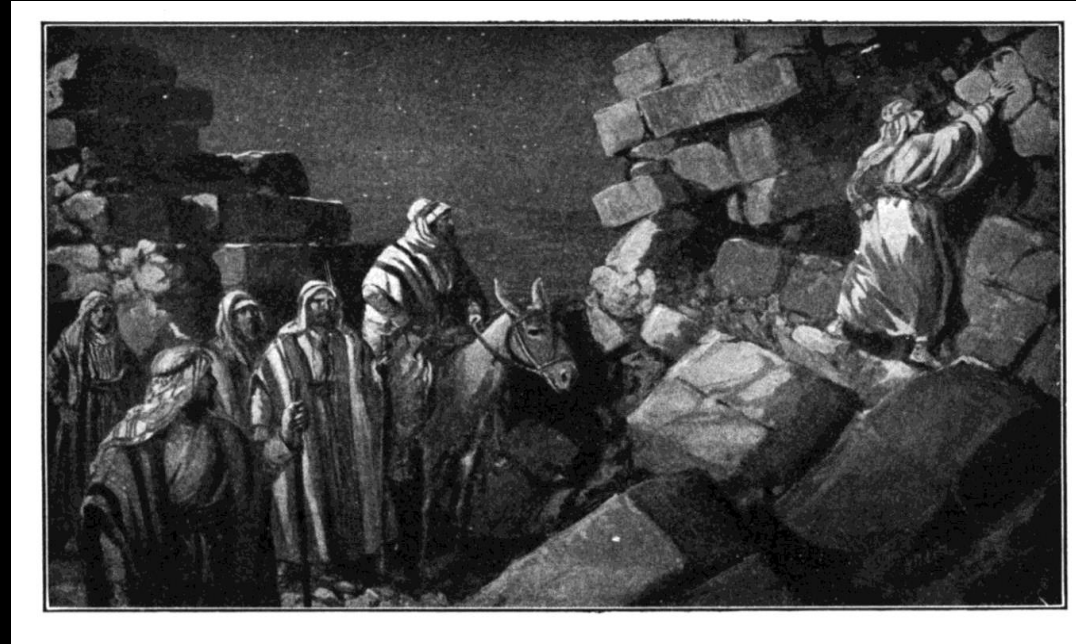


A Time to Build



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

Applications for Today

1. Let us all be “stirred up” to do the Lord’s work (Ezra 1-2 [Neh. 7]; Neh. 1-2; 2 Cor. 9:2; 2 Tim. 1:6; 2 Pet. 1:13; 3:1).
2. Let us all have a “mind to work” and stay busy doing the Lord’s work without being detoured by adversaries and oppositions (Ezra 3-6; Neh. 3-6; 1 Cor. 15:58).

Applications for Today

3. Use the time, talents, and position in life that the Lord has providentially given you in order to do what you can to save yourself and others around you (Esther 1-10; 1 Cor. 7:16; 9:22; 10:33; 1 Tim. 4:16; Jas. 5:19-20; Jude 23).
4. Teaching God's people God's law should be a priority in the life of the local church and in the life of the family (Ezra 7; Eph. 6:4; 2 Tim. 1:5; 2:2, 15; 3:15-17).

Applications for Today

5. Trust in God's providential hand to care for you as you journey through life (Ezra 8; Acts 11:21).
6. Take sin seriously and do whatever it takes to remove it from your life (Ezra 9-10; Jas. 4:7-10).
7. Assemble with your brethren to hear, learn, and obey the word of God (Neh. 8; Acts 2:42; 20:7).

Applications for Today

8. Confess your sins to God in prayer and then make a commitment to separate yourself from the sinful worldliness around you (Neh. 9-10; 1 Jn. 1:7-9 – 2:1; 2:15-17; 3:6-9).
9. Offer yourself willingly to serve in the Lord's work (Neh. 11; Judges 5:2, 9; 1 Chron. 29:9; Psa. 110:3; 1 Pet. 5:2).

Applications for Today

10. Assemble with your brethren to worship God with great joy (Neh. 12; Psa. 95:1; Lk. 24:52).
11. Reformation is sometimes hard, but have the courage and conviction to make the necessary reforms in order to return to God and be right with him (Neh. 13; Jer. 24:4-7; Zech. 1:3; Mal. 3:7).