

Session 13: Ezra-Nehemiah

Videos:

- Overview: Ezra-Nehemiah (The Bible Project)

Recommended Readings from the ESV Study Bible:

- Introduction to Ezra (pp. 799–803)
- Introduction to Nehemiah (pp. 821–823)

Handout from The Bible Project:

- Ezra-Nehemiah Overview Poster

Handouts from Dr. Parke:

- Ezra-Nehemiah - Slides from Dr. Parke's Teaching

Handouts from ESV Study Bible:

- Table: Chronology of Ezra
- Table: Chronology of Nehemiah
- Map: Jerusalem at the Time of Zerubbabel
- Map: Jerusalem at the Time of Nehemiah
- Table: Adversaries Hinder Work
- Table: Kings of Persia Mentioned in Ezra-Nehemiah
- Table: The Hand of God in Ezra and Nehemiah



PARALLEL DESIGN



1. PERSIAN KING MOVED BY GOD TO SEND A LEADER TO JERUSALEM



2. LEADER FACES OPPOSITION TO REBUILDING



3. STRANGE ANTI-CLIMAX

EZRA 1-6 ZERUBBABEL THE TEMPLE

1-2: **CYRUS** (SEE JEREMIAH 25) - "WHOMEVER WANTS TO RETURN TO JERUSALEM, MAY GOD BE WITH YOU!"

3-6: **GOD'S PRESENCE?** - "THESE PEOPLE ARE AS HARD AS LAMBSKINS!"

4: **YOU HAVE NO PART IN THE TEMPLE!** - "WE JUST WANT TO HELP!"

THE END

EZRA 7-10 EZRA FOR THE COMMUNITY

7-8: **GO TEACH THE TRUTH AND REBUILD YOUR COMMUNITY!**

9-10: **THESE PEOPLE ARE AS HARD AS LAMBSKINS!**

THE END

ANOTHER 70 YEARS

PROPHETIC HOPES AFTER EXILE

- FUTURE MESSIANIC KING (ISAIAH 9, HOSSEA 3)
- GOD'S PRESENCE IN A NEW TEMPLE (EZEKIEL 40-48, ZECHARIAH 2)
- GOD'S KINGDOM OVER THE NATIONS (ISAIAH 2, ZECHARIAH 8)
- FULFILL PROMISE TO ABRAHAM (GENESIS 12)

PROPHETS

WELCOME!

created by the Bible Project

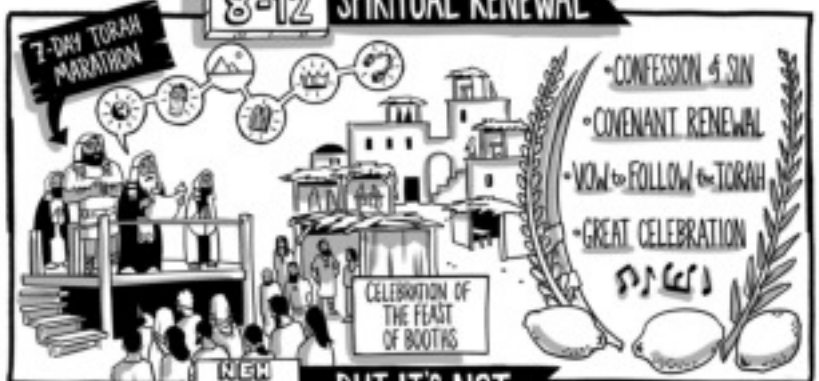
NEHEMIAH



NEW 1-7 NEHEMIAH CITY WALLS



NEW 8-12 SPIRITUAL RENEWAL



NEW 13 ...BUT IT'S NOT



BUT



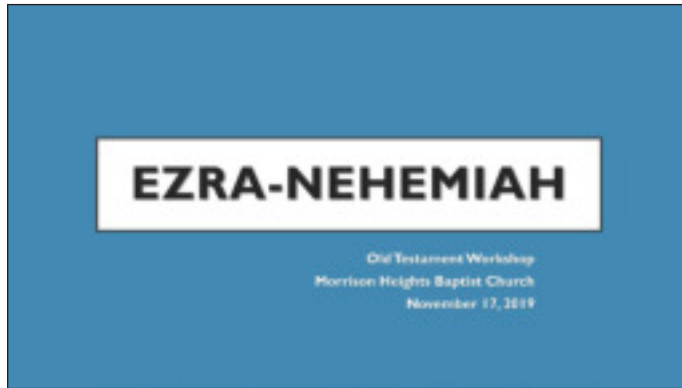
THE BOOK POINTS OUT THE NEED FOR A...



Ezra - Nehemiah

Slides from Dr. Parke's Teachings

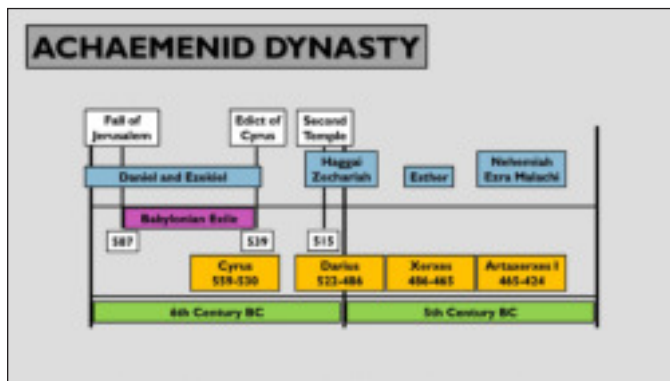
SLIDE 1



SLIDE 2



SLIDE 3



Ezra - Nehemiah

Slides from Dr. Parke's Teachings

SLIDE 4

EMPHASIS

Ezra and Nehemiah address rebuilding, **NOT** building.

BUILDING	REBUILDING
proactive	reactive
moving forward	getting back to before the tragedy
exciting	exhausting

** NOTE the many occurrences of "rebuild," "repair," and "restore" in the ESV.

SLIDE 5

LEADERSHIP

EZRA

Spiritual Rebuilder: Tribe of Levi and Line of Aaron

Ezra 7:1-5

"Scribe"

Ezra 7:6, 11-12, 21; Nehemiah 8:1, 4, 9, 13; 12:26, 35

regarding Ezra, not just a "secretarial" position

In the Book of Ezra, compare Shimshai and Ezra.

Shimshai

"the scribe wrote a letter against Jerusalem to King Artaxerxes (4:8)

Ezra

"a scribe skilled in the law of Moses (7:6)

"the scribe, learned in the words of the commandments of the Lord" (7:11)

SLIDE 6

LEADERSHIP

EZRA

In Jewish society, beginning with Ezra, the office of scribe became a prominent, respected role.

* Recall the MANY encounters between Jesus and the SCRIBES in the Gospels.

NEHEMIAH

Political Rebuilder

"Cupbearer"

Nehemiah 1:11-24

"associated intimately with the king's inner household ... apparently always a eunuch"

Source: Willard Hamrick, "Ezra-Nehemiah," The Brethren Bible Commentary

Ezra - Nehemiah

Slides from Dr. Parke's Teachings

SLIDE 7

LEADERSHIP

Relationship between the Ministry of Ezra and the Governorship of Nehemiah

458 BC	Arrival of Ezra in Jerusalem	Did the tenures of Ezra and Nehemiah overlap? YES SEE Nehemiah 8:9; 12:26; 12:27-47
445 BC	Arrival of Nehemiah in Jerusalem	
433 BC	Departure of Nehemiah to Susa	
after 432 BC	Return of Nehemiah to Jerusalem	

SLIDE 8

LEADERSHIP

"Nehemiah ... provided the physical structure and social and economic stability within which the religious community, formed by the zeal and erudition of Ezra, could grow ... Through the work of Ezra and Nehemiah Israel's new identity became centered around the law and temple."
La Sor, Hubbard, and Bush, Old Testament Survey

"Ezra and Nehemiah had played a vital role in preserving the religious life and culture of the Jews who returned from exile when the community was about to be swallowed up by its neighbors. The zeal they inspired would be carried over into a period which, in Jewish historical records, is almost blank."
John Tuback, The Old Testament Story

SLIDE 9

CONTENT

EZRA

The Book of Ezra divides into two unequal parts, chapters 1-6 and 7-10. Ezra does NOT appear in the book until chapter 7.

Chapters 1-6

covers Israel's history from the Edict of Cyrus (539 BC) to the completion of the Second Temple (515 BC), that which the prophets **Haggai** and **Zechariah** hastened
Ezra 3:1; 6:14

The Edict of Cyrus ended the Babylonian Exile. Two men, **Zerubbabel** (politician) and **Joshua** (priest), led the large group of returning Jews.

Ezra - Nehemiah

Slides from Dr. Parke's Teachings

SLIDE 10

CONTENT

EZRA

Chapter 7-10


chronicles Ezra's four-month journey from Babylon to Jerusalem

Ezra 7-8
details how he handled the dilemma of mixed marriages: a heart problem, NOT a skin problem; what the Apostle Paul called "unequally yoked" (2 Cor. 6:14, KJV)

Ezra 9-10

NEHEMIAH

Nehemiah prayed regularly and specifically. **ELEVEN** of his prayers appear in the book.



SLIDE 11

CONTENT

NEHEMIAH: "On Leadership"

- **Godly**
fearing God (3:1-13); obedient (7:1); on-going dialogue with God (1:6-11); 2:4; 4:4-5, 9; 5:19; 6:9b, 14; 12:14, 22b, 25, 31b)
- **Passionate**
1:4; 3:4, 13; 12:8, 11a, 13b, 17, 21, 25, 28
- **Visionary**
2:11-18
- **Comfortable in One-on-One Situations**
2:1-8; 6:10-14; 12:4-8, 28
- **Comfortable in Large-Group Settings**
2:14-18 (inspirational); 6:14 (encouraging); 5:1-12 and 12:10-11, 15-18, 20-22a, 23-27 (confrontational in order to solve problems)


TEN
Traits that Enabled Nehemiah to be an Effective Governor

SLIDE 12

CONTENT

NEHEMIAH: "On Leadership"

- **Courageous**
2:19-20; 4:1-23; 6:1-19; 12:4-9, 28 (bold)
- **Organized**
4:7-13, 14-23; 5:1-3; 12:27-47; 12:9, 13, 18, 22, 30-31
- **Discerning**
4:14 (perceptive); 6:12
- **Selfless**
5:14-19 = Profile of a Servant Leader
- **Competent Delegator** → NO Cronyism
7:2


*** READ 12:4, 11, 15, 17, 21, 23-28**

Chronology of Ezra

From the ESV Study Bible

Event	Year	Reference
Cyrus king of Persia captures Babylon	539 B.C.	Dan. 5:30–31
First year of King Cyrus; issues proclamation freeing Jewish exiles to return	538–537	Ezra 1:1–4
Jewish exiles, led by Sheshbazzar, return from Babylon to Jerusalem	537?	Ezra 1:11
Altar rebuilt	537	Ezra 3:1–2
Temple rebuilding begins	536	Ezra 3:8
Adversaries oppose the rebuilding	536–530	Ezra 4:1–5
Temple rebuilding ceases	530–520	Ezra 4:24
Temple rebuilding resumes (2nd year of Darius)	520	Ezra 5:2 ; cf. Hag. 1:14
Temple construction completed (6th year of Darius)	516	Ezra 6:15
Ezra departs from Babylon to Jerusalem (arrives in 7th year of Artaxerxes)	458	Ezra 7:6–9
Men of Judah and Benjamin assemble at Jerusalem	458	Ezra 10:9
Officials conduct three-month investigation	458–457	Ezra 10:16–17

Chronology of Nehemiah

From the ESV Study Bible

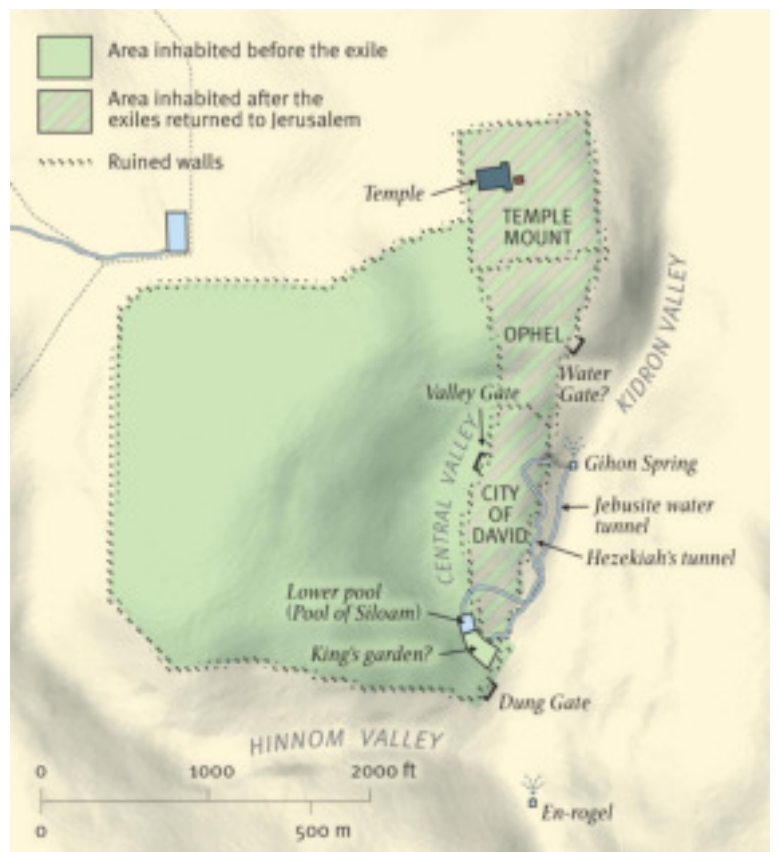
Event	Month/Day	Year	Reference
Hanani brings Nehemiah a report from Jerusalem (20th year of Artaxerxes I)		445–444 B.C.	1:1
Nehemiah before King Artaxerxes	1	445	2:1
Nehemiah arrives to inspect Jerusalem walls		445	2:11
Wall is finished	6/25	445	6:15
People of Israel gather	7	445	7:73–8:1
People of Israel celebrate Feast of Booths	7/15–22	445	8:14
People of Israel fast and confess sins	7/24	445	9:1
Nehemiah returns to Susa (32nd year of Artaxerxes I)		433–432	5:14 ; 13:6

Jerusalem at the Time of Zerubbabel

From the ESV Study Bible

538–515 B.C.

Among the first tasks undertaken upon the exiles' return was the rebuilding of the altar and the temple. Almost immediately the altar was set up, and regular burnt offerings were resumed. About a year later the foundations of the temple were laid, but opposition from other local governors halted the completion of the temple for over 20 years. Finally, in 515 B.C. (during the reign of Darius) the temple was completed. The city walls, however, would not be rebuilt until about 70 years later under the leadership of Nehemiah.



Jerusalem at the Time of Nehemiah

From the ESV Study Bible

c. 445 B.C.

Though Nehemiah gives a careful listing of the sections of Jerusalem's walls that were rebuilt, it is difficult to be certain exactly which walls and gates he was referring to. The city had extended beyond the city of David and the Temple Mount by the time of Hezekiah, but it appears that only the Temple Mount and the city of David were enclosed within Nehemiah's walls. An ambitious project nonetheless, it was completed in only 52 days, providing Jerusalem with some measure of protection from its enemies.



Adversaries Hinder Work

From the ESV Study Bible

Ezra 4:5	The people of the land hired counselors to work against the Israelites from the reigns of Cyrus (539–530 B.C.) to Darius (522–486)
Ezra 4:6	Accusations arose during the reign of Xerxes (Ahasuerus) (486–464)
Ezra 4:7–23	Accusations arose during the reign of Artaxerxes (464–423): “ <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • First threat: they will withhold money (v. 13) ” • Second threat: the king is dishonored (v. 14) ” • Third threat: they have rebelled before (v. 15) ” • Fourth threat: they will take over the whole area (v. 16)
Ezra 4:24–6:12	Work on the temple stopped from 536–520; Darius finally gives order to rebuild it

Kings of Persia Mentioned in Ezra-Nehemiah

From the ESV Study Bible

Cyrus	539–530 B.C.
Darius I	522–486
Xerxes (Ahasuerus)	485–464
Artaxerxes I	464–423

The Hand of God in Ezra and Nehemiah

From the ESV Study Bible

Ezra 7:6	The king granted Ezra all that he asked	for the hand of the Lord his God was on him
Ezra 7:9	Ezra began to go up from Babylon and came to Jerusalem	for the good hand of his God was on him
Ezra 7:28	Ezra took courage before the king and his men, and gathered leading men from Israel to go with him	for the hand of the Lord his God was on him
Ezra 8:18	Ezra is sent ministers for the house of God	by the good hand of their God on them
Ezra 8:22	On all who seek God	the hand of their God is for good
Ezra 8:31	God delivered them from the hand of the enemy and from ambushes by the way	[for] the hand of their God was on them
Neh. 2:8	King Artaxerxes granted what Nehemiah asked	for the good hand of his God was upon him