



Nehemiah – An Overview

Prairie Rose EMC, May 23, 2021
Pastor Mike



1. Historical Context

606 BC – First deportation to Babylon

586 BC - Temple is destroyed

1st Return (536 BC) **Zerubbabel** leads some Jews back to Jerusalem to rebuild the temple. (Ezra 1-6) 50,000 captives return with him = 2% of population.

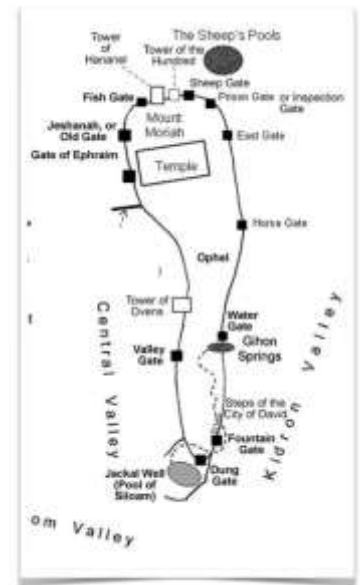
516 BC - Temple construction completed

478 BC - **Esther** is made queen of Persia and saves the Jews from an annihilation decree.

2nd Return (458 BC) **Ezra** brings a second group of exiles home and leads a great spiritual revival in Jerusalem (Ezra 7-10) 1500 men and families

3rd Return (444 BC) **Nehemiah's** group comes back to rebuild Jerusalem's walls. (Nehemiah 1-13)

445 BC - Complete the wall in a record 52 days.



What's up with the 70 years?

606 BC - 1st deportation

536 - 1st Return = 70 yrs.

586 BC - Temple destroyed

516 - Temple reconstructed = 70 yrs.

2 Chron. 36:21 – Land required a Sabbath every 7th year
Missed for 500 years = 70 years of back Sabbath

2. Overview

Nehemiah

Rebuilding the walls (1-7)

Return III (1&2)

a. Sad information (1)
- Prays

b. Secret inspection (2)
- Permission
- Safe passage
- Inspects the wall
- Devises a plan

Rebuild (3-7)

a. Erecting defences (3)
- Complete the work

b. Encountering difficulties (4-6)
- Criticism (4:1-6)
- Gossip in ranks (4:7-23)
- Draining Complaints (5:1-13)
- Personal Temptations (5:14-19)
- Slander (6)
- Intimidation (6)
- Threats (6)

c. Enlist and organize the people (7)
- Install leaders (7)
- Organize guard (7)
- List exiles (7)

Reforming the Community (8-13)

Renew (8-10)

a. Scripture communicated (8)

b. Sin confessed (9)

c. Submission covenanted (10)

Restore (11-13)

a. Dedication of wall (11-12)
- a listing of residents (11)
- Dedication party (12)

b. Final issues/reforms (13)
- Misappropriated funds
- Desecrated Sabbath
- Mixed marriages
- Neglected duties

“So the wall was completed on the 25th of Elul, in 52 days. When all our enemies heard about this, all the surrounding nations were afraid and lost their self-confidence, because they realized that this work had been done with the help of our God.”
Neh. 6:15&16

3. Why study this book?

What we learn from studying the book of Nehemiah

1. The Lord hears prayer ([Neh. 1:4–6](#)).
2. The Lord works providentially, especially through powerful rulers, to bring about his greater purposes (e.g., [Neh. 2:8](#)).
3. The Lord protects his people; therefore, they do not need to be afraid ([Neh. 4:14](#)).
4. The Lord is merciful and faithful to his promises despite his people’s persistence in sin ([Neh. 9:32–35](#)).
5. Worship is at the center of the life of God’s people, and it includes the willing, joyful giving of their resources ([Neh. 10:32–39](#)).
6. God’s people need to be on their guard against their own moral weakness (ch. 13).



JERUSALEM IN THE TIME OF NEHEMIAH (C. 444–420? B.C.)

Jerusalem was destroyed by the Babylonians in 586 a.c. Upon their return from exile in 536 a.c., the Jews, under the leadership of Zerubbabel and Joshua, first restored the altar and then laid the foundation of the temple. Twenty years later, in 516 a.c., the temple was rebuilt. This time period is referred to as the Second Temple period. Later on, and under very difficult circumstances, Nehemiah restored the city wall. This is described in great detail in ch. 3. There is ample archaeological evidence, both positive and negative, to show that only the Eastern Hill of Jerusalem was fortified at that time and that the eastern wall of the city was built higher up the slope than the previous wall, so that the city was smaller than that of Solomon.

The Tower of Hananel, the Tower of the Hundred, the Sheep Gate, the Gate of the Guard, and the Corner Tower added strength to the northern wall of the Temple Mount, which also served as the northern city wall in this area.

