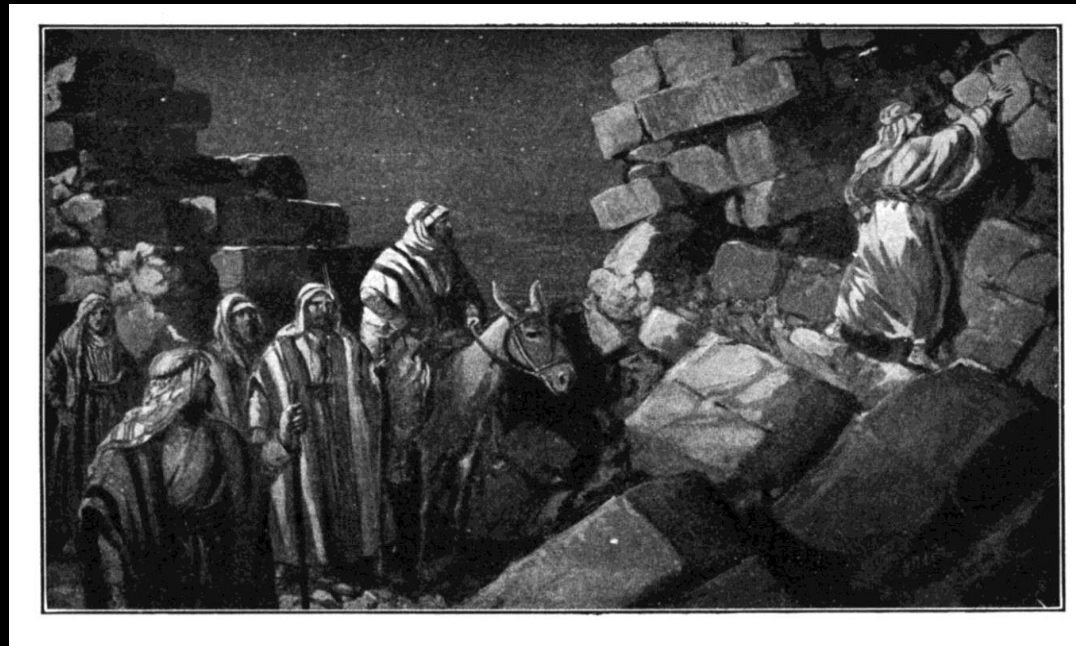


A Time to Build



A Study of the Books of Ezra, Nehemiah, and Esther

Key Dates and Events in the Period of the Return*

- 538/37 B.C.** first return of the Jews under Zerubbabel (Ezra 1-2)
- 537/36 B.C.** the altar built and the foundation laid (Ezra 3)
- 536/15-520 B.C.** the work on the temple ceases (Ezra 4)
- 520 B.C.** the preaching of Haggai (1-2) and Zechariah (1-6)
- 520 B.C.** the temple construction resumes (Ezra 5)
- 518 B.C.** the preaching of Zechariah (Zechariah 7-14)
- 516/15 B.C.** the temple is completed (Ezra 6)
- 486 B.C.** the Jews opposed in the beginning of Xerxes (Ezra 4:6)
- 483 B.C.** Xerxes holds a feast (Esther 1)
- 479 B.C.** Esther is made queen (Esther 2)
- 474/73 B.C.** Haman plans to kill the Jews (Esther 3-10)
- 464-423 B.C.** the Jews opposed in Artaxerxes' reign (Ezra 4:7ff)
- 458/57 B.C.** the second return of the Jews under Ezra (Ezra 7-10)
- 445-433 B.C.** Nehemiah returns & rebuilds the walls (Neh. 1-12)
- 433-432 B.C.** Nehemiah's recall and return (Nehemiah 13)
- 432-425 B.C.** the preaching of Malachi (1-4)

* all dates are approximate

Survey of Nehemiah

Reconstruction of the Walls 1:1 – 7:73		Reformation of the People 8:1 – 13:31	
Preparation to Build (1-2)	Reconstruction of the Walls (3-7)	Preparation to Reform (8-9)	Reformation of the People (10-13)
Nehemiah / Jews		Ezra / Nehemiah / Jews	
Physical Construction		Spiritual Instruction	
From Babylon to Jerusalem		Jerusalem	

12 years + (445 – 433 – 425 B.C.)

The Covenant of Nehemiah 10

1. The importance of it: demonstrates an obedient and humble response to the reading of God's law and to their prayer for sins (9:38)
2. The structure of it: 1) recognition (10:29); 2) description (19:30-39); and, summation (10:39)
3. The relevance of it: a reminder that there is still the Lord's house that needs to be supported (10:39)

The Covenant of Nehemiah 10

4. The nature of it: 1) a personal commitment (9:38 - 10:27); a public commitment (10:28-29); and, a practical commitment (10:29-39)

The Covenant of Nehemiah 10

The people made a commitment to...

1. Obey the law of God (10:29-30)
2. Honor the day of God (10:31a)
3. Value the land of God (10:31b)
4. Reflect the compassion of God (10:31c)
5. Support the work/worship of God (10:32-39)
6. Forsake not the house of God (10:39)

Applications for Today

1. Would you sign your name to a covenant to obey God's laws (10:1-27; Rom. 1:31)?
2. God's people need to make a commitment (oath) to separate from worldliness and keep God's law (10:28-39; 2 Cor. 6:14 – 7:1)?
3. Commitment to the Lord is for the whole family, not just part of it (10:28; Eph. 6:4).

Applications for Today

4. Make a promise to never forsake the house of God (10:39; Gal. 6:10; Eph. 2:19-20; Heb. 3:6; 8:8-10; 10:21; 1 Tim. 3:15; 1 Pet. 2:5; 4:17).

Leadership Qualities in Nehemiah 10

1. Lead by example. Be the first to make a commitment and covenant to follow God's law and do it in front of those whom you are seeking to lead (10:1-27).
2. See to it that all the members of a family are following all the laws of God (10:28-29).
3. Be specific about the goals and commitments you have for everyone; don't be vague (10:29-39).