

# Nehemiah

## Reconstruction of the Wall and Restoration of the People



*Jewish men praying at the Western Wall in Jerusalem*

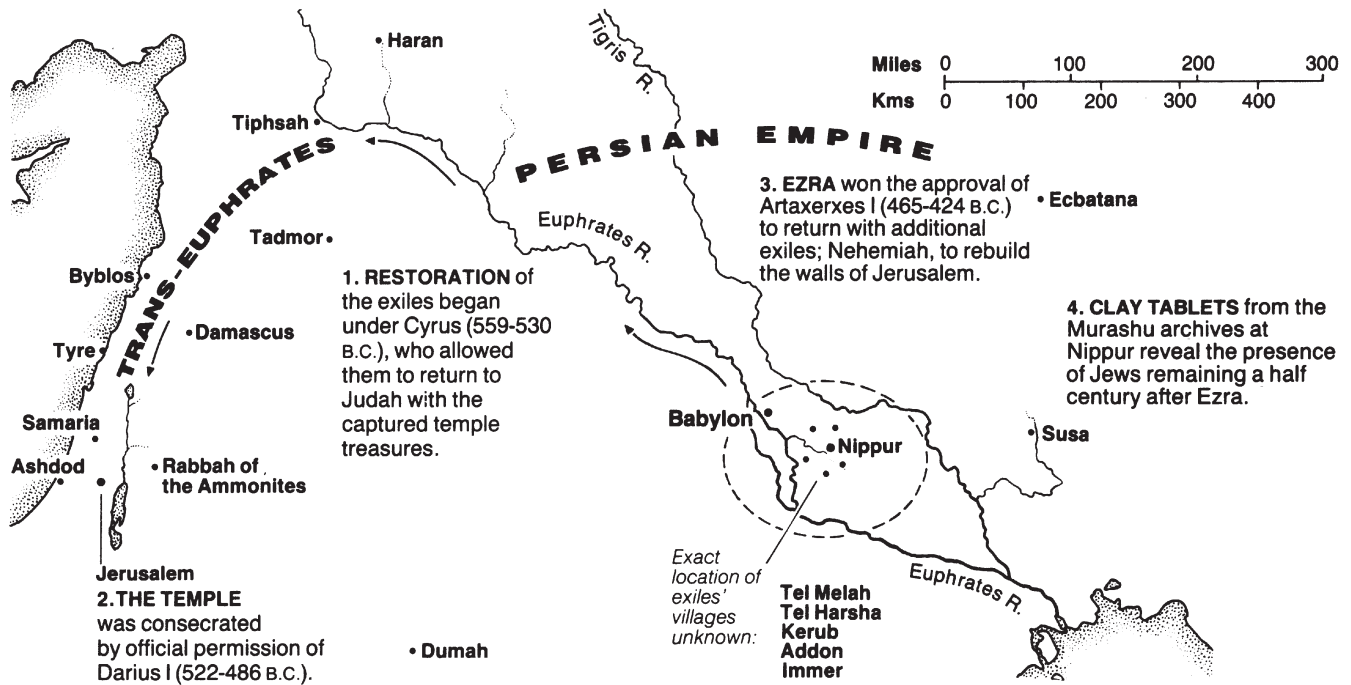
“Then the king said to me, ‘What do you request?’ So I prayed to the God of heaven. And I said to the king, ‘If it pleases the king, and if your servant has found favor in your sight, I ask that you send me to Judah, to the city of my fathers’ tombs, that I may rebuild it.’” (Nehemiah 2:4-5)

David Padfield

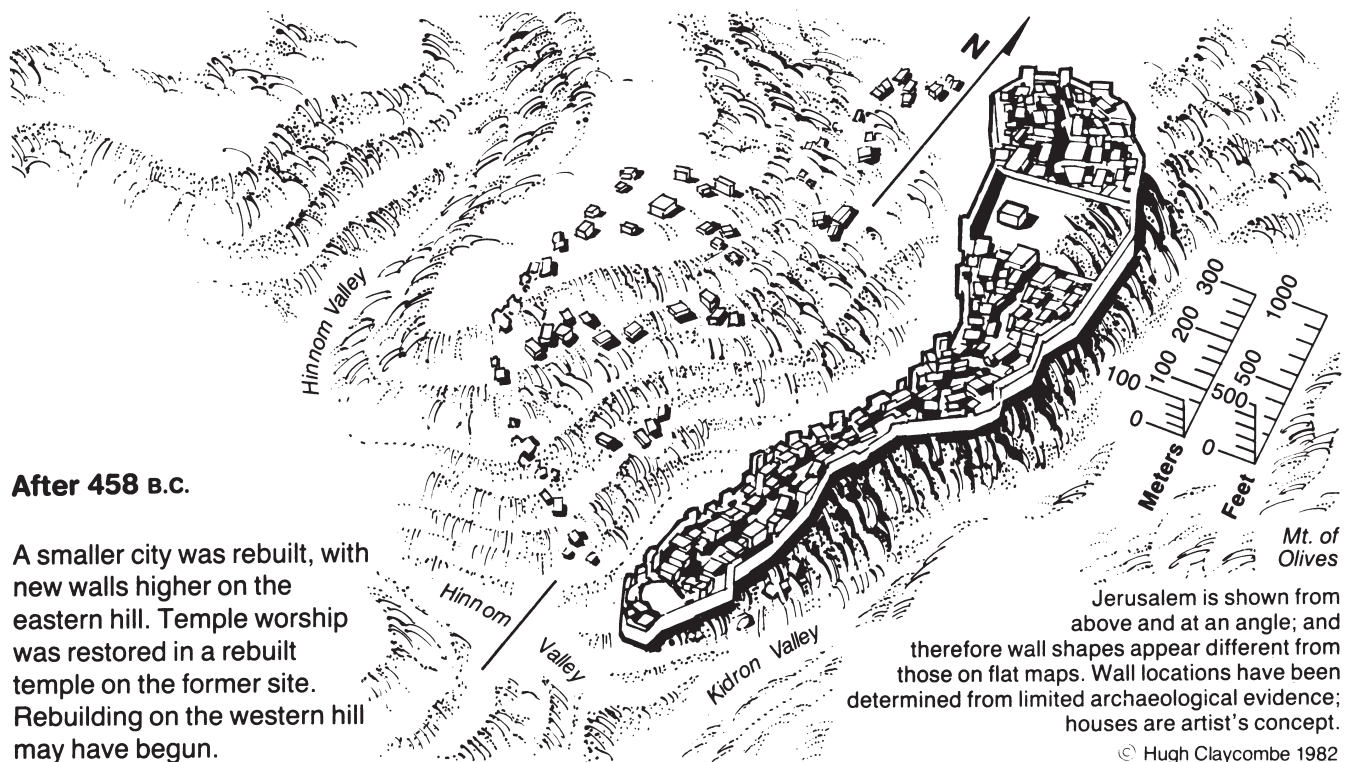
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# The Return From Exile

## Return from Exile



## Jerusalem Of The Returning Exiles



# Outline Of Nehemiah

## Part One: The Reconstruction of the Wall (1:1–7:73)

- I. The Preparation to Reconstruct the Wall.....1:1–2:20
  - A. Discovery of the Broken Wall.....1:1–3
  - B. Intercession of Nehemiah.....1:4–2:8
  - C. Arrival of Nehemiah in Jerusalem.....2:9–11
  - D. Preparation to Reconstruct the Wall .....2:12–20
  
- II. The Reconstruction of the Wall.....3:1–7:73
  - A. Record of the Builders.....3:1–32
  - B. Opposition to the Reconstruction .....4:1–6:14
  - C. Completion of the Reconstruction .....6:15–19
  - D. Organization of Jerusalem.....7:1–4
  - E. Registration of Jerusalem .....7:5–73

## Part Two: The Restoration of the People (8:1–13:31)

- I. The Renewal of the Covenant .....8:1–10:39
  - A. Interpretation of the Law.....8:1–18
  - B. Reaffirmation of the Covenant .....9:1–10:39
  
- II. The Obedience to the Covenant.....11:1–13:31
  - A. Resettlement of the People .....11:1–36
  - B. Register of the Priests and the Levites.....12:1–26
  - C. Dedication of the Jerusalem Wall .....12:27–47
  - D. Restoration of the People.....13:1–31

(The above outline is *Nelson's Complete Book of Bible Maps & Charts*, p. 162)

# About The Book Of Nehemiah

In the ancient Hebrew manuscripts the books of Ezra and Nehemiah were written as if they were one; but the title, “The Words of Nehemiah, the son of Hachaliah” (Nehemiah 1:1) clearly indicate the beginning of another book, and justify the separation which was made in the Greek translation at an early period. While the temple was rebuilt by Zerubbabel, it was the work of Nehemiah to rebuild the city walls. He went from Babylon for this purpose, thirteen years after Ezra went there to establish the law. That which moved him to the undertaking is set forth in the first chapter. The distress there depicted, which overwhelmed him on hearing that “the city, the place of his father’s sepulchres” (Nehemiah 2:3), was lying waste and its gates burned with fire, is accounting for if he had previously thought that since the return of so many captives the walls had been rebuilt; though it is supposed by some scholars that they had been rebuilt and had been again thrown down within the thirteen years just mentioned.

It will be seen by reading these six chapters, that Nehemiah was equally zealous and self-sacrificing with Ezra, but quite different in his way. While the latter was a priest by descent, and a scribe by profession, Nehemiah held a civil office, being cup-bearer to the king; and he had no scruple, therefore, about asking the king for a military escort when he obtained permission to go to Jerusalem (Nehemiah 2:9). He acted as governor of the land for twelve years, yet he received no salary; he made no purchase of lands, though doubtless there was a tempting opportunity for speculation in them; he made his own servants work on the wall; and he fed at his table a daily average of one hundred and fifty men, Jews and visitors from other lands (Nehemiah 5:14–17). His expenditure must have amounted to a very considerable fortune.

The other seven chapters of the book are occupied with some details of Nehemiah’s government of the people after the completion of the walls.

At the end of his leave of absence from the king he came back to Babylon, and “after certain days” he came again to Jerusalem (Nehemiah 2:6; Nehemiah 13:6, 7). During his absence intermarriages with the heathen had again sprung up, and other abuses crept in.

The narrative closes without a hint as to the subsequent life or death of either Nehemiah or Ezra; and thus ends the history contained in the Old Testament.

J. W. McGarvey, *A Guide to Bible Study*, © 1897

# Nehemiah

## Part One: The Reconstruction of the Wall (1:1–7:73)

### I. THE PREPARATION TO RECONSTRUCT THE WALL (1:1–2:20)

#### A. Discovery of the Broken Wall (1:1–3)

1. What did Nehemiah ask Hanani?
2. What was the condition of the Jews in Jerusalem?

#### B. Intercession of Nehemiah (1:4–2:8)

1. How did Nehemiah react to the condition of his brethren?
2. Summarize Nehemiah's prayer to God.
3. Why was Nehemiah afraid when King Artaxerxes noticed his sad countenance?
4. What did Nehemiah request of King Artaxerxes?

#### C. Arrival of Nehemiah in Jerusalem (2:9–11)

1. Who went with Nehemiah to Jerusalem?

2. How did Sanballat the Horonite and Tobiah the Ammonite react to the arrival of Nehemiah in Jerusalem?

#### D. Preparation to Reconstruct the Wall (2:12–20)

1. What did Nehemiah do at night in Jerusalem?
2. What observations did Nehemiah make about Jerusalem?
3. How did his close friends react to his observations?
4. How did “Sanballat the Horonite, Tobiah the Ammonite official, and Geshem the Arab” react to Nehemiah’s plans?

## II. THE RECONSTRUCTION OF THE WALL (3:1–7:73)

### A. Record of the Builders (3:1–32)

1. Who was responsible for the building of the Sheep Gate?
2. Who was responsible for the building of the Fish Gate?
3. Who was responsible for the building of the Old Gate?

4. Who was responsible for the building of the Tower of the Ovens?

5. Who repaired the Valley Gate?

6. Who repaired the Refuse Gate?

7. Who repaired the Fountain Gate?

8. Who repaired the Water Gate?

9. What other repairs were made?

## B. Opposition to the Reconstruction (4:1–6:14)

1. What did Sanballat and Tobiah the Ammonite do when they saw the progress that had been made on the walls of Jerusalem?

2. Why did Nehemiah have to “set the people according to their families, with their swords, their spears, and their bow” around the walls?

3. What did Nehemiah tell “the nobles, the rulers, and the rest of the people”?

4. What type of complaints did Nehemiah hear?
  
5. How did Nehemiah react when he “heard their outcry”?
  
6. What was the problem with “usury”?
  
7. What did Nehemiah refuse to partake of? Why?
  
8. How did Nehemiah respond to the letters of Sanballat?
  
9. What did Shemaiah want Nehemiah to do? How did Nehemiah respond?

#### C. Completion of the Reconstruction (6:15–19)

1. Why were the enemies of Nehemiah “very disheartened in their own eyes”?
  
2. What did Tobiah send to Nehemiah to frighten him?

#### D. Organization of Jerusalem (7:1–4)

1. Why did Nehemiah give “the charge of Jerusalem” to his brother Hanani?



2. How did the size of the city compare to the number of houses contained inside the city walls?

#### **E. Registration of Jerusalem (7:5–73)**

1. What was the significance of the “register of the genealogy of those who had come up in the first return”?
2. What was the number of the “whole assembly”?

## **Part Two: The Restoration of the People (8:1–13:31)**

### **I. THE RENEWAL OF THE COVENANT (8:1–10:39)**

#### **A. Interpretation of the Law (8:1–18)**

1. Why did the people come “together as one man in the open square that was in front of the Water Gate”?
2. What did Ezra do in the “open square that was in front of the Water Gate”?
3. Who stood up with Ezra? What did they do?
4. How did the people react to the words of Ezra?

5. What feast did the people find in the Law that was to be observed in the seventh month? How long had it been since that feast had been properly observed?

## B. Reaffirmation of the Covenant (9:1–10:39)

1. What did “those of Israelite lineage” stand up to do?

2. What did “the Levites, Jeshua, Kadmiel, Bani, Hashabniah, Sherebiah, Hodijah, Shebaniah, and Pethahiah” say to the people?

3. When and to whom did God “make known” His holy Sabbath?

4. How did God use His “Spirit” to speak to the people?

5. How would you summarize the history of the Jewish nation, as it is presented in Nehemiah chapter 9?

6. What document was sealed?

7. Who all “entered into a curse and an oath to walk in God’s Law”?

8. What new ordinances did they make?

## **II. THE OBEDIENCE TO THE COVENANT (11:1–13:31)**

### **A. Resettlement of the People (11:1–36)**

1. Why did the people “cast lots”?
2. Why did the people bless “all the men who willingly offered themselves to dwell at Jerusalem”?

### **B. Register of the Priests and the Levites (12:1–26)**

1. What is the significance of the register of the priests and Levites?
2. What type of record had been kept “during the reign of Darius the Persian”?

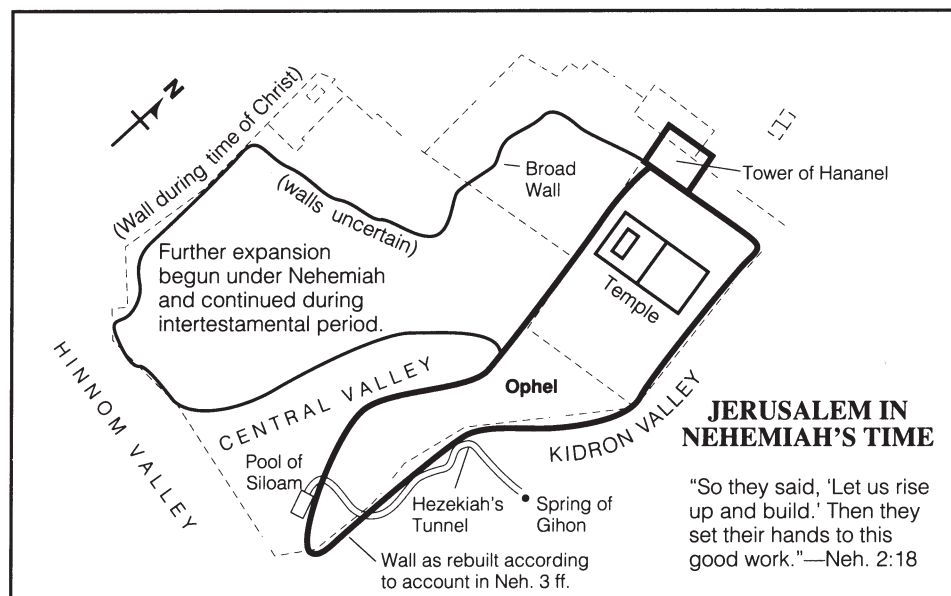
### **C. Dedication of the Jerusalem Wall (12:27–47)**

1. What was the dedication of the wall like?
2. Who accompanied Nehemiah and the leaders of Judah on the wall?
3. What was “heard afar off” from Jerusalem?

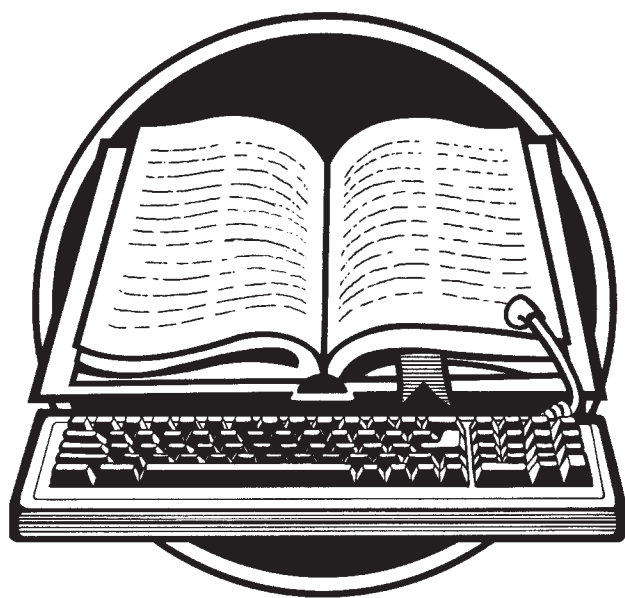
## D. Restoration of the People (13:1–31)

1. What did the people learn “ from the Book of Moses”?
2. What had grieved Nehemiah bitterly?
3. Why did Nehemiah have to contend with the rulers of the people?
4. What did Nehemiah see the people do on the Sabbath day?
5. When were the gates of Jerusalem closed? Why?
6. What was wrong with the marriages of many of the Jews?

### Jerusalem in Nehemiah's Time



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