

NEHEMIAH

Returned exiles rebuild the wall of Jerusalem despite opposition.

“The city was a reproach to her people. It had reached its greatest extent under the Judean kings, just over a century earlier. Now, the whole city with its great Broad Wall built by King Hezekiah lay in ruins.”

Leen Ritmeyer and Kathleen Ritmeyer,  
Jerusalem in the Time of Nehemiah

“Piles of soot and ash mixed with the rubble of the walls and here and there arrowheads of both the conquering Babylonian army and the Israelite defenders bore witness to the violent destruction of the city in 586 b.c.”

Leen Ritmeyer and Kathleen Ritmeyer

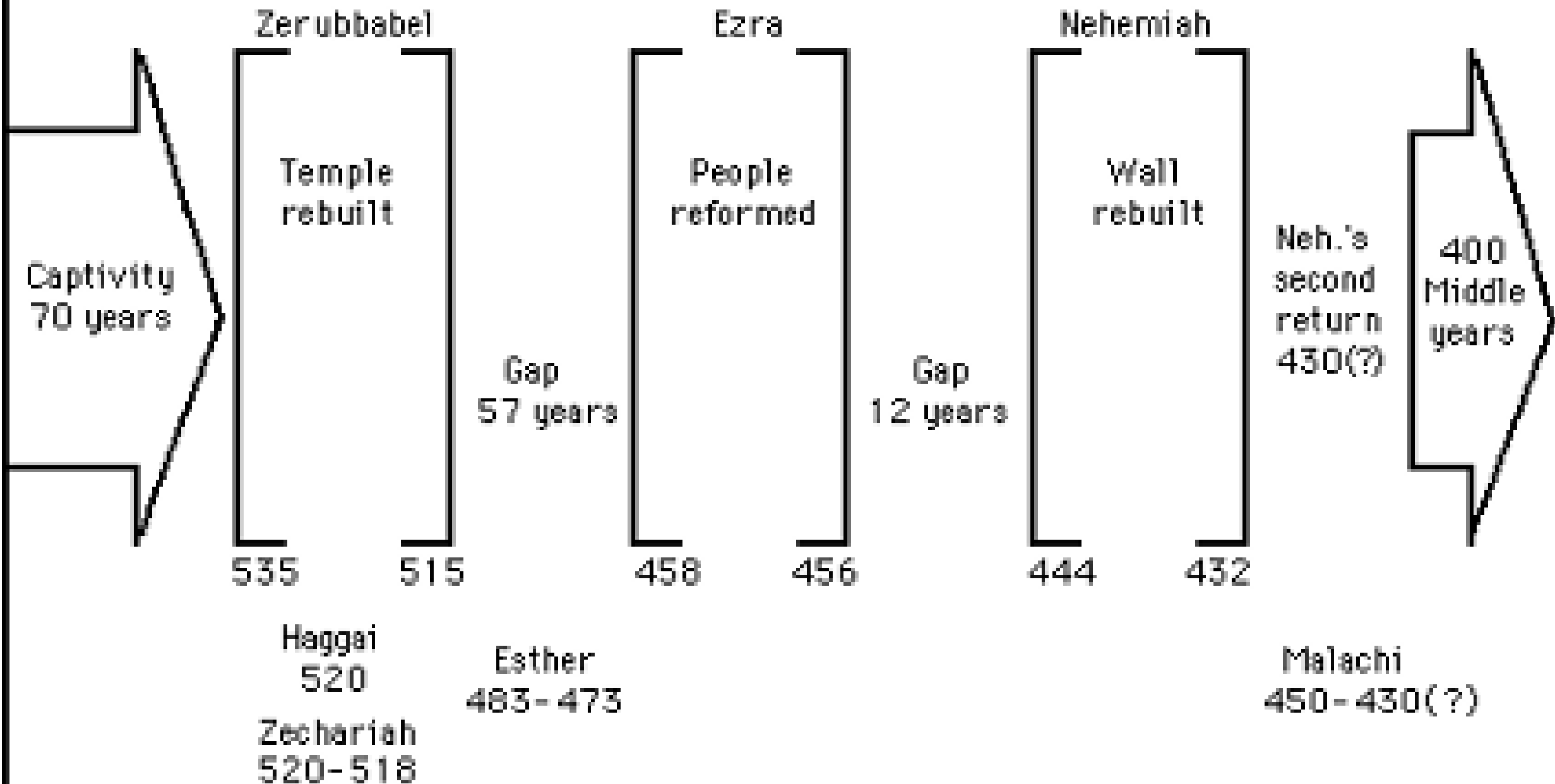
# Historical Setting

- 931 B.C. - Kingdom of Israel split
- 722 B.C. Northern Kingdom fell to Assyrians
- 586 B.C. – Southern Kingdom fell to Babylonians
- 539 B.C. – Babylon broken by Medes and Persians

# Historical Setting

- 538 B.C. – first group returned to Judah under Zerubbabel
- 515 B.C. – temple rebuilt
- 458 B.C. – second group of Jews return under Ezra
- 444 B.C. – third group returns under Nehemiah

# The Three Returns from Exile



# TIMELINE

# NEHEMIAH



\*All dates are approximate

“God used him to guide Judah in rebuilding the city’s walls and in reordering the people’s social and economic lives. What he accomplished in a brief period of time was an incredible feat. How he accomplished this goal is one of the major emphases in the book that bears his name.”

G. A. Getz

Nehemiah. In The Bible Knowledge Commentary

# Nehemiah 1:1-4

<sup>1</sup> The words of Nehemiah the son of Hachaliah.

Now it happened in the month of Chislev,  
in the twentieth year,  
as I was in Susa the citadel,

## Nehemiah 1:1-4

<sup>2</sup> that Hanani, one of my brothers,  
came with certain men from Judah.  
And I asked them concerning the Jews  
who escaped, who had survived the exile,  
and concerning Jerusalem.

## Nehemiah 1:1-4

<sup>3</sup> And they said to me,

“The remnant there in the province who had survived the exile is in great trouble and shame.

The wall of Jerusalem is broken down, and its gates are destroyed by fire.”

## Nehemiah 1:1-4

<sup>4</sup> As soon as I heard these words  
I sat down and wept  
and mourned for days,  
and I continued fasting and praying before  
the God of heaven.



Mount Ararat

Nineveh

Hadrach

Hamath

Mount Hor

Mount Hermon

Megiddo

Joppa

En-rogel

Mount Hor

Babylon

Ecbatana

Susa

Ur

## Nehemiah 1:2-4

<sup>2</sup> that Hanani, one of my brothers,  
came with certain men from Judah.  
And I asked them concerning the Jews  
who escaped, who had survived the exile,  
and concerning Jerusalem.

## Nehemiah 1:2-4

<sup>3</sup> And they said to me,

“The remnant there in the province who had survived the exile is in great trouble and shame.

The wall of Jerusalem is broken down, and its gates are destroyed by fire.”

## Nehemiah 1:2-4

<sup>4</sup> As soon as I heard these words  
I sat down and wept  
and mourned for days,  
and I continued fasting and praying before  
the God of heaven.

# I. The Example of Scripture

## 1 Chronicles 21:22–24

<sup>22</sup> And David said to Ornan, “Give me the site of the threshing floor that I may build on it an altar to the Lord—give it to me at its full price—that the plague may be averted from the people.”

## 1 Chronicles 21:22–24

**23** Then Ornan said to David, “Take it, and let my lord the king do what seems good to him. See, I give the oxen for burnt offerings and the threshing sledges for the wood and the wheat for a grain offering; I give it all.”

## 1 Chronicles 21:22–24

<sup>24</sup> But King David said to Ornan, “No, but I will buy them for the full price. I will not take for the Lord what is yours, nor offer burnt offerings that cost me nothing.”

## Haggai 1:1–6

<sup>1</sup>In the second year of Darius the king, in the sixth month, on the first day of the month, the word of the Lord came by the hand of Haggai the prophet to Zerubbabel the son of Shealtiel, governor of Judah, and to Joshua the son of Jehozadak, the high priest:

## Haggai 1:1–6

<sup>2</sup> “Thus says the Lord of hosts: These people say the time has not yet come to rebuild the house of the Lord.” <sup>3</sup> Then the word of the Lord came by the hand of Haggai the prophet, <sup>4</sup> “Is it a time for you yourselves to dwell in your paneled houses, while this house lies in ruins?”

## Haggai 1:1–6

<sup>5</sup>Now, therefore, thus says the Lord of hosts: Consider your ways. <sup>6</sup>You have sown much, and harvested little. You eat, but you never have enough; you drink, but you never have your fill. You clothe yourselves, but no one is warm. And he who earns wages does so to put them into a bag with holes.

## 1 Timothy 3:4-5

<sup>4</sup> He must manage his own household well, with all dignity keeping his children submissive, <sup>5</sup> for if someone does not know how to manage his own household, how will he care for God's church?

## Ephesians 4:32

<sup>32</sup> Be kind to one another, tenderhearted, forgiving one another, as God in Christ forgave you.

I. The Example of Scripture

II. The Example of Nehemiah

“No portion of the Old Testament provides us with a greater incentive to dedicated, discerning zeal for the work of God than the book of Nehemiah. The example of Nehemiah’s passion for the truth of God’s Word—whatever the cost or consequences, is an example sorely needed in the present hour.”

John C. Whitcomb

## II. The Example of Nehemiah

### A. Nehemiah's care for God's people

# Nehemiah 1:1-4

<sup>1</sup> The words of Nehemiah the son of Hachaliah.

Now it happened in the month of Chislev,  
in the twentieth year,  
as I was in Susa the citadel,

## Nehemiah 1:1-4

<sup>2</sup> that Hanani, one of my brothers,  
came with certain men from Judah.  
And I asked them concerning the Jews  
who escaped, who had survived the exile,  
and concerning Jerusalem.

## Nehemiah 1:1-4

<sup>3</sup> And they said to me,

“The remnant there in the province who had survived the exile is in great trouble and shame.

The wall of Jerusalem is broken down, and its gates are destroyed by fire.”

## Nehemiah 1:1-4

<sup>4</sup> As soon as I heard these words  
I sat down and wept  
and mourned for days,  
and I continued fasting and praying before  
the God of heaven.

## Matthew 20:28

<sup>28</sup> even as the Son of Man came not to be served but to serve, and to give his life as a ransom for many.”

“The tact, drive, and leadership qualities shown in this book are the type that would be demanded by Nehemiah’s position as king’s cupbearer, a very important position.”

William MacDonald,  
Believer’s Bible Commentary

“This important position in the king’s court gives insight into Nehemiah’s life and character. A mighty monarch such as the king of Persia would select for that position a man who was wise and discreet, and consistently honest and trustworthy. Nehemiah’s position alone reveals much about his intellectual capabilities, his emotional maturity, and his spiritual status.”

## Nehemiah 5:14-15, 18

**14** Moreover, from the time that I was appointed to be their governor in the land of Judah, from the twentieth year to the thirty-second year of Artaxerxes the king, twelve years, neither I nor my brothers ate the food allowance of the governor.

## Nehemiah 5:14-15, 18

**15** The former governors who were before me laid heavy burdens on the people and took from them for their daily ration forty shekels of silver. Even their servants lorded it over the people. But I did not do so, because of the fear of God.

## Nehemiah 5:14-15, 18

<sup>18</sup> Now what was prepared at my expense for each day was one ox and six choice sheep and birds, and every ten days all kinds of wine in abundance. Yet for all this I did not demand the food allowance of the governor, because the service was too heavy on this people.

“He supported himself rather than charge the people with his maintenance. He did not take advantage of his position to acquire **land** or feather his nest for the future. His time was devoted to making Jerusalem safe for his **brothers**, not to building his own personal fortune.”

William MacDonald

## Philippians 2:3

<sup>3</sup> Do nothing from selfish ambition or conceit, but in humility count others more significant than yourselves. <sup>4</sup> Let each of you look not only to his own interests, but also to the interests of others.

## II. The Example of Nehemiah

A. Nehemiah's care for God's people

B. Nehemiah's care for God's work

## Nehemiah 1:3-4

<sup>3</sup> And they said to me,

“The remnant there in the province who had survived the exile is in great trouble and shame.

The wall of Jerusalem is broken down, and its gates are destroyed by fire.”

## Nehemiah 1:3-4

<sup>4</sup> As soon as I heard these words  
I sat down and wept  
and mourned for days,  
and I continued fasting and praying before  
the God of heaven.

## Nehemiah 3:5

<sup>5</sup> And next to them the Tekoites repaired,  
but their nobles would not stoop to serve  
their Lord.