

The Life and Times of Nehemiah



**Preparation Workbook for
TEENS
2009 Manitoulin Youth Camp**

Dear Teen Young Person,

I am glad that you are interested in coming to the Manitoulin Youth Camp this summer, God Willing. We are very pleased to have Uncle Jamin Wigzel as our main Teen teacher.

Uncle Jamin's subject is "The Life & Times of Nehemiah".

This workbook is your pre-camp assignment. There are two components:

The first is a special project which you can work on individually or in pairs. This is work which you can hopefully share with the other class members during the camp week.

The second part is a series of questions based on the account of Nehemiah's life recorded in the book of Nehemiah, and 'echoed' elsewhere in Scripture. By completing the questions ahead of time you will have a good background for our studies during the week.

I would make the following suggestions to help you prepare for our week of studies around "The Life & Times of Nehemiah":

1. Plan to READ the appropriate chapters & verses regularly to get familiar with them.
2. Work through the question section of the workbook, setting goals to finish on time. For example, 10-15 questions per week.

Don't get frustrated; just give it your best shot. Some of these are 'thinking' questions so don't be afraid to ask someone else for his or her ideas!

3. Work on your special project, again setting goals to ensure it is completed before camp starts.

Remember, the more you personally put into this study the more you will get out of it!

May God bless you as you labour in His Word, that together at Youth Camp we might all be able to share what we have learned and be prepared for the return of Christ.

See you in July, God Willing,

Uncle Ian and Uncle Peter.

SPECIAL PROJECTS

Type 1: Oral Presentation, Essay or Seminar.

The following suggested topics would be suitable for a 5 to 10 minute presentation or seminar to the rest of the class, or an essay of about 3 typed pages.

If you choose a presentation please try to make use of maps and diagrams to enhance it. You can also make use of a computer and LCD projector if you like! Also make a one page summary of your presentation and make 40 copies of this for the other class members.

If you do an essay, please make 1 copy of it for me to keep, and 40 copies of a one page summary to give to the other class members.

Some suggested topics (in no particular order):

1. A character study of one of the characters from the times of Nehemiah.
2. God's Providence as seen in the Life of Nehemiah.
3. Faith demonstrated in the life of Nehemiah.
4. "Enemy at the Gates" – how to win the spiritual battle with "King Sin".
5. Taking up arms: Is it OK to defend the Truth using physical weapons?
6. The role of Prayer in the Life of Nehemiah.
7. The Spiritual analogy of "Building the Walls", for today.
8. Your choice. Contact us if you have another idea you would like to pursue.

Type 2: Creative Projects

Some of you may not want to do a talk or an essay and would rather let your creative energy be channeled in another direction.

There are many very dramatic scenes in this story.

Be sure you know the Biblical account very well and bring out the details and lessons. You will need to do just as much research and study for a creative project as for a talk or essay.

Here are some ideas:

1. Dramatization. Write a skit or short play based on one section or event from the life of Nehemiah. The skit may be historical or a modern day setting based on the principles from these chapters. If possible, find a couple of friends to help you enact your play for all of us to enjoy.
2. Draw a picture or make a model from one of the incidents in Nehemiah's life.
3. Write a short story in a modern setting, based on an incident from the life of Nehemiah.
4. Make a crossword puzzle based on the Life of Nehemiah.
5. Create a board game or maze based on Nehemiah's life.
6. Your idea. Contact us if you have a project in mind and we will discuss its suitability.

Time period for the Book of Nehemiah

To appreciate the conditions in Jerusalem at the time of Nehemiah it is helpful to first review the spiritual setting described in the land a few years earlier—when Ezra returned.

Ezra 7 - Ezra's' background and instructions from the king

v 1-7 What evidence is there in these verses that Ezra was a Godly (spiritual) man?

In what year did Ezra return to Jerusalem?

v 25-26 What instructions did King Artaxerxes give to Ezra?

v 27-28 What was Ezra's reaction to the king's command?

Ezra 9 & 10 - Conditions in Israel at Ezra's Return

9:1-5 What was wrong in the nation?

Which groups of Jews had done the most to bring about this trespass?

How did Ezra physically react to this situation?

How did he spiritually react?

9:10-12 How did God describe the land of Israel when the Jews entered it under Joshua?

What instructions did Ezra give to the people because of the condition of the land?

9:13-15 What was Ezra afraid God would do if the people disobeyed these instructions?

Why do you think God left Gentiles in the land instead of removing them before the Jews returned?

10:1-5 What did the leaders of the people agree to do to remove their sin?

10:6-17 How long did it take for the nation to fulfill their commitment?

10:18-43 What did the men listed in these verses all have in common?

Nehemiah 1 - Report from Jerusalem and Nehemiah's Prayer

While Ezra had returned to live in Judah, Nehemiah resided in Shushan, the capital of the Persian Empire, and worked in the king's court.

v 1-3 What does the name Nehemiah mean? (Look this up in Strong's concordance)

State the meaning of his name in your own words.

What other important Jewish leaders in the Bible lived in this same city during their life?

What month is Chisleu in the Jewish calendar (see appendices)? What month of ours does it equal?

How many years after Ezra's return does this chapter take place?

Where else is Hanani mentioned later in Nehemiah and how was he related to Nehemiah?

How did Hanani describe the condition of the Jews living in Jerusalem?

Give the Strong's number and definition of the words "affliction" and "reproach" in v3.

What does the word 'contumely' mean as used in Strong's definition?

Define 'affliction' and 'reproach' in your own words, using the information from Strong's.

How were the walls & gates of Jerusalem originally destroyed? (Provide a reference)

Is the word "remnant" in v3 the same Hebrew word Ezra used in 9:8, 14?

What evidence is there that the Jews in Hanani's report are the same Jews as the report in Ezra 9?

v 4 What evidence is there that Nehemiah wrote this book?

What four things did Nehemiah do upon hearing the report?

Why do you think he reacted in this way?

How did Nehemiah's reaction resemble Ezra's reaction to the bad news of Ezra 9:1-2?

v 5-11 Nehemiah's Prayer

What evidence is there that Nehemiah was familiar with the book of Deuteronomy?

How did Nehemiah believe that we show our love for God?

According to John 14:15, what is the relationship between loving God and obedience?

What phrase indicates Nehemiah prayed often to God about the news from Jerusalem?

Give 3 examples from Nehemiah's prayer that show he felt the Jews suffering was due to their sins.

What phrases indicates Nehemiah included himself in the sins of the people?

Does a faithful leader join himself to the people, even when they sin, or does he remain apart?

What phrase indicates Nehemiah knew Jerusalem was an important city in God's plan?

According to Nehemiah what 2 things does God use to redeem His people?

What do all of God's servants have in common regarding how they regard God's name?

Who was the "this man" Nehemiah referred to in v 13?



For whom did Nehemiah work and what was his job?

Why would this have been a good job to have?

Digging Deeper: Contrast this prayer of Nehemiah with Ezra's in Ezra ch 9. Using at least 5 sentences (or 75 words, whichever is greater) describe how the two prayers were similar.
(Do this on a separate sheet and add it to your workbook here.)

Digging Deeper: (Older Teens Only [OTO]): Contrast Nehemiah's prayer with Daniel's in Dan. 9, using at least 5 sentences or 75 words, whichever is greater.
(Do this on a separate sheet and add it to your workbook here.)

Chapter 2 - Journey to Jerusalem and Decision to Rebuild the Wall

In chapter 1 Nehemiah prayed and waited for God—this was obedience. Now he prays and acts, as a door of opportunity is opened for him to travel to Jerusalem.

v 1-3 What month is Nisan in the Jewish calendar? What month of ours does it equal?

For how long has Nehemiah been praying?

Why do you think God did not respond to his prayers for so long?

What evidence is there that Nehemiah did not mean to be sad in the king's presence?

What reason did he give to the king for his sadness?

If Nehemiah had simply forgotten about the report of 1:3 would his life have been in danger? (i.e. would he have been sad?)

What does this teach us about those who have a genuine concern for others?

What other Jewish leader made a request of a gentile king to also help Jews in distress?

Did this other leader also face a life threatening situation? Explain.

v 4-8 Why do you think Nehemiah prayed to God before answering the king's question?

What specific requests did Nehemiah make of the king?



What evidence is there that Nehemiah had already thought through what he would need?

Do you think Nehemiah would have an easier life as cupbearer, or living in Judah? (Explain)

Who was sitting beside the king as he was discussing this situation with Nehemiah?

What does the phrase "I set him a time" mean (v6)?

What 3 things did Nehemiah plan to build in Jerusalem?

Read 5:14, what additional responsibility did the king give to Nehemiah?

What evidence is there that Nehemiah was a faithful, honest, trustworthy employee (worker)?

Why did the king grant Nehemiah his requests?

To whom did Nehemiah give the credit when he had a good idea?

Find 2 verses in Ezra that show he knew God was helping him, like Nehemiah did (v8).

v 9-10 Find the reference to Ezra's journey to Jerusalem. How long did his trip take?

How was Nehemiah's trip different than Ezra's with respect to who accompanied them?

How did Sanballat and Tobiah react to Nehemiah's arrival?

Why do you think they reacted in this way?

Do you think these 2 men will be friends or enemies of the Jews, and why?



v 11-16 What do you think the phrase "what my God had put into my heart to do" means?

What steps did Nehemiah take to conceal his inspection of the wall?

Why do you think Nehemiah told no one of his plans to rebuild or survey the wall?

v 17-18 How faithful and accurate had Hanani's report been in 1:3?

What did Nehemiah do at the ecclesial meeting before suggesting they rebuild the wall?

What specific reasons did he give for building the wall?

What 2 items of evidence did he present to support his recommendation for building?

Which of the Jews did Nehemiah blame for the sad state of affairs that existed in Jerusalem?

How could Nehemiah prove God was working with him and the king supported him?

How do you think the Jews "strengthened their hands for this good work?"

Had Nehemiah convinced the Jews to do something they didn't want to do, or did he convince them to do something they wouldn't have done without him? (Explain)

v 19-20 How did the Gentile opposition attempt to convince the Jews not to rebuild the wall?

When had the Gentiles made a similar charge against the Jews concerning rebellion in Ezra?

How does Nehemiah's response reveal the Gentiles had asked to help build the wall?

What 3 things did Nehemiah state the Gentiles lacked, which prevented them from building?

How do you think Nehemiah's response would have impacted the Jews and why?

Chapter 3 - The Building Begins

Chapters 3-6 describe the events occurring in the land during the building of the wall. Chapter 3 describes how the -work was divided and who built each section.

How many of the gates are mentioned in this chapter? Which ones are not mentioned?

Where are these 2 mentioned in chapter 12?

If the city was 3 km around with 44 sections, how long (in meters) would each section be?

What note did Nehemiah record about the nobles from Tekoa? (v5)

What evidence is there that girls also helped in the building?



How many sections did Meshullam help build? (Give all references)

What evidence is there that some of the priests already lived in the city?

List each of the occupations noted in this chapter? How many were professional brick layers?

Why would each family building a section have to use the same materials and same blueprint as all other families used?

Applying the lessons of the building the Wall to our own day

Give an example of when your CYC worked together to accomplish a common goal.

Give an example of when your CYC failed to achieve a goal because not all worked together.

How can a strong, united CYC help a young person with the trials they face in life?

Why does a divided, bickering CYC discourage a young person from acting righteously?

Nehemiah knew a strong wall of separation would help keep the wicked influence of the surrounding Gentile nations outside the ecclesia. What Gentile influences do you find to be most harmful to your own spiritual walk?

What steps should a family take to build a strong wall of separation between themselves and the evil influences of the Gentile world around them?

What steps should a person take to build a similar strong wall of separation between him/herself and the evil Gentile influence?

Chapter 4 - The Gentile Opposition Intensifies, But the Work Continues

Chapter 4 occurs while the wall is being built and provides an insight into the pressure brought upon the Jews by the Gentile enemies who tried to bring a halt to the construction.

v 1-3 In what 2 ways did Sanballat respond upon learning the Jews were building the wall?

How would having the Samaritan army present intimidate the Jews while they were building?

What was Sanballat hoping to accomplish by making the speech he did in the Jews' hearing?

OTO: Find and explain another time when a Gentile stood at the wall and taunted the Jews.

Why do you think Tobiah spoke about a fox going up on the wall and causing it to fall down?

v 4-5 How did Nehemiah respond to this ridicule?

Is the word for "reproach" the same Hebrew word Hanani used in 1:3?

How did the reproaches of the Gentiles in ch. 4 prove the accuracy of Hanani's report in 1:3?

Nehemiah called the reproaches (taunts) of the Gentiles, sinful. How did the Gentiles sin?

Describe a situation in your life in which you have been ridiculed for your belief in God.

Nehemiah stated God was angry at Gentile leaders for what they said? How did he know this?

v 6 What was the one key reason Nehemiah gave for the wall being half completed successfully?

What does a right mind have to do with resisting the ridicule and taunts of those around us?

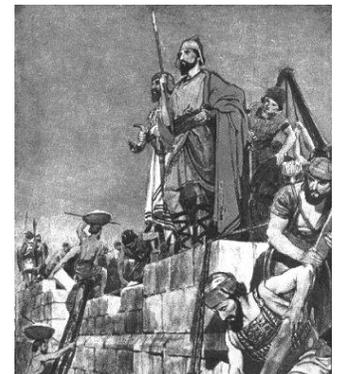
v 7-8 Which groups now comprised the allied peoples against the Jews?

What did this group decide to do and why?

How was this action different from the actions of v 1-3?

v 9 What changed regarding the prayers being offered now from those of v 5?

What did the nation do in addition to praying?



What lesson does this teach us about our own prayers and actions?

v 10-14 What 2 reasons did the men of Judah cite for not being able to continue the work?

How were the enemies planning to attack the Jews?

This threat is far more serious and dangerous than the verbal taunts of v 1-3, but the people have now developed a deeper faith. What does this teach us about trials and faith?

Compare v 15, how did the Jews living among the Gentiles learn of the planned secret attack?

Read v 12 in a version other than the King James and explain what it means in your own words

Read v 13 from the New King James: Why did Nehemiah place armed men in these spots?

How were the people divided up to defend the city?

How would being divided like this, motivate the Jews to fight?

How did Nehemiah verbally motivate the Jews?

One month earlier the Jews had not even agreed to build the wall, now they risk their lives and those of their family for it. What does this teach us about the leadership of Nehemiah?

v 15-20 What term does Nehemiah use here for the first time to describe the opposition?

What enabled the Jews to return to the work?

Into what 3 groups were the Jews divided up from that point forward and what did each do?

How would the constant threat of attack affect:

a) the speed at which the Jews worked;

b) the quality of their work;

and c) their desire to finish the wall?

Do you think the Jews did a better job of building the wall because of the Gentile opposition or do you think they would have done better without any enemies? (Explain)

What lesson does this teach us regarding the purpose of having trials in our life?

What was the purpose of the trumpeter?

v 21-23 Why do you think Nehemiah wanted all the workmen to move to the city?

Looking back on the events of this chapter, how did they prove the wall's importance?

Chapter 5 - The Shameful Treatment of the Poor Brethren by the Rich Brethren

Nehemiah finds an unbelievable condition in the ecclesia—rich brethren selling poor brethren into slavery, to make money. He severely rebukes those in error.

v 1-5 What is the Strong's number and meaning of the word "cry" in v 1?

Explain the concept of mortgaging a field to receive money.

OTO: Read Jeremiah 32:1-15 and explain why Jeremiah was told to buy a field at Anathoth.

In Jer. 32:15 what was to be the sign that the captives would return from Babylon?

How did the events of Neh. 5:3 relate to the prophecy in Jer. 32:15?

Why do you think God brought famine upon the land at this critical time of building the wall?

OTO: Haggai prophesied during the work of Zerubbabel (Ezra 3-5). Read Haggai 1:7-11 and explain why God brought a famine upon the land in those days.

How were the children of the poor Jews being forced into slavery and who was causing this?

In Jer. 34:8-17, how were Zedekiah's actions (before captivity) similar to the events of Neh. 5?

v 6-13 Define the concept of usury: lending money for interest (ask a parent for help, if necessary).

Math problem: if the interest rate is 12% per year compounded annually, and you borrow \$100, how much money do you owe after 1 year? after 5 years?

Where in the Law of Moses were the Jews forbidden from charging interest (usury) to each other?

Against which groups of Jews did Nehemiah bring accusations?

Why do you think Nehemiah was so angry with his own brethren over their charging of interest?

List the specific steps he took to correct the situation.

How was Nehemiah attempting to help the poor Jews who had been sold into slavery?

How did Nehemiah state the Jews could prevent the reproach of the Gentile nations?

In v 9 is this the same Hebrew word for "reproach" as was in 1:3 and 2:4?

Therefore, in what two ways were the Jews suffering the reproach Hanani reported in 1:3?

What did the rich Jews agree to do and what additional action did Nehemiah insist they do?

What was the purpose of Nehemiah's actions in v 13?

v 14-19 For how long was Nehemiah governor and what did he never do during that time?

In those days who provided a governor with "provisions" and how did this relate to v 4?

How had previous governors treated the Jews? How had these governor's servants acted?

How do you think the "fear of God" kept Nehemiah from doing wrong?

How can the fear of God keep us from sin?

How did the previous governors use their servants and how did Nehemiah use his?

Recall v 1-5, whose land would Nehemiah have been purchasing if he had acquired land?

Why didn't Nehemiah collect the bread (provision) allowance permitted under Persian law?

What do the events of this chapter teach us regarding how we should treat each other?

Chapter 6 - The Opposition Turns its Attention Solely on Nehemiah

As progress continues on the wall the Gentile enemies concentrate their efforts on destroying Nehemiah's credibility in order to convince the Jews to stop building.

What is a person's reputation?

What happens to a person's leadership ability if he acquires a bad reputation, and why is this?

v 1-4 How far along was the wall's construction by this time?

What is the Strong's number and definition of the word "mischief" (NKJ='harm')?

What is the Strong's number and definition of the word "together" (v 2)?

Describe Sanballat's and Geshem's plot against Nehemiah in these verses.

How do you think Nehemiah was able to perceive he was in danger?

What did Nehemiah and his enemies both know would happen to the work if Nehemiah left?

How can we use Nehemiah's response in v 4 to answer friends who ask us to join them in an activity that would take us away from the ecclesia/CYC?

v 5-9 Describe the specific false accusations of Sanballat's open letter.

How did Sanballat use Nehemiah's own religion to try and show Nehemiah to be unfaithful?

Name 3 other faithful men in Scripture who were falsely accused regarding their own religion.

How did Sanballat hope the letter would force Nehemiah to meet with him?

What did he threaten to do with the information he had?

What group of people do you think he was hoping to convince to stop following Nehemiah?

Read v 14, who appointed false prophets in Jerusalem and what did these false brethren say?

Why would these false brethren have made it difficult for Nehemiah to prove his innocence?

What would each of Nehemiah's faithful supporters have been accused of being?

What specific things did Nehemiah do in response to the accusations against him?

What had been the real reason for Sanballat sending the letter?

v 10-14 The open letter having failed, describe the enemies next plot against Nehemiah?

How did Shemaiah count on Nehemiah's kindness to carry out this plot against him?

How did Shemaiah's plan resemble the first 4 attempts of Sanballat and the open letter?

In response to the possible danger he faced, what 2 options did Nehemiah consider but reject?

Describe why he rejected each option?

How do you think Nehemiah perceived God had not sent Shemaiah?

What had Moses warned about false prophets in Deut. 13:1-4?

Nehemiah states if he had sinned the Gentiles could have brought a reproach upon him, how?

Is this the same Hebrew word for 'reproach' as is in 1:3; 2:17; 4:4; and 5:9?

How are all these incidents related to each other?

Who else in Scripture would have brought reproach upon himself if he had sinned even once?

Four times in this chapter reference is made to trying to make Nehemiah afraid, list each of them.

When a person is afraid why is it easier to get him to sin?

v 15-16 What month was Elul in the Jewish calendar?

During which (of our) months had the wall been built? What is typical of these months?

How did the nations react to news of the walls completion and why?

How do you think the Gentile nations realized God had been involved?

v 17-19 Why were some Jews such good, close friends with Tobiah?

Summarize how Tobiah had acted towards the Jews and Nehemiah in the first 6 chapters.

Why do you think some of the Jews still saw him as a "good guy"?

How do you think Nehemiah felt when Jews spoke highly to him of Tobiah?

How diligent had Meshullam been in building the wall? (Ref 3:4, 30)

How is he related to Tobiah?

What warning is here for us regarding working hard and remaining separate from the world?

Even though the wall was now completed, what was Tobiah still trying to do and why?

Chapter 7 - The Nation Enrolled

This chapter describes the appointment of Hanani and Hananiah over Jerusalem and recounts the names of the Jews who returned from captivity under Zerubbabel

v 1-5 What appointments did Nehemiah make regarding the Temple service?

Why were Hanani and Hananiah selected to govern Jerusalem?

What specific command did Nehemiah give regarding the operation of the gates?

Why do you think so few of the returning exiles had chosen to live in Jerusalem before now?

From whom did Nehemiah get the idea to enroll the nation?

Purpose of the enrollment

If an ecclesia stopped keeping track of current and new members, why would it become necessary, after 13 years, to refer to earlier records to determine accurate membership? Why do we (or should we) take attendance at CYC?

v 61-65 What happened to those who could not prove they were of Jewish ancestry?

v 73 If each month had 30 days, how many days elapsed between 6:15 and 7:73?

Chapter 8 - The Nation Spiritually Reborn

Nehemiah and Ezra waste no time in beginning Phase 2 of the spiritual rebirth of the nation. The wall has been successfully built and it is now time to get the Word back in to the middle of the hearts and minds of the people. This will primarily be Ezra's responsibility.

v 1-8 If the Jews numbered the same as in Zerubbabel's day, how many were there? (7:66)

Why would Ezra have been well suited to teach the nation about the Law of Moses?

What characteristic did the people who gathered that day have in common?

What is Strong's number and meaning of the word "understanding" (v 2)?

How many times is this word mentioned in v 2-12? (List the references)

For how long did Ezra read from the Law of Moses that day?

What phrase shows the people were very interested in what Ezra read?



What special provision had been made for Ezra's reading of the Law that day?

Describe the scene when Ezra stood to read from the Law.

How did the people stand during Ezra's opening prayer?

What was the role of the Levites that morning?

Do you think these Levites were well educated in the Law of Moses? Why or why not.

What is the difference between hearing something read and understanding what is read?

What are the Strong's meanings of the words "distinctly" and "sense" in v8?

How do these 2 definitions prove the idea the people gathered that day to gain understanding?

v 9-12 Why do you think the people wept after hearing the Law read that morning?

Who went among the people and encouraged them to rejoice, not weep?

What does the word holy mean? Why do you think God considered this a holy day?

What 3 instructions were the people given?

What do you think the phrase "the joy of the Lord is your strength" meant?

Why did the people go home rejoicing?

How do you think Nehemiah and Ezra would have felt at the end of the first day?

v 13-18 What request did the leaders of the people make on the 2nd day?

What is the Strong's number and meaning of the word "understand" in v 13?

How does this word differ from the word for "understanding" in v2?

Which of the 2 words involves the idea of acting wisely, using one's understanding?

For what purpose did the leaders gather on the 2nd day?

Which feast day did Ezra teach them about?

What did the leaders decide to do in light of what they had just learned about this feast?

Read Lev 23:33-36, 39-43 and describe what was to happen at this feast.

Read Deut 31:9-13 and explain the special provision that was to occur every 7 years at this feast. Why was this provision included (state the 3 reasons)?

How many days did the Jews in Nehemiah's day have to prepare for this feast?

Describe what the city of Jerusalem would have looked like during the 7 days of the feast.

Why do you think the people had very "great gladness"?

What happened on the eighth day and why?

Chapter 9 - A Morning of Reading and Confession, an Afternoon Prayer

On the day after the solemn assembly of ch. 8 the nation gathers once more to worship God. By day's end many will set their seal to a Covenant declaring themselves servants of Yahweh.

v 1-5 On what day of the month would the 8 day feast, just celebrated, have ended?

The Law of Moses did not require this assembly. Why do you think the people gathered again?

Read Est 4:1-4; Dan 9:3 and explain the purpose of fasting with sackcloth and ashes.

Why did Joshua put dust on his head in Josh 7:6?

Why did the messenger to Eli, in 1 Sam 4:12 tear his clothes and put earth on his head?

Why do you think the people fasted in sackcloth with dust on their heads (Neh. 9:1)?

How is this consistent with their reaction on Day 1 of this month? (8:1-12)

How was their confession similar to Nehemiah's prayer in ch. 1?

Why do you think the Jews chose to separate themselves from the foreigners?

How did this action demonstrate the principle: forgiveness requires a change of our ways?

Describe the agenda for the worship service that morning.

How are confessing sins and worshipping God interrelated?

What happened at the end of the worship service?

(Note: While we cannot be sure, it appears Ezra offered the prayer of v 6-37 because of his position as spiritual leader. The Septuagint manuscript includes his name in v 6.)

v 6-31 Ezra mentions several incidents from history, beginning with Creation in v 6. List 10 additional incidents from Bible history he references during his prayer. *Put them on a separate page and insert it here.*

How did he describe Abraham?

How do we know Ezra was familiar with the promises God made to Abraham?

At what verse does he begin to talk about the period of the Judges?

Why did Ezra state God eventually gave the people into the hands of their enemies? (v30)

Why didn't God completely wipe out the rebellious nation?

v 32-37 What phrase in v 32 shows Ezra has begun to speak of the situation in his own day?

Explain v 33 ~ What is Ezra saying here about how God has dealt with the people?

What specific things did the rulers and people not want to do in v 34?

Whom, specifically, did they not want to become a servant of (v 35)?

Therefore, who did God make them servants of?

How did Ezra describe their life of servitude to a Gentile king?

Why had God set a Gentile king over them?

v 38 What did Ezra recommend to be the solution of being servants of a Gentile king?

What does making a lifelong commitment to become God's servant have to do with freeing ourselves from the bondage imposed by a master who has power over our bodies?

Chapter 10 - The Covenant Sealed and Defined

A partial listing of those who signed the Covenant is contained in the first 27 verses. Then follows a detailed description of the contents of the Covenant.

v 28-29 What did a person have **to do** before setting his/her seal to the covenant?

What did a person have **to have** before setting his/her seal to the covenant?

What phrase shows the covenant was not about knowing the Law of Moses but doing it?

The Hebrew word for 'clave' (join in NKJ) (v29) is the same as 'strengthened' in 2:19 and 6:9. Why is this significant?

In Ezra 9:12 is described what to avoid if we want to be strong. Neh. 10 describes what the Jews did to become strong. What do these 2 sections teach us about how we can be strong (spiritually)?

What did the Covenant specifically say about the following?

a) marriage to foreigners

b) conducting business on the Sabbath

c) gathering crops on the 7th year

d) collecting debts (from those who were poor)

e) paying a yearly contribution to cover the expenses for operating the Temple

f) collecting wood for the sacrifices

g) bringing the first fruit offerings

h) the people paying tithes to support the Levites

i) the Levites paying tithes to support the priests

How did the Covenant reveal the peoples' level of knowledge about the Law of Moses?

What did the Covenant signers specifically agree they would never do regarding the Temple?

Chapter 11 - The Repopulation of Jerusalem

Chapter 11 describes the steps taken to have 10% of the people move back into the city to help establish it as the centre of activity among the Jewish people. The remainder of the chapter provides a census of some of the people and the cities where they lived.

v 1-2 Read 7:4. Why had so few people lived in the city prior to the wall being built?

Why do you think the leaders of the people had been living in the city?

Why do you think Nehemiah now refers to Jerusalem as "the holy city?"

Did those selected by lot reluctantly agree to move into the city? (Prove your answer)

Why is it important that all of our offerings be made to God with a willing heart?

Chapter 12 - The Dedication of the Wall

The first 26 verses include a list of chief men who returned with Zerubbabel along with listing of priests and Levites. Verse 27 begins a description of the day the Jews gathered to celebrate the Wall's completion and to dedicate it to God.

Ch 10:1-13 contains names of some who signed the Covenant. Chapter 12:1-9 lists leading men who returned with Zerubbabel. List the names of those men who appear in both lists.

These men are now likely old. What significant events have they witnessed in their lifetime?

v 27-31 What role would the Levites play in the celebration?

Why do you think there was singing and musical instruments planned for the celebration?

What does this teach us about the purpose and place of music in our worship of God?

What did the priests and Levites do before the celebration began?

v 31-42 Describe what took place on top of the wall that day.

How many foxes do you think could have walked on the wall when it was finished?

What do you think the rest of the people did while the 2 groups marched on the wall?

If they had used our hymn book, list 3 hymns you feel they might have sung.

What specific role did Ezra and Nehemiah play?

What 2 gates are mentioned in this chapter that were not mentioned in chapter 3?

At what place did the 2 groups join together and why was this so appropriate?

v 43 Who else offered great sacrifices on the day of dedication in Jerusalem? (Give a reference)

What do you think the phrase "for God had made them rejoice with a great joy" means?

What evidence do we have that the Gentiles would have been aware of the events that day?

v 44-47 What was the duty of those who were appointed over the chambers of the Temple?

After whose instructions did Ezra and Nehemiah pattern the Temple worship and service?

What did the people continue to contribute as long as Nehemiah was governor in the land?

Why were the Levites and priests able to continue their temple service?

Chapter 13 - A Warning to Every Generation

Nehemiah returns to Shushan after living 12 years in Judah. While he is gone from the land, the Gentile influence quickly returns, spurred on by the faithlessness of Eliashib and others. Nehemiah receives permission to return to Judah and finds the nation again in distress.

A key to understanding this chapter is to recognize that it is not in chronological order. Deterioration occurred while Nehemiah was away resulting in marriages with Gentiles (v 1-3) and the need for separation upon his return (v 3, 30). "Before this" (v 4) reveals verses 4-5 occurred when Nehemiah was in Shushan.

v 1-3 Read Deut 23:3-6 and recount the Sunday School lesson regarding Balaam.

For what 2 reasons were the Ammonites and Moabites forbidden from entering the ecclesia?

What specific warning did Moses give Israel in v 6?

How does this compare with Ezra's warning in Ez 9:12?

Read Num 25:15. Balaam taught Balak how to defeat the Israelites without lifting a single sword. What strategy did Balak use to bring about the downfall of the nation?

Do you think God was teaching the Israelites to hold a grudge against these people (they were never to enter the ecclesia) because they did not have the Jews well being at heart and therefore refused to give them bread and water in the Wilderness, or was he trying to teach the Jews a lesson? If a lesson (and not to hold a grudge) what was the lesson?

How had the Jews in Nehemiah's day lost sight of this lesson?

How can we lose sight of this lesson (the need for separation) in our day?

v 4-9 Reread 3:1. What was Eliashib's position in Israel?

Who held this position in the days of Moses?

Under the Law of Moses what was the primary responsibility of this position?

What is the Strong's number and meaning of the word "oversight" (v 4)?

What was Eliashib supposed to do with the provisions contributed by the nation? (Ref 12:44)

What is the Strong's number and meaning of the word "allied" (v 4)

How does this show Eliashib's teaching and way of life were completely opposite to Nehemiah's?

Read 13:28. What false teaching did Eliashib promote within his own family?

How did Eliashib make room for Tobiah in the Temple?

What do you think happened to all the contributions of the people for the priests/Levites?

What lesson does this teach us about making room for the Gentile influence in our lives?

v 6 Where was Nehemiah while Eliashib was doing this evil?

v 7-9 What was Nehemiah's immediate response to Tobiah's living in the Temple?

Can you remember a time in Christ's life when he was angry? Where was he and why was he angry?

How was the situation in Christ's life similar to this one in chapter 13?

Why do you think Nehemiah had the chambers cleansed?

Name Eliashib's Grandpa. (12:10). What had he done for the temple and the vessels? (Ez 1-6)

How do you think he would have felt about what his grandson had done and why?

OTO: What Babylonian treated the vessels blasphemously prior to their return to the land? How did Eliashib's actions resemble the actions of this king?

v 10-14 Why had the Levites not received their portions?

What did they have to do as a result?

Who did Nehemiah hold accountable for this spiritual breakdown?

What did the nation begin to do again, for the sake of the Levites?

What single characteristic did each of the brethren have, whom Nehemiah appointed to work?

What was their job?

Who did Nehemiah put out of a job by virtue of the appointment of these brethren?

v 15-18 In what 2 ways were the Jews breaking the Covenant in these verses?

How was Tobiah living in the Temple and the Men of Tyre living in Jerusalem related events?

Why do you think the men of Tyre were allowed to live in Jerusalem and sell fish on the Sabbath? (Hint: What is more tasty, fresh fish or day old fish?)

Who did Nehemiah hold accountable for this spiritual breakdown?

How was Nehemiah's fear in v 18 similar to Ezra's in Ez 9:14?

v 19-22 What steps did Nehemiah take to prevent the Sabbath from being further profaned?

Recall Nehemiah was governor, what do you think he meant in v21 by "lay hands on you?"

v 23-27 The key to understanding these verses is found in v27: What were some false brethren teaching in the ecclesia regarding marriage to Gentiles?

How did Nehemiah describe this false doctrine in v27?

What did Nehemiah do in v 25 to those brethren who had married foreign wives?

What did the Law of Moses allow for in Deut 25:1-3 for those who broke the Law?

What is the Strong's number and meaning of the phrase "plucked off their hair?"

What does this mean Nehemiah likely did to the hair/beards of these men?

How is this similar to Ezra's self-infliction upon hearing about the same situation (Ez 9:1-3)?

In the New Testament, when a brother insists on teaching a false doctrine what step of shaming him is taken to try and get him to see his error and change his ways?

How were Nehemiah's actions regarding the swearing of an oath, similar to Ezra's in Ez 10:5?

Why do you think Nehemiah quoted the example of Solomon to prove his point?

v 30-31 The Old Testament closes with a description of Nehemiah doing all he can for the sake of the nation, despite their sins. What lesson does this leave for us?

Appendix B: The Walls, Gates & Builders

JERUSALEM IN THE TIME OF NEHEMIAH



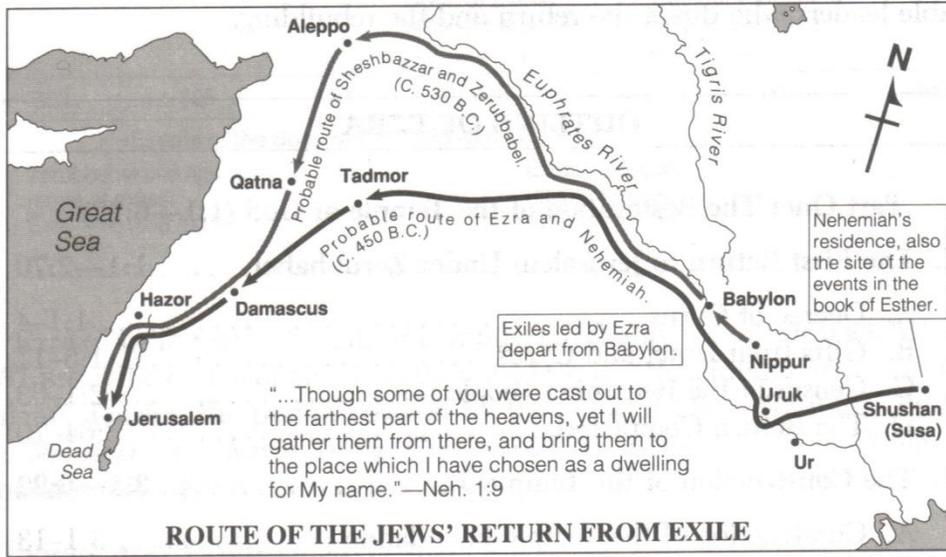
“SO WE BUILT THE WALL
FOR THE PEOPLE HAD A MIND TO WORK”

Appendix C: Time Line

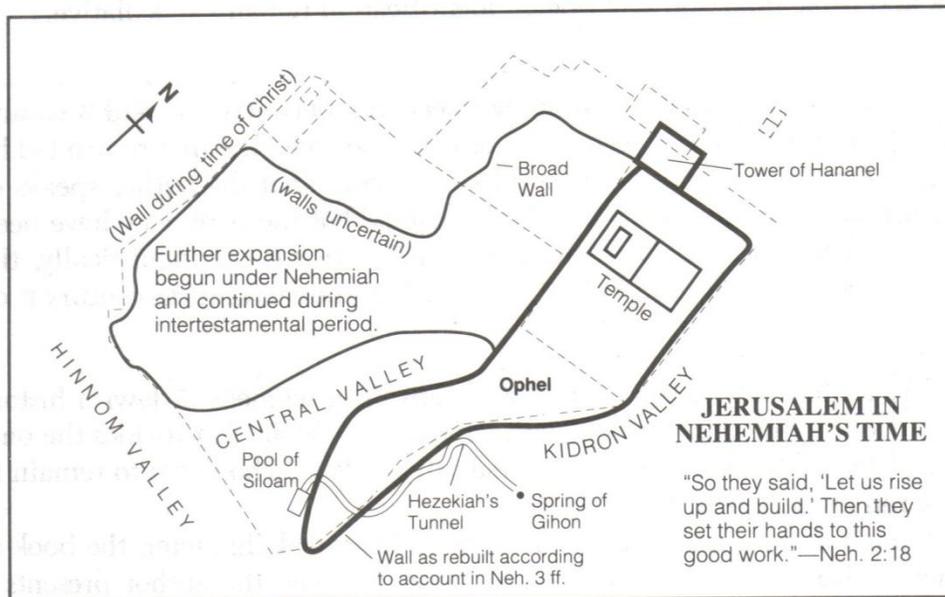
Chronology in Book of Nehemiah

<u>Year of Art's Reign</u>	<u>Jewish Month #</u>	<u>Jewish Month Name</u>	<u>Jewish Day of Month</u>	<u>Event</u>	<u>Ref</u>
20th	9	Kislev		Report from Hanani re Jerusalem	1:1
20th	1	Nisan		Receives permission to travel to Judah	2:1
20th	5	Ab	3	Work on wall begins	inferred
20th				Constructions by sections	ch 3
20th				Opposition, wall ½ built, workers armed	ch 4
20th				Rulers enslaving poor & rebuked	ch 5
20th	6	Elul	25	Plot against Nehemiah, wall completed	6:15
20th	7	Tishri		Nation enrolled, list from 1st return	7:73
20th	7	Tishri	1	Gather to hear Law read by Ezra	8:1
20th	7	Tishri	2	Leaders study Law with Ezra	8:13
20th	7	Tishri	15-22	Celebrate Feast of Tabernacles	8:18
20th	7	Tishri	24	Read Law, sins confessed, Ezra's prayer	9:1
20th	7	Tishri		Signers of Covenant & its contents	ch 10
20th	7	Tishri		Repopulation of Jerusalem and census	ch 11
20th	7	Tishri		Dedication of the Wall	ch 12
32nd	-			Nehemiah returns to Shushan	13:6
?	-			Returns to Jerusalem "after certain days"	13:6

Appendix D: Route of Exiles & City Map



Jerusalem in Nehemiah's Time



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