

# Nehemiah - More Than A Wall

- Originally, Ezra and Nehemiah were counted as one book. The accounts cover a century of events. Ezra 1-6 covers 538-515 B.C. Ezra 7 - Nehemiah 13 covers 458-433 B.C.
- The beginning of Ezra describes how the word of God came to Cyrus, king of Persia, in his first year. He was charged to build God a house. It was time for His people to return home. The first wave of returned exiles included Zerubbabel. They rebuilt the altar with Jeshua, the priest to sacrifice to God. Then, they began to rebuild the temple, which was eventually completed over 20 years later, though it lacked its previous glory.
- In Ezra 7, fifty-seven years after the temple was rebuilt, we read about Ezra's arrival with the second wave of exiles. He worked to establish the Law among God's people and confronted the problem of intermarriage.
- After learning about the great trouble and shame of the Israelites back home, the King allowed Nehemiah (the cupbearer to King Artaxerxes and governor of Judah) to return home around 445 B.C., 13 years after Ezra's arrival (he would return again sometime between 433 and 423 B.C.). Nehemiah returned to rebuild the walls of Jerusalem so God's people would be protected from their enemies. His return marked the third return of exiles. Below is a good summary taken from the ESV Study Bible:
  - Nehemiah Returns to Jerusalem to Rebuild Its Walls (1:1-2:20)
  - The Wall Is Built, Despite Difficulties (3:1-7:4)
  - A Record of Those Who Returned from Exile (7:5-73)
  - The Reading of the Law, and Covenant Renewal (8:1-10:39)
  - The Population of Jerusalem and the Villages; Priests and Levites (11:1-12:43)
  - Nehemiah Deals with Problems in the Community (12:44-13:31)

## Building Our Faith:

- **Synergy** - 4:6; 7:15
  - Don't underestimate the impact your zeal has on others.
  - There's always work to do, isn't there?
- **Outside Influence** - 4:10-14; 6:1-8
  - It's always easier to take the road of least resistance.
  - Don't let others intimidate you. Do what is right.
  - Embolden your brethren. 2:17-20; 4:9,14,19-23;
- **Nehemiah Prayers** - 1:4-11; 2:1-5; 4:4-5; 5:19; 6:9,14; 13:14,22,29,31
  - It's the short prayers.
  - It's the depending on God.
  - It's the real deal.
- **More Than A Wall** - 5:1-19; 13:1-31
  - What's a city without a wall. What's the point of a wall with no city?
  - What's the point of enticing others to enter when it's a mess?
  - "Rebuild. Fortify. Change Your Approach. Repeat." I heard this is a takeaway from the book. Sounds good, but this isn't allegory. Try to keep your walls from being knocked down in the first

place. Learn from the lesson so you don't have to repeat it. That is a good approach. I'm among the first to preach grace, patience, and forgiveness. However, we can still set ourselves up to succeed. Let's think positively and faithfully. Let's plan on serving the Lord so the wall doesn't have to be torn down.

- Worship is important. Let's give attention to God's kingdom before our own. We could add chapters 8-10 and 12.