

AN INTRODUCTION TO THE BOOK OF NEHEMIAH

I. INTRODUCTION

A. Authorship

1. Most of the book is written in the _____, which identifies Nehemiah as the author; his name means “Yahweh has _____”.
2. In order for the King of Persia to select a man like Nehemiah as his personal _____, he would have to be a man who was consistently _____ and _____, and this says a great deal about his communicative skills in front of the mighty monarch.
3. Nehemiah was the kind of man who cared about the _____ of the past and the _____ of the present, as well as the _____ for the future; he also cared about his heritage, his ancestral city, and the glory of his God.

B. Historical Background

1. In 722 BC the Assyrians conquered and captured the 10 _____ tribes known as “*Israel*”; then in 586 BC the Babylonians repeated the same thing with the 2 _____ tribes known as “*Judah*”.
2. The Israelites of the Northern Kingdom were absorbed into Assyria and eventually into other cultures; but the Jews of the Southern Kingdom remained intact in Babylon, and some of them eventually returned to the Promised land.
 - a. In 538 B.C. the first group of 50,000 returned to Judah under the leadership of Zerubbabel to begin a _____ of the _____. (Ezra 1:1-2:2)
 - b. In 458 B.C. a second group of 5,000 Jews returned with Ezra to begin a _____ of the _____. (Ezra 7:1-10)
 - c. In 444 B.C. Nehemiah led a third party of 42,000 to the land for a _____ of the _____ around the city.

C. Date and Setting

1. When the book opens, Nehemiah was in a prestigious _____ under King Artaxerxes; after returning to Jerusalem and completing his task within _____ (6:15); in 432 he returned to Artaxerxes (13:6), but eventually came back to Jerusalem.
2. The main action of the book is packed into the spring and summer of the year 444 B.C., in which time Nehemiah not only made the journey from Persia to Jerusalem, but he restored the city's _____ and _____, and then began to see to its _____.

D. Theme and Purpose

1. God chose to bring 97,000 Jews back into the Promised Land so as to keep His _____ with a _____ of His chosen people.
2. The Lord used Nehemiah to build a wall around Jerusalem so the Jewish people could give concentrated attention to the _____ and _____ of God's Word until Messiah would come.
3. This book is an example of what it means to be _____ to the work that the Lord has given you, to be _____ in the face of opposition, and yet without _____.
4. Nehemiah had an attitude of _____ which displayed incredible _____ in His God, and he never seems to have wavered in seeing God's purposes fulfilled.
5. This true-life story proves that seemingly _____ things are _____ through _____ in the living God and hard work; i.e., when believers determine to put His interests before their own.

* How can you personally apply this truth in your own life?