

Ezra and Nehemiah

Ezra

The Initial Return

The God of Heaven's Charge to Cyrus			
C	Ezra 1:1-6	Ezra 1:6-11	Comments
A 1, 2	<p>Ezra 1:1-4 Now in the first year of Cyrus king of Persia, that the word of the Lord by the mouth of Jeremiah might be fulfilled, the Lord stirred up the spirit of Cyrus king of Persia, so that he made a proclamation throughout all his kingdom, and also put it in writing, saying,</p> <p>2 Thus says Cyrus king of Persia:</p> <p>All the kingdoms of the earth the Lord God of heaven has given me. And He has commanded me to build Him a house at Jerusalem which is in Judah.</p> <p>3 Who is among you of all His people? May his God be with him, and let him go up to Jerusalem which is in Judah, and build the house of the Lord God of Israel (He is God), which is in Jerusalem.</p> <p>4 And whoever is left in any place where he dwells, let the men of his place help him with silver and gold, with goods and livestock, besides the freewill offerings for the house of God which is in Jerusalem.</p>	<p>Ezra 1:6-11</p> <p>6 And all those who were around them encouraged them with articles of silver and gold, with goods and livestock, and with precious things, besides all that was willingly offered.</p> <p>7 King Cyrus also brought out the articles of the house of the Lord, which Nebuchadnezzar had taken from Jerusalem and put in the temple of his gods; 8 and Cyrus king of Persia brought them out by the hand of Mithredath the treasurer, and counted them out to Sheshbazzar the prince of Judah.</p> <p>9 This is the number of them: thirty gold platters, one thousand silver platters, twenty-nine knives, 10 thirty gold basins, four hundred and ten silver basins of a similar kind, and one thousand other articles. 11 All the articles of gold and silver were five thousand four hundred. All these Sheshbazzar took with the captives who were brought from Babylon to Jerusalem.</p>	<p>Cyrus allows people to return to Jerusalem and rebuild the house of YHVH Elohim of Israel.</p> <p>Cyrus returned the silver and gold articles of the house of YHVH to the prince (governor) of Judah, Sheshbazzar (Zerubbabel).ⁱ</p> <p>Those who remain provide silver, gold, various goods, offerings.</p> <p>Based on the proclamation of the Cyrus cylinder, this likely refers to 539 BCE.</p>
B	Ezra 1:5-6		Heads of the father's houses of Judah and

	5 Then the heads of the fathers' houses of Judah and Benjamin, and the priests and the Levites, with all whose spirits God had moved, arose to go up and build the house of the Lord which is in Jerusalem.	Benjamin rose up to return including priests, Levites, and others moved by God's Spirit.
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The People Return			
C	Ezra 2:1-67	Ezra 2:68-70	Comments
A 1, 2	<p>Ezra 2:1-2a Now these are the people of the province who came back from the captivity, of those who had been carried away, whom Nebuchadnezzar the king of Babylon had carried away to Babylon, and who returned to Jerusalem and Judah, everyone to his own city.</p> <p>2 Those who came with Zerubbabel were Jeshua (Joshua, Yeshua; יֵשׁוּעַ), Nehemiah, Seraiah, Reelaiah, Mordecai, Bilshan, Mispar, Bigvai, Rehum, and Baanah.</p>	<p>Ezra 2:68-70 68 Some of the heads of the fathers' houses, when they came to the house of the Lord which is in Jerusalem, offered freely for the house of God, to erect it in its place: 69 According to their ability, they gave to the treasury for the work 61,000 gold drachmas, 5,000 minas of silver, and 100 priestly garments.</p> <p>70 So the priests and the Levites, some of the people, the singers, the gatekeepers, and the Nethinim, dwelt in their cities, and all Israel in their cities.</p>	<p>Various categories of people returned to Jerusalem:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Common people including the governor, Zerubbabel. • Levites • Priests, with Yeshua (Jeshua) as high priest – there is likely a spiritual parallel here. • singers • gatekeepers • Nethinim (temple servants)
B	<p>Ezra 2:2b-67 The number of the men of the people of Israel: ³ the people of Parosh, 2172; ⁴ the people of Shephatiah, 372; ⁵ the people of Arah, 775; ⁶ the people of Pahath-Moab, of the people of Jeshua and Joab, 2812; ⁷ the people of Elam, 1254; ⁸ the people of Zattu, 945; ⁹ the people of Zaccai, 760; ¹⁰ the people of Bani, 642; ¹¹ the people of Bebai, 623; ¹² the people of Azgad, 1222; ¹³ the people of Adonikam, 666; ¹⁴ the people of Bigvai, 2056; ¹⁵ the people of Adin, 454; ¹⁶ the people of Ater of Hezekiah, 98; ¹⁷ the people of Bezai, 323; ¹⁸ the people of Jorah, 112; ¹⁹ the people of Hashum, 223; ²⁰ the people of Gibbar, 95; ²¹ the people of Bethlehem, 123; ²² the men of Netophah, 56; ²³ the men of Anathoth, 128; ²⁴ the people of Azmaveth, 42; ²⁵ the people of Kirjath Arim, Chephirah, and Beeroth, 743; ²⁶ the people of Ramah and Geba, 621; ²⁷ the men of Michmas, 122; ²⁸ the men of Bethel and Ai, 223; ²⁹ the people of Nebo, 52; ³⁰ the people of Magbish, 156; ³¹ the people of the other Elam, 1254; ³² the people of Harim, 320; ³³ the people of Lod, Hadid, and Ono, 725; ³⁴ the people of Jericho, 345; ³⁵ the people of Senaah, 3630.</p> <p>³⁶ The priests: the sons of Jedaiah, of the house of Jeshua, 973; ³⁷ the sons of Immer, 1052; ³⁸ the sons of Pashhur, 1247; ³⁹ the sons of Harim, 1017.</p> <p>⁴⁰ The Levites: the sons of Jeshua and Kadmiel, of the sons of Hodaviah, 74.</p> <p>⁴¹ The singers: the sons of Asaph, 128.</p>		

<p>⁴² The sons of the gatekeepers: the sons of Shallum, the sons of Ater, the sons of Talmon, the sons of Akkub, the sons of Hatita, and the sons of Shobai, 139 in all.</p> <p>⁴³ The Nethinim (temple servants): the sons of Ziha, the sons of Hasupha, the sons of Tabbaoth, ⁴⁴ the sons of Keros, the sons of Siaha, the sons of Padon, ⁴⁵ the sons of Lebanah, the sons of Hagabah, the sons of Akkub, ⁴⁶ the sons of Hagab, the sons of Shalmal, the sons of Hanan, ⁴⁷ the sons of Giddel, the sons of Gahar, the sons of Reaiah, ⁴⁸ the sons of Rezin, the sons of Nekoda, the sons of Gazzam, ⁴⁹ the sons of Uzza, the sons of Paseah, the sons of Besai, ⁵⁰ the sons of Asnah, the sons of Meunim, the sons of Nephusim, ⁵¹ the sons of Bakbuk, the sons of Hakupha, the sons of Harhur, ⁵² the sons of Bazluth, the sons of Mehida, the sons of Harsha, ⁵³ the sons of Barkos, the sons of Sisera, the sons of Tamah, ⁵⁴ the sons of Nezhiah, and the sons of Hatipha.</p> <p>⁵⁵ The sons of Solomon's servants: the sons of Sotai, the sons of Sophereth, the sons of Peruda, ⁵⁶ the sons of Jaala, the sons of Darkon, the sons of Giddel, ⁵⁷ the sons of Shephatiah, the sons of Hattil, the sons of Pochereth of Zebaim, and the sons of Ami.</p> <p>⁵⁸ All the Nethinim and the children of Solomon's servants were 392.</p> <p>⁵⁹ And these were the ones who came up from Tel Melah, Tel Harsha, Cherub, Addan, and Immer; but they could not identify their father's house or their genealogy, whether they were of Israel: ⁶⁰ the sons of Delaiah, the sons of Tobiah, and the sons of Nekoda, 652; ⁶¹ and of the sons of the priests: the sons of Habaiah, the sons of Koz, and the sons of Barzillai, who took a wife of the daughters of Barzillai the Gileadite, and was called by their name. ⁶² These sought their listing among those who were registered by genealogy, but they were not found; therefore they were excluded from the priesthood as defiled. ⁶³ And the governor said to them that they should not eat of the most holy things till a priest could consult with the Urim and Thummim. <i>(They must have known where the Urim and Thumim were.)</i></p> <p>⁶⁴ The whole assembly together was 42,360, ⁶⁵ besides their male and female servants, of whom there were 7,337; and they had 200 men and women singers.</p> <p>⁶⁶ Their horses were 736, their mules 245, ⁶⁷ their camels 435, and their donkeys 6,720.</p>
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Altar Is Built, Work on Temple Begins			
C	Ezra 3:1-7	Ezra 3:8-13	Comments
A 1, 2	Ezra 3:1-5 And when the seventh month had come , and the children of Israel were in the cities , the people gathered together as one man to Jerusalem. 2 Then Jeshua the son of Jozadak and his brethren the priests, and Zerubbabel the son of Shealtiel and his brethren, arose and built the altar of	Ezra 3:8-13 Now in the second month of the second year of their coming to the house of God at Jerusalem, Zerubbabel the son of Shealtiel, Jeshua the son of Jozadak, and the rest of their brethren the priests and the Levites, and all those who had come out of the captivity to Jerusalem, began work and appointed the Levites from	People returned to Israel, not just Jerusalem; however, they gathered to Jerusalem. Yeshua (Joshua, Jeshua; יֵשׁוּעַ) is the high priest of the early postexilic period. ⁱⁱ The first thing that was built was the altar. The altar was built in the 7th

	<p>the God of Israel, to offer burnt offerings on it, as it is written in the Law of Moses the man of God. 3 Though fear had come upon them because of the people of those countries, they set the altar on its bases; and they offered burnt offerings on it to the Lord, both the morning and evening burnt offerings. 4 They also kept the Feast of Tabernacles, as it is written, and offered the daily burnt offerings in the number required by ordinance for each day.</p> <p>5 Afterwards they offered the regular burnt offering, and those for New Moons and for all the appointed feasts of the Lord that were consecrated, and those of everyone who willingly offered a freewill offering to the Lord.</p>	<p>twenty years old and above to oversee the work of the house of the Lord. 9 Then Jeshua with his sons and brothers, Kadmiel with his sons, and the sons of Judah, arose as one to oversee those working on the house of God: the sons of Henadad with their sons and their brethren the Levites.</p> <p>10 When the builders laid the foundation of the temple of the Lord, the priests stood in their apparel with trumpets, and the Levites, the sons of Asaph, with cymbals, to praise the Lord, according to the ordinance of David king of Israel. 11 And they sang responsively, praising and giving thanks to the Lord:</p> <p>“For He is good, For His mercy endures forever toward Israel.”</p> <p>Then all the people shouted with a great shout, when they praised the Lord, because the foundation of the house of the Lord was laid.</p> <p>12 But many of the priests and Levites and heads of the fathers’ houses, old men who had seen the first temple, wept with a loud voice when the foundation of this temple was laid before their eyes. Yet many shouted aloud for joy, 13 so that the people could not discern the noise of the shout of joy from the noise of the weeping of the people, for the people shouted with a loud shout, and the sound was heard afar off.</p>	<p>month of the 1st year of Cyrus king of Persia.</p> <p>The work of the house of YHVH began in the 2nd year of them coming to the house of God, with the foundation being laid 1st.</p> <p>It is amazing that people were still alive who had seen the original temple and had been able to make the journey back to Jerusalem and ultimately see the next temple.</p> <p>The burning of sacrifices paralleled the worship of YHVH with praise and musical instruments.</p>
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B	<p>Ezra 3:6-7</p> <p>From the first day of the seventh month they began to offer burnt offerings to the Lord, although the foundation of the temple of the Lord had not been laid. 7 They also gave money to the masons and the carpenters, and food, drink, and oil to the people of Sidon and Tyre to bring cedar logs from Lebanon to the sea, to Joppa, according to the permission (רְשִׁיוֹן ; official legal, royal approval) which they had from Cyrus king of Persia.</p>	<p>King Cyrus had given royal approval for the building of the temple, among other things in 539 BCE.</p> <p>The altar was completed before the foundation of the temple.</p> <p>The first offerings were made just 2 weeks before the Feast of Tabernacles (Sukkot).</p>
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Enemies' Opposition Halts Reconstruction of Temple			
C	Ezra 4:1-16	Ezra 4:17-24	Comments
A 1, 2	<p>Ezra 4:1-6</p> <p>Now when the adversaries of Judah and Benjamin heard that the descendants of the captivity were building the temple of the Lord God of Israel, 2 they came to Zerubbabel and the heads of the fathers' houses, and said to them, "Let us build with you, for we seek your God as you do; and we have sacrificed to Him since the days of Esarhaddon king of Assyria, who brought us here." 3 But Zerubbabel and Jeshua and the rest of the heads of the fathers' houses of Israel said to them, "You may do nothing with us to build a house for our God; but we alone will build to the Lord God of Israel, as King Cyrus the king of Persia has commanded us." 4 Then the people of the land tried to discourage the people of Judah. They troubled them</p>	<p>Ezra 4:23-24</p> <p>23 Now when the copy of King Artaxerxes' letter was read before Rehum, Shimshai the scribe, and their companions, they went up in haste to Jerusalem against the Jews, and by force of arms made them cease.</p> <p>24 Thus the work of the house of God which is at Jerusalem ceased, and it was discontinued until the second year of the reign of Darius king of Persia.</p>	<p>Rebuilding of Jerusalem is opposed. Notice how their enemies offered assistance, likely with an intent to disrupt or damage the process.</p> <p>The names of the kings mentioned do not make a lot of sense considering the time frame we are looking at.</p> <p>Persian Kings of Achaemenid Empire:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cyrus (559-530 BCE), King of the World; he died in battle. • Cambyses II (530-522 BCE) became co-regent with his father Cyrus until his father's death. He killed his brother Bardiya and kept this a secret from his people. • Bardiya (522), not the real one who was Cambyses' brother, but possibly an imposter

	<p><u>in building, 5 and hired counselors against them to frustrate their purpose all the days of Cyrus king of Persia, even until the reign of Darius king of Persia.</u></p> <p>6 In the reign of Ahasuerus, in the beginning of his reign, they wrote an accusation against the inhabitants of Judah and Jerusalem.</p>		<p>named Gaumata. He murdered Cambyses but managed to reign only days.¹</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Darius I, who married Cyrus' daughter (522-486 BCE), and others assassinated Gaumata. • Xerxes I (Ahasuerus), the son of Darius I (485-465 BCE). • Artaxerxes I (465-424 BCE). • Xerxes II (424 BCE). • (?) Sogdianus (424-423 BCE) • Darius II (424-404 BCE). • Artaxerxes II-IV (404-336 BCE) • Darius III (3336-330 BCE) • Artaxerxes V (330-329 BCE)ⁱⁱⁱ <p>There is more on this below.</p>
B	<p>Ezra 4:7-16</p> <p>In the days of Artaxerxes also, Bishlam, Mithredath, Tabel, and the rest of their companions wrote to Artaxerxes king of Persia; and the letter was written in Aramaic script, and translated into the Aramaic language. 8 Rehum the commander and Shimshai the scribe wrote a letter against Jerusalem to King Artaxerxes in this fashion:</p> <p>9 From Rehum the commander, Shimshai the scribe, and the rest of their companions — representatives of the</p>	<p>Ezra 4:17-22</p> <p>17 The king sent an answer:</p> <p>To Rehum the commander, to Shimshai the scribe, to the rest of their companions who dwell in Samaria, and to the remainder beyond the River:</p> <p>Peace, and so forth (and now).</p> <p>18 The letter which you sent to us has been clearly read before me. 19 And I gave the command, and a search has been made, and it was found that this city in former times has revolted against kings, and rebellion and sedition have</p>	<p>Letters from:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • the various peoples dwelling in Samaria and beyond the River • the king <p>According to Jewish Encyclopedia, the Biblical account is unhistorical for several reasons. On Adar 3, 515 (6th year of Darius), the Temple was completed. See also Ezra 6:14-15.^{iv}</p> <p>RASHI says Artaxerxes is another name for "king," specifically Cyrus.^v Considering the Hebrew,</p>

¹ <https://amazingbibletimeline.com/blog/darius-i-of-persia/>

	<p>Dinaites, the Apharsathchites, the Tarpelites, the people of Persia and Erech and Babylon and Shushan, the Dehavites, the Elamites, 10 and the rest of the nations whom the great and noble Osnapper took captive and settled in the cities of Samaria and the remainder beyond the River — and so forth.</p> <p>11 (This is a copy of the letter that they sent him) To King Artaxerxes from your servants, the men of the region beyond the River, and so forth:</p> <p>12 Let it be known to the king that the Jews who came up from you have come to us at Jerusalem, and are building the rebellious and evil city, and are finishing its walls and repairing the foundations.</p> <p>13 Let it now be known to the king that, if this city is built and the walls completed, they will not pay tax, tribute, or custom, and the king's treasury will be diminished. 14 Now because we receive support from the palace, it was not proper for us to see the king's dishonor; therefore we have sent and informed the king, 15 that search may be made in the book of the records of your fathers. And you will find in the book of the records and know that this city is a rebellious city, harmful to kings and provinces, and that they</p>	<p>been fostered in it. 20 There have also been mighty kings over Jerusalem, who have ruled over all the region beyond the River; and tax, tribute, and custom were paid to them. 21 Now give the command to make these men cease, that this city may not be built until the command is given by me.</p> <p>22 Take heed now that you do not fail to do this. Why should damage increase to the hurt of the kings?</p>	<p>that does not make sense; however, if that is so, perhaps it's referring to one of Cyrus' sons. In other words, Artaxerxes could be referring to Cambyses II (Son of Cyrus the Great) or Bardiya (Son of Cyrus the Great) instead of Cyrus the Great who gave the original order to build and who would not have reversed his own order. It is unlikely it is referring to the Artaxerxes who came after Darius I because the temple was completed in Darius' reign. There is roughly an 8 year difference between the end of Cyrus' reign and the beginning of Darius'.</p> <p>Note that based on this letter, the foundations and the walls of the temple are being built. Nehemiah will deal with the city walls later.</p>
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	<p>have incited sedition within the city in former times, for which cause this city was destroyed.</p> <p>16 We inform the king that if this city is rebuilt and its walls are completed, the result will be that you will have no dominion beyond the River.</p>		
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Work on the Temple Resumes Despite Opposition			
C	Ezra 5:1-17	Ezra 6:1-13	Comments
A 1, 2	<p>Ezra 5:1-5 Then (conjunctive vav) the prophet Haggai and Zechariah the son of Iddo, prophets, prophesied to the Jews who were in Judah and Jerusalem, in the name of the God of Israel, who was over them.</p> <p>2 So Zerubbabel the son of Shealtiel and Jeshua the son of Jozadak (Jeshua was high priest) rose up and began to build the house of God which is in Jerusalem; and the prophets of God were with them, helping them.</p> <p>3 At the same time Tattenai the governor of the region beyond the River and Shethar-Boznai and their companions came to them and spoke thus to them: "Who has commanded you to build this temple and finish this wall?" 4 Then, accordingly, we told them the names of the men who were constructing this building. 5 But the eye of their God was upon the elders of the Jews, so that</p>	<p>Ezra 6:13 Then Tattenai, governor of the region beyond the River, Shethar-Boznai, and their companions diligently did according to what King Darius had sent.</p>	<p>Haggai and Zechariah were on the scene to promote the rebuilding of the temple under Zerubbabel's leadership. Ezra is not yet in Jerusalem.</p> <p>Haggai and Zechariah prophesied that the Jews should resume building even though they lacked official permission.</p> <p>Haggai was concerned that the returning exiles spent more time on their own homes than the temple. They begin to rebuild on the 24th day of the 6th month of King Darius. Haggai 1:2-15</p> <p>Zachariah (YHVH remembers) promoted the increased political role of the high priest alongside the governor.</p>

	they could not make them cease till a report could go to Darius. Then a written answer was returned concerning this matter.		
B	<p>Ezra 5:6-17</p> <p>This is a copy of the letter that Tattenai sent:</p> <p>The governor of the region beyond the River, and Shethar-Boznai, and his companions, the Persians who were in the region beyond the River, to Darius the king.</p> <p>7 (They sent a letter to him, in which was written thus)</p> <p>To Darius the king:</p> <p>All peace.</p> <p>8 Let it be known to the king that we went into the province of Judea, to the temple of the great God, which is being built with heavy stones, and timber is being laid in the walls; and this work goes on diligently and prospers in their hands.</p> <p>9 Then we asked those elders, and spoke thus to them: "Who commanded you to build this temple and to finish these walls?" 10 We also asked them their names to inform you, that we might write the names of the men who were chief among them.</p> <p>11 And thus they returned us an answer, saying: "We are the servants of the God of heaven and earth, and we are rebuilding the temple that was built many years ago, which a great king of Israel built and completed.</p> <p>12 But because our fathers provoked the God of heaven</p>	<p>Ezra 6:1-12</p> <p>Then King Darius issued a decree, and a search was made in the archives, where the treasures were stored in Babylon. 2 And at Achmetha, in the palace that is in the province of Media, a scroll was found, and in it a record was written thus:</p> <p>3 In the first year of King Cyrus, King Cyrus issued a decree concerning the house of God at Jerusalem: "Let the house be rebuilt, the place where they offered sacrifices; and let the foundations of it be firmly laid, its height sixty cubits and its width sixty cubits, 4 with three rows of heavy stones and one row of new timber. Let the expenses be paid from the king's treasury. 5 Also let the gold and silver articles of the house of God, which Nebuchadnezzar took from the temple which is in Jerusalem and brought to Babylon, be restored and taken back to the temple which is in Jerusalem, each to its place; and deposit them in the house of God" —</p> <p>6 Now therefore, Tattenai, governor of the region beyond the River, and Shethar-Boznai, and your companions the Persians who are beyond the River, keep yourselves far from there. 7 Let the work of this house of God alone; let the</p>	<p>Letters from:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • the people beyond the River • the king Darius <p>The opposition is to building of the temple, which was being built with heavy stones and timber being laid in the walls.</p> <p>The walls in Ezra refer to the walls of the temple, not the city.</p> <p>The first year of King Cyrus was 539 BCE.</p> <p>Israel's enemies would be taxed to pay for the construction materials for the temple and they were to provide whatever was requested by the Jews for offerings to YHVH.</p> <p>The severe penalty of death would result for those who interfered with the building of the temple.</p> <p>Darius began his reign in 522 BCE. Therefore, roughly 17 years had passed since Cyrus' decree in 539 BCE.</p>

	<p>to wrath, He gave them into the hand of Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon, the Chaldean, who destroyed this temple and carried the people away to Babylon. 13 However, in the first year of Cyrus king of Babylon, King Cyrus issued a decree to build this house of God. 14 Also, the gold and silver articles of the house of God, which Nebuchadnezzar had taken from the temple that was in Jerusalem and carried into the temple of Babylon — those King Cyrus took from the temple of Babylon, and they were given to one named Sheshbazzar, whom he had made governor. 15 And he said to him, 'Take these articles; go, carry them to the temple site that is in Jerusalem, and let the house of God be rebuilt on its former site.' 16 Then the same Sheshbazzar came and laid the foundation of the house of God which is in Jerusalem; but from that time even until now it has been under construction, and it is not finished."</p> <p>17 Now therefore, if it seems good to the king, let a search be made in the king's treasure house, which is there in Babylon, whether it is so that a decree was issued by King Cyrus to build this house of God at Jerusalem, and let the king send us his pleasure concerning this matter.</p>	<p>governor of the Jews and the elders of the Jews build this house of God on its site.</p> <p>8 Moreover I issue a decree as to what you shall do for the elders of these Jews, for the building of this house of God: Let the cost be paid at the king's expense from taxes on the region beyond the River; this is to be given immediately to these men, so that they are not hindered. 9 And whatever they need — young bulls, rams, and lambs for the burnt offerings of the God of heaven, wheat, salt, wine, and oil, according to the request of the priests who are in Jerusalem — let it be given them day by day without fail, 10 that they may offer sacrifices of sweet aroma to the God of heaven, and pray for the life of the king and his sons.</p> <p>11 Also I issue a decree that whoever alters this edict, let a timber be pulled from his house and erected, and let him be hanged on it; and let his house be made a refuse heap because of this. 12 And may the God who causes His name to dwell there destroy any king or people who put their hand to alter it, or to destroy this house of God which is in Jerusalem. I Darius issue a decree; let it be done diligently.</p>	
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Dedication of the Temple			
C	Ezra 6:14-17	Ezra 6:18	Comments
A 1, 2	<p>Ezra 6:14-15 14 So the elders of the Jews built, and they prospered through the prophesying of Haggai the prophet and Zechariah the son of Iddo. And they built and finished it (the temple), according to the commandment of the God of Israel, and according to the command of Cyrus, Darius, and Artaxerxes king of Persia. 15 Now the temple was finished on the third day of the month of Adar, which was in the sixth year of the reign of King Darius.</p>	<p>Ezra 6:18 They assigned the priests to their divisions and the Levites to their divisions, over the service of God in Jerusalem, as it is written in the Book of Moses.</p>	<p>It is unclear why Artaxerxes' name is included as affirming the building of the temple. However, we do see Artaxerxes later promoting a second return under Ezra after the completion of the building of the temple, as well as him sending offerings.</p> <p>Clearly, Cyrus and Darius both supported the reconstruction.</p> <p>The obedience of the people to YHVH led to the completion of the building of the temple.</p> <p>To recap:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Temple was destroyed by Babylonians in 586 BCE. • The original construction of the altar was in completed in the 7th month of Cyrus' 1st year (539 BCE.) • According to the book of Ezra, the temple reconstruction began sometime after the altar was built, but it was discontinued until the time of Haggai and Zechariah's prophesying, which was roughly 18 years later. Haggai prophesied on the 1st day of the 6th month of the 2nd year of Darius, which was ~ 521 (reigned 522-486 BCE).

			<p>Zechariah began to prophesy in the 8th month of that year.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The people began to rebuild the temple on the 24th day of the 6th month of King Darius (521). • The temple was completed on Adar 3, in the 6th year of Darius (515).
B	<p>Ezra 6:16-17</p> <p>Then the children of Israel, the priests and the Levites and the rest of the descendants of the captivity, celebrated the dedication of this house of God with joy. 17 And they offered sacrifices at the dedication of this house of God, one hundred bulls, two hundred rams, four hundred lambs, and as a sin offering for all Israel twelve male goats, according to the number of the tribes of Israel.</p>		<p>The obedience of the people to YHVH also led to the dedication of the building of the temple.</p>

Feast of Passover			
C	Ezra 6:19-21	Ezra 6:22	Comments
A 1, 2	<p>Ezra 6:19</p> <p>And the descendants of the captivity kept the Passover on the fourteenth day of the first month.</p>	<p>Ezra 6:22</p> <p>And they kept the Feast of Unleavened Bread seven days with joy; for the Lord made them joyful, and turned the heart of the king of Assyria toward them, to strengthen their hands in the work of the house of God, the God of Israel.</p>	<p>The Passover and Feast of Unleavened Bread was celebrated at its appointed time.</p>
B	<p>Ezra 6:20-21</p> <p>For the priests and the Levites had purified themselves; all of them were ritually clean.</p> <p>And they slaughtered the Passover lambs for all the descendants of the captivity, for their brethren the priests, and for themselves.</p> <p>21 Then the children of Israel who had returned from the captivity ate together with all who had separated themselves from the filth of the nations of the land in order to seek the Lord God of Israel.</p>		<p>The priest and Levites purified themselves and slaughtered everyone's lambs for Passover.</p> <p>Everyone had separated themselves from the filth of the nations in order to seek YHVH.</p> <p>Is that not what we are called to do?</p> <p>Is that not what the Exodus represents, a separation</p>

		from the world and salvation of God's people from the nations?
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The Second Return

Ezra is Sent to Jerusalem			
C	Ezra 7:1-10	Ezra 7:11-8:14	Comments
A 1, 2	<p>Ezra 7:1-6</p> <p>Now after these things, in the reign of Artaxerxes king of Persia, Ezra the son of Seraiah, the son of Azariah, the son of Hilkiah, 2 the son of Shallum, the son of Zadok, the son of Ahitub, 3 the son of Amariah, the son of Azariah, the son of Meraioth, 4 the son of Zerahiah, the son of Uzzi, the son of Bukki, 5 the son of Abishua, the son of Phinehas, the son of Eleazar, the son of Aaron the chief priest — 6 this Ezra came up from Babylon; and he was a skilled scribe in the Law of Moses, which the Lord God of Israel had given. The king granted him all his request, according to the hand of the Lord his God upon him.</p>	<p>Ezra 8:1-14</p> <p>These are the heads of their fathers' houses, and this is the genealogy of those who went up with me from Babylon, in the reign of King Artaxerxes:</p> <p>2 of the sons of Phinehas, Gershom; of the sons of Ithamar, Daniel; of the sons of David, Hattush; 3 of the sons of Shecaniah, of the sons of Parosh, Zechariah; and registered with him were one hundred and fifty males; 4 of the sons of Pahath-Moab, Eliehoenai the son of Zerahiah, and with him two hundred males; 5 of the sons of Shechaniah, Ben-Jahaziel, and with him three hundred males; 6 of the sons of Adin, Ebed the son of Jonathan, and with him fifty males; 7 of the sons of Elam, Jeshaiiah the son of Athaliah, and with him seventy males; 8 of the sons of Shephatiah, Zebadiah the son of Michael, and with him eighty males; 9 of the sons of Joab, Obadiah the son of Jehiel, and with him two hundred and eighteen males; 10 of the sons of Shelomith, Ben-Josiphiah, and with him one hundred and sixty males;</p>	<p>Genealogies Listed:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ezra who came from Babylon • Many others from Babylon <p>An Artaxerxes has already been mentioned that could have been Cambyses II. Ezra likely left Babylon in 458 BCE, which was during the reign of Artaxerxes I who reigned 465-424 BCE.</p> <p>The Jewish Encyclopedia says this timing of Ezra's departure from Babylon corresponds to 458 BCE.^{vi}</p>

		<p>11 of the sons of Bebai, Zechariah the son of Bebai, and with him twenty-eight males;</p> <p>12 of the sons of Azgad, Johanan the son of Hakkatan, and with him one hundred and ten males;</p> <p>13 of the last sons of Adonikam, whose names are these — Eliphelet, Jeiel, and Shemaiah — and with them sixty males;</p> <p>14 also of the sons of Bigvai, Uthai and Zabbud, and with them seventy males.</p>	
B 1, 2	<p>Ezra 7:7-10</p> <p>Some of the children of Israel, the priests, the Levites, the singers, the gatekeepers, and the Nethinim came up to Jerusalem in the seventh year of King Artaxerxes.</p> <p>8 And Ezra came to Jerusalem in the fifth month, which was in the seventh year of the king.</p> <p>9 On the first day of the first month he began his journey from Babylon, and on the first day of the fifth month he came to Jerusalem, according to the good hand of his God upon him. 10 For Ezra had prepared his heart to seek the Law of the Lord, and to do it, and to teach statutes and ordinances in Israel.</p>	<p>Ezra 7:27-28</p> <p>Blessed be the Lord God of our fathers, who has put such a thing as this in the king's heart, to beautify the house of the Lord which is in Jerusalem, 28 and has extended mercy to me before the king and his counselors, and before all the king's mighty princes.</p> <p>So I was encouraged, as the hand of the Lord my God was upon me; and I gathered leading men of Israel to go up with me.</p>	<p>YHVH was working through the king so that His will was accomplished.</p> <p>The hand of YHVH was upon Ezra to teach His statutes and ordinances in Israel.</p>
C	<p>Ezra 7:11-26</p> <p>This is a copy of the letter that King Artaxerxes gave Ezra the priest, the scribe, expert in the words of the commandments of the Lord, and of His statutes to Israel:</p> <p>12 Artaxerxes, king of kings,</p> <p>To Ezra the priest, a scribe of the Law of the God of heaven:</p> <p>Perfect peace, and so forth.</p>		<p>Artaxerxes sent Ezra with a second group of exiles to return from Babylon to Jerusalem. Ezra was to inquire about Judah and Jerusalem.</p>

<p>13 I issue a decree that all those of the people of Israel and the priests and Levites in my realm, who volunteer to go up to Jerusalem, may go with you.</p> <p>14 And whereas you are being sent by the king and his seven counselors to inquire concerning Judah and Jerusalem, with regard to the Law of your God which is in your hand;</p> <p>15 and whereas you are to carry the silver and gold which the king and his counselors have freely offered to the God of Israel, whose dwelling is in Jerusalem; 16 and whereas all the silver and gold that you may find in all the province of Babylon, along with the freewill offering of the people and the priests, are to be freely offered for the house of their God in Jerusalem — 17 now therefore, be careful to buy with this money bulls, rams, and lambs, with their grain offerings and their drink offerings, and offer them on the altar of the house of your God in Jerusalem.</p> <p>18 And whatever seems good to you and your brethren to do with the rest of the silver and the gold, do it according to the will of your God. 19 Also the articles that are given to you for the service of the house of your God, deliver in full before the God of Jerusalem. 20 And whatever more may be needed for the house of your God, which you may have occasion to provide, pay for it from the king's treasury.</p> <p>21 And I, even I, Artaxerxes the king, issue a decree to all the treasurers who are in the region beyond the River, that whatever Ezra the priest, the scribe of the Law of the God of heaven, may require of you, let it be done diligently, 22 up to one hundred talents of silver, one hundred kors of wheat, one hundred baths of wine, one hundred baths of oil, and salt without prescribed limit. 23 Whatever is commanded by the God of heaven, let it diligently be done for the house of the God of heaven. For why should there be wrath against the realm of the king and his sons?</p> <p>24 Also we inform you that it shall not be lawful to impose tax, tribute, or custom on any of the priests, Levites, singers, gatekeepers, Nethinim, or servants of this house of God.</p> <p>25 And you, Ezra, according to your God-given wisdom, set magistrates and judges who may judge all the people who are in the region beyond the River, all such as know the laws of your God; and teach those who do not know them. 26 Whoever will not observe the law of your God and the law of the king, let judgment be executed speedily on him, whether it be death, or banishment, or confiscation of goods, or imprisonment.</p>	<p>The law of YHVH, God of heaven, is to be taught and its judgments enforced.</p> <p>Artaxerxes provided offerings and commands for Ezra's needs according to YHVH's command to be provided for.</p>
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God Provides			
C	Ezra 8:15-30	Ezra 8:31-36	Comments
A 1, 2	<p>Ezra 8:15-20 Now I gathered them by the river that flows to Ahava, and we camped there three days. And I looked among the people and the priests, and found none of the sons of Levi there. 16 Then I sent for Eliezer, Ariel, Shemaiah, Elnathan, Jarib, Elnathan, Nathan, Zechariah, and Meshullam, leaders; also for Joiarib and Elnathan, men of understanding. 17 And I gave them a command for Iddo the chief man at the place Casiphia, and I told them what they should say to Iddo and his brethren the Nethinim at the place Casiphia — that they should bring us servants for the house of our God. 18 Then, by the good hand of our God upon us, they brought us a man of understanding, of the sons of Mahli the son of Levi, the son of Israel, namely Sherebiah, with his sons and brothers, eighteen men; 19 and Hashabiah, and with him Jeshaiiah of the sons of Merari, his brothers and their sons, twenty men; 20 also of the Nethinim, whom David and the leaders had appointed for the service of the Levites, two hundred and twenty Nethinim. All of them were designated by name.</p>	<p>Ezra 8:35-36 The children of those who had been carried away captive, who had come from the captivity, offered burnt offerings to the God of Israel: twelve bulls for all Israel, ninety-six rams, seventy-seven lambs, and twelve male goats as a sin offering. All this was a burnt offering to the Lord.</p> <p>36 And they delivered the king's orders to the king's satraps and the governors in the region beyond the River. So they gave support to the people and the house of God.</p>	<p>God's hand provided people, and support for the people and the house of God.</p>
B 1, 2	<p>Ezra 8:21-27 Then I proclaimed a fast there at the river of Ahava, that we might humble ourselves before our God, to</p>	<p>Ezra 8:31-34 31 Then we departed from the river of Ahava on the twelfth day of the first month, to go to Jerusalem. And the hand of our</p>	<p>The hand of YHVH was upon His people causing them to be delivered from any enemies that would seek to destroy them and</p>

	<p>seek from Him the right way for us and our little ones and all our possessions. 22 For I was ashamed to request of the king an escort of soldiers and horsemen to help us against the enemy on the road, because we had spoken to the king, saying, "The hand of our God is upon all those for good who seek Him, but His power and His wrath are against all those who forsake Him." 23 So we fasted and entreated our God for this, and He answered our prayer.</p> <p>24 And I separated twelve of the leaders of the priests — Sherebiah, Hashabiah, and ten of their brethren with them — 25 and weighed out to them the silver, the gold, and the articles, the offering for the house of our God which the king and his counselors and his princes, and all Israel who were present, had offered. 26 I weighed into their hand six hundred and fifty talents of silver, silver articles weighing one hundred talents, one hundred talents of gold, 27 twenty gold basins worth a thousand drachmas, and two vessels of fine polished bronze, precious as gold.</p>	<p>God was upon us, and He delivered us from the hand of the enemy and from ambush along the road. 32 So we came to Jerusalem, and stayed there three days.</p> <p>33 Now on the fourth day the silver and the gold and the articles were weighed in the house of our God by the hand of Meremoth the son of Uriah the priest, and with him was Eleazar the son of Phinehas; with them were the Levites, Jozabad the son of Jeshua and Noadiah the son of Binnui, 34 with the number and weight of everything. All the weight was written down at that time.</p>	<p>causing preserving the articles and offerings.</p>
C	<p>Ezra 8:28-30</p> <p>And I said to them, "You are holy to the Lord; the articles are holy also;</p> <p>and the silver and the gold are a freewill offering to the Lord God of your fathers.</p>		<p>Ezra speaks.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• He said the priests and articles and offerings were holy to YHVH.• He told the priests to watch over the articles and offerings.

	29 Watch and keep them until you weigh them before the leaders of the priests and the Levites and heads of the fathers' houses of Israel in Jerusalem, in the chambers of the house of the Lord." 30 So the priests and the Levites received the silver and the gold and the articles by weight, to bring them to Jerusalem to the house of our God.	
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Abomination of Intermarriage			
C	Ezra 9:1-15	Ezra 10:1-4	Comments
A 1, 2	<p>Ezra 9:1-2</p> <p>When these things were done, the leaders came to me, saying, "The people of Israel and the priests and the Levites have not separated themselves from the peoples of the lands, with respect to the abominations of the Canaanites, the Hittites, the Perizzites, the Jebusites, the Ammonites, the Moabites, the Egyptians, and the Amorites. 2 For they have taken some of their daughters as wives for themselves and their sons, so that the holy seed is mixed with the peoples of those lands. Indeed, the hand of the leaders and rulers has been foremost in this trespass."</p>	<p>Ezra 10:1-4</p> <p>Now while Ezra was praying, and while he was confessing, weeping, and bowing down before the house of God, a very large assembly of men, women, and children gathered to him from Israel; for the people wept very bitterly.</p> <p>2 And Shechaniah the son of Jehiel, one of the sons of Elam, spoke up and said to Ezra, "We have trespassed against our God, and have taken pagan wives from the peoples of the land; yet now there is hope in Israel in spite of this. 3 Now therefore, let us make a covenant with our God to put away all these wives and those who have been born to them, according to the advice of my master and of those who tremble at the commandment of our God; and let it be done according to the law. 4 Arise, for this matter is your responsibility. We also are with you. Be of good courage, and do it."</p>	<p>The leaders confessed that the people had committed the abomination of taking foreign wives and have not remained separated.</p> <p>They chose to make a covenant with YHVH and put away these wives with their children.</p> <p>A parallel exists between the people who left Babylon and those who left Egypt:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A mixed multitude had left Egypt and entered into covenant with YHVH, they had been commanded, as part of that covenant, to remain separated from the peoples of the Promised land. • Even though they left Babylon as people of mixed marriages, they had to separate themselves to be set apart and in covenant as the people were at Mt. Sinai.
B	<p>Ezra 9:3-15</p> <p>So when I heard this thing, I tore my garment and my robe, and plucked out some of the hair of my head and beard, and sat down astonished. 4 Then everyone who trembled at the words of the God of Israel assembled to me, because of the</p>		<p>Ezra fasted and prayed to YHVH while mourning over the sin of intermarriages of the exiles.</p>

<p>transgression of those who had been carried away captive, and I sat astonished until the evening sacrifice.</p> <p>5 At the evening sacrifice I arose from my fasting; and having torn my garment and my robe, I fell on my knees and spread out my hands to the Lord my God.</p> <p>6 And I said: "O my God, I am too ashamed and humiliated to lift up my face to You, my God; for our iniquities have risen higher than our heads, and our guilt has grown up to the heavens. 7 Since the days of our fathers to this day we have been very guilty, and for our iniquities we, our kings, and our priests have been delivered into the hand of the kings of the lands, to the sword, to captivity, to plunder, and to humiliation, as it is this day. 8 And now for a little while grace has been shown from the Lord our God, to leave us a remnant to escape, and to give us a peg in His holy place, that our God may enlighten our eyes and give us a measure of revival in our bondage. 9 For we were slaves. Yet our God did not forsake us in our bondage; but He extended mercy to us in the sight of the kings of Persia, to revive us, to repair the house of our God, to rebuild its ruins, and to give us a wall in Judah and Jerusalem.</p> <p>10 And now, O our God, what shall we say after this? For we have forsaken Your commandments, 11 which You commanded by Your servants the prophets, saying, 'The land which you are entering to possess is an unclean land, with the uncleanness of the peoples of the lands, with their abominations which have filled it from one end to another with their impurity.</p> <p>12 Now therefore, do not give your daughters as wives for their sons, nor take their daughters to your sons; and never seek their peace or prosperity, that you may be strong and eat the good of the land, and leave it as an inheritance to your children forever.'</p> <p>13 And after all that has come upon us for our evil deeds and for our great guilt, since You our God have punished us less than our iniquities deserve, and have given us such deliverance as this, 14 should we again break Your commandments, and join in marriage with the people committing these abominations? Would You not be angry with us until You had consumed us, so that there would be no remnant or survivor?</p>	<p>Ezra confessed this sin to YHVH while acknowledging the redemptive plan of YHVH.</p> <p>Ezra confessed that to have their children intermarry with the people in the land that are outside of the covenant with YHVH is an abomination.</p> <p>Note the continuing parallel:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Moses often interceded for the people. • The people had been slaves in Babylon as their ancestors had been slaves in Egypt. <p>The parallel does not end here.</p>
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	15 O Lord God of Israel , You are righteous, for we are left as a remnant, as it is this day. Here we are before You, in our guilt, though no one can stand before You because of this!"	
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Abomination of Intermarriage Addressed			
C	Ezra 10:5-11	Ezra 10:12-17	Comments
A 1, 2	<p>Ezra 10:5-9 Then Ezra arose, and made the leaders of the priests, the Levites, and all Israel swear an oath that they would do according to this word. So they swore an oath. 6 Then Ezra rose up from before the house of God, and went into the chamber of Jehohanan the son of Eliashib; and when he came there, he ate no bread and drank no water, for he mourned because of the guilt of those from the captivity.</p> <p>7 And they issued a proclamation throughout Judah and Jerusalem to all the descendants of the captivity, that they must gather at Jerusalem, 8 and that whoever would not come within three days, according to the instructions of the leaders and elders, all his property would be confiscated, and he himself would be separated from the assembly of those from the captivity.</p> <p>9 So all the men of Judah and Benjamin gathered at Jerusalem within three days. It was the ninth month, on the twentieth of the month; and all the people sat in the open square of the house of</p>	<p>Ezra 10:16-17 Then the descendants of the captivity did so. And Ezra the priest, with certain heads of the fathers' households, were set apart by the fathers' households, each of them by name; and they sat down on the first day of the tenth month to examine the matter. 17 By the first day of the first month they finished questioning all the men who had taken pagan wives.</p>	<p>The parallel continues:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A proclamation was issued for all who had returned from captivity to come to Jerusalem to address this abomination of intermarriage within 3 days with a penalty for those who failed to come. • Recall that at Mt. Sinai, the people had to consecrate and wash their clothes before God would meet them on the 3rd day. The theme of 3 days is another parallel with the Exodus account. • The leaders of the assembly had to meet and question all men who had taken pagan wives. This process took several months to complete. • It would take some time for the people who entered into covenant with YHWH at Mt. Sinai to come to know and practice YHWH's laws.

	God, trembling because of this matter and because of heavy rain.		
B	<p>Ezra 10:10-11</p> <p>Then Ezra the priest stood up and said to them, "You have transgressed and have taken pagan wives, adding to the guilt of Israel. 11 Now therefore, make confession to the Lord God of your fathers, and do His will; separate yourselves from the peoples of the land, and from the pagan wives."</p>	<p>Ezra 10:12-15</p> <p>Then all the assembly answered and said with a loud voice, "Yes! As you have said, so we must do. 13 But there are many people; it is the season for heavy rain, and we are not able to stand outside. Nor is this the work of one or two days, for there are many of us who have transgressed in this matter.</p> <p>14 Please, let the leaders of our entire assembly stand; and let all those in our cities who have taken pagan wives come at appointed times, together with the elders and judges of their cities, until the fierce wrath of our God is turned away from us in this matter."</p> <p>15 Only Jonathan the son of Asahel and Jahaziah the son of Tikvah opposed this, and Meshullam and Shabbethai the Levite gave them support.</p>	<p>Ezra commanded the people to committed the abomination of intermarriage to come and confess their sin and to separate from their pagan wives.</p> <p>The number of intermarriages was so great that it could not be done in a single day.</p> <p>More of the parallel:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Assembly leaders would have to become involved at appointed times to meet with members of the assembly to deal with all of the intermarriages. • Moses could not deal with all of the multitude to teach them God's laws and judge cases. He had to appoint leaders over the people to assist with the process. Difficult cases would be brought to Moses.

Ezra 10:18-44: List of men who took Gentile wives:

And among the sons of the priests who had taken pagan wives the following were found of the sons of Jeshua the son of Jozadak, and his brothers: Maaseiah, Eliezer, Jarib, and Gedaliah. 19 And they gave their promise that they would put away their wives; and being guilty, they presented a ram of the flock as their trespass offering.

20 **Also of the sons of Immer:** Hanani and Zebadiah; 21 of the sons of Harim: Maaseiah, Elijah, Shemaiah, Jehiel, and Uziah; 22 of the sons of Pashhur: Elioenai, Maaseiah, Ishmael, Nethanel, Jozabad, and Elasah.

23 **Also of the Levites:** Jozabad, Shimei, Kelaiah (the same is Kelita), Pethahiah, Judah, and Eliezer.

24 **Also of the singers:** Eliashib;

and of the gatekeepers: Shallum, Telem, and Uri.

25 **And others of Israel:** of the sons of Parosh: Ramiah, Jeziah, Malchiah, Mijamin, Eleazar, Malchijah, and Benaiah;
 26 of the sons of Elam: Mattaniah, Zechariah, Jehiel, Abdi, Jeremoth, and Eliah;
 27 of the sons of Zattu: Elioenai, Eliashib, Mattaniah, Jeremoth, Zabad, and Aziza;
 28 of the sons of Bebai: Jehohanan, Hananiah, Zabbai, and Athlai;
 29 of the sons of Bani: Meshullam, Malluch, Adaiah, Jashub, Sheal, and Ramoth;
 30 of the sons of Pahath-Moab: Adna, Chelal, Benaiah, Maaseiah, Mattaniah, Bezalel, Binnui, and Manasseh;
 31 of the sons of Harim: Eliezer, Ishijah, Malchijah, Shemaiah, Shimeon, 32 Benjamin, Malluch, and Shemariah;
 33 of the sons of Hashum: Mattenai, Mattattah, Zabad, Eliphelet, Jeremai, Manasseh, and Shimei;
 34 of the sons of Bani: Maadai, Amram, Uel, 35 Benaiah, Bedeiah, Cheluh, 36 Vaniah, Meremoth, Eliashib, 37 Mattaniah, Mattenai, Jaasai, 38 Bani, Binnui, Shimei, 39 Shelemiah, Nathan, Adaiah, 40 Machnadebai, Shashai, Sharai, 41 Azarel, Shelemiah, Shemariah, 42 Shallum, Amariah, and Joseph;
 43 of the sons of Nebo: Jeiel, Mattithiah, Zabad, Zebina, Jaddai, Joel, and Benaiah.
 44 All these had taken pagan wives, and some of them had wives by whom they had children.

Nehemiah

Nehemiah Goes to Jerusalem			
C	Nehemiah 1:1-2:16	Nehemiah 2:17-20	Comments
A 1, 2	<p>Nehemiah 1:1-11 The words of Nehemiah the son of Hachaliah.</p> <p>It came to pass in the month of Chislev, in the twentieth year, as I was in Shushan the citadel, 2 that Hanani one of my brethren came with men from Judah; and I asked them concerning the Jews who had escaped, who had survived the captivity, and concerning Jerusalem. 3 And they said to me, "The survivors who are left from the captivity in the province are there in great distress and reproach. The wall of Jerusalem is also broken down, and its gates are burned with fire."</p> <p>4 So it was, when I heard these words, that I sat down</p>	<p>Nehemiah 2:19-20 19 But when Sanballat the Horonite, Tobiah the Ammonite official, and Geshem the Arab heard of it, they laughed at us and despised us, and said, "What is this thing that you are doing? Will you rebel against the king?"</p> <p>20 So I answered them, and said to them, "The God of heaven Himself will prosper us; therefore we His servants will arise and build, but you have no heritage or right or memorial in Jerusalem."</p>	<p>Nehemiah recalls the words of Moses. He has not forgotten them. Deuteronomy 30:1-6.</p> <p>Nehemiah hears of the situation in Jerusalem and prays. He confesses the sin of his people, and reminds YHVH of his promise to bring back His people.</p> <p>He asked for mercy, and he believed that YHVH would prosper them despite intimidation.</p> <p>Nehemiah's enemies are not in covenant with YHVH. They laughed and despised the Jews, and they accused them of rebellion. Despite this, Nehemiah has faith that God will prosper them.</p>

	<p>and wept, and mourned for many days; I was fasting and praying before the God of heaven.</p> <p>5 And I said: "I pray, Lord God of heaven, O great and awesome God, You who keep Your covenant and mercy with those who love You and observe Your commandments, 6 please let Your ear be attentive and Your eyes open, that You may hear the prayer of Your servant which I pray before You now, day and night, for the children of Israel Your servants, and confess the sins of the children of Israel which we have sinned against You. Both my father's house and I have sinned. 7 We have acted very corruptly against You, and have not kept the commandments, the statutes, nor the ordinances which You commanded Your servant Moses. 8 Remember, I pray, the word that You commanded Your servant Moses, saying, 'If you are unfaithful, I will scatter you among the nations; 9 but if you return to Me, and keep My commandments and do them, though some of you were cast out to the farthest part of the heavens, yet I will gather them from there, and bring them to the place which I have chosen as a dwelling for My name.' 10 Now these are Your servants and Your people, whom You</p>	
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	<p>have redeemed by Your great power, and by Your strong hand. 11 O Lord, I pray, please let Your ear be attentive to the prayer of Your servant, and to the prayer of Your servants who desire to fear Your name; and let Your servant prosper this day, I pray, and grant him mercy in the sight of this man."</p> <p>For I was the king's cupbearer.</p>		
B 1, 2	<p>Nehemiah 2:1-9 And it came to pass in the month of Nisan, in the twentieth year of King Artaxerxes, when wine was before him, that I took the wine and gave it to the king. Now I had never been sad in his presence before. 2 Therefore the king said to me, "Why is your face sad, since you are not sick? This is nothing but sorrow of heart." So I became dreadfully afraid, 3 and said to the king, "May the king live forever! Why should my face not be sad, when the city, the place of my fathers' tombs, lies waste, and its gates are burned with fire?" 4 Then the king said to me, "What do you request?" So I prayed to the God of heaven. 5 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."</p>	<p>Nehemiah 2:17-18 Then I said to them, "You see the distress that we are in, how Jerusalem lies waste, and its gates are burned with fire. Come and let us build the wall of Jerusalem, that we may no longer be a reproach." 18 And I told them of the hand of my God which had been good upon me, and also of the king's words that he had spoken to me. So they said, "Let us rise up and build." Then they set their hands to this good work.</p>	<p>References do not agree on which Artaxerxes is spoken of here. However, since Nehemiah and Ezra are contemporaries, it is likely that this is Artaxerxes I, and that Ezra came in 458 BCE (7th year) and Nehemiah came to Jerusalem in 445 BCE (20th year). Nehemiah first spoke to Artaxerxes who gave Nehemiah timber for the gates of the fortress of the temple, and for the wall of the city, and the house that Nehemiah would occupy. The wall of the city was finished on Elul 25 in 52 days. (Nehemiah 2:8; 6:15)</p>

	<p>6 Then the king said to me (the queen also sitting beside him), "How long will your journey be? And when will you return?" So it pleased the king to send me; and I set him a time.</p> <p>7 Furthermore I said to the king, "If it pleases the king, let letters be given to me for the governors of the region beyond the River, that they must permit me to pass through till I come to Judah, 8 and a letter to Asaph the keeper of the king's forest, that he must give me timber to make beams for the gates of the citadel which pertains to the temple, for the city wall, and for the house that I will occupy." And the king granted them to me according to the good hand of my God upon me.</p> <p>9 Then I went to the governors in the region beyond the River, and gave them the king's letters. Now the king had sent captains of the army and horsemen with me.</p>		
C	<p>Nehemiah 2:10-16</p> <p>When Sanballat the Horonite and Tobiah the Ammonite official heard of it, they were deeply disturbed that a man had come to seek the well-being of the children of Israel.</p> <p>11 So I came to Jerusalem and was there three days. 12 Then I arose in the night, I and a few men with me; I told no one what my God had put in my heart to do at Jerusalem; nor was there any animal with me, except the one on which I rode. 13 And I went out by night through the Valley Gate to the Serpent Well and the Refuse Gate, and viewed the walls of Jerusalem which were broken down and its gates which were burned with fire. 14 Then I went on to the Fountain Gate and to the King's Pool, but there was no room for the animal under me to pass. 15 So I went up in the night by the valley, and viewed the wall; then I turned back and entered by the Valley Gate, and so returned.</p>	<p>They did not like the fact that a man had come to seek the well-being of the children of Israel.</p> <p>Nehemiah went and inspected the wall.</p>	

	16 And the officials did not know where I had gone or what I had done; I had not yet told the Jews, the priests, the nobles, the officials, or the others who did the work.	
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Nehemiah 3:1-32: List of people who helped build the temple:

Then Eliashib the high priest rose up with his brethren the priests and built **the Sheep Gate**; they consecrated it and hung its doors. They built as far as the Tower of the Hundred, and consecrated it, then as far as the Tower of Hananel. 2 Next to Eliashib the men of Jericho built. And next to them Zaccur the son of Imri built.

3 Also the sons of Hassenaah built **the Fish Gate**; they laid its beams and hung its doors with its bolts and bars. 4 And next to them Meremoth the son of Urijah, the son of Koz, made repairs. Next to them Meshullam the son of Berechiah, the son of Meshezabel, made repairs. Next to them Zadok the son of Baana made repairs. 5 Next to them the Tekoites made repairs; but their nobles did not put their shoulders to the work of their Lord.

6 Moreover Jehoiada the son of Paseah and Meshullam the son of Besodeiah repaired **the Old Gate**; they laid its beams and hung its doors, with its bolts and bars. 7 And next to them Melatiah the Gibeonite, Jadon the Meronothite, the men of Gibeon and Mizpah, repaired the residence of the governor of the region beyond the River. 8 Next to him Uzziel the son of Harhaiah, one of the goldsmiths, made repairs. Also next to him Hananiah, one of the perfumers, made repairs; and they fortified Jerusalem as far as the Broad Wall. 9 And next to them Rephaiah the son of Hur, leader of half the district of Jerusalem, made repairs. 10 Next to them Jedaiah the son of Harumaph made repairs in front of his house. And next to him Hattush the son of Hashabniah made repairs.

11 Malchijah the son of Harim and Hashub the son of Pahath-Moab repaired another section, as well as the Tower of the Ovens. 12 And next to him was Shallum the son of Hallohesh, leader of half the district of Jerusalem; he and his daughters made repairs.

13 Hanun and the inhabitants of Zanoah repaired **the Valley Gate**. They built it, hung its doors with its bolts and bars, and repaired a thousand cubits of the wall as far as the Refuse Gate.

14 Malchijah the son of Rechab, leader of the district of Beth Haccerem, repaired **the Refuse Gate**; he built it and hung its doors with its bolts and bars.

15 Shallun the son of Col-Hozeh, leader of the district of Mizpah, repaired **the Fountain Gate**; he built it, covered it, hung its doors with its bolts and bars, and repaired the wall of the Pool of Shelah by the King's Garden, as far as the stairs that go down from the City of David. 16 After him Nehemiah the son of Azbuk, leader of half the district of Beth Zur, made repairs as far as the place in front of the tombs of David, to the man-made pool, and as far as the House of the Mighty.

17 After him the Levites, under Rehum the son of Bani, made repairs. Next to him Hashabiah, leader of half the district of Keilah, made repairs for his district. 18 After him their brethren, under Bavai the son of Henadad, leader of the other half of the district of Keilah, made repairs. 19 And next to him Ezer the son of Jeshua, the leader of Mizpah, repaired another section in front of the Ascent to the Armory at the buttress. 20 After him Baruch the son of Zabbai carefully repaired the other section, from the buttress

to the door of the house of Eliashib the high priest. 21 After him Meremoth the son of Urijah, the son of Koz, repaired another section, from the door of the house of Eliashib to the end of the house of Eliashib.

22 And after him the priests, the men of the plain, made repairs. 23 After him Benjamin and Hasshub made repairs opposite their house. After them Azariah the son of Maaseiah, the son of Ananiah, made repairs by his house. 24 After him Binnui the son of Henadad repaired another section, from the house of Azariah to the buttress, even as far as the corner. 25 Palal the son of Uzai made repairs opposite the buttress, and on the tower which projects from the king's upper house that was by the court of the prison. After him Pedaiah the son of Parosh made repairs.

26 Moreover the Nethinim who dwelt in Ophel made repairs as far as the place in front of the Water Gate toward the east, and on the projecting tower. 27 After them the Tekoites repaired another section, next to the great projecting tower, and as far as the wall of Ophel.

28 Beyond **the Horse Gate** the priests made repairs, each in front of his own house. 29 After them Zadok the son of Immer made repairs in front of his own house. After him Shemaiah the son of Shechaniah, the keeper of **the East Gate**, made repairs. 30 After him Hananiah the son of Shelemiah, and Hanun, the sixth son of Zalaph, repaired another section. After him Meshullam the son of Berechiah made repairs in front of his dwelling. 31 After him Malchijah, one of the goldsmiths, made repairs as far as the house of the Nethinim and of the merchants, in front of **the Miphkad Gate**, and as far as the upper room at the corner. 32 And between the upper room at the corner, as far as **the Sheep Gate**, the goldsmiths and the merchants made repairs.

Enemies Respond to Construction of the Wall			
C	Nehemiah 4:1-9 (H:33-4:3)	Nehemiah 4:11-13 (H: 4:4-17)	Comments
A 1, 2	<p>Nehemiah 4:1-6 (H 3:33-38) But it so happened, when Sanballat heard that we were rebuilding the wall, that he was furious and very indignant, and mocked the Jews. 2 And he spoke before his brethren and the army of Samaria, and said, "What are these feeble Jews doing? Will they fortify themselves? Will they offer sacrifices? Will they complete it in a day? Will they revive the stones from the heaps of rubbish — stones that are burned?"</p> <p>3 Now Tobiah the Ammonite was beside him, and he said, "Whatever they</p>	<p>Nehemiah 4:13-23 (H 4:6-17) 13 Therefore I positioned men behind the lower parts of the wall, at the openings; and I set the people according to their families, with their swords, their spears, and their bows. 14 And I looked, and arose and said to the nobles, to the leaders, and to the rest of the people, "Do not be afraid of them. Remember the Lord, great and awesome, and fight for your brethren, your sons, your daughters, your wives, and your houses."</p> <p>15 And it happened, when our enemies heard that it was known to us, and that God had brought their plot to nothing,</p>	<p>Enemies' response to the construction of the wall included:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Being furious • Being very indignant • Mocking the Jews <p>Half of God's people built the wall anyway while the other half stood guard with their weapons to fend off attacks.</p> <p>The plot of the enemies was to attack and create confusion. (See below).</p>

	<p>build, if even a fox goes up on it, he will break down their stone wall."</p> <p>4 Hear, O our God, for we are despised; turn their reproach on their own heads, and give them as plunder to a land of captivity! 5 Do not cover their iniquity, and do not let their sin be blotted out from before You; for they have provoked You to anger before the builders.</p> <p>6 So we built the wall, and the entire wall was joined together up to half its height, for the people had a mind to work.</p>	<p>that all of us returned to the wall, everyone to his work. 16 So it was, from that time on, that half of my servants worked at construction, while the other half held the spears, the shields, the bows, and wore armor; and the leaders were behind all the house of Judah. 17 Those who built on the wall, and those who carried burdens, loaded themselves so that with one hand they worked at construction, and with the other held a weapon. 18 Every one of the builders had his sword girded at his side as he built. And the one who sounded the trumpet was beside me.</p> <p>19 Then I said to the nobles, the rulers, and the rest of the people, "The work is great and extensive, and we are separated far from one another on the wall. 20 Wherever you hear the sound of the trumpet, rally to us there. Our God will fight for us."</p> <p>21 So we labored in the work, and half of the men held the spears from daybreak until the stars appeared. 22 At the same time I also said to the people, "Let each man and his servant stay at night in Jerusalem, that they may be our guard by night and a working party by day." 23 So neither I, my brethren, my servants, nor the men of the guard who followed me took off our clothes, except that everyone took them off for washing.</p>	
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B	<p>Nehemiah 4:7-9 (H 4:1-3) Now it happened, when Sanballat, Tobiah, the Arabs, the Ammonites, and the Ashdodites heard that the walls of Jerusalem were being restored and the gaps were beginning to be closed, that they became very angry, 8 and all of them conspired together to come and attack Jerusalem and create confusion.</p> <p>9 Nevertheless we made our prayer to our God, and because of them we set a watch against them day and night.</p>	<p>Nehemiah 4:10-11 (H 4:4-5) Then Judah said, "The strength of the laborers is failing, and there is so much rubbish that we are not able to build the wall."</p> <p>So it was, when the Jews who dwelt near them came, that they told us ten times, "From whatever place you turn, they will be upon us."</p> <p>11 And our adversaries said, "They will neither know nor see anything, till we come into their midst and kill them and cause the work to cease."</p>	<p>Enemies conspired to come and make surprise attacks on Jerusalem, kill them, and create confusion in order to cause the work to cease.</p> <p>The Jews warned the leaders of possible attacks.</p>
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Nehemiah Stops the Usury			
C	Nehemiah 5:1-12a	Nehemiah 12b-19	Comments
A 1, 2	<p>Nehemiah 5:1-5 And there was a great outcry of the people and their wives against their Jewish brethren. 2 For there were those who said, "We, our sons, and our daughters are many; therefore let us get grain, that we may eat and live."</p> <p>3 There were also some who said, "We have mortgaged our lands and vineyards and houses, that we might buy grain because of the famine."</p> <p>4 There were also those who said, "We have borrowed money for the king's tax on our lands and vineyards. 5 Yet now our flesh is as the flesh of our brethren, our children as</p>	<p>Nehemiah 5:14-19 Moreover, from the time that I was appointed to be their governor in the land of Judah, from the twentieth year until the thirty-second year of King Artaxerxes, twelve years, neither I nor my brothers ate the governor's provisions.</p> <p>15 But the former governors who were before me laid burdens on the people, and took from them bread and wine, besides forty shekels of silver. Yes, even their servants bore rule over the people, but I did not do so, because of the fear of God.</p> <p>16 Indeed, I also continued the work on this wall, and we did not buy any land. All my servants were gathered there for the work.</p>	<p>The people were hungry because of the famine. This caused them to mortgage their lands, vineyards, and houses. In addition, they were forcing their children to become slaves and were not able to redeem them.</p> <p>Nehemiah, their governor, was not part of this. He was not even eating the full provisions of the governor. He was busy working on the wall.</p> <p>He was very different from former governors in this matter.</p>

	<p>their children; and indeed we are forcing our sons and our daughters to be slaves, and some of our daughters have been brought into slavery.</p> <p>It is not in our power to redeem them, for other men have our lands and vineyards."</p>	<p>17 And at my table were one hundred and fifty Jews and rulers, besides those who came to us from the nations around us.</p> <p>18 Now that which was prepared daily was one ox and six choice sheep. Also fowl were prepared for me, and once every ten days an abundance of all kinds of wine.</p> <p>Yet in spite of this I did not demand the governor's provisions, because the bondage was heavy on this people.</p> <p>19 Remember me, my God, for good, according to all that I have done for this people.</p>	
B 1, 2	<p>Nehemiah 5:6-8 6 And I became very angry when I heard their outcry and these words. 7 After serious thought, I rebuked the nobles and rulers, and said to them, "Each of you is exacting usury from his brother." So I called a great assembly against them. 8 And I said to them, "According to our ability we have redeemed our Jewish brethren who were sold to the nations. Now indeed, will you even sell your brethren? Or should they be sold to us?"</p> <p>Then they were silenced and found nothing to say.</p>	<p>Nehemiah 5:12-13 12 So they said, "We will restore it, and will require nothing from them; we will do as you say ."Then I called the priests, and required an oath from them that they would do according to this promise.</p> <p>13 Then I shook out the fold of my garment and said, "So may God shake out each man from his house, and from his property, who does not perform this promise. Even thus may he be shaken out and emptied."</p> <p>And all the assembly said, "Amen!" and praised the Lord. Then the people did according to this promise.</p>	<p>The people cried out to Nehemiah because of the usury (high interest rates) the nobles and rulers were taking from them.</p> <p>After Nehemiah spoke to the nobles and rulers, they agreed to restore it to the people.</p> <p>The priests were to do according to the promise.</p>
C	Nehemiah 5:9-11		<p>Nehemiah's commands:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Stop this usury.

	<p>9 Then I said, "What you are doing is not good. Should you not walk in the fear of our God because of the reproach of the nations, our enemies?</p> <p>10 I also, with my brethren and my servants, am lending them money and grain.</p> <p>Please, let us stop this usury!</p> <p>11 Restore now to them, even this day, their lands, their vineyards, their olive groves, and their houses, also a hundredth of the money and the grain, the new wine and the oil, that you have charged them."</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Restore their lands, vineyards, olive groves, houses, and 1/100 of the money, grain, new wine, and oil that has been charged to them.
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Enemies Attempt to Intimidate Nehemiah			
C	Nehemiah 6:1-13	Nehemiah 6:14-19	Comments
A 1, 2	<p>Nehemiah 6:1-8</p> <p>Now it happened when Sanballat, Tobiah, Geshem the Arab, and the rest of our enemies heard that I had rebuilt the wall, and that there were no breaks left in it (though at that time I had not hung the doors in the gates), 2 that Sanballat and Geshem sent to me, saying, "Come, let us meet together among the villages in the plain of Ono." But they thought to do me harm.</p> <p>3 So I sent messengers to them, saying, "I am doing a great work, so that I cannot come down. Why should the work cease while I leave it and go down to you?"</p> <p>4 But they sent me this message four times, and I answered them in the same manner.</p> <p>5 Then Sanballat sent his servant to me as before, the fifth time, with an open letter in his hand. 6 In it was written:</p> <p>It is reported among the nations, and Geshem says, that you and the Jews plan</p>	<p>Nehemiah 6:15-19</p> <p>So the wall was finished on the twenty-fifth day of Elul, in fifty-two days. 16 And it happened, when all our enemies heard of it, and all the nations around us saw these things, that they were very disheartened in their own eyes; for they perceived that this work was done by our God.</p> <p>17 Also in those days the nobles of Judah sent many letters to Tobiah, and the letters of Tobiah came to them. 18 For many in Judah were pledged (sworn) to him, because he was the son-in-law of Shechaniah the son of Arah, and his son Jehohanan had married the daughter of Meshullam the son of Berechiah.</p> <p>19 Also they reported his good deeds before me, and reported my words to him. Tobiah sent letters to frighten me.</p>	<p>Enemies want to meet with Nehemiah to do him harm, and they are suggesting there are rumors that he wants to be king and threatened to report such to the king. Nehemiah says what they are suggesting are lies.</p> <p>The completion of the wall in 52 days caused their enemies to become disheartened.</p> <p>Tobiah had people who were sworn to him amongst the nobles of Judah because of family ties.</p> <p>Can you see the improper loyalty that resulted from these family ties?</p> <p>They passed communication back and forth between Nehemiah and Tobiah.</p> <p>Tobiah's goal was still to frighten Nehemiah.</p>

	<p>to rebel; therefore, according to these rumors, you are rebuilding the wall, that you may be their king.</p> <p>7 And you have also appointed prophets to proclaim concerning you at Jerusalem, saying, "There is a king in Judah!" Now these matters will be reported to the king. So come, therefore, and let us consult together.</p> <p>8 Then I sent to him, saying, "No such things as you say are being done, but you invent them in your own heart."</p>		
B	<p>Nehemiah 6:9</p> <p>9 For they all were trying to make us afraid, saying, "Their hands will be weakened in the work, and it will not be done."</p>	<p>Nehemiah 6:14</p> <p>14 My God, remember Tobiah and Sanballat, according to these their works, and the prophetess Noadiah and the rest of the prophets who would have made me afraid.</p>	<p>Their enemies used fear tactics to keep the wall from being completed.</p> <p>These tactics are nothing new. They are being used even today.</p>
C	<p>Nehemiah 6:10-13</p> <p>Afterward I came to the house of Shemaiah the son of Delaiah, the son of Mehetabel, who was a secret informer; and he said, "Let us meet together in the house of God, within the temple, and let us close the doors of the temple, for they are coming to kill you; indeed, at night they will come to kill you."</p> <p>11 And I said, "Should such a man as I flee? And who is there such as I who would go into the temple to save his life? I will not go in!"</p> <p>12 Then I perceived that God had not sent him at all, but that he pronounced this prophecy against me because Tobiah and Sanballat had hired him. 13 For this reason he was hired, that I should be afraid and act that way and sin, so that they might have cause for an evil report, that they might reproach me.</p>		<p>Warning of assassination from a hireling was not heeded.</p> <p>Nehemiah's enemies wanted an evil report so they could show their disapproval of him. They tried to promote fear, cause Nehemiah to sin, and to prevent Nehemiah's job from being done.</p>

Wrapping Up Includes Identifying Citizens and Priests			
C	Nehemiah 7:1-62	Nehemiah 7:70-73	Comments

A 1, 2	<p>Nehemiah 7:1-4</p> <p>Then it was, when the wall was built and I had hung the doors, when the gatekeepers, the singers, and the Levites had been appointed,</p> <p>2 that I gave the charge of Jerusalem to my brother Hanani, and Hananiah the leader of the citadel, for he was a faithful man and feared God more than many.</p> <p>3 And I said to them, "Do not let the gates of Jerusalem be opened until the sun is hot; and while they stand guard, let them shut and bar the doors; and appoint guards from among the inhabitants of Jerusalem, one at his watch station and another in front of his own house."</p> <p>4 Now the city was large and spacious, but the people in it were few, and the houses were not rebuilt.</p>	<p>Nehemiah 7:70-73</p> <p>70 And some of the heads of the fathers' houses gave to the work.</p> <p>The governor gave to the treasury one thousand gold drachmas, fifty basins, and five hundred and thirty priestly garments.</p> <p>71 Some of the heads of the fathers' houses gave to the treasury of the work twenty thousand gold drachmas, and two thousand two hundred silver minas.</p> <p>72 And that which the rest of the people gave was twenty thousand gold drachmas, two thousand silver minas, and sixty-seven priestly garments.</p> <p>73 So the priests, the Levites, the gatekeepers, the singers, some of the people, the Nethinim, and all Israel dwelt in their cities.</p> <p>When the seventh month came, the children of Israel were in their cities.</p>	<p>Wrapping up:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• The wall was completed with its doors.• Appointment of gatekeepers, singers, Levites.• Hanani put in charge of Jerusalem.• Houses were not yet built• Donations were given• People dwelt in their cities
B 1	<p>Nehemiah 7:5-60</p> <p>Then my God put it into my heart to gather the nobles, the rulers, and the people, that they might be registered by genealogy. And I found a register of the genealogy of those who had come up in the first return, and found written in it:</p> <p>6 These are the people of the province who came back from the captivity, of those who had been carried away, whom Nebuchadnezzar the king of Babylon had carried away, and who returned to Jerusalem and Judah, everyone to his city.</p> <p>7 Those who came with Zerubbabel were Jeshua, Nehemiah, Azariah, Raamiah, Nahamani, Mordecai, Bilshan, Mispereth, Bigvai, Nehum, and Baanah.</p> <p>The number of the men of the people of Israel:</p> <p>8 the sons of Parosh, 2172;</p>		<p>People are registered.</p>

<p>9 the sons of Shephatiah, 372; 10 the sons of Arah, 652; 11 the sons of Pahath-Moab, of the sons of Jeshua and Joab, 2818; 12 the sons of Elam, 1254; 13 the sons of Zattu, 845; 14 the sons of Zaccai, 760; 15 the sons of Binnui, 648; 16 the sons of Bebai, 628; 17 the sons of Azgad, 2322; 18 the sons of Adonikam, 667; 19 the sons of Bigvai, 2067; 20 the sons of Adin, 655; 21 the sons of Ater of Hezekiah, 98; 22 the sons of Hashum, 328; 23 the sons of Bezai, 324; 24 the sons of Hariph, 112; 25 the sons of Gibeon, 95; 26 the men of Bethlehem and Netophah, 188; 27 the men of Anathoth, 128; 28 the men of Beth Azmaveth, 42; 29 the men of Kirjath Jearim, Chephirah, and Beeroth, 743; 30 the men of Ramah and Geba, 621; 31 the men of Michmas, 122; 32 the men of Bethel and Ai, 123; 33 the men of the other Nebo, 52; 34 the sons of the other Elam, 1254; 35 the sons of Harim, 320; 36 the sons of Jericho, 345; 37 the sons of Lod, Hadid, and Ono, 721; 38 the sons of Senaah, 3930. 39 The priests: the sons of Jedaiah, of the house of Jeshua, 973; 40 the sons of Immer, 1052; 41 the sons of Pashhur, 1247; 42 the sons of Harim, 1017. 43 The Levites: the sons of Jeshua, of Kadmiel, and of the sons of Hodevah, seventy-four. 44 The singers: the sons of Asaph, one hundred and forty-eight. 45 The gatekeepers: the sons of Shallum, the sons of Ater, the sons of Talmon, the sons of Akkub, the sons of Hatita, the sons of Shobai, one hundred and thirty-eight. 46 The Nethinim: the sons of Ziha, the sons of Hasupha, the sons of Tabbaoth, 47 the sons of Keros, the sons of Sia, the sons of Padon, 48 the sons of Lebana, the sons of Hagaba, the sons of Salmai, 49 the sons of Hanan, the sons of Giddel, the sons of Gahar,</p>	
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	<p>50 the sons of Reaiah, the sons of Rezin, the sons of Nekoda, 51 the sons of Gazzam, the sons of Uzza, the sons of Paseah, 52 the sons of Besai, the sons of Meunim, the sons of Nephishesim, 53 the sons of Bakbuk, the sons of Hakupha, the sons of Harhur, 54 the sons of Bazlith, the sons of Mehida, the sons of Harsha, 55 the sons of Barkos, the sons of Sisera, the sons of Tamah, 56 the sons of Nezhiah, and the sons of Hatipha. 57 The sons of Solomon's servants: the sons of Sotai, the sons of Sophereth, the sons of Perida, 58 the sons of Jaala, the sons of Darkon, the sons of Giddel, 59 the sons of Shephatiah, the sons of Hattil, the sons of Pochereth of Zebaim, and the sons of Amon. 60 All the Nethinim, and the sons of Solomon's servants, were 392.</p>	
B 2	<p>Nehemiah 7:61-62 And these were the ones who came up from Tel Melah, Tel Harsha, Cherub, Addon, and Immer, but they could not identify their father's house nor their lineage, whether they were of Israel: 62 the sons of Delaiah, the sons of Tobiah, the sons of Nekoda, 642;</p>	Some could not show they were Israelites.
B 3	<p>Nehemiah 7:63-65 and of the priests: the sons of Habaiah, the sons of Koz, the sons of Barzillai, who took a wife of the daughters of Barzillai the Gileadite, and was called by their name. 64 These sought their listing among those who were registered by genealogy, but it was not found; therefore they were excluded from the priesthood as defiled. 65 And the governor said to them that they should not eat of the most holy things till a priest could consult with the Urim and Thummim.</p>	Some could not show they were priests.
B 4	<p>Nehemiah 7:66-73a (H: 7:66-72a) Altogether the whole assembly was 42,360, 67 besides their male and female servants, of whom there were 7337; and they had 245 men and women singers. 68 Their horses were 736, their mules 345, 69 their camels 435, and donkeys 6,720.</p>	Essentially, this is a census of the assembly.

The Law is Read and Explained			
C	Nehemiah 8:1-12	Nehemiah 8:13-18	Comments
A 1, 2	<p>Nehemiah 8:1-8:8 8 Now all the people gathered together as one man in the open square that</p>	<p>Nehemiah 8:16-18 Then the people went out and brought them and made themselves booths, each one</p>	<p>The book of the Law was read and explained to the people on the 1st day of the 7th month (Tishrei).</p>

	<p>was in front of the Water Gate; and they told Ezra the scribe to bring the Book of the Law of Moses, which the Lord had commanded Israel. 2 So Ezra the priest brought the Law before the assembly of men and women and all who could hear with understanding on the first day of the seventh month. 3 Then he read from it in the open square that was in front of the Water Gate from morning until midday, before the men and women and those who could understand; and the ears of all the people were attentive to the Book of the Law.</p> <p>4 So Ezra the scribe stood on a platform of wood which they had made for the purpose; and beside him, at his right hand, stood Mattithiah, Shema, Anaiah, Urijah, Hilkiah, and Maaseiah; and at his left hand Pedaiah, Mishael, Malchijah, Hashum, Hashbadana, Zechariah, and Meshullam. 5 And Ezra opened the book in the sight of all the people, for he was standing above all the people; and when he opened it, all the people stood up. 6 And Ezra blessed the Lord, the great God.</p> <p>Then all the people answered, "Amen, Amen!" while lifting up their hands. And they bowed their heads and worshiped the</p>	<p>on the roof of his house, or in their courtyards or the courts of the house of God, and in the open square of the Water Gate and in the open square of the Gate of Ephraim. 17 So the whole assembly of those who had returned from the captivity made booths and sat under the booths; for since the days of Joshua the son of Nun until that day the children of Israel had not done so. And there was very great gladness. 18 Also day by day, from the first day until the last day, he read from the Book of the Law of God. And they kept the feast seven days; and on the eighth day there was a sacred assembly, according to the prescribed manner.</p>	<p>It is horrifying to see that the terms of the covenant had been neglected, even the feasts of YHWH, since the days of Joshua the son of Nun! This had been neglected for many generations.</p>
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	<p>Lord with their faces to the ground.</p> <p>7 Also Jeshua, Bani, Sherebiah, Jamin, Akkub, Shabbethai, Hodijah, Maaseiah, Kelita, Azariah, Jozabad, Hanan, Pelaiah, and the Levites, helped the people to understand the Law; and the people stood in their place. 8 So they read distinctly from the book, in the Law of God; and they gave the sense, and helped them to understand the reading.</p>		
B	<p>Nehemiah 8:9-12</p> <p>And Nehemiah, who was the governor, Ezra the priest and scribe, and the Levites who taught the people said to all the people, "This day is holy to the Lord your God; do not mourn nor weep." For all the people wept, when they heard the words of the Law.</p> <p>10 Then he said to them, "Go your way, eat the fat, drink the sweet, and send portions to those for whom nothing is prepared; for this day is holy to our Lord. Do not sorrow, for the joy of the Lord is your strength."</p> <p>11 So the Levites quieted all the people, saying, "Be still, for the day is holy; do not be grieved." 12 And all the people went their way to eat and drink, to send portions and rejoice greatly, because they understood the words that were declared to them.</p>	<p>Nehemiah 8:13-15</p> <p>Now on the second day the heads of the fathers' houses of all the people, with the priests and Levites, were gathered to Ezra the scribe, in order to understand the words of the Law.</p> <p>14 And they found written in the Law, which the Lord had commanded by Moses, that the children of Israel should dwell in booths during the feast of the seventh month, 15 and that they should announce and proclaim in all their cities and in Jerusalem, saying, "Go out to the mountain, and bring olive branches, branches of oil trees, myrtle branches, palm branches, and branches of leafy trees, to make booths, as it is written."</p>	<p>Why were they weeping and mourning? Possibly, because they realized how much YHVH's commandments had been neglected.</p> <p>At this time, they chose to change that and to start by celebrating Chag HaSukkot because of its timing.</p>

The Leaders, Priests, and Levites Repent for the People			
C	Nehemiah 9:1-3		Comments
P	<p>Nehemiah 9:1-3 Now on the twenty-fourth day of this month the children of Israel were assembled with fasting, in sackcloth, and with dust on their heads.</p> <p>2 Then those of Israelite lineage separated themselves from all foreigners; and they stood and confessed their sins and the iniquities of their fathers.</p> <p>3 And they stood up in their place and read from the Book of the Law of the Lord their God for one-fourth of the day; and for another fourth they confessed and worshiped the Lord their God.</p>		<p>The second day after the 8th day, Tishrei 24, they fasted and repented.</p> <p>The Israelites separated themselves from all of the foreigners:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • They confessed the sins and iniquities of their fathers. • They read from the law. • They confessed more and worshipped YHVH their God. <p>This is seen in the chiasm below.</p>
C	Nehemiah 9:4-21	Nehemiah 9:22-38	Comments
A 1, 2	<p>Nehemiah 9:4-8 Then Jeshua, Bani, Kadmiel, Shebaniah, Bunni, Sherebiah, Bani, and Chenani stood on the stairs of the Levites and cried out with a loud voice to the Lord their God.</p> <p>5 And the Levites, Jeshua, Kadmiel, Bani, Hashabniah, Sherebiah, Hodijah, Shebaniah, and Pethahiah, said: "Stand up and bless the Lord your God Forever and ever!</p> <p>"Blessed be Your glorious name, Which is exalted above all blessing and praise! 6 You alone are the Lord; You have made heaven, The heaven of heavens, with all their host, The earth and everything on it, The seas and all that is in them, And You preserve</p>	<p>Nehemiah 9:36-38 "Here we are, servants today! And the land that You gave to our fathers, To eat its fruit and its bounty, Here we are, servants in it!</p> <p>37 And it yields much increase to the kings You have set over us, Because of our sins;</p> <p>Also they have dominion over our bodies and our cattle At their pleasure; And we are in great distress.</p> <p>"And because of all this, We make a sure covenant and write it; Our leaders, our Levites, and our priests seal it."</p>	<p>The priests and Levites, and leaders s of YHVH, cried out to Him and blessed Him. They recounted the past, including the covenant with Abraham, and their present situation that was a result of the curses of the law.</p> <p>Note that the kings mentioned in Nehemiah 9 are foreign kings. Their dominion over the Jews was a curse of the law that resulted from their sins.</p> <p>They recalled the original covenant made with their fathers and they chose to enter into a renewed covenant with YHVH.</p>

	<p>them all. The host of heaven worships You.</p> <p>7 "You are the Lord God, Who chose Abram, And brought him out of Ur of the Chaldeans, And gave him the name Abraham; 8 You found his heart faithful before You, And made a covenant with him To give the land of the Canaanites, The Hittites, the Amorites, The Perizzites, the Jebusites, And the Girgashites — To give it to his descendants. You have performed Your words, For You are righteous.</p>		
B 1, 2	<p>Nehemiah 9:9-15</p> <p>"You saw the affliction of our fathers in Egypt, And heard their cry by the Red Sea. 10 You showed signs and wonders against Pharaoh, Against all his servants, And against all the people of his land. For You knew that they acted proudly against them. So You made a name for Yourself, as it is this day. 11 And You divided the sea before them, So that they went through the midst of the sea on the dry land; And their persecutors You threw into the deep, As a stone into the mighty waters. 12 Moreover You led them by day with a cloudy pillar, And by night with a pillar of fire, To give them light on the road Which they should travel.</p> <p>13 "You came down also on Mount Sinai, And spoke with them from heaven, And gave them just ordinances</p>	<p>Nehemiah 9:32-35</p> <p>"Now therefore, our God, The great, the mighty, and awesome God, Who keeps covenant and mercy: Do not let all the trouble seem small before You That has come upon us, Our kings and our princes, Our priests and our prophets, Our fathers and on all Your people, From the days of the kings of Assyria until this day. 33 However You are just in all that has befallen us; For You have dealt faithfully, But we have done wickedly. 34 Neither our kings nor our princes, Our priests nor our fathers, Have kept Your law, Nor heeded Your commandments and Your testimonies, With which You testified against them. 35 For they have not served You in their kingdom, Or in the many good things that You gave them, Or in the large and rich land which You set before them; Nor did they turn from their wicked works.</p>	<p>They reminded YHVH of:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The events surrounding the threshold covenant related of the Passover, including how he delivered them from Egypt. • The covenant on Mt. Sinai, the terms of which are the ordinances, laws, statues, commandments. • That He commanded His people to take the land. • That He keeps His covenants and shows mercy. • That He has been just and that they had been wicked and not kept the terms of the covenant.

	<p>and true laws, Good statutes and commandments. 14 You made known to them Your holy Sabbath, And commanded them precepts, statutes and laws, By the hand of Moses Your servant. 15 You gave them bread from heaven for their hunger, And brought them water out of the rock for their thirst, And told them to go in to possess the land Which You had sworn to give them.</p>		
C 1, 2	<p>Nehemiah 9:16-21 "But they and our fathers acted proudly, Hardened their necks, And did not heed Your commandments. 17 They refused to obey, And they were not mindful of Your wonders That You did among them. But they hardened their necks, And in their rebellion They appointed a leader To return to their bondage.</p> <p>But You are God, Ready to pardon, Gracious and merciful, Slow to anger, Abundant in kindness, And did not forsake them.</p> <p>18 "Even when they made a molded calf for themselves, And said, 'This is your god That brought you up out of Egypt, 'And worked great provocations, 19 Yet in Your manifold mercies You did not forsake them in the wilderness. The pillar of the cloud did not depart from them by day, To lead them on the road; Nor the pillar of</p>	<p>Nehemiah 9:26-31 "Nevertheless they were disobedient And rebelled against You, Cast Your law behind their backs And killed Your prophets, who testified against them To turn them to Yourself; And they worked great provocations.</p> <p>27 Therefore You delivered them into the hand of their enemies, Who oppressed them; And in the time of their trouble, When they cried to You, You heard from heaven; And according to Your abundant mercies You gave them deliverers who saved them From the hand of their enemies.</p> <p>28 "But after they had rest, They again did evil before You. Therefore You left them in the hand of their enemies, So that they had dominion over them; Yet when they returned and cried out to You, You heard from heaven; And many times You delivered them according to Your mercies,</p>	<p>They confessed the sins of their fathers, the fact they had not kept the terms of the covenant with YHVH, even as early as when they were at Mt. Sinai.</p> <p>They acknowledged YHVH's care and provision despite their fathers' sin.</p> <p>They acknowledged that their fathers killed YHVH's prophets who warned them of the error of their ways and the coming of the curses of the law for doing so. This was the dominion of their enemies over them.</p> <p>God did this to bring them back to the terms of the covenant, but they often ignored these warning signs.</p> <p>Despite their punishment, YHVH as merciful and allowed for a remnant to remain.</p>

	<p>fire by night, To show them light, And the way they should go. 20 You also gave Your good Spirit to instruct them, And did not withhold Your manna from their mouth, And gave them water for their thirst. 21 Forty years You sustained them in the wilderness; They lacked nothing; Their clothes did not wear out And their feet did not swell.</p>	<p>29 And testified against them, That You might bring them back to Your law. Yet they acted proudly, And did not heed Your commandments, But sinned against Your judgments, 'Which if a man does, he shall live by them.'</p> <p>And they shrugged their shoulders, Stiffened their necks, And would not hear. 30 Yet for many years You had patience with them, And testified against them by Your Spirit in Your prophets. Yet they would not listen;</p> <p>Therefore You gave them into the hand of the peoples of the lands. 31 Nevertheless in Your great mercy You did not utterly consume them nor forsake them; For You are God, gracious and merciful.</p>	
D	<p>Nehemiah 9:22-25</p> <p>"Moreover You gave them kingdoms and nations, And divided them into districts. So they took possession of the land of Sihon, The land of the king of Heshbon, And the land of Og king of Bashan. 23 You also multiplied their children as the stars of heaven, And brought them into the land Which You had told their fathers To go in and possess. 24 So the people went in And possessed the land; You subdued before them the inhabitants of the land, The Canaanites, And gave them into their hands, With their kings And the people of the land, That they might do with them as they wished. 25 And they took strong cities and a rich land, And possessed houses full of all goods, Cisterns already dug, vineyards, olive groves, And fruit trees in abundance. So they ate and were filled and grew fat, And delighted themselves in Your great goodness.</p>	<p>At one time, they had become the head and not the tail. In other words, YHVH helped them conquer their enemies and take the land that YHVH promised to Abraham and his descendants, and enjoy the blessings of the covenant.</p>	

Everyone Separated Themselves to the Original Covenant			
C	Nehemiah 10:1-28	Nehemiah 10:29-30	Comments
A 1, 2	<p>Nehemiah 10:1</p> <p>Now those who placed their seal on the document were:</p>	<p>Nehemiah 10:28-29</p> <p>Now the rest of the people — the priests, the Levites, the gatekeepers, the singers, the</p>	<p>The rest of the people joined those who had put their seal on the document, thereby entering into the</p>

		<p>Nethinim, and all those who had separated themselves from the peoples of the lands to the Law of God, their wives, their sons, and their daughters, everyone who had knowledge and understanding —</p> <p>29 these joined with their brethren, their nobles, and entered into a curse and an oath to walk in God's Law, which was given by Moses the servant of God, and to observe and do all the commandments of the Lord our Lord, and His ordinances and His statutes:</p>	<p>covenant with YHVH to walk in the covenant given to Moses on Mt. Sinai. This act was essentially renewing an existing covenant.</p>
B	<p>Nehemiah 10:1b-27</p> <p>Nehemiah the governor, the son of Hacaliah, and Zedekiah, 2 Seraiah, Azariah, Jeremiah, 3 Pashhur, Amariah, Malchijah, 4 Hattush, Shebaniah, Malluch, 5 Harim, Meremoth, Obadiah, 6 Daniel, Ginnethon, Baruch, 7 Meshullam, Abijah, Mijamin, 8 Maaziah, Bilgai, and Shemaiah. These were the priests.</p> <p>9 The Levites: Jeshua the son of Azaniah, Binnui of the sons of Henadad, and Kadmiel.</p> <p>10 Their brethren: Shebaniah, Hodijah, Kelita, Pelaiah, Hanan, 11 Micha, Rehob, Hashabiah, 12 Zaccur, Sherebiah, Shebaniah, 13 Hodijah, Bani, and Beninu.</p> <p>14 The leaders of the people: Parosh, Pahath-Moab, Elam, Zattu, Bani, 15 Bunni, Azgad, Bebai, 16 Adonijah, Bigvai, Adin, 17 Ater, Hezekiah, Azzur, 18 Hodijah, Hashum, Bezai, 19 Hariph, Anathoth, Nebai, 20 Magpiash, Meshullam, Hezir, 21 Meshezabel, Zadok, Jaddua, 22 Pelatiah, Hanan, Anaiah, 23 Hoshea, Hananiah, Hasshub, 24 Hallohesh, Pilha, Shobek, 25 Rehum, Hashabnah, Maaseiah, 26 Ahijah, Hanan, Anan, 27 Malluch, Harim, and Baanah.</p>		<p>Nehemiah, the priests, Levites, and their brethren placed a seal on the document for the covenant.</p>

Nehemiah 10:30-39 List of oaths:

We would not give our daughters as wives to the peoples of the land, nor take their daughters for our sons; 31 if the peoples of the land brought wares or any grain to sell on the Sabbath day, we would not

buy it from them on the Sabbath, or on a holy day; and we would forego the seventh year's produce and the exacting of every debt.

32 Also we made ordinances for ourselves, to exact from ourselves yearly one-third of a shekel for the service of the house of our God: 33 for the showbread, for the regular grain offering, for the regular burnt offering of the Sabbaths, the New Moons, and the set feasts; for the holy things, for the sin offerings to make atonement for Israel, and all the work of the house of our God. 34 We cast lots among the priests, the Levites, and the people, for bringing the wood offering into the house of our God, according to our fathers' houses, at the appointed times year by year, to burn on the altar of the Lord our God as it is written in the Law.

35 And we made ordinances to bring the firstfruits of our ground and the firstfruits of all fruit of all trees, year by year, to the house of the Lord; 36 to bring the firstborn of our sons and our cattle, as it is written in the Law, and the firstborn of our herds and our flocks, to the house of our God, to the priests who minister in the house of our God; 37 to bring the firstfruits of our dough, our offerings, the fruit from all kinds of trees, the new wine and oil, to the priests, to the storerooms of the house of our God; and to bring the tithes of our land to the Levites, for the Levites should receive the tithes in all our farming communities. 38 And the priest, the descendant of Aaron, shall be with the Levites when the Levites receive tithes; and the Levites shall bring up a tenth of the tithes to the house of our God, to the rooms of the storehouse.

39 For the children of Israel and the children of Levi shall bring the offering of the grain, of the new wine and the oil, to the storerooms where the articles of the sanctuary are, where the priests who minister and the gatekeepers and the singers are; and we will not neglect the house of our God.

Nehemiah 11:1-36 List of people who live in Jerusalem.

Now the leaders of the people dwelt at Jerusalem; the rest of the people cast lots to bring one out of ten to dwell in Jerusalem, the holy city, and nine-tenths were to dwell in other cities. 2 And the people blessed all the men who willingly offered themselves to dwell at Jerusalem.

3 These are the heads of the province who dwelt in Jerusalem. (But in the cities of Judah everyone dwelt in his own possession in their cities — Israelites, priests, Levites, Nethinim, and descendants of Solomon's servants.) 4 Also in Jerusalem dwelt some of the children of Judah and of the children of Benjamin.

The children of Judah: Athaiah the son of Uziah, the son of Zechariah, the son of Amariah, the son of Shephatiah, the son of Mahalalel, of the children of Perez; 5 and Maaseiah the son of Baruch, the son of Col-Hozeh, the son of Hazaiah, the son of Adaiah, the son of Joiarib, the son of Zechariah, the son of Shiloni. 6 All the sons of Perez who dwelt at Jerusalem were four hundred and sixty-eight valiant men.

7 **And these are the sons of Benjamin:** Sallu the son of Meshullam, the son of Joed, the son of Pedaiiah, the son of Kolaiah, the son of Maaseiah, the son of Ithiel, the son of Jeshaiah; 8 and after him Gabbai and Sallai, nine hundred and twenty-eight. 9 Joel the son of Zichri was their overseer, and Judah the son of Senuah was second over the city.

10 **Of the priests:** Jedaiah the son of Joiarib, and Jachin; 11 Seraiah the son of Hilkiyah, the son of Meshullam, the son of Zadok, the son of Meraioth, the son of Ahitub, was the leader of the house of God. 12 Their brethren who did the work of the house were eight hundred and twenty-two; and Adaiah the son of Jeroham, the son of Pelaliah, the son of Amzi, the son of Zechariah, the son of Pashhur, the son of Malchijah, 13 and his brethren, heads of the fathers' houses, were two hundred and forty-two; and Amashai the son of Azarel, the son of Ahzai, the son of Meshillemoth, the son of Immer, 14 and their brethren, mighty men of valor, were one hundred and twenty-eight. Their overseer was Zabdiel the son of one of the great men.

15 **Also of the Levites:** Shemaiah the son of Hasshub, the son of Azrikam, the son of Hashabiah, the son of Bunni; 16 Shabbethai and Jozabad, of the heads of the Levites, had the oversight of the business outside of the house of God; 17 Mattaniah the son of Micha, the son of Zabdi, the son of Asaph, the leader who began the thanksgiving with prayer; Bakbukiah, the second among his brethren; and Abda the son of Shammua, the son of Galal, the son of Jeduthun. 18 All the Levites in the holy city were two hundred and eighty-four.

19 **Moreover the gatekeepers,** Akkub, Talmon, and their brethren who kept the gates, were one hundred and seventy-two.

20 And the rest of Israel, of the priests and Levites, were in all the cities of Judah, everyone in his inheritance. 21 But the Nethinim dwelt in Ophel. And Ziha and Gishpa were over the Nethinim.

22 **Also the overseer of the Levites** at Jerusalem was Uzzi the son of Bani, the son of Hashabiah, the son of Mattaniah, the son of Micha, of the sons of Asaph, the singers in charge of the service of the house of God. 23 For it was the king's command concerning them that a certain portion should be for the singers, a quota day by day. 24 Pethahiah the son of Meshezabel, of the children of Zerah the son of Judah, was the king's deputy in all matters concerning the people.

25 And as for the villages with their fields, some of the children of Judah dwelt in Kirjath Arba and its villages, Dibon and its villages, Jekabzeel and its villages; 26 in Jeshua, Moladah, Beth Pelet, 27 Hazar Shual, and Beersheba and its villages; 28 in Ziklag and Meconah and its villages; 29 in En Rimmon, Zorah, Jarmuth, 30 Zanoah, Adullam, and their villages; in Lachish and its fields; in Azekah and its villages. They dwelt from Beersheba to the Valley of Hinnom.

31 Also the children of Benjamin from Geba dwelt in Michmash, Aiija, and Bethel, and their villages; 32 in Anathoth, Nob, Ananiah; 33 in Hazor, Ramah, Gittaim; 34 in Hadid, Zeboim, Neballat; 35 in Lod, Ono, and the Valley of Craftsmen. 36 Some of the Judean divisions of Levites were in Benjamin.

Dedication of the Wall of Jerusalem			
C	Nehemiah 12:1-30	Nehemiah 12:31-47	Comments

A 1, 2	<p>Nehemiah 12:1-26 Now these are the priests and the Levites who came up with Zerubbabel the son of Shealtiel, and Jeshua: Seraiah, Jeremiah, Ezra, 2 Amariah, Malluch, Hattush, 3 Shechaniah, Rehum, Meremoth, 4 Iddo, Ginnethoi, Abijah, 5 Mijamin, Maadiah, Bilgah, 6 Shemaiah, Joiarib, Jedaiah, 7 Sallu, Amok, Hilkiyah, and Jedaiah.</p> <p>These were the heads of the priests and their brethren in the days of Jeshua.</p> <p>8 Moreover the Levites were Jeshua, Binnui, Kadmiel, Sherebiah, Judah, and Mattaniah who led the thanksgiving psalms, he and his brethren. 9 Also Bakbukiah and Unni, their brethren, stood across from them in their duties.</p> <p>10 Jeshua begot Joiakim, Joiakim begot Eliashib, Eliashib begot Joiada, 11 Joiada begot Jonathan, and Jonathan begot Jaddua.</p> <p>12 Now in the days of Joiakim, the priests, the heads of the fathers' houses were: of Seraiah, Meraiah; of Jeremiah, Hananiah; 13 of Ezra, Meshullam; of Amariah, Jehohanan; 14 of Melichu, Jonathan; of Shebaniah, Joseph; 15 of Harim, Adna; of Meraioth, Helkai; 16 of Iddo, Zechariah; of</p>	<p>Nehemiah 12:31-47 So I brought the leaders of Judah up on the wall, and appointed two large thanksgiving choirs. One went to the right hand on the wall toward the Refuse Gate. 32</p> <p>After them went Hoshai and half of the leaders of Judah, 33 and Azariah, Ezra, Meshullam, 34 Judah, Benjamin, Shemaiah, Jeremiah, 35 and some of the priests' sons with trumpets — Zechariah the son of Jonathan, the son of Shemaiah, the son of Mattaniah, the son of Michaiah, the son of Zaccur, the son of Asaph, 36 and his brethren, Shemaiah, Azarel, Milalai, Gilalai, Maai, Nethanel, Judah, and Hanani, with the musical instruments of David the man of God.</p> <p>And Ezra the scribe went before them. 37 By the Fountain Gate, in front of them, they went up the stairs of the City of David, on the stairway of the wall, beyond the house of David, as far as the Water Gate eastward.</p> <p>38 The other thanksgiving choir went the opposite way, and I was behind them with half of the people on the wall, going past the Tower of the Ovens as far as the Broad Wall, 39 and above the Gate of Ephraim, above the Old Gate, above the Fish Gate, the Tower of Hananel, the Tower of the Hundred, as far as the Sheep Gate; and they stopped by the Gate of the Prison.</p>	<p>List of the leaders, Levites, priests, some of the priests' sons, and others who were up on the wall, including 2 large thanksgiving choirs and people musical instruments.</p> <p>Also, there were those appointed over the storehouses.</p> <p>The people rejoiced at the dedication of the wall of Jerusalem.</p>
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	<p>Ginnethon, Meshullam; 17 of Abijah, Zichri; the son of Minjamin; of Moadiah, Piltai; 18 of Bilgah, Shammua; of Shemaiah, Jehonathan; 19 of Joiarib, Mattenai; of Jedaiah, Uzzi; 20 of Sallai, Kallai; of Amok, Eber; 21 of Hilkiyah, Hashabiah; and of Jedaiah, Nethanel.</p> <p>22 During the reign of Darius the Persian, a record was also kept of the Levites and priests who had been heads of their fathers' houses in the days of Eliashib, Joiada, Johanan, and Jaddua. 23 The sons of Levi, the heads of the fathers' houses until the days of Johanan the son of Eliashib, were written in the book of the chronicles.</p> <p>24 And the heads of the Levites were Hashabiah, Sherebiah, and Jeshua the son of Kadmiel, with their brothers across from them, to praise and give thanks, group alternating with group, according to the command of David the man of God.</p> <p>25 Mattaniah, Bakbukiah, Obadiah, Meshullam, Talmon, and Akkub were gatekeepers keeping the watch at the storerooms of the gates. 26 These lived in the days of Joiakim the son of Jeshua, the son of Jozadak, and in the days of Nehemiah the governor,</p>	<p>40 So the two thanksgiving choirs stood in the house of God, likewise I and the half of the rulers with me; 41 and the priests, Eliakim, Maaseiah, Minjamin, Michaiah, Elioenai, Zechariah, and Hananiah, with trumpets; 42 also Maaseiah, Shemaiah, Eleazar, Uzzi, Jehohanan, Malchijah, Elam, and Ezer. The singers sang loudly with Jezrahiah the director.</p> <p>43 Also that day they offered great sacrifices, and rejoiced, for God had made them rejoice with great joy; the women and the children also rejoiced, so that the joy of Jerusalem was heard afar off.</p> <p>44 And at the same time some were appointed over the rooms of the storehouse for the offerings, the firstfruits, and the tithes, to gather into them from the fields of the cities the portions specified by the Law for the priests and Levites; for Judah rejoiced over the priests and Levites who ministered.</p> <p>45 Both the singers and the gatekeepers kept the charge of their God and the charge of the purification, according to the command of David and Solomon his son.</p> <p>46 For in the days of David and Asaph of old there were chiefs of the singers, and songs of praise and thanksgiving to God.</p> <p>47 In the days of Zerubbabel and in the days of Nehemiah all Israel gave the portions for the</p>	
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	and of Ezra the priest, the scribe.	singers and the gatekeepers, a portion for each day. They also consecrated holy things for the Levites, and the Levites consecrated them for the children of Aaron.	
B	<p>Nehemiah 12:27-30</p> <p>Now at the dedication of the wall of Jerusalem they sought out the Levites in all their places, to bring them to Jerusalem to celebrate the dedication with gladness, both with thanksgivings and singing, with cymbals and stringed instruments and harps. 28 And the sons of the singers gathered together from the countryside around Jerusalem, from the villages of the Netophathites, 29 from the house of Gilgal, and from the fields of Geba and Azmaveth; for the singers had built themselves villages all around Jerusalem. 30 Then the priests and Levites purified themselves, and purified the people, the gates, and the wall.</p>		The wall of Jerusalem was dedicated and celebrated with gladness, and the priests, Levites, people, gates, and wall were purified.

Correction of Problems			
C	Nehemiah 13:1-14	Nehemiah 13:15-31	Comments
A 1, 2	<p>Nehemiah 13:1-3</p> <p>On that day they read from the Book of Moses in the hearing of the people, and in it was found written that no Ammonite or Moabite should ever come into the assembly of God, 2 because they had not met the children of Israel with bread and water, but hired Balaam against them to curse them.</p> <p>However, our God turned the curse into a blessing.</p> <p>3 So it was, when they had heard the Law, that they separated all the mixed multitude from Israel.</p>	<p>Nehemiah 13:23-31</p> <p>In those days I also saw Jews who had married women of Ashdod, Ammon, and Moab.</p> <p>24 And half of their children spoke the language of Ashdod, and could not speak the language of Judah, but spoke according to the language of one or the other people.</p> <p>25 So I contended with them and cursed them, struck some of them and pulled out their hair, and made them swear by God, saying, "You shall not give your daughters as wives to their sons, nor take their daughters for your sons or yourselves." 26 Did not Solomon king of Israel sin by these things? Yet among many nations there was no king like him, who was beloved of his</p>	<p>YHWH's people were not to intermarry with the Ammonite or the Moabite which would cause them to be brought into the assembly of God.</p> <p>Solomon sinned as a result of his intermarriages, and these wives caused Solomon to sin.</p> <p>Some, by doing this, defiled the priesthood and the covenant.</p> <p>They had to be cleansed of everything pagan.</p>

		<p>God; and God made him king over all Israel. Nevertheless pagan women caused even him to sin. 27 Should we then hear of your doing all this great evil, transgressing against our God by marrying pagan women?"</p> <p>28 And one of the sons of Joiada, the son of Eliashib the high priest, was a son-in-law of Sanballat the Horonite; therefore I drove him from me.</p> <p>29 Remember them, O my God, because they have defiled the priesthood and the covenant of the priesthood and the Levites.</p> <p>30 Thus I cleansed them of everything pagan. I also assigned duties to the priests and the Levites, each to his service, 31 and to bringing the wood offering and the firstfruits at appointed times.</p> <p>Remember me, O my God, for good!</p>	
B	<p>Nehemiah 13:4-14</p> <p>Now before this, Eliashib the priest, having authority over the storerooms of the house of our God, was allied with Tobiah. 5 And he had prepared for him a large room, where previously they had stored the grain offerings, the frankincense, the articles, the tithes of grain, the new wine and oil, which were commanded to be given to the Levites and singers and gatekeepers, and the offerings for the priests.</p>	<p>Nehemiah 13:15-22</p> <p>In those days I saw people in Judah treading wine presses on the Sabbath, and bringing in sheaves, and loading donkeys with wine, grapes, figs, and all kinds of burdens, which they brought into Jerusalem on the Sabbath day. And I warned them about the day on which they were selling provisions.</p> <p>16 Men of Tyre dwelt there also, who brought in fish and all kinds of goods, and sold them on the Sabbath to the</p>	<p>Nehemiah returned to the king, but came back later to find that all of the good that had taken place was short-lived.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Tobiah, who had been allied with Eliashib the priest, had been given a large room from one of the storerooms of the courts of God where tithes and grain offerings had been stored. Essentially, the house of God was forsaken.

	<p>6 But during all this I was not in Jerusalem, for in the thirty-second year of Artaxerxes king of Babylon I had returned to the king. Then after certain days I obtained leave from the king, 7 and I came to Jerusalem and discovered the evil that Eliashib had done for Tobiah, in preparing a room for him in the courts of the house of God. 8 And it grieved me bitterly; therefore I threw all the household goods of Tobiah out of the room. 9 Then I commanded them to cleanse the rooms; and I brought back into them the articles of the house of God, with the grain offering and the frankincense.</p> <p>10 I also realized that the portions for the Levites had not been given them; for each of the Levites and the singers who did the work had gone back to his field.</p> <p>11 So I contended with the rulers, and said, "Why is the house of God forsaken?" And I gathered them together and set them in their place. 12 Then all Judah brought the tithe of the grain and the new wine and the oil to the storehouse.</p> <p>13 And I appointed as treasurers over the storehouse Shelemiah the priest and Zadok the scribe, and of the Levites, Pedaiah;</p>	<p>children of Judah, and in Jerusalem.</p> <p>17 Then I contended with the nobles of Judah, and said to them, "What evil thing is this that you do, by which you profane the Sabbath day? 18 Did not your fathers do thus, and did not our God bring all this disaster on us and on this city? Yet you bring added wrath on Israel by profaning the Sabbath."</p> <p>19 So it was, at the gates of Jerusalem, as it began to be dark before the Sabbath, that I commanded the gates to be shut, and charged that they must not be opened till after the Sabbath. Then I posted some of my servants at the gates, so that no burdens would be brought in on the Sabbath day. 20 Now the merchants and sellers of all kinds of wares lodged outside Jerusalem once or twice.</p> <p>21 Then I warned them, and said to them, "Why do you spend the night around the wall? If you do so again, I will lay hands on you!" From that time on they came no more on the Sabbath.</p> <p>22 And I commanded the Levites that they should cleanse themselves, and that they should go and guard the gates, to sanctify the Sabbath day.</p> <p>Remember me, O my God, concerning this also, and spare</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Levites had not been getting their portions and had to work in their fields. • Jews were working on the Sabbath instead of resting as a sign of the covenant. Non-Jews were selling on the Sabbath as well. <p>Nehemiah corrected these problems by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Getting rid of Tobiah's personal effects; • Having the storeroom cleansed; • Putting the Levites back in their place; • Ordering the tithe to be brought into the storehouses; • Forbidding commerce on the Sabbath; • Ordering the gates to be shut on the Sabbath; • Instructing the Levites to cleanse themselves and guard the city gates to sanctify the Sabbath.
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	<p>and next to them was Hanan the son of Zaccur, the son of Mattaniah; for they were considered faithful, and their task was to distribute to their brethren.</p> <p>14 Remember me, O my God, concerning this, and do not wipe out my good deeds that I have done for the house of my God, and for its services!</p>	<p>me according to the greatness of Your mercy!</p>	
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ⁱ <http://www.jewishencyclopedia.com/articles/14309-temple-the-second>

ⁱⁱ https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Joshua_the_High_Priest

ⁱⁱⁱ [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/List_of_monarchs_of_Persia#Achaemenid_Empire_\(559%E2%80%93334/327_BCE\)](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/List_of_monarchs_of_Persia#Achaemenid_Empire_(559%E2%80%93334/327_BCE))

^{iv} <http://www.jewishencyclopedia.com/articles/4902-darius-i>

^v Stone Edition of the Tanach, ArtScroll Series, p. 1821

^{vi} <http://www.jewishencyclopedia.com/articles/5967-ezra-the-scribe>