

THRU THE BIBLE EXPOSITION

Nehemiah: Pattern For Solutions In Spiritually Hard Times

M. Celebrating God's Timelessly Sure All-Sufficiency

(Nehemiah 8:13-18)

Introduction: (To show the need . . .)

We need a lot of help in a variety of realms today:

(1) We need help financially: a letter in the Republican-American by Art Ingram of Seymour (June 16, 2021, p. 9A) stated, "President Biden's . . . \$6 trillion agenda . . . encourages the . . . unemployed to continue soaking up taxpayer money" and "(i)llegal immigrants are streaming across the border . . . to further burden working Americans."

(2) We need help with livelihood needs: Mr. Ingram added, "Gasoline prices have gone up 10% under this administration. Costs for food, clothing, housing, utilities and other essentials are spiking," Ibid.

(3) We need help with our physical welfare: The editorial, "Lawmakers who do harm" (Ibid., June 14, 2021, p. 8A) that opposed Connecticut's legalization of marijuana, warned, "Poison-control centers have been deluged with calls for help from people, including children, who were sickened by today's high-potency smokable and edible marijuana products; suicide rates are spiking in states that have legalized marijuana; and studies have linked marijuana use with 'impaired cognitive function, alcohol abuse and psychosis.'"

(4) We need help with leadership: (a) Dr. Anthony Fauci who led our nation's response to the pandemic, heads the National Institute of Allergy and Infectious Diseases, part of the National Institutes of Health. The NIH awarded a grant for studying bat coronavirus to the U. S.-based EcoHealth Alliance which in turn subcontracted the research to the Wuhan lab in China. (Marc Thiessen, "Media negligent on leak theory," Ibid., May 29, 2021, p. 8A) (b) Then, there is evidence that COVID-19 "was engineered" in "gain-of-function" research at that lab to make it very infectious to man! (Ibid.; Aaron Feis, "'Damning' COV data point to lab: experts," New York Post, June 7, 2021, p. 7) "(I)n an opinion piece for The Wall Street Journal, Dr. Steven Quay and researcher Richard Muller pointed to two key pieces of evidence to support" this claim: (i) "Of the 36 possible genome pairings that can produce two arginine amino acids in a row -- which results in boosting a virus' lethality -- the one most commonly used in gain-of-function research is CGG-CGG, or double CGG . . . (T)he double CGG sequence has never been found naturally among the entire group of coronaviruses that includes CoV-2, which causes COVID-19. But, in what Quay and Muller called a 'damning fact,' it was found in CoV-2," Ibid., Feis. (ii) However, the "'most compelling" evidence "is the dramatic differences in the genetic diversity of CoV-2, compared with the coronaviruses responsible for SARS and MERS.' SARS and MERS" mutated "'rapidly as they spread through the human population, until the most contagious forms dominated' . . . By contrast, COVID-19 proved to be highly contagious from the point it was first detected," Ibid. (c) Also, "in 2018, U. S. diplomats warned of inadequate safety at the Wuhan lab" and (d) "three researchers at the Wuhan lab sought hospital care in November 2019 -- roughly when the pandemic began -- with symptoms consistent with COVID-19." (Ibid., Thiessen). (e) So, if Dr. Anthony Fauci, who led our nation's pandemic response, was part of an institution that awarded money for gain-of-function research on the coronavirus at the Wuhan lab that was known to be troublesome, he is to be implicated in the costs of the pandemic! That also means we have a leadership problem!

Need: *So, we ask, "How do we deal with concerns over the help we need in so many realms of life today?!"*

I. When Judah's Hebrews observed the Feast of Booths (or Tabernacles) in Nehemiah 8:13-17a, they testified of God's faithful all-sufficiency in meeting His people's needs:

- A. God instituted that feast in Moses' day to preserve the testimony that He had made Israel live in booths [or tents, tabernacles] when they were in the wilderness, Leviticus 23:42-43. (Bible Know. Com., O. T., p. 208)
- B. The Lord's **reason** for preserving this testimony was to teach future generations in Israel to rely on God versus other false, pagan gods that He might **faithfully** meet their **every need**, Deuteronomy 8:2-20:
 1. God predicted that He would provide for Israel in the Exodus 400 years before the event even occurred:
 - a. He told Israel's patriarch Abraham that his descendants would be in bondage for 400 years, Gen. 15:13.
 - b. God then said that He would punish that nation so Abraham's descendants could leave it, Genesis 15:14a.
 - c. The Lord also told Abraham that his descendants would arrive in the land of Canaan, Genesis 15:16a.
 - d. God put Abraham into a deep sleep so he could not contribute to the covenant that followed (Gen. 15:12). Typical of such covenants, animals were slain and their bodies halved and placed apart for the covenant parties to pass between the halves, promising that what had occurred to those animals would occur to their cattle if they did not keep their promises, Gen. 15:9-10; H. C. Leupold, Expos. of Genesis, 1974, p. 480.

Appearing as a "smoking firepot" and a "flaming torch," God then *alone* passed between the animal parts, making an **unconditional** covenant with Abraham to bring Israel to Canaan, Gen. 15:10-21; *Ibid.*, p. 487.

- e. Significantly, the "smoking firepot" and the "flaming torch" prefigured God's cloud by day and fiery pillar by night that 400 years later would lead Israel out of Egypt into Canaan, Genesis 15:17; Exodus 13:21-22.
2. This promise of God was **PARTLY** fulfilled in the generation of Israel's Exodus (as follows):
 - a. God faithfully provided for Israel's **food** needs by His daily provision of manna, Deut. 8:2-3; Ex. 16:35.
 - b. God faithfully provided for Israel's **clothing**, Exodus 12:35-36 with Deuteronomy 8:4a.
 - c. God faithfully provided for Israel's **health**, Deuteronomy 8:4b, 15a.
 - d. God faithfully provided for Israel's **wealth**, Exodus 12:35-36; Deut. 8:11-14, 18.
 - e. God faithfully provided for Israel's **water**, Deuteronomy 8:15b.
 - f. God faithfully provided for Israel's **leadership**, giving moment-by-moment, day-by-day, year-by-year guidance with His cloud and fiery pillar for all 40 years of their journey, Num. 9:15-23; Ex. 40:36-38.

II. However, the Feast of Tabernacles will AGAIN be observed in Christ's future Millennial Kingdom (Zechariah 14:16-19) to celebrate God's COMPLETE fulfillment of the Abrahamic Covenant as a testimony to His TIMELESSLY SURE ALL-SUFFICIENCY (as follows):

- A. In Genesis 15:18-21, God had promised Abraham all the land from the Nile River [in Egypt] to the Euphrates River [in Iraq], land Israel has yet to rule as her territory. (*Ryrie Study Bib., KJV*, 1978, fn. to Gen. 15:18-21)
- B. At that time, the desert of the Sinai Peninsula where Israel had need of God's forty-year faithful provision for her livelihood needs will bloom with life (Isaiah 35:1-2), testifying to God's timelessly sure all-sufficiency!
- C. Thus, all believers of all nations will observe the Feast of Tabernacles in Christ's Kingdom, celebrating God's timelessly sure all-sufficiency in addressing every need of His people throughout history, Zechariah 14:16-19.

Lesson: *Judah's Hebrews kept the Feast of Tabernacles to testify of God's past faithful work to meet His people's every need in fulfillment of His Abrahamic Covenant. In Christ's coming Kingdom, the WORLD of BELIEVERS will observe that feast to celebrate God's timelessly sure all-sufficiency in meeting their every need.*

Application: *(1) May we trust in Christ Who died as our Atoning Sacrifice for sin that we might receive God's gift of eternal life, John 3:16; 1 Cor. 15:1-11. (2) May we rest in God's faithful all-sufficiency to meet our every need.*

Conclusion: (To illustrate the message . . .)

We apply God's Scripture promises of His faithful provision for us relative to the needs in our introduction:

(1) On rising livelihood costs in food, clothing, housing, gasoline, utilities (etc.) caused by oppressive rulers, Hebrews 13:5b uses the **middle** voice (*arkoumenoi*, *U. B. S. Grk. N. T.*, 1966, p. 776; *The Analyt. Grk. Lex. (Zon.)*, 1972 p. 51; Arndt & Gingrich, *A Grk.-Eng. Lex. of the N. T.*, 1967, p. 106-107) in calling us to "be content" with what we have, meaning this action is **for our own benefit**. Thus, God is our Helper amid oppressive foes (Heb. 13:6), and He can provide all we need if, when and how He so decides! However, God wants us to be content with what we **already** possess for **our own tranquility**, letting **Him** deal with if, when and how we might need something more!

(2) On the state's legalization of marijuana, (a) we can claim God's help to protect us on the road from drivers who get high on marijuana (Hebrews 13:5-6) and (b) heed the advice of a defensive driving teacher who once told me to watch the front wheel of another car on the road, for it will signal what the driver will do before the driver himself realizes what he is about to do. (c) We can also avoid using drugs ourselves by relying on the Holy Spirit, Eph. 5:18.

(3) On illegal immigration, we must rely on God's sovereignty taught in Acts 17:26-27 where He is said to have created and sustained the nations' borders to create a thirst in man for Himself. We need to be ready to give the Gospel of Christ to the lost, be they citizens or illegal immigrants, for all need salvation. (Acts 17:30 with John 3:16)

(4) On the vacuum of credible, responsible leaders in today's world, we recall the comforting Romans 13:1-7 instruction that God sovereignly dictates the civil powers that exist, and that the chaos of the Great Tribulation will **not** occur until **after** the rapture of the Church that is predicted in Revelation 4:1-2. (cf. 2 Thessalonians 2:1-17)

(5) On the way officials balloon government debt, loading future generations with taxes, 2 Corinthians 12:14b implies that God wants parents to build wealth for their children. Toward a workable solution, we know that working in retirement, waiting to age 70 ½ to start taking retirement benefits to maximize income long-term in view of rising longevity rates and life-long saving and investing promote the health, longevity and livelihood welfare of the elderly. If **retirees** can do these things, certainly parents at any age can keep saving and investing for their children's futures!

May we trust in Christ Who died as our Atoning Sacrifice for sin that we might receive God's gift of eternal life. May we then rest on God's timelessly faithful all-sufficiency to meet our every need.