

Nehemiah 11:17

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

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

Analysis

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

This verse within Nehemiah 11 addresses themes of sacrifice, community building, strategic living. Repopulating Jerusalem required sacrifice—willingness to leave comfortable situations to strengthen the covenant community. The Hebrew palal (ללן) for prayer indicates intercession and petition, emphasizing dependence on God. This passage demonstrates biblical principles applicable across both testaments—God's sovereignty combined with human responsibility, faith expressed through obedient action, and the necessity of both individual and corporate commitment to covenant faithfulness. Nehemiah models leadership that combines vision, prayer, courage, integrity, and perseverance amid sustained opposition.

Historical Context

Nehemiah's account occurs during Persian imperial dominance (539-331 BC), specifically 445-433 BC under Artaxerxes I. Nehemiah's final reforms address

recurring covenant violations, demonstrating the ongoing challenge of maintaining spiritual commitment across generations. The Persian period was crucial transitional time when Jewish identity shifted from monarchical nationalism to Torah-centered covenantal community. Without political independence, the people's cohesion depended on shared scripture, temple worship, and covenant obedience. This established patterns persisting through the Second Temple period into New Testament times. Understanding this context illuminates Jesus's ministry among a people shaped by these reforms and challenges.

Related Passages

Hebrews 11:1 — Definition of faith

James 2:17 — Faith and works

1 John 4:8 — God is love

1 Corinthians 13:4 — Characteristics of love

Study Questions

1. How does regular engagement with Scripture transform understanding of God and His will for your life?
2. What specific commitments do you need to make (or renew) regarding Bible reading, worship, and obedience?
3. How can the principles demonstrated in this passage inform your response to current challenges in your life or church?

Interlinear Text

וּמַתַּנְיָה ה	בֶּן	מִיכָה	בֶּן	זַבְדִּי י	בֶּן	אָסָף
And Mattaniah	the son	H4318	the son	of Zabdi	the son	of Asaph
H4983	H1121		H1121	H2067	H1121	H623
וְהָיָה	הַתְחִלָּה	יְהוֹדָה ה	לְתַפִּלָּה ה	וּבִקְבֻקָּה ה		
was the principal	to begin	the thanksgiving	in prayer	and Bakkukiah		
H7218	H8462	H3034	H8605	H1229		
מִשְׁנֵה ה	מֵאֶחָיו	וְעַבְדָּא	בֶּן	שָׁמּוּעַ	בֶּן	גָּלָל
the second	among his brethren	and Abda	the son	of Shammua	the son	of Galal
H4932	H251	H5653	H1121	H8051	H1121	H1559
בֶּן	יְדֻתָּן:					
the son	of Jeduthun					
H1121	H3038					

Additional Cross-References

1 Chronicles 9:15 (Parallel theme): And Bakkakkar, Heresh, and Galal, and Mattaniah the son of Micah, the son of Zichri, the son of Asaph;