

Israel Goes Home



A study of the historical books of *Ezra*, *Nehemiah* and *Esther* along with the contemporaneous Minor Prophets, *Haggai*, *Zechariah* and *Malachi*. The student will become familiar with the history of the period and the events that set the stage for the developments of the inter-testamental period that ended with the birth of Messiah. Special emphasis is given to the Messianic messages of the prophets and their exhortations to the remnant to remain faithful unto Jehovah.

Israel Goes Home

Lesson One: *The Proclamation of Cyrus*

Lesson Aim: See the prophecy of Isaiah 44:28 and Jeremiah 25:11, 12 fulfilled.

Lesson Text: Ezra 1:1–2:70

Memory Verse: Ezra 1:1

Background Texts: Isaiah 44:24–45:13; Jeremiah 25:1–14; 2 Chronicles 36:22, 23

Questions for Discussion

1. Who is Cyrus? (1:1)
2. What did he decree in writing concerning Jehovah, Jerusalem and the Jews? (1:2–4)
3. Who had prophesied that this would occur? (Cite the references)
4. How many years did the captivity last?
5. How had God “raised the spirits” of certain of the Jews to build the Temple? (1:5)
6. With what did the Persians strengthen the hands of the Jews for their journey? (1:6)
7. What did Cyrus give to the Jews for the Temple? (1:7–11) How many total?
8. Who was Sheshbazzar? (1:11; 5:14, 16; 1 Chronicles 3:17, 18)
9. Who is Zerubbabel? (2:2; 3:2, 8; 4:2–3; 5:2; 1 Chronicles 3:19)
10. How many Jews returned to Palestine from Babylon in 516 BC? (2:64)
11. Which family had the least number of men to return?
12. Which family had the greatest number of men to return?
13. Which family could not prove they were of Israel? How many were there? (2:59)
14. Which was the largest family of the priests to return?
15. Which was the largest family of the Levites to return?
16. Which family was excluded from serving in the priesthood? Why? (2:61, 62)
17. How many servants came with the Jews on their return? (2:65)
18. How many beasts of burden did they bring with them? (2:66, 67)
19. Who were the Nethinims? (Ezra 8:20; cf. Joshua 9:23, 27)
20. What offering was made for the Temple by the Chiefs upon returning? (2:68, 69)

Israel Goes Home

Lesson Two: *A Fast Start & a Slow Finish, the Temple Is Begun*

Lesson Aim: See how Israel is deterred from the great work of building the Temple by her enemies in the land.

Lesson Text: Ezra 3:1–4:24

Memory Verse: Ezra 3:12

Background Texts: Leviticus 23:24–44; Numbers 29:1–38; Deuteronomy 16:13–17; 2 Kings 17; Ezra 1:1–4; 2 Chronicles 36:22–23

Questions for Discussion

1. Why is the seventh month important? For what purpose did the people gather? (3:1, 4)
2. Who is Joshua the son of Jehozadak? (3:2; 1 Chronicles 6:14, 15; 2 Kings 25:18–21)
3. What did Joshua and Zerubbabel build at this time? Why? (3:2, 3)
4. What had not yet been laid? (3:6)
5. What contract was let at this time? With whom was this contract made? (3:7)
6. When did the actual work on the Temple begin? (3:8)
7. Describe the celebration attending the setting of the foundation of the Temple. (3:9–13)
8. Who offered to help the Jews in the rebuilding of the Temple? (4:1–2, 9)
9. Why did Joshua and Zerubbabel forbid them? (4:3 and 2 Kings 17:24, 30–31)
10. Why were the Samaritans able to disturb the work of rebuilding the Temple? (3:3; 4:5)
11. Who is King Ahasuerus? (4:6 and Isaiah 43:3)
12. Who is King Artaxerxes? (4:7)
13. Who is King Asnapper? (4:10 and 2 Kings 17:24)
14. Who is King Esarhaddon? (4:2 and 2 Kings 19:36, 37)
15. What false accusations were made to Artaxerxes against the Jews? (4:12–16)
16. What order did Artaxerxes give concerning the building of the Temple? (4:17–22)
17. Why did he give this order? (4:20–22)
18. How did the Samaritans make the people stop building? (4:23)
19. What reply did the Jews make to these charges?
20. How long did the work on the Temple cease? (4:24)

Israel Goes Home

Lesson Three: *Haggai, the Lord's Messenger*

Lesson Aim: Here Haggai stir up the people to finish what they had begun in building the Temple of the Lord.

Lesson Text: Haggai 1:1–2:23

Memory Verse: Haggai 2:23

Background Texts: Ezra 1:1–5:2; Deuteronomy 29:1–30:20; Hebrews 12:18–29

Questions for Discussion

1. When did Haggai begin to prophesy? (1:1)
2. How long did he have to preach before he got any results? (1:15)
3. When was the Temple completed? (Ezra 6:15)
4. What excuse were the people offering for not completing the work on the Temple?
5. Why might they offer this excuse? (Ezra 3:3; 4:23)
6. What question did Haggai ask the people? (1:4)
7. What explanation did Haggai give for the poor economic conditions of the day? (1:6)
8. What had the people done to cause God to respond in this way? (Deuteronomy 30:9, 10)
9. What could Israel do that would cause God to turn away the drought? (1:8–11)
10. How do Zerubbabel and Joshua respond to this message? (1:12)
11. What message does Haggai bring when they return to building the Temple? (1:13)
12. After they had been working about a month, what question does Haggai ask the people about the Temple they are building? (2:1–3; cf. Ezra 3:12)
13. Though the Temple is much less glorious than what Solomon built, what promise does Jehovah make to Joshua and the people? (2:4, 9)
14. To what does God refer when He promises to shake the heavens and the earth? (2:6, 7)
15. What explanation does Haggai give for the empty barns and vats in Israel? (2:11–18)
16. How long between the Haggai's last vision and the start of the re-building? (2:10; 1:15)
17. What promise does Jehovah make to Israel on the 24th day of the ninth month? (2:19)
18. What will God overthrow when He shakes the heavens and the earth? (2:21, 22)
19. What will Jehovah make of Zerubbabel "in that day"? (2:23)

Israel Goes Home

Lesson Four: *The Glories of Spiritual Zion*

Lesson Aim: See the New Jerusalem not as a meager city in Palestine, but as the dwelling place of the righteous remnant that would return to Jehovah.

Lesson Text: Zechariah 1:1–2:13

Memory Verse: Zechariah 2:12

Background Texts: Ezra 1:1–5:2; 1 Kings 22:11, 12; Haggai 2:1–23

Questions for Discussion

1. When did Zechariah begin to prophecy? (1:1) How long was this after the first prophecy from Haggai? (Haggai 1:1) How long after the building was begun? (1:15)
2. What is the message of Zechariah 1:1–6?
3. What are the answers to the two questions in Zechariah 1:5?
4. What did Zechariah see on the 24th of Sebat? Who were these men?
5. What was the message of the horsemen? (1:11) What word was expected? (Haggai 2:7)
6. What indication did Jehovah give He would keep His promise? (Zechariah 1:14–17)
7. Was the rebuilding of the Temple the promised shaking of the earth? (1:17)
8. What vision did Zechariah see assuring him of Zion's future glory? (1:18–21)
9. From reading Haggai 2 and Zechariah 1, what change took place in Jerusalem that resulted in this approval from Jehovah? (Haggai 2:10; Zechariah 1:7).
10. Who did Zechariah see next? (2:1) Where was he going and why? (2:2)
11. What was this man told by an angel concerning Jerusalem? (2:4)
12. What is the significance of this statement to the Jews then living in Jerusalem?
13. What would be the only wall this Jerusalem would have or need? (2:5)
14. From where does Jehovah call Israel? Is this the literal or a figurative place? (2:6, 7)
15. In what sense would Babylon be the spoil of her former servants? (2:9)
16. Where does Jehovah dwell? (2:10)
17. How will "many nations" become God's "people"? (2:11; cf. Isaiah 2:2, 3)
18. Where is "the Holy Land"? (2:12)
19. What is the significance of Jehovah being raised up out of His holy habitation? (2:13)

Israel Goes Home

Lesson Five: *Joshua and Zerubbabel in God's Plan*

Lesson Aim: Learn how Joshua the High Priest and Zerubbabel the Governor fit into God's plan of redemption as types of Christ.

Lesson Text: Zechariah 3:1–4:14

Memory Verse: Zechariah 3:8

Background Texts: Ezra 1:1–5:2; Hebrews 7:1–8:4; Zechariah 6:10–15; Revelation 5:6; 12:10

Questions for Discussion

1. What is the next vision which Zechariah sees? (3:1–3)
2. For what purpose is Satan standing before the Angel of the Lord? (3:2)
3. How does the Angel of the Lord describe Jerusalem? What does this mean? (3:2)
4. How is Joshua clothed when he first appears in the vision? (3:3)
5. What commandment does the Angel of the Lord give concerning him? (3:4) Why?
6. What does Zechariah exclaim from his vantage point in the vision? (3:5)
7. What is Joshua's appearance at the end of the vision? (3:5b)
8. What promise does the Angel of the Lord make to Joshua? Upon what conditions? (3:7)
9. Of whom was Joshua and his "fellows" a sign? (3:8)
10. Who is the stone laid before Joshua? What is the significance of the seven eyes? (3:9)
11. What is the significance of every man sitting under his own vine & own fig tree? (3:10)
12. What vision appears to Zechariah upon being awakened by the angel? (4:1–3)
13. Sketch the vision on the back of this page.
14. What did the vision signify for Zerubbabel? (4:6–9)
15. Of whom is Zerubbabel a type in the vision? (4:10; Haggai 2:21–23; Zechariah 6:12, 13)
16. What is "the day of small things"? (4:10; Ezra 3:12; Haggai 2:3)
17. Where are the seven eyes found in this vision? (4:10) Who do they signify?
18. Who do you think the candlestick represents in the vision?
19. What do the two olive trees represent in this vision? (4:11–14)
20. What is the significance of the olive oil in the vision? (4:12)

Israel Goes Home

Lesson Six: *There Shall in No Wise Enter Anything that Defiles*

Lesson Aim: Learn from these visions the righteous character of the New Jerusalem.

Lesson Text: Zechariah 5:1–6:15

Memory Verse: Zechariah 6:12, 13

Background Texts: Revelation 21:1–27; Leviticus 26:14; Deuteronomy 28:15–68

Questions for Discussion

1. What is the next thing that Zechariah sees? What are its dimensions? (1 cubit=18 “)
2. Who is speaking to Zechariah? (5:3; cf. 4:5; 5:5)
3. What does Zechariah’s vision represent? (5:3) What is the “whole earth”?
4. Upon whom does the curse fall? What will become of them? (5:4)
5. What does this vision signify about the character of the citizens of Messiah’s Kingdom?
6. What does Zechariah see next? (5:5, 6) Whom does it represent?
7. What is inside the “ephah” and what is on top? (5:7) What did these represent? (5:8)
8. Who does the prophet see carrying the “ephah” and its contents? (5:9) Describe them?
9. Where do they take the “ephah”? (5:11) Why here? What do you think this represents?
10. What does this vision signify concerning the character of Messiah’s Kingdom?
11. What is the next vision seen by Zechariah? (6:1–3)
12. What do the horses and chariots represent? (6:5; cf. Jeremiah 51:1; Revelation 7:1)
13. Which horses are said to be “bay”? (6:3, 7) [Hint: check a concordance or NIV or NKJ].
14. Of the four, which seem to be most significant? Where did they go? With what result?
15. What does the activity of these chariots seem to represent?
16. Unto whom does Zechariah go? From where had these men just arrived? (6:10)
17. What was Zechariah commanded to make? (6:11) What was he to do with these?
18. What facts concerning Messiah did Zechariah announce on this occasion? (6:12, 13)
19. What was done with the objects which Zechariah made?
20. To which Temple did Zechariah refer in verse 13 and 15? Who are they that are “far off” that will build in this Temple?

Israel Goes Home

Lesson Seven: *Not a Fast but Repentance!*

Lesson Aim: See Israel's need to make their religion one of the heart rather than one of outward appearance.

Lesson Text: Zechariah 7:1–8:23

Memory Verse: Zechariah 8:8

Background Texts: 2 Kings 25:8–10; Jeremiah 52:4–13; 41:1–10; Isaiah 58:1–11; Jeremiah 14:12 ; Joel 2:12–14; Matthew 6:16–18; Ezekiel 3:9; Jeremiah 17:1

Questions for Discussion

1. What is significant about the dates associated with the fasts found in these chapters?
2. Who came from Bethel and why did they come? What did they want to know? (7:1–3)
3. How had the people fasted and feasted while in Babylon? (7:5–6)
4. Who are the “former prophets”? What had they said concerning Israel’s “fasting”?
5. What did Jehovah want Judah to do in this matter of fasting?
6. Who refused to hear and pulled away the shoulder and stopped their ears? (7:11–13)
7. What is “adamant stone”? To what does the prophet refer when he mentions it?
8. What befell Judah because they would not hearken with penitent contrition? (7:14)
9. Why had God returned to Jerusalem?
10. Is “jealousy” with “great fury” a righteous attribute? How and why? (8:2, 3)
11. What is the “mountain” to which Zechariah refers? (Isaiah 2:2–3; Daniel 2:44, 45)
12. Who would be in the streets? (8:4–6) Is this significant? (Lamentations 2:21)
13. Upon what conditions would men become “the people of God”? (2:11, 12; Hosea 2:23)
14. Judah’s faithful obedience in building the Temple would result in their being blessed (8:9–12). What was this blessing and when was it fully realized? (9:13–15)
15. What must these Jews do to share in this blessing promised by Zechariah? (8:16, 17)
16. What would Judah’s fasting become to them? (8:19) Why? How?
17. Who else would be included in the blessings of Messiah’s Kingdom? Why and how?

Israel Goes Home

Lesson Eight: *I Have Bent Judah and Filled the Bow with Ephraim*

Lesson Aim: See the Kingdom of Heaven fill the whole earth with peace & salvation.

Lesson Text: Zechariah 9:1–11:17

Memory Verse: Zechariah 9:9

Background Texts: Leviticus 17:10–14; Deuteronomy 32:15–17; Matthew 21:1–11; John 6:26–71; Matthew 24:1–34; Daniel 9:24–27; Matthew 26:14–16; 27:3–10

Questions for Discussion

1. What is the significance of the cities named in Zechariah 9:1–6, what do they represent?
2. What are the “the eyes of man” and to whom do they belong? (9:1, 8)
3. What two things might befall a citizen of these cities? (9:7)
4. To what blood in the mouth is Zechariah referring? (9:7) What are these abominations?
5. About what does God camp? (9:8) What promise of security is made? (cf. Daniel 2:44)
6. Describe the Kingdom of Heaven as seen by Zechariah? (9:8–11)
7. What does it mean to be given “double”? (9:12; cf. Deuteronomy 21:17; Romans 8:16, 17)
8. What does the imagery of God as a soldier with Judah and Ephraim as His bow warring against Greece represent relative to the Kingdom of Heaven? (9:12–17; Romans 15:16).
9. What did the sending of the early and late rains signify to the Jews? The withholding of those rains? (Deuteronomy 11:10–17; Jeremiah 5:23, 24; Amos 4:6–13; Hosea 2:6–13)
10. Why does the prophet encourage Judah to pray for these rains?
11. What would God cause to arise from the nation which He had chastised? (10:3–7)
12. Who is the “corner” and the “nail”? Who is the “battle bow” and “every oppressor”?
13. What would Jehovah do with these mighty men? (10:8–12)
14. To what terrible event in the history of Judah must Zechariah 11:1–3 refer? (11:11–13)
15. Who is commanded to feed the “flock of the slaughter”? Who are this flock? (11:4)
16. Who are the shepherds that pity not the flock? What would become of them? (11:5–6)
17. What are “Beauty” and “Bands”? What do they represent in the vision? (11:7–14).
18. How did Judah treat the Good Shepherd which Jehovah sent? (11:12–14)
19. What Shepherd would Jehovah now send to Judah? (11:15–17)

Israel Goes Home

Lesson Nine: *"In that Day..."*

Lesson Aim: Give attention to Zechariah's signs indicating Messiah is coming.

Lesson Text: Zechariah 12:1–14:21

Memory Verse: Zechariah 12:10

Background Texts: Isaiah 2:1–3; Micah 4:1–4; Luke 24:44–48; Acts 2:1ff; Hebrews 12:18–29; John 19:19–37; Matthew 26:30–35; 24:15–31

Questions for Discussion

1. The prophet speaks of the exalted glory of Jerusalem "in that day," to what does he refer? (12:1–9)
2. To Whom does the prophet refer in Zechariah 12:10? Why the mourning?
3. What happened at Hadad-rimmon? (See: 2 Chronicles 35:20–25) Whom did the people mourn then? What does that have to do with the Messiah?
4. What would be opened in Jerusalem "in that day"? Why? (13:1)
5. What would be the effect of this cleansing upon Jerusalem? (13:2–3)
6. Who would be ashamed "in that day"? (13:4–5)
7. What would become of the Good Shepherd "in that day"? (13:6, 7)
8. What would happen to His sheep? (13:7–9)
9. How is the Messiah Jehovah's "fellow"? (13:7; cf. John 10:30; etc.)
10. Who are the "two parts" that are "cut off"? (13:8)
11. To which Jerusalem, physical or spiritual, does the prophet refer in 14:1–3?
12. When do the events of 14:4–11 occur? Why is this important to know?
13. From where would the righteous flee and to where would they go? (14:4, 11)
14. What would be accomplished with this flight from Jerusalem? (14:8, 9)
15. Locate the area described in 14:10 as the boundaries of Jerusalem?
16. Once God exalted Jerusalem what would become of all her enemies? (14:12–15)
17. What would the remnant of the nations do? (14:16–19)
18. Describe the New Jerusalem. What is there and what is not there? (14:20–21)

Israel Goes Home

Lesson Ten: *"The Temple Is Finished"*

Lesson Aim: See how the exhortation of God's prophets turned the people back to the work of God in completing the Temple in Jerusalem.

Lesson Text: Ezra 5:1–6:22

Memory Verse: Ezra 5:5

Background Texts: Haggai, Zechariah, 2 Chronicles 36:22, 23; Ezra 1:1–11

Questions for Discussion

1. Who prophesied among the Jews in the second year of Darius, King of Persia? (5:1)
2. What two leaders were stirred up by their preaching to build the house of God? (5:2)
3. What did Satan do in order to hinder the work of building the Temple? (Ezra 5:3–4; cf., 1 Thessalonians 2:13–18; 2 Thessalonians 3:1–4)
4. How did the elders of the Jews respond to this threat? (5:5, 12–16)
5. What did Tatnai do in an attempt to get the building stopped? (5:6–10, 17)
6. What authority did the Jews have to rebuild the Temple? (5:13–15; 2 Chronicles 36:22, 23)
7. How long had the Jews been building on the Temple at this time? (5:13, 16) How long had they been idle? (4:7, 19–24)
8. What was the difference between the previous search of the archives of Persia and the one now requested? (4:12–22; 5:17)
9. What did this second search of the archives reveal? (6:1–5)
10. What was the Persian law concerning the edicts of their monarch's? (Daniel 6:8, 12)
11. What was the breadth and height of the second Temple? (Ezra 6:3, a Bab. cubit = 21")
12. How do these dimensions compare to the first Temple? (see: 1 Kings 6:1–3, 17–20)
13. What other provisions for the temple did Darius make? (Ezra 6:5–10)
14. What punishment was decreed for those that interfered with the rebuilding? (6:11–12)
15. When was the Temple completed? (6:13–15) How long was this after the destruction of the former Temple?
16. How was the second Temple dedicated for service unto Jehovah? (6:16–22)

Israel Goes Home

Lesson Eleven: “*Esther Becomes Queen*”

Lesson Aim: See Hadassah rise to a place of prominence in order to be used by God.

Lesson Text: Esther 1:1–2:18

Memory Verse: Esther 2:11

Background Texts: 2 Kings 24:10–16; Ephesians 5:21–33; Daniel 8:1–27

Questions for Discussion

1. During what king’s reign do the events of this book take place? In what year of this reign do they begin? (1:1–3)
2. By what other name is this Persian king known?
3. In what special celebration was the king of Persia engaged? (1:4–8) To what events in world history did this celebration coincide? (cf. Daniel 8:1–4, 20)
4. Who is queen of Persia at this time? (1:9)
5. Why did Ahasuerus become angry with the queen? (1:10–12)
6. What did the princes of Persia fear would happen because of her actions? (1:13–18)
7. What punishment was determined for the queen because of her actions? (1:19)
8. Why was this punishment determined? (1:20)
9. Was the king’s request of Vashti reasonable? (1:11)
10. Is the edict of Ahasuerus in harmony with the principles of Ephesians 5:21–33?
11. For what purpose were young women gathered from all across the empire? (2:1–4)
12. Who is Mordecai and how did he come to be in Shushan? (2:5, 6)
13. What was the tribal descent of Mordecai? Who may have been his ancestor?
14. Who is Hadassah? What significance does her name have? (Nehemiah 8:15)
15. What does *Esther* mean? Why would Hadassah take this name? (cf. Daniel 1:7)
16. Who is *Hege* or *Hegai*? (2:1, 8, 15) How did he treat Esther?
17. What activity of Mordecai is indicative of his parental love of Hadassah? (2:7, 11)
18. Explain the ritual by which Esther became one of Ahasuerus’ concubines. (2:12–18)
19. In what year did Esther become queen of Persia?

Israel Goes Home

Lesson Twelve: *“The Plot to Kill the Jews”*

Lesson Aim: See the providence of God work on behalf of His people to save them from unreasonable and wicked men.

Lesson Text: Esther 2:19–4:17

Memory Verse: Esther 4:14

Background Texts: 1 Samuel 15:1–23; Exodus 17:8–16; Deuteronomy 25:17–19

Questions for Discussion

1. To what event does *“the second time”* refer? (2:19; cf. vv. 8, 12)
2. What position did Mordecai hold in the government? (2:21; 3:2)
3. Of what did Mordecai become aware in his position *“in the king’s gate”*? (2:21)
4. What reasons would these men have for slaying Ahasuerus? (cf. 2 Kings 19:36)
5. How was Mordecai able to save the king’s life? (2:22)
6. What became of the conspirators? (2:23)
7. Who is Haman? Of what possible descent is he? (3:1)
8. What possible reasons justified Mordecai’s refusal to reverence Haman? (1 Kings 1:23)
9. What effect did Mordecai’s lack of reverence arouse in Haman? (3:2–6)
10. For what purpose was Haman casting *Pur* or *“lots”*? (consider: Proverbs 16:33)
11. Upon what day was the lot cast? (3:7, 13)
12. What did Haman propose to Ahasuerus concerning the Jews? What was the king’s response to this proposal? (3:8–11; cf. 4:7)
13. What did King Ahasuerus do in order to implement Haman’s request? (3:12–14)
14. Upon what day was this edict written? (3:12) Why is this significant?
15. When Mordecai and the Jews learned of the decree, what did they do? (4:1–3)
16. What command did Mordecai give to Esther concerning this decree? (4:4–9)
17. What excuse did Esther offer for not obeying Mordecai’s commandment? (4:11)
18. Of what did Mordecai remind Esther concerning her responsibility? (4:13–14)
19. What did Esther ask Mordecai and the Jews of Shushan to do on her behalf? (4:15)
20. How did Esther resolve the question of whether or not she would go to the king?

Israel Goes Home

Lesson Thirteen: *“Esther Saves Israel”*

Lesson Aim: See the completion of God’s deliverance of Israel by Esther the Queen.

Lesson Text: Esther 5:1–7:10

Memory Verse: Esther 7:10

Background Texts: 2 Samuel 15:30; Proverbs 6:16–19; 16:18; 29:23

Questions for Discussion

1. On the third day of the fast where did Esther appear? How was she dressed? (5:1, 2)
2. Why did the king extend his scepter toward Esther? (cf. 4:11)
3. What did Ahasuerus promise to give Esther? (5:3; cf. Mark 6:22, 23)
4. For what does Esther ask? (5:4, 5)
5. What does Esther imply about her unspecified request by the invitation to a second banquet? (5:6–8, take note of the phrase “as the king hath said”)
6. How does Haman interpret his inclusion at the banquet that day? (5:12)
7. However, what spoils Haman’s celebration of his newfound success? (5:9, 13)
8. Who is Zeresh? What plan does she contrive for Haman’s pleasure? (5:14)
9. What was causing Ahasuerus to have a sleepless night? (6:1–3)
10. What did the king learn that night concerning Mordecai? (6:3)
11. How did Haman come to be in the king’s outer court? (6:4, 5)
12. What did the king ask Haman? Of whom did he think the king spoke? (6:6)
13. What was Haman’s answer concerning the king’s wish? (6:7–9)
14. What commandment did Ahasuerus give Haman concerning Mordecai? (6:10–11)
15. How did Haman behave after obeying the king’s commandment? (6:12)
16. What expectation did Zeresh and Haman’s advisers have for him in this matter? (6:13)
17. What did Esther reveal to the king in the presence of Haman that next day? (7:1–6)
18. What did Haman begin to do when he saw the king’s anger? (7:7–8)
19. Why did the king’s servants in seizing Haman “cover” his face? (cf. Job 9:23, 24)
20. How was Ahasuerus’ sentence against Haman carried out? (7:9, 10)

Israel Goes Home

Lesson Fourteen: *“The Jews Avenge Themselves upon Their Enemies”*

Lesson Aim: See that in the end God does avenge his people of the wicked.

Lesson Text: Esther 8:1–10:3

Memory Verse: Esther 10:3

Background Texts: Genesis 41:37–45; Daniel 2:46–49; 6:1–3, 13–16, 25–28

Questions for Discussion

1. What did King Ahasuerus give to Esther the queen? (8:1)
2. What honor did Ahasuerus bestow upon Mordecai? (8:2; cf. 10:3)
3. Who became head over all the house of Haman? (8:3)
4. For what additional favor did Esther entreat King Ahasuerus? (8:4–6)
5. How did Ahasuerus grant Esther’s request without violating the law of the Persian kings which forbids the reversal of a royal decree? (8:7–14)
6. How was the decree of Ahasuerus received by the Jews? (8:15–17a)
7. What effect did the decree of Ahasuerus have upon the people of Persia? (8:17b)
8. When did Ahasuerus issue his second decree concerning the Jews? (8:9) How long was this after the first decree? How long before the first decree became effective? (3:12, 13)
9. How did the Jews resist their enemies? Who gave aid to the Jews? (9:1–4) Why?
10. How many were slain in Shushan? What notable men were among the dead? (9:5–11)
11. What additional request did Esther make? (9:12–14)
12. How many more were slain in Shushan? What was the total number dead? (9:15–16)
13. What did the Jews not take though lawfully it was theirs? (9:10, 16; cf. 8:11, 12)
14. What two days did Mordecai decree as feast days for the Jews? (9:17–23) Why?
15. What did the Jews call this holiday? Why call it this? (9:24–27)
16. To which Jews did the authority of Mordecai extend? (9:28, 29; cf. 8:9)
17. Unto what rank did Mordecai attain? (8:15; 9:4; 10:3)
18. What did Mordecai do for the Jews all his days in the kingdom? (10:1-3)

Israel Goes Home

Lesson Fifteen: *“Ezra Returns to Jerusalem”*

Lesson Aim: Learn the necessity of personal holiness of one who will serve Jehovah.

Lesson Text: Ezra 7:1-8:36

Memory Verse: Ezra 7:10

Background Texts: Leviticus 20:7; 1 Peter 1::13–23; 2 Corinthians 8:20–22

Questions for Discussion

1. Who is Ezra? (7:1-6) What relation was he to Joshua the priest? (1 Chronicles 6:14)
2. When did Ezra return to Jerusalem in order to continue the restoration begun by Zerubbabel and Joshua? (7:1-7) How long after them did Ezra come?
3. What qualifications did Ezra have that suited him for the work he was undertaking?
4. Which “King Artaxerxes” is it that grants Ezra permission to return to Israel? (7:1, 7, 11)
5. What authority did the decree of Artaxerxes grant to Ezra? (7:11-26)
6. Why was Artaxerxes so generous in behalf of the Jews and their Temple?
7. How many came with Ezra back to Jerusalem? (8:1-20)
8. What is of particular note about the Levites that joined this company? (cf. 7:9; 8:31)
9. What had Ezra rejected from among the kings many offers? (8:21-23) Why?
10. How did Ezra and the people eliminate the need for such?
11. How much gold and silver by weight did Ezra bring to Jerusalem? (8:24-30)
12. What vessels did they bring?
13. What policy did Ezra follow handling these funds? (8:24-34; 2 Corinthians 8:20-22)
14. What principle concerning fitness for service is learned from Ezra’s charge to the priests responsible for this offering for the Temple? (cf. Leviticus 20:7; 1 Peter 1:15, 16)
15. When did Ezra arrive in Jerusalem? How long had their journey taken? (8:31; cf. 7:9)
16. What did he and the people do once there? (8:35)
17. What kind of offering did Ezra and the people with him offer? (8:35) Why?
18. What did Ezra do with the letter he received from Artaxerxes after arriving? (8:36)
19. What effect did Ezra’s arrival have upon the people and the Temple?

Israel Goes Home

Lesson Sixteen: *“Ezra Restores True Worship at Jerusalem”*

Lesson Aim: See that those who really yearn to be right find the strength to turn to God.

Lesson Text: Ezra 9:1–10:44

Memory Verse: Ezra: 10:1

Background Texts: Exodus 34:12–16; Deuteronomy 7:1–6; Malachi 2:11–17

Questions for Discussion

1. What report did the princes of Israel bring to Ezra? (9:1–2)
2. What does this indicate about the progress Israel had made since their return? (cf. 6:21)
3. Why was intermarriage with the nations such a serious matter? (Exodus 34:16; Deuteronomy 7:3, 4; Malachi 2:11) Who were the chief offenders? (9:2)
4. What was Ezra’s reaction to this news? (9:3, 4) Why do this?
5. What does Ezra do after a day of “humiliation”? (9:6)
6. How does Ezra treat the sin of the princes and people in his prayer? (9:6)
7. What does Ezra confess in his prayer to God concerning the nation? (9:7)
8. What had Israel done after having received “mercy” and “a little reviving”? (9:8–10)
9. What response to Israel’s renewed rebellion does Ezra expect from God? (9:13–15)
10. Who comes to Ezra while he is praying in the Temple? (10:1, 2)
11. What confession do they make to Ezra? What solution do they propose? (10:2, 3)
12. Why do they say, “This matter belongeth unto thee”? (cf., Ezra 7:25, 26)
13. What does Shechaniah pledge to Ezra on behalf of the congregation? (10:4)
14. What does Ezra make the priests, Levites and all Israel swear? (10:5)
15. What was Ezra doing in the chamber of Johanan? For how long? (10:6, 9)
16. What proclamation do the princes and elders make? (10:7–8)
17. When did Israel come before the house of God? (10:9) Why were they trembling?
18. What did Ezra command Israel to do? What was their response? (10:10–16)
19. How long did it take the judges to grant all the bills of divorcement in Israel? (10:17)
20. How many among the priests had taken foreign wives? (10:18–44)

Israel Goes Home

Lesson Seventeen: *“Nehemiah Comes to Jerusalem”*

Lesson Aim: Learn who Nehemiah is and observe his wisdom in leading the people.

Lesson Text: Nehemiah 1:1–2:20

Memory Verse: Nehemiah 2:20

Background Texts: Deuteronomy 7:1–9; 30:1–10; Leviticus 26:27–46; Ezra 7:1–26

Questions for Discussion

1. Who was Nehemiah? (1:1, 11)
2. What report did Hanani and other Jews bring to Nehemiah concerning Jerusalem?
3. How did Nehemiah react to this report from Jerusalem? (1:4)
4. In what year did Nehemiah begin to pray concerning his involvement in the events taking place in Jerusalem? (1:1, 4, 11; 2:1)
5. What attribute of Jehovah did Nehemiah emphasize in his petition? (1:5, 8, 9)
6. What did Nehemiah confess in his prayer to Jehovah? (1:6, 7)
7. Nehemiah says, “We have dealt very corruptly against Thee.” To what is he referring?
8. Of what promise does Nehemiah remind Jehovah? (1:9; cf., Deuteronomy 30:1–5)
9. What condition would any return to Jerusalem require? (1:11)
10. Who is Artaxerxes? (2:1; Ezra 7:1ff) What was Nehemiah’s relationship to him?
11. Why was Nehemiah afraid of Artaxerxes? (2:1, 2)
12. Did Nehemiah exaggerate about the condition of Jerusalem? (2:3, 4; Jeremiah 8:1–3)
13. When given the opportunity to make a request of the king what did Nehemiah do? (2:4)
14. For what did Nehemiah pray? (2:5–8) Was his prayer answered? (2:9)
15. What authority did he receive from the king? How was this authority conveyed?
16. What two men were Nehemiah’s enemies before he ever met them? Why? (2:10)
17. After three days what did Nehemiah do under cover of darkness? (2:11–16)
18. Who had Nehemiah brought into his confidence at this time? (2:12, 16)
19. When did Nehemiah exhort the people to build? (2:17, 18)
20. Who opposed the work? What false charges did these men make? (2:19, 20)

Israel Goes Home

Lesson Eighteen: *"The Work Begins"*

Lesson Aim: Learn what can be done when the people of God have a mind to work.

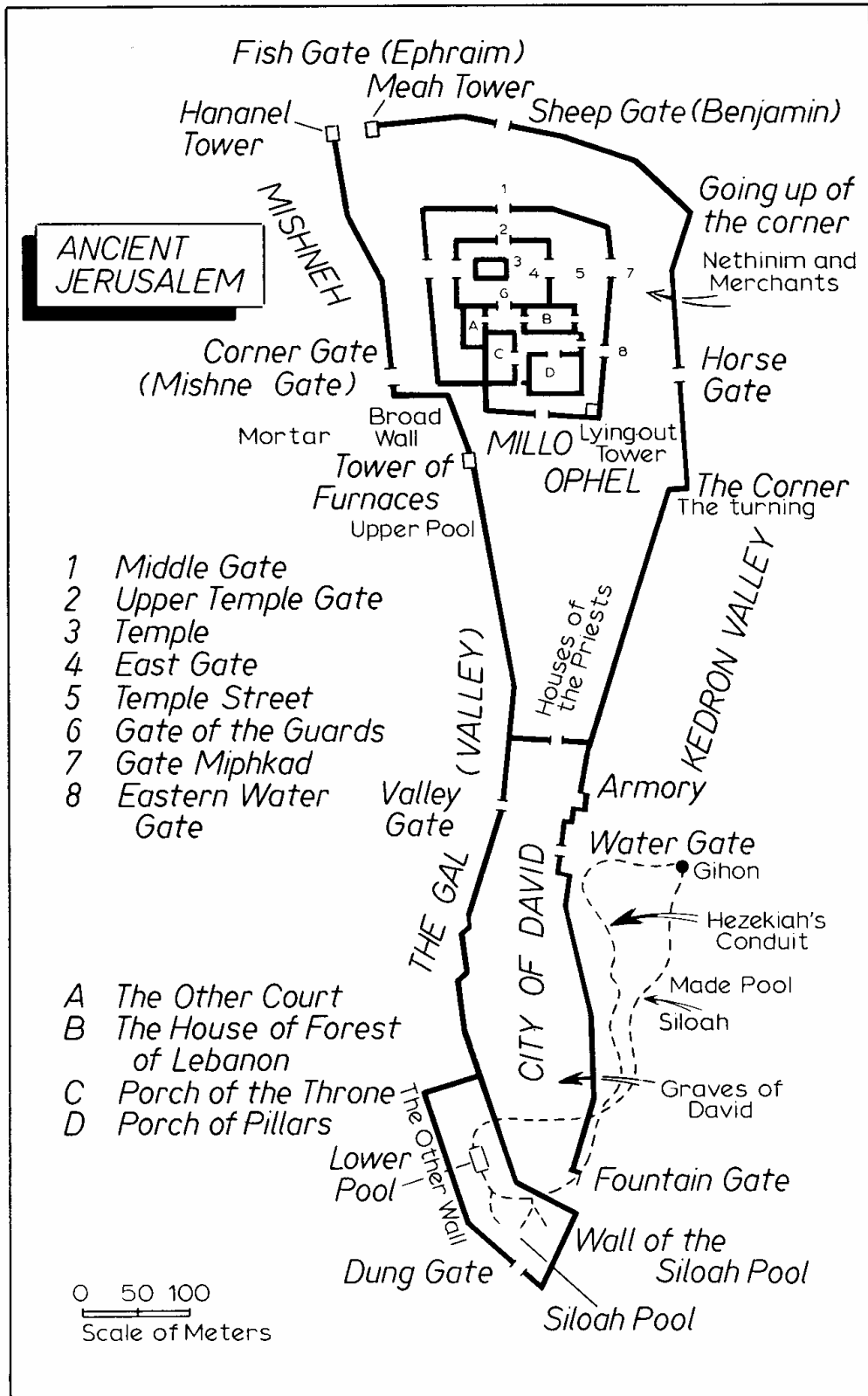
Lesson Text: Nehemiah 3:1-4:23

Memory Verse: Nehemiah 4:6

Background Texts: 2 Kings 17:24-34; Ezra 4:10; Isaiah 7:1-9

Questions for Discussion

1. Who rebuilt the Sheep Gate? (3:1) Who built was next to them? (3:2)
2. Who rebuilt the Fish Gate? (3:3) Who worked next to them? (3:4-5)
3. What is observed about the nobles of the Tekoites? (3:5)
4. Who repaired the Old Gate? (3:6) Who repaired next to them? (3:7)
5. What men of special skills worked on the wall? (3:8-9)
6. What section of the wall did Jedaiah repair? (3:10, 11) Who worked next to him?
7. Who repaired the Tower of the Furnaces? What ovens were these? (Jeremiah 37:21)
8. Who is Shallum? Who worked with him to repair the wall? (3:12)
9. Who repaired the Valley Gate? The Dung Gate? The Fountain Gate & Wall of Siloah?
10. What sections did the other Nehemiah repair? (3:16) Who repaired next to him?
11. Who repaired from the "turning" to the end of the house of Eliashab? (3:20-22)
12. From what tribe did Benjamin, Hashub, Azariah and Binnui probably come? (3:23-24)
13. Where did Palal and Pedaiah repair? Who worked beside them? (3:25-26)
14. Who repaired a second section of the wall? (3:27)
15. Where did the priests repair? (3:28-30) Who repaired the remaining section?
16. What two methods did Sanballat use to discourage the Jews from building? (4:1-3, 8)
17. What was the response of the Jews to these threats? (4:4, 5, 9)
18. What initial strategy of defense did Nehemiah employ against the Samaritans? (4:9, 13)
19. How did Nehemiah encourage the people in their work and resistance? (4:14)
20. After the emergency passed how did Nehemiah deploy the people for defense? (4:15ff)
21. What did Nehemiah have the people do in order to increase security? (4:22)
22. What detail indicates the urgency of the work and the tension of the situation? (4:23)



College Press Bible Textbook Series: Ezra and Nehemiah by Ruben Ratzlaff

Israel Goes Home

Lesson Nineteen: *“Obstacles Overcome”*

Lesson Aim: See that Satan is always throwing obstacles before the people of God.

Lesson Text: Nehemiah 5:1–6:19

Memory Verse: Nehemiah 5:3

Background Texts: Exodus 22:22–27; Leviticus 25:35–55; Deuteronomy 15:1–18; 23:19–20; Jeremiah 34:8–22; Ezekiel 18:5–18; 22:1–16; Haggai 1:1–2:23; Numbers 3:1–10; 18:1–7

Questions for Discussion

1. Soon after Nehemiah’s arrival there was an outcry against the nobles and rulers. Why?
2. Why was there a “dearth” in the land? (5:3, Haggai 1:7–11; 2:16, 17)
3. Why were these Jews compelled to borrow money? (5:2–5)
4. Why was Nehemiah angry with the rulers for this practice? (5:6)
5. What does Nehemiah mean when he writes, “Then I consulted with myself”? (5:7)
6. What means did Nehemiah use to convince the nobility of their error?
7. With what realities does Nehemiah urge the moneylenders to forgive the debts? (5:8, 9)
8. What does Nehemiah ask the moneylenders and priests to restore to the poor? (5:10–13)
9. What example had Nehemiah set in this matter of lending to the poor?
10. What curse did Nehemiah pronounce against those that would refuse? Did any refuse?
11. What course of action regarding taxation did Nehemiah follow as governor of the satrapy? (5:14–18) What did he ask the Lord to do respecting these actions?
12. What request did Nehemiah’s enemies make of him? What was his answer? (6:1–3)
13. How many times did they make this request? How was the last request presented?
14. What was Nehemiah’s reply? (6:8, 9) What did he presume was afoot? (cf. Ezra 4:4)
15. Who was Shemaiah? Where was he? What did he reveal to Nehemiah? (6:10)
16. Who else was involved in this ruse and conspiracy? (6:14)
17. What was Nehemiah’s reaction to Shemaiah’s revelation? (6:11)
18. What was Nehemiah’s conclusion about the Jews that would “put him in fear”? (6:13)
19. Why was Tobiah the Ammonite so influential among the Jews? (3:4, cf., Ezra 2:5)
20. How long did it take to finish the wall? What effect did this have on Judah’s enemies?

Israel Goes Home

Lesson Twenty: *“Setting Things in Order”*

Lesson Aim: Observe Nehemiah and Ezra setting the city, the Temple and the worship in order. Note how the people willingly respond to their newfound duties.

Lesson Text: Nehemiah 7:1–8:18

Memory Verse: Nehemiah 8:2–3

Background Texts: Ezra 2:1–60; 1 Chronicles 24:1–26:32; Leviticus 23:23–36; Deuteronomy 12:1–12; 31:9–13; Numbers 10:1–10

Questions for Discussion

1. To what were the porters, singers and Levites appointed? (7:1)
2. Who was Hanani? (7:2; see: 1:2) What were his qualifications for ruler of Jerusalem?
3. What position had Hananiah held? What special qualifications did he possess? (cf. 2:8)
4. What special security measures were adopted for the city gates? (7:3)
5. What additional security measures were adopted for the rest of the city?
6. Why were these extraordinary measures necessary? (7:4)
7. What did Nehemiah propose to do next? (7:5) What purpose might this serve?
8. What discrepancy exists between the list in Nehemiah 7 and the list in Ezra 2 (see: work sheet on the next page)? (7:66–69)
9. What took place on the first day of the seventh month? (7:73–8:1) Why?
10. How long was this after the completion of the walls? (6:15)
11. Who was present at this festival? How long did Ezra read and preach? (8:3)
12. Who stood with Ezra on the pulpit? Why do this?
13. How did the people worship God? (8:5–6)
14. Who helped Ezra in reading and teaching the Law of God? (8: 7–8)
15. What were the people forbidden to do? Why? (8:9–12) Why?
16. What did the elders of Israel learn on the second day of the seventh month? (8:13–15)
17. What commandment was published in all the cities? What was the reaction? (8:16–17)
18. How long did this continue? (8:18)
19. What did Ezra do during every day of this feast?
20. How long did they keep this feast? What happened on the eighth day? (8:18)

Family Clans	Ezra 2:3–60	Nehemiah 7:8–62	Difference
Parosh			
Shephatiah			
Arah			
Pahath–Moab			
Elam			
Zattu			
Zaccai			
Bani (Binnui)			
Bebai			
Azgad			
Adonikam			
Bigvai			
Adin			
Ater			
Bezai			
Jorah (Hariph)			
Hashum			
Gibbar (Gibeon)			
From the Towns			
Bethlehem & Netophah			
Anathoth			
Azmaveth (beth Azmaveth)			
Kiriath Jearim, Kephirah, and Beeroth			
Ramah and Geba			
Micmash			
Bethel and Ai			
Nebo			
Magbish			
The other Elam			
Harim			
Lod, Hadid and Ono			
Jericho			
Senaah			
Priests			
Jedaiah			
Immer			
Pashur			
Harim			
Levites			
Singers			
Gatekeepers			
Temple servants			
Of Delaiah, Tobiah and Nekoda			

Israel Goes Home

Lesson Twenty-one: *"The Revival Continues"*

Lesson Aim: See spiritual renewal and revival in Israel come to a wonderful climax.

Lesson Text: Nehemiah 9:1–10:39

Memory Verse: Nehemiah 9:7, 8

Background Texts:

Questions for Discussion

1. What significance does the 24th day of the seventh month have on the Hebrew calendar?
2. Why were the Jews assembled in sackcloth and covered with dust?
3. What had these people done that indicated their godly sorrow and contrition? (9:2)
4. On what did their worship consist on this day? (9:3) How long did they worship?
5. How did they indicate their respect for the word of God?
6. Who was leading the congregation in worship this day? (9:4–5)
7. What the Levites called a blessing is what we commonly think of as what?
8. What great work did the Levites attribute to Jehovah alone? (9:6)
9. What was God's relationship to Israel through Abraham? (9:7–8)
10. What had Jehovah done to get Himself "a name"? (9:9–12)
11. What did Israel do after God made a covenant with them at Mt. Sinai? (9:13–17)
12. However, how did God treat Israel in her rebellion? (9:18–25)
13. How did Israel respond to these great acts of God's grace? (9:26)
14. How did God deal with them after that? (9:27–31) Why did He not destroy them?
15. Amazingly, for what do the Levites ask at this juncture in their blessing? (9:32, 36–37)
16. What more do they confess after their supplication? (9:33–35)
17. In order to demonstrate their conviction what do the people do? (9:38–10:29)
18. What specific ordinances do they bind themselves to keep? (10:29–31)
19. Regarding the Temple worship what do they promise to do? (10:32–34)
20. Concerning the maintenance of the priesthood, what was their promise? (10:35–39)

Israel Goes Home

Lesson Twenty-two: *“Resettlement Resolved”*

Lesson Aim: See Nehemiah establish a permanent presence in the city of Jerusalem.

Lesson Text: Nehemiah 11:1–12:26

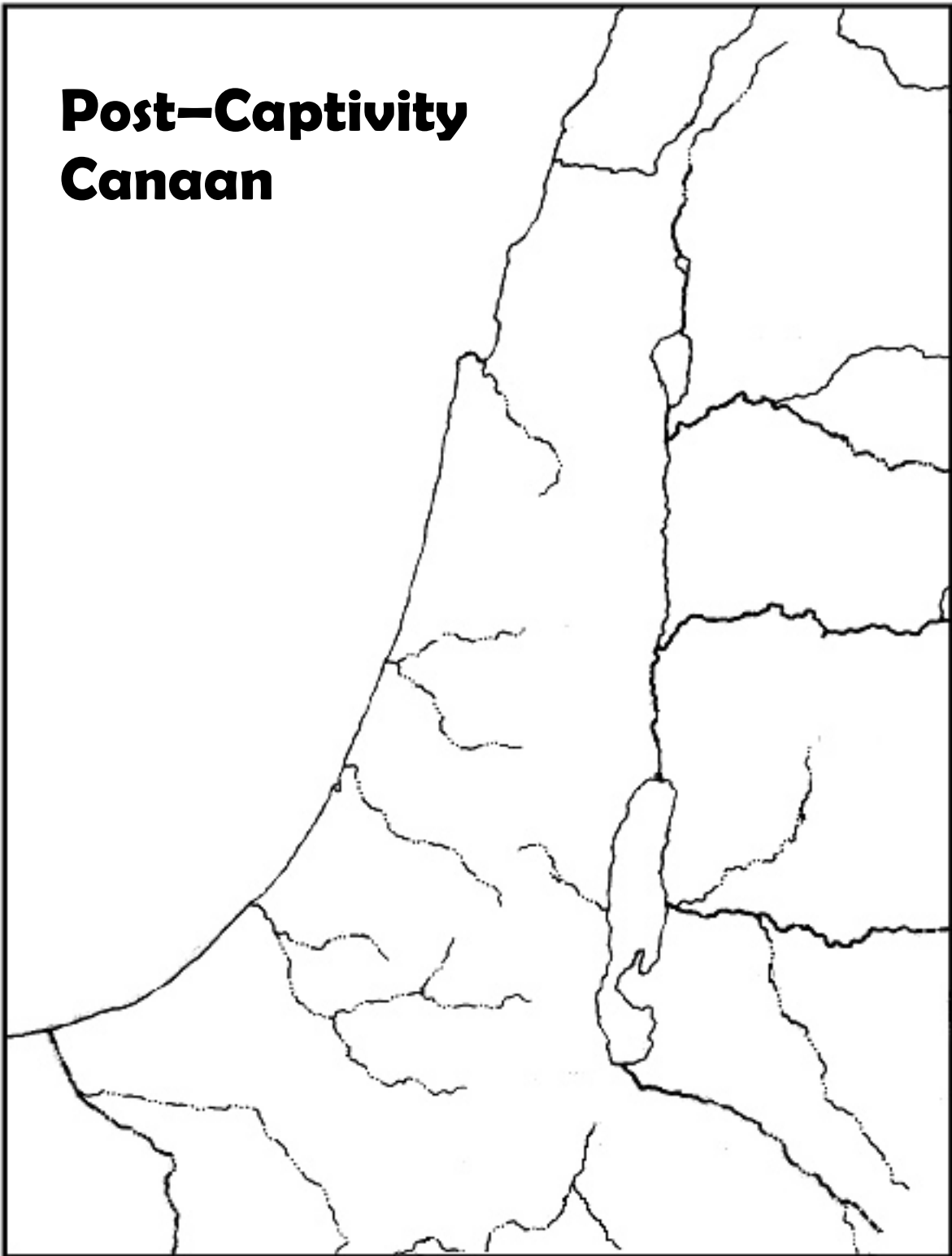
Memory Verse: Nehemiah 11:2

Background Texts: 1 Chronicles 9:1–34; Genesis 38:29–30; 46:8–27; Numbers 26:19–22

Questions for Discussion

1. Why was the population of Jerusalem so sparse? (7:4)
2. At the time of Nehemiah’s arrival, who alone lived in Jerusalem? (11:1a)
3. Why would there be a need for a larger presence in the capital city?
4. How many Jews did Nehemiah propose to bring into the city? (11:1b)
5. What method was used to determine who would move to Jerusalem?
6. How were those chosen regarded? (11:2) Why would this be the case? (Proverbs 16:33)
7. Besides Levites, what four tribes were represented in Jerusalem? (11:4; 1 Chron. 9:3)
8. How many sons of Perez lived in Jerusalem? (11:6) How many of Zerah? (1 Chron. 9:9)
9. How many Benjamites were included on the roster? (11:8; 1 Chron. 9:9)
10. How may we account for the differences in the two lists? (11:2)
11. What two men commanded the Judahites and the Benjamites in the city? (11:9)
12. How many priests came to live in Jerusalem? (11:12–14)
13. Who was chief officer of the priests? (11:10, 14)
14. How many Levites were in the city? (11:18) What four were of note among them?
15. Who kept the gates? (11:19; 1 Chron. 9:22–34)
16. Where did the rest of Israel and Levi live?
17. Where did the Servants of Solomon live? Who was in charge of them? (11:21)
18. Who was responsible for the activities of the Levites in Jerusalem? (11:22)
19. Locate as many of the villages of Judah and Benjamin on the map.
20. Give the lineage of the high priest from the days of Zedekiah until Nehemiah. (12:1–26)

Post-Captivity Canaan



Israel Goes Home

Lesson Twenty-three: *"The Wall Is Dedicated"*

Lesson Aim: Learn that a wall is only as strong as the people it surrounds.

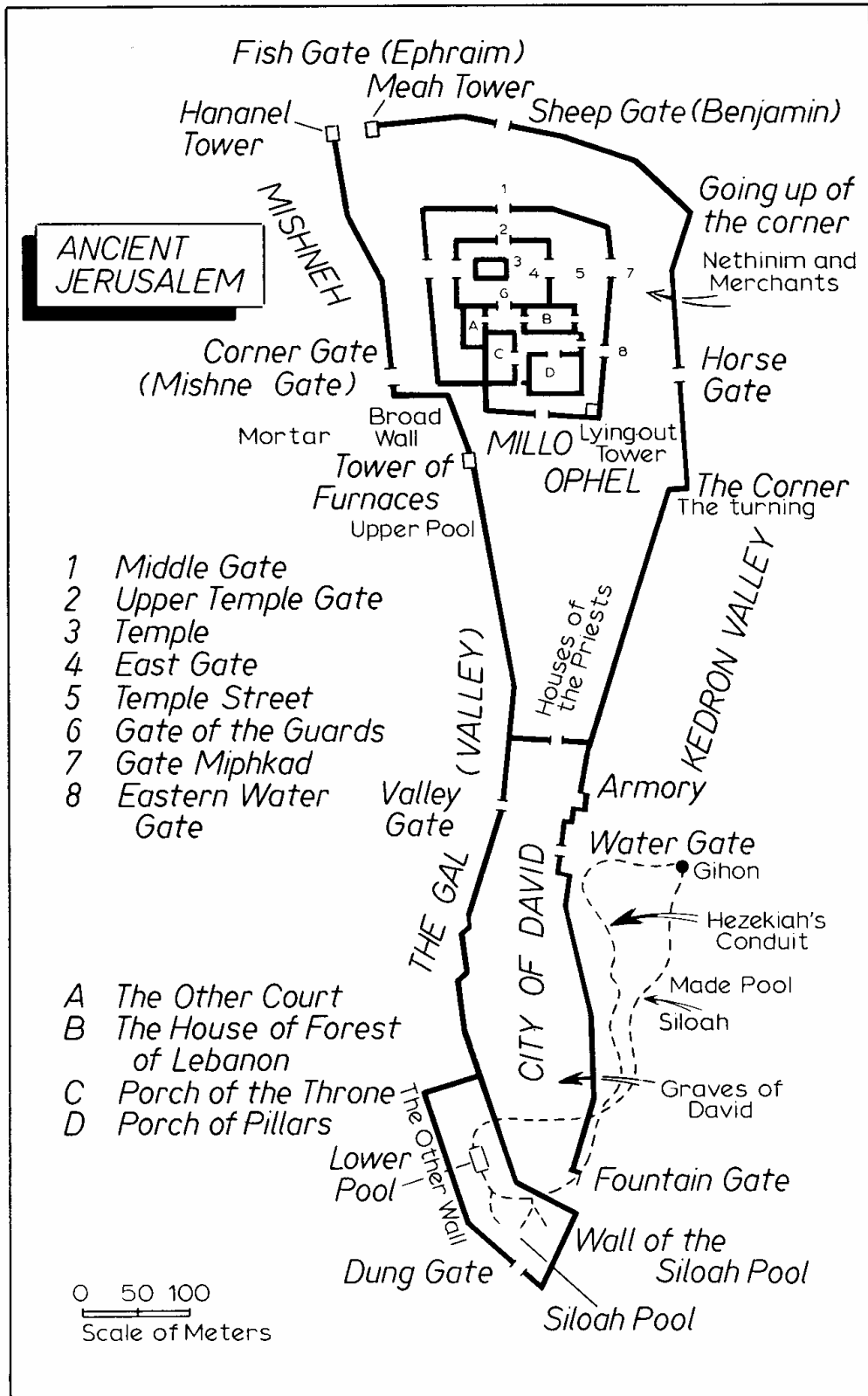
Lesson Text: Nehemiah 12::27–47

Memory Verse: Nehemiah 12:47

Background Texts: 1 Chronicles 15:13–24; Numbers 18:20–32; 35:1–8; Joshua 21:1–42

Questions for Discussion

1. In order to accomplish the dedication of the wall, for whom did Nehemiah send? (12:27)
2. Why was their presence necessary?
3. Where did the Levites live in the days of the restoration? (12:28) Where had they lived?
4. Where was Netophathi? What is significant about it? (Ezra 2:22; Nehemiah 7:26)
5. In what work were the Levites engaged in preparing the wall for dedication? (12:30)
6. What was the order which they followed? What significance do you see in this?
7. Describe the dedication procession. (12:31–43) [Use the attached map.]
8. What two men each led a column in the procession? (12:36, 38)
9. What group is conspicuously absent from the procession? (12:31–32, 38; 11:7)
10. What instruments were used in the worship? (12:36; cf. v. 24) What does this mean?
11. Where did the two columns meet? (12:40) What ensued after their arrival?
12. What was the reaction of the people to the events of the day? (12:43)
13. What are "the portions of the Law for the priests"? (12:44)
14. Where were these portions kept?
15. What provision was made at this time concerning them? (12:44a) Why?
16. Who among the Levites had the charge of these things? (1 Chronicles 25 and 26)
17. During the administrations of Zerubbabel and Nehemiah, what duty did Israel and the Levites perform? (12:47)



College Press Bible Textbook Series: Ezra and Nehemiah by Ruben Ratzlaff

Israel Goes Home

Lesson Twenty-four: *"The Priesthood Is Corrupted"*

Lesson Aim: Hear Malachi's complaint against a corrupted priesthood.

Lesson Text: Malachi 1:1–2:10

Memory Verse: Malachi 1:6

Background Texts: Nehemiah 13:1–31; Leviticus 27:17–25; Deuteronomy 15:19–23; Ezra 9:1–10:12; Romans 9:1–18; Genesis 25:19–28; Obadiah; Ecclesiastes 5:4–5; Matthew 23

Questions for Discussion

1. If Malachi was written between Nehemiah's first and second terms as governor, what would be its date of composition?
2. In what style is the book written?
3. What affirmation does Jehovah make in the opening verse of the book.
4. Who are Esau and Jacob?
5. When did God express hatred for Esau? (1:3; see: Jeremiah 49:7; 25:9, 21; Obadiah).
6. When did He demonstrate love for Jacob? (Deuteronomy 4:37; Romans 9:11)
7. What was Esau's boast against Jehovah? What was God's reply? (1:4)
8. What would Jacob endure long enough to confess concerning Jehovah? (See: NIV)
9. What complaint did Jehovah have against the priests? (1:6)
10. What was their reply? What was Jehovah's answer? (1:7–8)
11. What test of his accusation did Jehovah propose? (1:8b)
12. What is the implied answer to Jehovah's question in 1:9?
13. Who is to blame for the carnality and wickedness from which Jehovah turns away?
14. Why did Jehovah want someone to shut the Temple gates? (1:10)
15. When would the Gentiles offer incense and pure offering acceptable to God? (1:11)
16. State the four things which constituted a profanation of Jehovah's altar. (1:12–14)
17. What would be the consequence of continued disobedience by the priests? (2:1–3)
18. What are the characteristics of a true Levite? (2:4–7)
19. What three charges does Malachi bring against the priests of his day? (2:8)
20. How had the priests profaned the covenant of the Lord? (2:9b)

Israel Goes Home

Lesson Twenty-five: *“Judah Hath Profaned the Holiness of the Lord”*

Lesson Aim: Hear Malachi’s complaint against a backslidden nation weary of God.

Lesson Text: Malachi 2:11–4:6

Memory Verse: Malachi 3:8

Background Texts: Nehemiah 9:1–10:39; 13:1–31; Ezra 10:1–17; Exodus 34:12–16; Deuteronomy 7:1–6; 24:1–4; Matthew 3:3; 11:10–14; 17:12; 19:1–11; Proverbs 2:17; 5:18; Isaiah 40:1–5; Mark 1:3; Luke 3:4; John 1:23

Questions for Discussion

1. What sins had the men of Judah fallen into? What would God do to them? (2:11–12)
2. Who was covering the altar of God with tears? (2:13)
3. Who is a witness to the covenant of marriage? (Ezekiel 17:11–21; 2 Chronicles 36:11–13).
4. Give the sense of Malachi 2:15. (See: ASV and Homer Hailey on *The Minor Prophets*)
5. What is God’s view of Divorce? (2:16)
6. What was said that wearied the Lord? For what were they looking? (2:17; 2 Peter 3:4, 9)
7. Whom did God promise to send? What would be the effect of their coming? (3:1–4)
8. Why had God not consumed the sons of Jacob even though they were wicked? (3:5–6)
9. Will a man rob God? (3:8)
10. How had Israel robbed Jehovah? (3:8–10)
11. What would God do if Israel would repent? (3:11–12)
12. What stout words did Israel speak against Jehovah? (3:13–15)
13. What would become of those in Israel that feared the Lord? (3:16–18)
14. About what will there be no doubt in “that day” (3:18)
15. What will become of the wicked in the day of judgment? (4:1)
16. Who is the “Sun of Righteousness”? (4:2)
17. What will become of those that fear the name of the Lord? (4:2b–3)
18. What does Malachi exhort Israel to remember? (4:4)
19. Who is “Elijah the prophet” whom God will send before the Judgment? (4:5)
20. What would Elijah succeed in doing in Israel? (4:6) When did this happen?

Israel Goes Home

Lesson Twenty-six: *“Nehemiah Returns to a Backsliding People”*

Lesson Aim: See Israel lapse once more into sin after a great revival.

Lesson Text: Nehemiah 13:1–31

Memory Verse: Nehemiah 13:14

Background Texts: Nehemiah 2:1–6; 5:14; Malachi 1:1–4:5; Deuteronomy 23:1–6; Numbers 22–25

Questions for Discussion

1. Why did Nehemiah return to Shushan in the 32nd year of Artaxerxes? (13:6)
2. What evil practice had arisen in Jerusalem during Nehemiah’s absence? (13:4–5, 7)
3. Why was this wrong? (13:1–3) Where do the Old Testament Scriptures teach this?
4. Who was Tobiah? Who was Eliashib? What relation was Tobiah to Eliashib? (13:28)
5. What had Tobiah been to Israel since the days of rebuilding the wall?
6. How did Nehemiah handle the situation with Tobiah? (13:8–9)
7. What duty had the people failed to perform? (13:10) Why was this serious? (10:35–39)
8. What had this forced the Levites to do? (13:10)
9. How did Nehemiah deal with the leaders concerning this matter? (13:11)
10. What did Nehemiah observe happening on the Sabbath? (13:15–16)
11. Why was this a serious matter? (10:31)
12. How did Nehemiah correct this problem? (13:17–19)
13. What additional measures did Nehemiah make to protect the Sabbath day? (13:20–22)
14. To what other evil practice had some of the Jews returned? (13:23)
15. How had this practice affected the children of the land? (13:24)
16. What did Nehemiah do to prove these men? (13:25; cf. 2 Samuel 10:4, 6; Isaiah 50:6)
17. Of what did Nehemiah cite Solomon as an example? (13:26–27)
18. What did Nehemiah ask God to do concerning those Jews that did not separate themselves from strangers in the land? (13:29)
19. What other matters did Nehemiah correct? (13:31)
20. For what did Nehemiah pray concerning himself? Why pray a pray like this one?