

STRENGTHENED

O GOD, STRENGTHEN MY HANDS

NEHEMIAH 6:9

Sunday Morning, March 9, 2025 » Pastor Josiah Kagin

Message Title: Generosity in the Work

Message Text: Nehemiah 5:14-19

Introduction:

Nehemiah and the people have been working wholeheartedly on the rebuilding of the two and a half miles of stone wall around the city of Jerusalem. God was enabling them marvelously and giving them success even though the challenges were many. They have faced multiple menacing threats from their enemies in all the regions surrounding them. They navigated difficult internal challenges like food shortages and the exploitive, self-serving actions of the rulers in Jerusalem. In the midst of it all, Nehemiah continued to lead with boldness and generosity. Today, we will greatly benefit from Nehemiah's personal journal entry concerning his generosity and *how it was demonstrated in his life*. We will learn that generosity is not about how much you have, but what you do with what you have and the attitude with which you do it.

DEFINITION—GENEROSITY: the quality of being kind and generous; to give liberally; openhanded (Miriam-Webster)

1. The Way He _____ (14-15)

A. His _____ (14)

NOTE — For 72 years, other governors had done nothing to better the living condition, the security situation or to improve the economy of Jerusalem.

Nehemiah 5:14-15b Moreover from the time that I was appointed to be their governor in the land of Judah, from the twentieth year even unto the two and thirtieth year of Artaxerxes the king, that is, twelve years, I and my brethren have not eaten the bread of the governor. 15 But the former governors that had been before me were chargeable unto the people, and had taken of them bread and wine, beside forty shekels of silver; yea, even their servants bare rule over the people:

DEFINITION—APPOINTED: to assign a duty, responsibility or obligation to someone.



NOTE — Nehemiah was appointed for a 12 year term as governor over Judah. (See about second term in 13:6)

Daniel 2:21 And he changeth the times and the seasons: He removeth kings, and setteth up kings: He giveth wisdom unto the wise, And knowledge to them that know understanding:

NEHEMIAH'S GOVERNORSHIP (14b) — refused the perks of the position

BREAD OF THE GOVERNOR — The office of the governor was *supported* through 'taxes' on the people.

THE FORMER GOVERNORS (15) — imposed food and financial taxation

DEFINITION—CHARGEABLE: to weigh heavily upon; to impose a task upon, assign a responsibility to.

DEFINITION—BARE RULE: to domineer; to rule or exercise power over in a cruel and autocratic manner.

B. His _____ (15c)

Nehemiah 5:15c ...but so did not I, because of the fear of God.

NOTE — Nehemiah made a deliberate choice to not burden the people with taxation or domination.

DEFINITION—FEAR: reverence; a feeling of profound respect for someone or something, often a deity, conceived of as fear.\

Genesis 20:11 And Abraham said, Because I thought, Surely the fear of God is not in this place; and they will slay me for my wife's sake.

Mark 12:38-40 And he said unto them in his doctrine, Beware of the scribes, which love to go in long clothing, and love salutations in the marketplaces, 39 And the chief seats in the synagogues, and the uppermost rooms at feasts: 40 Which devour widows' houses, and for a pretence make long prayers: these shall receive greater damnation.

Proverbs 23:17 Let not thine heart envy sinners: But be thou in the fear of the Lord all the day long

2. The Way He _____ (16-18)

A. He Gave _____ (16)

Nehemiah 5:16 Yea, also I continued in the work of this wall, neither bought we any land: and all my servants were gathered thither unto the work.

HIS ATTENTION — “Yea, also I continued in the work of this wall...”

DEFINITION—CONTINUED: to apply or focus one's attention or abilities onto something.

HIS AFFECTION — "... *neither bought we any land...*"

HIS ASSETS — "...*and all my servants were gathered thither unto the work.*"

DEFINITION—SERVANTS: a man or young man working in the service of another; especially in the household. {*In those days, servants were considered assets*}

2 Corinthians 8:5 And this they did, not as we hoped, but first gave their own selves to the Lord, and unto us by the will of God.

B. He Gave _____ (17-18)

Nehemiah 5:17-18 Moreover there were at my table an hundred and fifty of the Jews and rulers, beside those that came unto us from among the heathen that are about us. 18 Now that which was prepared for me daily was //one ox and six choice sheep; also fowls were prepared for me, and once in ten days store of all sorts of wine://yet for all this required not I the bread of the governor, because the bondage was heavy upon this people.

NOTE — In the Persian custom, local nobles and officials routinely dined at the table of the king. —FSB

THE DAILY GROCERY LIST (SEE ABOVE / /)

QUOTE: It is estimated that this amount of food would meet the needs of over 500 guests, so Nehemiah must have kept "open house" constantly. Or perhaps he shared what was left with the people working on the wall. At any rate, he was generous to others and asked for no reward. —Wiersbe

Hebrews 13:2 Be not forgetful to entertain strangers: for thereby some have entertained angels unawares.

1 Peter 4:9 Use hospitality one to another without grudging

3. The Way He _____ God (19)

NOTE — Nehemiah's prayer reveals that his generosity flowed from recognizing that God was the source of all that he needed.

A. As His _____ (19a)

Nehemiah 5:19 Think upon me, my God, for good...

DEFINITION—GOOD: prosperity; the condition of prospering in life.

James 1:17 Every good gift and every perfect gift is from above, and cometh down from the Father of lights, with whom is no variableness, neither shadow of turning.

QUESTION: Who is your provider?

Matthew 6:7–8 But when ye pray, use not vain repetitions, as the heathen do: for they think that they shall be heard for their much speaking. 8 Be not ye therefore like unto them: for your Father knoweth what things ye have need of, before ye ask him.

B. As His _____ (19b)

Nehemiah 5:19 ...according to all that I have done for this people.

NOTE — God saw all the sacrifices that Nehemiah made on behalf of the people.

QUESTION: Who is your rewarder?

Mark 9:41 For whosoever shall give you a cup of water to drink in my name, because ye belong to Christ, verily I say unto you, he shall not lose his reward.

Luke 18:28–30 Then Peter said, Lo, we have left all, and followed thee. 29 And he said unto them, Verily I say unto you, There is no man that hath left house, or parents, or brethren, or wife, or children, for the kingdom of God's sake, 30 Who shall not receive manifold more in this present time, and in the world to come life everlasting

Conclusion

Generosity is not about _____ you have or what you would do with what you _____, but what you do with what you _____ and the _____ with which you do it.

Questions to Consider

How generous was Jesus to me?

Does generosity influence the way that I lead others?

Does generosity mark the way that I give from what I already have to God and others?

To whom to I look for provision and reward?

