

# Rebuilding *for* God's People

*A Study of Nehemiah  
and 2 Corinthians*



## Lesson 8: Jody Harrington





This day is sacred to our Lord. Do not grieve, for the joy of the Lord is your strength.

Nehemiah 8: 10b



**Concern (Ch 1)**

**Construction (Ch 2–3)**

**Conflict (Ch 4–6)**

 **Consecration (Ch 7–12)**

**Cleansing (Ch13)**

# **Outline of Nehemiah**





**1. REFORMING THE PEOPLE  
WITH PENITENTIAL PRAYER**

**2. RENEWING RELATIONSHIP  
WITH A COVENANT**

**NEHEMIAH 9 and 10**



# PENITENTIAL PRAYER: CHAPTER 9

1. Praising of God v. 1-6
2. Covenant with Abraham v. 7-8
3. Mighty Acts of God in Egypt v. 9-11
4. Care of God in Wilderness v. 12
5. Giving of the Law at Sinai and desert wandering v. 13-21
6. Conquering of Canaan v. 13-21
7. Unfaithfulness of Israel and God's patience v. 26-31
8. Confession of sin and its consequences v. 32-37

REFORMING THE PEOPLE





*Overall Theme of Prayer:*

*God's Love and Care Contrasted With  
Disobedience of His People*



# OTHER THEMES OF THE PRAYER

- God is the God of history
- Repeated disobedience and total neglect of God's commandments
- Faithfulness of God to the covenant
- Consequences of sin



# Renewing the Covenant

“Because of all this we made a firm covenant and wrote it down. Our leaders, Levites, and priests set their seal to it.”

Nehemiah 10:1





# The Significance of Seals



# There are about 60 references to seals and sealing in the Bible

- to render something tamper-proof (Jer. 32:10, Matt. 27:66)
- to demonstrate authority (1 Kings 21:8, John 6:27)
- to seal a letter for privacy (or not--Neh. 6-5)
- to seal a covenant (Neh. 9:38)
- to delegate authority (Esther 8:8, John 6:27)
- to seal documents (Isa. 8:16, Rev. 5)
- as a metaphor in the NT (Paul's reference to Abraham's circumcision as the seal of righteousness Rom.4:11)





# LEVITES AND PRIESTS-- What's the Difference?

- All priests are Levites--members of the tribe of Levi who was one of the sons of Jacob.
- All Levites are NOT priests--Priests are descendants of Aaron and his sons (Exodus 28-29)
- Priests prepared sacrifices, maintained the temple, collected tithes, presided over ritual purifications, among other things
- Levites provided music for services, administered and taught the law to the people.

From: Harper's Bible Dictionary



# Sealers of the Covenant

- Nehemiah (v. 1)
- 21 Priests (v. 3-9)
- 16 Levites (v. 10-13)
- 44 Leaders of the People (v. 14-27)





# THOSE WHO SWORE AN OATH

- other priests
- Levites
- gatekeepers
- singers
- temple servants
- their wives, sons, daughters
- all who were able to understand

**Nehemiah 10: 29-30**



## Biblical Oaths

Hebrew word for “oath” is *sheba* which means “to seven oneself”

Refers to God’s covenant to Adam and Eve when he rests, blesses and makes holy the seventh day (Genesis 2:1-3)

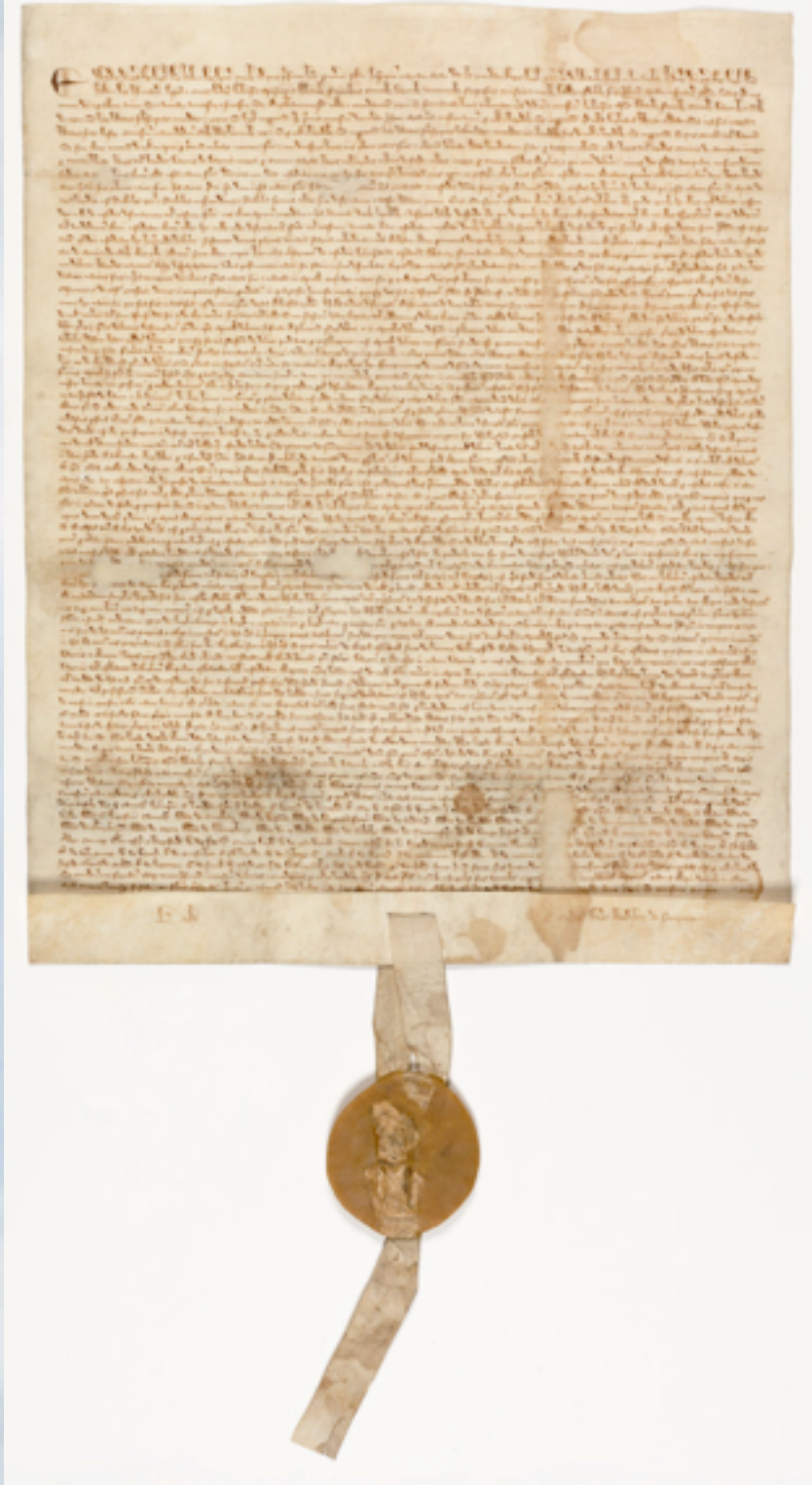
Seven is the sacred number in Hebrew culture

Matthew 7: 3, Luke 6: 41





# The Magna Carta





# Modern Seals





Covenant ceremonies in the Old Testament must include swearing of oaths

- Oaths are a holy ritual
- To swear falsely profanes God's Holy Name
- God is invoked as a guarantor of the Oath
- God will punish broken or false oaths

## Biblical Oaths



## **PRIORITIES SET BY THE COVENANT**

- Obey God in their homes (v. 30)
- Obey God in their business (v. 31)
- Obey God in their worship (v. 32-39)

# Nehemiah 10







# Keys to Changing Our Priorities

“The key is not to prioritize what’s on your schedule, but to schedule your priorities.”

Stephen R. Covey





Serious thought precedes any significant change in our lives.

Change comes on the heels of honest, specific thought about our lives.

From: Hand Me Another Brick  
by Charles R. Swindoll



Written plans confirm  
right priorities.

Public commitments equal  
accountability.

**From: Hand Me Another Brick  
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# THE BSD COVENANT

Lord, I want to seek Your kingdom and Your righteousness first. I want to give You my heart and give ear to Your teaching.

I want to love You first and foremost. You have said that when we seek You, we will find You.

I commit to seek You with a willing heart in this study that I may know you better and draw near to you.



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# Three Key Components of BSD

*STUDY-- daily personal Bible study, group discussion of the lesson and weekly teaching lecture.*

*NURTURE-- prayer and weekly phone and e-mail contacts*

*FELLOWSHIP-- monthly group luncheons*



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# PRIORITIES SET BY BSD COVENANT

- *CONSISTENT BIBLE STUDY*
- *CONSISTENT ATTENDANCE*
- *CONSISTENT PRAYER*
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In this world distinction  
and conformity pull us in  
opposite directions.

**From: Hand Me Another Brick  
by Charles R. Swindoll**



“For I do not understand my own actions. For I do not do what I want, but I do the very thing I hate.”

**Romans 7: 15 (ESV)**





# Applying the Lesson in Your Life

Do you want to make a change in your life?

Have you given that change serious, specific thought and prayer?

Will you make a public and sacred commitment to the things that will bring about the change?

How will your desire to conform conflict with your plans to make that change?



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