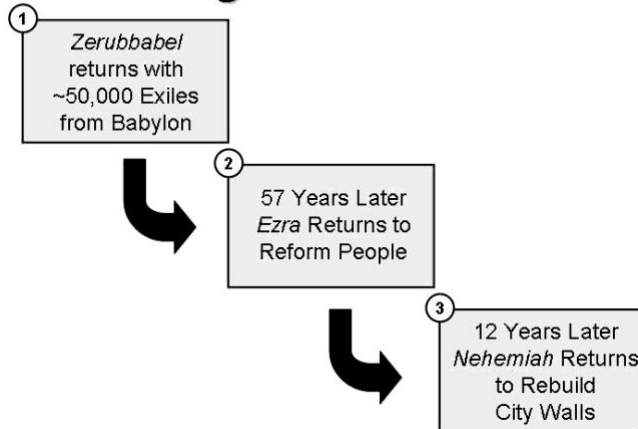


# NEHEMIAH

## Three Stage Return from Exile



Similar Outlines	Ezra Chapters	Nehemiah Chapters
<b>Return</b>	1-2	1-2
<b>Rebuild</b>	3-6	3-7
<b>Renew</b>	7-8	8-10
<b>Reform</b>	9-10	11-13
<b>Chapter 9 in Both Ezra and Nehemiah are prayers of confession over national sin.</b>		

Some believe that Ezra wrote Ezra (“Help”) and Nehemiah (“Comfort”) as well as the books of Chronicles; however, the book of Nehemiah is written in first person. Both books are written in two languages: Hebrew and Aramaic. Aramaic was the worldwide language of commerce and politics; Israel learned Aramaic while in the exile; the only other book of the Old Testament that is written in two languages – the book of Daniel.

The Jews considered Nehemiah to be one book with Ezra; however, the repetition of Ezra 2 and Nehemiah 7 may indicate it was originally two works. The accuracy of the history told in the book has been well established by the discovery of the Elephantine papyri which mentions many of the same names and events with dates. It can be also learned from these papyri that Nehemiah ceased to be governor of Judea in 408 B.C.

The book of Esther chronologically occurred at the time of Nehemiah. God raised Esther, a young Jewish maiden, to the throne of Persia as queen. Esther’s husband, was either King Ahasuerus or King Xerxes of Persia; he is identified as Artaxerxes in the opening chapters of Nehemiah. This heathen king gave the command for Nehemiah to return to Jerusalem to build up the walls of the city. Esther was possibly with the King at the time of the request to return to Jerusalem (Nehemiah 2:6).

16 Neh 1, 2, 3

### Read Nehemiah 1:1-3...Jerusalem Report Arrives in Susa, Persia

1:1 Susa (Shushan) was the capital city at the base of the Zagros Mountains near the Karkheh Kūr (Choaspes) River in Iran. The month of Chislev is in the November/December time frame.

1:2 Nehemiah asked his guest, Hanani (meaning “Grace” - Ezra 10:20) about the progress of God’s work.

1:3 Nehemiah is saddened by state of affairs in Jerusalem (the destroyed wall and gate).

- According to Nehemiah 1:1, where was Nehemiah when he received the report on Jerusalem?
  - Nehemiah was in Persia's capital city of Susa
- According to Nehemiah 1:3, what report of Jerusalem was given to Nehemiah?
  - Those who returned to Jerusalem were in trouble and disgrace with a broken wall that had burned down.

### Read Nehemiah 1:4-11...Nehemiah's Prayer

1:4 The first action that Nehemiah took upon receipt of the bad news was fasting and prayer.

1:5 God keeps His covenant with those who keep His commands

1:6 The prayer is for an attentive response as Nehemiah is coming in repentance of sin.

1:7 The Jewish people had not kept the commands (firm directives), statutes(precepts/principles), ordinances(judgments/verdicts), but God had made arrangements for this in the time of Moses.

1:8-9 God made a conditional covenant that Israel would be scattered for disobedience but restored for repentance.

1:10 Nehemiah states that the identifying characteristic of Israel is that they are God's people.

1:11 God's servants desire to fear His name, and three actions are requested: 1.That the Lord Be Attentive 2.That the Lord give success 3.That the Lord would have compassion. Nehemiah was the King's Cupbearer which resulted in the opportunity of coming into close contact with the king and entailed a character of trustworthiness. It is because Nehemiah was one of the Israelites (as Jesus became man) that he was able to intercede for his people in slavery and have them set free.

- According to Nehemiah 1:4, what was Nehemiah's first response to bad news?
  - The first action that Nehemiah took upon receipt of the bad news was fasting and prayer.
- According to Nehemiah 1:5, with whom does God keep His covenants?
  - God keeps His covenant with those who keep His commands
- According to Nehemiah 1:6-7, after praising the Lord, what does Nehemiah pray?
  - Nehemiah admits his sin as well as the sin of his family and nation
- According to Nehemiah 1:8-9, of what does Nehemiah remind God?
  - Nehemiah reminds God that he would restore His people who repent
- According to Nehemiah 1:11, what position did Nehemiah hold?
  - Nehemiah was cupbearer to the King

### Read Nehemiah 2:1-10...The Persian King Blesses Nehemiah's Trip to Jerusalem

2:1 Prior to this, Nehemiah had always had joy serving the King. Nisan would have occurred in the March/April timeframe. History dates Artaxerxes as becoming King in 465 B.C. which would date this event 20 years later in 445BC.

- The month of Nisan would have been 4 months after hearing the news of Jerusalem in the month of Kislev (Nehemiah 1:1)

Jewish Calendar			
Hebrew Months	Gregorian Months	Days per Month	Holidays
1. Nisan	March-April	30	Pesakh
2. Iyar	April-May	29	Lag B'Omer
3. Sivan	May-June	30	Shavuot
4. Tammuz	June-July	29	
5. Av	July-August	30	Tisha B'Av
6. Elul	August-September	29	
7. Tishrel	September-October	30	Rosh Hashanah, Sukkot, Yom Kippur, Shemini Atzeret, Simchat Torah
8. Cheshvan	October-November	29	
9. Kislev	November-December	30	Chanukah

10.	Tevet	December-January	29	End of Chanukah
11.	Shevat	January-February	30	Tu B'shvat
12.	Adar	February-March	29	Purim

2:2 The King understood that Nehemiah wasn't sick, but instead was simply heartbroken. The King's servant feared the displeasure of the King that someone who served Him would show an attitude of grief.

2:3 Nehemiah responds with respect towards the King, but then explains the source of his sadness which was that Jerusalem had been made desolate.

2:4 Before presenting request to an earthly King (& Queen – possibly Esther - verse 6), Nehemiah prays to the “God of heaven” Esther was possibly this queen or the “queen mother” with Artaxerxes as her step-son (Nehemiah 2:6).

2:5 Nehemiah makes a clear request to the King to be sent to Jerusalem to rebuild it.

- Nehemiah was living in the comfortable palace, but he knelt before the King and said “send me” to a hurting, disheartened people.

2:6 The King allowed Nehemiah to go and rebuild Jerusalem upon the condition that he return to the King at a specified time.

2:7 Nehemiah requested a letter from the King for safe passage to the provinces beyond the Euphrates.

2:8 Nehemiah also requested a letter from the King to the keeper of the forests (Asaph) to allow Nehemiah to use those resources to construct the wall and house in Jerusalem.

2:9 Beyond the letter, the King also sent military officers and cavalry to accompany Nehemiah.

2:10 Sanballat, the governor of Samaria, (13:28 - the Babylonian Sin-uballit, "may Sin give him life") and Tobiah, his probable Ammonite slave (King James Version, "servant") were wealthy, powerful “users” of the Israel people. Tobiah sent letters to Nehemiah to put him in fear (Neh 6:17-19).

Nehemiah seems to have considered Tobiah to be his chief enemy; for he put him before Sanballat in his prayers to God to remember his opponents according to their works (Neh 6:14)

- **According to Nehemiah 2:1, what occurred for the first time in the King's presence?**
  - **The King saw Nehemiah sad for the first time.**
- **According to Nehemiah 2:2, what was Nehemiah's response to the King recognizing his grief?**
  - **Nehemiah was afraid**
- **According to Nehemiah 2:5, what were the two criteria for meeting Nehemiah's request?**
  - **The request needed to please the king and his servant must have found favor in the king's sight.**
- **According to Nehemiah 2:5, who sat next to the king when he heard Nehemiah's request?**
  - **The Queen (probably Esther)**
- **According to Nehemiah 2:7-8, what letters from the king did Nehemiah receive?**
  - **Safe passage and lumber for construction**

### **Read Nehemiah 2:11-20...Nehemiah Prepares to Build the Walls of Jerusalem**

2:11 Stayed in Jerusalem for 3 days before acting. This is a solid spiritual principle for those going into any ministry to take time to understand the social/political/physical landscape before rushing in.

- Zechariah characterized Jerusalem as a city without walls (Zechariah 2:4-5)

2:12 The Lord was the motivation for Nehemiah as the Lord put the idea into his mind. In Scripture, “nighttime” often represents a time of trial and struggle. The animals might cause noise and be difficult to rein-in, so the only animal that accompanied Nehemiah was the one subjected to him.

<b>Nehemiah's Night Tour</b> (Nehemiah 2:13-14)	
<b>Progression of Nehemiah</b>	<b>Story Line</b>
1. Valley Gate	Difficult Times
2. Dragon's Well	Satan's Offer of Nourishment
3. Refuse Gate	Polluted & Wasted Life

4. Broken & Consumed by Fire	Judgment
5. Fountain Gate	Repenting & Cleansing
6. King's Pool	Exalted Life-Giving Reward

2:15 God's servant returned to the valley to help others much like those who have found the Lord enter difficult environments (i.e. jail ministry; missions to third world) to share the plan of salvation.

2:16 Five categories of people did not realize what Nehemiah had seen: 1.Officials 2.Jews 3.Priests 4.Nobles 5.Officials 6.Workers

2:17 Nehemiah asked his peers to see and recognize their fallen state while encouraging them to rebuild the wall of Jerusalem.

2:18 Nehemiah testified to the favor of His God and the King as he encouraged them to arise and perform the good work of rebuilding.

<b>Three Men Mock the Work of Rebuilding the Wall of Jerusalem (Nehemiah 2:19)</b>			
<b>Mocker</b>	<b>Meaning of Name</b>	<b>Native</b>	<b>Native Context</b>
1. Sanballat	"Secret Enemy/Bramble bush"	The Horonite	Native of Beth-horon (Joshua 16:3, 5)
2. Tobiah	"God is Good"	The Ammonite	Youngest Daughter of Lot
3. Geshem	"Rain"	The Arab	South where Israel Wandered

2:20 Nehemiah answered Israel's enemies that God would give His people success. Nehemiah doesn't reference his position next to the King of Persia, but instead, Nehemiah went to a higher King.

- **According to Nehemiah 2:11, how many days did Nehemiah rest before touring the walls?**
  - **Nehemiah rested three days**
- **According to Nehemiah 2:17, why did Nehemiah say that Jerusalem needed to rebuild the wall?**
  - **So that God's people would no longer be a disgrace**
- **According to Nehemiah 2:18, what kind of work was rebuilding the wall?**
  - **This was "good" work**
- **According to Nehemiah 2:19, what was the response of the enemies to Nehemiah's desire to rebuild the wall?**
  - **They mocked the effort and mis-defined it as rebelling against the king**

### **Read Nehemiah 3:1-32...Nehemiah Rebuilds the Walls of Jerusalem**

Using the GATES of Chapter 3, Nehemiah teaches us what needs to be done to strengthen the walls in our lives. The "next to" chapter with 16 uses of "next to"; Nehemiah is not mentioned by name in chapter 3.

<b>Sequence of Gates Corresponds with Walk of Believers (Nehemiah 3)</b>		
<b>Gates</b>	<b>Reference</b>	<b>Symbolism</b>
1. Sheep Gate	3:1	The Lamb of God
2. Fish Gate	3:3	New Believer
3. Old Gate	3:6	Old Nature
4. Valley Gate	3:13	Trials
5. Dung Gate	3:13	Sin's Consequences
6. Fountain Gate	3:15	The Work of the Spirit
7. Water Gate	3:26	Cleansing in the Word
8. Horse Gate	3:28	Spiritual Battle
9. East Gate	3:29	Physical Death
10. Muster Gate	3:31	Examination/Judgment Seat
11. Sheep Gate	3:32	The Lamb/Alpha-Omega

## The walls of Jerusalem are demarcated by the Gates

- 3:1 Sheep Gate was the first gate built, and that constructed without locks (John 5:2); this is the gate through which the sheep were brought into the city to be sacrificed at the altar. The Sheep Gate, of course, signifies the Lamb of God, whose blood was shed on the cross, and, therefore, it reveals the principle of the cross which is always the starting place for strength in one's life.
- 3:2 Jericho had been the first conquest of Israel upon entering the Promised Land
- 3:3 The "Fish Gate" reflects when a person becomes a Christian (Mark 1:17).
- 3:4 In this "next to" chapter 3, it shows the importance of fellowship and unity in work.
- 3:5 The nobles rejected the work of building the wall, and these nobles would be later chastised for their sin (Nehemiah 13:11, 17). The Tekoites repaired two sections of the wall (Nehemiah 3:27). Tekoa was 12 miles south of Jerusalem (2 Chronicles 11:6).
- 3:6 The "Old Gate" represents the old nature that plagues the new Christian.
- 3:7 The men of Gibeon and Mizpah were such skilled carpenters that they had repaired the official seat of the governor on the other side of the Euphrates.
- 3:8 Beyond carpenters, goldsmiths and perfumers also worked to rebuild the wall. Gold often speaks to royalty while perfumed aroma is often used to reflect something pleasing to the Lord.
- 3:9 Rephaiah was an important man as he was over half of Jerusalem, but he was working next to his brothers as did the leader of the other half, Shallum. (3:12)
- 3:10 Jedaiah made repairs of the wall in front of his home.
- 3:11 These furnaces may have been for the making of bricks and/or the baking of bread along with an eating house.
- 3:12 Shallum was an important man as he was over half of Jerusalem, but he was working next to his brothers as did the leader of the other half, Rephaiah. (3:9)
- Shallum's daughters also assisted him in building the wall.
- 3:13 The Valley Gate is the place of testing, trial and difficulty that comes from the consequences of that old nature and past choices.
- The Dung Gate symbolizes the discarding of the sins of the past as the consequences have been worked through in the valley.
- 3:14 Although the dung gate was the humblest task, it was given to a Rechabite that the Lord used as a representation of faithfulness
- Rechabites were forbid to build houses because they were a faithful nomadic people, but clearly the Rechabites could build walls (Jeremiah 35:7)
- 3:15 The Fountain Gate as the Well (John 4:14) It speaks of the Holy Spirit, which is the river of life in us -- the flowing of the Spirit of God in our lives.
- 3:16 Important men of other districts assisted as did Nehemiah who was an important man as he was over half of Beth-zur, but he was working next to his brothers as did the leaders of the Jerusalem districts – Rephaiah, Shallum. (3:9, 12)
- 3:17 The Levites assisted in building the wall. Important men of other districts assisted as did Hashabiah who was an important man as he was over half of Keilah, but he was working next to his brothers as did the leaders of the Jerusalem districts – Rephaiah, Shallum. (3:9, 12)
- Keilah was the city that David had rescued from the Philistines; however, God warned David that Keilah would be false to him and surrender him to King Saul (1 Samuel 23:1-14).
  - Leaders of both halves of the Keilah district built the wall – Hashabiah (Neh 3:17) & Bavvai (Neh 3:18)
- 3:18 Bavvai was an important man as he was over half of Keilah, but he was working next to his brothers as did the leader of the other half, Hashabiah. (3:17)
- 3:19 Mizpeh was the look-out (watchtower), so named by Jacob to warn of Laban's approaching (Gen 31:49). Ezer of Mizpah repaired the ascent to the armory.
- 3:20 Baruch had zealously repaired the way to the High Priest; while others repaired one section, Baruch repaired two sections.

- 3:22 The priests worked with the men of the valley to rebuild. A valley often represents difficult times.
- 3:23 Benjamin, Hasshub and Azariah all built locally in front of and beside their homes.
- 3:24 Azariah would be helped with the rebuilding next to his house (Neh 3:23) by Binnui.
- 3:25 Palal started at the angle where Binnui stopped his work.
- 3:26 The Water Gate. Water is always a symbol of the word of God, and the interesting thing about this Water Gate is that it did not need to be repaired.
- Evidently the wall next to the water gate was the only part of the wall that was still standing. It mentions the people who lived by it, but it doesn't mention its needing repair.
  - The word of God never breaks down. It doesn't need to be repaired. It simply needs to be re-inhabited.
- 3:27 Tekoa was 12 miles south of Jerusalem (2 Chronicles 11:6). This is the second section of wall that the Tekoites repaired (Nehemiah 3:5); they repaired the wall of Ophel that Jotham built (2 Chronicles 27:3).
- 3:28 The Horse Gate; The horse in scripture is a symbol of warfare or, in this case, the need to do battle against the forces of darkness. (Ephesians 6:12)
- 3:29 The East Gate. The East Gate faced the rising sun, and is the gate of hope. It is the gate of anticipation of what is yet to come when all the trials of life and all the struggles of earth will end and the glorious new sun will rise on the new day of God.
- 3:30 Meshullam repaired the wall in front of his "quarters".
- 3:31 The ninth gate is the Muster Gate or, literally, the "examination gate." This was evidently the place where judgment was conducted. We need to sit and take a look at ourselves every now and then -- to stop and re-evaluate what we are doing.
- 3:32 That brings Scripture full circle to the Sheep Gate, the gate of the cross. The cross must be at the beginning and the end of every life. Now, in this beautiful way, the book of Nehemiah is teaching us what needs to be done to strengthen the walls in our lives.
- **According to Nehemiah 3:5, who did no support building the wall of Jerusalem?**
    - **The nobles rejected the work of their masters in repairing the wall, and these nobles would be later chastised for their sin (Nehemiah 13:11, 17).**
  - **According to Nehemiah 3:7, how skilled were the men of Gibeon and Mizpah?**
    - **The men of Gibeon and Mizpah were such skilled carpenters that they had repaired the official seat of the governor on the other side of the Euphrates.**
  - **According to Nehemiah 3:8, were only skilled carpenters working on the wall?**
    - **No, beyond carpenters, goldsmiths and perfumers also worked to rebuild the wall. Gold often speaks to royalty while perfumed aroma is often used to reflect something pleasing to the Lord.**
  - **According to Nehemiah 3:9, were important officials working on repairing the wall?**
    - **Yes, Rephaiah was an important man as he was over half of Jerusalem, and he was working next to his brothers as did the leader of the other half of Jerusalem, Shallum. (3:12)**
  - **According to Nehemiah 3:9, who assisted the official Shallum in repairing the wall?**
    - **Shallum's daughters assisted him in building the wall.**
  - **According to Nehemiah 3:14, who was assigned to rebuild the dung gate?**
    - **Although the dung gate was the humblest task, it was given to a Rechabite that the Lord used as a representation of faithfulness**
    - **Rechabites were forbid to build houses because they were a faithful nomadic people, but clearly the Rechabites could build walls (Jeremiah 35:7)**
  - **According to Nehemiah 3:20, how did Baruch approach the work of repairing the wall?**
    - **Baruch had zealously repaired the way to the High Priest; while others repaired one section, Baruch repaired two sections.**
    - **The Tekoites also repaired two sections of wall (Nehemiah 3:5, 27). Tekoa was 12 miles south of Jerusalem (2 Chronicles 11:6).**

**Read Nehemiah 4:1-6...The Enemies of Israel Mocked in an Attempt to Dishearten the Workers**

4:1 Mocking (Prov 9:7-8) is a common reaction to God's activity (Gal 6:7); this ridicule comes from pride (Prov 21:24). In Acts 2:13 some pursue and others mock which evolves into caviling/complaining (Acts 4:7) then threats (Acts 4:17) then imprisonment (Acts 5:18) then beatings (Acts 5:40) and finally to slaughter (Acts 7:58).

4:2 Jesus could resurrect more than doubters could ever imagine (Mk 14:58, 15:29; Jn 2:20)

4:4 A useful reaction to mockers is prayer (Proverbs 9:7-8)

4:5 Nehemiah prays that those mocking would be judged accordingly (Jer 18:23)

4:6 God's people are called to obediently serve the Lord with "all of their heart". This unity of purpose and Spirit can accomplish great objectives.

- **According to Nehemiah 4:1, what was the response of the Jerusalem wall being rebuilt?**
  - **The enemies ridiculed Jerusalem**

**Read Nehemiah 4:7-15...The Enemies of Israel Become Frustrated**

4:7 Those who opposed God's people were angry at the progress that was being made.

4:8 Believers should not downplay the hatred that the world has for Jesus and His followers (John 15:18-25).

4:9 Defense is combination of prayer and action

4:10-12 Israel struggled with pessimism as well as persecution. The Israelites quote the enemies by calling the broken wall a pile of "rubbish". (Neh 4:2)

4:13 Every believer should understand his vulnerabilities and be on guard to defend those areas.

4:14 Don't be afraid, but remember the awe-inspiring Lord

4:15 God frustrated the enemy's persecution

- **According to Nehemiah 4:10, the Israelites stated that there was a lot of what?**
  - **Rubbish - The Israelites quote the enemies by calling the broken wall a pile of "rubbish". (Neh 4:2)**

**Read Nehemiah 4:16-23...God's People Defend Those Performing His Work**

4:16 Some believers were working while the others were protecting and defending them. Too often, believers who are not working are instead, watching and criticizing the work as the world.

4:17 Just as Israel was building with one hand and protecting with the other, Believers should build the kingdom while defending against the onslaught of sin.

4:19 There was concern that the work spread God's people apart from each other; however, they agreed to come together when needed.

4:20 Believers should take courage because "*God will fight for us!*"

4:21 Both guarding and working continued from early morning until late at night.

4:22 The workers were also employed as night guardsmen while the guards were also employed as workers during the light of day.

4:23 A Believer should be covered by the Lord at all times (Exodus 4:11) and even while studying the Word (washing) be on guard against false teaching.

- **According to Nehemiah 4:20, why were the Israelites encouraged?**
  - **God would fight for them**
- **According to Nehemiah 4:23, how prepared were God's people for assault?**
  - **They remained dressed with their weapons – even when going to water.**

**Read Nehemiah 5:1-5...Israelites Abuse One Another**

5:1 The mention of the wives shows the negative affect on the family life; if left to their own devices, the men may not have protested as adamantly if not for their wives.

5:2 Some families were repopulating Israel, but they didn't have the food or resources to feed their sons and daughters.

5:3 Others stated that they were only able to provide for their large families by mortgaging their homes and fields.

5:4 Others could not pay the King's tax requirements on their fields without borrowing.

5:5 Although these Jews considered themselves as equals, they had to sell their daughters into slavery because of their economic obligations. Hebrews had a tradition of selling themselves into bondage to pay off debt (Ex 21:1-11; Lev 25:39; Deut. 15:12-18)

- The families, homesteads and fields were being taken away from the poor and needy.
- Believers should not take advantage of one another, but instead build each other up selflessly.
  
- **According to Nehemiah 5:1, who was included with the Jewish men in economic protest?**
  - **Their wives raised concern as well**
- **According to Nehemiah 5:2, what was one cause of need for the Jewish population?**
  - **They had large families that they couldn't feed**
- **According to Nehemiah 5:3, how were some Jewish men feeding their families?**
  - **They would mortgage their homes and property**
- **According to Nehemiah 5:4, beyond feeding their families, what else could the Jewish population not afford?**
  - **Paying the Kings Taxes**
- **According to Nehemiah 5:5, how were some Jewish families paying off their debts?**
  - **They would sell their sons and daughters into slavery**

### **Read Nehemiah 5:6-13...Nehemiah Prevents Israel's Internal Abuse**

5:6 Nehemiah's initial response to the exploitation of his fellow Jews was anger.

5:7 After meditating on the situation, Nehemiah publicly accused the upper class of exploiting their fellow Jews through charging interest. This was in the nature of a legal dispute (Hebrew word "rib"), and Nehemiah began by calling together a large group of people (Nehemiah 13:11). Overcharging interest is called "usury".

- Although the "noblemen" had not broken the letter of the law, they had broken the spirit or intent of the Mosaic law to love each other.

5:8 The concept of "buying back" is based on the word "redeem". Although the Jewish community had redeemed Jewish slaves from the Gentiles, they had enslaved themselves.

- The redeemer was called the "goel".

5:9 The Jewish nobility were not living in the fear of the Lord, and their economic abuse was destabilizing the nation which would expose them to attacks from outside.

5:10 Nehemiah was a part of that upper class who was loaning funds, but he urged others in his class to stop charging interest.

5:11 Nehemiah stops the wealthy from taking advantage of poor (Ex 22:25, Lev 25:36, Deut 23:19);

- Ezekiel 22:12 speaks against charging interest to the impoverished brother

5:12 The leaders of God's people repent of taking advantage of those in need. Nehemiah did not simply take the nobility at their word, but he made them take an oath in God's name that they would do the right thing.

5:13 Folds of Nehemiah's robes represent God's folds for protection of His people (Ps 93:1). After the oath, Nehemiah applies a curse to the people if they fail to do what they say that they will do. The term "Amen" is used as an affirmation that means "so be it" in agreement.

- **According to Nehemiah 5:6, what was Nehemiah's immediate response to the economic inequality?**
  - **He was angry**
- **According to Nehemiah 5:7, what was Nehemiah's action to stop the exploitation?**
  - **He called a large group together and accused the nobility publicly**



- **According to Nehemiah 5:8, what had the Jewish nation worked hard to do?**
  - **They had bought back (redeemed) slaves from the Gentiles**
- **According to Nehemiah 5:12, what action Nehemiah take to ensure that the nobles will keep their word?**
  - **Nehemiah makes the nobles take an oath in God's name**

### **Read Nehemiah 5:14-19...Nehemiah Appointed to Govern Judah**

5:14 For twelve (organizational testimony) years (445BC-433BC), Nehemiah had not enjoyed benefits of position at the expense of the congregation.

5:15 Although a precedent had been set by wicked prior governors, Nehemiah did not continue to burden the people with heavy taxes.

5:16 The fear of the Lord kept Nehemiah's focus on building the kingdom instead of exploiting the congregation to their detriment of food (sustenance), wine (joy), and silver (redemptive living).

- In spite of the building program, Nehemiah didn't even purchase land.
- Believers should not become encumbered by the things of the world that can be purchased and lead to debt.

5:17-18 The Governor of God's people hosted officials and leaders but did not consider this an excuse to dine extravagantly at the congregation's expense.

5:19 Nehemiah prays for God to remember him for his generosity to God's people (Neh 13:14, 22, 31) instead of asking God to remember His instruction (Neh 1:8) or to remember people negatively (Neh 6:14, 13:29)

- **According to Nehemiah 5:12, what had Nehemiah not done in 12 years?**
  - **Nehemiah had not taken advantage of his position**
- **According to Nehemiah 5:16, what kept Nehemiah from abusing his power?**
  - **Nehemiah revered the Lord (Eph 2:8-10 and 6:8-10)**
- **According to Nehemiah 5:12, what did Nehemiah not do while building the wall?**
  - **Nehemiah did not own land, but instead focused on constructing the wall for the people**

### **Read Nehemiah 6:1-9...Enemies Attempt to Lure Nehemiah into an Ambush**

6:1 In a Believer's walk, it is important to understand the exposure to risk of an attack; although the walls had been rebuilt, the doors in the gates of Jerusalem had not yet been set up.

- Geshem was a well-known Arabic ruler mentioned in a variety of historical documents. Geshem was the leader of the entire Arabian area and possibly the King of Kedar.

6:2 The enemies tried to lure Nehemiah into a risky situation in the Ono ("Grief/Iniquity of him") Valley which was 27 miles northwest of Jerusalem (Nehemiah 7:29, 37)

- Nehemiah informed his enemies that he did not have the time to be distracted from his work.

6:3 Believers should stay focused on building up the kingdom of God instead of being distracted by the enemy.

6:4 Believers should stay faithful and steadfast to worldly invitations. The enemies of Nehemiah continued to escalate the importance and urgency of the meeting.

6:5 The fifth letter was an open letter which would have been uncommon for a government document.

- Typically, communications were sent sealed with the ruler's signet ring to ensure that no one tampered with the message; however, Sanballat wanted this message and rumors to spread through those working on the construction.

6:6-7 Sanballat threatens Nehemiah with false rumors and gossip that is so prevalent in the church today. The religious leader is threatened about his motives.

6:8 Nehemiah puts a stop to useless rumors that distract (Prov 26:22)

6:9 Nehemiah understood that the enemy was trying to weaken the wills of the workmen, but he also focused on strengthening his hands.

- **According to Nehemiah 6:2, why did Sanballat and Geshem want to meet with Nehemiah?**

- They wanted to harm him
- According to Nehemiah 6:3, what did Nehemiah call the work that he was doing for the Lord?
  - Nehemiah it a “great work”
- According to Nehemiah 6:4, what was unique about the fifth letter that Sanballet sent?
  - It was an unsealed document
  - Typically, communications were sent sealed with the ruler’s signet ring to ensure that no one tampered with the message; however, Sanballet wanted this message and rumors to spread through those working on the construction.

### **Read Nehemiah 6:10-15...Enemies Tempt Nehemiah to Hide in the Temple**

6:10-12 Nehemiah deals with false prophet. The Word of God stated that the civil authority had no right to enter the Holy Place of the Temple – only the Levites.

- Because Shamaiah’s word contradicted that of Scripture, Nehemiah knew that he was a false prophet.
- It was illegal for a layman to enter the Temple (Numbers 18:7)

6:13 The false prophet had been hired to ruin the reputation of this leader.

6:14 It seems that a number of other Prophets and Prophetess wanted to intimidate Nehemiah (possibly for personal profit).

6:15 Jerusalem’s wall was completed in 52 days; the western wall had to be repaired while the eastern wall along the ridge had to be rebuilt.

- According to Nehemiah 6:10, where did Shemaiah ask to meet with Nehemiah?
  - Shemaiah asked Nehemiah to meet him inside the Temple while Nehemiah was visiting Shemaiah’s house.
  - It was illegal for a layman to enter the Temple (Numbers 18:7) Civil authority had no right to enter the Holy Place of the Temple – only the Levites, and because Shamaiah’s word contradicted that of Scripture, Nehemiah knew that he was a false prophet.

### **Read Nehemiah 6:16-19...The Wall Discourages Jerusalem’s Enemies**

6:16 Accomplishments should be understood in the context of God because it is his power that enables success. Modern society even attributes scientific impossibilities to “luck/karma/fate” instead of the sovereign God.

6:17 Even within Jerusalem, there was treacherous communication with Tobiah, the enemy of Jerusalem.

6:18 It was not only the oaths of the exiles to Tobiah that caused their support, but also his marriages to influential exiles like the daughter of Shecaniah son of Arah (Ezra 2:5) and the marriage of Tobiah’s son to Meshullum’s daughter (Neh 3:4).

- As any good politician, Tobiah had made the necessary contacts and relationships for his support regardless of his personal rebellion.

6:19 While Tobiah’s actions were obvious, Israelite nobles held Tobiah in high opinion and publicly promoted him. Believers who play “matchmaker” in relationships will be held accountable for their biased judgments.

- According to Nehemiah 6:16, what was the response by the surrounding nations when they saw the completed wall?
  - They were frightened; they had attempted to intimidate God’s people, but now the enemies were the ones who were intimidated.
- According to Nehemiah 6:17-18, why did Jewish nobles communicate with Tobiah who was clearly treacherous?
  - Tobiah had used marriage to ensure power.

- **Tobiah married the daughter of an influential exile - Shecaniah son of Arah (Ezra 2:5)**
- **Tobiah's son married Meshullum's daughter (Neh 3:4).**
- **As any good politician, Tobiah had made the necessary contacts and relationships for his support regardless of his personal rebellion.**

18 Neh 7, 8

**Read Nehemiah 7:1-4...Activities to Build Jerusalem after Construction of the Walls**

7:1 After the walls were in place and the doors of the gates were attached, Nehemiah assigned the gatekeepers, the musicians and the Levites to serve.

7:2 Leader (Hanani) was a faithful man who feared God more than most; Hanani (“my grace”, “my mercy”) was the one who originally had alerted Nehemiah to the Jewish situation in Jerusalem (Neh 1:2) – possibly a priest who had married a foreign woman (10:20); a priest and chief musician who took part in the dedication of the walls of Jerusalem (Neh 12:36). Believers who fear (as well as revere) the Lord should be held in high regard.

7:3 While the light (of Jesus) is shining brightly, welcome others through the gate to shine His truth, but in the darkness of evil and difficult times, close the gates as protection instead of being exposed to risk.

7:4 Jerusalem is described as “*large and spacious*” because few people lived within the walls, and the houses had not been rebuilt

**Read Nehemiah 7:5-62...Activities to Build Jerusalem after Construction of the Walls**

- **Parallel Passage: Ezra 2:2-63**

7:5 God is credited as putting ideas into Nehemiah's mind. Nehemiah attains record of who had repopulated Judah with Zerubbabel.

<b>Leaders in the Post-Babylon Return to Judah</b> (Nehemiah 7:7)			
1.	Zerubbabel	“A Stranger/Seed of Babylon”	A stranger in Babylon has a Deliverer and is comforted by God as he hears the Lord in His thunder and feels compassion in contrition and confession that counts my body as penitent from affliction
2.	Jeshua	“Deliverer/Savior”	
3.	Nehemiah	“Comforted by God”	
4.	Azariah	“God has helped/he that hears the Lord”	
5.	Raamiah	“Thunder of the Lord”	
6.	Nahamani	“Compassion”	
7.	Mordecai	“Contrition”	
8.	Bilshan	“Eloquent/in the Tongue”	
9.	Mispereth	“Number”	
10.	Bigvai	“In my body”	
11.	Nehum	“Comforter/penitent”	
12.	Baanah	“Son of affliction/oppression”	

Nehemiah 7:7-65 and Ezra 2:2-63 reflect 19 possible discrepancies of individuals that returned to Jerusalem from Babylon (5 times Ezra counts more than Nehemiah); it is possible that Ezra and Nehemiah compiled their lists for different time periods.

- Ezra may have compiled a list of those who left Babylon with Zerubbabel, while Nehemiah compiled his list of those who actually made it to Jerusalem.
- In some cases, people who left Babylon with the intention of going back to rebuild Jerusalem may have turned back or died along the way.
- In other cases, a family may have enlisted recruits to bolster their numbers. Perhaps family members in other lands got word of the migration and rendezvoused with their relatives along the way from Babylon to Jerusalem.

- **According to Nehemiah 7:5, what was Nehemiah’s motivation to enroll those who returned by their genealogies?**
  - **God put it into Nehemiah’s heart**

### **Read Nehemiah 7:63-65...After the Census**

7:64 Disqualified for priesthood because their names were not written in the book; the Book of Life (Ex 32:32, Lk 10:20, Rev 1:27, 20:12 - versus - Jeremiah 17:13)

7:65 Governor waits for God to decide the eating of the most holy things

7:66-67 Ezra and Nehemiah both claimed that the total number of individuals returning were 42,360 although the numbers of each respective list are 29,818 for Ezra 2:64 and 31,089 for Nehemiah because the menservants, maidservants and singers (and all others not on the list) were not added into calculation

7:68-69 The Israelites also brought a great many donkeys (6,720) as well as horses (736), mules (245) and camels (435) – Ezra 2:66-67

7:70-72 The Governor, heads of families and community gave to God’s work.

7:73 Seven people are listed and then Ezra read the Bible to them in the 7<sup>th</sup> month (8:1)

- **According to Nehemiah 7:64, what made individuals unclean and excluded from priesthood?**
  - **They were disqualified for priesthood because their names were not written in the book; the Book of Life (Ex 32:32, Lk 10:20, Rev 1:27, 20:12 – contrasted to Jeremiah 17:13)**

### **Read Nehemiah 8:1-12...Bible Study at the Water Gate**

8:1 Ezra reads the scriptures as exiles are given spiritual water at the water gate. This city gate is the place that justice would have been administered.

- The “town” square/plaza/commons was a place of gathering for a large group of people. This is referenced as the “Great Synagogue/Assembly”.
- Wisdom was to be proclaimed in the street (Proverbs 1:20-21, 8:1-5)
- The “Water Gate” was probably the gate closest to the main source of water into Jerusalem, the Gihon Spring on the east.
- There has never been a revival or awakening without returning back to the Bible. “Read Bible” for revival.

8:2 The seventh month of Tishri is an important month for the Jewish people as it’s the beginning of the new year. The most holy feast – the day of atonement – is on the 10<sup>th</sup> day of the 7<sup>th</sup> month; this is the only day of fasting as a nation. On the 15<sup>th</sup> day is the feast of tabernacles.

- Ezra was known as the teacher of the law.
- Ezra had not returned with the first group to Jerusalem – possibly to avoid power struggles with the High Priest Joshua.
- Ezra worked to define and document lineages and genealogies. It is thought that Ezra collected and edited parts of the Old Testament.
- According to Jewish tradition, Ezra instituted several major enactments:
  - The Torah was to be read publicly during the afternoon service on the Sabbath.
  - The Torah was to be read publicly during the morning services on Monday and Thursday.
  - The judges should gather on Mondays and Thursdays to judge the people.
  - Clothing should be laundered on Thursday in preparation for the Sabbath.
  - Garlic should be eaten on Friday, in preparation for the Sabbath.<sup>27</sup>
  - Women should bake bread early in the morning to have it ready to give to the poor.
  - Women should wear undergarments.
  - Women should wash their hair prior to immersing in a mikvah.
  - Peddlers should circulate throughout the towns selling cosmetics, so that they would be readily available for purchase.

- Men who experience a nocturnal emission should immerse in a mikvah before studying Torah.

8:3 Scriptures were read from the “water gate”; the “water gate” is mentioned only as such in Nehemiah and is the center of activity (3:26, 8:1, 3, 16, 12:37). Ezra read the Scriptures for six consecutive hours from 6:00am until noon, and the congregation was attentive the entire time.

8:4 Ezra reads the law from a pulpit (8:4) every day of festival (8:18)

8:5 Ezra showed everyone that the words were from the Book of the Lord and not his own as Ezra was elevated physically and spiritually.

8:6 The congregation would lift their hands to the Lord and proclaim twice (witness) “Amen” which means “so be it.”

The Levites who Explained the Law to the Exiles as Ezra Read (Nehemiah 8:7)			
1.	Jeshua	“Deliverer/savior”	The Deliverer has built His Spirit in worship In spite of the strength of the pursuer my peace is God’s brilliant work though man is small to whoever hears the Lord He will give mercy and grace as His miracle.
2.	Bani	“Built/posterity”	
3.	Sherebiah	“Flame of the Lord/singing with the Lord”	
4.	Jamin	“Right Hand”	
5.	Akkub	“Supplanter/crookedness/pursuer”	
6.	Shabbethai	“My Rest”	
7.	Hodiah	“Splendor of God”	
8.	Maaseiah	“The Work of the Lord”	
9.	Kelita	“Dwarf”	
10.	Azariah	“He that hears the Lord/Who God helps”	
11.	Jozabad	God has bestowed”	
12.	Hanan	“Mercy/Grace”	
13.	Pelaiah	“The Lord’s secret/miracle”	

8:8 The Levites translated the scriptures so the people would understand what was being read. There were many more Levites than priests (priests were a subset of Levites).

8:9 The reaction of the community to God’s Word was sadness and grief as they began to understand their sin and that of their forefathers. The day had been set apart as holy unto the Lord, so the exiles were told not to grieve. The only other use of the term Governor for a post-captivity individual was with Zerubbabel.

8:10 The strength of the Believer is in the rejoicing (praise, thanksgiving) in the Lord (Ps 109:30; Eph 5:20; Philippians 4:6-8; 1 Thes. 2:13). Grieving reflects inward focus, but this holy day was a concentration on the Lord. The exiles are told to take three actions: 1.Eat richly 2.Drink what is sweet 3.Be generous with the needy

- *“The joy of the Lord is your strength”*

8:11 Israelites told to stop, rest, and be still (Ps 4:4; 46:10)

8:12 The people were able to celebrate the Lord instead of focusing on their failure.

- **According to Nehemiah 8:1, where did the people gather to hear the Law?**
  - **The square at the Water Gate**
- **According to Nehemiah 8:2, how is Ezra referenced?**
  - **Ezra was the teacher of the Law**
- **According to Nehemiah 8:2, who had commanded the Law that Ezra would convey?**
  - **The Lord had commanded the Law of Moses to be written**
- **According to Nehemiah 8:3, who was gathered to hear the Law?**
  - **Anyone capable of understanding.**
- **According to Nehemiah 8:3, how long did the Israelites listen to the reading of the law?**
  - **Six Hours – from daybreak until noon**
- **According to Nehemiah 8:4, what did Ezra stand on to read the law of God?**
  - **A high wooden platform**
- **According to Nehemiah 8:5, what did all the people do as Ezra opened the Law?**

- **The congregation stood out of reverence**

**Read Nehemiah 8:1-12...The Israelites Celebrated the Feast of the Tabernacles**

- 8:13 Family leaders (along with Priests & Levites) came before Ezra to study the words of the Law  
 8:14 God’s people discovered the Feast of Booths/Tabernacles defined in the law and how temporary shelters had been used in past times (Ex 23:16; 34:22; Lev 23:39-44; Dt 16:13-15). The Day of Atonement wasn’t mentioned although it occurred on the 10<sup>th</sup> day of the seventh month – Tishri.  
 8:16 God’s people were “discovering” new truths in His Word and did not delay in acting on them – even to the point of moving from their houses into temporary, improvised shelter.  
 8:17 Festival of Booths had not been celebrated since Joshua  
 8:18 God’s Word was read daily, and then they congregated together on the 8<sup>th</sup> day. This was the central element of the holy day set apart to the Lord. In Jesus’ time, it seems that the last/eighth day of the Feast of Tabernacles was a uniquely special day.
- **According to Nehemiah 8:13, why did the heads of the families gather around the Levites?**
    - **They wanted to focus on the words of the law.**
  - **According to Nehemiah 8:14-1, what was the result of Israel learning of the Feast of Booths?**
    - **The Israelites put what they learned into action**
  - **According to Nehemiah 8:18, what did the people do during each day?**
    - **They read Scripture.**

19 Neh 9, 10, 11

**Read Nehemiah 9:1-5...The Israelites Confess Their Sin**

- 9:1 After the celebration of the goodness of God, the people took time to reflect on their sin and grieve in three ways (Esther 4:3):
- 1.Fasting (man’s lack of ability for sustenance)
  - 2.Sackcloth (man’s lack of ability for a covering)
  - 3.Dust on heads (man’s worldliness)
- 9:2 God’s people should take time to separate from the influences of the world and confess sin (Lev 20:26)
- 9:3 The Israelites read from the Law of God for a fourth of the day then confessed/worshipped for a fourth of the day.
- The Jewish order of service in the synagogue was/is to read God’s Word first, and then respond to God according to His Word. The worship is much more varied and attuned to God’s message to His people.

<b>Levites Who Cried Out to The Lord</b> (Nehemiah 9:4)		
1.	Jeshua	“Deliverer/savior”
2.	Bani	“Built/posterity”
3.	Kadmiel	“Before God/God of antiquity”
4.	Shebaniah	“The Lord that converts/hides/grows up”
5.	Bunni	“Building me”
6.	Sherebiah	“Flame of the Lord/singing for the Lord”
7.	Bani	“Built/posterity”
8.	Chenani	“My pillar/planted”
		The Deliverer builds as the eternal God through conversion and maturity while developing me in His Spirit of worship to build my strength

<b>Levites Who Led in Prayer &amp; worship</b> (Nehemiah 9:5)		
1.	Jeshua*	“Deliverer/savior”
2.	Kadmiel*	“Before God/God of antiquity”
		The Deliverer as the eternal God

3. Bani*	“Built/posterity”	builds those He regards in His Spirit of worship for His splendor through conversion and freedom
4. Hashabneiah	“Regarded by the Lord”	
5. Sherebiah*	“Flame of the Lord/singing for the Lord”	
6. Hodiah	“Splendor of God”	
7. Shebaniah*	“The Lord that converts/hides/grows up”	
8. Pethahiah	“Loosed of the Lord; the gate opening by the Lord”	
<b>*Five Levites from first group (Neh 9:4)</b>		

9:5 The prayer begins with acknowledgement and praise of God

- **Ezra Prays the Longest Prayer in all of Scripture (Nehemiah 9:6-38). The prayer of Ezra was a reflection on the Scripture that he had just read.**

### **Read Nehemiah 9:6-8...God’s Actions from Creation Through Abraham**

9:6 Aspects of God that run counter to modern society is that He is exclusively God – the one and only – and is the creator of all nature.

9:7 God chose a man and changed his name – made him a new man in Himself.

9:8 God found Abraham’s heart faithful; modern society discourages faithfulness while it is one of the greatest attributes that the Lord blesses.

- **According to Nehemiah 9:6, who is the Creator who gives life?**
  - **God alone is the Creator and giver of life**

### **Read Nehemiah 9:6-15...God’s Attentiveness in The Exodus**

9:11 The Lord saw Israel as Egyptian slaves and heard their cry of distress as they fled

9:10 Misbehavior and power derive from pride and arrogance.

9:12 God’s way (unlike man’s way) leads to enlightenment and salvation.

9:13 Ordinance (judgments/verdicts), instruction (the law), decrees (statutes/precepts/principles), and commandments (firm directives) need to be adhered to by God’s people. The principles of the Lord result in natural/supernatural consequences (incorrectly referenced as Karma). Jesus died to bring forgiveness and salvation, but rebellious living continues to bear fruit (results) that is cursed.

9:14 The holy Sabbath was “revealed” as a law of creation; mankind does not realize the natural consequence of the fallen, sinful state nor the supernatural results of holiness.

9:15 The bread and the water reference Jesus coming to sustain God’s people (Neh 9:20)

- **According to Nehemiah 9:14, what did God reveal to His people as holy?**
  - **The Sabbath**

### **Read Nehemiah 9:16-21...Israel’s Rebellion and Wilderness Wanderings**

9:16 Pride and arrogance lead to sin and rebellion

9:17 Back-sliding Christians do not spend time in the Lord’s word

9:18 Israel continued to sin while God faithfully forgave.

9:19 The Lord led His people in the wilderness.

9:20 The bread and the water reference Jesus coming to sustain God’s people, and the Spirit of the Lord was given to instruct and enlighten.

9:21 Although God’s rebellious, idolatrous people were in the wilderness of their choosing, they did not lack anything, and their clothing did not wear out nor their feet swell.

- **According to Nehemiah 9:21, how did God care for His people in the wilderness?**
  - **Although God’s rebellious, idolatrous people were in the wilderness of their choosing, they did not lack anything, and their clothing did not wear out nor their feet swell.**
    - **The clothing was a covering of the Lord which could not be affected by the circumstances.**

- **The feet as the way that His people move and interact (come into contact) with this world would not be damaged.**

**Read Nehemiah 9:22-25...God’s Gift of the Promised Land Victories**

9:22 Israel’s first conquest was in the Transjordan area east of the Jordan River. Israel defeated Sihon in the south before moving north to defeat Og the giant.

9:23 The number of children was a result of God’s work, and He is the one who brought them into the Promised Land.

9:24 The Lord delivered victories to His people as He defeated the Canaanites in the Promised Land.

9:25 The goodness of the Lord gifted His people with seven items: 1.fortified cities 2.fertile land 3.well-supplied houses 4.rock-hewn cisterns 5.vineyards 6.olive groves 7.fruit trees

- **According to Nehemiah 9:24, who defeated the Canaanites in the Promised Land?**
  - **God**

**Read Nehemiah 9:26-28...Israel’s Cycle of Sin During the Period of the Judges**

9:26 Aggressive disobedience brought punishment and repentance; God’s blessings resulted in pride that led to sin and destructive rebellion.

9:27 The Lord judged His people in the Promised Land.

9:28 Relief from God brought backsliding again and again

- **According to Nehemiah 9:26, how did the Israelites respond to God’s blessing?**
  - **God’s people became disobedient and rebellious**

**Read Nehemiah 9:29-31...God’s Warning to His People**

9:29 The Lord’s Word warned of the consequences of disobedience as did His prophets.

9:30 The Spirit of the Lord rested on the Lord’s prophets to warn His people of the consequences of pride and rebellion. Every believer has that Spirit inside of them to guide and instruct.

9:31 The Lord could have annihilated His people, but in His mercy, He restored them through a remnant.

- **According to Nehemiah 9:30, how did God’s Spirit warn His people?**
  - **God’s Spirit admonished through His prophets**

**Read Nehemiah 9:29-31...God’s Faithfulness & His People’s Unfaithfulness**

9:32 Six categories of Israelites afflicted by the outcomes of their rebellion: 1.Kings 2.Leaders 3.Priests 4.Prophets 5.Ancestors 6.All of God’s People

9:33 God is faithful while His people are wicked.

9:34 Israel’s political and religious leaders were unfaithful to God’s law.

9:35 Even when blessed by the Lord, His people did not obey and walk with Him.

9:36-37 Israel recognized their current slavery to Persia

9:38 This covenant had several key sections: 1.Obedience to God’s Commands (Neh 10:29) 2.No Marriage with Unbelievers (Neh 10:30) 3.Godly Business Dealings (Neh 10:31) 4.Worshipping the Lord’s Way (Neh 10:32-33) 5.Giving to the Lord (Neh 10:34-39)

<b>A written constitution by the Israelites making a “binding agreement” to God (Nehemiah 9:38)</b>	
1. Obedience to God’s Commands	(Neh 10:29)
2. No Marriage with Unbelievers	(Neh 10:30)
3. Godly Business Dealings	(Neh 10:31)
4. Worshipping the Lord’s Way	(Neh 10:32-33)
5. Giving to the Lord	(Neh 10:34-39)

- **According to Nehemiah 9:35, how did God respond to God’s great goodness?**
  - **They did not turn to God or Repent**



**Read Nehemiah 10:1-27...Israelites Covenant Contract with the Lord**

<b>Seals on Written Covenant with the Lord (Nehemiah 10:1-27)</b>				
	<u>Name</u>	<u>Grouping</u>	<u>Meanings</u>	<u>Storyline (uninspired)</u>
1.	Nehemiah	Governor; son of Hecaliah	Consolation/comfort of the Lord	<i>Comfort is from the Lord</i>
2.	Zedekiah	Priest (1)	Justice/righteousness of the Lord	<i>As is righteousness.</i>
3.	Seraiah	Priest (2)	God has prevailed/soldier of the Lord	<i>For the soldier of the Lord</i>
4.	Azariah	Priest (3)	“He that hears the Lord/Who God helps”	<i>The one who hears the Lord</i>
5.	Jeremiah	Priest (4)	“Exalted/appointed/raised up by the Lord”	<i>Is exalted by the Lord.</i>
6.	Pashhur	Priest (5)	“Splitter/cleaver/whiteness”	<i>And separated</i>
7.	Amariah	Priest (6)	“Stated by the Lord/Integrity of the Lord”	<i>In the integrity of the Lord</i>
8.	Malchijah	Priest (7)	“God is King”	<i>God is King</i>
9.	Hattush	Priest (8)	“Assembled/forsaking sin”	<i>Over the congregation</i>
10.	Shebaniah	Priest (9)	“The Lord converts/hides/has matured”	<i>The Lord hides</i>
11.	Malluch	Priest (10)	“Reigning/counseling”	<i>And counsels</i>
12.	Harim	Priest (11)	“Destroyed/dedicated to God”	<i>Those dedicated to Him</i>
13.	Meremoth	Priest (12)	“Heights/bitterness”	<i>Bitterness on</i>
14.	Obadiah	Priest (13)	“Servant of the Lord”	<i>The Servant of God</i>
15.	Daniel	Priest (14)	“Judgment of God”	<i>Is God’s Judgment.</i>
16.	Ginnethon	Priest (15)	“Gardner”	<i>As a Gardner.</i>
17.	Baruch	Priest (16)	“Who is blessed”	<i>Who is blessed</i>
18.	Meshullam	Priest (17)	“Peaceable/perfect/befriended”	<i>With peace.</i>
19.	Abijah	Priest (18)	“The Lord is my Father”	<i>The Lord is my Father</i>
20.	Mijamin	Priest (19)	“Right hand”	<i>And dependable</i>
21.	Maaziah	Priest (20)	“Strength/consolation of Jehovah”	<i>Strength</i>
22.	Bilgai	Priest (21)	“Cheerfulness”	<i>Happy</i>
23.	Shemaiah	Priest (22)	“He that hears/obeys the Lord”	<i>Is the one who obeys</i>
24.	Jeshua	Levite; son of Azaniah (1)	“Deliverer/savior”	<i>Our Savior</i>
25.	Binnui	Levite; son of Henadad (1)	“Building up”	<i>Elevates</i>
26.	Kadmiel	Levite (1)	“In front of/before God; God of antiquity; God of rising”	<i>In front of God</i>
27.	Shebaniah	Levite (2)	“The Lord converts/hides/has matured”	<i>The Lord converts</i>
28.	Hodiah	Levite (3)	“Splendor of God”	<i>God’s majesty</i>
29.	Kelita	Levite (4)	“Dwarf”	<i>Into smaller elements</i>
30.	Pelaiah	Levite (5)	“Distinguished by the Lord; the Lord’s secret/miracle”	<i>As the Lord’s secret miracles</i>
31.	Hanan	Levite (6)	“Full of grace/merciful”	<i>With grace</i>
32.	Mica	Levite (7)	“Poor; humble; who is like God”	<i>For the humble</i>
33.	Rehob	Levite (8)	“Broad place; space; extent”	<i>A wide expanse</i>
34.	Hashabiah	Levite (8)	“The estimation of the Lord; regarded by the Lord”	<i>Is regarded by the Lord</i>
35.	Zaccur	Levite (9)	“Mindful”	<i>Of those who are mindful</i>
36.	Sherebiah	Levite (10)	“Flame of the Lord; singing with the Lord”	<i>Of God’s judgment.</i>
37.	Shebaniah	Levite (11)	“The Lord converts/hides/has matured”	<i>The Lord converts</i>
38.	Hodiah	Levite (12)	“Splendor of God”	<i>God’s majesty</i>
39.	Bani	Levite (13)	“Built”	<i>Built</i>
40.	Beninu	Levite (14)	“Our son”	<i>For our sons</i>
41.	Parosh	Leader (1)	“Flea”	<i>Who are meager.</i>
42.	Pahath-moab	Leader (2)	“Ruler of Moab”	<i>The godless leader</i>
43.	Elam	Leader (3)	“A young man/virgin/secret”	<i>Is a young</i>
44.	Zattu	Leader (4)	“Olive Tree/Sprout”	<i>Fruitful sprout</i>
45.	Bani	Leader (5)	“Built”	<i>Built</i>

46.	Bunni	Leader (6)	“Building me”	<i>And building me. Over thieves In vain things. The Lord is the Master Of my body Adorning me When I am lame God has strengthened And helped In His splendor. Silent As an egg Or Autumn rain Is an answer That is prophetic. Excelling In peace And strength God is a Deliverer His righteousness Is known And His deliverance Is full of grace. God has answered In salvation. The gift of the Lord Is considerate To the slanderer. The worker Is made vain By God’s mercy The Lord regards His own work The brother in the Lord Is full of grace As a cloud Ruling As dedicated to God To answer affliction.</i>
47.	Azgad	Leader (7)	“Strong Army/Gang of Robbers”	
48.	Bebai	Leader (8)	“Void/fatherly”	
49.	Adonijah	Leader (9)	“The Lord is my Master”	
50.	Bigvai	Leader (10)	“In my body”	
51.	Adin	Leader (11)	“Effeminate/adorned”	
52.	Ater	Leader (12)	“Left hand/shut/lame”	
53.	Hezekiah	Leader (13)	“Whom God has strengthened”	
54.	Azzur	Leader (14)	“Helpful”	
55.	Hodiah	Leader (15)	“Splendor of God”	
56.	Hashum	Leader (16)	“Silence; their hasting; opulent”	
57.	Bezai	Leader (17)	“Eggs”	
58.	Hariph	Leader (18)	“Autumn Rain”	
59.	Anathoth	Leader (19)	“An Answer”	
60.	Nebai	Leader (20)	“Budding/Speaking/Propheying”	
61.	Magpiash	Leader (21)	“Excelling/height”	
62.	Meshullam	Leader (22)	“Peaceable/Perfect/Befriended”	
63.	Hezir	Leader (23)	“Swine/strong”	
64.	Meshezabel	Leader (24)	“God is a Deliverer”	
65.	Zadok	Leader (25)	“Just/justified/righteous”	
66.	Jaddua	Leader (26)	“Known”	
67.	Pelathiah	Leader (27)	“Deliverance of the Lord”	
68.	Hanan	Leader (28)	“Full of Grace/Merciful”	
69.	Anaiah	Leader (29)	“God has answered”	
70.	Hoshea	Leader (30)	“Salvation”	
71.	Hananiah	Leader (31)	“Grace/Mercy/Gift of the Lord”	
72.	Hasshub	Leader (32)	“Considerate”	
73.	Hallohesh	Leader (33)	“The whisperer/the slanderer”	
74.	Pilha	Leader (34)	“Ploughman”	
75.	Shobek	Leader (35)	“Made void/forsaken”	
76.	Rehum	Leader (36)	“Merciful/Compassionate”	
77.	Hashabnah	Leader (37)	“Regarded by the Lord”	
78.	Maaseiah	Leader (38)	“Work of the Lord”	
79.	Ahiah	Leader (39)	“Brother of the Lord”	
80.	Hanan	Leader (40)	“Full of Grace/Merciful”	
81.	Anan	Leader (41)	“Cloud”	
82.	Malluch	Leader (42)	“Reigning/counseling”	
83.	Harim	Leader (43)	“Destroyed/dedicated to God”	
84.	Baanah	Leader (44)	“In the answer/in affliction”	

### Read Nehemiah 10:28-31...God’s People Separate with Sanctified Lives

10:28 Those dedicated to the Lord were those who could understand and separate themselves from this world (walk separated lives).

10:29 The people set themselves apart to make Him the true Lord of their lives.

10:30 God’s people made a commitment not to be unequally yoked and not to expose themselves to being polluted by the world.

10:31 God’s people made the decision to follow the Lord’s commands by not dealing with the world according to their customs and business, but according to God’s guidelines (even including commerce on the Sabbath).

- **According to Nehemiah 9:30-31, what did God’s people covenant in the contract?**
  - **They wouldn’t be unequally yoked**
  - **They would maintain the Sabbath Day as holy instead of commerce**
  - **They would tithe for Levitical support**

### Read Nehemiah 10:32-39...Israel Pledges Not to Neglect the Temple

10:32 God’s people made the commitment to materially support His work in this world while abiding by the offerings that He established.

<b>The Offerings of the Lord (regardless of frequency) would be Established (Nehemiah 10:33)</b>			
1.	Bread	Continual	The "Bread of the Presence" (Ex 25:30; Lev 24:5-9; Jn 6:35)
2.	Grain Offering	Daily	Fine Flour that was ground by the mill stone as the Believer endures suffering as the oil (Spirit) is poured into it (Lev 7:12)
3.	Burnt Offering	Regular	The entire offering is dedicated to the Lord (Lev 1)
4.	Sabbath Offerings	Weekly	The Drink & Grain Offering of fellowship with the Lord (Num 28:9-10)
5.	New Moon Offerings	Monthly	(Num 28:11-14)
6.	Appointed Festivals	Seven Times Annually	(Col 2:16-17; Ex 23:14-17; 34:23; Lev 23:4, 6, 10, 16, 24, 27, 40)

10:34 God's people used lots to decide who would bring the wood for the fire (Prov 16:33)

10:35 The best of the fruits and harvest would be dedicated to the Lord

10:36 Beyond material blessing, God's people would involve their children (and assets e.g. house, cars) in the service of the Lord

10:37 God's people would fill the storerooms to provide sustenance for God's dedicated servants.

10:38 The tithe was to be collected with a priest from the direct line of Aaron present for validation, credibility, and accountability. The clergy were then expected to tithe as well.

<b>Israelites &amp; Levites supported the House of the Lord (Nehemiah 10:39)</b>			
1.	Grain	Priests	God's People
2.	New Wine	Gatekeepers	Entry to New life
3.	Oil	Singers	Worship in the Spirit

**Read Nehemiah 11:1-36...The New Residents of Jerusalem**

11:1 The leaders lived in Jerusalem, but others preferred to live in the other towns which may have escaped being destroyed to the extent of Jerusalem.

- Israel's inhabitants cast lots to decide who would live in Jerusalem; the rest went to their inherited land (Neh 11:20)
- The remaining Israelites tithed individuals to live in Jerusalem

11:2 Israelites who had volunteered to live in Jerusalem were praised (Neh 7:1-4)

11:3 Although Israel's provincial leaders lived in Jerusalem, a variety of different categories of people lived in the other towns of Israel. 1. Israelites 2. priests 3. Levites 4. Temple servants 5. Descendants of Solomon's servants

11:4, 7, 15 Only Tribes of Judah, Benjamin and Levi are mentioned

<b>The Descendants of Judah from Perez In Jerusalem (Nehemiah 11:4)</b>	
1.	Athaliah "God is Praised"
2.	Uzziah "God is my Strength"
3.	Zechariah "Remembered by God"
4.	Amariah "The Word of God"
5.	Shephatiah "God is my judge"
6.	Mahalalel "Praise of God"
7.	Perez "Breach/Breakthrough"

**The Descendants of Judah  
from Shelah (Gn 46:12) In Jerusalem  
(Nehemiah 11:5)**

1. Maaseiah	“The Work of the Lord”
2. Baruch	“Blessed”
3. Kol-Hozeh	“Complete/Make Perfect”
4. Hazaiah	“God has seen”
5. Adaiah	“Adornment of God”
6. Joiarib	“God Pleads/Contends”
7. Zechariah	“Remembered by God”
8. Shelah	“Petition”

<b>The Descendants of Judah from Benjamin In Jerusalem (Nehemiah 11:7-9)</b>	
1. Sallu	“An exaltation; a basket”
2. Meshullam	“Peace”
3. Joed	“God is Witness”
4. Pedaiah	“Redemption of the Lord”
5. Kolaiah	“God’s Voice”
6. Maaseiah	“The work of the Lord”
7. Ithiel	“God is with me”
8. Jeshaiiah	“God is Salvation”
<b>Sallu’s Followers</b>	
1.. Gabbai	“The Back”
2. Sallai	“An exaltation; a basket”

11:9 Joel was the chief officer of the Benjamites; Judah was over the New Quarter of Jerusalem

11:10, 15 Aaron descended from Levi, and all priests descended from Aaron; therefore, all priests came from a subset of the tribe of Levi.

- The first priests mentioned were Jedaiah (“Loved by God”), the son of Joiarib (“God pleads/contends”) as well as Jakin (“The God will establish”)

<b>Lineage of Priest In Jerusalem (Nehemiah 11:11)</b>	
1. Seraiah	“Yahweh is Ruler”
2. Hilkiah	“God is my Portion”
3. Jakin	“God is Witness”
4. Meshullam	“Peace”
5. Zadok	“Just”
6. Meraioth	“Bitterness; Rebellion”
7. Ahitub	“Brother of Goodness”

11:11 Seraiah was the official responsible for the management of the Temple

11:12 There were 822 men responsible for work in the Temple.

<b>Lineage of the Head of the Priestly Families (Nehemiah 11:12)</b>	
1. Adaiah	“Adornment of God”
2. Jeroham	“Cherished/One who finds mercy”
3. Pelaliah	“God Delivers”
4. Amzi	“strong”
5. Zechariah	“Remembered by God”
6. Pashhur	“Splitter/Cleaver”
7. Malkijah	“My King is Yah”

11:13 There were 242 heads of Israelite families

<b>Priestly Men of Standing in Jerusalem (Nehemiah 11:13)</b>	
1. Amashsai	“Strong”
2. Azarel	“Aided by God”
3. Ahzai	“Take Hold/Grasp”

4. Meshillemoth	“Recompense”
5. Immer	“Speaking a Lamb”

11:14 There were 128 priestly men of standing.

<b>Levites in Jerusalem (Nehemiah 11:15)</b>		
1.	Shemaiah	“Heard of Jehovah”
2.	Hasshub	“Considerate”
3.	Azrikam	“Help/Revenging”
4.	Hashabiah	“The Lord has considered”
5.	Bunni	“Victory Bringer; Attractive”

11:16 There were two men who were heads of the Levites who were caretakers on the outside of the Temple of God: Shabbethai (“My Rest”) and Jozabad (“Endowed by Jehovah”).

11:17 Mattahiah was the great-grandson of Asaph who began the thanksgiving in prayer

11:18 There were 284 Levites in Jerusalem.

11:19 There were 172 gatekeepers in Jerusalem led by two men: Akkub (“footprint/supplanting”) and Talmon (“oppressed”).

11:20 The remainder of Israelites knew of their heritage and ancestral homes which they claimed.

11:21 The Temple servants reported to two men: Ziha (“brightness/whiteness”) and Gishpa/Hasupha (“quick”). The Hebrew name for the Temple servants was “Nethinim” (Joshua 9:27; Ezra 2:43)

11:22 Uzzi was the music director of the Temple, and he descended from Asaph, the author of several Psalms.

11:23 The king determined the music that was to be played at the Temple. King David is the background of Psalms and worship, so the term “king” may refer to precedents set by David rather than the Persian King (Nehemiah 12:24, 45-46).

11:24 One of Judah’s descendants through Zera was named Pethahiah, and he was responsible for the king’s public affairs.

11:25-30 lists the cities where Judah’s inhabitants set up homes; when comparing this listing with the Jews from certain cities rebuilding the wall (in Nehemiah 3), there is only one city in common (Zanoah). However, most of these towns are mentioned in Joshua 15.

<b>Judah’s Towns Outside of Jerusalem where post-captivity Israelites Settled (Nehemiah 11:25-30)</b>		
<b>Judah Towns</b>	<b>Meaning of Name</b>	<b>Storyline (uninspired)</b>
1. Kiriath Arba	“Get Together”	<i>Altogether wasting away Was the congregation of God A Deliverer Gave life And escaped Like the wolf of a house The oaths Are pressed together As a source of strength Under the weight In the morning We fear death And desertion As prey Who walks alone Outside the strength of the walls.</i>
2. Dibon	“Pining; Wasting”	
3. Jekabzeel	“Congregation of God”	
4. Jeshua	“Savior/Deliverer”	
5. Moladah	“A Giver of Life”	
6. Beth Pelet	“House of Escape”	
7. Hazar Shual	“Wolf’s house”	
8. Beersheba	“Well of oath/seven”	
9. Ziklag	“Measure pressed down”	
10. Mekonah	“A source of strength/a solid foundation”	
11. En Rimmon	“Well of Weight”	
12. Zorah	“Dawn”	
13. Jarmuth	“Fearing/Seeing Death”	
14. Zanoah	“Forgetfulness, Desertion”	
15. Adullam	“Their prey/ornament”	
16. Lachish	“Who walks/exists by himself”	
17. Azekah	“Strength of Walls”	

11:30 Beersheba referenced the southern tip of Israel while the Valley of Hinnom was directly south of Jerusalem. The people remained in the land of Judah.

<b>Benjamin’s Towns Outside of Jerusalem where post-captivity Israelites Settled (Nehemiah 11:25-30)</b>
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<b>Benjamin Towns</b>	<b>Meaning of Name</b>	<b>Storyline (uninspired)</b>
1. Mikmash	“Concealed Place”	<i>Hidden place</i>
2. Aija	“Happy”	<i>Is joyful</i>
3. Bethel	“House of God”	<i>As the House of God</i>
4. Anathoth	“Answer, Song, Poverty”	<i>With singing</i>
5. Nob	“Discourse/Prophecy”	<i>And prophesying</i>
6. Ananiah	“Protected by God”	<i>While protected by God</i>
7. Hazor	“From the Stronghold”	<i>Away from the stronghold</i>
8. Ramah	“Elevated”	<i>And elevate</i>
9. Gittaim	“One who works the wine press”	<i>From work in the winepress</i>
10. Hadid	“Iron”	<i>Strong as iron</i>
11. Zeboim	“Gazelles”	<i>And fast as gazelles</i>
12. Neballat	“Prophecy; Budding”	<i>prophesying</i>
13. Lod	“Nativity generation”	<i>About the time of nativity</i>
14. Ono	“Small field”	<i>In a small field</i>
15. Ge Harashim	“Valley of Craftsmen”	<i>In a valley of workers.</i>

11:36 Some Levites also lived among the Benjamites.

20 Neh 12, 13

### Read Nehemiah 12:1-26...Priests & Levites Who Returned with Zerubbabel

12:1 This list is very similar to an earlier list in Ezra 2:36-39 and Nehemiah 7:39-47.

<b>Priests who went up with Zerubbabel (civic) and Jeshua (religious)</b> (Nehemiah 12:1-7)			
	<b>Name</b>	<b>Meanings</b>	<b>Story</b>
1.	Seraiah	“God has prevailed/soldier of the Lord”	<p>The Lord’s soldier has been raised up and helped as the Lord promised when He counseled against sin from His Heaven with mercy from the heights of His power against traps. My Father, the Lord, is my strength and His Testimony</p> <p>gives joy to those who hear and obey as He defends those He knows who are weighed/tested in the valleys but God is my portion and He knows my way</p>
2.	Jeremiah	“Raised up/Exaltation of the Lord”	
3.	Ezra	“Help”	
4.	Amariah	“Said by the Lord/Integrity of the Lord”	
5.	Malluch	“Reigning/Counselling”	
6.	Hattush	“Assembled/Forsaking Sin”	
7.	Shecaniah	“Habitation of the Lord”	
8.	Rehum	“Merciful/Compassionate”	
9.	Meremoth	“Exaltation/Heights/Myrrh of Death”	
10.	Iddo	“His Band/Power/Praise”	
11.	Ginnethoi	“A Trap”	
12.	Abijah	“The Lord is my Father”	
13.	Mijamin	“Right Hand”	
14.	Maadiah	“Pleasantness/The Testimony of the Lord/ Whose ornament if the Lord	
15.	Bilgah	“Cheerful/Ancient Countenance”	
16.	Shemaiah	“Who hears/obeys the Lord”	
17.	Joiarib	“Whom God defends/contends for”	
18.	Jedaiah	“God knows/The hand of the Lord”	
19.	Sallu	“Weighed”	
20.	Amok	“Deep/A Valley/A Depth”	
21.	Hilkiah	“God is my portion”	
22.	Jedaiah	“God knows/The hand of the Lord”	

<b>The (Levitical) Leaders of the Priests during the days of Jeshua</b> (Nehemiah 12:8)			
	<b>Name</b>	<b>Meanings</b>	<b>Story</b>
1.	Jeshua	“Deliverer/savior”	<p>The Deliverer lifts up before God</p>
2.	Binnui	“Building up”	
3.	Kadmiel	“Before God/God of rising”	

4. Sherebiah	“Flame of the Lord/singing with the Lord”	singing with the Lord of Praise as a gift of God
5. Judah	“Praise”	
6. Mattaniah	“Gift of God”	
Leaders of the Priests were responsible for the “Praise Songs”		

12:9 In the rotation of duties, Bakbukiah and Unni held responsibility for the other shifts (Neh 12:24)

12:10-11 Six generations of high priests are listed: 1.Jeshua 2.Joiakim 3.Eliashib 4.Joiada 5.Jonathan 6.Jaddua

- Jeshua was the high priest during the time frame of Zerubbabel, and the timeframe of these high priests would seem to cover several centuries afterwards (into the Greek empire).
- After Alexander the Great led his military in the defeat of Persian armies, he made his way toward Egypt with the expectation of overrunning Jerusalem en route.
  - Josephus writes of the high priest, Jaddua, coming out to meet Alexander and astound him with the accuracy of Daniel’s prophecies.
  - In the historical context, Ezra possibly died in the same year as Alexander the Great (323 BC).

Heads of the Priestly Families (Nehemiah 12:12-21)			
Priestly Family	Head of Family	Meaning	Storyline
1. Seraiah	Meraiah	“Bitter”	<i>The bitter receive compassion and peace graciously as God’s gift. God increases the joy of the remnant remembered by Him. Peace at the remembrance of God to deliver and save is well-known as a gift from Him. Rains are given to Israel with power and light and strength the Lord has considered and the Lord has given.</i>
2. Jeremiah	Hananiah	“Compassion of God”	
3. Ezra	Meshullam	“Peace”	
4. Amariah	Jehohanan	“Grace/Gift of the Lord”	
5. Malluk	Jonathan	“Jehovah’s Gift”	
6. Shekaniah	Joseph	“Jehovah Increases”	
7. Harim	Adna	“Delight”	
8. Meremoth	Helkai	“Part; Portion”	
9. Iddo	Zechariah	“Remembered by God”	
10. Ginnethon	Meshullam	“Peace”	
11. Abijah	Zikri	“Remembrance of God”	
12. Miniamin/Moadiah	Piltai	“Escape/Save/Deliver”	
13. Bilgah	Shammua	“Renowned”	
14. Shemaiah	Jehonathan	“Gift of the Lord”	
15. Joiarib	Mattenai	“Gift rains in Israel”	
16. Jedaiah	Uzzi	“Power/Strength”	
17. Sallu	Kallai	“Light/My Voice”	
18. Amok	Eber	“Strong as the Wild Boar”	
19. Hilkiah	Hashabiah	“The Lord has Considered”	
20. Jedaiah	Nethanel	“God has Given”	

12:22 Leaders of Levites and Priests recorded while Darius of Persia ruled (Haggai 1:1, Zech 1:1)

12:23 The Book of Historical Records is mentioned as a Temple list (instead of the book of Chronicles)

12:24 Israelites followed David’s guidelines in worshipping by division (Neh 12:9)

12:25 Beside the doors of the gates were storage locations for the tools used in the Temple as well as treasury boxes, and these gatekeepers were guards and caretakers of these storage areas.

12:26 While Joiakim was the high priest, Nehemiah the Governor and Ezra the priest/scribe ... Malachi was the Prophet.

### Read Nehemiah 12:27-47...Dedication of the Wall of Jerusalem

12:27 After the captivity of God’s people, they had struggled to rebuild the wall of separation from the world’s influences (Eph 6:12), but now they celebrated the protection.

- The wall offered other functions beyond external enemies; from it could be seen any interior crime/pollution as it looked down into the city.
- Also, since the walls were thick and strong, homes were built against the wall for support.

- This celebratory music was similar to the dedication on Solomon (2 Chronicles 5:13)
- 12:28 The Netophathites were inhabitants of Netophah nearby the vicinity of Bethlehem.
- 12:29 The musicians had constructed houses near Jerusalem.
- 12:30 The cleansing was external (physical) as well as internal (spiritual) which often consisted of abstinence of certain food, wine and activities.

- **According to Nehemiah 12:30, before the dedication, what did the Levites do?**
  - **They purified themselves**

### Read Nehemiah 12:31-43... Praising Processions to the East and West

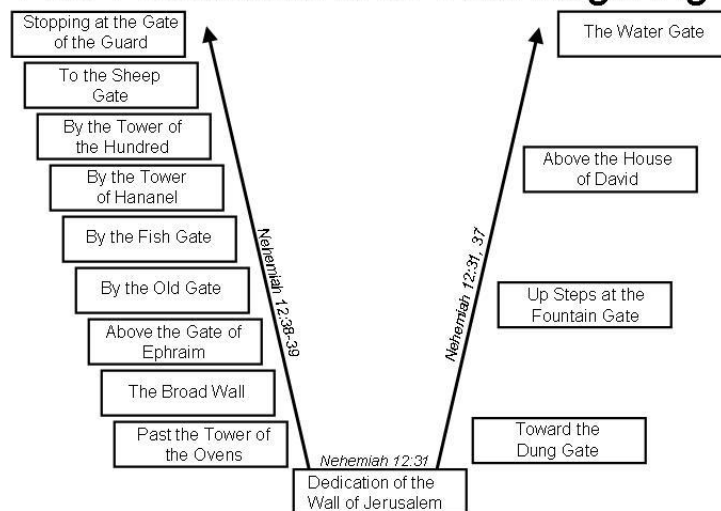
12:31 The leaders were to walk on top of the wall as worship paraded below. Two large choirs were assembled to march in opposite directions while singing thanksgiving.

12:36 Ezra marched with the procession heading east to the water gate.

12:38 Nehemiah marched with the procession heading in the opposite direction. The two groups marched in opposite directions around the wall until they met on the other side near the Temple.

- Nehemiah's wall was 9 feet wide

### Two Processions of Thanksgiving



12:43 The surrounding people heard the joy of God's people.

### Read Nehemiah 12:44-47... Praising Processions to the East and West

12:44 Three types of offerings were listed for the Temple: 1. Contributions 2. Firstfruits 3. Tithes

- The offerings from the harvests in the fields, but if an offering could not be made "in kind", then it could be converted into Jewish shekels
  - The Temple was very particular as to what denomination of money could be given
  - A Temple position that evolved over time was the money changer who would exchange foreign currency into coinage the Temple would accept.

12:45 The priests, Levites and musicians fulfilled their service according to the Word of the Lord as established through King David (1 Chronicles 23:26; 2 Chronicles 8:14).

- It was important to relate the post-captivity Israelites with their heritage and ancestry by more than genealogy – into locations, structures, organization and practices.
- Throughout the "second exodus" from Babylon, the Israelites fashioned themselves after the first exodus from Egypt.
- As Jerusalem's Temple and wall were rebuilt, Israel continued to fashion after King David and Solomon's practices.

12:46 Post-captivity Israelites remembered six centuries prior when King David and Asaph elevated worship and assigned worship leaders.



12:47 There were ninety years between Zerubbabel and Nehemiah, and in all that time offerings were given by the people to support the singers (worship team) and gatekeepers (e.g. ground keepers)

### **Read Nehemiah 13:1-9...The Enemy (Tobiah) Evicted from Lodging at the Temple**

13:1 The reading of the Word of God (the Book of Moses) results in separating the true Believers (who are totally “sold out” for the Lord) with those carnal Believers who are tainted by the world (Neh 13:3).

- The reading of the Law was required during the Feast of Tabernacles/Booths (Deuteronomy 31:11)
- This was a quote from the Law of Moses (Deuteronomy 23:3-5)
- Although the Old Testament states multiple times the Assembly (Biqhal) of Yahweh (Dt 23:1-3, 8; Micah 2:5), this is the only time in the Old Testament where the Assembly (Biqhal) of Elohim is used.
  - The Septuagint writers translated this term “ecclesia” which is the term that the New Testament writers utilized to emphasize a connection with the Old Testament people of God.
  - In the same way, these Israelites in Nehemiah’s time wanted to reinforce the connection with their heritage.

13:2 Ammonites (from Lot’s youngest daughter) and Moabites (from Lot’s eldest) did not assist God’s people in this world but were worldly themselves (Mt 25:31-46). Although Lot walked with Abraham, he ended up in the throes of Sodom and Gomorrah.

13:3 King Balaak hired Balaam to curse the people of Israel attempted (Numbers 22-24)

13:4 Storage chambers were located around the Temple (Nehemiah 12:44). Tobiah (the Ammonite) had been an enemy of the reconstruction of Jerusalem (Nehemiah 6:17-19), but the priest responsible for managing the storage chambers was his friend.

13:5 The grain offering was used in the morning and evening sacrifices while the frankincense was used on the altar every day to represent ongoing prayer. Israel was to tithe to the Levites, and the Levites were to tithe to the priests.

13:6 Although Nehemiah had been Resident Governor for twelve years (445-433BC), he had since returned to the King in Persia.

- Historical documents reference other Kings of Assyria as “King of Babylon” as well (i.e. Cyrus, Cambes, Darius I), and these Kings would reign from Babylon during the winter months.

13:7 Nehemiah was unaware (as he had not been told) that Tobias had a special room at the Temple site that was supposed to be filled with Priestly supplies and incense.

- The room of Tobias was empty because of disuse – Israel had not been paying tithe to the Levites.

13:8 Nehemiah didn’t argue or delegate, but instead, he himself threw the property of Tobias out of the Temple storeroom. While Nehemiah was away in Persia, wickedness had crept in – he had to clean house.

13:9 Nehemiah called for the room to be purified and returned to its rightful purpose; clearly some of the supplies and incense had been moved out to make space for Tobias.

### **Read Nehemiah 13:10-14...Support for Levites Reinstated**

13:10 Lack of giving resulted in singers and gatekeepers going back to field work (Malachi 3:8-10) The offerings were meant to support the Levites (Numbers 18:21-32).

- Each Levite had a small piece of ground to grow vegetables that were not given in offerings (Numbers 25:8; Joshua 21:3)

13:11 This rebuke was in the nature of a legal dispute (Hebrew word “rib”) – Nehemiah had rebuked the aristocracy earlier (Nehemiah 5:7), and this word is used three times in this chapter (Neh 13:11, 17, 25).

13:12 As a nation, all of Judah came together to fill the Temple with tithe.

13:13 A few trustworthy Levites were made responsible for distributing the supplies.

<b>Trustworthy Managers of the Temple Storerooms (Nehemiah 13:13)</b>		
1. Priest	Shelemiah	“God is my happiness/peace”
2. Scribe	Zadok	“Just”
3. Levite	Pedaiah	“Redemption of the Lord”
4. Their Assistant	Hanan	“Love/Compassion/Sympathy”

13:14, 22, 31 After addressing each of Israel’s three sins, Nehemiah would ask the Lord to “remember me”. The Israelites were sinning in three ways: 1.Wealth (not supporting the Levites) 2.Work (commerce on the Sabbath) 3.Women (marrying into foreign religions)

- These were the three commitments made by His people in their written contract (Nehemiah 10:30-31).
  - They wouldn’t be unequally yoked
  - They would maintain the Sabbath Day as holy instead of commerce
  - They would tithe for Levitical support

### **Read Nehemiah 13:15-22...Commerce on the Sabbath Ceased**

13:15 The post-captivity Israelites fell quickly back into the exact sins that moved God to send them into exile (Jeremiah 17:19-27).

- Believers must choose whether to rely on self-effort or the Lord for sustenance. Self-effort led the Israelites to labor on the Lord’s day even though they had taken a counter vow (Neh 10:31).

13:16 The men of Tyre were importing loads of fish into Jerusalem (Ezekiel 27:12-36; 28:16). One supply chain would move product down the Mediterranean coastline (75 miles from Tyre to Joppa – 2 Chronicles 2:16), and then the product would be moved overland from Joppa to Jerusalem (30 miles)

13:17 As with the lack of support for the Levites, Nehemiah holds the nobles accountable for their greed in driving commerce on the Sabbath.

13:18 The 70 years of captivity had been judgment for the missed Sabbaths (Lev 26:34 & 43 – Jer 25:12, 29:10, Ezra 36:21, Ex 23:11)

13:19 The Jewish Sabbath begins at 6:00pm on Friday and lasts until 6:00PM on Saturday.

- Jews based this on the creation story which was marked by the phrase “*there was evening and there was morning – the first day*” (Genesis 1:5, 8, 13, 19, 23, 31).
  - This phrase was used for six days, but not on the seventh, Sabbath day.

13:20 Several times during the night, merchants prepared to be the first inside when the gates opened in the morning of the Sabbath.

13:21 Nehemiah threatened to arrest the merchants outside the doors of the gates.

13:22 Nehemiah took physical action to keep the city pure from merchants

- After addressing each of Israel’s three sins, Nehemiah would ask the Lord to “remember me”.
  - The Israelites were sinning in three ways:
    - 1.Wealth (not supporting the Levites)
    - 2.Work (commerce on the Sabbath)
    - 3.Women (marrying into foreign religions) – Nehemiah 13:14, 22, 31

### **Read Nehemiah 13:23-31...Inter-religious Marriages Rebuked**

13:23-25 Nehemiah physical disciplined those who had been lured into the world (those who had lost all knowledge of God’s ways – Hebrew).

13:26-27 God uniquely loved Solomon, but he was seduced by the world.

- Nehemiah expected God’s people to understand the stories of the Old Testament and respond accordingly, but societies forget and disregard the lessons of the past which leads to their demise.
- Unequally yoked wasn’t about race, but instead it was about religions.

- 13:28 Sanballat (2:10) is the Babylonian Sin-uballit, "may Sin give him life"; Josephus History – The daughter of Sanballat (Satrap of Samaria) marries a Judean Priest (Manasseh), and Manasseh is exiled from Judah (Neh 13:28); Sanballat makes Manasseh Governor and High Priest → then Manasseh builds Temple; After it became clear that the Jews who had returned from exile in Babylon would not accept the Samaritans as brothers, the Samaritans established their center in Samaria. However, when Alexander the Great captured the city of Samaria in 332 BC, he turned it into a Greek city and settled many of his veterans there. At that time the Samaritans moved their center of worship to Shechem and built a Temple on Mt. Gerizim.
- 13:29 Nehemiah prays that God remembers to judge those who had been married into idolatrous affairs.
- 13:30 Believers must begin by “cleaning house” and ridding one’s life of all immoral, worldly elements and contacts; then Believers must set up good practices for an ongoing life of submission to the Lord’s will.
- 13:14, 22, 31 After addressing each of Israel’s three sins, Nehemiah would ask the Lord to “remember me”. The Israelites were sinning in three ways: 1. Wealth (not supporting the Levites) 2. Work (commerce on the Sabbath) 3. Women (marrying into foreign religions)
- These were the three commitments made by His people in their written contract (Nehemiah 10:30-31).
    - They wouldn’t be unequally yoked
    - They would maintain the Sabbath Day as holy instead of commerce
    - They would tithe for Levitical support
  - Nehemiah concludes the book by asking God to remember him for his good to God’s people (Neh 5:19) instead of asking God to remember God’s promise (Neh 1:8) or to remember people negatively (Neh 6:14, 13:29)

## Persian Kings

*Line of Achaemenid (Persian) Kings*

**Cyrus II (“the Great”)** – Mede who defeated Babylon & Returned Israel to Jerusalem  
Isaiah 45, Daniel 10, Ezra 1-3

Son

**Ahasuerus (Cambyses III)** – Attacked & Conquered Egypt (Not in Bible)

Usurper

**Artaxerxes (Smerdis)** – Look-alike (Gaumata) of Cambyses’ brother was a Mede “Magi” usurping kingship  
Ezra 4:7-23

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*Separate Line of Achaemenid (Persian) Kings*

**Darius I (“the Great”)** – Authorized Jerusalem Temple; Lost battle to Greece at the Battle of Marathon  
Ezra 5, 6, Daniel 9, 11

Son

**Xerxes I** – Husband of Esther; Lost great wealth in Second Persian Invasion of Greece (Athens/Sparta)  
Esther 1-10

Son

**Artaxerxes I (Longimanus)** – Possibly Esther’s Son; Sent Nehemiah to construct wall of Jerusalem  
Nehemiah 1-13; Ezra 7-10