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# CHRISTIAN WORKER BIBLE STUDY SERIES

PRESENTED BY:

## *Ezra & Nehemiah*

STUDY NUMBER TWENTY  
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## EZRA AND NEHEMIAH

Ezra and Nehemiah were two in a series of seven men the Lord used to reestablish His people in their Promised Land after the Babylonian captivity. In 536 B.C. **Zerubbabel** and **Joshua** led the first group of returning exiles who laid the foundations of the temple in Jerusalem. Fifteen years later, under the preaching of **Haggai** and **Zechariah**, work on the temple resumed and the building was completed in five years. In 458 B.C., **Ezra** arrived, and began the work of restoring public worship. **Nehemiah** began reconstruction of the city in 445 B.C. In about 436 B.C., **Malachi** came to exhort the people to faithful service and holy living.

The books of Ezra and Nehemiah are the accounts of how the people of Israel were reestablished in the land of promise as the congregation of the Lord.

### THE BOOK OF EZRA

After spending 70 years of captivity in Babylon because of sin and disobedience to God, the Lord's chosen people were allowed by the Lord to return to their homeland, Israel. The purpose for their return is clearly stated in Ezra 1:2: "...to build Him (the Lord God) a house at Jerusalem." Significantly, the first step in building or rebuilding a life for God is creating a dwelling place for God. Around this center the outer life can be formed; accordingly, Nehemiah proceeded to rebuild the city walls after the temple had been completed.

Written by Ezra the priest, the book describes two separate returns from Babylon to Israel. Chapters 1-6 deal with the initial return led by Zerubbabel.

#### CHAPTER 1 - READ THE CHAPTER FIRST

1. Read Isaiah 44:24-45:6. Nearly 200 years before Israel was to be freed from their captivity in Babylon, Isaiah named the king who was to be the Lord's instrument in this deliverance. What was his name? I am the Lord --- Jesus

The prophet Isaiah foretold not only the event, but also the name of the king involved two centuries before it actually took place.

2. Read Jeremiah 29:10 and 25:12. How many years did Jeremiah prophesy would pass before the return of the exiles? seventy years are accomplished
3. Who stirred up Cyrus' spirit? v. 1 the Lord stirred up the spirit of Cyrus king of Persia
4. Who had given Cyrus the kingdoms of the earth? v. 2 The Lord God of heaven hath given me all the kingdoms of the earth  
God's sovereign hand is seen through the use of a heathen king to reestablish the nation of Israel in her own land.
5. In your own words, summarize Cyrus' proclamation of verses 2-4. The Lord, The God of Jerusalem, who is the only one and true God, has set me as a King to Build his house. All those that have the same living spirit of God, and feel called should do the same. We are not to worry about provision as it is commanded that were ever we go the people are to give gold, silver, and what ever else is needed for us to complete His work.
6. Who rose up to build the house of God in Jerusalem? v. 5 Then rose up the chief of the fathers of Judah and Benjamin, and the priests, and the Levites, with all them whose spirit God had raised

7. Those remaining in Babylon had a part in the restoration of God's temple also. What items were willingly offered to the returning Jews? vv. 4,6 \_\_\_\_\_  
vessels of silver, with gold, with goods, and with beasts, and with precious things, beside all that was willingly offered.
8. What possessions did Cyrus return to the Jews? v. 7 \_\_\_\_\_  
Cyrus the king brought forth the vessels of the house of the Lord
9. What had the vessels of the temple been used for in Babylon? Daniel 5:1-4 \_\_\_\_\_ the king, and his princes, his wives, and his concubines, drank in them. They drank wine, and praised the gods of gold, and of silver, of brass, of iron, of wood, and of stone. They had a big party worshipping false gods.
10. Once again, these vessels are set apart to be used as \_\_\_\_\_ the vessels \_\_\_\_\_ of the house of God. v. 7

## CHAPTER 2 - READ THE CHAPTER FIRST

1. Who is named as the leader of the returning exiles? v. 2 \_\_\_\_\_ Zerubbabel
2. Why were certain of the Levites considered polluted and put from the priesthood? v. 62 \_\_\_\_\_  
sought their register among those that were reckoned by genealogy, but they were not found

God was concerned with establishing the purity of the bloodline of the priests who would be representing Him. God's requirement for His people today is no less stringent. Although we may claim to be Christians, unless the sin-cleansing, untainted blood of Jesus Christ flows through us, our names will not be found in the Book of Life (Rev. 20:15), and we can have no part in His royal priesthood.

3. What were these unregistered priests forbidden to do? v. 63 \_\_\_\_\_ they should not eat of the most holy thing  
These men were not considered priests until their authenticity could be established by divine revelation.
4. What was the total number of people in the whole congregation? vv. 64,65 \_\_\_\_\_ forty and two thousand three hundred and threescore,
5. What was freely offered for the house of God? vv. 68,69 \_\_\_\_\_ to set it up in his place: They gave after their ability unto the treasure of the work threescore and one thousand drams of gold, and five thousand pound of silver, and one hundred priests' garments.

## CHAPTER 3 - READ THE CHAPTER FIRST

Some time elapsed between Chapters 2 and 3 as the people established their own cities and homes, but they did not forget their original purpose for returning to their land. How fitting it is that one of the first national acts was the celebration of the great Feast of Tabernacles. This is the celebration of the ingathering, or completion of the harvest, and typifies the time when the Jews will be gathered together in Jerusalem forever under the leadership of the Lord Jesus Christ. Although work on the temple had not yet begun, the people saw the need for the immediate reestablishment of the original feasts, sacrifices and offerings.

1. When was the Feast of Tabernacles celebrated? v. 1 Also read Leviticus 23:24. \_\_\_\_\_  
the seventh month...in the first day of the month
2. Where did the people gather together? v. 1 \_\_\_\_\_ the people gathered themselves together as one man to Jerusalem.
3. Whom do we see at this time standing with Zerubbabel as a leader among the people? v. 2 \_\_\_\_\_  
Jeshua the son of Jozadak, and his brethren the priests.. also Zerubbabels brothers
4. What did the priests build first, and for what purpose? v. 2 \_\_\_\_\_  
build the altar of the God of Israel, to offer burnt offerings thereon

5. How often were the burnt offerings offered? vv. 3-5 burnt offerings morning and evening, and both of the new moons
6. How much work had been completed on the temple itself? v. 6 the foundation of the temple of the Lord was not yet laid.
7. When did the people start building the temple? v. 8 in the second year of their coming unto the house of God
8. Describe what took place when the foundation was laid. vv. 10,11 they set the priests in their apparel with trumpets, and the Levites the sons of Asaph with cymbals, to praise the Lord they sang together by course in praising and giving thanks unto the Lord; because he is good, for his mercy endureth for ever toward Israel. And all the people shouted with a great shout, However, the priests wept bitterly in remembrance of the former house.
9. Who began to weep with a loud voice? v. 12 many of the priests and Levites and chief of the fathers, who were ancient men, that had seen the first house

The laying of the foundation was a very stirring time for all of the Jews. Some who had seen the original temple wept at the remembrance of the former glory. For everyone, the laying of this foundation signified the establishment of a new relationship between the Jews and their God.

## CHAPTER 4 - READ THE CHAPTER FIRST

Chapter 4 is a picture of the spiritual warfare that takes place as a believer allows the Holy Spirit to begin a "building program" in his life. Immediately the adversary opposes this restoration project by various methods.

1. Who heard that the children of Israel were building a temple? v. 1 adversaries of Judah and Benjamin
2. What did these adversaries say that they wanted to do? v. 2 us build with you: for we seek your God, as ye do
3. How did Zerubbabel and Jeshua and the Jewish leaders respond to this offer? v. 3 Ye have nothing to do with us to build an house unto our God; but we ourselves together will build unto the Lord God of Israel, as king Cyrus the king of Persia hath commanded us.  
These adversaries were a mixed race of descendants from the intermarriage of Jews and foreigners who had been dwelling in Israel. Though their religious worship included Jehovah, He was only one of the many gods that they acknowledged. To unite with these foreigners would have been the first step of compromise for the Jews. Read II Corinthians 6:14. The adversaries soon showed their true colors.
4. In what three ways did the adversaries next trouble the Jews? vv. 4,5
  - a. weakened the hands of the people of Judah, and troubled them in building,
  - b. And hired counsellors against them, to frustrate their purpose,
  - c. the reign of Ahasuerus, in the beginning of his reign, wrote they unto him an accusation against the inhabitants of Judah and Jerusalem

Verses 6-24 tell the story of one instance of the opposition raised by the adversaries. As we shall see, opposition by trickery or by force was almost constant throughout Ezra's and Nehemiah's time.
5. In this instance, how did the adversaries portray Jerusalem to the King of Persia? vv. 12,15 the rebellious and the bad city, they not pay toll, tribute, and custom, and so thou shalt endamage the revenue of the kings.

6. What did the adversaries say would happen to the king if Jerusalem were rebuilt? vv. 13,16 \_\_\_\_\_  
thou shalt have no portion on this side the river. and shalt endamage the revenue of the kings.
7. In searching his records, King Artaxerxes found that in the past Jerusalem had indeed been the center of a powerful and very independent nation. What did he command as a result? v. 21  
commandment to cause these men to cease, and that this city be not builded
8. How did Rehum, Shimshai and their companions stop the work on the temple? v. 23b \_\_\_\_\_  
they went up in haste to Jerusalem unto the Jews, and made them to cease by force and power.

Whenever a great work is to be done for God, great opposition can be expected. Paul found this to be true at Ephesus.

9. Write out I Corinthians 16:9 \_\_\_\_\_ there is a great opportunity to make an impact for the good through The Lord, however, there is also great opposition.

Immediately after the foundation was laid, the adversaries caused all work on the temple to cease for four years until the second year of Darius.

## CHAPTER 5 - READ THE CHAPTER FIRST

1. Read Haggai 1; then check this box. [x]

The opposition had halted the work. God was using the adversaries to try the hearts of His people. The prophet Haggai painted a picture of a people concerned only with their own houses and lands while God's house still lay in waste and ruin.

2. Read Zechariah 3 and 4; then check this box. [x]
3. Who is encouraged by name in Zechariah 3? Joshua -- all those that have their sin forgiven  
And in Zechariah 4? Joshua & Zerubabel  
-- All those that have the capstone (Jesus) and receive oil from one of the two at the lamp
4. Who began to build once again? v. 2 Zerubbabel and Joshua

Tatnai was the governor of all of the provinces on the west side of the Euphrates River. He may have heard complaints from the adversaries about the revival of the work on the temple. He came to Jerusalem to see exactly what was taking place, and then dispatched an objective letter to King Darius, the current ruler in Persia, recorded in verses 7-17.

5. What question did Tatnai put to the builders? vv. 3,4,9,10 "Who authorized you to rebuild this temple and to finish it?" 4 They[a] also asked, "What are the names of those who are constructing this building?"
6. Who did the Jews say they were? v. 11 "We are the servants of the God of heaven and earth"
7. Who first made the decree to build the house of God? v. 13 "However, in the first year, King Cyrus issued a decree to rebuild this house of God"
8. What instructions were given to Sheshbazzar (Zerubbabel) when he was given the vessels? v. 15  
Take these articles and go and deposit them in the temple in Jerusalem. And rebuild the house of God on its site.
9. What did Tatnai ask the king to search for? v. 17 to see if King Cyrus did in fact issue a decree to rebuild this house of God in Jerusalem.

## CHAPTER 6 - READ THE CHAPTER FIRST

Diligent search revealed the record in one of the Median palaces.

1. What was King Darius' decision? vv. 6,7 Let the work of this house of God alone; let the governor of the Jews and the elders of the Jews build this house of God in his place. To continue the work on the House of God.
2. What did the king command concerning the tribute money? v. 8 the king's goods, even of the tribute beyond the river, forthwith expenses be given unto these men, that they be not hindered.
3. What were the Jews to be given? v. 9 that which they have need of, both young bullocks, and rams, and lambs, for the burnt offerings of the God of heaven, wheat, salt, wine, and oil, according to the appointment of the priests which are at Jerusalem, let it be given them day by day
4. What did King Darius want the Jews to pray for? v. 10 pray for the life of the king, and of his sons.
5. What would happen to anyone who altered the king's words? v. 11 whosoever shall alter this word, let timber be pulled down from his house, and being set up, let him be hanged thereon; and let his house be made a dunghill for this.
6. How did Tatnai and his companions perform the word of the king? v. 13b they did it speedily.  
 The temple was completed in March of the year 515 B.C. It had taken 22 years to complete. Maturation of the spiritual life is not an instantaneous experience. It is completed only by time, trials, and continuous yieldings to the "hammer and chisel" of the Holy Spirit.
7. Who attended the dedication of the house of God? v. 16 the children of Israel, the priests, and the Levites, and the rest of the children of the captivity
8. What was offered at the dedication service? v. 17 an hundred bullocks, two hundred rams, four hundred lambs; and for a sin offering for all Israel, twelve he goats
9. Read the account of the dedication of Solomon's temple in I Kings 8 and II Chronicles 7:1-3; then check this box. [X]

Though the Shekinah glory of God was not manifest during the second dedication, the promise of a future and far greater glory had been given by the prophet Haggai.

10. Write out Haggai 2:9. the glory of the later house will be greater than the former house, for out of this house I will bring peace says the Lord. The later house was the one in which Jesus.. the prince of peace taught.
11. For whom was the passover killed? v. 20 for all the children of the captivity, and for their brethren the priests, and for themselves the Levites
12. What feast was kept with joy for seven days? v. 22 the feast of unleavened bread

There are approximately 57 years between Chapters 6 and 7. The Lord saw fit to raise up a new Jewish leader out of Babylon to instruct and correct the backslidden nation of Israel. In Chapters 7-10, Ezra led the second group of exiles from Babylon to Israel and instituted reforms among the regathered Jews.

## CHAPTER 7 - READ THE CHAPTER FIRST

1. What was Ezra's occupation? vv. 6,11 he was a ready scribe in the law of Moses, which the Lord God of Israel had given
2. Why did the king grant Ezra all of his requests? v. 6 all his request, according to the hand of the Lord his God upon him.
3. Who went with Ezra to Jerusalem? v. 7 children of Israel, and of the priests, and the Levites, and the singers, and the porters, and the Nethinims, unto Jerusalem

4. What three things was Ezra prepared to do? v. 10  
 a. seek the law of the Lord, b. and to do it,  
 c. and to teach in Israel statutes and judgments.

Here is the secret of an effective Christian. God's Word is studied, practiced, and then perpetuated through teaching in the lives of others.

Verses 12-26 record the king's permission for the exiles to return, and also the gifts and the special authority that the king gave to Ezra.

5. What did the king and his counselors offer to God? v. 15 silver and gold
6. What were the Jews told to buy with the gold and silver? vv. 17,18 bullocks, rams, lambs, with their meat offerings and their drink offerings, and offer them upon the altar of the house of your God
7. What else was given to them? v. 19 vessels also that are given thee for the service of the house of thy God, those deliver thou before the God of Jerusalem
8. From where were they given permission to get anything they might need? v. 20 out of the king's treasure house.
9. Why was the king so generous to the returning Jews? v. 23 why should there be wrath against the realm of the king and his sons? He was afraid of Gods wrath.
10. What was not imposed upon the priests, singers, porters, Nethinims, or ministers of the house of God? v. 24 not be lawful to impose toll, tribute, or custom, upon them.
11. Who was to appoint magistrates and judges? v. 25 Ezra, after the wisdom of thy God, that is in thine hand, set magistrates and judges,
12. What was to happen to anyone who did not obey God's law or the king's law? v. 26 let judgment be executed speedily upon him, whether it be unto death, or to banishment, or to confiscation of goods, or to imprisonment.
13. What had God put within the heart of the king? v. 27 to beautify the house of the Lord which is in Jerusalem:

## CHAPTER 8 - READ THE CHAPTER FIRST

Verses 1-14 list the people who were making the journey to Israel with Ezra. Verses 15-30 describe a special gathering of the Jews before they return to Jerusalem.

1. Whom did Ezra discover was missing? v. 15 and found there none of the sons of Levi.
2. What were Ezra's representatives told to say to Iddo? v. 17 that they should bring unto us ministers for the house of our God.

Though Ezra had sent out messengers asking for Levites, he recognized that it was God who called and drew these priests to make the journey back to their homeland. (v. 18)

3. Why did Ezra call a fast? v. 21 that we might afflict ourselves before our God, to seek of him a right way for us, and for our little ones, and for all our substance.

As the people began to make preparation to return to Israel, Ezra's faith was tested. The way back to Israel was filled with robbers, and the returning exiles brought with them much treasure. Because he had confidently asserted to the king that God had his hand on the Jews and would protect them, Ezra was ashamed to ask the king for an armed escort. Instead, he and his fellow travelers fasted and sought God.

4. What did the hand of God do for the returning Jews? v. 31b he delivered us from the hand of the enemy, and of such as lay in wait by the way.

## CHAPTER 9 - READ THE CHAPTER FIRST

The children of Israel had forgotten the lessons that God had taught them through the fall of their

kingdom and 70 years of captivity. They had fallen back into the same sins that originally caused their downfall.

1. What three groups had not separated themselves from the heathen? v. 1
  - a. The people of Israel,
  - b. and the priests,
  - c. and the Levites
2. What two groups were the chief offenders? v. 2 a. the princes b. and rulers
3. What was Ezra's reaction? v. 3 when I heard this thing, I rent my garment and my mantle, and plucked off the hair of my head and of my beard, and sat down astonished.

Verses 6-15 show Ezra as the intercessor of Israel. He cried out for forgiveness as he took the sin of the nation upon himself, though he, in fact, was innocent.

4. Why had the Israelites been given into the hand of other nations and suffered so much at their hand? v. 7 Since the days of our fathers have we been in a great trespass unto this day; and for our iniquities
5. What four things had God's mercy allowed the Jews to do? v. 9
  - a. to give us a reviving,
  - b. to set up the house of our God,
  - c. and to repair the desolations thereof,
  - d. and to give us a wall in Judah and in Jerusalem.
6. What three commands had God, from the time they left Egypt, given the Israelites concerning the heathen inhabitants of the Promised Land? v. 12
  - a. give not your daughters unto their sons,
  - b. neither take their daughters unto your sons,
  - c. nor seek their peace or their wealth for ever

The nation had just experienced years of torment because God's commands had been consistently disobeyed.

7. Although this time God had been merciful and allowed the Israelites to return to their land, what did Ezra feel would probably happen if they sinned again as they had before? v. 14b wouldest not thou be angry with us till thou hadst consumed us, so that there should be no remnant nor escaping?

## CHAPTER 10 - READ THE CHAPTER FIRST

1. Who came to Ezra out of Israel? v. 1 a very great congregation of men and women and children
2. What did Shechaniah suggest to make things right? v. 3 therefore let us make a covenant with our God to put away all the wives, and such as are born of them

The priests, Levites and all Israel swore to do as Shechaniah proposed. (v. 5) It is not enough to weep great tears and pray eloquent prayers. With true repentance, action must be taken to remove the sin.

3. What proclamation was made throughout Judah and Jerusalem? v. 7 \_\_\_\_\_  
that they should gather themselves together unto Jerusalem;
4. What would be the consequences if the proclamation were ignored? v. 8 \_\_\_\_\_  
three days, according to the counsel of the princes and the elders, all his substance should be forfeited, and himself separated from the  
congregation of those that had been carried away
5. What three things did Ezra demand of the people of Israel? v. 11
  - a. Now therefore make confession unto the Lord God of your fathers, and do his pleasure: \_\_\_\_\_
  - b. \_\_\_\_\_ and separate yourselves from the people of the land,
  - c. \_\_\_\_\_ and from the strange wives.
6. How did the congregation respond? v. 12 \_\_\_\_\_ As thou hast said, so must we do.

Within three and a half months, the men of Israel had put aside their foreign wives and the children born of those unions.

God demands a holy, separated people. Ezra knew that if the hearts of the worshipers in the temple are not clean before God, the preparing of the physical temple is in vain.

Just as the Lord had used Zerubbabel and Jeshua to lead His people in the restoration of the physical temple, so He used Ezra to lead in the restoration of the spiritual temple. In the record of Ezra's ministry we see the powerful testimony of a man who "prepared his heart to seek the law of the Lord, and to do it, and to teach in Israel statutes and judgments." (Ezra 7:10)

## THE BOOK OF NEHEMIAH

### INTRODUCTION

Nehemiah was a layman who dedicated himself to securing the civil prosperity of the reinstated community in Jerusalem. As the governor, he exerted much personal influence and worked hand in hand with Ezra the scribe over a period of 12 years.

The dominant theme of the book of Nehemiah is **leadership**. Nehemiah's influence was strong and decisive on king and commoner alike because he moved in the direct leading of God.

### OUTLINE OF THE BOOK

- I. Building the walls and the gates (Chapters 1-6)
- II. Establishing the community in Jerusalem (Chapters 7:1-12:43)
- III. Reforming abuses (Chapter 12:44-13:31)

### CHAPTER 1 - READ THE CHAPTER FIRST

1. Nehemiah's take-charge attitude is evident in the very opening statement of this story. Who asked for an account from the men of Judah? v. 2 \_\_\_\_\_ I asked them concerning the Jews that had escaped--Nehemiah
2. What two things did Nehemiah ask about? v. 2 a. \_\_\_\_\_ concerning the Jews that had escaped--who were left in captive  
b. \_\_\_\_\_ and concerning Jerusalem

3. In what condition were these things? v. 3
  - a. in great affliction and reproach: \_\_\_\_\_
  - b. the wall of Jerusalem also is broken down, and the gates thereof are burned with fire. \_\_\_\_\_
4. This report had a profound effect on Nehemiah. What was his response? v.4
  - a. sat down \_\_\_\_\_ b. and wept, \_\_\_\_\_
  - c. and mourned certain days, \_\_\_\_\_ d. and fasted, \_\_\_\_\_
  - e. and prayed before the God of heaven, \_\_\_\_\_

Nehemiah was a man accustomed to pray. From these accounts we see that prayer was his first resort and his final word in just about every situation. Answer the following questions from the prayer in verses 5 through 11.

5. What indication do we have that Nehemiah was constantly in prayer? v.6 \_\_\_\_\_  
hear the prayer of thy servant, which I pray before thee now, day and night
6. Whom did Nehemiah include among those of Israel who had sinned against the Lord? v. 6b  
the children of Israel, which we have sinned against thee: both I and my father's house have sinned.
7. Nehemiah reminded the Lord of a promise He had made to His people through Moses. Summarize this promise in your own words. vv. 8,9 \_\_\_\_\_  
if you transgress you will be scattered abroad, but if you repent and turn to the Lord and draw close to Him, the Lord will gather you up and establish you in a land He has prepared for you.

Nehemiah was willing to be the tool God used in pleading before the king for Jerusalem. He prayed through to action. At the end of the prayer his thoughts turned to the king and his court where Nehemiah served, for it was in this court that God would begin to answer Nehemiah's prayer.

## CHAPTER 2 - READ THE CHAPTER FIRST

Four months passed from the time Nehemiah heard of the state of Jerusalem until he was able to present his case before the king.

1. What was different about Nehemiah's appearance this time he went before the king? v. 1 \_\_\_\_\_  
sad in his presence.
- This was dangerous, for no sorrow was allowed in the court under penalty of death.
2. The king saw the depth of Nehemiah's feeling. He said it was (v. 2) \_\_\_\_\_  
this is nothing else but sorrow of heart. Then I was very sore afraid,
3. What was Nehemiah's answer when the king asked why he looked sad? v. 3 \_\_\_\_\_  
Let the king live for ever: why should not my countenance be sad, when the city, the place of my fathers' sepulchres, lieth waste, and the gates thereof are consumed with fire?
4. The stage had been set. God had given Nehemiah favor in the sight of the king. What was the first thing Nehemiah did when the king suddenly asked what his request was? v. 4 \_\_\_\_\_  
So I prayed to the God of heaven. --- Praying before just jumping right in, this is a great lesson for me!

5. Nehemiah boldly asked three things of the king. What were they?
- a. v. 5 that thou wouldst send me unto Judah, unto the city of my fathers' sepulchres, that I may build it
- b. v. 7 let letters be given me to the governors beyond the river, that they may convey me over till I come into Judah
- c. v. 8 a letter unto Asaph the keeper of the king's forest, that he may give me timber to make beams for the gates of the palace which appertained to the house, and for the wall of the city, and for the house that I shall enter into
6. "And the king granted me, according to the good hand of my God upon me." v. 8

Nehemiah began his interview with the king in prayer and ended his account of it with a testimony of the Lord's undertaking.

Up to this point Nehemiah had been alone--in his decision to go, in his wrestling with God. This was suddenly no longer the case.

7. Now his enemies began to be revealed. Which two are mentioned in verse 10 ?
- a. Sanballat the Horonite, b. and Tobiah the servant, the Ammonite
8. Although some men accompanied him on his survey of the walls, which words reveal that Nehemiah still bore the burden of his task alone? v. 12 neither told I any man what my God had put in my heart to do at Jerusalem
9. Nehemiah lists the classes of people who did not understand his mission in verse 16. Who were they? a. the rulers knew not whither I went, b. neither had I as yet told it to the Jews,
- c. nor to the priests, d. nor to the nobles,
- e. nor to the rest that did the work

When Nehemiah began to speak the burden of the Lord that was upon him, the people began to rally, to take heart and to join in the battle.

10. Nehemiah described the desolation, saying, "Jerusalem lieth waste, and the gates thereof are burned with fire and he called to action, saying, "let us let us build up the wall of Jerusalem, that we be no more a reproach." v. 17
11. When he testified of the blessings he had received from both the Lord and the king, suddenly Nehemiah's "I" became the "we" of the people. They said, "Let us rise up and build. So they strengthened their hands for this good work." v. 18
12. Sanballat and Tobiah and a third adversary, Geshem, laughed them to scorn and and despised them. v. 19
13. But now Nehemiah was not a lonely laborer. He answered the adversaries as a leader among the hosts of the Lord. What did he say? v. 20 The God of heaven, he will prosper us; therefore we his servants will arise and build: but ye have no portion, nor right, nor memorial, in Jerusalem.

### CHAPTER 3 - READ THE CHAPTER FIRST

Here we have an enumeration of those called and chosen for this work. Although not every worker is mentioned here, the Lord is careful to record by name each one who sets himself apart unto His purposes. This is not just a list of names, but it is a record of action.

1. Eliashib the high priest and his brethren the priests did four things. What were they? v. 1  
(Please answer on next page.)

- a. rose up with his brethren the priests, b. and they builded the sheep gate;  
 c. they sanctified it, d. and set up the doors of it;

The teams labored shoulder to shoulder along the whole length of the wall. Two action words dominate the chapter: **build** and **repair**.

2. Not everyone accepted the challenge. What did the nobles of the Tekoites miss out on? v. 5  
their nobles put not their necks to the work of their Lord.
3. Who labored with Shallum the son of the ruler of half of Jerusalem? v. 12 he and his daughters.
4. The workers came from many towns in Palestine and from many different walks of life. List four occupations represented among the workers on the wall.
- a. goldsmiths b. priests  
 c. ruler of part of Bethhaccerem d. the keeper of the east gate.

This is a scene of tremendous heroism. A small remnant of captive Jews (38 are named here) set themselves to rebuild their fallen capital while they were few in number, poor in resources and surrounded by enemies. Each laborer was making a stand that might cost his life.

## CHAPTER 4 - READ THE CHAPTER FIRST

As God's people set about building in the kingdom, the enemy was stirred into opposition.

1. Sanballat heard that we builded the wall, v. 1
2. His reaction was threefold. He was he was wroth, and  
and took great indignation  
and and mocked the Jews. v. 1.
3. What was Sanballat's mocking estimate of the people in Jerusalem? v. 2 will they make an end in a day
4. Tobiah said that the wall would not support even the light-footed fox v. 3
5. What mighty weapon of warfare did Nehemiah immediately put to use? vv. 4,5 prayer  
 Read II Corinthians 10:4.
6. What reason did Nehemiah give for the Jews' success in building the wall? v. 6 for the people had a mind to work

When the wall was half finished, the enemy raised a new offensive. Three nations conspired to fight against Jerusalem and put an end to its reconstruction.

7. How did the workers on the wall respond to this crisis? v. 9  
 a. we made our prayer unto our God,  
 b. and set a watch against them day and night
8. In Matthew 26:41, Jesus exhorts us to watch and pray
9. Nehemiah looked at the situation and rose up and turned the builders into warriors. Families were equipped with three things: (v. 13) a. their swords,  
 b. their spears, c. and their bows.

10. What were the three points of Nehemiah's exhortation to all the people? v. 14
  - a. Be not ye afraid of them: \_\_\_\_\_
  - b. remember the Lord, which is great and terrible, \_\_\_\_\_
  - c. and fight for your brethren, your sons, and your daughters, your wives, and your houses. \_\_\_\_\_
11. On the wall, half of the people wrought in the work and the other half of them (v. 16) \_\_\_\_\_  
held both the spears, the shields, and the bows, and the habergeons \_\_\_\_\_
12. Everyone working on the wall with one hand (v. 17) \_\_\_\_\_ wrought his work  
and with the other hand \_\_\_\_\_ wrought in the work, and with the other hand held a weapon. \_\_\_\_\_
13. Preparations for defense were so complete that the enemy knew that God had \_\_\_\_\_  
brought their counsel to nought, \_\_\_\_\_ and the planned attacks were never made. v. 15
14. "So we labored in the work." (verse 21) Opposition from the enemy had only served to increase the unity, resolve and strength of the workers. List three further measures that were taken to ensure the safety of the people.
  - a. vv. 19,20 \_\_\_\_\_ In what place therefore ye hear the sound of the trumpet.. Signaling \_\_\_\_\_
  - b. v. 22 \_\_\_\_\_ let every one with his servant lodge within Jerusalem, that in the night they may be a guard to us, and labour on the day. \_\_\_\_\_
  - c. v. 23 \_\_\_\_\_ none of us put off our clothes, saving that every one put them off for washing. \_\_\_\_\_  
Yay God...

## CHAPTER 5 - READ THE CHAPTER FIRST

At this crucial time internal problems--disunity and discontent among the brethren--threatened to destroy the whole work.

1. One group said they were forced to take grain they could not afford to pay for (v. 2). Others had mortgaged their property for these reasons:
  - a. v. 3 \_\_\_\_\_ that we might buy corn, because of the dearth
  - b. v. 4 \_\_\_\_\_ We have borrowed money for the king's tribute, \_\_\_\_\_
2. Some families were further reduced to (v. 5) \_\_\_\_\_ we bring into bondage our sons and our daughters to be servants, \_\_\_\_\_  
and some of our daughters are brought unto bondage already \_\_\_\_\_

Such practices were in direct opposition to the special provision for the poor given in the Law of Moses. Read Leviticus 25:35-38.

3. Nehemiah was \_\_\_\_\_ very angry when I heard their cry and these words \_\_\_\_\_ v. 6
4. Nehemiah rebuked the \_\_\_\_\_ nobles, \_\_\_\_\_ and \_\_\_\_\_ and the rulers, \_\_\_\_\_ and set \_\_\_\_\_ and said unto them, a great assembly \_\_\_\_\_ against them. v. 7
5. Nehemiah dealt with the offenders by direct accusation and he shamed them by contrasting their practices with his own example. He testified that he and others had redeemed the Jews from their heathen masters, and asks (v. 8) \_\_\_\_\_ will ye even sell your brethren? or shall they be sold unto us? \_\_\_\_\_
6. He counseled the people to walk in \_\_\_\_\_ walk in the fear of our God \_\_\_\_\_  
because of \_\_\_\_\_ the reproach of the heathen our enemies \_\_\_\_\_ v. 9

7. Nehemiah stated that he and his brethren had lent money and corn for which they, too, could collect interest; but he chose not to, saying, "I pray you, let <sup>us</sup> \_\_\_\_\_ leave off this usury." v.10
8. When the nobles and the rulers fully agreed to cease from usury and restore the mortgaged property, what other group of leaders did Nehemiah single out to join in this resolve? v. 12  
\_\_\_\_\_ called the priests, and took an oath of them, that they should do according to this promise

In the closing section of this chapter, Nehemiah testified that during the 12-year period he served as governor he had never taken the governor's salary or eaten the food allotted for the governor. Nehemiah's example spoke at least as clearly as his words, as he led the people in unselfish commitment to the work at hand.

9. Read I Corinthians 9:7-15. Like Nehemiah, the Apostle Paul denied himself the material rights due him as a minister so that none could mistake his motive. In verse 12, Paul summarizes his position, saying, "Nevertheless, \_\_\_\_\_ we have not used this power; but suffer all things, lest we should hinder the gospel of Christ."
10. From verses 15-18, list four specific unselfish acts Nehemiah mentions as part of his personal contribution to the cause.
  - a. \_\_\_\_\_ had taken of them bread and wine, beside forty shekels of silver; yea, even their servants bare rule over the people: but so did not I
  - b. \_\_\_\_\_ I continued in the work of this wall, neither bought we any land: and all my servants were gathered thither unto the work.
  - c. \_\_\_\_\_ there were at my table an hundred and fifty of the Jews and rulers, beside those that came unto us from among the heathen that are about us.
  - d. \_\_\_\_\_ yet for all this required not I the bread of the governor, because the bondage was heavy upon this people.
11. Again and again we see in Nehemiah's short, direct prayers the heart of a man in close connection with his God (See 2:4, 6:9, 13:31). Whom does he expect to reward him for all he has done in behalf of the Lord's people? v. 19 \_\_\_\_\_ Think upon me, my God, for good, according to all that I have done for this people.

## CHAPTER 6 - READ THE CHAPTER FIRST

Nehemiah's testimony is that victory is wrought only by winning battles. Chapter 6 records the completing of the wall and documents four areas of conflict that beset him during this time.

1. The allied enemies of the Jews in Jerusalem sought to draw Nehemiah away from the work at hand into a place of personal peril, saying (v. 2) \_\_\_\_\_ Come, let us meet together in some one of the villages in the plain of Ono. But they thought to do me mischief.
2. What reason did Nehemiah send back why he would not meet with them? v. 3 \_\_\_\_\_ saying, I am doing a great work, so that I cannot come down: why should the work cease, whilst I leave it, and come down to you
3. The fifth time Sanballat asked Nehemiah to take counsel with them, he reported a rumor about the ambitions of Nehemiah and the Jews. What was this rumor? v. 6 \_\_\_\_\_ hat thou and the Jews think to rebel: for which cause thou buildest the wall, that thou mayest be their king
4. Nehemiah correctly identified the reports as lies (v. 8) and assessed the effect they were calculated to have on the workers in Jerusalem, namely, \_\_\_\_\_ Their hands shall be weakened from the work, that it be not done \_\_\_\_\_ . v. 9

5. Write out the pointed prayer Nehemiah voiced at this time. v. 9 \_\_\_\_\_  
 OH God Strengthen my hands... Or Help! \_\_\_\_\_
- After this, Shemaiah summoned Nehemiah to another meeting, a private one, behind the locked doors of the temple where he would be safe from attacks on his life.
6. Nehemiah perceived that God had not sent Shemaiah, but that Tobiah and Sanballat had \_\_\_\_\_  
 but that he pronounced this prophecy against \_\_\_\_\_ him. v. 12
7. What was the purpose of Shemaiah's deception? v. 13 \_\_\_\_\_  
 that I should be afraid, and do so, and sin, and that they might have matter for an evil report, that they might reproach me.
8. Apparently several prophets had used similar devices on Nehemiah, all with the purpose of (v.14)  
 that would have put me in fear,, try to get him to sin, and fear..
9. "So the wall was finished...in \_\_\_\_\_ fifty and two \_\_\_\_\_ days." v. 15
10. When all the enemies and all the heathen learned that the wall was finished, their reaction was twofold: v. 16  
 a. \_\_\_\_\_ hey were much cast down in their own eyes:  
 b. \_\_\_\_\_ for they perceived that this work was wrought of our God.
11. One of the leaders of the opposition, \_\_\_\_\_ Tobiah \_\_\_\_\_ by name, was allied by marriage to the nobles in Jerusalem and continued to incite enmity against Nehemiah by a letter-writing campaign. Nehemiah recognized that the aim of this enemy was: (v. 19)

## CHAPTER 7 - READ THE CHAPTER FIRST

1. The first order of business after the wall was completed was to appoint: (v. 1)  
 a. \_\_\_\_\_ the porters \_\_\_\_\_ b. \_\_\_\_\_ and the singers \_\_\_\_\_ c. \_\_\_\_\_ and the Levites were appointed,
2. Secondly, Nehemiah set about to secure the city. He gave two men charge over Jerusalem with instructions to (v.3) \_\_\_\_\_ Let not the gates of Jerusalem be opened until the sun be hot; and while they stand by, let them shut the doors, and bar them: and appoint watches of the inhabitants of Jerusalem, every one in his watch, and every one to be over against his \_\_\_\_\_
3. \_\_\_\_\_ house. What problems faced the newly fortified city? v. 4 \_\_\_\_\_  
 the city was large and great: but the people were few therein, and the houses were not builded.

Nehemiah was now led of the Lord to reckon by genealogy all the returned Jews living in Palestine. Verses 6 through 65 are an accounting of the number of the people grouped by their cities and by the Levitical offices. This is a review of the register first given in Ezra 2.

4. The total number of the congregation of Israel, excluding servants and singers, was \_\_\_\_\_ 42360 \_\_\_\_\_  
 v. 66

Not only were the names and numbers carefully recorded, but the offerings given unto the work were also written in the official account.

5. Gifts from three sources are listed in verses 70 through 72. What are they?  
 a. \_\_\_\_\_ some of the chief of the fathers gave unto the work \_\_\_\_\_ b. \_\_\_\_\_ that which the rest of the people gave \_\_\_\_\_  
 (Please continue answer on next page.)

c. The Tirshatha gave and the Levites and Priests...

It was important for Nehemiah, the Tirshatha, as a leader of the people, to be exemplary in every area of his own life, including his material offerings.

## CHAPTER 8 - READ THE CHAPTER FIRST

With the walls fortified and the city secure, attention was now turned to reestablishing public worship in Israel.

1. Who joined Nehemiah in leading the people in worship? vv. 1,9 Ezra, The Levites, and all the people
2. What did the people ask Ezra to present before them? v. 1 The book of the Law of Moses
3. On this first day of the gathering, how long did Ezra read in the book of the Law? v. 3  
from the morning until midday
4. When Ezra opened the book and blessed the Lord, the great God, how did the people respond?  
vv. 5,6 a. all the people stood up b. all the people answered, Amen, Amen  
c. lifting up their hands d. they bowed their heads  
e. and worshipped the Lord with their faces to the ground
5. What did all the people do when they heard the words of the Law? v. 9 all the people wept,
6. Nehemiah, Ezra and the Levites encouraged the people to cease their mourning, for this day was holy and a time of JOY--- rejoicing... vv. 9-12
7. The people were brought to a place of rejoicing because (v. 12) they had understood the words that were declared unto them.
8. On the second day of this gathering, they found where it was written that the children of Israel should dwell in booths in the feast of the seventh month. What was the name of this feast? Leviticus 23:34 festival of trumpets
9. How many of the Jews took part in this feast? v. 17 all the congregation of them
10. What did Ezra do on each of the eight days of the feast? v. 18 he read in the book of the law of God

## CHAPTER 9 - READ THE CHAPTER FIRST

1. On the twenty-fourth day of this month, the Israelites assembled again, this time not with feasting but with with fasting, and with sackclothes, and earth upon them. v. 1
2. This was true heartfelt worship. What three aspects of worship do we see in verses 2 and 3?  
a. Israel separated themselves from all strangers  
b. confessed their sins, and the iniquities of their fathers  
c. stood up in their place, and read in the book of the law of the Lord their God one fourth part of the day
3. Certain Levites stood on the stairs, or raised platform, and (v. 4) and cried with a loud voice unto the Lord their God.

4. Certain other Levites led the people in worship, saying (v. 5) Stand up and bless the Lord your God for ever and ever: and blessed be thy glorious name, which is exalted above all blessing and praise.

These Levites proceeded to offer a confession to the Lord on behalf of the assembled congregation. God's faithful and just dealing was contrasted with the disobedience and backsliding of His people.

5. Outline the Levites' confession by filling in the blanks below. Some of the blanks are filled in as examples.

|                                                                                | Verse Numbers |
|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------|
| I. God, the glorious Creator of Heaven and Earth                               | 6             |
| II. God's faithful dealing with Abraham                                        | 7-8           |
| III. <u>God the Deliverer delivering Israel from Egypt</u>                     | 9-11          |
| IV. <u>God's wonderful provision in the wilderness</u>                         | 9-15          |
| V. <u>Israel's proved rebellion</u>                                            | 16-18         |
| VI. <u>God's continued faithfulness in the wilderness</u>                      | 19-21         |
| VII. <u>God's inheritance, the Lord gives Israel Land and a Place</u>          | 22-25         |
| VIII. <u>Israel still turns from the Lord and casts away Gods Law</u>          | 26            |
| IX. <u>Israel is carried away, but God delivers them again</u>                 | 27            |
| X. <u>Israel continues to harden their heart and turn from the Law of Life</u> | 28-30         |
| XI. <u>Declaration of God's mercy and grace</u>                                | 31            |
| XII. <u>Plea for mercy and grace at this time</u>                              | 32            |
| XIII. Confession of God's righteousness and the people's sinfulness.           | 33-37         |

6. Verse 38 is the altar call of the worship service. By this act of consecration the Israelites publicly confessed themselves to be the congregation of the Lord, His people by covenant. Write out verse 38.

and because all this we make a covenant and write it, and our princes, priests and leaders seal it.

## CHAPTER 10 - READ THE CHAPTER FIRST

1. Nehemiah, as the Tirshatha, is the first one recorded among those who sealed, or endorsed, the covenant. Besides individuals listed, these groups were included in the sealing:
- a. v. 9 the Levites b. v. 14 The chief of the people
2. Wonderful is the unity among the whole congregation at this critical time! It is recorded that the rest of the people came to their brethren, their nobles, and and entered into a curse, and into an oath, to walk in God's law which was given by Moses... v. 29

Here we see the vital signs of real revival. One evangelist has defined revival as "a new beginning of obedience to God." Throughout the remainder of this chapter, Nehemiah records specific observances of the Law of Moses which the Israelites now oblige themselves to fulfill. Some of the ordinances enumerated here apply to personal and social life (verses 30-31), but the greater portion have to do with maintaining public temple worship (verses 32-39).

3. What final promise do the people make regarding public worship? v. 39b \_\_\_\_\_  
we will not forsake the house of our God.

## CHAPTER 11 - READ THE CHAPTER FIRST

The newly united Israelites now undertake to populate the city of Jerusalem. Although we might think it an honor to dwell in the holy city, it was not convenient because the city was in general disrepair (see Chapter 7:4).

1. How did the people choose who was to dwell in Jerusalem? v. 1 \_\_\_\_\_  
the rest of the people also cast lots,
2. What proportion of the population were to live there? v. 1 \_\_\_\_\_ to bring one of ten to dwell in Jerusalem
3. How did the rest of Israel regard those who went to live in Jerusalem? v. 2 \_\_\_\_\_  
And the people blessed all the men,
4. We can see from verses 3 and 20 that it was a sacrifice to move to Jerusalem. What was one of the things these individuals had to give up? \_\_\_\_\_ they had to leave their former places, and move lock stock and barrel.  
And the residue of Israel, of the priests, and the Levites, were in all the cities of Judah, every one in his inheritance

Verses 3 through 24 list the chiefs of the provinces who dwelt in Jerusalem. Verses 25 through 36 record some of the major towns inhabited by the rest of Israel.

## CHAPTER 12 - READ THE CHAPTER FIRST

Verses 1-26 contain a summary record of the rulers, priests and Levites from the early days of the exiles' return under Zerubbabel to the time of Nehemiah, the governor, and Ezra the priest and scribe.

The scene is set for the culmination of the labor of these days, the dedication of the wall.

1. Who were the first to be summoned to prepare for the celebration? vv. 27-29  
a. \_\_\_\_\_ sought the Levites out of all their places, b. \_\_\_\_\_ And the sons of the singers gathered themselves together
2. The priests and the Levites purified: (v. 30) a. \_\_\_\_\_ themselves  
b. \_\_\_\_\_ the people c. \_\_\_\_\_ the gates d. \_\_\_\_\_ and the wall
3. Nehemiah assembled the princes upon the wall and appointed (v. 31) \_\_\_\_\_  
two great companies of them that gave thanks

Tobiah had mockingly stated that the rebuilt wall would not support a fox! Now two great crowds of singing worshipers triumphantly march along the top of the whole circumference of the wall. Apparently these two groups, one accompanied by Ezra and the other by Nehemiah, set out in opposite directions from one point on the wall, met on the opposite side, and proceeded to a thanksgiving service in the temple. (v. 40)

4. That day "the joy of Jerusalem was heard even afar off." From verse 43:
  - a. What accompanied the rejoicing? great joy
  - b. Why did they rejoice? for God had made them rejoice
  - c. How did they rejoice? with they offered great sacrifices and with great joy..
  - d. Who joined the men in rejoicing? the wives also and the children rejoiced:

A new zeal to attend to the affairs of the house of God, a fresh faithfulness to perform assigned duties--these were some of the outworkings of the joy of the Lord now shed abroad in the hearts of the people.

5. Laborers were assigned to care for the offerings gathered as the portions for the priests and Levites because (v. 44) for Judah rejoiced for the priests and for the Levites that waited.
6. The singers and the porters were encouraged to be faithful to their set offices. (v. 45)
7. Every day all the needs of the temple ministers were met by a great chain of blessing: (v. 47)
  - a. All Israel gave the portions of of the singers and the porters
  - b. They sanctified holy things unto unto the Levites
  - c. the Levites sanctified them unto unto the children of Aaron

## CHAPTER 13 - READ THE CHAPTER FIRST

Although the chronology of this last chapter is obscure, it seems that Nehemiah had spent a season at the court of Artaxerxes (v. 6), returned at the time of the dedication of the wall and took advantage of this occasion to reform certain abuses which had crept into the life of the people in his absence. Some of these reforms may have been made at other times. Nehemiah was a man whose zeal was matched by a keen and steady perception of the need. He knew that in a spiritual sense, eternal vigilance is the price of liberty.

1. It was through reading in the Law that Israel was led to (v. 3) that they separated from Israel all the mixed multitude.

Verses 4 through 14 seem to be a parenthetical interjection in which Nehemiah relates how he had dealt with some of these problems before.

Tobiah was an avowed enemy of Nehemiah and a sower of discord among the Jewish brethren (See Chapter 2:10, 19; 4:3, 7-8; 6:17-19).

2. While Nehemiah was away in Persia, what special favor had Eliashib shown to Tobiah? vv. 4,5 he had prepared for him a great chamber which was in the House of God == The Temple
3. What did Eliashib have to remove in order to do this? v. 5 meat offerings, the frankincense, and the vessels, and the tithes of the corn, the new wine, and the oil, which was commanded to be given to the Levites, and the singers, and the porters; and the offerings of the priests.
4. What action did Nehemiah take? vv. 8,9 cast forth all the household stuff to Tobiah out of the chamber.  
9 Then I commanded, and they cleansed the chambers: and thither brought I again the vessels of the house of God, with the meat offering and the frankincense.

5. How were the Levites and singers affected by the failure of the people to provide their portion?  
v. 10 the Levites and the singers, that did the work, were fled every one to his field
6. Nehemiah personally confronted the rulers and asked them (v. 11) \_\_\_\_\_  
Why is the house of God forsaken?
7. What problem did Nehemiah address in verses 15 through 22? \_\_\_\_\_
8. What did Nehemiah promise he would do if the merchants continued to camp outside the city on the Sabbath? v. 21 doing business and work on the sabbath
9. In Nehemiah's absence some Jews had married wives of Ashdod, of Ammon, and of Moab:  
\_\_\_\_\_ and had raised children that spake half in the speech of Ashdod  
who could not speak in the Jews' language. vv. 23-24
10. How did Nehemiah deal with these offenders? v. 25 \_\_\_\_\_  
intended with them, and cursed them, and smote certain of them, and plucked off their hair, and made them swear by God, saying, Ye shall not give your daughters unto their sons, nor take their daughters unto your sons, or for yourselves.
11. Nehemiah's final recorded prayer is in two parts: (vv. 29-31)
  - a. Remember them, O my God, because they have defiled the priesthood, and the covenant of the priesthood, and of the Levites.
  - b. Remember Thus cleansed I them from all strangers, and appointed the wards of the priests and the Levites, every one in his business;<sup>31</sup> And for the wood offering, at times appointed, and for the firstfruits. Remember me, O my God, for good.

Ezra and Nehemiah were both men of action, leaders among men, whose bold stand for God in the public arena was founded on an intimate standing in the presence of God. Amid the stress and demands of public ministry, Ezra could say, "I was strengthened as the hand of the Lord, my God, was upon me" (Ezra 7:28); and Nehemiah simply prayed, "Now therefore, O God, strengthen my hands" (Nehemiah 6:9). Together these men still speak to us as they addressed the people of God in Nehemiah 8:10: "The joy of the Lord is your strength."

I have answered all questions and completed all memory work to the best of my ability.

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Date 8/25/2017