

**“Godliness With Contentment!”**  
**Nehemiah 11:20-36**

**Introduction:**

1. The Last Time We Were In Nehemiah, We Saw An Abiding Commitment By God’s People To Remain In The City Of Jerusalem!
  - The Were Willing To Move There, Leaving Behind Their Homes & Communities, To Rebuild The City!
    - The Temple Was Rebuilt – By Ezra!
    - The Walls Were Rebuilt – By Nehemiah!
    - The City Was To Be Rebuilt – By The People!
2. But, Not Everyone Could Move Into Jerusalem!
  - Some Were Probably Disappointed!
    - Felt Like They Could Not Contribute To The Welfare Of Jerusalem!
  - But The Lord Had A Place For Them Too!
    - There Were Other Places / Other Responsibilities That Needed To Be Tended To As Well!
    - Matthew Henry - “Let There Be No Strife, No Envy, No Contempt, No Ill Will, Between The Inhabitants Of The City And Those Of The Villages; Both Are Needful, Both Useful, And Neither Can Be Spared!”
  - Sometimes, We May Feel Disappointed As Well!
    - With Where God Has Placed Us!
    - A Rural Church!
    - A Small Church!
    - A Seeming Limited Ministry!
    - But God Has A Place & A Plan For Each Of Us Also!
3. The Lesson We Need To Learn:
  - Is The Lesson Those In Nehemiah 11 Needed To Learn As Well:
    - As Paul Taught In 1 Timothy 6:6 - “But Godliness With Contentment Is Great Gain!”
  - Wherever We Are:
    - We Are To Remain Godly!
    - We Are To Grow In Our Love For The Lord!
      - And Our Learning From Him!
      - And Our Living For Him!
  - But, Wherever We Are:
    - We Are Also To Remain Content!
    - This Is One Of Our Greatest Enemies: Discontent!
    - This Does Not Mean That We Are To Be Content:
      - With Our On Character & Conduct!
      - No, We Must Continue To Grow!
    - But, This Does Mean That We Are Content With:
      - Our Placement By God!
        - Our Positions From God!
        - Our Provision By God!
        - The Presence Of God!
4. We See An Example Of This Kind Of “Godliness With Contentment” In Each Of These 4 Areas:

\* Is There “Godliness With Contentment” With:

**1. Our Placement By God?**

- 11:20-21 - “And the residue of Israel, of the priests, and the Levites, were in all the cities of Judah, every one in his inheritance. / But the Nethinims dwelt in Ophel: and Ziha and Gispa were over the Nethinims!”
  - The “Residue” Of The People Had To Remain Scattered Throughout The Land Of Judah & Benjamin!
  - They Were Committed To “Godliness With Contentment”:
    - **Wherever** God Wanted Them To Be!
  - They Understood That God Had Something Different – Not Inferior – Just Different For Them!
- A Different Role!

- “The Residue Of Israel, Of The Priests, And The Levites!”
- Not Only Were Their Roles Important In Jerusalem:
  - Their Roles Were Important Outside Of Jerusalem As Well!
- Yes, Some Of The People Were Needed In Jerusalem!
  - But Most Of The People Were Needed Outside!
  - They Symbolized The Everyday Service That Was Necessary To Keep Things Working!
- Some Of The Priests Were Needed In Jerusalem!
  - But Most Of The Priests Were Needed Outside!
  - They Symbolized The Need & Importance Of Worship In Every Part Of Life!
- Some Of The Levites Were Needed In Jerusalem!
  - But, Again, Most Were Needed Outiside!
  - They Symbolized The Opportunities To Serve The Lord & Others That Are Available Everywhere!
- They Were Content To Devote Themselves To The Lord, Even “In All The Cities Of Judah!”
- A Different Responsibility!
  - “Every One In His Own Inheritance!”
    - Or The “Ancestral Property” Given To Them By Their Ancestors!
  - But Where Did Their Ancestors Get That Property?
    - God Gave It To Them! Starting With Abraham!
    - Moses Reminded The People Of This Gift In His Song Of Deliverance - After Crossing The Red Sea - Exodus 15:17 - “Thou shalt bring them in, and plant them in the mountain of thine inheritance, in the place, O LORD, which thou hast made for thee to dwell in, in the Sanctuary, O Lord, which thy hands have established!”
  - It Wasn’t Just Jerusalem That Belonged To The Lord!
    - All Of The Land Belonged To The Lord!
  - And All The People Had A Responsibility To Serve The Lord In It!
    - So Do We! Every Place We Go – God Has Given Us Opportunities To Serve Him!
  - “Godliness With Contentment Is Great Gain!”
- A Different Reason!
  - 11:21 - The Place Where The “Nethinims” Served!
    - Back In Jerusalem!
  - The “Nethinims” Were Temple Slaves & Servants!
    - But How Did They Get To Stay In Jerusalem?
  - A Little History:
    - Remember The Gibeonites (Joshua 9) Who Were Afraid Of Joshua’s Conquest Of Canaan - Faked Being From A Far Away Country - Even Wore Old Clothes / Ripped Up Sacks / Dry & Moldy Bread - Tricked Joshua Into A Treaty - Found Out - Joshua 9:23 - “Now therefore ye are cursed, and there shall none of you be freed from being bondmen, and hewers of wood and drawers of water for the house of my God!”
    - Even Though These People, Hundreds Of Years Later, Had No Choice To Do What They Were To Do / To Live Where They Were To Live - We See A “Godliness With Contentment!”
      - Why Paul Could Tell Those Who Were Slaves To Remain Where God Placed Them!
  - “Godliness With Contentment Is Great Gain!”
    - Are You Content With Your Placement By God?

\* Is There “Godliness With Contentment” With:

**2. Our Position From God?**

- 11:22 - “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!”
  - Three Specific Roles Of Service In 11:21-22!
  - They Were Committed To “Godliness With Contentment”:
    - *Whatever* God Wanted Them To Be!

- 11:21 - A Position Of Great Routine!
  - The Nethinims Role Was To Perform Routine, Menial Tasks!
  - And They Were Content!
    - They Knew That Their Role Was Important As Well!
- 11:22 - A Position Of Great Responsibility!
  - Meet Uzzi!
    - “The Overseer Of The Levites At Jerusalem!”
  - He Lived In Jerusalem!
    - But He Oversaw The Service Of All Of The Levites Throughout Judah!
  - God Had Prepared Him For This Task!
    - He Had A Family History & Heritage Of Leaders!
    - From His Father, Bani, On Up Through His Great-Great Grandfather Micha!
  - And He Was Content!
    - And Was Going To Serve In His Role With All His Heart!
- A Position Of Great Resourcefulness!
  - The “Sons Of Asaph” Had An Important Role As Well!
    - They Were The Music Leaders For The Temple!
    - Related To The Great Musician, Asaph!
      - Chief Musician For King David!
  - They Were Singers!
    - A Highly Creative & Visible Job!
  - But They Were Given Another Responsibility!
    - Over & Above Singing!
  - “Over The Business Of The House Of God!”
    - Now, They Were “Appointed To Look After The Necessary *Repairs* Of The Temple!” (MH)
  - Could Have Considered This To Be A Demotion!
    - But - Flexible - Content!
- Their Service Was Not About Them – But About Him – The Lord!
  - Understood: “Godliness With Contentment Is Great Gain!”

\* Is There “Godliness With Contentment” With:

### 3. ***Our Provision From God?***

- 11:23-24 - “For it was the king’s commandment concerning them, that a certain portion should be for the singers, due for every day. / 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!”
  - God Promises To Provide The “Daily Bread” For His People!
    - But He Doesn’t Always Explain How!
  - And The People Needed To Be Content With:
    - ***However*** God Provided For Them!
  - Sometimes It Requires Great Humility When You Find Out Who God Will Provide Your Needs Through!
    - But When He Does, It Will Be:
- A Powerful Provision!
  - “The King’s Commandment!”
    - Which King? Most Likely - Artaxerxes - The King Of Persia!
  - The Lord Worked Through Nehemiah In Such A Way:
    - That Even The King Of Persia Took An Interest In The Welfare Of The People Of Jerusalem!
  - Proverbs 21:1 - “The king’s heart is in the hand of the LORD, as the rivers of water: he turneth it whithersoever he will!”
- A Practical Provision!
  - The King Required That A “Certain Portion” Be Given To The Singers For Their Work!
    - As Singers & As Handymen Around The Temple!
    - “Due Every Day!”

- God Took Care Of Them & Provided For Them!
  - And They Were Content!
- Matthew 6:31 & 33 - “Therefore take no thought, saying, What shall we eat? or, What shall we drink? or, Wherewithal shall we be clothed? / But seek ye first the kingdom of God, and his righteousness; and all these things shall be added unto you!”
- A Providential Provision!
  - God’s Provision Went Further!
    - Not Just For The Singers - But For The People As A Whole!
  - 11:24 - “Pethahiah” – “At The King’s Hand In All Matters Concerning The People!”
    - And Had The King’s Ear!
  - Isn’t God’s Provision Amazing!
    - In The King’s Presence, Pethahiah Was Able To Share The Needs Of The Lord’s Own People!
- Because They Knew & Experienced God’s Provision:
  - More Than Anything Else, They Wanted: “Godliness With Contentment!”
  - Everything They Had Was From The Lord!
    - Therefore, Everything They Had Was To Be Used For The Lord!”

\* Is There “Godliness With Contentment” With:

4. ***The Presence Of God?***

- 11:25-36!
  - The Rest Of The Chapter Is A Detailed List Of The Cities / Villages / And Other Settlements Where God’s People Would Go To Serve!
    - These Would Be Their Homes!
  - They Learned: “Godliness With Contentment”:
    - ***Wherever*** They Were!
  - Because Wherever They Were:
    - God Was There!
- The Presence Of God Was With Judah!
  - 11:25-30!
    - 17 Towns Are Mentioned!
  - And The Reach Of Those Towns Are Mentioned In 11:30!
    - “From Beersheba Unto The Valley Of Hinnom!”
  - The Valley Of Hinnom:
    - The Northern Reach - Just Under Jerusalem!
  - Beersheba:
    - The Southern Reach!
  - Even Though It Seems Like A Large Place!
    - Can Feel Lonely!
    - Only 40 Miles Separated These Two Cities!
  - God Was Near To Them All!
    - They Could Focus On “Godliness With Contentment!”
- The Presence Of God Was With Benjamin!
  - 11:31-35!
    - 15 Towns Are Mentioned!
  - Along With A Region:
    - “The Valley Of Craftsmen!”
  - God Had A Special Place For Every One Of His Servants!
- The Presence Of God Was Permanent!
  - 11:36 - “And of the Levites were divisions in Judah, and in Benjamin!”
    - The Levites Were Often Used By God To Continue To Preach / Teach / Serve The People!
  - And God Made Sure That He Had Some Of These Servants In Each Region!
    - God Was Still With Them!
- Even Though They Were Not All Able To Be In Jerusalem!

- Through This, They Learned: "Godliness With Contentment Is Great Gain!"

**Conclusion:**

1. Have We Learned This Lesson?  
- Or Are We Still Discontent?
2. We Must Focus On "Godliness!"  
- Wherever God Places Us!  
- Whatever God Has For Us!  
- However God Provides For Us!  
- Because His Presence Is Always With Us!
3. As It Says In Hebrews 13:5:  
- "And be content with such things as ye have: for he hath said, I will never leave thee, nor forsake thee!"
4. Remember:  
- "Godliness With Contentment Is Great Gain!"

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