

Nehemiah 12 - Establishment of Priests and Levites; Dedication of City Walls

II. Rebuilding of the people (Neh 8:1—13:31)

(2) Resettling of the city in Nehemiah's later reforms (Neh 11:1—13:31)

(B) Updating of the priestly and Levitical clans (12:1-26)

(a) Those that came with Zerubbabel (12:1-11)

(i) Priests (12:1-7)

(ii) Levites (12:8-11)

(b) Leaders of each priestly clan in the days of Joiakim who was the high priest after Jeshua (12:12-21)

(c) Leaders of each Levitical clans in the days of Eliashib (12:22-24)

(d) Gatekeepers in the days of Joiakim (12:25-26)

(C) Walls dedicated (12:27-47)

(a) Assembly (12:27-30)

(b) Procession (12:31-39)

(i) First (12:31-37)

(ii) Second (12:38-39)

(c) Ceremony (12:40-47)

(i) Sacrifices (12:40-43)

(ii) Appointment of Levites (12:44-47)

Nehemiah 12

(B) Updating of the priestly and Levitical clans (12:1-26) (Cf. Ezra 2:36-40)

(a) Those that came with Zerubbabel (12:1-11)

(i) Priests (12:1-7)

1 Now these are the priests and the Levites who came up with Zerubbabel the son of Shealtiel, and Jeshua: Seraiah, Jeremiah, Ezra,

1 Now these are the priests and the Levites who came up with Zerubbabel the son of Shealtiel, and Jeshua: Seraiah, Jeremiah, Ezra,

1 These are the priests and descendants of Levi who had returned with Shealtiel's son Zerubbabel and with Jeshua: Seraiah, Jeremiah, Ezra,

1 Now these are the priests and the Levites that went up with Zerubbabel the son of Shealtiel, and Jeshua: Seraiah, Jeremiah, Ezra,

2 Amariah, Malluch, Hattush,
2 Amariah, Malluch, Hattush,
2 Amariah, Malluch, Hattush,
2 Amariah, Malluch, Hattush,

3 Shecaniah, Rehum, Meremoth,
3 Shecaniah, Rehum, Meremoth,
3 Shecaniah, Rehum, Meremoth,
3 Shechaniah, Rehum, Meremoth,

4 Iddo, Ginnethoi, Abijah,
4 Iddo, Ginnethoi, Abijah,
4 Iddo, Ginnethoi, Abijah,
4 Iddo, Ginnetho, Abijah,

5 Mijamin, Maadiah, Bilgah,
5 Mijamin, Maadiah, Bilgah,
5 Mijamin, Maadiah, Bilgah,
5 Miamin, Maadiah, Bilgah,

6 Shemaiah and Joiarib, Jedaiah,
6 Shemaiah and Joiarib, Jedaiah,
6 Shemaih, Joiarib, Jedaiah,
6 Shemaiah, and Joiarib, Jedaiah,

7 Sallu, Amok, Hilkiyah, *and* Jedaiah. These were the heads of the priests and their kinsmen in the days of Jeshua.

7 Sallu, Amok, Hilkiyah and Jedaiah. These were the heads of the priests and their kinsmen in the days of Jeshua.

7 Sallu, Amok, Hilkiyah, and Jedaiah. These were the leaders of the priests and their associates in the time of Jeshua.

7 Sallu, Amok, Hilkiyah, Jedaiah. These were the chief of the priests and of their brethren in the days of Jeshua.

- David had appointed 24 priestly divisions to serve in the temple (1 Chr 24:7-19) when it would be built. Now Nehemiah listed the 22 leaders of the priests who had returned from Babylon with Zerubbabel and Jeshua, almost 100 years earlier, in 538 BC. [Perhaps two names were dropped from the list in copying or perhaps it was not possible to fill the roster of 24.]

(ii) Levites (12:8-11)

8 And the Levites *were* Jeshua, Binnui, Kadmiel, Sherebiah, Judah, *and* Mattaniah *who* was in charge of the songs of thanksgiving, he and his brothers.

8 The Levites *were* Jeshua, Binnui, Kadmiel, Sherebiah, Judah, *and* Mattaniah *who* was in charge of the songs of thanksgiving, he and his brothers.

8 The descendants of Levi included Jeshua, Binnui, Kadmiel, Sherebiah, Judah, and Mattaniah, who with his associates was in charge of the songs of thanksgiving.

8 Moreover the Levites: Jeshua, Binnui, Kadmiel, Sherebiah, Judah, and Mattaniah, which was over the thanksgiving, he and his brethren.

9 Also Bakbukiah and Unni, their brothers, *stood* opposite them in *their* service divisions.

9 Also Bakbukiah and Unni, their brothers, stood opposite them in *their* service divisions.

9 Bakbukiah and Unni and their associates stood opposite them in the service.

9 Also Bakbukiah and Unni, their brethren, were over against them in the watches.

- The names of eight of the Levites who returned with Zerubbabel are listed here

— Their associates brought the number to 74 (Ezra 2:40), or to 202 if the Levite singers (Ezra 2:41) are included. Of the eight names, Ezra listed only 2, Jeshua and Kadmiel (Ezra 2:40).

— Mattaniah and Bakbukiah (v8-9) in Zerubbabel's day (v1) should not be confused with men by the same names in Nehemiah's day (11:17) though their work of leading songs of thanksgiving (Cf. v24) was similar.

10 Jeshua fathered Joiakim, Joiakim fathered Eliashib, Eliashib *fathered* Joiada,

10 Jeshua became the father of Joiakim, and Joiakim became the father of Eliashib, and Eliashib became the father of Joiada,

10 Jeshua fathered Joiakim, Joiakim fathered Eliashib, and Eliashib fathered Joiada.

10 And Jeshua begat Joiakim, Joiakim also begat Eliashib, and Eliashib begat Joiada,

11 Joiada fathered Jonathan, and Jonathan fathered Jaddua.

11 and Joiada became the father of Jonathan, and Jonathan became the father of Jaddua.

11 Joiada fathered Jonathan and Jonathan fathered Jaddua.

11 And Joiada begat Jonathan, and Jonathan begat Jaddua.

- The many generations of high priests extended from Aaron to Jehozadak, who was taken into exile to Babylon (1 Chr 6:3-15)

— Then Jeshua the high priest returned from Babylon with Zerubbabel (Ezra 2:1-2; Neh 11:1). Jeshua's descendant Eliashib (12:10) was the high priest in Nehemiah's day (3:1; 13:4,7,28).

— Some scholars suggest that the reference to Eliashib's line to Jaddua, three generations later, was added by someone after Nehemiah's time. However, it was certainly possible that Eliashib's great-grandson was born while Nehemiah was still living. Jonathan is probably the same as Johanan in v22.

(b) Leaders of each priestly clan in the days of Joiakim who was the high priest after Jeshua (12:12-21)

12 Now in the days of Joiakim, the priests, the heads of fathers' *households* were: of Seraiah, Meraiah; of Jeremiah, Hananiah;

12 Now in the days of Joiakim, the priests, the heads of fathers' *households* were: of Seraiah, Meraiah; of Jeremiah, Hananiah;

12 These were the priests and heads of their ancestors' houses in the time of Joiakim: of Seraiah, Meraiah; of Jeremiah, Hananiah;

12 And in the days of Joiakim were priests, the chief of the fathers: of Seraiah, Meraiah; of Jeremiah, Hananiah;

13 of Ezra, Meshullam; of Amariah, Jehohanan;

13 of Ezra, Meshullam; of Amariah, Jehohanan;

13 of Ezra, Meshullam; of Amariah, Jehohanan;

13 Of Ezra, Meshullam; of Amariah, Jehohanan;

14 of Malluchi, Jonathan; of Shebaniah, Joseph;

14 of Malluchi, Jonathan; of Shebaniah, Joseph;

14 of Malluchi, Jonathan; of Shebaniah, Joseph;

14 Of Melicu, Jonathan; of Shebaniah, Joseph;

15 of Harim, Adna; of Meraioth, Helkai;

15 of Harim, Adna; of Meraioth, Helkai;

15 of Harim, Adna; of Meraioth, Helkai;

15 Of Harim, Adna; of Meraioth, Helkai;

16 of Iddo, Zechariah; of Ginnethon, Meshullam;

16 of Iddo, Zechariah; of Ginnethon, Meshullam;

16 of Iddo, Zechariah; of Ginnethon, Meshullam;

16 Of Iddo, Zechariah; of Ginnethon, Meshullam;

17 of Abijah, Zichri; of Miniamin, of Moadiah, Piltai;

17 of Abijah, Zichri; of Miniamin, of Moadiah, Piltai;

17 of Abijah, Zichri; of Miniamin, of Moadiah, Piltai;
17 Of Abijah, Zichri; of Miniamin, of Moadiah, Piltai;

18 of Bilgah, Shammua; of Shemaiah, Jehonathan;
18 of Bilgah, Shammua; of Shemaiah, Jehonathan;
18 of Bilgah, Shammua; of Shemaiah, Jehonathan;
18 Of Bilgah, Shammua; of Shemaiah, Jehonathan;

19 of Joiarib, Mattenai; of Jedaiah, Uzzi;
19 of Joiarib, Mattenai; of Jedaiah, Uzzi;
19 of Joiarib, Mattenai; of Jedaiah, Uzzi;
19 And of Joiarib, Mattenai; of Jedaiah, Uzzi;

20 of Sallai, Kallai; of Amok, Eber;
20 of Sallai, Kallai; of Amok, Eber;
20 of Sallai, Kallai; of Amok, Eber;
20 Of Sallai, Kallai; of Amok, Eber;

21 of Hilkiah, Hashabiah; *and* of Jedaiah, Nethanel.
21 of Hilkiah, Hashabiah; of Jedaiah, Nethanel.
21 of Hilkiah, Hashabiah; of Jedaiah, Nethanel.
21 Of Hilkiah, Hashabiah; of Jedaiah, Nethaneel.

- These verses list the heads of the priestly families in the days of Joiakim, the son of Jeshua the high priest (Cf. v10). Twenty names are listed here, corresponding roughly to the 22 names in v1-7. Hattush in v2 and Maadiah in v5 are not in the list in v12-21. Harim (v15; Cf. 10:5) is spelled Rehum in 12:3. Minjamin in v17 is spelled Mijamin in v5.

(c) Leaders of each Levitical clans in the days of Eliashib (12:22-24)

22 As for the Levites, the heads of fathers' *households* were registered in the days of Eliashib, Joiada, and Johanan, and Jaddua; so *were* the priests in the reign of Darius the Persian.

22 As for the Levites, the heads of fathers' *households* were registered in the days of Eliashib, Joiada, and Johanan and Jaddua; so *were* the priests in the reign of Darius the Persian.

22 When Eliashib, Joiada, Johanan, and Jaddua were serving, the descendants of Levi were recorded as heads of their ancestors' houses, as were the priests during the reign of Darius the Persian.

22 The Levites in the days of Eliashib, Joiada, and Johanan, and Jaddua, were recorded chief of the fathers: also the priests, to the reign of Darius the Persian.

- Darius is probably Darius II who ruled Persia from 423 to 404 BC. According to the Elephantine papyri, Johanan was high priest in 408 BC. Possibly Nehemiah lived to see Johanan's son Jaddua become high priest sometime between 408 and 404 BC.

23 The sons of Levi, the heads of fathers' *households*, were registered in the Book of the Chronicles up to the days of Johanan the son of Eliashib.

23 The sons of Levi, the heads of fathers' *households*, were registered in the Book of the Chronicles up to the days of Johanan the son of Eliashib.

23 The leaders of the ancestors of Levi were written in the Book of Annals until the time of Eliashib's son Johanan.

23 The sons of Levi, the chief of the fathers, were written in the book of the chronicles, even until the days of Johanan the son of Eliashib.

- The book of the annals was an official record book of the Levite family heads up to the days of Johanan

24 And the heads of the Levites were Hashabiah, Sherebiah, and Jeshua the son of Kadmiel, with their brothers opposite them, to praise *and* give thanks, as prescribed by David the man of God, division corresponding to division.

24 The heads of the Levites were Hashabiah, Sherebiah and Jeshua the son of Kadmiel, with their brothers opposite them, to praise *and* give thanks, as prescribed by David the man of God, division corresponding to division.

24 The leaders of the descendants of Levi were: Hashabiah, Sherebiah, and Kadmiel's son Jeshua, along with their associates who served opposite them to give praise and thanks, division by division, according to the commands given by David the man of God.

24 And the chief of the Levites: Hashabiah, Sherebiah, and Jeshua the son of Kadmiel, with their brethren over against them, to praise and to give thanks, according to the commandment of David the man of God, ward over against ward.

(d) Gatekeepers in the days of Joiakim (12:25-26)

25 Mattaniah, Bakbukiah, Obadiah, Meshullam, Talmon, *and* Akkub were gatekeepers keeping watch at the storerooms of the gates.

25 Mattaniah, Bakbukiah, Obadiah, Meshullam, Talmon *and* Akkub were gatekeepers keeping watch at the storehouses of the gates.

25 Mattaniah, Bakbukiah, Obadiah, Meshullam, Talmon, and Akkub were gatekeepers who guarded the store houses of the gates.

25 Mattaniah, and Bakbukiah, Obadiah, Meshullam, Talmon, Akkub, were porters keeping the ward at the thresholds of the gates.

- The Levites mentioned in v24-25 served in the days of the high priest Joiakim (Cf. v10,12), and in the days of Nehemiah and Ezra
- Hashabiah may be the man mentioned in 3:17; Sherebiah and Jeshua are mentioned in 12:8 as being involved in leading songs of thanksgiving, sung antiphonally
- Mattaniah and Bakbukiah (Cf. 11:17) were associated with music in 12:8 but here (v25) they were gatekeepers
- Obadiah was probably the same as Abda (11:17)
- Meshullam (also mentioned in 3:4,30) may be a variant spelling for Shallum, who along with Talmon and Akkub were gatekeepers (Cf. 1 Chr 9:17)

26 These men *served* in the days of Joiakim the son of Jeshua, the son of Jozadak, and in the days of Nehemiah the governor and Ezra the priest *and* scribe.

26 These *served* in the days of Joiakim the son of Jeshua, the son of Jozadak, and in the days of Nehemiah the governor and of Ezra the priest *and* scribe.

26 These were at the time of Jeshua's son Joiakim, the grandson of Jozadak, and in the time of Nehemiah the governor and Ezra the priest and scribe.

26 These were in the days of Joiakim the son of Jeshua, the son of Jozadak, and in the days of Nehemiah the governor, and of Ezra the priest, the scribe.

(C) Walls dedicated (12:27-47)

(a) Assembly (12:27-30)

27 Now at the dedication of the wall of Jerusalem they sought out the Levites from all their places, to bring them to Jerusalem so that they could celebrate the dedication with joy, with songs of thanksgiving and with songs *to the accompaniment* of cymbals, harps, and lyres.

27 Now at the dedication of the wall of Jerusalem they sought out the Levites from all their places, to bring them to Jerusalem so that they might celebrate the dedication with gladness, with hymns of thanksgiving and with songs *to the accompaniment* of cymbals, harps and lyres.

27 At the dedication of the wall of Jerusalem, they invited the descendants of Levi to come from wherever they lived to Jerusalem so they could celebrate the dedication with joy, thanksgiving, and songs, accompanied by cymbals, lyres, and harps.

27 And at the dedication of the wall of Jerusalem they sought the Levites out of all their places, to bring them to Jerusalem, to keep the dedication with gladness, both with thanksgivings, and with singing, with cymbals, psalteries, and with harps.

28 So the sons of the singers were assembled from the territory around Jerusalem, and from the villages of the Netophathites,

28 So the sons of the singers were assembled from the district around Jerusalem, and from the villages of the Netophathites,

28 So the descendants of the singers gathered themselves together from the region surrounding Jerusalem, from the villages of Netophathi,

28 And the sons of the singers gathered themselves together, both out of the plain country round about Jerusalem, and from the villages of Netophathi;

29 from Beth-gilgal and from *their* fields in Geba and Azmaveth, because the singers had built themselves villages around Jerusalem.

29 from Beth-gilgal and from *their* fields in Geba and Azmaveth, for the singers had built themselves villages around Jerusalem.

29 from Beth-gilgal, and from the area of Geba and Azmaveth, because the singers had built villages for themselves in the vicinity of Jerusalem.

29 Also from the house of Gilgal, and out of the fields of Geba and Azmaveth: for the singers had builded them villages round about Jerusalem.

30 The priests and the Levites purified themselves; they also purified the people, the gates, and the wall.

30 The priests and the Levites purified themselves; they also purified the people, the gates and the wall.

30 The priests and the descendants of Levi purified themselves, and also purified the people, the gates, and the wall.

30 And the priests and the Levites purified themselves, and purified the people, and the gates, and the wall.

- Nehemiah had the Levites, who had settled in various towns around Jerusalem (Cf. 11:3, 20) join the others in the holy city for the ceremonies to dedicate the rebuilt wall. It was to be a time of singing songs of thanksgiving (Cf. 12:8) to God with musical instruments (Cf. 1 Chr 25:1).

- Singers, who were Levites, assembled from south of Jerusalem (the villages of Netophah), the east (assuming Beth Gilgal is the same as Gilgal), and the north (the Benjamite towns of Geba and Azmaveth). The preparations also included ceremonial cleansing of all the people and of the gates and the wall. This was done no doubt by sprinkling the blood of sacrificed animals.

(b) Procession (12:31-39)

(i) First (12:31-37)

31 Then I had the leaders of Judah come up on top of the wall, and I appointed two large choirs, the first proceeding to the right on top of the wall toward the Dung Gate.

31 Then I had the leaders of Judah come up on top of the wall, and I appointed two great choirs, the first proceeding to the right on top of the wall toward the Refuse Gate.

31 Then I brought up the leaders of Judah to the crest of the wall, and appointed two large thanksgiving choirs, the first of which proceeded on the wall to the right toward the Dung Gate.

31 Then I brought up the princes of Judah upon the wall, and appointed two great companies of them that gave thanks, whereof one went on the right hand upon the wall toward the dung gate:

32 Hoshaiiah and half of the leaders of Judah followed them,

32 Hoshaiiah and half of the leaders of Judah followed them,

32 Following them were Hoshaiiah and half of the leaders of Judah,

32 And after them went Hoshaiiah, and half of the princes of Judah,

33 with Azariah, Ezra, Meshullam,

33 with Azariah, Ezra, Meshullam,

33 including Azariah, Ezra, Meshullam,

33 And Azariah, Ezra, and Meshullam,

34 Judah, Benjamin, Shemaiah, Jeremiah,

34 Judah, Benjamin, Shemaiah, Jeremiah,

34 Judah, Benjamin, Shemaiah, and Jeremiah.

34 Judah, and Benjamin, and Shemaiah, and Jeremiah,

35 and some of the sons of the priests with trumpets; *and* Zechariah the son of Jonathan, the son of Shemaiah, the son of Mattaniah, the son of Micaiah, the son of Zaccur, the son of Asaph,

35 and some of the sons of the priests with trumpets; *and* Zechariah the son of Jonathan, the son of Shemaiah, the son of Mattaniah, the son of Micaiah, the son of Zaccur, the son of Asaph,

35 Some of the priests' sons were trumpeters, including Zechariah son of Jonathan, the son of Shemaiah, the son of Mattaniah, the son of Micaiah, the son of Zaccur, the son of Asaph,

35 And certain of the priests' sons with trumpets; namely, Zechariah the son of Jonathan, the son of Shemaiah, the son of Mattaniah, the son of Micaiah, the son of Zaccur, the son of Asaph:

36 and his kinsmen, Shemaiah, Azarel, Milalai, Gilalai, Maai, Nethanel, Judah, *and* Hanani, with the musical instruments of David the man of God. And Ezra the scribe *went* before them.

36 and his kinsmen, Shemaiah, Azarel, Milalai, Gilalai, Maai, Nethanel, Judah *and* Hanani, with the musical instruments of David the man of God. And Ezra the scribe went before them.

36 with his associates Shemaiah, Azarel, Milalai, Gilalai, Maai, Nethanel, Judah, and Hanani, accompanied by the musical instruments of David, the man of God. Ezra the scribe led the procession.

36 And his brethren, Shemaiah, and Azarael, Milalai, Gilalai, Maai, Nethaneel, and Judah, Hanani, with the musical instruments of David the man of God, and Ezra the scribe before them.

37 At the Fountain Gate they went directly up the steps of the city of David by the stairway of the wall, above the house of David to the Water Gate on the east.

37 At the Fountain Gate they went directly up the steps of the city of David by the stairway of the wall above the house of David to the Water Gate on the east.

37 At the Fountain Gate, which stood opposite them, they ascended the stairs of the City of David where the wall rose above the house of David east of the Water Gate.

37 And at the fountain gate, which was over against them, they went up by the stairs of the city of David, at the going up of the wall, above the house of David, even unto the water gate eastward.

(ii) Second (12:38-39)

38 The second choir proceeded to the left, while I followed them with half of the people on the wall, above the Tower of Furnaces, to the Broad Wall,

38 The second choir proceeded to the left, while I followed them with half of the people on the wall, above the Tower of Furnaces, to the Broad Wall,

38 The second thanksgiving choir approached opposite them, and I followed them. Half of the people stood on the crest of the wall from beyond the Tower of the Ovens to the Broad Wall,

38 And the other company of them that gave thanks went over against them, and I after them, and the half of the people upon the wall, from beyond the tower of the furnaces even unto the broad wall;

39 and above the Gate of Ephraim, by the Ancient Gate, by the Fish Gate, the Tower of Hananel, and the Tower of the Hundred, as far as the Sheep Gate; and they stopped at the

Gate of the Guard.

39 and above the Gate of Ephraim, by the Old Gate, by the Fish Gate, the Tower of Hananel and the Tower of the Hundred, as far as the Sheep Gate; and they stopped at the Gate of the Guard.

39 and from above the Ephraim Gate, above the Fish Gate, the Tower of Hananel and the Tower of the Hundred, as far as the Sheep Gate. They stopped at the Guard Gate.

39 And from above the gate of Ephraim, and above the old gate, and above the fish gate, and the tower of Hananeel, and the tower of Meah, even unto the sheep gate: and they stood still in the prison gate.

(c) Ceremony (12:40-47)

(i) Sacrifices (12:40-43)

40 Then the two choirs took their positions in the house of God. So did I and half of the officials with me;

40 Then the two choirs took their stand in the house of God. So did I and half of the officials with me;

40 Then the two choirs assembled in the Temple of God, as did I, along with half of the officials who accompanied me,

40 So stood the two companies of them that gave thanks in the house of God, and I, and the half of the rulers with me:

41 and the priests, Eliakim, Maaseiah, Miniamin, Micaiah, Elioenai, Zechariah, and Hananiah, with the trumpets;

41 and the priests, Eliakim, Maaseiah, Miniamin, Micaiah, Elioenai, Zechariah and Hananiah, with the trumpets;

41 and the priests Eliakim, Maaseiah, Miniamin, Micaiah, Elioenai, Zechariah, Hananiah with trumpeters

41 And the priests; Eliakim, Maaseiah, Miniamin, Michaiah, Elioenai, Zechariah, and Hananiah, with trumpets;

42 and Maaseiah, Shemaiah, Eleazar, Uzzi, Jehohanan, Malchijah, Elam, and Ezer. And the singers sang, with Jezrahiah *their* leader,

42 and Maaseiah, Shemaiah, Eleazar, Uzzi, Jehohanan, Malchijah, Elam and Ezer. And the singers sang, with Jezrahiah *their* leader,

42 Maaseiah, Shemaiah, Eleazar, Uzzi, Jehohanan, Malchijah, Elam, and Ezer. And the singers made their presence known, with Jezrahiah to lead them.

42 And Maaseiah, and Shemaiah, and Eleazar, and Uzzi, and Jehohanan, and Malchijah, and Elam, and Ezer. And the singers sang loud, with Jezrahiah their overseer.

- Nehemiah assembled two great choirs to sing thanks (Cf. v8,27); the number in each choir is not indicated
- The choirs probably began near the Valley Gate, which interestingly is the place where Nehemiah began and ended his nighttime inspection of the ruined walls months earlier (2:13-15)
- The first procession moved counter-clockwise on the southern and eastern wall toward the Dung Gate (12:31) and past the Fountain Gate up to the Water Gate. Because both choirs entered the temple (v40), the first one may have proceeded on the wall up to the East Gate.
- The procession included the following: Ezra, who led the group (12:36), the choir, Hoshaiah half the leaders of Judah (v32), priests (seven of them named and some with trumpets), and Zechariah and his eight associates with musical instruments.

The second choir moved clockwise, presumably starting at the Valley Gate and going past various gates and towers (see comments on chapter 3) till they arrived at the Gate of the Guard. This group included the choir, Nehemiah, half the officials (12:40), priests (seven of them named and with trumpets), and eight others who apparently were singers.

The parallel arrangement of the two processions is striking.

Their walking on top of the wall (v31,38) visually demonstrated that the walls were strong, a rejoinder to Tobiah's earlier mocking claim that the wall would be so weak that even a fox on top of it would break it down (4:3). Perhaps Nehemiah wanted Tobiah to see that with God's help the project was completed in spite of his and others' opposition. Since the people now carried no spears, swords, or bows (Cf. 4:16,18), the enemies had no doubt withdrawn. Seeing the two large processions marching on the walls must have been an impressive sight.

43 and on that day they offered great sacrifices and rejoiced because God had given them great joy, and the women and children rejoiced as well, so that the joy of Jerusalem was heard from far away.

43 and on that day they offered great sacrifices and rejoiced because God had given them great joy, even the women and children rejoiced, so that the joy of Jerusalem was heard from afar.

43 That day they offered a large number of sacrifices, and they rejoiced, because God had caused them to rejoice enthusiastically. Their wives and children rejoiced, so that Jerusalem's joy was heard from a long distance.

43 Also that day they offered great sacrifices, and rejoiced: for God had made them rejoice with great joy: the wives also and the children rejoiced: so that the joy of Jerusalem was heard even afar off.

- In the temple ("the house of God," v40) the choir leader Jezrahiah led the two large choirs. Sacrifices were made and the people rejoiced so loudly that they could be heard far away.

(ii) Appointment of Levites (12:44-47)

44 On that day men were also appointed over the chambers for the supplies, the contributions, the first fruits, and the tithes, to gather into them from the fields of the cities the portions *required by* the Law for the priests and Levites; for Judah rejoiced over the priests and the Levites who served.

44 On that day men were also appointed over the chambers for the stores, the contributions, the first fruits and the tithes, to gather into them from the fields of the cities the portions required by the law for the priests and Levites; for Judah rejoiced over the priests and Levites who served.

44 Also at that time men were appointed over the storerooms for the contributions, for the first fruits, and for the tithes, so those portions required by the Law could be gathered from the fields adjacent to the towns to benefit the priests and descendants of Levi, for the people of Judah rejoiced over the priests and the descendants of Levi who were serving.

44 And at that time were some appointed over the chambers for the treasures, for the offerings, for the firstfruits, and for the tithes, to gather into them out of the fields of the cities the portions of the law for the priests and Levites: for Judah rejoiced for the priests and for the Levites that waited.

45 For they performed the worship of their God and the service of purification, together with the singers and the gatekeepers in accordance with the command of David *and* of his son Solomon.

45 For they performed the worship of their God and the service of purification, together with the singers and the gatekeepers in accordance with the command of David *and* of his son Solomon.

45 They carried out their service obligations to their God and their service obligations of purification according to what David and his son Solomon had commanded.

45 And both the singers and the porters kept the ward of their God, and the ward of the purification, according to the commandment of David, and of Solomon his son.

46 For in the days of David and Asaph, in ancient times, *there were* leaders of the singers, songs of praise and songs of thanksgiving to God.

46 For in the days of David and Asaph, in ancient times, *there were* leaders of the singers, songs of praise and hymns of thanksgiving to God.

46 For in David's lifetime—and in the lifetime of Asaph, choir master of old—there were songs of praise and thanksgiving to God.

46 For in the days of David and Asaph of old there were chief of the singers, and songs of praise and thanksgiving unto God.

47 So all Israel in the days of Zerubbabel and Nehemiah gave the portions *due* the singers and the gatekeepers as each day required, and they set apart the consecrated *portion* for the Levites, and the Levites set apart the consecrated *portion* for the sons of Aaron.

47 So all Israel in the days of Zerubbabel and Nehemiah gave the portions due the singers and the gatekeepers as each day required, and set apart the consecrated *portion* for the Levites, and the Levites set apart the consecrated *portion* for the sons of Aaron.

47 All Israel in the time of Zerubbabel and in the time of Nehemiah gave allotments to each of the singers and gate keepers on a daily basis, setting them apart to benefit the descendants of Levi. And the descendants of Levi set them apart to benefit the descendants of Aaron.

47 And all Israel in the days of Zerubbabel, and in the days of Nehemiah, gave the portions of the singers and the porters, every day his portion: and they sanctified holy things unto the Levites; and the Levites sanctified them unto the children of Aaron.

- Nehemiah took advantage of this celebration to provide for ongoing worship. The storerooms to which the people were to bring their contributions, first fruits, and tithes that were required by the Law were side rooms on the temple (Cf. 1 Kings 6:5; 1 Chr 28:11; 2 Chr 31:11; Neh 10:37-39; 12:25; 13:4,12-13). Nehemiah had the ministering priests and Levites follow the order of responsibilities outlined more than 500 years earlier by David (1 Chr 22-26) and presumably established by Solomon. Music had been an important part of David's preparations for the temple, under the leadership of the musician Asaph (1 Chr 15:19; 16:4-5,37). Besides being an effective administrator Nehemiah was also a man of worship. He was concerned with praise by music and praise by gifts.

"All Israel"?

After the Babylonian captivity, the terms "Jew" and "Israelite" are used interchangeably. Ezra calls the returning remnant "Jews" 8x and "Israel" 40x. (Ezra also speaks of "all Israel": Ezra 2:70; 3:11; 8:35; 10:25, et al.) Nehemiah uses the term "Jew" 11x and "Israel" 22x. Nehemiah too speaks of "all Israel" being back in the land (v47). The remnant that returned from Babylon is represented as "the nation" (Mal 1:1, et al.).

The same is true in the NT. Our Lord is said to have offered Himself to the nation, "the lost sheep of the house of Israel" (Matt 10:5-6; 15:24). Tribes other than Judah are mentioned specifically in the NT as being represented in the land. Anna knew her tribal identity was of the tribe of Asher (Luke 2:36). Paul knew he was of the tribe of Benjamin, a "Jew," and an

"Israelite" (Rom 11:1). The NT speaks of "Israel" 70x (KJV) and uses the word "Jew" 196x [KJV]. At the Feast of Pentecost Peter cries, "Ye men of Judea" (Acts 2:14), "ye men of Israel..." (Acts 2:22), and "All the house of Israel" (Acts 2:36).