

Nehemiah

Memoirs, Part II: Complications

70.

Now there was a great outcry of the people and of their wives against their Jewish brothers. For there were those who said, “We, our sons and our daughters are many; therefore let us get grain that we may eat and live.”

There were others who said, “We are mortgaging our fields, our vineyards and our houses that we might get grain because of the famine.”

Also there were those who said, “We have borrowed money for the king’s tax on our fields and our vineyards. Now our flesh is like the flesh of our brothers, our children like their children. Yet behold, we are forcing our sons and our daughters to be slaves, and some of our daughters are forced into bondage already, and we are helpless because our fields and vineyards belong to others.”

[5:1-5]

71.

Then I was very angry when I had heard their outcry and these words. I consulted with myself and contended with the nobles and the rulers and said to them, “You are exacting usury, each from his brother!”

Therefore, I held a great assembly against them. I said to them, “We according to our ability have redeemed our Jewish brothers who were sold to the nations; now would you even sell your brothers that they may be sold to us?”

Then they were silent and could not find a word to say.

Again I said, “The thing which you are doing is not good; should you not walk in the fear of our God because of the reproach of the nations, our enemies? And likewise I, my brothers and my servants are lending them money and grain. Please, let us leave off this usury. Please, give back to them this very day their fields, their vineyards, their olive groves and their houses, also the hundredth part of the money and of the grain, the new wine and the oil that you are exacting from them.”

Then they said, “We will give it back and will require nothing from them; we will do exactly as you say.”

So I called the priests and took an oath from them that they would do according to this promise. I also shook out the front of my garment and said, “Thus may God shake out every man from his house and from his possessions who does not fulfill this promise; even thus may he be shaken out and emptied.”

And all the assembly said, “Amen!” And they praised the Lord. Then the people did according to this promise.

[5:6-13]

72.

Moreover, from the day that I was appointed to be their governor in the land of Judah, from the twentieth year to the thirty-second year of King Artaxerxes, for twelve years, neither I nor my kinsmen have eaten the governor's food allowance. But the former governors who were before me laid burdens on the people and took from them bread and wine besides forty shekels of silver; even their servants domineered the people. But I did not do so because of the fear of God. I also applied myself to the work on this wall; we did not buy any land, and all my servants were gathered there for the work. Moreover, there were at my table one hundred and fifty Jews and officials, besides those who came to us from the nations that were around us. Now that which was prepared for each day was one ox and six choice sheep, also birds were prepared for me; and once in ten days all sorts of wine were furnished in abundance. Yet for all this I did not demand the governor's food allowance, because the servitude was heavy on this people. Remember me, O my God, for good, according to all that I have done for this people.

[5:14-19]

73.

Now when it was reported to Sanballat, Tobiah, to Geshem the Arab and to the rest of our enemies that I had rebuilt the wall, and that no breach remained in it, although at that time I had not set up the doors in the gates, then Sanballat and Geshem sent a message to me, saying, "Come, let us meet together at Chephirim in the plain of Ono."

But they were planning to harm me. So I sent messengers to them, saying, "I am doing a great work and I cannot come down. Why should the work stop while I leave it and come down to you?"

They sent messages to me four times in this manner, and I answered them in the same way. Then Sanballat sent his servant to me in the same manner a fifth time with an open letter in his hand. In it was written, "It is reported among the nations, and Gashmu says, that you and the Jews are planning to rebel; therefore you are rebuilding the wall. And you are to be their king, according to these reports. You have also appointed prophets to proclaim in Jerusalem concerning you, 'A king is in Judah!' And now it will be reported to the king according to these reports. So come now, let us take counsel together."

Then I sent a message to him saying, "Such things as you are saying have not been done, but you are inventing them in your own mind." For all of them were trying to frighten us, thinking, "They will become discouraged with the work and it will not be done." But now, O God, strengthen my hands.

[6:1-9]

74.

When I entered the house of Shemaiah the son of Delaiah, son of Mehetabel, who was confined at home, he said, “Let us meet together in the house of God, within the temple, and let us close the doors of the temple, for they are coming to kill you, and they are coming to kill you at night.”

But I said, “Should a man like me flee? And could one such as I go into the temple to save his life? I will not go in.” Then I perceived that surely God had not sent him, but he uttered his prophecy against me because Tobiah and Sanballat had hired him. He was hired for this reason, that I might become frightened and act accordingly and sin, so that they might have an evil report in order that they could reproach me.

Remember, O my God, Tobiah and Sanballat according to these works of theirs, and also Noadiah the prophetess and the rest of the prophets who were trying to frighten me.

[6:10-14]

75.

So the wall was completed on the twenty-fifth of the month Elul, in fifty-two days. When all our enemies heard of it, and all the nations surrounding us saw it, they lost their confidence; for they recognized that this work had been accomplished with the help of our God. Also in those days many letters went from the nobles of Judah to Tobiah, and Tobiah’s letters came to them. For many in Judah were bound by oath to him because he was the son-in-law of Shecaniah the son of Arah, and his son Jehohanan had married the daughter of Meshullam the son of Berechiah. Moreover, they were speaking about his good deeds in my presence and reported my words to him. Then Tobiah sent letters to frighten me.

[6:15-19]

76.

Now when the wall was rebuilt and I had set up the doors, and the gatekeepers and the singers and the Levites were appointed, then I put Hanani my brother, and Hananiah the commander of the fortress, in charge of Jerusalem, for he was a faithful man and feared God more than many.

Then I said to them, “Do not let the gates of Jerusalem be opened until the sun is hot, and while they are standing guard, let them shut and bolt the doors. Also appoint guards from the inhabitants of Jerusalem, each at his post, and each in front of his own house.”

Now the city was large and spacious, but the people in it were few and the houses were not built. Then my God put it into my heart to assemble the nobles, the officials and the people to be enrolled by genealogies.

[7:1-5a]

77.

Then I found the book of the genealogy of those who came up first in which I found the following record:

These are the people of the province who came up from the captivity of the exiles whom Nebuchadnezzar the king of Babylon had carried away, and who returned to Jerusalem and Judah, each to his city, who came with Zerubbabel, Jeshua, Nehemiah, Azariah, Raamiah, Nahamani, Mordecai, Bilshan, Mispereth, Bigvai, Nehum, Baanah.

[7:5b-7a]

[See Appendix I: Ezra 2/Nehemiah 7 Returning Exile Spreadsheet, for a table collating Ezra 2:3-69 and Nehemiah 7:7b-73]

And when the seventh month came, the sons of Israel were in their cities.

[7:73b]

Appendix I: Ezra 2/Nehemiah 7 Returning Exile Spreadsheet

<u>Group</u>		<u>Ezra 2</u>	<u>Neh 7</u>	<u>Ezra</u>	<u>Nehemiah</u>	<u>Divorces</u>	
The People of Israel		24225	24663			86	
The descendants of Parosh		2172				7	
Shephatiah		372					
Arah		775	652				
Pahath-Moab		2812	2818	of the sons of Jeshua and Joab	""	8	
Elam		1254				6	
Zattu		945	845			6	
Zakkai		760					
Bani [Binnui]		642	648	Two Banis listed in divorce; 6, 27		33	
Bebai		623	628			4	
Azgad		1222	2322				
Adonikam		666	667				
Bigvai		2056	2067				
Adin		454	655				
Ater of Hezekiah		98					
Bezai	Bezai (2)	323	324				
Jorah		112					
Hashum	Hashum (1)	223	328			7	
Gibbar		95					
	Hariph (3)		112				
	Gibeon (4)		95				
the men of Bethlehem		123	188				
of Netophah		56					
of Anathoth		128	128				
of Azmaveth		123	42				
the sons of Kiriath-Arim		743		Chephirah and Beeroth	""		
of Ramah and Geba		621					
the men of Michmas		122					

of Bethel and Ai		223	123				
the sons of Nebo		52		"of the other Nebo"		7	
of Magbish		156					
of the other Elam		1254					
Harim		320				8	
Lod, Hadid, and Ono		725	721	Lod...; Jericho switched in Nehemiah			
The men of Jericho		345					
The sons of Senaah		3630	3930				
The Priests		4289				18	
the sons of Jedaiah		973		of the house of Jeshua	""	4	
Immer		1052				2	
Pashhur		1247				6	
Harim		1017				6	
The Levites		341	286	<i>20 added in time of Ezra</i>		10	
the sons of Jeshua and Kadmiel		74		of the sons of Hodaviah	""	6	
the singers: the sons of Asaph		128	148			1	
the sons of the gatekeepers,		139	138	1*	""	3	
The Temple Servants		392		<i>2* Shalmi not included ; 220 added in time of Ezra</i>	""Akkub not included		
Unverified Sons of Israel		652	642	3*	""		
Unverified Sons of Priests		?	?	4*	""		
Total Remnant (Listed)		42360					
Total Remnant (Actual Sum)		29899	29880				
Total Remnant (Modified Sum)		37436	37462				
Slaves		7337					
Singing Men and Women		200	245				
Animals							

Horses		736	736				
Mules		245	245				
Camels		435	435				
Donkeys		6720	6720				
Contributions					Wording different: 6*		
Gold drachmas		61000	41000		1000 (Governor) + 20000 (Heads) + 20000 (Rest of People)		
Silver minas		5000	4200		2200 (Heads) + 2000 (Rest of People)		
Priestly garments		100	597		530 (Governor) + 67 (Rest of People)		
Bowls			50		Governor		
1. the sons of Shallum, Ater, Talmon, Akkub, Hatita, Shobai							
2. the sons of Ziha, the sons of Hasupha, the sons of Tabbaoth, the sons of Keros, the sons of Siaha, the sons of Padon, the sons of Lebanah, the sons of Hagabah, the sons of Akkub, the sons of Hagab, the sons of Shalmal, the sons of Hanan, the sons of Giddel, the sons of Gahar, the sons of Reaiah, the sons of Rezin, the sons of Nekoda, the sons of Gazzam, the sons of Uzza, the sons of Paseah, the sons of Besai, the sons of Asnah, the sons of Meunim, the sons of Nephisim, the sons of Bakbuk, the sons of Hakupha, the sons of Harhur, the sons of Bazluth, the sons of Mehida, the sons of Harsha, the sons of Barkos, the sons of Sisera, the sons of Temah, the sons of Nezhiah, the sons of Hatipha. The sons of Solomon's servants: the sons of Sotai, the sons of Hassophereth, the sons of Peruda, the sons of Jaalah, the sons of Darkon, the sons of Giddel, the sons of Shephatiah, the sons of Hattil, the sons of Pochereth-hazzebaim, the sons of Ami.							
3. Those who came up from Tel-melah, Tel-harsha, Cherub, Addan and Immer, but they were not able to give evidence of their fathers' households and their descendants, whether they were of Israel: the sons of Delaiah, the sons of Tobiah, the sons of Nekoda							
4. the sons of Habaiah, the sons of Hakkoz, the sons of Barzillai, who took a wife from the daughters of Barzillai the Gileadite, and he was called by their name. These searched among their ancestral registration, but they could not be located; therefore they were considered unclean and excluded from the priesthood. The governor said to them that they should not eat from the most holy things until a priest stood up with Urim and Thummim.							

5. Some of the heads of fathers' households, when they arrived at the house of the Lord which is in Jerusalem, offered willingly for the house of God to restore it on its foundation. According to their ability they gave to the treasury for the work

6. Some from among the heads of fathers' households gave to the work. The governor gave to the treasury 1,000 gold drachmas, 50 basins, 530 priests' garments. Some of the heads of fathers' households gave into the treasury of the work 20,000 gold drachmas and 2,200 silver minas. That which the rest of the people gave was 20,000 gold drachmas and 2,000 silver minas and 67 priests' garments.

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