

IN &
OUT®

Nehemiah

REBUILDING, REVIVAL, AND
RESTORATION OF THE
PEOPLE OF GOD

IN & OUT[®]
NEHEMIAH
REBUILDING, REVIVAL, AND RESTORATION OF THE
PEOPLE OF GOD

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The Power of One

Is it possible for one person to make a difference?

As much as your heart wants to say “yes,” your mind is probably saying, “No, not really. The problems are too large and too complex to be addressed and changed by just one person.”

Friend, if that’s what you are thinking, you are going to love this study of the book called Nehemiah. In the next few weeks you will see that God can take one individual and make a difference.

The power of one.

**One person following hard after the one true God.
One individual making a difference.**

TAKING IT IN

As you begin this study, it’s important to remember to start with prayer. Why? Because the words you are about to study are God’s Words. He is the author of every book of the Bible. Men wrote what God breathed (2 Timothy 3:16)!

Therefore, as you read, develop the habit of asking God—by His Spirit—to teach you what He has written and preserved all these millennia. Nehemiah, like all books, has a specific purpose. Its words are to be learned, understood, and applied to our lives.

Not only did God the Father say it, but Jesus also confirmed it that we live by “every word that proceeds out of the mouth of God” (Deuteronomy 8:3; Matthew 4:4).

1. In the Appendix you’ll find Observation Worksheets. For those of you new to Precept studies, an Observation Worksheet is a printout of the text you’ll be studying. It is double-spaced and has wide margins for easy reading and marking. It’s a worksheet you can mess up.

a. Read Nehemiah 1.

- 1) Mark *Nehemiah*, including pronouns (*my, I, me*) and synonyms (for example “your servant” in verse 6). Choose a color for Nehemiah. Colors are more quickly identifiable.
- 2) Watch for the **when** of things. We recommend that you put a green circle over references to time, or words that show a sequence of time, such as *then, after*, etc.

By the way, there is a **Key Word Bookmark** on the back of your Precept book. One side has suggested markings for observing the Bible in general, while the other is for marking specific words in Nehemiah which we will explain later.

- 3) Mark anything that tells you **where** by double underlining it in green. Then locate it on the map.



- 4) Now let's mark references to another **who**—*the Lord God*. By the way, when studying the Bible in general, don't feel obligated to mark every reference to God as too many markings can be confusing. Mark the essential ones—truths that reveal who God is or that tell you something you didn't know about God.

However, in Nehemiah 1, we suggest you mark references to *the Lord God*, including all pronouns and synonyms. See the Key Word Bookmark for a suggested marking.

- b. After marking Nehemiah, look at your markings and list what you learn about this man on the page in the Appendix entitled “Nehemiah the Man.” This is not busy work but part of the learning process. Many times we read the Bible and forget what we read. Marking and listing just what the text says will keep you from forgetting what you read.
 - c. Look at references to the Lord God that you marked. On a separate sheet of paper or in the margin of your worksheet make a list of what you learn. This is the way you get to know God and understand His holiness and His ways. This is how you develop a biblical theology of the Person of God! Go for it!
2. Now let’s look for a **what**. According to chapter 1, **what** is the situation in Jerusalem?
 3. **How** does Nehemiah respond to the news from Jerusalem? You’ve already seen it by marking Nehemiah, haven’t you? And who does Nehemiah turn to when he gets this news about Jerusalem?
 4. Finally, as you read chapter 1, did you notice any important repeated words like *prayer* and *sin*?
 - a. We call these key words. **Key words** are important repeated words that help unlock the meaning of the text. It is good to mark key words and their synonyms and pronouns with distinctive colors and/or symbols.
 - b. Read chapter 1 again and mark references to *prayer* and *sin* distinctively. Also mark *acted very corruptly* in verse 7 like *sin*. See the bookmark for marking suggestions.

Put these two key words and *Nehemiah* on the blank side of your Key Word Bookmark with the markings you will use throughout this course.

-
- c. In the margin of your Observation Worksheet, write “prayer” and list what the text tells you about prayer. Then do the same for “sin.” Don’t add a thing—just get down the facts!
- d. Now when making lists on *prayer* and *sin*, did you notice who is being prayed for and why? Go back and mark references to these people, including pronouns. Then list what you learn about these people from marking the references. You can make this list on your Observation Worksheet or record it in the following space.
- e. Did Nehemiah pray anything for himself personally? If so, what? And what did he mean by it?
5. You will find the chart “The Times of Ezra, Nehemiah, and Esther” in the Appendix. Take time to carefully look at it.
- a. Now just so you don’t miss it: who captured Jerusalem and what happened to it? What part(s) of the city was Nehemiah so grieved over in Nehemiah 1:3?

-
- b. Read Nehemiah 2:1 to see whose twentieth year 1:1 is referring to. If Jerusalem was conquered and destroyed in 586 B.C. and this king's twentieth year is 445 B.C., how long have the walls been down? The questions you want to ask as you read Nehemiah are: why were they down and what did it take to get them rebuilt?
- c. Look at the top line next to “Babylonian and Medo-Persian Kings” and then “Three Returns From Exile.” Let's see what you can learn from the chart about the temple, or as it is most often referred to, the house of God.
- 1) When did they start rebuilding it?
 - 2) When did they stop rebuilding the temple even though it was not completed?
 - 3) When did they resume the work on the temple?
 - 4) When did they finish?
- d. Now look at the chart again. Note when the book of Ezra ends and the book of Nehemiah begins. Since Ezra is about rebuilding the temple, what concerns Nehemiah since the temple is already built? Or to put it another way, what caused Nehemiah to mourn, weep, fast, and pray?
6. Let's do one more read through Nehemiah 1, but this time do it by paragraph.
- a. Read Nehemiah 1:1-3 aloud. When you finish, summarize the content of these verses—what is happening? Write the summary in pencil in the margin of verses 1-3 on your Observation Worksheet or below.

- b. Read Nehemiah 1:4-11 and record a summary in the margin of your Observation Worksheet near verse 4 or below.
- c. Now you are ready to summarize in as few words as possible a theme for Nehemiah 1. Use words from the text.

Record a chapter theme at the heading of your Observation Worksheet and in the designated place on the “Nehemiah at a Glance” chart in the Appendix. An At a Glance chart is an incredibly valuable tool that helps you systematically record key elements you want to remember from each book of the Bible. (You’ll find these in the *New Inductive Study Bible* at the end of every book.)

7. Now observe Nehemiah 2. Read a–c before you do.
 - a. We are looking at what “one individual” can do, so color-code references to *Nehemiah* in this chapter as you did in chapter 1.
 - b. Add to the list on Nehemiah you began when you observed chapter 1.
 - c. Add the following words to your Key Word Bookmark. Pick a color and/or symbol for your marking. Words with suggested markings on the other side of the bookmark have an asterisk [*].
 - 1) *Jerusalem* and *city* (when it refers to Jerusalem)
 - 2) *wall* (mark it in Nehemiah 1:3 also)
 - 3) *temple** (*house of God*)
 - 4) *Sanballat*, *Tobiah*, and *Geshem*—Mark each in a distinctive color; you will encounter these three men in other chapters of Nehemiah.
 - 5) *build* and *rebuilding*
8. Now that you have marked the text, we want to move through Nehemiah 2. Read Nehemiah 2:1-8 picturing what’s happening. Put yourself in Nehemiah’s place. He was the king’s cupbearer—a servant. And those who served the king were not to be sad, down, depressed in the presence of the king; nothing was to upset the king!
 - a. When you finish, summarize 2:1-8 in the margin of your Observation Worksheet or below.

f. Look at Nehemiah 2:17-20. What are these verses about? What is happening and how does Nehemiah handle it? Summarize these verses in the margin of your Observation Worksheet.

g. Record a theme for Nehemiah 2 on your At a Glance chart.

LIVING IT OUT

1. Ask God to show you if there is anything you can learn from Nehemiah the man and apply to your life.

a. For instance, Nehemiah was grieved because of the distress of his people, the reproach they faced, the broken walls of Jerusalem, the gates burned with fire. Is there distress in your family, community, church, nation? Reproach? Anything “broken” in your life, family, community? Write it down. It’s good to verbalize it.

b. Have you wondered how to handle these kinds of things? What did you observe as you made your list on Nehemiah? Is there anything you can learn from him and how he handled this heart-wrenching news?

-
- c. What do you think God wants you to do? Application consists not of mere knowledge but of acting in light of that knowledge.
- d. When will you begin?
2. Now reflect on what you learned from marking references to prayer in Nehemiah 1. You are going to see many more as you continue your study. Did you learn anything about the role prayer played in Nehemiah's life and how he prayed?

Good job, faithful one! Think of what you learned simply from marking references to Nehemiah. What manner of man is this cupbearer?

NEHEMIAH 1

Observation Worksheet

Chapter Theme _____

THE words of Nehemiah the son of Hacaliah.

- Now it happened in the month Chisleu, *in* the twentieth year, while I was in Susa the capitol,
- 2 that Hanani, one of my brothers, and some men from Judah came; and I asked them concerning the Jews who had escaped *and* had survived the captivity, and about Jerusalem.
 - 3 They said to me, “The remnant there in the province who survived the captivity are in great distress and reproach, and the wall of Jerusalem is broken down and its gates are burned with fire.”
 - 4 When I heard these words, I sat down and wept and mourned for days; and I was fasting and praying before the God of heaven.
 - 5 I said, “I beseech You, O LORD God of heaven, the great and awesome God, who preserves the covenant and lovingkindness for those who love Him and keep His commandments,
 - 6 let Your ear now be attentive and Your eyes open to hear the prayer of Your servant which I am praying before You now, day and night, on behalf of the sons of Israel Your servants, confessing the sins of the sons of Israel which we have sinned against You; I and my father’s house have sinned.
 - 7 “We have acted very corruptly against You and have not kept the commandments, nor the statutes, nor the ordinances which You commanded Your servant Moses.
 - 8 “Remember the word which You commanded Your servant Moses, saying, ‘If you are unfaithful I will scatter you among the peoples;
 - 9 but *if* you return to Me and keep My commandments and do them, though those of you who have been scattered were in the most remote

part of the heavens, I will gather them from there and will bring them to the place where I have chosen to cause My name to dwell.’

10 “They are Your servants and Your people whom You redeemed by Your great power and by Your strong hand.

11 “O Lord, I beseech You, may Your ear be attentive to the prayer of Your servant and the prayer of Your servants who delight to revere Your name, and make Your servant successful today and grant him compassion before this man.”

Now I was the cupbearer to the king.

NEHEMIAH 2
Observation Worksheet

Chapter Theme _____

- AND it came about in the month Nisan, in the twentieth year of King Artaxerxes, that wine *was* before him, and I took up the wine and gave it to the king. Now I had not been sad in his presence.
- 2 So the king said to me, “Why is your face sad though you are not sick? This is nothing but sadness of heart.” Then I was very much afraid.
- 3 I said to the king, “Let the king live forever. Why should my face not be sad when the city, the place of my fathers’ tombs, lies desolate and its gates have been consumed by fire?”
- 4 Then the king said to me, “What would you request?” So I prayed to the God of heaven.
- 5 I said to the king, “If it please the king, and if your servant has found favor before you, send me to Judah, to the city of my fathers’ tombs, that I may rebuild it.”
- 6 Then the king said to me, the queen sitting beside him, “How long will your journey be, and when will you return?” So it pleased the king to send me, and I gave him a definite time.
- 7 And I said to the king, “If it please the king, let letters be given me for the governors *of the provinces* beyond the River, that they may allow me to pass through until I come to Judah,
- 8 and a letter to Asaph the keeper of the king’s forest, that he may give me timber to make beams for the gates of the fortress which is by the temple, for the wall of the city and for the house to which I will go.” And the king granted *them* to me because the good hand of my God *was* on me.
- 9 Then I came to the governors *of the provinces* beyond the River and gave them the king’s letters. Now the king had sent with me officers of the army and horsemen.

- 10 When Sanballat the Horonite and Tobiah the Ammonite official heard *about it*, it was very displeasing to them that someone had come to seek the welfare of the sons of Israel.
- 11 So I came to Jerusalem and was there three days.
- 12 And I arose in the night, I and a few men with me. I did not tell anyone what my God was putting into my mind to do for Jerusalem and there was no animal with me except the animal on which I was riding.
- 13 So I went out at night by the Valley Gate in the direction of the Dragon's Well and *on* to the Refuse Gate, inspecting the walls of Jerusalem which were broken down and its gates which were consumed by fire.
- 14 Then I passed on to the Fountain Gate and the King's Pool, but there was no place for my mount to pass.
- 15 So I went up at night by the ravine and inspected the wall. Then I entered the Valley Gate again and returned.
- 16 The officials did not know where I had gone or what I had done; nor had I as yet told the Jews, the priests, the nobles, the officials or the rest who did the work.
- 17 Then I said to them, "You see the bad situation we are in, that Jerusalem is desolate and its gates burned by fire. Come, let us rebuild the wall of Jerusalem so that we will no longer be a reproach."
- 18 I told them how the hand of my God had been favorable to me and also about the king's words which he had spoken to me. Then they said, "Let us arise and build." So they put their hands to the good *work*.
- 19 But when Sanballat the Horonite and Tobiah the Ammonite official, and Geshem the Arab heard *it*, they mocked us and despised us and said, "What is this thing you are doing? Are you rebelling against the king?"
- 20 So I answered them and said to them, "The God of heaven will give us success; therefore we His servants will arise and build, but you have no portion, right or memorial in Jerusalem."

NEHEMIAH THE MAN

NEHEMIAH AT A GLANCE

Book Theme:

Segment Divisions

Chapter Themes

Author:

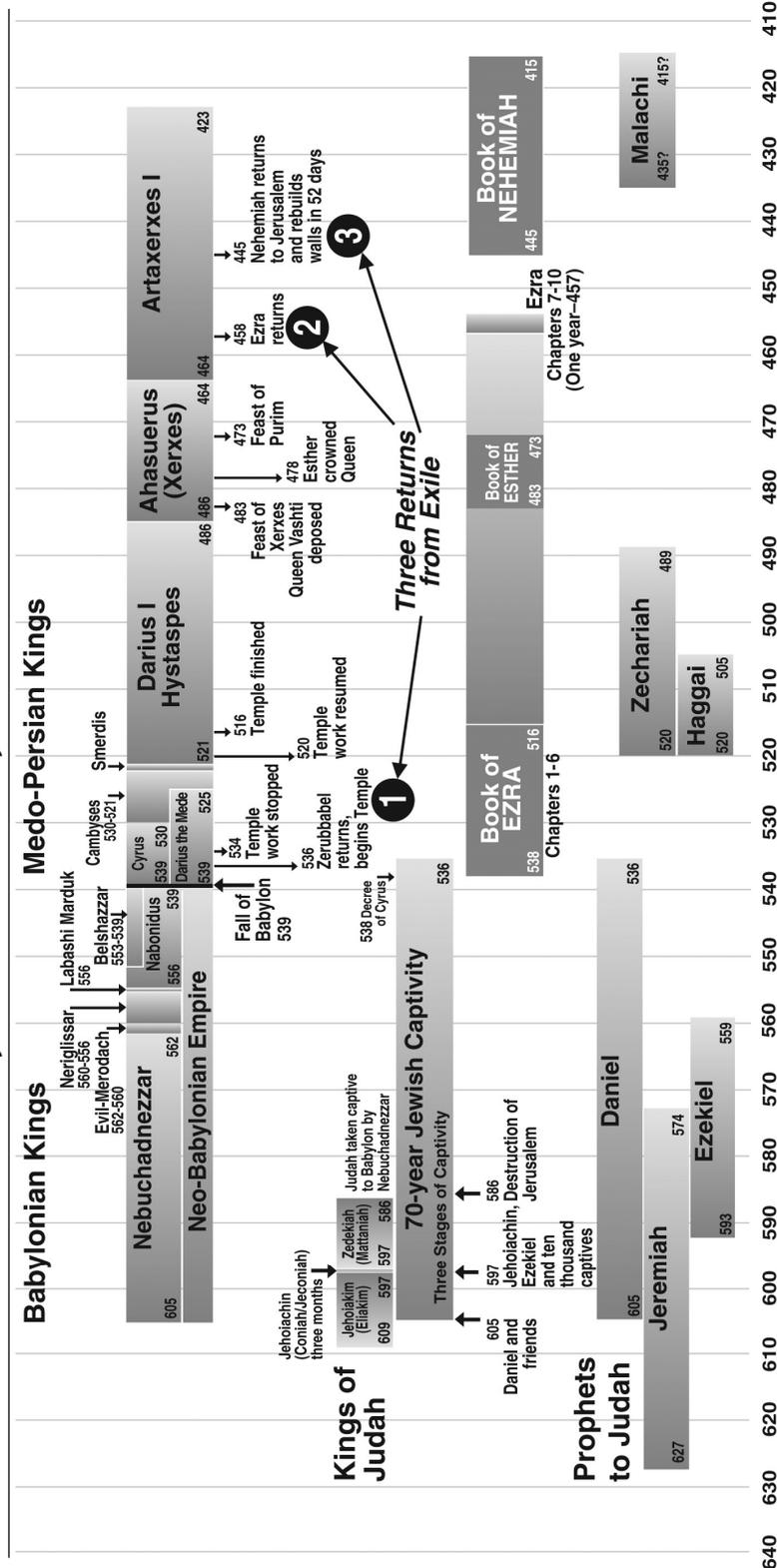
Date:

Purpose:

Key Words:

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		13

THE TIMES OF EZRA, NEHEMIAH, AND ESTHER



The Jewish Calendar

Babylonian names (B) for the months are still used today for the Jewish calendar. Canaanite names (C) were used prior to the Babylonian captivity in 586 B.C. Four are mentioned in the Old Testament.

Adar-Sheni is an intercalary month used every two to three years or seven times in 19 years.

1st month	2nd month	3rd month	4th month
Nisan (B) Abib (C) March-April	Iyyar (B) Ziv (C) April-May	Sivan (B) May-June	Tammuz (B) June-July
7th month	8th month	9th month	10th month
5th month	6th month	7th month	8th month
Ab (B) July-August	Elul (B) August-September	Tishri (B) Ethaniam (C) September-October	Marcheshvan (B) Bul (C) October-November
11th month	12th month	1st month	2nd month
9th month	10th month	11th month	12th month
Chislev (B) November-December	Tebeth (B) December-January	Shebat (B) January-February	Adar (B) February-March
3rd month	4th month	5th month	6th month

Sacred calendar appears in black • Civil calendar appears in gray

