Nehemiah 8-13

Insert Clever Title Here

REVIEW

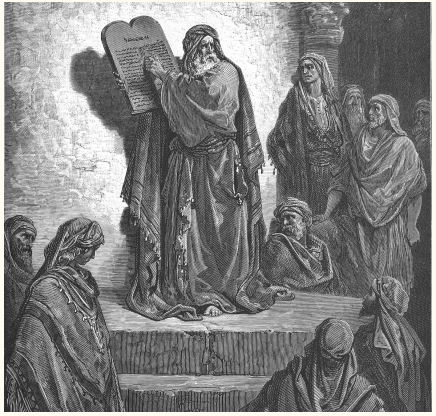
- Ezr.1-6 Zerubbabel **rebuilds temple**
- Ezr.7-10 Ezra **reintroduces Torah**
- Neh.1-7 Nehemiah **rebuilds walls**

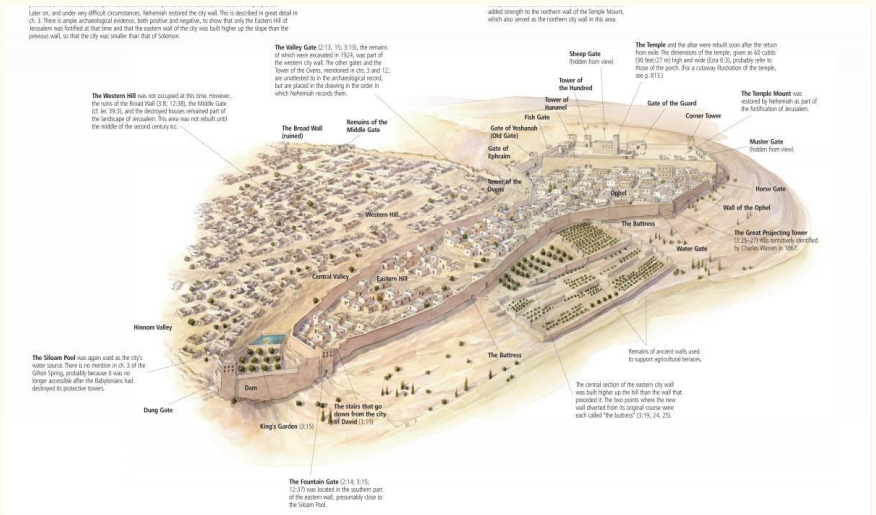
The *Unreturned* People

Chapter 8

- The **people ask** Ezra to read the law of Moses to them, he did, all morning
- The **people, attentive**, said “Amen! Amen!” when Ezra blessed God
- A list of teachers took time to explain it to the people
- The people were **grieved**
- Nehemiah and Ezra had to send the Levites to **cheer up the people**
- Feast of booths follows: 7 days of scripture reading, communal feasting, in temporary tents, and ritual water drawing







You Can Lead Israel to Water…

God never says that putting people in the right place, with the right rules and buildings, will help them in any way.

Now on the last day … of the feast [of booths], Jesus ..cried out.. **“If anyone is thirsty, let him come to Me and drink. He who believes in Me, as the Scripture said, ‘From his innermost being will flow rivers of living water.’ ”** -John 7:37-38

Zechariah 14 speaks of **living water** and the feast of booths.

Ritually drawing water from springs near Jerusalem was part of the feast.

During the feast of booths, the *hallel* is traditionally sung, including Psalm 118:22 “The stone which the builders rejected Has become the chief corner stone.”

The Temple Institute, plus editorial about verse 22

Chapter 9

- Israel gathered to fast in sackcloth and dirt
- Separated from outsiders
- Confessed sins
- Read scripture, worshipped
- Levites told them to rise
- Recited history: God guiding Israel; Israel not listening
- **“we are making an agreement in writing”**

Israel: “Nevertheless, in Your great compassion You did not make an end of them or forsake them, For You are a gracious and compassionate God”

God: 

Nehemiah 9:31

Chapter 10

- Many Israelite **names sealed** on the “agreement”
- Made themselves rules under “**a curse and an oath**” to
  - Follow all laws and statutes
  - Not intermarry
  - Keep Sabbath day and year (crops)
  - Temple contributions
  - Sacrifices, rituals
  - Levites to run the temple, not neglect it

Ceremony matters for serious things. But it can’t make you serious.

My annotation/caution apropos of chapter 10

Chapter 11-12 • *“Time Passes…”*

- Families selected to live in Jerusalem, named, blessed
- *Possibly* some by luck, some blessed for volunteering
- Everyone else went out, the families in each place listed
- Their jobs and functions recorded (admin, priests, workers)
- Singers had strict regulations from the king
- Priests in particular listed by name, had to register
- Enormous choirs were provided for by all of Israel & Judah

Chapter 13

- Israel arguably misreads ban on Ammon & Moab
- *Possibly* wrong to conclusively kick out all foreigners
- Nehemiah is gone to King Artaxerxes, returns
- Corrupt priest set up quarters for privileged in the temple
- Portions not given to Levites, Levites left. **Neh' restores.**
- People blowing off the Sabbath. **Neh' restores it.**
- People marrying Ashdod, Ammon, Moab. **Neh': No.**

God’s opinion of Nehemiah’s frustration is not revealed.

My annotation/caution apropos of chapter 13