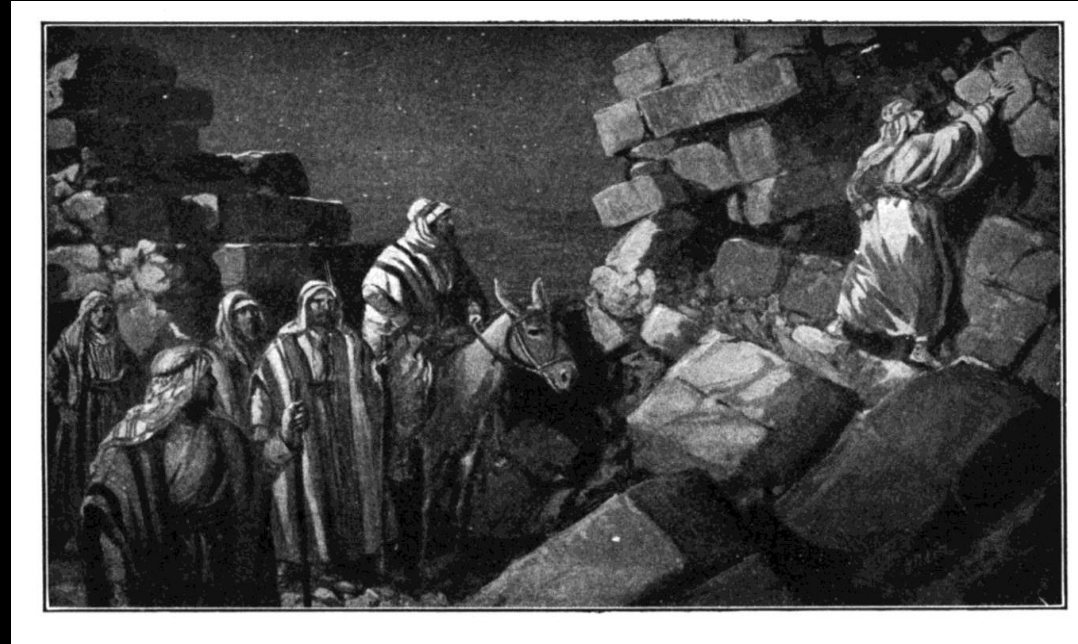


A Time to Build



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.)

Applications for Today

1. Opposition to the Lord's work can be external - from without God's people (4:1-8), and internal - from within God's people (5:1-13; Gal. 5:13-15).
2. Do we get upset when we hear that our brethren are having problems, or do we simply ignore them (5:6; Rom. 12:15; 1 Cor. 12:26)?

Applications for Today

3. Good leadership will do what it can to help to alleviate the problems among their followers (including personal sacrifices), not make them worse (5:7-13; Acts 20:35).
4. Walking in the fear of our God will help us to treat our brethren properly (5:9, 15; Deut. 8:6; 10:12; Isa. 50:10).

Applications for Today

5. A magnanimous spirit of giving and generosity is needed to today among God's people, especially when they find themselves in difficult times (5:14-19; Prov. 11:24-25; 19:17).
6. God will remember the good deeds that we do for others (5:19; Heb. 6:10).

Leadership Qualities in Nehemiah 5

1. Be willing to listen to the concerns that are expressed by your followers (5:1-5)
2. Be caring and concerned about the problems you are told about; don't ignore them (5:6)
3. Make specific plans to rectify the problems (5:7-13)
4. Do not be a part of the problem yourself and lead by example (5:14-19)

Opposition to God's Work (Neh. 2-6)

1. Negative environment (2:10)
2. Ridicule / questioning (2:19)
3. Lack of help among your own people (3:5)
4. External discouragement / questioning (4:1-3)
5. External fighting and internal confusion (4:7-8)
6. Internal discouragement and fear (4:10-12)
7. Internal problems (5:1-13)