

Nehemiah 7:4

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

Now the city was large and great: but the people were few therein, and the houses were not builded.

Analysis

Now the city was large and great: but the people were few therein, and the houses were not builded.

This verse within Nehemiah 7 addresses themes of organization, genealogy, remembrance, continuity. With physical security established, Nehemiah organizes administration and records genealogies, showing continuity with God's promises. The construction work (banah, בָּנָה) symbolizes restoring what sin and judgment destroyed. 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. The spiritual reforms under Ezra and Nehemiah shaped Judaism for centuries, establishing Scripture's centrality and patterns of worship continuing into the intertestamental period and beyond. 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

Romans 2:1 — Judging others

Revelation 20:12 — Judgment according to deeds

Study Questions

1. How does Nehemiah 7:4 deepen your understanding of God's character and His work in human history?
2. What specific contribution can you make to building up Christ's church in your local community?
3. How does understanding your work as part of God's larger purposes transform your approach to daily responsibilities?

Interlinear Text

וְהָעִיר	רַחֲבָה	וְגְדוֹלָהּ	וְהָעָם	מְעַט	בְּתוֹכָהּ
Now the city	was large	and great	but the people	were few	therein
H5892	H7342	H3027 H1419	H5971	H4592	H8432
וְאֵין	בָּתֵּי יָם	בְּנוּיִם:			
H369	and the houses	were not builded			
	H1004	H1129			

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