

WOMEN'S BIBLE STUDY

# RESTORED

LESSONS IN NEHEMIAH

## Lesson 20 – Cat's Away and Mice Play!

### Nehemiah 13:15-31

The old adage is true that “while the cat is away, the mice will play!” Nehemiah went back to the palace to take care of business and guess what happened? The children of Israel began to stray from the promises they made to God and before long things in Jerusalem were in disarray. The priorities they set for themselves while Nehemiah was in the city were now being ignored. Sadly, one of the first things to be neglected was honoring the Sabbath day. The Sabbath day, which was designed to be a day of rest, turned into a commercial day of doing very profitable business. There was no way Nehemiah was going to sit by quietly and allow this to go uncorrected. Let's just say, the cat had returned and the mice were no longer going to be running around out of control! Nehemiah immediately stepped up and confronted the wrongdoers.

Open your Bible and begin with a word of prayer

**This Week's Scripture: Nehemiah 13:15-31**

*<sup>15</sup> In those days I saw people in Judah treading winepresses on the Sabbath, and bringing in sheaves, and loading donkeys with wine, grapes, figs, and all kinds of burdens, which they brought into Jerusalem on the Sabbath day. And I warned them about the day on which they were selling provisions. <sup>16</sup> Men of Tyre dwelt there also, who brought in fish and all kinds of goods, and sold them on the Sabbath to the children of Judah, and in Jerusalem. <sup>17</sup> Then I contended with the nobles of Judah, and said to them, “What evil thing is this that you do, by which you profane the Sabbath day? <sup>18</sup> Did not your fathers do thus, and did not our God bring all this disaster on us and on this city? Yet you bring added wrath on Israel by profaning the Sabbath.” <sup>19</sup> So it was, at the gates of Jerusalem, as it began to be dark before the Sabbath, that I commanded the gates to be shut, and charged that they must not be opened till after the Sabbath. Then I posted some of my servants at the gates, so that no burdens would be brought in on the Sabbath day. <sup>20</sup> Now the merchants and sellers of all kinds of wares lodged outside Jerusalem once or twice. <sup>21</sup> Then I warned them, and said*

to them, "Why do you spend the night around the wall? If you do so again, I will lay hands on you!" From that time on they came no more on the Sabbath. <sup>22</sup> And I commanded the Levites that they should cleanse themselves, and that they should go and guard the gates, to sanctify the Sabbath day. Remember me, O my God, concerning this also, and spare me according to the greatness of Your mercy! <sup>23</sup> In those days I also saw Jews who had married women of Ashdod, Ammon, and Moab. <sup>24</sup> And half of their children spoke the language of Ashdod, and could not speak the language of Judah, but spoke according to the language of one or the other people. <sup>25</sup> So I contended with them and cursed them, struck some of them and pulled out their hair, and made them swear by God, saying, "You shall not give your daughters as wives to their sons, nor take their daughters for your sons or yourselves. <sup>26</sup> Did not Solomon king of Israel sin by these things? Yet among many nations there was no king like him, who was beloved of his God; and God made him king over all Israel. Nevertheless pagan women caused even him to sin. <sup>27</sup> Should we then hear of your doing all this great evil, transgressing against our God by marrying pagan women?" <sup>28</sup> And one of the sons of Joiada, the son of Eliashib the high priest, was a son-in-law of Sanballat the Horonite; therefore I drove him from me. <sup>29</sup> Remember them, O my God, because they have defiled the priesthood and the covenant of the priesthood and the Levites. <sup>30</sup> Thus I cleansed them of everything pagan. I also assigned duties to the priests and the Levites, each to his service, <sup>31</sup> and to bringing the wood offering and the firstfruits at appointed times. Remember me, O my God, for good!

**This Week's Memory Verse:**

**This is love, that we walk according to His commandments. This is the commandment, that as you have heard from the beginning, you should walk in it.**

**2 John 1:6(NKJV)**

1. If you like stories with happy endings, let me warn you, you won't like Nehemiah 13! Read through our verses this week and make a list of the problems that infiltrated the holy city of Jerusalem. \_\_\_\_\_

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2. God's people had forsaken the promises they made previously. Read Matthew 4:4 and share what the heart of their problem was. \_\_\_\_\_

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3. Like the Israelites, we mess up and fall short, we break our promises, and we don't always follow what God says. The good news is it's never too late to take God's Word seriously. From the scriptures below, what can you learn that will help you to take God seriously?

- a. Exodus 20:7: \_\_\_\_\_  
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- b. Ecclesiastes 12:13b-14: \_\_\_\_\_  
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- c. John 14:21: \_\_\_\_\_  
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**Reflect and Respond** – When all was said and done, Nehemiah closed with two prayers. This comes as no surprise since throughout our study, we have seen him constantly turn to prayer. What an awesome reminder as we close out our study this year – BE A WOMAN OF PRAYER! Take a moment to write out a prayer below asking God to do big things in your life. Close your prayer with Nehemiah's final words: "Remember me, O my God, for good." (Nehemiah 13:31) \_\_\_\_\_

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**Result** – Consider today's Bible study lecture and group time. What one lesson will you take away from this study and apply to your walk with the Lord? \_\_\_\_\_

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