

12/22/18

OT #47

LET US RISE UP AND BUILD

Ezra 1-8; Nehemiah 1-2, 4, 6, 8

GT

Events

Cyrus was very enthusiastic to help the Jews return. The manual suggests this was because he read his own name in Isaiah. If so, does this make it more likely the scrolls were tampered with?

Joshua: high priest

Zerubbabel: king's descendant/governor

Nehemiah: cupbearer to the king
commander of guard
governor of Judah

Ezra: scribe/prophet/interpreter of scripture

He gave them permission and money to return & build the temple.

He also returned the gold & silver "vessels" that had been looted from it by Nebuchad.

They made the long journey, built an altar and began offering sacrifices, and started keep festivals, starting with Tabernacles.

The Samaritans want to help build, but Joshua and Zerubbabel rebuff them. So they turn the king against the work for many years. Finally, Darius is moved to allow it to continue, and in another 4 years it is finished.

Ezra is then moved upon to return, and given great authority by Artaxerxes to teach and restore the worship of Yehweh & the observance of temple rites

Ezra 9-10 calling Israelites who had married Canaanites to repentance

(Neh. 2:18 - Let us rise up and build)

Nehemiah asks for authority to rebuild the walls - He is ridiculed and plotted against.

But always he works at finishing the walls. He inspires others when they are lazy or discouraged. He pays no heed to those who seek to scare him away or flatter him away. One plot is even to tempt him to go into the temple at

night for safety - He recognized the attempt for what it was - an effort to get him to sin. (Nehemiah 4:14 -> similar to title of liberty) Another plot -> threat to tell the King that the wall is a rebellion.

When the walls are done, Ezra comes and reads scriptures to the people, and explains them to the people. (Nehemiah 8:8 "gave the sense")

Nehemiah was first - a man of the scriptures. He read that Israel would be scattered for disobedience, then that it would be gathered in the days of its obedience. ~~§~~

second - a man of faith. He chose to believe that he could - with God's help, accomplish the task of restoring Jerusalem's security and glory.

third - a man of prayer. He prayed mightily that God would keep the promises that he made in the scriptures. ~~then~~

fourth - a man of work. He set about to accomplish the goal he had set for himself, and kept at it no matter what.

fifth - a man of devotion. He could have let himself be scared or enticed away from the walls. ~~And~~ And it would have been perfectly reasonable for him to do so. Instead, he kept to his task, trusting God to be true.

sixth - a man of righteousness. After the wall was built and dedicated, he reminded the people of their duty to the Sabbath day, and had Ezra teach them from the scriptures and ~~separate~~ end the practice of intermarrying with the Canaanites.

Timeline

- 606 Babylon conquers Nineveh
- 605 Babylon takes many Jews Captive - Daniel
- 597 Jehoiachin, Ezekiel, 2nd wave of captives to Babylon
- 587 Jerusalem destroyed
- 562 Nebuchadnezzar dies, Babylon's decline
- 538 Babylon falls to Cyrus. Cyrus authorizes return
- 535 Zerubbabel and Jeshua lead 50k Jews to rebuild altar and foundations of temple
- 533 cornerstone of temple is laid - Samaritan opposition
- 522 Haggai and Zechariah encourage finishing the temple
King Darius commands opposition to cease (Lion's Den?)
- 516 Temple completed
- 486 Esther (460?)
- 458 Ezra returns to Jerusalem
- 445 Nehemiah comes to Jerusalem
- 433 Nehemiah returns to Persia
- 431 2nd mission of Nehemiah. Probable time of Malachi

Things to remember

- Ezra is the one who mostly initiated the practice of weekly synagogue worship.
- The Jews had had to replace their focus on the temple with other things - especially
- Haggai's message is similar to that of Nehemiah - why are you (Jews) allowing yourselves to be distracted from what you know you should be doing? (Building the temple) Even though what you are doing instead (building your homes) is important, you can't be blessed (with rain and prosperity) until you get your priorities back in line.

Like Nehemiah - we are all building something - ourselves. Let no outside influence call you away from that important work.