

Nehemiah 11:1,2

FILLING JERUSALEM WITH DWELLERS

- I. The great need.
 - A. Jerusalem now had walls, but there were relatively very few who lived within it (7:4).
 1. This meant that there were only a few to watch, few to defend, and few to develop and maintain an economy.
 2. But Zechariah foretold God returning to dwell in Jerusalem so it would be called a city of truth and the holy mountain (8:3).
 - B. Why were there only a few living in Jerusalem?
 1. It was much easier and more profitable to live in the country where could raise grain and livestock than in the city.
 2. Second, Jerusalem was known even by the heathen as the place where God chose to have His name dwell (Ezra 6:12).
 3. If lived in the “holy city” (1) one would have to live a holy, circumspect life, and some would shrink from such commitment.
 - C. Thus to move into this Jerusalem required sacrifice.
- II. There was a willingness to repopulate the holy city.
 - A. Some willingly volunteered to take their families into Jerusalem and to begin its restoration (2).
 - B. There was a wide range of people who came into Jerusalem, with various gifts and abilities.
 - C. God calls believers to populate the true church of Jesus Christ wherever it is found.
- III. Love for God as our Father is expressed as a love for the church, our spiritual mother.
 - A. Love for the church will always be evidenced in self-sacrifice, self-denying, and self-emptying.
 - B. Let us give ourselves enthusiastically to the church and not let petty issues become the focus and divert attention from the central calling to declare the truth and to live joyfully together.
 - C. This only comes in the way of a resolve, by God’s grace, to use the gifts given us for the sake of others and the whole.