

New American Standard Bible (NASB)

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Ezra 1

Ezra 1

Cyrus's Proclamation

¹ Now in the first year of Cyrus king of Persia, in order to fulfill the word of the LORD by the mouth of Jeremiah, the LORD stirred up the spirit of Cyrus king of Persia, so that he sent a proclamation throughout all his kingdom, and also put it in writing, saying: ² “Thus says Cyrus king of Persia, ‘The LORD, the God of heaven, has given me all the kingdoms of the earth and He has appointed me to build Him a house in Jerusalem, which is in Judah.’ ³ ‘Whoever there is among you of all His people, may his God be with him! Let him go up to Jerusalem which is in Judah and rebuild the house of the LORD, the God of Israel; He is the God who is in Jerusalem.’ ⁴ ‘Every survivor, at whatever place he may live, let the men of that place support him with silver and gold, with goods and cattle, together with a freewill offering for the house of God which is in Jerusalem.’”

Holy Vessels Restored

⁵ Then the heads of fathers' households of Judah and Benjamin and the priests and the Levites arose, even everyone whose spirit God had stirred to go up and rebuild the house of the LORD which is in Jerusalem. ⁶ All those about them encouraged them with articles of silver, with gold, with goods, with cattle and with valuables, aside from all that was given as a freewill offering. ⁷ Also King Cyrus brought out the articles of the house of the LORD, which Nebuchadnezzar had carried away from Jerusalem and put in the house of his gods; ⁸ and Cyrus, king of Persia, had them brought out by the hand of Mithredath the treasurer, and he counted them out to Sheshbazzar, the prince of Judah. ⁹ Now this was their number: 30 gold dishes, 1,000 silver dishes, 29 duplicates; ¹⁰ 30 gold bowls, 410 silver bowls of a second kind and 1,000 other articles. ¹¹ All the articles of gold and silver numbered 5,400. Sheshbazzar brought them all up with the exiles who went up from Babylon to Jerusalem.

Ezra 2

Number of Those Returning

¹ Now these are the people of the province who came up out of the captivity of the exiles whom Nebuchadnezzar the king of Babylon had carried away to Babylon, and returned to Jerusalem and Judah, each to his city. ² These came with Zerubbabel, Jeshua, Nehemiah, Seraiah, Reelaiah, Mordecai, Bilshan, Mispar, Bigvai, Rehum and Baanah. The number of the men of the people of Israel:

- 3 the sons of Parosh, 2,172;
- 4 the sons of Shephatiah, 372;
- 5 the sons of Arah, 775;
- 6 the sons of Pahath-moab of the sons of Jeshua and Joab, 2,812;
- 7 the sons of Elam, 1,254;

- 8 the sons of Zattu, 945;
- 9 the sons of Zaccai, 760;
- 10 the sons of Bani, 642;
- 11 the sons of Bebai, 623;
- 12 the sons of Azgad, 1,222;
- 13 the sons of Adonikam, 666;
- 14 the sons of Bigvai, 2,056;
- 15 the sons of Adin, 454;
- 16 the sons of Ater of Hezekiah, 98;
- 17 the sons of Bezai, 323;
- 18 the sons of Jorah, 112;
- 19 the sons of Hashum, 223;
- 20 the sons of Gibbar, 95;
- 21 the men of Bethlehem, 123;
- 22 the men of Netophah, 56;
- 23 the men of Anathoth, 128;
- 24 the sons of Azmaveth, 42;
- 25 the sons of Kiriath-arim, Chephirah and Beeroth, 743;
- 26 the sons of Ramah and Geba, 621;
- 27 the men of Michmas, 122;
- 28 the men of Bethel and Ai, 223;
- 29 the sons of Nebo, 52;
- 30 the sons of Magbish, 156;
- 31 the sons of the other Elam, 1,254;
- 32 the sons of Harim, 320;
- 33 the sons of Lod, Hadid and Ono, 725;
- 34 the men of Jericho, 345;
- 35 the sons of Senaah, 3,630.

Priests Returning

- 36 The priests: the sons of Jedaiah of the house of Jeshua, 973;
- 37 the sons of Immer, 1,052;
- 38 the sons of Pashhur, 1,247;
- 39 the sons of Harim, 1,017.

Levites Returning

- 40 The Levites: the sons of Jeshua and Kadmiel, of the sons of Hodaviah, 74.
- 41 The singers: the sons of Asaph, 128.
- 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, the sons of Shobai, in all 139.
- 43 The 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 Shalmai, 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 Nephisim,

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 Temah,
54 the sons of Neziah, the sons of Hatipha.
55 The sons of Solomon's servants: the sons of Sotai, the sons of Hassophereth, the sons of Peruda,
56 the sons of Jaalah, the sons of Darkon, the sons of Giddel,
57 the sons of Shephatiah, the sons of Hattil, the sons of Pochereth-hazzebaim, the sons of Ami.
58 All the temple servants and the sons of Solomon's servants were 392.

⁵⁹ Now these are those who came up from Tel-melah, Tel-harsha, Cherub, Addan and Immer, but they were not able to give evidence of their fathers' households and their descendants, whether they were of Israel:

60 the sons of Delaiah, the sons of Tobiah, the sons of Nekoda, 652.

Priests Removed

⁶¹ Of the sons of the priests: the sons of Habaiah, the sons of Hakkoz, the sons of Barzillai, who took a wife from the daughters of Barzillai the Gileadite, and he was called by their name. ⁶² These searched among their ancestral registration, but they could not be located; therefore they were considered unclean and excluded from the priesthood. ⁶³ The governor said to them that they should not eat from the most holy things until a priest stood up with Urim and Thummim.

⁶⁴ The whole assembly numbered 42,360, ⁶⁵ besides their male and female servants who numbered 7,337; and they had 200 singing men and women. ⁶⁶ Their horses were 736; their mules, 245; ⁶⁷ their camels, 435; their donkeys, 6,720. ⁶⁸ Some of the heads of fathers' households, when they arrived at the house of the LORD which is in Jerusalem, offered willingly for the house of God to restore it on its foundation. ⁶⁹ According to their ability they gave to the treasury for the work 61,000 gold drachmas and 5,000 silver minas and 100 priestly garments. ⁷⁰ Now the priests and the Levites, some of the people, the singers, the gatekeepers and the temple servants lived in their cities, and all Israel in their cities.

Nehemiah 7:6-73

⁶ These are the people of the province who came up from the captivity of the exiles whom Nebuchadnezzar the king of Babylon had carried away, and who returned to Jerusalem and Judah, each to his city, ⁷ who came with Zerubbabel, Jeshua, Nehemiah, Azariah, Raamiah, Nahamani, Mordecai, Bilshan, Mispereth, Bigvai, Nehum, Baanah. The number of men of the people of Israel:

8 the sons of Parosh, 2,172;
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, 2,818;
12 the sons of Elam, 1,254;
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, 2,322;
18 the sons of Adonikam, 667;
19 the sons of Bigvai, 2,067;
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 Kiriath-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, 1,254;
35 the sons of Harim, 320;
36 the men of Jericho, 345;
37 the sons of Lod, Hadid and Ono, 721;
38 the sons of Senaah, 3,930.
39 The priests: the sons of Jedaiah of the house of Jeshua, 973;
40 the sons of Immer, 1,052;
41 the sons of Pashhur, 1,247;
42 the sons of Harim, 1,017.
43 The Levites: the sons of Jeshua, of Kadmiel, of the sons of Hodevah, 74.
44 The singers: the sons of Asaph, 148.
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, 138.
46 The temple servants: 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 Shalmai,
49 the sons of Hanan, the sons of Giddel, the sons of Gahar,
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 Nephushesim,
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 Temah,
56 the sons of Neziah, the sons of Hatipha.
57 The sons of Solomon's servants: the sons of Sotai, the sons of Sophereth, the sons of Peruda,
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-hazzebaim, the sons of Amon.

⁶⁰ All the temple servants and the sons of Solomon's servants were 392. ⁶¹ These were they who came up from Tel-melah, Tel-harsha, Cherub, Addon and Immer; but they could not show their fathers' houses or their descendants, whether they were of Israel:

62 the sons of Delaiah, the sons of Tobiah, the sons of Nekoda, 642.

63 Of the priests: the sons of Hobaiah, the sons of Hakkoz, the sons of Barzillai, who took a wife of the daughters of Barzillai, the Gileadite, and was named after them. 64 These searched among their ancestral registration, but it could not be located; therefore they were considered unclean and excluded from the priesthood. 65 The governor said to them that they should not eat from the most holy things until a priest arose with Urim and Thummim.

Total of People and Gifts

66 The whole assembly together was 42,360, 67 besides their male and their female servants, of whom there were 7,337; and they had 245 male and female singers. 68 Their horses were 736; their mules, 245; 69 their camels, 435; their donkeys, 6,720. 70 Some from among the heads of fathers' households gave to the work. The governor gave to the treasury 1,000 gold drachmas, 50 basins, 530 priests' garments. 71 Some of the heads of fathers' households gave into the treasury of the work 20,000 gold drachmas and 2,200 silver minas. 72 That which the rest of the people gave was 20,000 gold drachmas and 2,000 silver minas and 67 priests' garments. 73 Now the priests, the Levites, the gatekeepers, the singers, some of the people, the temple servants and all Israel, lived in their cities. And when the seventh month came, the sons of Israel were in their cities.

Ezra 3-4:6

Ezra 3

Altar and Sacrifices Restored

1 Now when the seventh month came, and the sons of Israel were in the cities, the people gathered together as one man to Jerusalem. 2 Then Jeshua the son of Jozadak and his brothers the priests, and Zerubbabel the son of Shealtiel and his brothers arose and built the altar of the God of Israel to offer burnt offerings on it, as it is written in the law of Moses, the man of God. 3 So they set up the altar on its foundation, for they were terrified because of the peoples of the lands; and they offered burnt offerings on it to the LORD, burnt offerings morning and evening. 4 They celebrated the Feast of Booths, as it is written, and offered the fixed number of burnt offerings daily, according to the ordinance, as each day required; 5 and afterward there was a continual burnt offering, also for the new moons and for all the fixed festivals of the LORD that were consecrated, and from everyone who offered a freewill offering to the LORD. 6 From the first day of the seventh month they began to offer burnt offerings to the LORD, but the foundation of the temple of the LORD had not been laid. 7 Then they gave money to the masons and carpenters, and food, drink and oil to the Sidonians and to the Tyrians, to bring cedar wood from Lebanon to the sea at Joppa, according to the permission they had from Cyrus king of Persia.

Temple Restoration Begun

8 Now in the second year of their coming to the house of God at Jerusalem in the second month, Zerubbabel the son of Shealtiel and Jeshua the son of Jozadak and the rest of their brothers the priests and the Levites, and all who came from the captivity to Jerusalem, began the work and appointed the Levites from twenty years and older to oversee the work of the house of the LORD. 9 Then Jeshua with his sons and brothers stood united with Kadmiel and his sons, the sons of Judah and the sons of Henadad with their sons and brothers the Levites, to oversee the workmen

in the temple of God. 10 Now when the builders had 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 directions of King David of Israel. 11 They sang, praising and giving thanks to the LORD, saying, "(Y)For He is good, for His lovingkindness is upon Israel forever." And all the people shouted with a great shout when they praised the LORD because the foundation of the house of the LORD was laid. 12 Yet many of the priests and Levites and heads of fathers' households, (Z)the old men who had seen the first temple, wept with a loud voice when the foundation of this house was laid before their eyes, while many shouted aloud for joy, 13 so that the people could not distinguish the sound of the shout of joy from the sound of the weeping of the people, for the people shouted with a loud shout, and the sound was heard far away.

Ezra 4

Adversaries Hinder the Work

1 Now when the enemies of Judah and Benjamin heard that the people of the exile were building a temple to the LORD God of Israel, 2 they approached Zerubbabel and the heads of fathers' households, and said to them, "Let us build with you, for we, like you, seek your God; and we have been sacrificing to Him since the days of Esarhaddon king of Assyria, who brought us up here." 3 But Zerubbabel and Jeshua and the rest of the heads of fathers' households of Israel said to them, "You have nothing in common with us in building a house to our God; but we ourselves will together build to the LORD God of Israel, as King Cyrus, the king of Persia has commanded us." 4 Then the people of the land discouraged the people of Judah, and frightened them from building, 5 and hired counselors against them to frustrate their counsel all the days of Cyrus king of Persia, even until the reign of Darius king of Persia. 6 Now in the reign of Ahasuerus, in the beginning of his reign, they wrote an accusation against the inhabitants of Judah and Jerusalem.

Ezra 4:24-6:22

24 Then work on the house of God in Jerusalem ceased, and it was stopped until the second year of the reign of Darius king of Persia.

Ezra 5

Temple Work Resumed

1 When the prophets, Haggai the prophet and Zechariah the son of Iddo, prophesied to the Jews who were in Judah and Jerusalem in the name of the God of Israel, who was over them, 2 then Zerubbabel the son of Shealtiel and Jeshua the son of Jozadak arose and began to rebuild the house of God which is in Jerusalem; and the prophets of God were with them supporting them. 3 At that time Tattenai, the governor of the province beyond the River, and Shethar-bozenai and their colleagues came to them and spoke to them thus, "Who issued you a decree to rebuild this temple and to finish this structure?" 4 Then we told them accordingly what the names of the men were who were reconstructing this building. 5 But the eye of their God was on the elders of the Jews, and they did not stop them until a report could come to Darius, and then a written reply was returned concerning it.

Adversaries Write to Darius

⁶ This is the copy of the letter which Tattenai, the governor of the province beyond the River, and Shethar-bozenai and his colleagues the officials, who were beyond the River, sent to Darius the king. ⁷ They sent a report to him in which it was written thus: "To Darius the king, all peace. ⁸ "Let it be known to the king that we have gone to the province of Judah, to the house of the great God, which is being built with huge stones, and beams are being laid in the walls; and this work is going on with great care and is succeeding in their hands. ⁹ "Then we asked those elders and said to them thus, 'Who issued you a decree to rebuild this temple and to finish this structure?' ¹⁰ "We also asked them their names so as to inform you, and that we might write down the names of the men who were at their head. ¹¹ "Thus they answered us, saying, 'We are the servants of the God of heaven and earth and are rebuilding the temple that was built many years ago, which a great king of Israel built and finished. ¹² 'But because our fathers had provoked the God of heaven to wrath, He gave them into the hand of Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon, the Chaldean, who destroyed this temple and deported the people to Babylon. ¹³ 'However, in the first year of Cyrus king of Babylon, King Cyrus issued a decree to rebuild this house of God. ¹⁴ 'Also the gold and silver utensils of the house of God which Nebuchadnezzar had taken from the temple in Jerusalem, and brought them to the temple of Babylon, these King Cyrus took from the temple of Babylon and they were given to one whose name was Sheshbazzar, whom he had appointed governor. ¹⁵ 'He said to him, "Take these utensils, go and deposit them in the temple in Jerusalem and let the house of God be rebuilt in its place." ¹⁶ 'Then that Sheshbazzar came and laid the foundations of the house of God in Jerusalem; and from then until now it has been under construction and it is not yet completed.' ¹⁷ "Now if it pleases the king, let a search be conducted in the king's treasure house, which is there in Babylon, if it be that a decree was issued by King Cyrus to rebuild this house of God at Jerusalem; and let the king send to us his decision concerning this matter."

Ezra 6

Darius Finds Cyrus's Decree

¹ Then King Darius issued a decree, and search was made in the archives, where the treasures were stored in Babylon. ² In Ecbatana in the fortress, which is in the province of Media, a scroll was found and there was written in it as follows: "Memorandum-- ³ "In the first year of King Cyrus, Cyrus the king issued a decree: 'Concerning the house of God at Jerusalem, let the temple, the place where sacrifices are offered, be rebuilt and let its foundations be retained, its height being 60 cubits and its width 60 cubits; ⁴ with three layers of huge stones and one layer of timbers. And let the cost be paid from the royal treasury. ⁵ 'Also let the gold and silver utensils of the house of God, which Nebuchadnezzar took from the temple in Jerusalem and brought to Babylon, be returned and brought to their places in the temple in Jerusalem; and you shall put them in the house of God.' ⁶ "Now therefore, Tattenai, governor of the province beyond the River, Shethar-bozenai and your colleagues, the officials of the provinces beyond the River, keep away from there. ⁷ "Leave this work on the house of God alone; let the governor of the Jews and the elders of the Jews rebuild this house of God on its site. ⁸ "Moreover, I issue a decree concerning what you are to do for these elders of Judah in the rebuilding of this house of God: the full cost is to be paid to these people from the royal treasury out of the taxes of the provinces beyond the River, and that without delay. ⁹ "Whatever is needed, both young bulls, rams, and lambs for a burnt offering to the God of heaven, and wheat, salt, wine and anointing oil, as the priests in Jerusalem request, it is to be given to them daily without fail, ¹⁰ that they may offer acceptable sacrifices to the God of heaven and pray for the life of the king and his sons. ¹¹ "And I issued a decree that any man who violates this edict, a timber shall be drawn from his house and he shall be impaled on it and his

house shall be made a refuse heap on account of this. ¹² "May the God who has caused His name to dwell there overthrow any king or people who attempts to change it, so as to destroy this house of God in Jerusalem. I, Darius, have issued this decree, let it be carried out with all diligence!"

The Temple Completed and Dedicated

¹³ Then Tattenai, the governor of the province beyond the River, Shethar-bozenai and their colleagues carried out the decree with all diligence, just as King Darius had sent. ¹⁴ And the elders of the Jews were successful in building through the prophesying of Haggai the prophet and Zechariah the son of Iddo And they finished building according to the command of the God of Israel and the decree of Cyrus, Darius, and Artaxerxes king of Persia. ¹⁵ This temple was completed on the third day of the month Adar; it was the sixth year of the reign of King Darius. ¹⁶ And the sons of Israel, the priests, the Levites and the rest of the exiles, celebrated the dedication of this house of God with joy. ¹⁷ They offered for the dedication of this temple of God 100 bulls, 200 rams, 400 lambs, and as a sin offering for all Israel 12 male goats, corresponding to the number of the tribes of Israel. ¹⁸ Then they appointed the priests to their divisions and the Levites in ^{AO}their orders for the service of God in Jerusalem, as it is written in the book of Moses.

The Passover Observed

¹⁹ The exiles observed the Passover on the fourteenth of the first month. ²⁰ For the priests and the Levites had purified themselves together; all of them were pure Then they slaughtered the Passover lamb for all the exiles, both for their brothers the priests and for themselves. ²¹ The sons of Israel who returned from exile and all those who had separated themselves from the impurity of the nations of the land to join them, to seek the LORD God of Israel, ate the Passover. ²² And they observed the Feast of Unleavened Bread seven days with joy, for the LORD had caused them to rejoice, and had turned the heart of the king of Assyria toward them to encourage them in the work of the house of God, the God of Israel.

Ezra 4:7-23

⁷ And in the days of Artaxerxes, Bishlam, Mithredath, Tabeel and the rest of his colleagues wrote to Artaxerxes king of Persia; and the text of the letter was written in Aramaic and translated from Aramaic.

The Letter to King Artaxerxes

⁸ Rehum the commander and Shimshai the scribe wrote a letter against Jerusalem to King Artaxerxes, as follows—

⁹ then wrote Rehum the commander and Shimshai the scribe and the rest of their colleagues, the judges and the lesser governors, the officials, the secretaries, the men of Erech, the Babylonians, the men of Susa, that is, the Elamites, ¹⁰ and the rest of the nations which the great and honorable Osnappar deported and settled in the city of Samaria, and in the rest of the region beyond the River. Now ¹¹ this is the copy of the letter which they sent to him:

"To King Artaxerxes: Your servants, the men in the region beyond the River, and now ¹² let it be known to the king that the Jews who came up from you

have come to us at Jerusalem; they are rebuilding the rebellious and evil city and (F)are finishing the walls and repairing the foundations. ¹³ "Now let it be known to the king, that if that city is rebuilt and the walls are finished, they will not pay tribute, custom or toll, and it will damage the revenue of the kings. ¹⁴ "Now because we are in the service of the palace, and it is not fitting for us to see the king's dishonor, therefore we have sent and informed the king, ¹⁵ so that a search may be made in the record books of your fathers. And you will discover in the record books and learn that that city is a rebellious city and damaging to kings and provinces, and that they have incited revolt within it in past days; therefore that city was laid waste. ¹⁶ "We inform the king that if that city is rebuilt and the walls finished, as a result you will have no possession in the province beyond the River."

The King Replies and Work Stops

¹⁷ Then the king sent an answer to Rehum the commander, to Shimshai the scribe, and to the rest of their colleagues who live in Samaria and in the rest of the provinces beyond the River:

"Peace. And now ¹⁸ the document which you sent to us has been translated and read before me. ¹⁹ "A decree has been issued by me, and a search has been made and it has been discovered that that city has risen up against the kings in past days, that rebellion and revolt have been perpetrated in it, ²⁰ that mighty kings have ruled over Jerusalem, governing all the provinces beyond the River, and that tribute, custom and toll were paid to them. ²¹ "So, now issue a decree to make these men stop work, that this city may not be rebuilt until a decree is issued by me. ²² "Beware of being negligent in carrying out this matter; why should damage increase to the detriment of the kings?"

²³ Then as soon as the copy of King Artaxerxes' document was read before Rehum and Shimshai the scribe and their colleagues, they went in haste to Jerusalem to the Jews and stopped them by force of arms.

Nehemiah 1-7:5

Nehemiah 1

Nehemiah's Grief for the Exiles

¹ The words of Nehemiah the son of Hacaliah Now it happened in the month Chislev, in the twentieth year, while I was in Susa the capital, 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

Nehemiah's Prayer Answered

¹ 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.

Nehemiah Inspects Jerusalem's Walls

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 3

Builders of the Walls

¹ Then Eliashib the high priest arose with his brothers the priests and built the Sheep Gate; they consecrated it and hung its doors. They consecrated the wall to the Tower of the Hundred and the Tower of Hananel.² Next to him the men of Jericho built, and next to them Zaccur the son of Imri built.³ Now the sons of Hassenaah built the Fish Gate; they laid its beams and hung its doors with its bolts and bars.⁴ Next to them Meremoth the son of Uriah the son of Hakkoz made repairs. And next to him Meshullam the son of Berechiah the son of Meshezabel made repairs. And next to him Zadok the son of Baana also made repairs.⁵ Moreover, next to him the Tekoites made repairs, but their nobles did not support the work of their masters.⁶ Joiada 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 its bars.⁷ Next to them Melatiah the Gibeonite and Jadon the Meronothite, the men of Gibeon and of Mizpah, also made repairs for the official seat of the governor of the province beyond the River.⁸ Next to him Uzziel the son of Harhaiah of the goldsmiths made repairs. And next to him Hananiah, one of the perfumers, made repairs, and they restored Jerusalem as far as the Broad Wall.⁹ Next to them Rephaiah the son of Hur, the official of half the district of Jerusalem, made repairs.¹⁰ Next to them Jedaiah the son of Harumaph made repairs opposite his house. And next to him Hattush the son of Hashabneiah made repairs.¹¹ Malchijah the son of Harim and Hasshub the son of Pahath-moab repaired another section and the Tower of Furnaces.¹² Next to him Shallum the son of Hallohesh, the official of half the district of Jerusalem, made repairs, he and his daughters.¹³ Hanun and the inhabitants of Zanoah repaired the Valley Gate. They built it and hung its doors with its bolts and its bars, and a thousand cubits of the wall to the Refuse Gate.¹⁴ Malchijah the son of Rechab, the official of the district of Beth-haccherem repaired the Refuse Gate. He built it and hung its doors with its bolts and its bars.¹⁵ Shallum the son of Col-hozeh, the official of the district of Mizpah, repaired the Fountain Gate. He built it, covered it and hung its doors with its bolts and its bars, and the wall of the Pool of Shelah at the king's garden as far as the steps that descend from the city of David.¹⁶ After him Nehemiah the son of Azbuk, official of half the district of Beth-zur, made repairs as far as a point opposite the tombs of David, and as far as the artificial pool and the house of the mighty men.¹⁷ After him the Levites carried out repairs under Rehum the son of Bani. Next to him Hashabiah, the official of half the district of Keilah, carried out repairs for his district.¹⁸ After him their brothers carried out repairs under Bavvai the son of Henadad, official of the other half of the district of Keilah.¹⁹ Next to him Ezer the son of Jeshua, the official of Mizpah, repaired another section in front of the ascent of the armory at the Angle.²⁰ After him Baruch the son of Zabbai zealously repaired another section, from the Angle to the doorway of the house of Eliashib the high priest.²¹ After him Meremoth the son of Uriah the son of Hakkoz repaired another section, from the doorway of Eliashib's house even as far as the end of his house.²² After him the priests, the men of the valley, carried out repairs.²³ After them Benjamin and Hasshub carried out repairs in front of their house. After them Azariah the son of Maaseiah, son of Ananiah, carried out repairs beside his house.²⁴ After him Binnui the son of Henadad repaired another section, from the house of Azariah as far as the Angle and as far as the corner.²⁵ Palal the son of Uzai made repairs in front of the Angle and the tower projecting from

the upper house of the king, which is by the court of the guard. After him Pedaiah the son of Parosh made repairs.²⁶ The temple servants living in Ophel made repairs as far as the front of the Water Gate toward the east and the projecting tower.²⁷ After them the Tekoites repaired another section in front of the great projecting tower and as far as the wall of Ophel.²⁸ Above the Horse Gate the priests carried out repairs, each in front of his house.²⁹ After them Zadok the son of Immer carried out repairs in front of his house. And after him Shemaiah the son of Shecaniah, the keeper of the East Gate, carried out 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 carried out repairs in front of his own quarters.³¹ After him Malchijah, one of the goldsmiths, carried out repairs as far as the house of the temple servants and of the merchants, in front of the Inspection Gate and as far as the upper room of the corner.³² Between the upper room of the corner and the Sheep Gate the goldsmiths and the merchants carried out repairs.

Nehemiah 4

Work Is Ridiculed

¹ Now it came about that when Sanballat heard that we were rebuilding the wall, he became furious and very angry and mocked the Jews.² He spoke in the presence of his brothers and the wealthy men of Samaria and said, "What are these feeble Jews doing? Are they going to restore it for themselves? Can they offer sacrifices? Can they finish in a day? Can they revive the stones from the dusty rubble even the burned ones?"³ Now Tobiah the Ammonite was near him and he said, "Even what they are building—if a fox should jump on it, he would break their stone wall down!"

4 Hear, O our God, how we are despised! Return their reproach on their own heads and give them up for plunder in a land of captivity. **5** Do not forgive their iniquity and let not their sin be blotted out before You, for they have demoralized the builders.

⁶ So we built the wall and the whole wall was joined together to half its height, for the people had a mind to work.⁷ Now when Sanballat, Tobiah, the Arabs, the Ammonites and the Ashdodites heard that the repair of the walls of Jerusalem went on, and that the breaches began to be closed, they were very angry.⁸ All of them conspired together to come and fight against Jerusalem and to cause a disturbance in it.

Discouragement Overcome

⁹ But we prayed to our God, and because of them we set up a guard against them day and night.¹⁰ Thus in Judah it was said, "The strength of the burden bearers is failing, Yet there is much rubbish; And we ourselves are unable To rebuild the wall."¹¹ Our enemies said, "They will not know or see until we come among them, kill them and put a stop to the work."¹² When the Jews who lived near them came and told us ten times, "They will come up against us from every place where you may turn,"¹³ then I stationed men in the lowest parts of the space behind the wall, the exposed places, and I stationed the people in families with their swords, spears and bows.¹⁴ When I saw their fear, I rose and spoke to the nobles, the officials and the rest of the people: "Do not be afraid of them; remember the Lord who is great and awesome, and fight for your brothers, your sons, your daughters, your wives and your houses."¹⁵ When our enemies heard that it was known to us, and that God had

frustrated their plan, then all of us returned to the wall, each one to his work. ¹⁶ From that day on, half of my servants carried on the work while half of them held the spears, the shields, the bows and the breastplates; and the captains were behind the whole house of Judah. ¹⁷ Those who were rebuilding the wall and those who carried burdens took their load with one hand doing the work and the other holding a weapon. ¹⁸ As for the builders, each wore his sword girded at his side as he built, while the trumpeter stood near me. ¹⁹ I said to the nobles, the officials and the rest of the people, "The work is great and extensive, and we are separated on the wall far from one another. ²⁰ "At whatever place you hear the sound of the trumpet, rally to us there. Our God will fight for us." ²¹ So we carried on the work with half of them holding spears from dawn until the stars appeared. ²² At that time I also said to the people, "Let each man with his servant spend the night within Jerusalem so that they may be a guard for us by night and a laborer by day." ²³ So neither I, my brothers, my servants, nor the men of the guard who followed me, none of us removed our clothes, each took his weapon even to the water.

Nehemiah 5

Usury Abolished

¹ Now there was a great outcry of the people and of their wives against their Jewish brothers. 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." ³ There were others who said, "We are mortgaging our fields, our vineyards and our houses that we might get grain because of the famine." ⁴ Also there were those who said, "We have borrowed money for the king's tax on our fields and our vineyards. ⁵ "Now our flesh is like the flesh of our brothers, our children like their children Yet behold, we are forcing our sons and our daughters to be slaves, and some of our daughters are forced into bondage already, and we are helpless because our fields and vineyards belong to others." ⁶ Then I was very angry when I had heard their outcry and these words. ⁷ I consulted with myself and contended with the nobles and the rulers and said to them, "You are exacting usury, each from his brother!" Therefore, I held a great assembly against them. ⁸ I said to them, "We according to our ability have redeemed our Jewish brothers who were sold to the nations; now would you even sell your brothers that they may be sold to us?" Then they were silent and could not find a word to say. ⁹ Again I said, "The thing which 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? ¹⁰ "And likewise I, my brothers and my servants are lending them money and grain. Please, let us leave off this usury. ¹¹ "Please, give back to them this very day their fields, their vineyards, their olive groves and their houses, also the hundredth part of the money and of the grain, the new wine and the oil that you are exacting from them." ¹² Then they said, "We will give it back and will require nothing from them; we will do exactly as you say " So I called the priests and took an oath from them that they would do according to this promise. ¹³ I also shook out the front of my garment and said, "Thus may God shake out every man from his house and from his possessions who does not fulfill this promise; even thus may he be shaken out and emptied " And all the assembly said, "Amen!" And they praised the LORD. Then the people did according to this promise.

Nehemiah's Example

¹⁴ Moreover, from the day that I was appointed to be their governor in the land of Judah, from the twentieth year to the thirty-second year of King Artaxerxes, for twelve years, neither I nor my kinsmen have eaten the governor's food allowance. 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; even their servants domineered the people. But I did not do so because of the fear of God. ¹⁶ I also

applied myself to the work on this wall; we did not buy any land, and all my servants were gathered there for the work. ¹⁷ Moreover, there were at my table one hundred and fifty Jews and officials, besides those who came to us from the nations that were around us. ¹⁸ Now that which was prepared for each day was one ox and six choice sheep, also birds were prepared for me; and once in ten days all sorts of wine were furnished in abundance Yet for all this I did not demand the governor's food allowance, because the servitude was heavy on this people. ¹⁹ Remember me, O my God, for good, according to all that I have done for this people.

Nehemiah 6

The Enemy's Plot

¹ Now when it was reported to Sanballat, Tobiah, to Geshem the Arab and to the rest of our enemies that I had rebuilt the wall, and that no breach remained in it, although at that time I had not set up the doors in the gates, ² then Sanballat and Geshem sent a message to me, saying, "Come, let us meet together at Chephirim in the plain of Ono." But they were planning to harm me. ³ So I sent messengers to them, saying, "I am doing a great work and I cannot come down. Why should the work stop while I leave it and come down to you?" ⁴ They sent messages to me four times in this manner, and I answered them in the same way. ⁵ Then Sanballat sent his servant to me in the same manner a fifth time with an open letter in his hand. ⁶ In it was written, "It is reported among the nations, and Gashmu says, that you and the Jews are planning to rebel; therefore you are rebuilding the wall. And you are to be their king, according to these reports. ⁷ "You have also appointed prophets to proclaim in Jerusalem concerning you, 'A king is in Judah!' And now it will be reported to the king according to these reports. So come now, let us take counsel together." ⁸ Then I sent a message to him saying, "Such things as you are saying have not been done, but you are inventing them in your own mind." ⁹ For all of them were trying to frighten us, thinking, "They will become discouraged with the work and it will not be done." But now, O God, strengthen my hands. ¹⁰ When I entered the house of Shemaiah the son of Delaiah, son of Mehetabel, who was confined at home, 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, and they are coming to kill you at night." ¹¹ But I said, "Should a man like me flee? And could one such as I go into the temple to save his life? I will not go in." ¹² Then I perceived that surely God had not sent him, but he uttered his prophecy against me because Tobiah and Sanballat had hired him. ¹³ He was hired for this reason, that I might become frightened and act accordingly and sin, so that they might have an evil report in order that they could reproach me. ¹⁴ Remember, O my God, Tobiah and Sanballat according to these works of theirs, and also Noadiah the prophetess and the rest of the prophets who were trying to frighten me.

The Wall Is Finished

¹⁵ So the wall was completed on the twenty-fifth of the month Elul, in fifty-two days. ¹⁶ When all our enemies heard of it, and all the nations surrounding us saw it, they lost their confidence; for they recognized that this work had been accomplished with the help of our God. ¹⁷ Also in those days many letters went from the nobles of Judah to Tobiah, and Tobiah's letters came to them. ¹⁸ For many in Judah were bound by oath to him because he was the son-in-law of Shecaniah the son of Arah, and his son Jehohanan had married the daughter of Meshullam the son of Berechiah. ¹⁹ Moreover, they were speaking about his

good deeds in my presence and reported my words to him. Then Tobiah sent letters to frighten me.

Nehemiah 7

Census of First Returned Exiles

¹ Now when the wall was rebuilt and I had set up the doors, and the gatekeepers and the singers and the Levites were appointed, ² then I put Hanani my brother, and Hananiah the commander of the fortress, in charge of Jerusalem, for he was a faithful man and feared God more than many. ³ Then I said to them, "Do not let the gates of Jerusalem be opened until the sun is hot, and while they are standing guard, let them shut and bolt the doors. Also appoint guards from the inhabitants of Jerusalem, each at his post, and each in front of his own house." ⁴ Now the city was large and spacious, but the people in it were few and the houses were not built. ⁵ Then my God put it into my heart to assemble the nobles, the officials and the people to be enrolled by genealogies. Then I found the book of the genealogy of those who came up first in which I found the following record:

Nehemiah 11-13

Nehemiah 11

Time Passes; Heads of Provinces

¹ Now the leaders of the people lived in Jerusalem, but the rest of the people cast lots to bring one out of ten to live in Jerusalem, the holy city, while nine-tenths remained in the other cities. ² And the people blessed all the men who volunteered to live in Jerusalem. ³ Now these are the heads of the provinces who lived in Jerusalem, but in the cities of Judah each lived on his own property in their cities—the Israelites, the priests, the Levites, the temple servants and the descendants of Solomon's servants. ⁴ Some of the sons of Judah and some of the sons of Benjamin lived in Jerusalem. From the sons 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 sons 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 Joarib, the son of Zechariah, the son of the Shilonite.

6 All the sons of Perez who lived in Jerusalem were 468 able men.

⁷ Now 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 Jeshaiiah;

8 and after him Gabbai and Sallai, 928.

9 Joel the son of Zichri was their overseer, and Judah the son of Hassenuah was second in command of the city.

¹⁰ From the priests:

Jedaiah the son of Joarib, Jachin,

11 Seraiah the son of Hilkiah, the son of Meshullam, the son of Zadok, the son of Meraioth, the son of Ahitub, the leader of the house of God,

12 and their ¹kinsmen who performed the work of the temple, 822; 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 kinsmen, heads of fathers' households, 242; and Amashsai the son of Azarel, the son of Ahzai, the son of Meshillemoth, the son of Immer,

14 and their brothers, valiant warriors, 128. And their overseer was Zabdiel, the son of Haggadolim.

¹⁵ Now from the Levites:

Shemaiah the son of Hasshub, the son of Azrikam, the son of Hashabiah, the son of Bunni;

16 and Shabbethai and Jozabad, from the leaders of the Levites, who were in charge of the outside work of the house of God;

17 and Mattaniah the son of Mica, the son of Zabdi, the son of Asaph, who was the leader in beginning the thanksgiving at prayer, and 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 284.

19 Also the gatekeepers, Akkub, Talmon and their brethren who kept watch at the gates, were 172.

Outside Jerusalem

²⁰ The rest of Israel, of the priests and of the Levites, were in all the cities of Judah, each on his own inheritance. ²¹ But the temple servants were living in Ophel, and Ziha and Gishpa were in charge of the temple servants. ²² Now the overseer of the Levites in Jerusalem was Uzzi the son of Bani, the son of Hashabiah, the son of Mattaniah, the son of Mica, from the sons of Asaph, who were the singers for the service of the house of God. ²³ For there was a commandment from the king concerning them and a firm regulation for the song leaders day by day. ²⁴ Pethahiah the son of Meshezabel, of the sons of Zerah the son of Judah, was the king's representative in all matters concerning the people. ²⁵ Now as for the villages with their fields, some of the sons of Judah lived in Kiriath-arba and its towns, in Dibon and its towns, and in Jekabzeel and its villages, ²⁶ and in Jeshua, in Moladah and Beth-pelet, ²⁷ and in Hazar-shual, in Beersheba and its towns, ²⁸ and in Ziklag, in Meconah and in its towns, ²⁹ and in En-rimmon, in Zorah and in Jarmuth, ³⁰ Zanoah, Adullam, and their villages, Lachish and its fields, Azekah and its towns. So they encamped from Beersheba as far as the valley of Hinnom. ³¹ The sons of Benjamin also lived from Geba onward, at Michmash and Aija, at Bethel and its towns, ³² at Anathoth, Nob, Ananiah, ³³ Hazor, Ramah, Gittaim, ³⁴ Hadid, Zeboim, Neballat, ³⁵ Lod and Ono, the valley of craftsmen. ³⁶ From the Levites, some divisions in Judah belonged to Benjamin.

Nehemiah 12

Priests and Levites Who Returned to Jerusalem with Zerubbabel

¹ 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 Shecaniah, Rehum, Meremoth,

4 Iddo, Ginnethoi, Abijah,
5 Mijamin, Maadiah, Bilgah,
6 Shemaiah and Joiarib, Jedaiah,
7 Sallu, Amok, Hilkiyah and Jedaiah.

These were the heads of the priests and their kinsmen in the days of Jeshua.

⁸ The Levites were Jeshua, Binnui, Kadmiel, Sherebiah, Judah, and Mattaniah who was in charge of the songs of thanksgiving, he and his brothers. ⁹ Also Bakbukiah and Unni, their brothers, stood opposite them in their service divisions. ¹⁰ Jeshua became the father of Joiakim, and Joiakim became the father of Eliashib, and Eliashib became the father of Joiada, ¹¹ and Joiada became the father of Jonathan, and Jonathan became the father of Jaddua.

12 Now in the days of Joiakim, the priests, the heads of fathers' households were:

of Seraiah, Meraiah; of Jeremiah, Hananiah;
13 of Ezra, Meshullam; of Amariah, Jehohanan;
14 of Malluchi, Jonathan; of Shebaniah, Joseph;
15 of Harim, Adna; of Meraioth, Helkai;
16 of Iddo, Zechariah; of Ginnethon, Meshullam;
17 of Abijah, Zichri; of Miniamin, 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; of Jedaiah, Nethanel.

The Chief Levites

²² As for the Levites, the heads of fathers' households were registered in the days of Eliashib, Joiada, and Johanan and Jaddua; so were the priests in the reign of Darius the Persian. ²³ The sons of Levi, the heads of fathers' households, were registered in the Book of the Chronicles up to the days of Johanan the son of Eliashib. ²⁴ The heads of the Levites were Hashabiah, Sherebiah and Jeshua the son of Kadmiel, with their brothers opposite them, to praise and give thanks, as prescribed by David the man of God, division corresponding to division. ²⁵ Mattaniah, Bakbukiah, Obadiah, Meshullam, Talmon and Akkub were gatekeepers keeping watch at the storehouses of the gates. ²⁶ These served in the days of Joiakim the son of Jeshua, the son of Jozadak, and in the days of Nehemiah the governor and of Ezra the priest and scribe.

Dedication of the Wall

²⁷ Now at the dedication of the wall of Jerusalem they sought out the Levites from all their places, to bring them to Jerusalem so that they might celebrate the dedication with gladness, with hymns of thanksgiving and with songs to the accompaniment of cymbals, harps and lyres. ²⁸ So the sons of the singers were assembled from the district around Jerusalem, and from the villages of the Netophathites, ²⁹ from Beth-gilgal and from their fields in Geba and Azmaveth, for the singers had built themselves villages around Jerusalem. ³⁰ The priests and the Levites purified themselves; they also purified the people, the gates and the wall.

Procedures for the Temple

³¹ Then I had the leaders of Judah come up on top of the wall, and I appointed two great choirs,

the first proceeding to the right on top of the wall toward the Refuse Gate. ³² Hoshaiah and half of the leaders of Judah followed them, ³³ with Azariah, Ezra, Meshullam, ³⁴ Judah, Benjamin, Shemaiah, Jeremiah, ³⁵ and some of the sons of the priests with trumpets; and Zechariah the son of Jonathan, the son of Shemaiah, the son of Mattaniah, the son of Micaiah, the son of Zaccur, the son of Asaph, ³⁶ and his kinsmen, Shemaiah, Azarel, Milalai, Gilalai, Maai, Nethanel, Judah and Hanani, with the musical instruments of David the man of God. And Ezra the scribe went before them. ³⁷ At the Fountain Gate they went directly up the steps of the city of David by the stairway of the wall above the house of David to the Water Gate on the east. ³⁸ The second choir proceeded to the left, while I followed them with half of the people on the wall, above the Tower of Furnaces, to the Broad Wall, ³⁹ and above the Gate of Ephraim, by the Old Gate, by the Fish Gate, the Tower of Hananel and the Tower of the Hundred, as far as the Sheep Gate; and they stopped at the Gate of the Guard. ⁴⁰ Then the two choirs took their stand in the house of God. So did I and half of the officials with me; ⁴¹ and the priests, Eliakim, Maaseiah, Miniamin, Micaiah, Elioenai, Zechariah and Hananiah, with the trumpets; ⁴² and Maaseiah, Shemaiah, Eleazar, Uzzi, Jehohanan, Malchijah, Elam and Ezer. And the singers sang, with Jezrahiah their leader, ⁴³ and on that day they offered great sacrifices and rejoiced because God had given them great joy, even the women and children rejoiced, so that the joy of Jerusalem was heard from afar. ⁴⁴ On that day men were also appointed over the chambers for the stores, the contributions, the first fruits and the tithes, to gather into them from the fields of the cities the portions required by the law for the priests and Levites; for Judah rejoiced over the priests and Levites who served. ⁴⁵ For they performed the worship of their God and the service of purification, together with the singers and the gatekeepers in accordance with the command of David and of his son Solomon. ⁴⁶ For in the days of David and Asaph, in ancient times, there were leaders of the singers, songs of praise and hymns of thanksgiving to God. ⁴⁷ So all Israel in the days of Zerubbabel and Nehemiah gave the portions due the singers and the gatekeepers as each day required, and set apart the consecrated portion for the Levites, and the Levites set apart the consecrated portion for the sons of Aaron.

Nehemiah 13

Foreigners Excluded

¹ On that day they read aloud from the book of Moses in the hearing of the people; and there was found written in it that no Ammonite or Moabite should ever enter the assembly of God, ² because they did not meet the sons of Israel with bread and water, but hired Balaam against them to curse them. However, our God turned the curse into a blessing. ³ So when they heard the law, they excluded all foreigners from Israel.

Tobiah Expelled and the Temple Cleansed

⁴ Now prior to this, Eliashib the priest, who was appointed over the chambers of the house of our God, being related to Tobiah, ⁵ had prepared a large room for him, where formerly they put the grain offerings, the frankincense, the utensils and the tithes of grain, wine and oil prescribed for the Levites, the singers and the gatekeepers, and the contributions for the priests. ⁶ But during all this time I was not in Jerusalem, for in the thirty-second year of Artaxerxes king of Babylon I had gone to the king. After some time, however, I asked leave from the king, ⁷ and I came to Jerusalem and learned about the evil that Eliashib had done for Tobiah, by preparing a room for him in the courts of the house of God. ⁸ It was very displeasing to me, so I threw all of Tobiah's household goods out of the room. ⁹ Then I gave

an order and they cleansed the rooms; and I returned there the utensils of the house of God with the grain offerings and the frankincense.

Tithes Restored

¹⁰ I also discovered that the portions of the Levites had not been given them, so that the Levites and the singers who performed the service had gone away, each to his own field. ¹¹ So I reprimanded the officials and said, "Why is the house of God forsaken?" Then I gathered them together and restored them to their posts. ¹² All Judah then brought the tithes of the grain, wine and oil into the storehouses. ¹³ In charge of the storehouses I appointed Shelemiah the priest, Zadok the scribe, and Pedaiah of the Levites, and in addition to them was Hanan the son of Zaccur, the son of Mattaniah; for they were considered reliable, and it was their task to distribute to their kinsmen. ¹⁴ Remember me for this, O my God, and do not blot out my loyal deeds which I have performed for the house of my God and its services.

Sabbath Restored

¹⁵ In those days I saw in Judah some who were treading wine presses on the sabbath, and bringing in sacks of grain and loading them on donkeys, as well as wine, grapes, figs and all kinds of loads, and they brought them into Jerusalem on the sabbath day So I admonished them on the day they sold food. ¹⁶ Also men of Tyre were living there who imported fish and all kinds of merchandise, and sold them to the sons of Judah on the sabbath, even in Jerusalem. ¹⁷ Then I reprimanded the nobles of Judah and said to them, "What is this evil thing you are doing, by profaning the sabbath day? ¹⁸ "Did not your fathers do the same, so that our God brought on us and on this city all this trouble? Yet you are adding to the wrath on Israel by profaning the sabbath." ¹⁹ It came about that just as it grew dark at the gates of Jerusalem before the sabbath, I commanded that the doors should be shut and that they should not open them until after the sabbath. Then I stationed some of my servants at the gates so that no load would enter on the sabbath day. ²⁰ Once or twice the traders and merchants of every kind of merchandise spent the night outside Jerusalem. ²¹ Then I warned them and said to them, "Why do you spend the night in front of the wall? If you do so again, I will use force against you." From that time on they did not come on the sabbath. ²² And I commanded the Levites that they should purify themselves and come as gatekeepers to sanctify the sabbath day For this also remember me, O my God, and have compassion on me according to the greatness of Your lovingkindness.

Mixed Marriages Forbidden

²³ In those days I also saw that the Jews had married women from Ashdod, Ammon and Moab. ²⁴ As for their children, half spoke in the language of Ashdod, and none of them was able to speak the language of Judah, but the language of his own people. ²⁵ So I contended with them and cursed them and struck some of them and pulled out their hair, and made them swear by God, "You shall not give your daughters to their sons, nor take of their daughters for your sons or for yourselves. ²⁶ "Did not Solomon king of Israel sin regarding these things? Yet among the many nations there was no king like him, and he was loved by his God, and God made him king over all Israel; nevertheless the foreign women caused even him to sin. ²⁷ "Do we then hear about you that you have committed all this great evil by acting unfaithfully against our God by marrying foreign women?" ²⁸ Even one of the sons of Joiada, the son of Eliashib the high priest, was a son-in-law of Sanballat the Horonite, so I drove him away from me. ²⁹ Remember them, O my God, because they have defiled the priesthood and the covenant of the priesthood and the Levites. ³⁰ Thus I purified them from everything foreign and appointed duties for the priests and the Levites, each in his

task, ³¹ and I arranged for the supply of wood at appointed times and for the first fruits Remember me, O my God, for good.

Nehemiah 9:38-10:39

A Covenant Results

³⁸ "Now because of all this We are making an agreement in writing; And on the sealed document are the names of our leaders, our Levites and our priests."

Nehemiah 10

Signers of the Document

¹ Now on the sealed document were the names of:

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, Shemaiah. These were the priests.

⁹ And the Levites:

Jeshua the son of Azaniah, Binnui of the sons of Henadad, Kadmiel;
10 also their brothers Shebaniah, Hodiah, Kelita, Pelaiah, Hanan,
11 Mica, Rehob, Hashabiah,
12 Zaccur, Sherebiah, Shebaniah,
13 Hodiah, Bani, Beninu.
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 Hodiah, 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 Ahiah, Hanan, Anan,
27 Malluch, Harim, Baanah.

Obligations of the Document

²⁸ Now the rest of the people, the priests, the Levites, the gatekeepers, the singers, the

temple servants 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, all those who had knowledge and understanding,²⁹ are joining with their kinsmen, their nobles, and are taking on themselves a curse and an oath to walk in God's law, which was given through Moses, God's servant, and to keep and to observe all the commandments of GOD our Lord, and His ordinances and His statutes;³⁰ and that we will not give our daughters to the peoples of the land or take their daughters for our sons.³¹ As for the peoples of the land who bring wares or any grain on the sabbath day to sell, we will not buy from them on the sabbath or a holy day; and we will forego the crops the seventh year and the exaction of every debt.³² We also placed ourselves under obligation to contribute yearly one third of a shekel for the service of the house of our God:³³ for the showbread, for the continual grain offering, for the continual burnt offering, the sabbaths, the new moon, for the appointed times, for the holy things and for the sin offerings to make atonement for Israel, and all the work of the house of our God.³⁴ Likewise we cast lots for the supply of wood among the priests, the Levites and the people so that they might bring it to the house of our God, according to our fathers' households, at fixed times annually, to burn on the altar of the LORD our God, as it is written in the law;³⁵ and that they might bring the first fruits of our ground and the first fruits of all the fruit of every tree to the house of the LORD annually,³⁶ and bring to the house of our God the firstborn of our sons and of our cattle, and the firstborn of our herds and our flocks as it is written in the law, for the priests who are ministering in the house of our God.³⁷ We will also bring the first of our dough, our contributions, the fruit of every tree, the new wine and the oil to the priests at the chambers of the house of our God, and the tithes of our ground to the Levites, for the Levites are they who receive the tithes in all the rural towns.³⁸ The priest, the son of Aaron, shall be with the Levites when the Levites receive tithes, and the Levites shall bring up the tenth of the tithes to the house of our God, to the chambers of the storehouse.³⁹ For the sons of Israel and the sons of Levi shall bring the contribution of the grain, the new wine and the oil to the chambers; there are the utensils of the sanctuary, the priests who are ministering, the gatekeepers and the singers Thus we will not neglect the house of our God.

Ezra 7-10

Ezra 7

Ezra Journeys from Babylon to Jerusalem

¹ Now after these things, in the reign of Artaxerxes king of Persia, there went up

- Ezra son of Seraiah, son of Azariah, son of Hilkiah,
- 2 son of Shallum, son of Zadok, son of Ahitub,
- 3 son of Amariah, son of Azariah, son of Meraioth,
- 4 son of Zerariah, son of Uzzi, son of Bukki,
- 5 son of Abishua, son of Phinehas, son of Eleazar, son of Aaron the chief priest.

⁶ This Ezra went up from Babylon, and he was a scribe skilled in the law of Moses, which the LORD God of Israel had given; and the king granted him all he requested because the hand of the LORD his God was upon him.⁷ Some of the sons of Israel and some of the priests, the Levites, the singers, the gatekeepers and the temple servants went up to Jerusalem in the seventh year of King Artaxerxes.⁸ He came to Jerusalem in the fifth month, which was in the seventh year of the king.⁹ For on the first of the first month he began to go up from Babylon; and on the first of the fifth month he came to Jerusalem, because the good hand of his God was upon him.¹⁰ For Ezra had set his heart to study the law of the LORD and to practice it, and to teach His statutes and ordinances

in Israel.

King's Decree on Behalf of Ezra

11 Now this is the copy of the decree which King Artaxerxes gave to Ezra the priest, the scribe, learned in the words of the commandments of the LORD and His statutes to Israel:

¹² "Artaxerxes, king of kings, to Ezra the priest, the scribe of the law of the God of heaven, perfect peace. And now ¹³ I have issued a decree that any of the people of Israel and their priests and the Levites in my kingdom who are willing to go to Jerusalem, may go with you. ¹⁴ "Forasmuch as you are sent by the king and his seven counselors to inquire concerning Judah and Jerusalem according to the law of your God which is in your hand, ¹⁵ and to bring the silver and gold, which the king and his counselors have freely offered to the God of Israel, whose dwelling is in Jerusalem, ¹⁶ with all the silver and gold which you find in the whole province of Babylon, along with the freewill offering of the people and of the priests, who offered willingly for the house of their God which is in Jerusalem; ¹⁷ with this money, therefore, you shall diligently buy bulls, rams and lambs, with their grain offerings and their drink offerings and (P) offer them on the altar of the house of your God which is in Jerusalem. ¹⁸ "Whatever seems good to you and to your brothers to do with the rest of the silver and gold, you may do according to the will of your God. ¹⁹ "Also the utensils which are given to you for the service of the house of your God, deliver in full before the God of Jerusalem. ²⁰ "The rest of the needs for the house of your God, for which you may have occasion to provide, provide for it from the royal treasury. ²¹ "I, even I, King Artaxerxes, issue a decree to all the treasurers who are in the provinces beyond the River, that whatever Ezra the priest, the scribe of the law of the God of heaven, may require of you, it shall be done diligently, ²² even up to 100 talents of silver, 100 kors of wheat, 100 baths of wine, 100 baths of oil, and salt as needed. ²³ "Whatever is commanded by the God of heaven, let it be done with zeal for the house of the God of heaven, so that there will not be wrath against the kingdom of the king and his sons. ²⁴ "We also inform you that it is not allowed to impose tax, tribute or toll on any of the priests, Levites, singers, doorkeepers, Nethinim or servants of this house of God. ²⁵ "You, Ezra, according to the wisdom of your God which is in your hand, appoint magistrates and judges that they may judge all the people who are in the province beyond the River, even all those who know the laws of your God; and you may teach anyone who is ignorant of them. ²⁶ "Whoever will not observe the law of your God and the law of the king, let judgment be executed upon him strictly, whether for death or for banishment or for confiscation of goods or for imprisonment."

The King's Kindness

²⁷ Blessed be the LORD, the God of our fathers, (who has put such a thing as this in the king's heart, to adorn the house of the LORD which is in Jerusalem, ²⁸ and has extended lovingkindness to me before the king and his counselors and before all the king's mighty princes Thus I was strengthened according to the hand of the LORD my God upon me, and I gathered leading men from Israel to go up with me.

Ezra 8

People Who Went with Ezra

¹Now these are the heads of their fathers' households and the genealogical enrollment of those who went up with me from Babylon in the reign of King Artaxerxes:

- 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 who was of the sons of Parosh, Zechariah and with him 150 males who were in the genealogical list;
- 4 of the sons of Pahath-moab, Elihoenai the son of Zerariah and 200 males with him;
- 5 of the sons of Zattu, Shecaniah, the son of Jahaziel and 300 males with him;
- 6 and of the sons of Adin, Ebed the son of Jonathan and 50 males with him;
- 7 and of the sons of Elam, Jeshaiiah the son of Athaliah and 70 males with him;
- 8 and of the sons of Shephatiah, Zebadiah the son of Michael and 80 males with him;
- 9 of the sons of Joab, Obadiah the son of Jehiel and 218 males with him;
- 10 and of the sons of Bani, Shelomith, the son of Josiphiah and 160 males with him;
- 11 and of the sons of Bebai, Zechariah the son of Bebai and 28 males with him;
- 12 and of the sons of Azgad, Johanan the son of Hakkatan and 110 males with him;
- 13 and of the sons of Adonikam, the last ones, these being their names, Eliphelet, Jeuel and Shemaiah, and 60 males with them;
- 14 and of the sons of Bigvai, Uthai and Zabbud, and 70 males with them.

Ezra Sends for Levites

¹⁵ Now I assembled them at the river that runs to Ahava, where we camped for three days; and when I observed the people and the priests, I did not find any Levites there. ¹⁶ So I sent for Eliezer, Ariel, Shemaiah, Elnathan, Jarib, Elnathan, Nathan, Zechariah and Meshullam, leading men, and for Joiarib and Elnathan, teachers. ¹⁷ I sent them to Iddo the leading man at the place Casiphia; and I told them what to say to Iddo and his brothers, the temple servants at the place Casiphia, that is, to bring ministers to us for the house of our God. ¹⁸ According to the good hand of our God upon us they brought us a man of insight of the sons of Mahli, the son of Levi, the son of Israel, namely Sherebiah, and his sons and brothers, 18 men; ¹⁹ and Hashabiah and Jeshaiiah of the sons of Merari, with his brothers and their sons, 20 men; ²⁰ and 220 of the temple servants, whom David and the princes had given for the service of the Levites, all of them designated by name.

Protection of God Invoked

²¹ Then I proclaimed a fast there at the river of Ahava, that we might humble ourselves before our God to seek from Him a safe journey for us, our little ones, and all our possessions. ²² For I was ashamed to request from the king troops and horsemen to protect us from the enemy on the way, because we had said to the king, "The hand of our God is favorably disposed to all those who seek Him, but His power and His anger are against all those who forsake Him." ²³ So we fasted and sought our God concerning this matter, and He listened to our entreaty. ²⁴ Then I set apart twelve of the leading priests, Sherebiah, Hashabiah, and with them ten of their brothers; ²⁵ and I weighed out to them the silver, the gold and the utensils, the offering for the house of our God which the king and his counselors and his princes and all Israel present there had offered. ²⁶ Thus I weighed into their hands 650 talents of silver, and silver utensils worth 100 talents, and 100 gold talents, ²⁷ and 20 gold bowls worth 1,000 darics, and two utensils of fine shiny bronze, precious as gold. ²⁸ Then I said to them, "You are holy to the LORD, and the utensils are holy; and the silver and the gold are a freewill offering to the LORD God of your fathers. ²⁹ "Watch and keep them until you

weigh them before the leading priests, the Levites and the heads of the fathers' households of Israel at Jerusalem, in the chambers of the house of the LORD." ³⁰ So the priests and the Levites accepted the weighed out silver and gold and the utensils, to bring them to Jerusalem to the house of our God. ³¹ Then we journeyed from the river Ahava on the twelfth of the first month to go to Jerusalem; and the hand of our God was over us, and He delivered us from the hand of the enemy and the ambushes by the way. ³² Thus we came to Jerusalem and remained there three days.

Treasure Placed in the Temple

³³ On the fourth day the silver and the gold and the utensils were weighed out in the house of our God into the hand of Meremoth the son of Uriah the priest, and with him was Eleazar the son of Phinehas; and with them were the Levites, Jozabad the son of Jeshua and Noadiah the son of Binnui. ³⁴ Everything was numbered and weighed, and all the weight was recorded at that time. ³⁵ The exiles who had come from the captivity offered burnt offerings to the God of Israel: 12 bulls for all Israel, 96 rams, 77 lambs, 12 male goats for a sin offering, all as a burnt offering to the LORD. ³⁶ Then they delivered the king's edicts to the king's satraps and to the governors in the provinces beyond the River, and they supported the people and the house of God.

Ezra 9

Mixed Marriages

¹ Now when these things had been completed, the princes approached me, saying, "The people of Israel and the priests and the Levites have not separated themselves from the peoples of the lands, according to their abominations, those 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 for their sons, so that the holy race has intermingled with the peoples of the lands; indeed, the hands of the princes and the rulers have been foremost in this unfaithfulness." ³ When I heard about this matter, I tore my garment and my robe, and pulled some of the hair from my head and my beard, and sat down appalled. ⁴ Then everyone who trembled at the words of the God of Israel on account of the unfaithfulness of the exiles gathered to me, and I sat appalled until the evening offering.

Prayer of Confession

⁵ But at the evening offering I arose from my humiliation, even with my garment and my robe torn, and I fell on my knees and stretched out my hands to the LORD my God; ⁶ and I said, "O my God, I am ashamed and embarrassed to lift up my face to You, my God, for our iniquities have risen above our heads and our guilt has grown even to the heavens. ⁷ "Since the days of our fathers to this day we have been in great guilt, and on account of our iniquities we, our kings and our priests have been given into the hand of the kings of the lands, to the sword, to captivity and to plunder and to open shame, as it is this day. ⁸ "But now for a brief moment grace has been shown from the LORD our God, to leave us an escaped remnant and to give us a peg in His holy place, that our God may enlighten our eyes and grant us a little reviving in our bondage. ⁹ "For we are slaves; yet in our bondage our God has not forsaken us, but has extended lovingkindness to us in the sight of the kings of Persia, to give us reviving to raise up the house of our God, to restore its ruins and to give us

a wall in Judah and Jerusalem. ¹⁰ "Now, our God, what shall we say after this? For we have forsaken Your commandments, ¹¹ which You have 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 end to end and with their impurity. ¹² 'So now do not give your daughters to their sons nor take their daughters to your sons, and never seek their peace or their prosperity, that you may be strong and eat the good things of the land and leave it as an inheritance to your sons forever.' ¹³ "After all that has come upon us for our evil deeds and our great guilt, since You our God have requited us less than our iniquities deserve, and have given us an escaped remnant as this, ¹⁴ shall we again break Your commandments and intermarry with the peoples who commit these abominations? Would You not be angry with us to the point of destruction, until there is no remnant nor any who escape? ¹⁵ "O LORD God of Israel, You are righteous, for we have been left an escaped remnant, as it is this day; behold, we are before You in our guilt, for no one can stand before You because of this."

Ezra 10

Reconciliation with God

¹ Now while Ezra was praying and making confession, weeping and prostrating himself before the house of God, a very large assembly, men, women and children, gathered to him from Israel; for the people wept bitterly. ² Shecaniah the son of Jehiel, one of the sons of Elam, said to Ezra, "We have been unfaithful to our God and have married foreign women from the peoples of the land; yet now there is hope for Israel in spite of this. ³ "So now let us make a covenant with our God to put away all the wives and their children, according to the counsel of my lord 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, but we will be with you; be courageous and act." ⁵ Then Ezra rose and made the leading priests, the Levites and all Israel, take oath that they would do according to this proposal; so they took the oath. ⁶ Then Ezra rose from before the house of God and went into the chamber of Jehohanan the son of Eliashib. Although he went there, he did not eat bread nor drink water, for he was mourning over the unfaithfulness of the exiles. ⁷ They made a proclamation throughout Judah and Jerusalem to all the exiles, that they should assemble at Jerusalem, ⁸ and that whoever would not come within three days, according to the counsel of the leaders and the elders, all his possessions should be forfeited and he himself excluded from the assembly of the exiles. ⁹ So all the men of Judah and Benjamin assembled at Jerusalem within the three days. It was the ninth month on the twentieth of the month, and all the people sat in the open square before the house of God, trembling because of this matter and the heavy rain. ¹⁰ Then Ezra the priest stood up and said to them, "You have been unfaithful and have married foreign wives adding to the guilt of Israel. ¹¹ "Now therefore, make confession to the LORD God of your fathers and do His will; and separate yourselves from the peoples of the land and from the foreign wives." ¹² Then all the assembly replied with a loud voice, "That's right! As you have said, so it is our duty to do. ¹³ "But there are many people; it is the rainy season and we are not able to stand in the open. Nor can the task be done in one or two days, for we have transgressed greatly in this matter. ¹⁴ "Let our leaders represent the whole assembly and let all those in our cities who have married foreign wives come at appointed times, together with the elders and judges of each city, until the fierce anger of our God on account of this matter is turned away from us." ¹⁵ Only Jonathan the son of Asahel and Jahzeiah the son of Tikvah opposed this, with Meshullam and Shabbethai the Levite supporting them. ¹⁶ But the exiles did so. And Ezra the priest selected men who were heads of fathers' households for each of their father's households, all of them by name. So they convened on the first day of the tenth month to investigate the matter. ¹⁷ They finished investigating all the men who had married foreign wives by the first day of the first month.

List of Offenders

¹⁸ Among the sons of the priests who had married foreign wives were found of the sons of Jeshua the son of Jozadak, and his brothers: Maaseiah, Eliezer, Jarib and Gedaliah. ¹⁹ They pledged to put away their wives, and being guilty, they offered a ram of the flock for their offense.

- 20** Of the sons of Immer there were Hanani and Zebadiah;
- 21** and of the sons of Harim: Maaseiah, Elijah, Shemaiah, Jehiel and Uziah;
- 22** and of the sons of Pashhur: Elioenai, Maaseiah, Ishmael, Nethanel, Jozabad and Elasa.
- 23** Of Levites there were Jozabad, Shimei, Kelaiah (that is, Kelita), Pethahiah, Judah and Eliezer.
- 24** Of the singers there was Eliashib; and of the gatekeepers: Shallum, Telem and Uri.
- 25** Of Israel, of the sons of Parosh there were Ramiah, Izziah, Malchijah, Mijamin, Eleazar, Malchijah and Benaiah;
- 26** and of the sons of Elam: Mattaniah, Zechariah, Jehiel, Abdi, Jeremoth and Elijah;
- 27** and of the sons of Zattu: Elioenai, Eliashib, Mattaniah, Jeremoth, Zabad and Aziza;
- 28** and of the sons of Bebai: Jehohanan, Hananiah, Zabbai and Athlai;
- 29** and of the sons of Bani: Meshullam, Malluch and Adaiah, Jashub, Sheal and Jeremoth;
- 30** and of the sons of Pahath-moab: Adna, Chelal, Benaiah, Maaseiah, Mattaniah, Bezalel, Binnui and Manasseh;
- 31** and of the sons of Harim: Eliezer, Isshijah, 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, Cheluhi,
- 36** Vaniah, Meremoth, Eliashib,
- 37** Mattaniah, Mattenai, Jaasu,
- 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 there were Jeiel, Mattithiah, Zabad, Zebina, Jaddai, Joel and Benaiah.
- 44** All these had married foreign wives, and some of them had wives by whom they had children.

Nehemiah 8-9:37

Nehemiah 8

Ezra Reads the Law

¹ And all the people gathered as one man at the square which was in front of the Water Gate, and they asked Ezra the scribe to bring the book of the law of Moses which the LORD had given to Israel. ² Then Ezra the priest brought the law before the assembly of men, women and all who could listen with understanding, on the first day of the seventh month. ³ He read from it before the square which was in front of the Water Gate from early morning

until midday, in the presence of men and women, those who could understand; and all the people were attentive to the book of the law. ⁴ Ezra the scribe stood at a wooden podium which they had made for the purpose. And beside him stood Mattithiah, Shema, Anaiah, Uriah, Hilkiah, and Maaseiah on his right hand; and Pedaiah, Mishael, Malchijah, Hashum, Hashbaddanah, Zechariah and Meshullam on his left hand. ⁵ 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 Then Ezra blessed the LORD the great God. And all the people answered, "Amen, Amen!" while lifting up their hands; then they bowed low and worshiped the LORD with their faces to the ground. ⁷ Also Jeshua, Bani, Sherebiah, Jamin, Akkub, Shabbethai, Hodiah, Maaseiah, Kelita, Azariah, Jozabad, Hanan, Pelaiah, the Levites, explained the law to the people while the people remained in their place. ⁸ They read from the book, from the law of God, translating to give the sense so that they understood the reading.

"This Day Is Holy"

⁹ Then Nehemiah, who was the governor, and 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 or weep." For all the people were weeping when they heard the words of the law. ¹⁰ Then he said to them, "Go, eat of the fat, drink of the sweet, and send portions to him who has nothing prepared; for this day is holy to our Lord. Do not be grieved, for the joy of the LORD is your strength." ¹¹ So the Levites calmed all the people, saying, "Be still, for the day is holy; do not be grieved." ¹² All the people went away to eat, to drink, to send portions and to celebrate a great festival, because they understood the words which had been made known to them.

Feast of Booths Restored

¹³ Then on the second day the heads of fathers' households of all the people, the priests and the Levites were gathered to Ezra the scribe that they might gain insight into the words of the law. ¹⁴ They found written in the law how the LORD had commanded through Moses that the sons of Israel should live in booths during the feast of the seventh month. ¹⁵ So they proclaimed and circulated a proclamation in all their cities and in Jerusalem, saying, "Go out to the hills, and bring olive branches and wild olive branches, myrtle branches, palm branches and branches of other leafy trees, to make booths, as it is written." ¹⁶ So the people went out and brought them and made booths for themselves, each on his roof, and in their courts and in the courts of the house of God, and in the square at the Water Gate and in the square at the Gate of Ephraim. ¹⁷ The entire assembly of those who had returned from the captivity made booths and lived in them. The sons of Israel had indeed not done so from the days of Joshua the son of Nun to that day And there was great rejoicing. ¹⁸ He read from the book of the law of God daily, from the first day to the last day And they celebrated the feast seven days, and on the eighth day there was a solemn assembly according to the ordinance.

Nehemiah 9

The People Confess Their Sin

¹ Now on the twenty-fourth day of this month the sons of Israel assembled with fasting, in sackcloth and with dirt upon them. ² The descendants of Israel separated themselves from all foreigners, and stood and confessed their sins and the iniquities of their fathers. ³ While they stood in their place, they read from the book of the law of the LORD their God for a fourth of the day; and for another fourth they confessed and worshiped the LORD their God. ⁴ Now on the Levites'

platform stood Jeshua, Bani, Kadmiel, Shebaniah, Bunni, Sherebiah, Bani and Chenani, and they cried with a loud voice to the LORD their God. ⁵ Then the Levites, Jeshua, Kadmiel, Bani, Hashabneiah, Sherebiah, Hodiah, Shebaniah and Pethahiah, said,

"Arise, bless the LORD your God forever and ever!
O may Your glorious name be blessed
And exalted above all blessing and praise!

- 6** "You alone are the LORD
You have made the heavens,
The heaven of heavens with all their host,
The earth and all that is on it,
The seas and all that is in them
You give life to all of them
And the heavenly host bows down before You.
- 7** "You are the LORD God,
Who chose Abram
And brought him out from Ur of the Chaldees,
And gave him the name Abraham.
- 8** "You found his heart faithful before You,
And made a covenant with him
To give him the land of the Canaanite,
Of the Hittite and the Amorite,
Of the Perizzite, the Jebusite and the Girgashite—
To give it to his descendants
And You have fulfilled Your promise,
For You are righteous.
- 9** "You saw the affliction of our fathers in Egypt,
And heard their cry by the Red Sea.
- 10** "Then You performed signs and wonders against Pharaoh,
Against all his servants and all the people of his land;
For You knew that they acted arrogantly toward them,
And made a name for Yourself as it is this day.
- 11** "You divided the sea before them,
So they passed through the midst of the sea on dry ground;
And their pursuers You hurled into the depths,
Like a stone into raging waters.
- 12** "And with a pillar of cloud You led them by day,
And with a pillar of fire by night
To light for them the way
In which they were to go.
- 13** "Then You came down on Mount Sinai,
And spoke with them from heaven;
You gave them just ordinances and true laws,
Good statutes and commandments.
- 14** "So You made known to them Your holy sabbath,
And laid down for them commandments, statutes and law,
Through Your servant Moses.
- 15** "You provided bread from heaven for them for their hunger,
You brought forth water from a rock for them for their thirst,
And You told them to enter in order to possess

- The land which You swore to give them.
- 16** "But they, our fathers, acted arrogantly;
They became stubborn and would not listen to Your commandments.
- 17** "They refused to listen,
And did not remember Your wondrous deeds which You had performed among them;
So they became stubborn and appointed a leader to return to their slavery in Egypt
But You are a God of forgiveness,
Gracious and compassionate,
Slow to anger and abounding in lovingkindness;
And You did not forsake them.
- 18** "Even when they made for themselves
A calf of molten metal
And said, 'This is your God
Who brought you up from Egypt,'
And committed great blasphemies,
- 19** You, in Your great compassion,
Did not forsake them in the wilderness;
The pillar of cloud did not leave them by day,
To guide them on their way,
Nor the pillar of fire by night, to light for them the way in which they were to go.
- 20** "You gave Your good Spirit to instruct them,
Your manna You did not withhold from their mouth,
And You gave them water for their thirst.
- 21** "Indeed, forty years You provided for them in the wilderness and they were not in want;
Their clothes did not wear out, nor did their feet swell.
- 22** "You also gave them kingdoms and peoples,
And allotted them to them as a boundary.
They took possession of the land of Sihon the king of Heshbon
And the land of Og the king of Bashan.
- 23** "You made their sons numerous as the stars of heaven,
And You brought them into the land
Which You had told their fathers to enter and possess.
- 24** "So their sons entered and possessed the land
And You subdued before them the inhabitants of the land, the Canaanites,
And You gave them into their hand, with their kings and the peoples of the land,
To do with them as they desired.
- 25** "They captured fortified cities and a fertile land
They took possession of houses full of every good thing,
Hewn cisterns, vineyards, olive groves,
Fruit trees in abundance
So they ate, were filled and grew fat,
And reveled in Your great goodness.
- 26** "But they became disobedient and rebelled against You,
And cast Your law behind their backs
And killed Your prophets who had admonished them
So that they might return to You,
And they committed great blasphemies.
- 27** "Therefore You delivered them into the hand of their oppressors who oppressed them,
But when they cried to You in the time of their distress,
You heard from heaven, and according to Your great compassion
You gave them deliverers who delivered them from the hand of their oppressors.
- 28** "But as soon as they had rest, they did evil again before You;
Therefore You abandoned them to the hand of their enemies, so that they ruled over them
When they cried again to You, You heard from heaven,
And many times You rescued them according to Your compassion,
- 29** And admonished them in order to turn them back to Your law
Yet they acted arrogantly and did not listen to Your commandments but sinned against
Your ordinances,
By which if a man observes them he shall live
And they turned a stubborn shoulder and stiffened their neck, and would not listen.
- 30** "However, You bore with them for many years,
And admonished them by Your Spirit through Your prophets,
Yet they would not give ear.
Therefore You gave them into the hand of the peoples of the lands.
- 31** "Nevertheless, in Your great compassion You did not make an end of them or forsake them,
For You are a gracious and compassionate God.
- 32** "Now therefore, our God, the great, the mighty, and the awesome God, who keeps covenant and lovingkindness,
Do not let all the hardship seem insignificant before You,
Which has come upon us, our kings, our princes, our priests, our prophets, our fathers
and on all Your people,
From the days of the kings of Assyria to this day.
- 33** "However, You are just in all that has come upon us;
For You have dealt faithfully, but we have acted wickedly.
- 34** "For our kings, our leaders, our priests and our fathers have not kept Your law
Or paid attention to Your commandments and Your admonitions with which You
have admonished them.
- 35** "But they, in their own kingdom,
With Your great goodness which You gave them,
With the broad and rich land which You set before them,
Did not serve You or turn from their evil deeds.
- 36** "Behold, we are slaves today,
And as to the land which You gave to our fathers to eat of its fruit and its bounty,
Behold, we are slaves in it.
- 37** "Its abundant produce is for the kings
Whom You have set over us because of our sins;
They also rule over our bodies
And over our cattle as they please,
So we are in great distress.