

## CLEANING THE HOUSE OF GOD #3 NEHEMIAH

We have examined Jesus and Hezekiah cleaning the temple today we will learn from Nehemiah.

Neh. 13 <sup>6</sup>But **while all this was going on, I was not in Jerusalem**, for in the thirty-second year of Artaxerxes king of Babylon I had returned to the king. Some time later I asked his permission <sup>7</sup>and came back to Jerusalem. Here I learned about the evil thing Eliashib had done in providing Tobiah a room in the courts of the house of God. <sup>8</sup>I was greatly displeased and threw all Tobiah's household goods out of the room. <sup>9</sup>I gave orders to purify the rooms, and then I put back into them the equipment of the house of God, with the grain offerings and the incense. NIV

### **I. The absence of Presence reveals our true heart.**

**A. It was while Nehemiah was in Babylon that evil was established.**

V 6 .. while all this was going on, I was not in Jerusalem,

**B. Jesus warned that if do not “practice his presence” we will fall into sin.**

Luke 12 <sup>45</sup>But suppose the servant says to himself, ‘My master is taking a long time in coming,’ and **he then begins to beat the menservants and maidservants and to eat and drink and get drunk.** NIV

### **II. How evil comes into the house of God in the absence of Presence.**

<sup>4</sup>Before this, Eliashib the priest had been put in charge of the storerooms of the house of our God. He was closely associated with Tobiah, <sup>5</sup>and he had provided him with a large room formerly used to store the grain offerings and incense and temple articles, and also the tithes of grain, new wine and oil prescribed for the Levites, singers and gatekeepers, as well as the contributions for the priests. NIV

**A. Holy relationships are compromised  
Unholy alliances are formed.**

Eliashib and Tobiah are not supposed to have anything to do with one another.

V 4.... He was closely associated with Tobiah,...

Tobiah had been their enemy during the building of the wall.

He had hired false prophets to speak against the work.

He had mocked Nehemiah and the workers.

He had gone into a rage when Nehemiah had completed the rebuilding of the wall around Jerusalem.

### **B. The Word of God is compromised**

V 1 On that day the Book of Moses was read aloud in the hearing of the people and there it was found written **that no Ammonite or Moabite should ever be admitted into the assembly of God,** NIV

Tobiah was an Ammonite!

What was Eliashib the priest doing with Tobiah the enemy of Israel?

<sup>28</sup> And *one* of the sons of Joiada, the son of Eliashib the high priest, *was* son in law to Sanballat the Horonite: ....NIV

Eliashib had allowed his son to **marry against the guidelines given to the Jews by God.**

Lev. 21 14 “..take a virgin of his own people to wife”...

Now Eliashib has a joining with the enemy. His son’s father, Sanballat, was the enemy of Nehemiah and Israel. **To make matters worse Sanballat and Tobiah were joined together as enemies against the work!**

What fellowship has light with darkness?

### **C. The house of God is compromised**

V 7... Here I learned about the evil thing Eliashib had done in **providing Tobiah a room in the courts of the house of God.**

1. The enemy is given a place in God’s house

2. It was not just an ordinary room.

<sup>5</sup> 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.  
NIV

3. The temple provisions were exposed to Tobiah.
4. Smaller rooms had partitions taken down and a large suite was made for Tobiah and his furniture.

### **III. How sin is dealt with when there is Presence in the temple.**

When Nehemiah returned from the king the people had already heard the Word of God and would be open to how Nehemiah dealt with Tobiah.

<sup>8</sup> I was greatly displeased and threw **all** Tobiah's household goods out of the room.

#### **A. Tobiah's furniture is thrown out.**

What ever has made sin easy and enticing must go. Chairs, bedding, tables, etc. **Furniture is a clear indication of dwelling, permanence, and personal comfort.**

Ill. We don't make a thief a teller. We don't put alcohol in front of the alcoholic. Why? It is a temptation. Get rid of that thing brings temptation.

2Co. 6 <sup>17</sup> "Therefore come out from them and be separate, says the Lord. **Touch no unclean thing, and I will receive you.**"

Jesus method with dealing with sin is "severance". **"If your eye offends you, pluck it out. If your hand offends you, cut it off"**.

#### **B. Tobiah himself is thrown out.**

The devil must be dealt with. He is the tempter. He is the enemy of the believer.

We must deal with sin severely.

#### **C. The temple rooms are purified and restored.**

<sup>9</sup> I gave orders to purify the rooms....

##### **1. The rooms are cleansed that were once contaminated.**

Scrub the room with the washing of the Word.

Ill. **There are self cleaning ovens, but not self cleaning houses!**

**2Co. 7: 1** Since we have these promises, dear friends, **let us purify ourselves** from everything that contaminates **body and spirit**, perfecting holiness out of reverence for God. NIV

## **2. The rooms are restored.**

**9... I put back** into them the equipment of the house of God, with the grain offerings and the incense.

**a. equipment- kjv “vessels”**- anything that was used for making sacrifice to the Lord. (cups, lampstands, tables etc.)

**b. grain offerings-** was **thanks giving** for the provision of God and the harvest.

**c. incense-** represents **praise.**

Psalms 100 <sup>4</sup> **Enter his gates with thanksgiving and his courts with praise; give thanks to him and praise his name.**

<sup>5</sup> For the Lord is good and his love endures forever; his faithfulness continues through all generations. NIV