

# WHY IS “THE HOUSE OF GOD” FORSAKEN?

Nehemiah 13:4-31

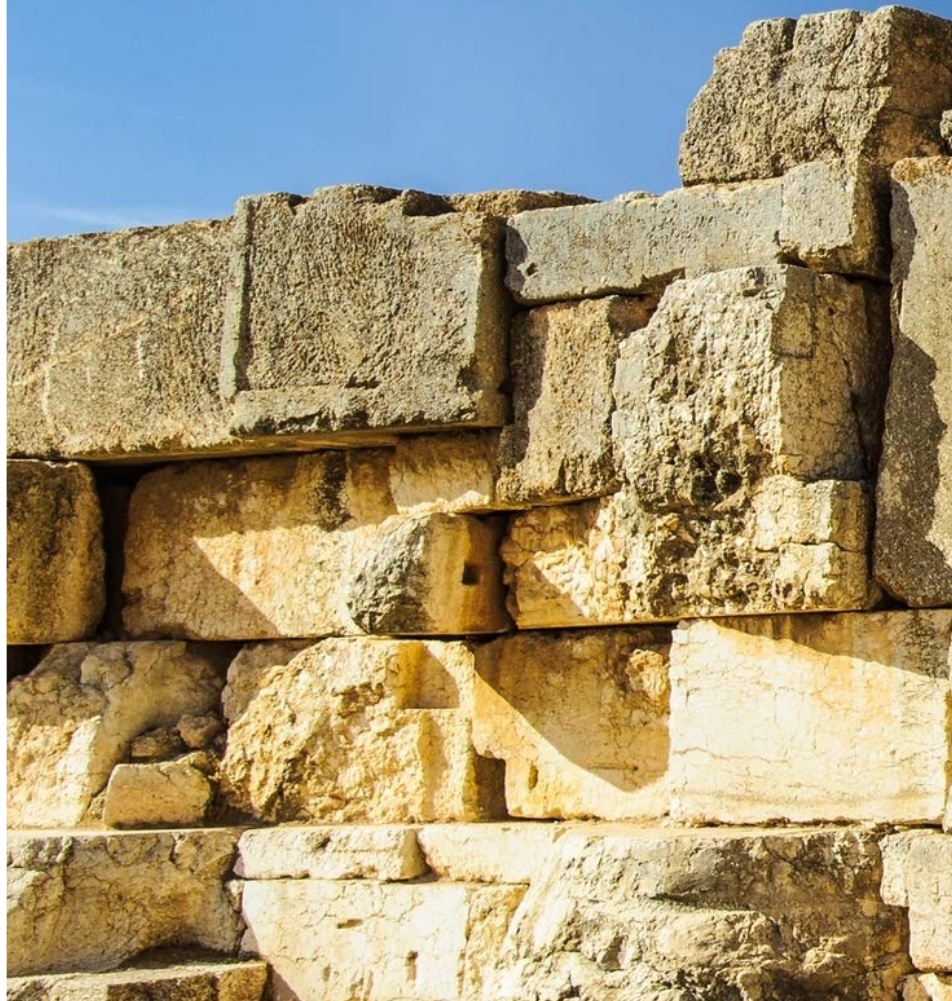
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# WHY IS “THE HOUSE OF GOD” FORSAKEN?

*Leadership Lessons from the Book of Nehemiah*

## NEHEMIAH — ON — LEADERSHIP



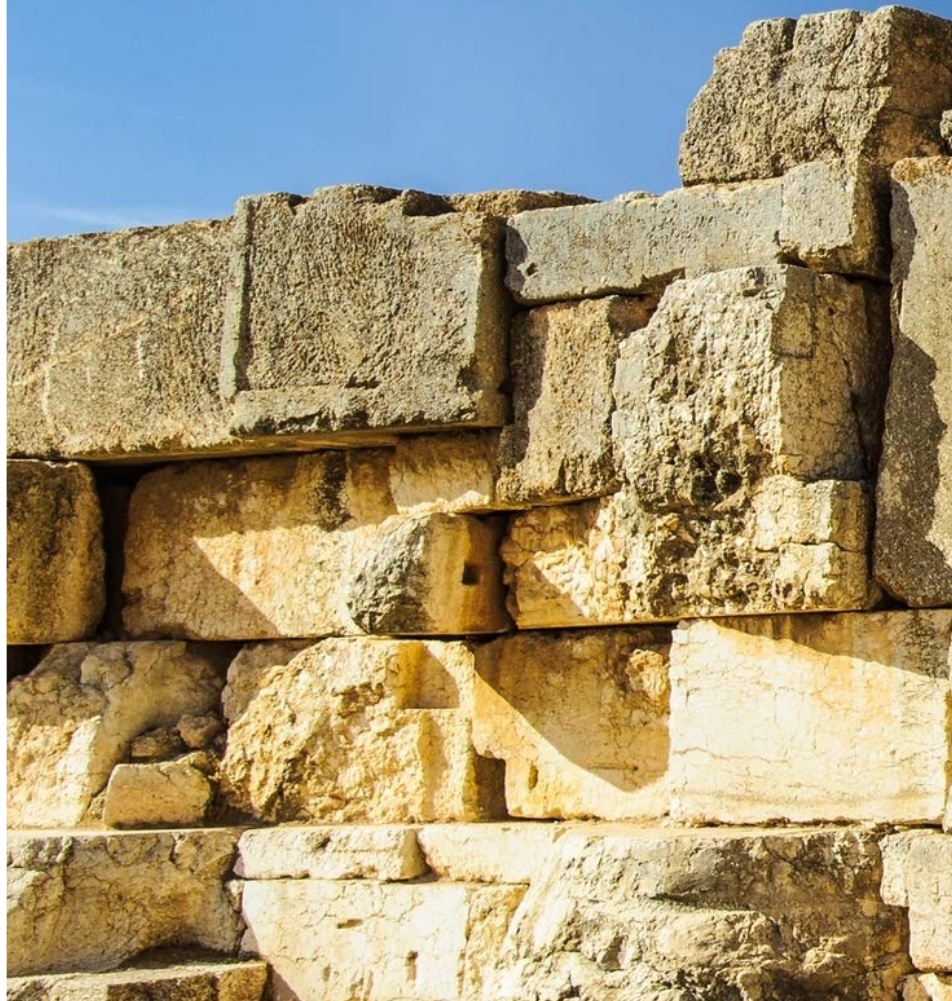
- The first 7 chapters of the book of Nehemiah deal with his return to the ancient site, and the rebuilding of the walls of the city.
- Chapters 8 - 12 deal with the reading of the law, and the efforts to restore a faithful observance of it.



# WHY IS “THE HOUSE OF GOD” FORSAKEN?

*Leadership Lessons from the Book of Nehemiah*

## NEHEMIAH — ON — LEADERSHIP



## Nehemiah 13:11 (NKJV)

11 So I contended with the rulers, and said, “Why is the house of God forsaken?” And I gathered them together and set them in their place.



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**Nehemiah 13:11 (NKJV)**

<sup>11</sup> So I contended with the rulers, and said, “Why is the house of God forsaken?” And I gathered them together and set them in their place.



The question put forth by Nehemiah is one which needs to be asked today: “Why is the house of God forsaken?”



# WHY IS “THE HOUSE OF GOD” FORSAKEN?

## DISRESPECT FOR GOD’S HOUSE



Residency was given to the  
ENEMY (13:4)

Holy Things Replaced With  
COMMON Things (13:5)

The temple needed to be  
“CLEANSED” (13:6-9)



# WHY IS “THE HOUSE OF GOD” FORSAKEN?

## DISRESPECT FOR GOD’S HOUSE



### MAKING APPLICATIONS

- Worldly & common things have been given residency in MANY churches claiming to belong to Christ (1 Cor 11:34)
- While taking up residency under the guise of “expedients” - they are in fact undermining & destroying God’s people & work. (Mt 13:22; 1 Tim 5:16; 2 Cor. 10:4)



# WHY IS "THE HOUSE OF GOD" FORSAKEN?

## DISRESPECT FOR GOD'S HOUSE

The church's organizational design is sufficient to accomplish its instituted worship and work!

When we add to the worship and work the Lord gave the church to do, we are forced to alter its organization!





# WHY IS “THE HOUSE OF GOD” FORSAKEN?

## DISRESPECT FOR GOD’S HOUSE

### MAKING APPLICATIONS



- We need Nehemiah's & our Lord's zeal towards God's house! (John 2:13-17)
- The church needs to be cleansed from all things common, (*human institutions, carnal activities, secular substitutes, social & political involvement, doctrines of men*), (2 Cor. 6:14-7:1)
- The church's spiritual worship & work restored! (1 Tim 3:15; Jn 4:24)

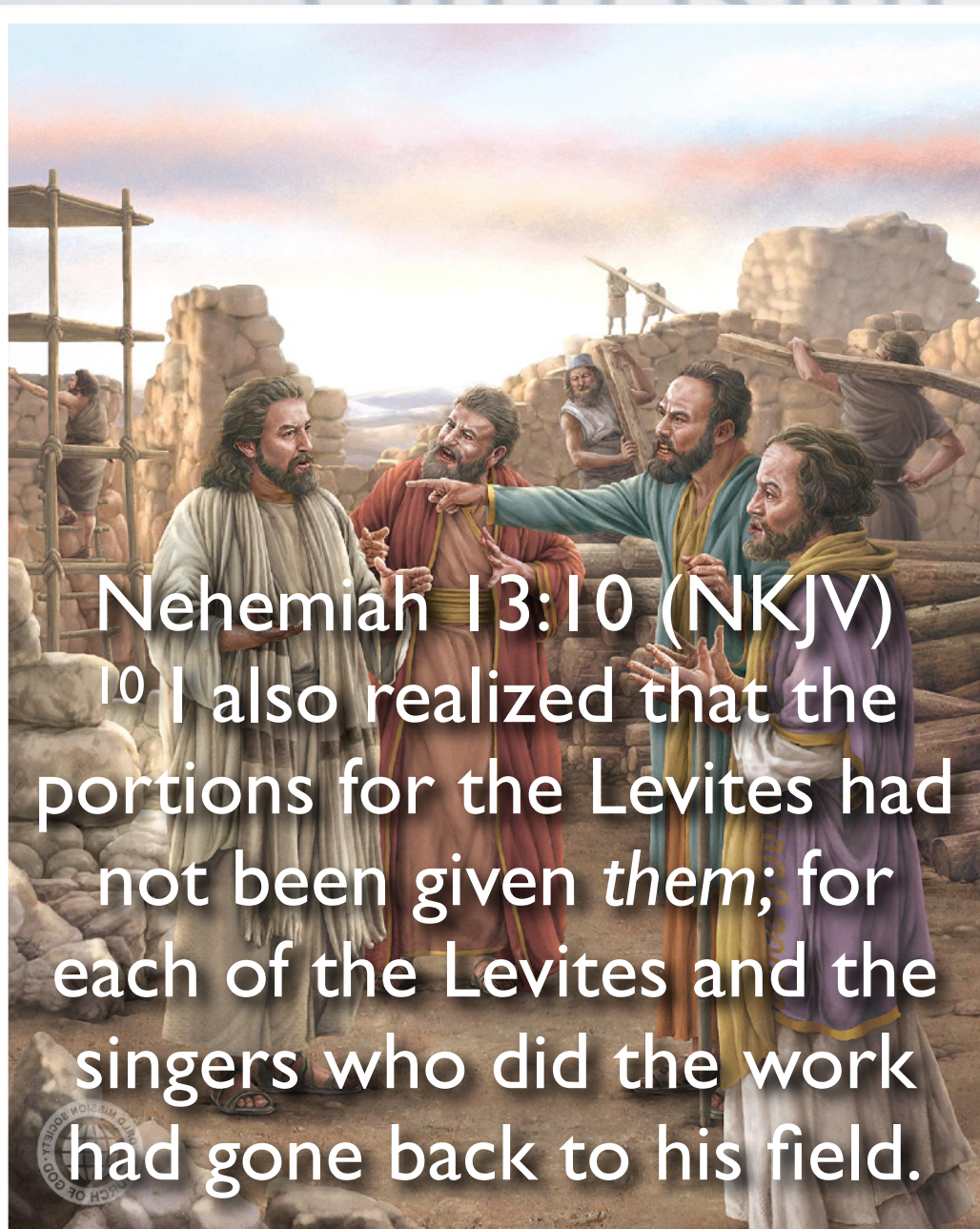


# WHY IS “THE HOUSE OF GOD” FORSAKEN?

## MATERIALISTIC PRIORITIES

Neglected support for those serving (13:10-14)

- The Levites had to leave the Temple and work their lands for substance. (10; Deut 25:4; Mat 10:10; 1 Cor. 9:7-9)



Nehemiah 13:10 (NKJV)

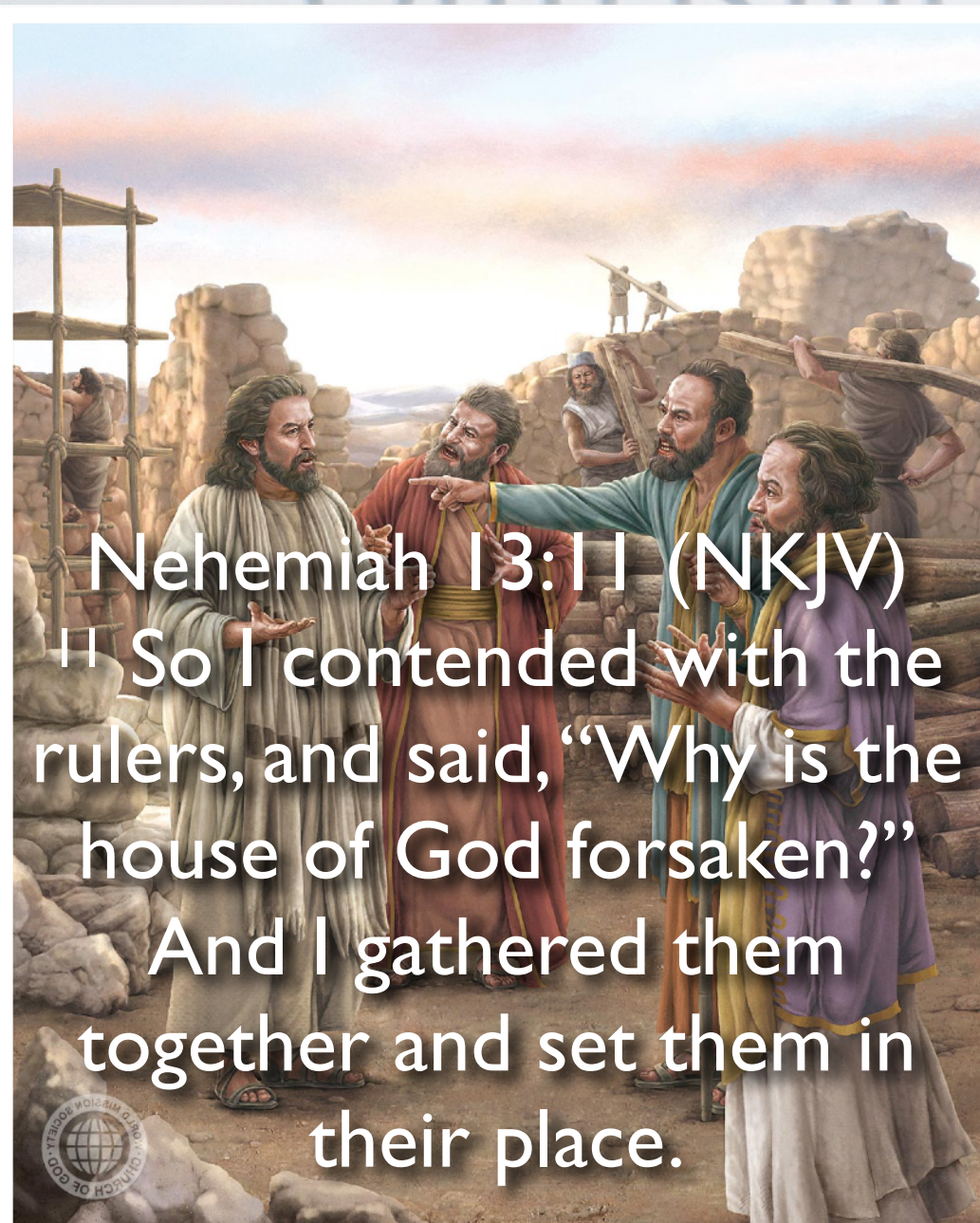
<sup>10</sup> I also realized that the portions for the Levites had not been given *them*; for each of the Levites and the singers who did the work had gone back to his field.



# WHY IS “THE HOUSE OF GOD” FORSAKEN?

## MATERIALISTIC PRIORITIES

Neglected support for those serving (13:10-14)



Nehemiah 13:11 (NKJV)

“So I contended with the rulers, and said, “Why is the house of God forsaken?”

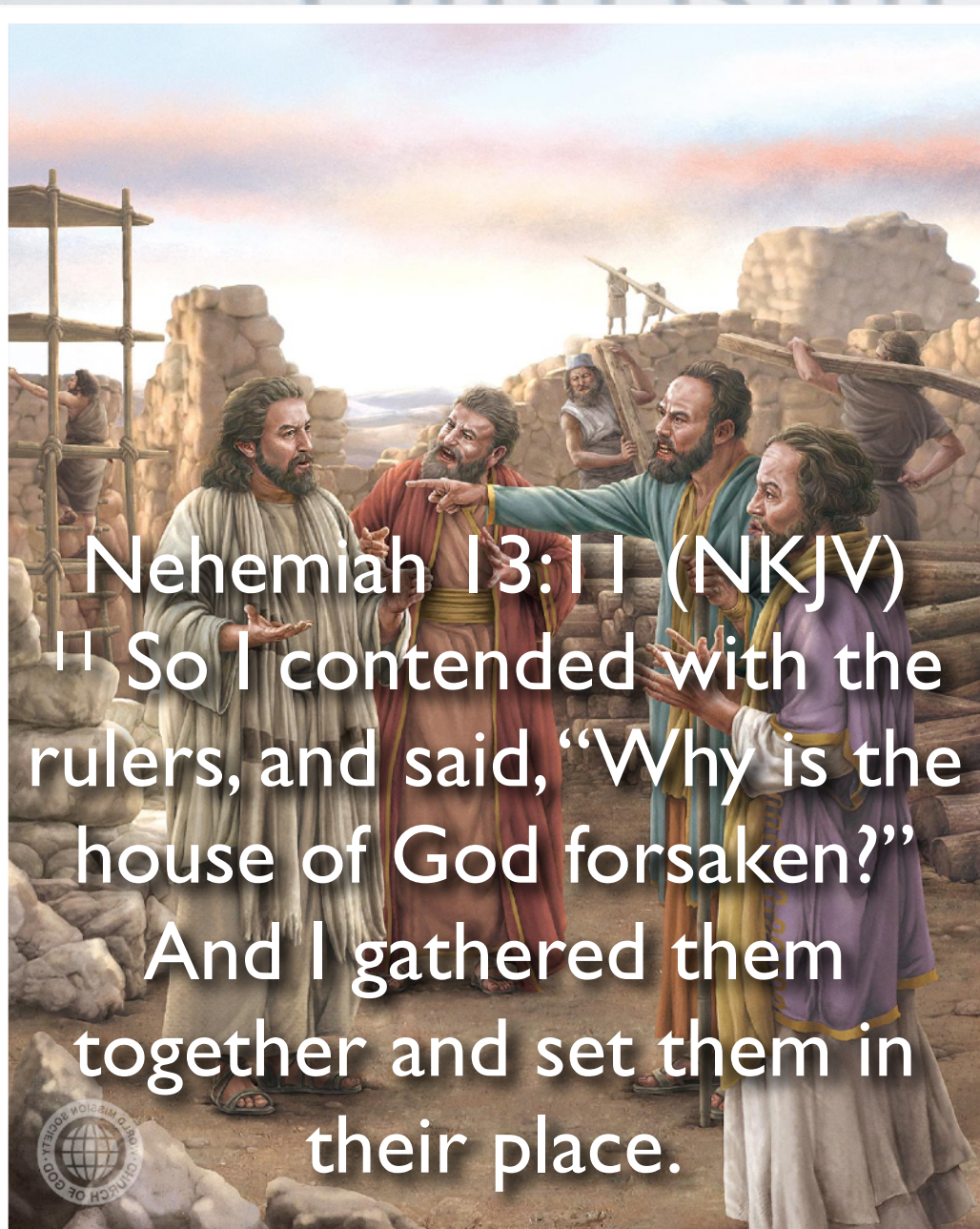
And I gathered them together and set them in their place.

- The Levites had to leave the Temple and work their lands for substance. (10; Deut 25:4; Mat 10:10; 1 Cor. 9:7-9)
- To neglect those who labor in God’s house is to neglect God’s house! (11; Mal 3:8-11; 1 Tim 5:17,18; 1 Cor 9:14)



# WHY IS “THE HOUSE OF GOD” FORSAKEN?

## MATERIALISTIC PRIORITIES



Neglected support for those serving (13:10-14)

- Nehemiah set out to correct the problem. (cf. 13:11-14).
- The people complied (vs. 12)
- Levites placed at their posts - four men to oversee the distribution of the tithes (v. 12, 13; cf. v. 5; 10:39).
- Also Nehemiah prayed for God's help in the matter (13:14).

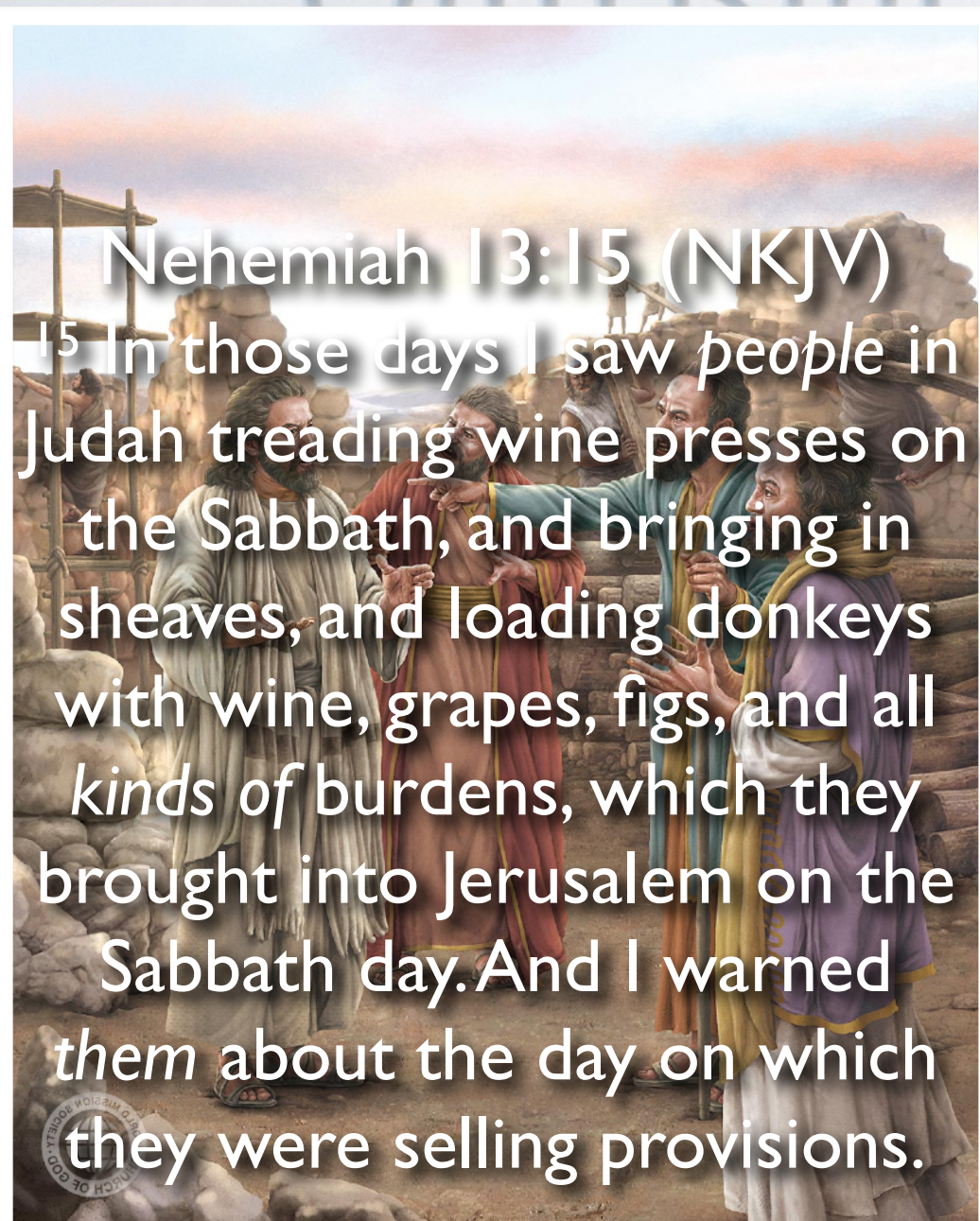


# WHY IS “THE HOUSE OF GOD” FORSAKEN?

## MATERIALISTIC PRIORITIES

### Neglect of Worship (13:15-22)

- Spiritual things were put on the back burner for material things (13:15-22)
- Another commitment Israel had made in writing, but had broken, was to keep God's laws regarding the Sabbath (10:31).



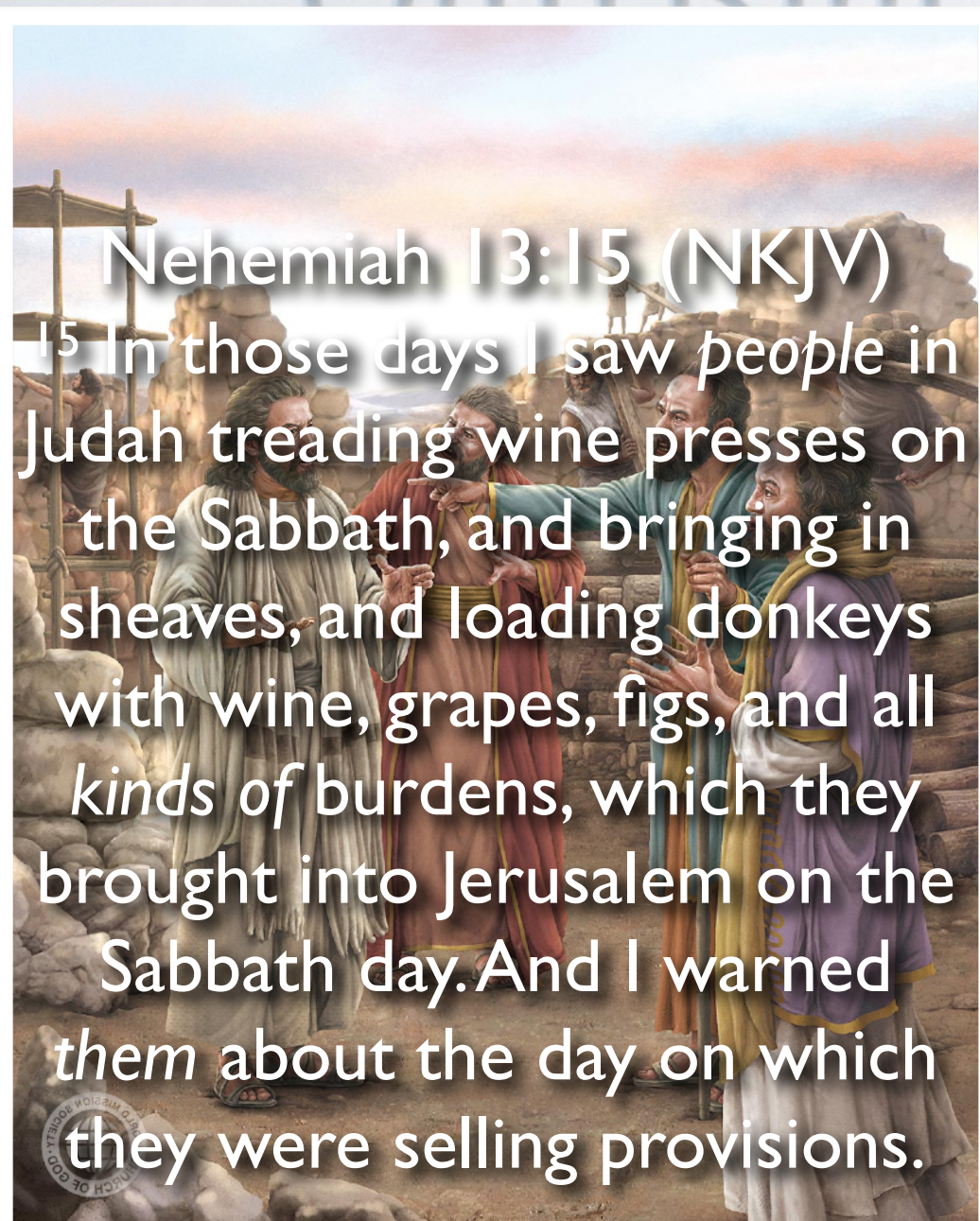


# WHY IS “THE HOUSE OF GOD” FORSAKEN?

## MATERIALISTIC PRIORITIES

### Neglect of Worship (13:15-22)

- They were working on the Sabbath as other days of the week. (*Treading grapes in winepresses, & transporting wine, grain, grapes, figs, & other merchandise, into Jerusalem to sell it*).
- They also were buying fish and other items from people of Tyre who resided in Jerusalem.



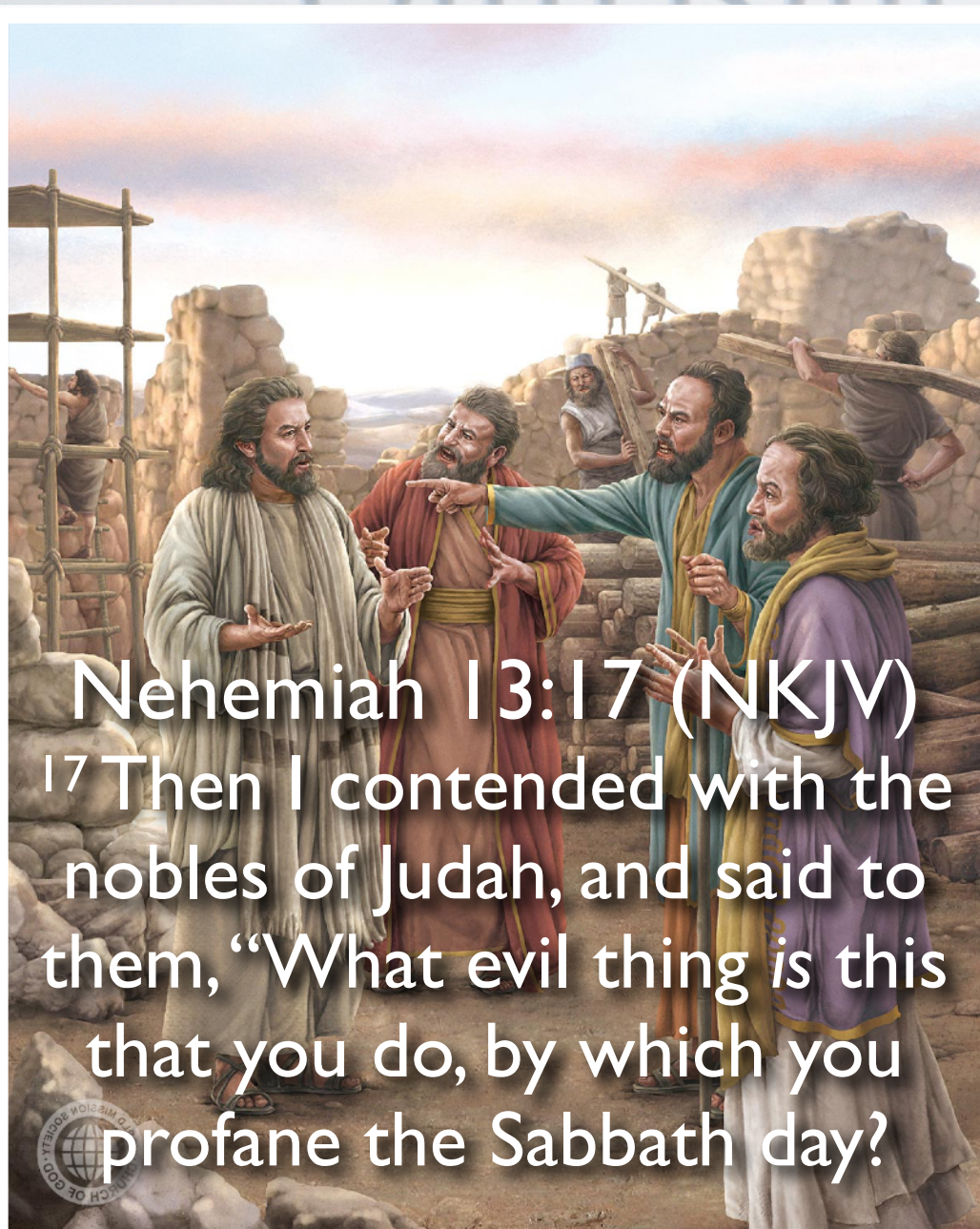
Nehemiah 13:15 (NKJV)

15 In those days I saw people in Judah treading wine presses on the Sabbath, and bringing in sheaves, and loading donkeys with wine, grapes, figs, and all kinds of burdens, which they brought into Jerusalem on the Sabbath day. And I warned them about the day on which they were selling provisions.



# WHY IS “THE HOUSE OF GOD” FORSAKEN?

## MATERIALISTIC PRIORITIES



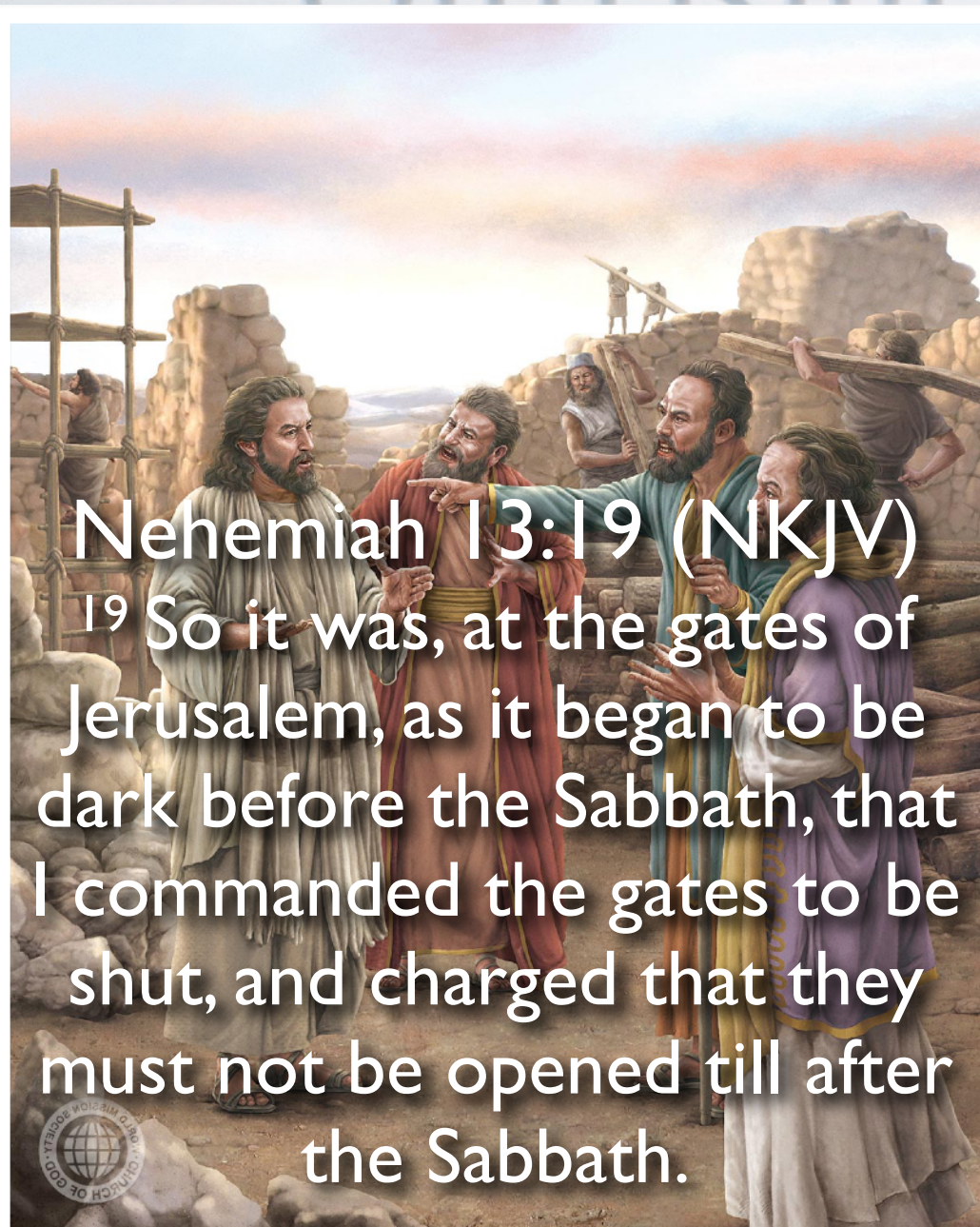
### Neglect of Worship (13:15-22)

- Nehemiah met the problem with both rebuke & action (17-22; cf. vv. 11–13).
- Called it what it was - EVIL! One of the sins for which they were exiled (17, 18; cf. Jer. 17:19–27)
- Nehemiah had the city doors shut on the Sabbath (19)



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## MATERIALISTIC PRIORITIES



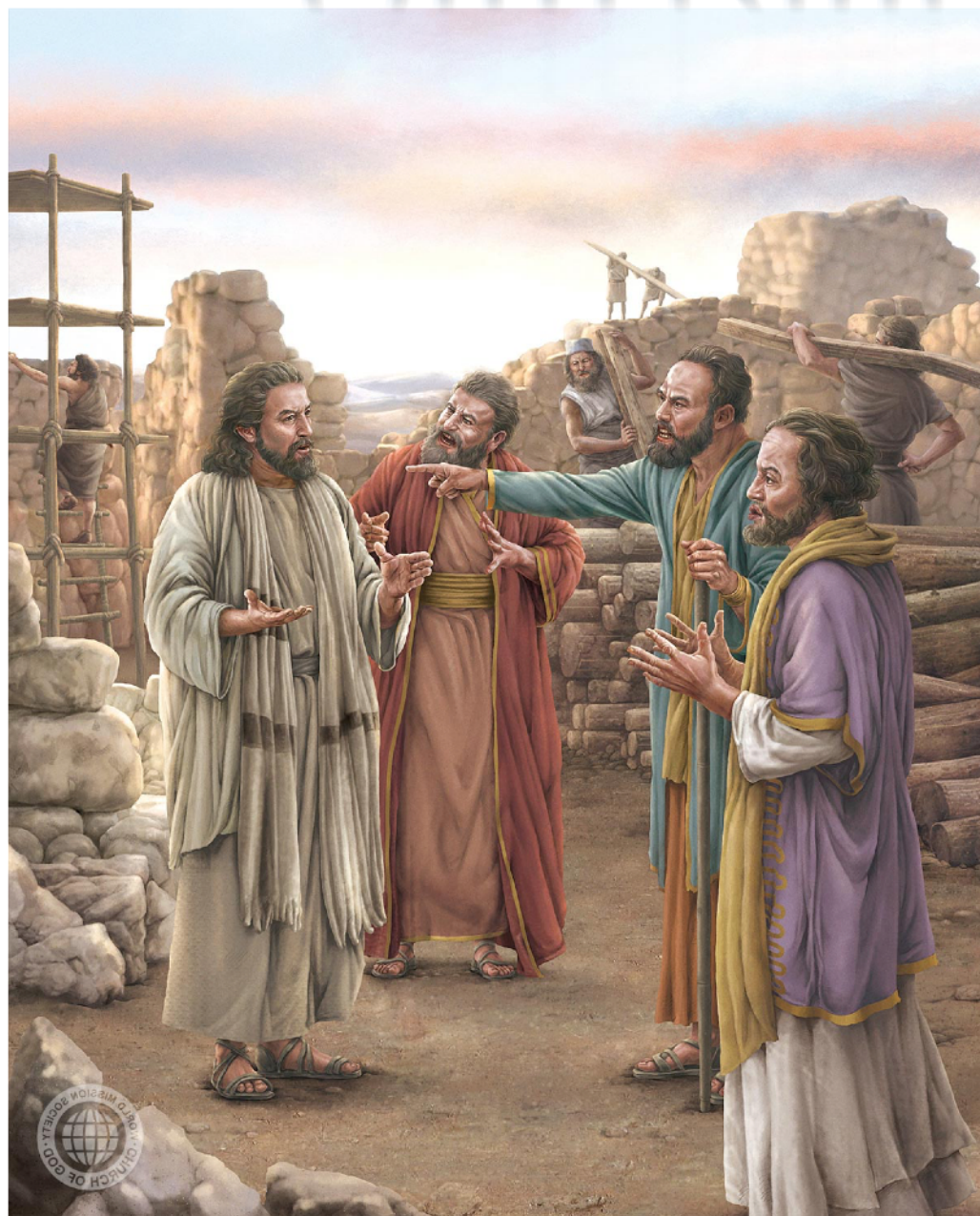
### Neglect of Worship (13:15-22)

- Guards were posted to see no merchandise was brought in. (19)
- Some merchants stayed all night outside the walls. Nehemiah threatened to use force. (20,21)
- He had the Levites to help guard the gates (30; cf. 7:1; 11:19).
- Again he asked God to help (22)



# WHY IS “THE HOUSE OF GOD” FORSAKEN?

## MATERIALISTIC PRIORITIES



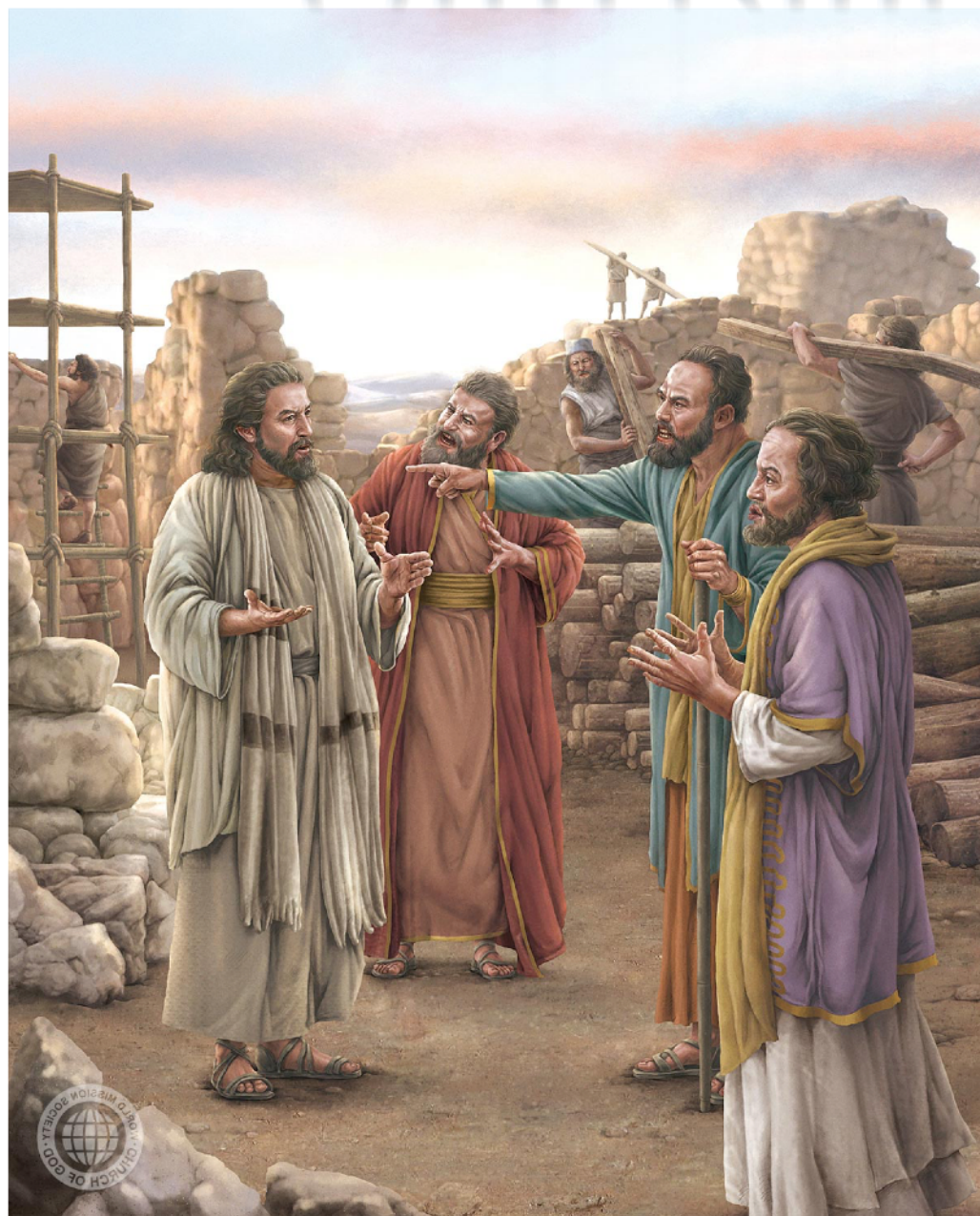
### Areas of Needed Application Today

- God's house, God's work, should be more valuable & important than material things & worldly pleasures (Mat 6:33; 2 Cor 8,9)
- Preachers & elders who stand for & teach the truth need to be supported (1 Tim 5:17,18; 1 Cor 9:14)



# WHY IS “THE HOUSE OF GOD” FORSAKEN?

## MATERIALISTIC PRIORITIES



### Areas of Needed Application Today

- Sunday is the Lord's day, and Christians are to come together to worship God, edify & encourage one another (Acts 20:7; 1 Cor 16:1,2; Heb 10:24,25)
- Do we view Sunday as JUST another day? Do we use work as an excuse? Do we feel the need to work in order to provide NECESSITIES or WANTS?



# WHY IS “THE HOUSE OF GOD” FORSAKEN?

## MATERIALISTIC PRIORITIES

### Areas of Needed Application Today



- Many today prefer to engage in other activities on Sundays (*golf / fishing / ballgames / shopping / family outings / yard work / TV, etc.*) (Heb 10:24,25)
- A priority problem! A heart problem! (Mark 12:29-31; Mat 6:19-24; Col. 3:1,2; Rom. 12:1,2)



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## Mark 12:29–31 (NKJV)

<sup>29</sup> Jesus answered him, “The first of all the commandments *is: ‘Hear, O Israel, the Lord our God, the Lord is one.* <sup>30</sup> *And you shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, with all your soul, with all your mind, and with all your strength.’ This is the first commandment.* <sup>31</sup> *And the second, like it, is this: ‘You shall love your neighbor as yourself.’ There is no other commandment greater than these.”*



# WHY IS “THE HOUSE OF GOD” FORSAKEN?

## Matthew 6:19–24 (NKJV)

<sup>19</sup> “Do not lay up for yourselves treasures on earth, where moth and rust destroy and where thieves break in and steal; <sup>20</sup> but lay up for yourselves treasures in heaven, where neither moth nor rust destroys and where thieves do not break in and steal. <sup>21</sup> For where your treasure is, there your heart will be also. <sup>22</sup> “The lamp of the body is the eye. If therefore your eye is good, your whole body will be full of light. <sup>23</sup> But if your eye is bad, your whole body will be full of darkness. If therefore the light that is in you is darkness, how great is that darkness! <sup>24</sup> “No one can serve two masters; for either he will hate the one and love the other, or else he will be loyal to the one and despise the other. You cannot serve God and mammon.



# WHY IS “THE HOUSE OF GOD” FORSAKEN?

## Matthew 6:32–34 (NKJV)

<sup>32</sup> For after all these things the Gentiles seek. For your heavenly Father knows that you need all these things. <sup>33</sup> But seek first the kingdom of God and His righteousness, and all these things shall be added to you. <sup>34</sup> Therefore do not worry about tomorrow, for tomorrow will worry about its own things. Sufficient for the day *is* its own trouble.



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## Colossians 3:1–3 (NKJV)

<sup>1</sup> If then you were raised with Christ, seek those things which are above, where Christ is, sitting at the right hand of God. <sup>2</sup> Set your mind on things above, not on things on the earth. <sup>3</sup> For you died, and your life is hidden with Christ in God.<sup>33</sup> But seek first the kingdom of God and His righteousness, and all these things shall be added to you.



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## Romans 12:1–2 (NKJV)

<sup>1</sup> I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that you present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable to God, *which is* your reasonable service. <sup>2</sup> And do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind, that you may prove what *is* that good and acceptable and perfect will of God.



# WHY IS “THE HOUSE OF GOD” FORSAKEN?

WE WILL NOT FORSAKE GOD’S HOUSE IF WE GENUINELY

## PRIORITIZE SPIRITUAL THINGS

**SUPPORT** GOD’S WORK & WORKERS

**SET AFFECTIONS** ON THINGS ABOVE

**SEEK** DAILY SPIRITUAL GROWTH

(Acts 17:11,12; 2 Peter 1:5-11)

Nehemiah 13:4-31



# WHY IS “THE HOUSE OF GOD” FORSAKEN?

BECAUSE OF:

DISRESPECT FOR GOD’S HOUSE

MATERIALISTIC PRIORITIES

HEARTS CORRUPTED BY THE WORLD





## Hebrews 10:24–25 (NKJV)

<sup>24</sup> And let us consider one another in order to stir up love and good works, <sup>25</sup> not forsaking the assembling of ourselves together, as *is* the manner of some, but exhorting *one another*, and so much the more as you see the Day approaching.

LET US NEVER BE QUILTY OF FORSAKING  
“THE HOUSE OF GOD”

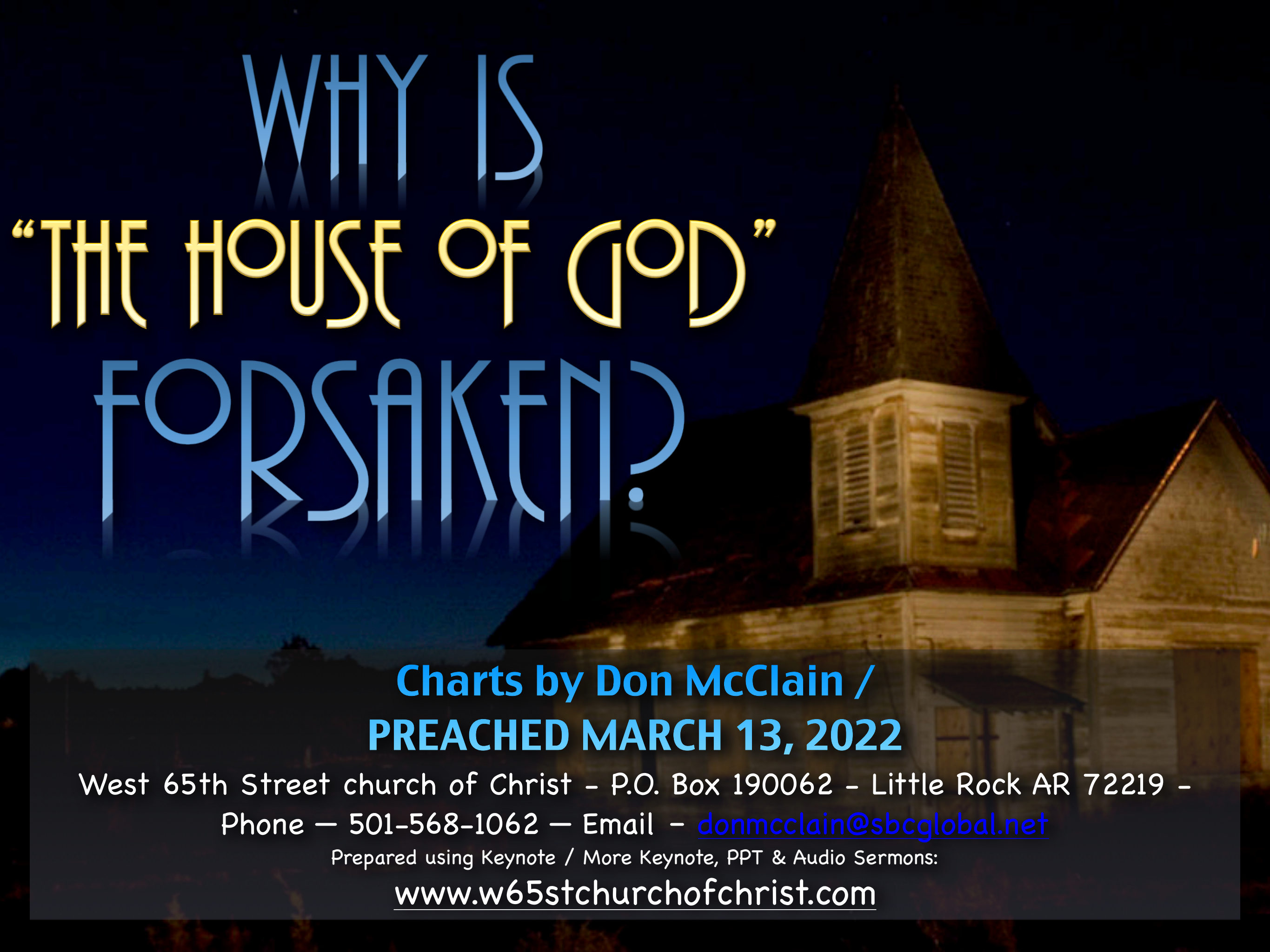
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PREACHED MARCH 13, 2022**

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