

Tuesday Bible Study: Introduction to Ezra & Nehemiah

Outline (from Knowing the Bible: Ezra & Nehemiah)

Ezra

1. Cyrus' Decree and the *First* Return of Exiles from Babylon (1:1-2:70)
2. The Returned Exiles Rebuild the *Temple* on its Original Site (3:1-6:22)
3. Ezra the Priest Leads the *Second* Return to Rebuild the *People* by teaching the Law of Moses (7:1-8:36)
4. Ezra Discovers and Confronts the Problem of Intermarriage (9:1-10:44)

Nehemiah

1. Nehemiah Leads the *Third* Return to Jerusalem to Rebuild its *Walls* (1:1-2:20)
2. The Wall Is rebuilt, Despite Difficulties (3:1-7:4)
3. A Record of Those Who Returned from Exile (7:5-73)
4. The *People* Are Rebuilt around God's Word, Leading to Covenant Renewal (8:1-10:39)
5. Results of the Covenant Renewal (11:1-12:47)
6. Nehemiah Deals with Problems in the Community (13:1-31)

Timeline (from The Lutheran Study Bible, Concordia Publishing House)

- | | |
|--------|---|
| 587 BC | Jerusalem temple destroyed |
| 538 BC | Cyrus decrees that exiles may return to Judah |
| 537 BC | Altar rebuilt in Jerusalem |
| 516 BC | Second temple completed |
| 458 BC | Ezra arrives in Jerusalem |
| 445 BC | Nehemiah leads work on walls of Jerusalem |
| 434 BC | Nehemiah returns to Susa |

Key Verses (adapted from *The Lutheran Study Bible*, Concordia Publishing House)

Ezra (3:10-13 Temple dedication), (7:10 Ezra's Heart), (9:6-9 Ezra's Prayer)

Nehemiah (1:4-11 Nehemiah's prayer), (4:18-23 building the wall), (8:7b-12 attending to the Word)

Resources

Knowing the Bible Series: Ezra & Nehemiah by Kathleen B. Neilson; Crossway

Interpretation (A Bible Commentary for Teaching & Preaching): Ezra-Nehemiah

by Mark A. Throntveit; John Knox Press

Life Lessons from Ezra & Nehemiah by Max Lucado; Thomas Nelson

MacArthur Bible Studies: Ezra & Nehemiah – Israel Returns from Exile

by John MacArthur; Thomas Nelson

The Lutheran Study Bible, Concordia Publishing House