

## **Forsaking the House of God<sup>1</sup>**

Nehemiah 13

PROPOSITION: Nehemiah 13 may help us to see the “house of God” is forsaken even today and what we should do about it.

### **INTRODUCTION:**

1. The book of Nehemiah sets forth the fundamental essentials for success in the Lord’s work.
2. If the methods used by Nehemiah were to be used today, the Lord’s church would grow.
3. By the time of Nehemiah, the word of God had come to pass with such minute and wonderful accuracy.
4. Nehemiah was “the man of the hour.”
5. He asked a most vital and important question: “Why is the house of God forsaken?” (13:11).
6. Six reasons are given in Nehemiah 13 concerning why the house of God was forsaken.

### **DISCUSSION: The house of God was forsaken because of...**

#### **I. Ignorance of the word of God.**

- A. The word of the Lord is, “My people are destroyed for lack of knowledge” (Hos. 4:6).
- B. Nehemiah’s people had forgotten what the Book of Moses (i.e. the law) said (vv. 1-3).

#### **II. A lack of separation.**

- A. Drastic action was taken by the people (v. 3).
- B. The need of such action was seen in the reading of God’s word.
- C. It is important that we know what the Bible says about separation (2 Cor. 6:17; Rom. 12:2; 1 John 2:15-17; James 4:4).
- D. We are to be separated...
  1. From evil (1 John 2:15-17).
  2. From false doctrine (2 John 9; Gal. 1:8, 9).
  3. From wrong actions.

#### **III. Uncleaness.**

- A. Eliashib did evil for Tobiah, “preparing for him a chamber in the courts of the house of God.” Nehemiah “cleansed the chambers” (vv. 4-9).
- B. God demands that His people keep themselves clean (cf. James 1:27; 1 Tim. 5:22; Phil. 4:8).
- C. God has punished those who would not keep the house of God clean in the past (cf. Josh. 6:18ff; Acts 5:1-11; 1 Cor. 5:1-5).
- D. Elders are responsible for keeping God’s house clean (Rom. 16:17; 2 Thes. 3:6; Tit. 1:9).
- E. We must do our best to keep ourselves pure.

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<sup>1</sup> J. Wayne Kilpatrick, “Forsaking the House of God,” *The Preacher’s Periodical*, Vol. 6, No. 3, August 1985, pp. 31, 32, 50. Adapted by Andy Kizer.

**IV. A lack of giving.**

- A. Due to the Jews' lack of giving, the priests had gone back to the fields and farms in order to make their living (vv. 10-14).
- B. God has always demanded sacrificial, proportionate giving (Gen. 14:19, 20; 28:20-22; Mal. 3:8-10; 1 Cor. 16:2; 2 Cor. 9:6, 7).
- C. God's house is forsaken when we do not do that.

**V. The desecration of the day of worship.**

- A. Cf. Nehemiah 13:15-22; Exodus 20:8-11.
- B. We are not commanded in the New Testament to "keep the Sabbath."
  - 1. Gentiles never were (cf. Neh. 9:13, 14).
  - 2. The New Testament requires the saints to meet on the first day of the week (1 Cor. 16:2; Acts 20:7; Rev. 1:10).
- C. The "Lord's day" is a holy day (cf. Rev. 1:10).
- D. For the sake of our families, our country, the Lord's church, and our own souls, we must safeguard the Lord's day (cf. Heb. 10:25).

**VI. Unscriptural marriages on the part of the children of God.**

- A. Read Nehemiah 13:23-27.
- B. We must caution young people about whom they marry.
- C. The church today, in many quarters, is forsaking the "house of the Lord" in forsaking the truth about marriage, divorce, and remarriage.
- D. Such practices will surely ruin the church for which Jesus died.

**CONCLUSION:**

- 1. We must learn these lessons from history before God's house is forsaken.
- 2. God's house is much too important for this ever to happen.