

# Nehemiah 11 - Re-Population of Jerusalem

## 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)

#### (A) Population that shifted into Jerusalem (11:1-36)

- (a) 10% of the families are chosen by lot, blessed by the people, and reside in Jerusalem with Israel's leaders (11:1-2)
- (b) Heads of families residing in Jerusalem (11:3-24)
- (c) Villages occupied by Jews living outside of Jerusalem (11:25-36)

## Nehemiah 11

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

#### (A) Population that shifted into Jerusalem (11:1-36)

- (a) 10% of the families are chosen by lot, blessed by the people, and reside in Jerusalem with Israel's leaders (11:1-2)

**1** Now the leaders of the people lived in Jerusalem, but the rest of **the people cast lots** to bring **one out of ten** to live in Jerusalem, **the holy city**, while nine-tenths *remained* in the *other cities*.

**1** Now the leaders of the people lived in Jerusalem, but the rest of the people cast lots to bring one out of ten to live in Jerusalem, the holy city, while nine-tenths *remained* in the *other cities*.

**1** The leaders of the people who lived in Jerusalem, along with the rest of the people, decided to choose one out of ten of them by lot to live in Jerusalem, the holy city, leaving the other nine of them in their towns.

**1** And the rulers of the people dwelt at Jerusalem: the rest of the people also cast lots, to bring one of ten to dwell in Jerusalem the holy city, and nine parts to dwell in other cities.

- With the walls now rebuilt, the city needed to be further populated in order to prosper and be great. For more than 70 years Jerusalem was a ghost town, followed by about 80 years of it being slowly repopulated and the new temple built.

— Nehemiah was also aware that the larger the population in Jerusalem, the greater resources they would have for defense and battle.

— The leaders had already set an example by living in the city and demonstrating their commitment to the spiritual and social restoration of the nation.

- "...the people cast lots" - demonstrated both fairness and a belief in God's guidance (Num 26:55; 1 Sam 10:20-21; Cf. Joshua 14:2; 15:1; 16:1; 18:6-10; 19:1; Cf. Prov 16:33; 18:18)
- "...one out of ten" - one family out of ten would move to Jerusalem, depending upon the lot, which would ensure that the city would be repopulated without imposing hardship on any single family.
  - This was a form of tithing of the entire community, just as in Neh 10 the people promised to bring a tithe of farm produce to the storehouses (10:37-39)
- "...the holy city" - this is the first time Jerusalem was called the "holy city" in the historical books, though this name was used in the Prophets and in the NT (Is 48:2; 52:1; Dan 9:24; Cf. Matt 4:5; 27:53; Rev 11:2; 21:2,10; 22:19).

2 And the people blessed all the men who **volunteered** to live in Jerusalem.

2 And the people blessed all the men who volunteered to live in Jerusalem.

2 And the people blessed all of the men who volunteered to live in Jerusalem.

2 And the people blessed all the men, that willingly offered themselves to dwell at Jerusalem.

- The people were grateful for those men/families who were not leaders but who volunteered to move into Jerusalem without being obligated to do so through casting lots.

— These men/families realized that it was honoring to God to repopulate Jerusalem, so they did so voluntarily. This is a great example of not "despising the day of small things" (Zech 4:10).

- "...volunteered" - different from the group who moved to Jerusalem because of the lot; these people volunteered, without the casting of lots, to move to Jerusalem.

— While the one-tenth chosen by lot was a "tithe" of the community (v1), the volunteers were a freewill offering

- Volunteering to move into Jerusalem seems to be a small thing to us today, but Nehemiah tells us that the people blessed these volunteers because they had to make in some cases very large sacrifices in order to do this.

— In many cases, these men/families had to re-order their view of material things. They had to give up land in their previous region and find a new way to make a living in Jerusalem.

They likely had to leave some friends and family behind in their old village.

— They would also have to deal with the problems that living in Jerusalem posed at that time. It had laid desolate for 70 years, and was now only slightly rebuilt (although the temple and wall were rebuilt), and it was somewhat of a ghost town.

— Living in Jerusalem also meant that you were a target of the enemy. The city had a strong wall, but since Jerusalem was a notable city, the city was more prone to be attacked by whole armies instead of bands of robbers.

(b) Heads of families residing in Jerusalem (11:3-24)

**3** Now these are the heads of the provinces who lived in Jerusalem, but in the cities of Judah each lived on his own property in their cities—the Israelites, the priests, the Levites, the temple servants, and the descendants of Solomon’s servants.

**3** Now these are the heads of the provinces who lived in Jerusalem, but in the cities of Judah each lived on his own property in their cities—the Israelites, the priests, the Levites, the temple servants and the descendants of Solomon’s servants.

**3** These are the leaders of the provinces who lived in Jerusalem. Some lived in the towns of Judah—each on their property in their respective towns—that is, the Israelites, the priests, the descendants of Levi, the Temple Servants, and the descendants of Solomon’s servants.

**3** Now these are the chief of the province that dwelt in Jerusalem: but in the cities of Judah dwelt every one in his possession in their cities, to wit, Israel, the priests, and the Levites, and the Nethinims, and the children of Solomon’s servants.

- Some priests and Levites including temple servants lived in surrounding towns and villages and “commuted” to Jerusalem when they served in the temple.

**4** Some of the sons of Judah and some of the sons of Benjamin lived in Jerusalem. From the sons of Judah: Athaiah the son of Uzziah, the son of Zechariah, the son of Amariah, the son of Shephatiah, the son of Mahalalel, of the sons of Perez;

**4** Some of the sons of Judah and some of the sons of Benjamin lived in Jerusalem. From the sons of Judah: Athaiah the son of Uzziah, the son of Zechariah, the son of Amariah, the son of Shephatiah, the son of Mahalalel, of the sons of Perez;

**4** Some of the descendants of Judah and Benjamin lived in Jerusalem. From Judah’s Descendants: Uzziah’s son Athaiah, who was the son of Zechariah, the son of Amariah, the son of Shephatiah, the son of Mahalalel;

**4** And at Jerusalem dwelt certain of the children of Judah, and of the children of Benjamin. Of the children of Judah; Athaiah the son of Uzziah, the son of Zechariah, the son of Amariah, the son of Shephatiah, the son of Mahalaleel, of the children of Perez;

- The residents of Jerusalem included Jews from the tribes of Judah (v4-6) and Benjamin (v7-9). There were twice as many from Benjamin as there was from Judah.

**5** and Maaseiah the son of Baruch, the son of Col-hozeh, the son of Hazaiah, the son of Adaiah, the son of Joiarib, the son of Zechariah, the son of the Shilonite.

**5** and Maaseiah the son of Baruch, the son of Col-hozeh, the son of Hazaiah, the son of Adaiah, the son of Joiarib, the son of Zechariah, the son of the Shilonite.

**5** Baruch’s son Maaseiah, who was the son of Col-hozeh, the son of Hazaiah, the son of Adaiah, the son of Joiarib, the son of Zechariah, the son of the Shilonite.

5 And Maaseiah the son of Baruch, the son of Colhozeh, the son of Hazaiah, the son of Adaiah, the son of Joiarib, the son of Zechariah, the son of Shiloni.

6 All the sons of Perez who lived in Jerusalem were 468 able men.

6 All the sons of Perez who lived in Jerusalem were 468 able men.

6 All of the descendants of Perez who lived in Jerusalem numbered 468 men of valor.

6 All the sons of Perez that dwelt at Jerusalem were four hundred threescore and eight valiant men.

- According to 1 Chr 9:3 descendants of Ephraim and Manasseh also lived in Jerusalem.

The total of "provincial leaders" (v3) from Judah included Athaiah, a descendant of Perez, and Maaseiah, a descendant of Shelah (v4-5). Perez and Shelah were sons of Judah (Cf. Gen 38:2-5,26-29). Another son of Judah, Zerah, mentioned in Gen 38:30 and 1 Chr 9:6, is not referred to in v4-6. This explains why 1 Chr 9:6 has 690 and Neh 11:6 has 468 in the census.

7 Now these are the sons of Benjamin: Sallu the son of Meshullam, the son of Joed, the son of Pedaiah, the son of Kolaiah, the son of Maaseiah, the son of Ithiel, the son of Jeshaiiah;

7 Now these are the sons of Benjamin: Sallu the son of Meshullam, the son of Joed, the son of Pedaiah, the son of Kolaiah, the son of Maaseiah, the son of Ithiel, the son of Jeshaiiah;

7 These Benjamin's Descendants: Meshullam's son Sallu, who was the son of Joed, the son of Pedaiah, the son of Kolaiah, the son of Maaseiah, the son of Ithiel, the son of Jeshaiiah;

7 And these are the sons of Benjamin; Sallu the son of Meshullam, the son of Joed, the son of Pedaiah, the son of Kolaiah, the son of Maaseiah, the son of Ithiel, the son of Jesaiah.

8 and after him Gabbai *and* Sallai, 928.

8 and after him Gabbai *and* Sallai, 928.

8 and after him Gabbai and Sallai, numbering 928.

8 And after him Gabbai, Sallai, nine hundred twenty and eight.

9 Joel the son of Zichri was their overseer, and Judah the son of Hassenuah was second in command of the city.

9 Joel the son of Zichri was their overseer, and Judah the son of Hassenuah was second in command of the city.

9 Zichri's son Joel was their overseer, and Hassenuah's son Judah was in command of the second district of the city.

9 And Joel the son of Zichri was their overseer: and Judah the son of Senuah was second over the city.

**10** From the priests: Jedaiah the son of Joiarib, Jachin,

**10** From the priests: Jedaiah the son of Joiarib, Jachin,

**10** From the Priests: Joiarib's son Jedaiah, Jachin,

**10** Of the priests: Jedaiah the son of Joiarib, Jachin.

11 Seraiah the son of Hilkiyah, the son of Meshullam, the son of Zadok, the son of Meraioth, the son of Ahitub, the overseer of the house of God,

11 Seraiah the son of Hilkiyah, the son of Meshullam, the son of Zadok, the son of Meraioth, the son of Ahitub, the leader of the house of God,

11 Hilkiyah's son Seraiah, the son of Meshullam, the son of Zadok, the son of Meraioth, the son of Ahitub, the administrator of the Temple of God.

11 Seraiah the son of Hilkiyah, the son of Meshullam, the son of Zadok, the son of Meraioth, the son of Ahitub, was the ruler of the house of God.

12 and their kinsmen who did the work of the temple, 822; and Adaiah the son of Jeroham, the son of Pelaliah, the son of Amzi, the son of Zechariah, the son of Pashhur, the son of Malchijah,

12 and their kinsmen who performed the work of the temple, 822; and Adaiah the son of Jeroham, the son of Pelaliah, the son of Amzi, the son of Zechariah, the son of Pashhur, the son of Malchijah,

12 Their associates who performed the work of the Temple numbered 822. Jeroham's son Adaiah, the son of Pelaliah, the son of Amzi, the son of Zechariah, the son of Pashhur, the son of Malchijah,

12 And their brethren that did the work of the house were eight hundred twenty and two: and Adaiah the son of Jeroham, the son of Pelaliah, the son of Amzi, the son of Zechariah, the son of Pashur, the son of Malchiah,

13 and his kinsmen, heads of fathers' *households*, 242; and Amashsai the son of Azarel, the son of Ahzai, the son of Meshillemoth, the son of Immer,

13 and his kinsmen, heads of fathers' *households*, 242; and Amashsai the son of Azarel, the son of Ahzai, the son of Meshillemoth, the son of Immer,

13 along with his associates, the leaders of the families, numbered 242, along with Amashsai, the son of Azarel, the son of Ahzai, the son of Meshillemoth, the son of Immer,

13 And his brethren, chief of the fathers, two hundred forty and two: and Amashai the son of Azareel, the son of Ahasai, the son of Meshillemoth, the son of Immer,

14 and their brothers, valiant warriors, 128. And their overseer was Zabdiel, the son of Haggedolim.

14 and their brothers, valiant warriors, 128. And their overseer was Zabdiel, the son of Haggedolim.

14 along with their relatives, 128 mighty, valiant men, and their overseer Zabdiel son of Haggedolim.

14 And their brethren, mighty men of valour, an hundred twenty and eight: and their overseer was Zabdiel, the son of one of the great men.

- The priests were from six family heads (v10-14): Jedaiah; the son of Joiarib; Jakin; Seraiah, Adaiah; and Amashsai

— In 1 Chr 9:10-13, the names refer to the same individuals, with a few spelling variations. The son of Joiarib is Jehoiarib, Seraiah is Azariah, and Amashsai is Maasai.

— It is difficult to know why the 1,192 priests differ from the total of 1,760 in 1 Chr 9:13

**15** Now from the Levites: Shemaiah the son of Hasshub, the son of Azrikam, the son of Hashabiah, the son of Bunni;

**15** Now from the Levites: Shemaiah the son of Hasshub, the son of Azrikam, the son of Hashabiah, the son of Bunni;

**15** From the descendants of Levi: Shemaiah son of Hasshub, the son of Azrikam, the son of Hashabiah, the son of Bunni,

**15** Also of the Levites: Shemaiah the son of Hashub, the son of Azrikam, the son of Hashabiah, the son of Bunni;

16 and Shabbethai and Jozabad, from the leaders of the Levites, who were in charge of the outside work of the house of God;

16 and Shabbethai and Jozabad, from the leaders of the Levites, who were in charge of the outside work of the house of God;

16 and Shabbethai and Jozabad, from the leaders of the descendants of Levi who oversaw the exterior work of the Temple of God,

16 And Shabbethai and Jozabad, of the chief of the Levites, had the oversight of the outward business of the house of God.

17 and Mattaniah the son of Mica, the son of Zabdi, the son of Asaph, who was the leader in beginning the thanksgiving at prayer, and Bakbukiah, the second among his kinsmen; and Abda the son of Shammua, the son of Galal, the son of Jeduthun.

17 and Mattaniah the son of Mica, the son of Zabdi, the son of Asaph, who was the leader in beginning the thanksgiving at prayer, and Bakkukiah, the second among his brethren; and Abda the son of Shammua, the son of Galal, the son of Jeduthun.

17 and Mattaniah son of Mica, the son of Zabdi, the son of Asaph, who led the thanksgiving prayer, and Bakkukiah, second among his relatives, and Abda son of Shammua, the son of Galal, the son of Jeduthun.

17 And Mattaniah the son of Micha, the son of Zabdi, the son of Asaph, was the principal to begin the thanksgiving in prayer: and Bakkukiah the second among his brethren, and Abda the son of Shammua, the son of Galal, the son of Jeduthun.

18 All the Levites in the holy city *were* 284.

18 All the Levites in the holy city *were* 284.

18 All of the descendants of Levi in the holy city numbered 284.

18 All the Levites in the holy city were two hundred fourscore and four.

- The list of Levite family heads in v15-18 and the list in 1 Chr 9:14-16 have several variations in spelling and additions or omissions (e.g., Bakkukiah may be the same as Bakkakkar, and Abda may be Obadiah; Cf. 12:25).

— The chronicler listed Heresh, Galal, and Berekiah whereas Nehemiah does not, and Nehemiah lists Shabbethai and Jozabad, who did outside work on the temple (11:16) whereas 1 Chr does not.

**19** Also the gatekeepers: Akkub, Talmon, and their kinsmen who kept watch at the gates, *were* 172.

**19** Also the gatekeepers, Akkub, Talmon and their brethren who kept watch at the gates, *were* 172.

**19** The Gatekeepers: Akkub, Talmon, and their relatives, who kept watch at the gates, numbered 172.

**19** Moreover the porters, Akkub, Talmon, and their brethren that kept the gates, were an hundred seventy and two.

- The gatekeepers' family heads were two, whereas 1 Chr 9:17 names four. This may account for the difference in the total gatekeepers: 172 in Neh 11:19 and 212 in 1 Chr 9:22.

20 The rest of Israel, of the priests *and* of the Levites, *were* in all the cities of Judah, each on his own inheritance.

20 The rest of Israel, of the priests *and* of the Levites, *were* in all the cities of Judah, each on his own inheritance.

20 The rest of Israel—the priests and the descendants of Levi—lived in all the cities of Judah, each on his own property,

**20** And the residue of Israel, of the priests, and the Levites, were in all the cities of Judah, every one in his inheritance.

21 But the temple servants were living in Ophel, and Ziha and Gishpa were in charge of the temple servants.

21 But the temple servants were living in Ophel, and Ziha and Gishpa were in charge of the temple servants.

21 but the Temple Servants lived on Ophel. Ziha and Gishpa oversaw the Temple Servants.

21 But the Nethinims dwelt in Ophel: and Ziha and Gishpa were over the Nethinims.

- The rest of the Israelites were in Judean towns (v20) except for temple servants in Ophel (Cf. 3:26), the hill in the city that led north to the temple

**22** Now the overseer of the Levites in Jerusalem was Uzzi the son of Bani, the son of Hashabiah, the son of Mattaniah, the son of Mica, from the sons of Asaph, *who were* the singers for the service of the house of God.

**22** Now the overseer of the Levites in Jerusalem was Uzzi the son of Bani, the son of Hashabiah, the son of Mattaniah, the son of Mica, from the sons of Asaph, who were the singers for the service of the house of God.

**22** The overseer of the descendants of Levi at Jerusalem was Uzzi son of Bani, the son of Hashabiah, the son of Mattaniah, the son of Mica. Singers from the descendants of Asaph oversaw the work of the Temple of God.

**22** The overseer also of the Levites at Jerusalem was Uzzi the son of Bani, the son of Hashabiah, the son of Mattaniah, the son of Micha. Of the sons of Asaph, the singers were over the business of the house of God.

23 For *there was* a commandment from the king concerning them and a royal command for the singers day by day.

23 For *there was* a commandment from the king concerning them and a firm regulation for the song leaders day by day.

23 They were subject to the commands of the king, who provided for the singers daily.

23 For it was the king's commandment concerning them, that a certain portion should be for the singers, due for every day.

- The singers were under the orders of the king (v23), presumably Artaxerxes.

24 And **Pethahiah** the son of Meshezabel, of the sons of Zerah the son of Judah, was the king's representative for every matter concerning the people.

24 Pethahiah the son of Meshezabel, of the sons of Zerah the son of Judah, was the king's representative in all matters concerning the people.

24 Pethahiah son of Meshezabel, a descendant of Zerah son of Judah, represented the king in all matters concerning the people.

24 And Pethahiah the son of Meshezabeel, of the children of Zerah the son of Judah, was at the king's hand in all matters concerning the people.

- "...Pethahiah" - the agent who represented the Jews' affairs to Artaxerxes and informed them of the king's wishes and directives (Cf. 9:5)

(c) Villages occupied by Jews living outside of Jerusalem (11:25-36)

**25** Now as for the villages with their fields, some of the sons of Judah lived in **Kiriath-arba** and its towns, in Dibon and its towns, and in Jekabzeel and its villages,

**25** Now as for the villages with their fields, some of the sons of Judah lived in Kiriath-arba and its towns, in Dibon and its towns, and in Jekabzeel and its villages,

**25** Now concerning the villages and their fields, some of the people of Judah lived in Kiriath-arba and its villages, in Dibon and its villages, in Jekabzeel and its villages,

**25** And for the villages, with their fields, some of the children of Judah dwelt at Kirjatharba, and in the villages thereof, and at Dibon, and in the villages thereof, and at Jekabzeel, and in the villages thereof,

- In the post-exilic period under Nehemiah, some of the people of Judah settled in 17 towns and their surrounding villages from the Valley of Hinnom, immediately south of Jerusalem, as far south as Beersheba (v27,30), about 32 miles south of Jerusalem.

- "...Kiriath Arba" - an old name for Hebron (Joshua 14:15)

26 and in Jeshua, in Moladah, and Beth-pelet,

26 and in Jeshua, in Moladah and Beth-pelet,

26 in Jeshua, in Moladah, and Beth-pelet,

26 And at Jeshua, and at Moladah, and at Bethphelet,

27 and in Hazar-shual, in Beersheba and its towns,

27 and in Hazar-shual, in Beersheba and its towns,

27 in Hazar-shual, in Beer-sheba and its villages,

27 And at Hazarshual, and at Beersheba, and in the villages thereof,

28 and in Ziklag, in Meconah and in its towns,

28 and in Ziklag, in Meconah and in its towns,

28 in Ziklag, in Meconah and its villages,

28 And at Ziklag, and at Mekonah, and in the villages thereof,

29 and in En-rimmon, in Zorah, and in Jarmuth,

29 and in En-rimmon, in Zorah and in Jarmuth,  
29 in En-rimmon, in Zorah, in Jarmuth,  
29 And at Enrimmon, and at Zareah, and at Jarmuth,

30 Zanoah, Adullam, and their villages, Lachish and its fields, Azekah and its towns. So they camped from Beersheba as far as the Valley of Hinnom.

30 Zanoah, Adullam, and their villages, Lachish and its fields, Azekah and its towns. So they encamped from Beersheba as far as the valley of Hinnom.

30 in Zanoah, Adullam, and their villages, Lachish and its fields, and Azekah and its villages. They encamped from Beer-sheba to the Hinnom Valley.

30 Zanoah, Adullam, and in their villages, at Lachish, and the fields thereof, at Azekah, and in the villages thereof. And they dwelt from Beersheba unto the valley of Hinnom.

31 The sons of Benjamin also *lived* from Geba *onward*, at Michmash and Aija, at Bethel and its towns,

31 The sons of Benjamin also *lived* from Geba *onward*, at Michmash and Aija, at Bethel and its towns,

31 The descendants of Benjamin lived from Geba to Michmash, Aija, Bethel and its villages,

**31** The children also of Benjamin from Geba dwelt at Michmash, and Aija, and Bethel, and in their villages,

- The 15 cities where the descendants of Benjamin lived were north of Judah (v32-35)

32 at Anathoth, Nob, Ananiah,

32 at Anathoth, Nob, Ananiah,

32 Anathoth, Nob, Ananiah,

32 And at Anathoth, Nob, Ananiah,

33 Hazor, Ramah, Gittaim,

33 Hazor, Ramah, Gittaim,

33 Hazor, Ramah, Gittaim,

33 Hazor, Ramah, Gittaim,

34 Hadid, Zeboim, Neballat,

34 Hadid, Zeboim, Neballat,

34 Hadid, Zeboim, Neballat,

34 Hadid, Zeboim, Neballat,

35 Lod, and Ono, the **Valley of Craftsmen**.

35 Lod and Ono, the valley of craftsmen.

35 Lod, and Ono's Craftsmen Valley,

35 Lod, and Ono, the valley of craftsmen.

- "...Valley of Craftsmen" - also called the Lod-Ono Valley; it was located outside of Benjamin proper

36 And from the Levites, *some* divisions in Judah *belonged* to Benjamin.

36 From the Levites, *some* divisions in Judah belonged to Benjamin.

36 with some Levitical divisions of Judah pertaining to Benjamin.

36 And of the Levites were divisions in Judah, and in Benjamin.

- Some of the Levites who were living in Judah moved north to Benjamin

— All of the Levites lived among the general population, just as they did when the Israelites first entered the Promised Land under Joshua, in order to be a positive influence and to act as spiritual resources for the people.