covering. **16** But if anyone wants to argue about this, I simply say that we have no other custom than this, and neither do God's other churches.

Psalms 35:1 - 16

35 **1** O LORD, oppose those who oppose me. Fight those who fight against me. **2** Put on your armor, and take up your shield. Prepare for battle, and come to my aid. **3** Lift up your spear and javelin against those who pursue me. Let me hear you say, "I will give you victory!" **4** Bring shame and disgrace on those trying to kill me; turn them back and humiliate those who want to harm me. **5** Blow them away like chaff in the wind— a wind sent by the angel of the LORD. **6** Make their path dark and slippery, with the angel of the LORD pursuing them. **7** I did them no wrong, but they laid a trap for me. I did them no wrong, but they dug a pit to catch me. **8** So let sudden ruin come upon them! Let them be caught in the trap they set for me! Let them be destroyed in the pit they dug for me. **9** Then I will rejoice in the LORD. I will be glad because he rescues me. **10** With every bone in my body I will praise him: "LORD, who can compare with you? Who else rescues the helpless from the strong? Who else protects the helpless and poor from those who rob them?" **11** Malicious witnesses testify against me. They

accuse me of crimes I know nothing about. **12** They repay me evil for good. I am sick with despair. **13** Yet when they were ill, I grieved for them. I denied myself by fasting for them, but my prayers returned unanswered. **14** I was sad, as though they were my friends or family, as if I were grieving for my own mother. **15** But they are glad now that I am in trouble; they gleefully join together against me. I am attacked by people I don't even know; they slander me constantly. **16** They mock me and call me names; they snarl at me.

Proverbs 21:17 - 18

21 17 Those who love pleasure become poor; those who love wine and luxury will never be rich. **18** The wicked are punished in place of the godly, and traitors in place of the honest.