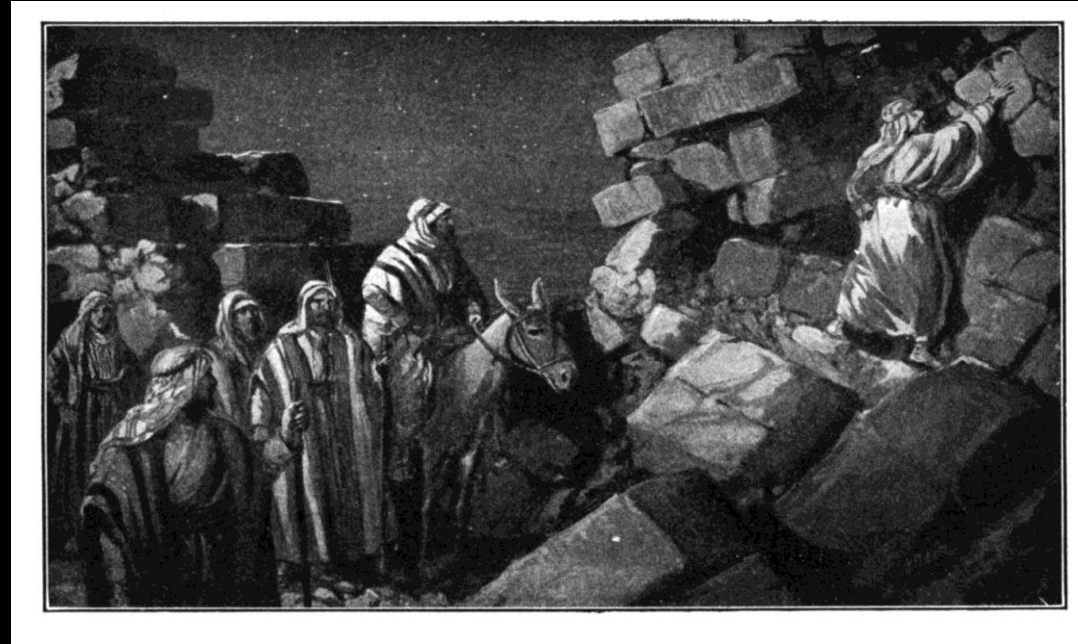


A Time to Build



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.)

Bless and Praise the Lord For His...

1. Creation of the world (9:5-6)
2. Call of Abraham (9:7-8)
3. Exodus from Egypt (9:9-15)
4. Wilderness wandering (9:16-22)
5. Conquest of Canaan (9:23-25)
6. Sending the judges (9:26-31)
7. Giving the kings (9:32-35)
8. Return from the captivity (9:36-38)

The Character of God in Nehemiah 9

1. He is eternal (9:5)
2. He is unique (9:6a)
3. He is powerful (9:6b)
4. He is true to his word (9:7-8)
5. He is loving (9:9-12)
6. He is revealing (9:13-15)
7. He is merciful (9:16-18)
8. He is generous (9:19-25)
9. He is patient (9:26-31)
10. He is faithful (9:32-38)

Applications for Today

1. It is good to assemble with a humble and contrite heart for confession, Bible reading, and worship (9:1-4; 2 Chron. 30:13; Acts 2:42; 20:7; 1 Cor. 11:20; 14:23).
2. God's people are to separate themselves spiritually from worldliness around them (9:2; 2 Cor. 6:14 – 7:1; Jas. 4:4).

Applications for Today

3. Bless and praise the Lord in prayer for his great and glorious name and for all his acts of lovingkindness toward mankind (9:5, 32; 1 Chron. 16:36; Psa. 72:19; 106:48).
4. God creates and preserves what he creates (9:6; Psa. 36:6).
5. Like Abraham, have a faithful heart to obey God when he calls you (9:8; Heb. 11:8).

Applications for Today

6. God is just and righteous (fair) in all that he says and does (9:8, 33; Deut. 32:4; Psa. 33:5).
7. God gives his people light to guide them (9:12, 19; Psa. 119:105, 130).
8. God's law is right, true, and good (9:13; Psa. 19:7-9).
9. God gives his people the bread of life and the water of life (9:15; Jn. 6; 7).

Applications for Today

10. Do not harden your heart, refuse to obey, and rebel against your good God (9:16-17, 26, 29; Heb. 3:8, 15; 4:7).
11. God is gracious, merciful, and forgiving (9:17, 19, 27-28, 31; Ex. 34:6; Psa. 86:15).
12. God sends his good Spirit (the Holy Spirit) to instruct and guide his people by revealing his word to them (9:20, 30; Jn. 16:13).

Applications for Today

13. Sometimes when God's people get filled, they get faithless (9:25, 35); and, after they get rest, they get rebellious (9:25, 28; Deut. 32:15; 1 Tim. 6:6-10).
14. Doing God's law brings spiritual life (9:29; Lev. 18:5; Gal. 3:10-11).
15. God shows his great goodness (faithful, righteous, gracious, merciful, loving, giving, forgiving, and just) over and over again (9:6-35; Psa. 73:1; Lam. 3:22-23).

Applications for Today

16. A greater awareness of the character of God and what he has done for us will help us to cope with times of great distress (9:37; Gen. 32:7-12; 1 Sam. 30:6; 2 Chron. 33:12).

Leadership Qualities in Nehemiah 9

1. Make sure the people you are leading have regular opportunities to hear, understand, and practice God's word (9:1-4).
2. Encourage the people you are leading to praise the Lord, recognize his goodness, and be humble to admit their own faults in prayer (9:5-38).