

Nehemiah 1-7


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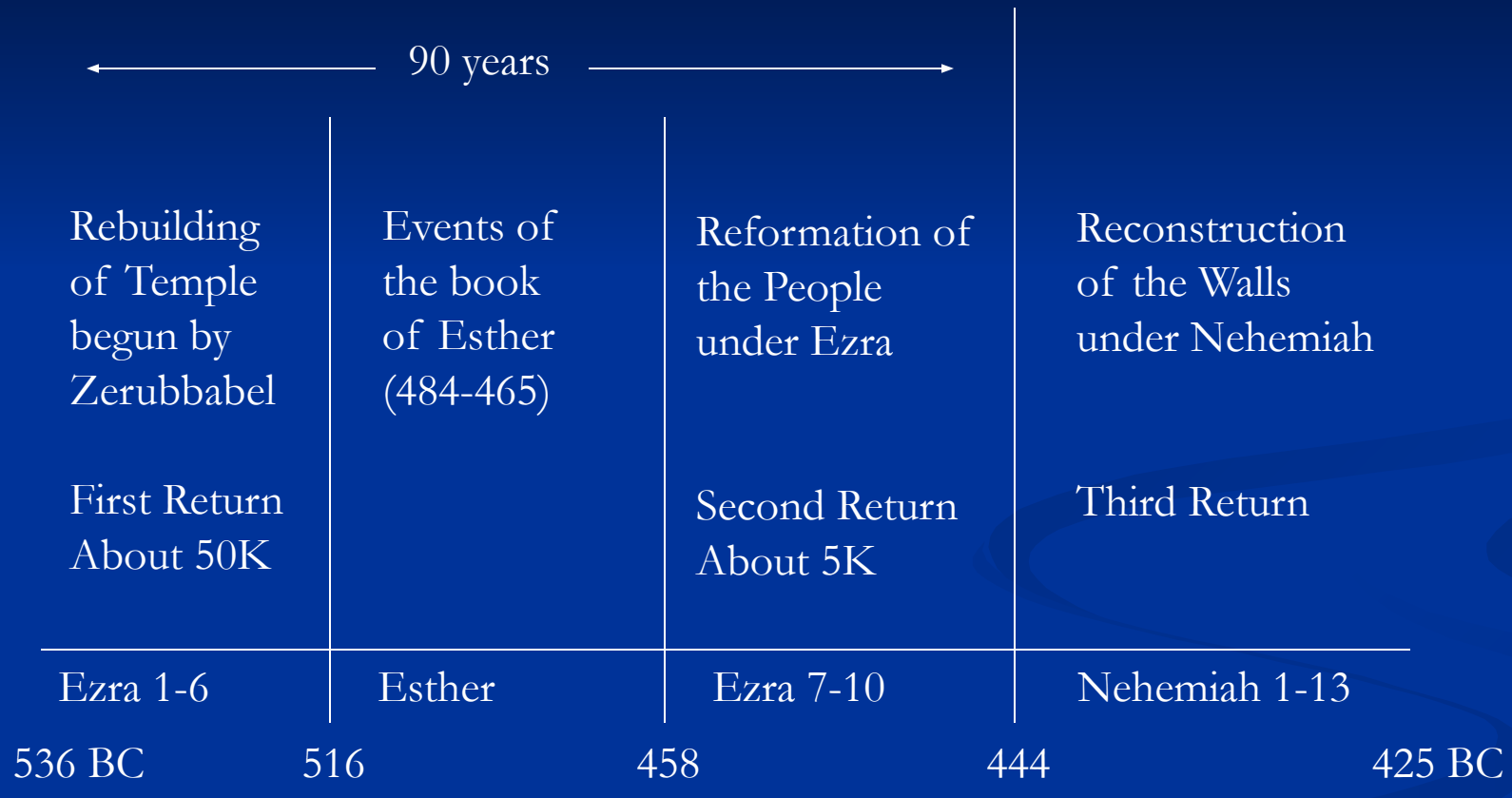
Sa 'Yo Hesus
kami ay luluhod
Ihahayag na Ikaw
ang tanging Dios

Who was Nehemiah?

- A contemporary of Ezra
- Cupbearer to King Artaxerxes of Persia.
- He held a position of crucial importance.
- He led a group of exiles from Babylon to return to Jerusalem.
- He led the rebuilding of the shattered walls of Jerusalem in just 52 days.
- He served as governor of Jerusalem from 444 -432 BC.

Nehemiah – Chronology



- Nehemiah was a leader whose life was characterized by compassion, vision, courage, godliness, integrity, prayer and action.
- His name means “Jehovah comforts or consoles”
- Generations of Christians have found inspiration & timeless principles of leadership from his example.

Key verses:

- 6:15,16, "So the wall was completed… in fifty-two days. And it came about when all our enemies heard *of it*, and all the nations surrounding us saw *it*, they lost their confidence; for they recognized that this work had been accomplished with the help of our God."

- 8:8 "And they read from the book, from the law of God, translating to give the sense so that they understood the reading."

Simple Outline of Nehemiah:

I. Reconstruction of the Wall 1-7

A. The Return to Jerusalem 1:1-2:20

B. The Rebuilding of the Walls 3:1-7:4

C. The Register of the People 7:5-7:73

II. Restoration of the People 8-13

I. Reconstruction of the Wall Chaps. 1-7

A. The Return to Jerusalem 1:1-2:20

1. Nehemiah's inquiry 1:1-3

2. Nehemiah's intercession 1:4-7

> The best prayers come from a deep sense of heartfelt need.

Vs 5 And I said, "I beseech Thee, O LORD God of heaven, the great and awesome God, who preserves the covenant and lovingkindness for those who love Him and keep His commandments"

A. The Return to Jerusalem 1:1-2:20

3. Nehemiah's petition 1:8-11

Vs 9 He recalled God's word to Moses, "…if you return to Me and keep My commandments…I will gather them …to the place where I have chosen to cause My name to dwell."

Vs 11 "O Lord I beseech You may Your ear be attentive to the prayer of the Your servant… and make Your servant successful to day…"

> Even though Nehemiah was the king's trusted cupbearer, he didn't depend on his position. He depended on God.

A. The Return to Jerusalem 1:1-2:20

4. Artexerxes' commission 2:1-10

Vs 2 "Why is your face sad though you are not sick? This is nothing but sadness of heart. Then I was very much afraid"

Vs 4 "Then the king said to me, 'What would you request?' So I prayed to the God of heaven."

> Nehemiah petitioned God before he petitioned the king.

A. The Return to Jerusalem 1:1-2:20

4. Artexerxes' commission 2:1-10

Vs 5 "And I said to the king, "If it please the king, and if your servant has found favor before you, send me to Judah, to the city of my fathers' tombs, that I may rebuild it."

Vs 6-8 Nehemiah respectfully asked for letters granting him passage to Jerusalem and provisions to rebuild the city walls & gates.

Vs 8b "And the king granted them to me because the good hand of my God was on me."

A. The Return to Jerusalem 1:1-2:20

4. Artexerxes' commission 2:1-10

Vs 10 "And when Sanballat the Horonite and Tobiah the Ammonite official heard about it, it was very displeasing to them that someone had come to seek the welfare of the sons of Israel."

> When God begins to work, there will be opposition, there will be Sanballats and Tobiahs to contend with!

A. The Return to Jerusalem 1:1-2:20

5. Nehemiah's inspection of the walls 2:11-20



A. The Return to Jerusalem 1:1-2:20

5. Nehemiah's inspection of the walls 2:11-20

Vs 17 "Then I said to them, 'You see the bad situation we are in, that Jerusalem is desolate and its gates burned by fire.

Vs 18 Come, let us rebuild the wall of Jerusalem that we may no longer be a reproach. **Let us arise and build.**"'

> Nehemiah had a vision of the need and how to meet it.

* Is there something that God is calling me to rebuild?

2:19 “But when Sanballat the Horonite, and Tobiah the Ammonite official, and Geshem the Arab heard *it*, they mocked us and despised us and said, ‘What is this thing you are doing? Are you rebelling against the king?’”

>As the building begins, so does the opposition!

2:20 “So I answered them… ‘The God of heaven will give us success; therefore we His servants will arise and build, but you have no portion, right, or memorial in Jerusalem

B. The Rebuilding of the Walls 3:1- 7:4

1. The work assigned 3:1-32



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1. The work assigned 3:1-32

Nehemiah organized the work on the wall, assigning sections to families that were close as possible to their respective homes.

This gave added motivation to rebuild the wall and defend their families. It gave each person a sense of ownership and responsibility for their contribution to the work.

B. The Rebuilding of the Walls 3:1- 7:4

2. The work attacked 4:1-6:14

a. By mockery 4:1-6

b. By conspiracy 4:7-23

c. By usury 5:1-19

d. By compromise 6:1-4

e. By slander 6:5-9

f. By deception 6:10-14

Adapted from C.C. Ryrie

B. The Rebuilding of the Walls 3:1- 7:4

2. The work attacked 4:1-6:14

a. By mockery 4:1-6

How does Nehemiah respond?

He prays! Vs 4,5 “Hear, O our God, how we are despised! Return their reproach on their own heads and give them up for plunder in a land of captivity. Do not forgive their iniquity and let not their sin be blotted out before You, for they have demoralized the builders.”

B. The Rebuilding of the Walls 3:1- 7:4

2. The work attacked 4:1-6:14

b. By conspiracy 4:7-23

vs 7,8 Sanballat & Co. conspired to fight against Jerusalem.

vs 10 "Thus in Judah it was said, 'The strength of the burden bearers is failing, Yet there is much rubbish; And we ourselves are unable to rebuild the wall.'"

Nehemiah's response: 4:14 "When I saw their fear, I rose and spoke to the nobles, the officials, and the rest of the people: 'Do not be afraid of them; remember the Lord who is great and awesome, and fight for your brothers, your sons, your daughters, your wives, and your houses.'"

4:17 “Those who were rebuilding the wall and those who carried burdens took their load with one hand doing the work and the other holding a weapon.”





Photo: Zev Radovan.

B. The Rebuilding of the Walls 3:1-7:4

2. The work attacked 4:1-6:14

c. By usury 5:1-19 Nehemiah confronts wealthy Jews who were charging interest on their poorer neighbors in violation of OT Law. He sets an example by paying his own way.

d. By compromise 6:1-4 Nehemiah's enemies try to lure him to a meeting 19 miles from Jerusalem where they could more easily assassinate him and attack the city in his absence. (Ryrie) His response: "I am doing a great work and cannot come down." He knew his priorities & refused to be distracted.

B. The Rebuilding of the Walls 3:1-7:4

2. The work attacked 4:1-6:14

e. By slander 6:5-9 Sanballat sent an open letter falsely accusing Nehemiah of rebellion and setting himself up to be king. Nehemiah calmly responds saying such things have not been done, you are inventing them in your own mind.

f. By deception 6:10-14 Shemaiah tried to frighten Nehemiah with death threats and urged him to take refuge in the temple, where only the priests were allowed. Nehemiah refused.

3. The work accomplished 6:15-7:4

The wall was re-built in 52 days!

C. The Register of the People 7:5-73

A genealogic record, likely used to insure repopulating the city with Jewish ancestory

"Walls were necessary, but the fundamental issue was repopulating the city. People, not buildings or walls, are still the key to continuing God's work." Larry Richards

Conclusion:

- Nehemiah and the people of God were under attack from without and within.
- We too are in a spiritual battle. Our adversary is just as unrelenting in his opposition to the Lord's work.
- But the same great God who enabled Nehemiah to finish building the walls of Jerusalem will enable us to finish our course with joy and accomplish the work He has called us to do.
- We need more men like Nehemiah!