

# *Resurrection Life of Jesus Church*

## THE ORIGIN STORY OF JESUS

RLJ-1880

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### PART 85: SIN CREEPS BACK

#### **USURY AND GREED**

The first generation had died and Nehemiah was dealing with the second generation who had come with Zerubbabel 136 years earlier and their offspring. Three social classes had developed over time.

1. Rich
2. Middle class
3. Poor

The rich people used their money from Babylon to purchase large farming estates in Judah. There was drought from time to time and the poor starved. The big farmers then sold grain to them in return for their farms.

Nehemiah had to deal with an uprising of poor Jews while rebuilding the wall. He became angry, rebuked the rich nobles, and called for a meeting to settle the issue.

#### **Nehemiah 5:1-8**

Nehemiah ordered the end of usury (interest) and commanded the rich nobles to return all the properties they had swindled from the poor. **verses 9-14**

#### **NEHEMIAH THE GOVERNOR**

Nehemiah made it clear to the Judeans that he had not taken any tax money for himself since he came from Susa to be their governor twelve years earlier. The people already had a heavy tax burden from the Persian government and Nehemiah did not want to add to it. Nehemiah told them why he had not burdened the people – he respected and worshiped the God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob! **verses 15-19**

#### **ASSASSINATION ATTEMPT**

When Sanballat, Tobiah and Geshem found out that the walls of Jerusalem had been rebuilt, they tried to lure Nehemiah into a trap and kill him. **Nehemiah 6:1-2**

Since the three men represented the Persian government to rule their respective provinces, Nehemiah had to deal wisely with them. **verse 4**

The sent official letters to Nehemiah on four occasions to intimidate and wear him down. **verse 5**

Sanballat sent an official from his office to read an open letter that accused Nehemiah of revolting against the Persian government. **verses 5-7**

Nehemiah responded by stating that the accusation was false. **verse 8**

As was his pattern, Nehemiah went to prayer over the matter. **verse 9**



Politics is an ugly business that always involves slander, lying, intimidation, and swaying public opinion. If these tactics fail, spies can be used to lure a person to his death. This was the case when Sanballat and Tobiah hired a Jew named Shemaiah who tried to induce Nehemiah to isolate himself in the temple where he could be politically tarnished. **verses 10-13**

Nehemiah went to God in prayer instead of giving in to fear. **verse 14**

## **A GREAT ENGINEERING VICTORY**

Using 29 construction crews, Nehemiah was able to lead the work of rebuilding Jerusalem's wall in just 52 days. This caused the enemies of the Jews to be downcast when they realized that God had supernaturally intervened and the God of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob was supreme compared to their feeble gods of wood and stone. **verses 15-16**

## **TREASON**

The leaders of Jerusalem at the time of Nehemiah's arrival had been born in the land of Judah. They were the sons and daughters of wealthy Jews that left Babylon and were compromised despite the best efforts of Ezra. They were not interested in God or the five books of Moses. Their focus was money and power.

Nehemiah called them nobles but in today's vernacular they would be called politicians. Shechaniah was one of these men. **Ezra 8:1-3**

Even though Shechaniah admitted that he and others had sinned by taking pagan wives, he allowed one of his daughters to marry Governor Tobiah, who wanted to cement his relationship with a powerful Jewish leader. **Ezra 10:1-3**

Tobiah also had one of his sons marry the daughter of Meshullam, who was the son of Berechiah. As a result, a number of powerful Jews undermined Nehemiah by giving away his secret operations in their communications with Tobiah, who used this inside knowledge to try and instill fear into Nehemiah. **Nehemiah 6:17-19**

## **NEHEMIAH PREPARED TO LEAVE JERUSALEM**

Once Nehemiah finished building the wall and installing gates, he organized worship at the temple. **Nehemiah 7:1**

The next order of business was to appoint a new governor of Judah since he was returning to the Persian capitol of Susa. He selected his brother Hanani as his successor and Hananiah to be the ruler of the city of Jerusalem. **verse 2**

He instructed them in the way the gates of the wall were to be operated. **verse 3**

God moved upon Nehemiah to re-populate the city of Jerusalem and it was to be done according to the genealogy of the people. Nehemiah left Jerusalem and returned to Susa after making arrangements. **verses 4-5**

## **A CURSE AND AN OATH**

In order to move forward, the people that had cleansed themselves of idols and intermarriage with pagans now pronounced a curse upon themselves, as well as an oath that they would obey what God had instructed Moses. **Nehemiah 10:28-39**

## **REPOPULATING JERUSALEM**

The rulers lived in Jerusalem along with the people in the administration and the military, but most of the houses had not been rebuilt since they were burned some 203 years earlier. It was decided that 10% of the Jews would live in Jerusalem, while 90% remained in the cities and countryside of Judah. Lots were cast to choose who would dwell in Jerusalem. **Nehemiah 11:1-4**

## **NEHEMIAH RETURNS**

Nehemiah came to Jerusalem for the first time in 384 B.C. He returned to Susa 12 years later in 372 B.C. After a while, he was given permission to visit Jerusalem a second time. He found the Jews had corrupted themselves again. Due to his political connections, Tobiah had been given a chamber in the temple where he could stay when visiting Jerusalem. Tobiah was a pagan and this was blasphemy on the part of the high priest. **Nehemiah 13:6-7**

Nehemiah was upset and ordered all the household items of Tobiah to be cast out from the temple. He then ordered the temple to be cleansed. **verses 8-9**

## **CORRUPTION AMONG THE RULERS**

The book of Nehemiah does specify how long Hanani and Hananiah lasted as rulers in Jerusalem, but it is obvious that they weren't there anymore when Nehemiah returned. The Levite staff and singers of the temple had not been paid and so they had gone back to their dwellings in the countryside.

Nehemiah rebuked the rulers and ordered them to start paying the temple staff. **verses 10-13**

Nehemiah then turned to God in prayer. **verse 14**

## **ESTABLISHING THE SABBATH DAY**

Nehemiah noticed that the sabbath day was not being observed and he ordered a halt to selling or working on the sabbath day. He also sharply rebuked the Jewish leadership. **verses 15-19**

He threatened the merchants camped outside Jerusalem with arrest if they continued to sell on the Sabbath. **verses 20-21**

The Levites were ordered to cleanse themselves. **verse 22**

## **REBUKING MIXED MARRIAGES**

Jewish men had once again married pagan women and Nehemiah was full of wrath against their rebelliousness. He strongly cursed them and some were executed, while others had their hair ripped out. **verses 23-27**

A grandson of high priest Eliashib had married a daughter of Sanballat and Nehemiah banned him from Jerusalem. **verse 28**

### **NEHEMIAH'S LAST WORDS**

Nehemiah asked the Lord to ominously remember the men who had taken pagan wives. He declared the city cleansed and set all things in order in the temple. **verses 29-31**

### **SUMMARY**

The descendants of Abraham are truly a stiff-necked people and the consequences of their sins have cost them greatly. They lost the Promised Land; their two temples were destroyed, and they have been scattered among the nations of the world. **Exodus 32:9**

The Jewish leadership rejected Jesus as their Messiah and added yet another curse to their lives. **Matthew 27:17-25**

They will gladly receive the Kabbalistic serpent messiah in the future offered by Lucifer whom the Bible calls the Antichrist. **John 5:43**

The children of Israel have given the world the greatest gift in Jesus!

But the children of Israel will also give the world the false messiah, the Antichrist!

***Remember, it's not so important how you begin your life after salvation, but how you finish it!***

***Do you have an ear to hear with?***