**The Book of Nehemiah**

**Nehemiah Chapter 1**

1The words of Nehemiah the son of Hacaliah.

News from Jerusalem

Now in the month Chislev, in the twentieth year, as I was in the fortress city of Shushan, 2Hanani, one of my brothers, came from Judah along with other men. And I asked them about the Jews who had escaped and survived the captivity, and about Jerusalem. 3And they said to me, “The remnant there in the province who survived the captivity are in great affliction and reproach. Also, the wall of Jerusalem is broken down and its gates are burned with fire.”

Nehemiah’s Prayer

4And when I heard these words I sat down and wept. And I mourned for a number of days and I fasted and prayed before the God of heaven 5and said,

“I beg you, Yahweh, the God of heaven, the great and awesome God who keeps covenant and covenant faithfulness with those who love him and keep his commandments: 6let your ear now be attentive and your eyes open, that you may listen to the prayer of your servant that I pray before you at this time, day and night, for the children of Israel your servants while I confess the sins of the children of Israel that we have sinned against you. Yes, I and my father’s house have sinned. 7We have dealt very corruptly against you and have not kept the commandments, or the statutes, or the ordinances that you commanded your servant Moses.

8“Remember, I beg you, the word that you commanded your servant Moses, saying, ‘If you are unfaithful, I will scatter you abroad among the peoples; 9but if you return to me and keep my commandments and do them, though your outcasts were in the uttermost part of the heavens, nevertheless I will gather them from there and will bring them to the place that I have chosen, to cause my name to dwell there.’

10“Now these are your servants and your people whom you have redeemed by your great power and by your strong hand. 11Lord, I beg you, let your ear be attentive now to the prayer of your servant, and to the prayer of your servants who delight to fear your name, and please make your servant successful this day and grant him mercy in the presence of this man.”

Now I was the king’s cupbearer.

**Nehemiah Chapter 2**

Nehemiah Sent to Jerusalem

1Now in the month Nisan, in the twentieth year of Artaxerxes the king, when wine was before him, I picked up the wine and gave it to the king. Now I had not been sad before in his presence. 2The king said to me, “Why is your face sad, since you are not sick? This is nothing else but sadness of heart.”

Then I was very much afraid. 3Then 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 waste, and its gates have been consumed with fire?”

4Then the king said to me, “What is your request?”

So I prayed to the God of heaven. 5I said to the king, “If it pleases 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.”

6The king said to me (the queen was also sitting by him), “How long will your journey be? And when will you return?” So it pleased the king to send me when I had given him a time.

7Moreover I said to the king, “If it pleases the king, let letters be given to me for the governors beyond the River, so that they will let me pass through until I come to Judah, 8and a letter to Asaph the keeper of the king’s *royal* park, that he will give me timber to make beams for the gates of the fortress of the Temple, for the wall of the city, and for the house that I will occupy.” The king granted my requests, for the good hand of my God was upon me.

9Then I came to the governors beyond the *Euphrates* River and gave them the king’s letters. Now the king had sent with me commanders of the army and horsemen. 10But when Sanballat the Horonite and Tobiah the servant, the Ammonite, heard of it, it grieved them exceedingly that a man had come to seek the welfare of the children of Israel.

Preparing to Rebuild the Walls

11So I came to Jerusalem and was there three days. 12I arose in the night, I and some few men with me. I did not tell anyone what my God put into my heart to do for Jerusalem, nor was there any animal with me except the animal that I rode on. 13I went out by night by the Valley Gate, even toward the Serpent’s Well and to the Dung Gate, and viewed the walls of Jerusalem that were broken down, and its gates that had been consumed by fire. 14Then I went on to the Fountain Gate and to the King’s Pool, but there was no place for the animal that was under me to pass. 15Then I went up in the night by the ravine and viewed the wall, and I turned back and entered by the Valley Gate, and so returned. 16The rulers did not know where I went or what I did, nor had I as yet told it to the Jews, nor to the priests, nor to the nobles, nor to the rulers, nor to the rest who did the work. 17Then I said to them, “You see the bad situation that we are in, how Jerusalem lies waste and its gates are burned with fire. Come, let’s build up the wall of Jerusalem, so that we will no longer be a disgrace.” 18I told them of the gracious hand of my God that had been upon me, and also of the king’s words that he had spoken to me.

They said, “Let’s rise up and build.” So they strengthened their hands for the good work.

19But when Sanballat the Horonite and Tobiah the servant, the Ammonite, and Geshem the Arabian heard it, they ridiculed us and spoke of us with contempt, and said, “What is this thing that you are doing? Will you rebel against the king?”

20Then I answered them and said to them, “The God of heaven will prosper us. Therefore, we his servants will arise and build; but you have no portion or right or historic claim in Jerusalem.”

**Nehemiah Chapter 3**

Rebuilding the Walls

1Then Eliashib the high priest rose up with his brothers the priests, and they built the Sheep Gate. They dedicated it and hung its doors. They dedicated the wall as far as the Tower of the Hundred, as far as the Tower of Hananel. 2Next to him built the men of Jericho. Next to them built Zaccur the son of Imri.

Fish Gate

3The sons of Hassenaah built the Fish Gate. They laid its beams and hung its doors, its bolts, and its bars. 4Next to them, Meremoth the son of Uriah the son of Hakkoz made repairs. Next to them, Meshullam the son of Berechiah the son of Meshezabel made repairs. Next to them, Zadok the son of Baana made repairs. 5Next to them, the Tekoites made repairs; but their nobles did not put their necks to the work of their lords.

Old Gate, Broad Wall, and Tower of the Ovens

6Joiada the son of Paseah and Meshullam the son of Besodeiah repaired the Old Gate. They laid its beams, and hung its doors, and its bolts, and its bars. 7Next to them, Melatiah the Gibeonite and Jadon the Meronothite, the men of Gibeon and of Mizpah, repaired the residence of the governor *of the province* beyond the River. 8Next to him, Uzziel the son of Harhaiah, goldsmiths, made repairs. Next to him, Hananiah one of the perfumers made repairs, and they restored Jerusalem as far as the Broad Wall.

9Next to them, Rephaiah the son of Hur, the ruler of half the district of Jerusalem, made repairs. 10Next to them, Jedaiah the son of Harumaph made repairs across from his house. Next to him, Hattush the son of Hashabneiah made repairs. 11Malchijah the son of Harim and Hasshub the son of Pahathmoab repaired another portion, and the Tower of the Ovens. 12Next to him, Shallum the son of Hallohesh, the ruler of half the district of Jerusalem, he and his daughters made repairs.

Valley Gate, Dung Gate, and Fountain Gate

13Hanun and the inhabitants of Zanoah repaired the Valley Gate. They built it and hung its doors, its bolts, and its bars, and 1,000 cubits[[1]](#footnote-11648) of the wall to the Dung Gate. 14Malchijah the son of Rechab, the ruler of the district of Beth-haccherem, repaired the Dung Gate. He built it and hung its doors, its bolts, and its bars.

15Shallun the son of Colhozeh, the ruler of the district of Mizpah, repaired the Fountain Gate. He built it and covered it, and hung its doors, its bolts, and its bars, and the wall of the Pool of Shelah by the king’s garden, as far as the stairs that go down from the city of David.

16After him, Nehemiah the son of Azbuk, the ruler 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 to the House of the Warriors. 17After him, the Levites, Rehum the son of Bani made repairs. Next to him, Hashabiah, the ruler of half the district of Keilah, made repairs for his district. 18After him, their brothers, Bavvai the son of Henadad, the ruler of half the district of Keilah, made repairs. 19Next to him, Ezer the son of Jeshua, the ruler of Mizpah, repaired another portion, across from the ascent to the armory at the turning of the wall.

The Angle, Water Gate, and Tower on the Ophel

20After him, Baruch the son of Zabbai earnestly repaired another portion, from the turning of the wall to the door of the house of Eliashib the high priest. 21After him, Meremoth the son of Uriah the son of Hakkoz repaired another portion, from the door of the house of Eliashib even to the end of the house of Eliashib. 22After him, the priests, the men of the Plain, made repairs.

23After them, Benjamin and Hasshub made repairs across from their house. After them, Azariah the son of Maaseiah the son of Ananiah made repairs beside his own house. 24After him, Binnui the son of Henadad repaired another portion, from the house of Azariah to the turning of the wall, and to the corner. 25Palal the son of Uzai made repairs opposite the turning of the wall, and the tower that stands out from the upper house of the king that is by the court of the guard. After him Pedaiah the son of Parosh made repairs. 26And the Temple servants living in Ophel *made repairs* as far as the place opposite the Water Gate toward the east, and the tower that projects out. 27After him the Tekoites repaired another portion, opposite the great tower that projects out and as far as the wall of Ophel.

Horse Gate, Inspection Gate, and Sheep Gate

28Above the Horse Gate the priests made repairs, each one across from his own house. 29After them, Zadok the son of Immer made repairs across from his own house. After him, Shemaiah the son of Shecaniah, the keeper of the East Gate, made repairs. 30After him, Hananiah the son of Shelemiah and Hanun the sixth son of Zalaph, repaired another portion.

After him, Meshullam the son of Berechiah made repairs across from his *own* quarters. 31After him, Malchijah one of the goldsmiths made repairs as far as the house of the Temple servants and of the merchants, across from the Gate of Hammiphkad, and as far as the upper room of the corner. 32Between the upper room of the corner and the Sheep Gate, the goldsmiths and the merchants made repairs.

**Nehemiah Chapter 4**

Progress in Spite of Opposition

1But when Sanballat heard that we were building the wall, he was angry and greatly enraged, and he mocked the Jews. 2and the army of Samaria and said, “What are these feeble Jews doing? Will they fortify themselves? Will they sacrifice? Will they finish in a day? Will they revive the stones out of the heaps of rubbish, since they are burned?” 3Now Tobiah the Ammonite was by him, and he said, “What they are building, if a fox climbed up it, he would break down their stone wall.”

4“Hear, our God, for we are despised; and turn back their reproach on their own head, and give them over as plunder in a land *where they are* captives. 5Do not cover their iniquity and do not let their sin be blotted out from before you, for they have insulted the builders.”

6So we built the wall, and all of the wall was joined together up to half its height, for the people had a mind to work.

7But when Sanballat, Tobiah, the Arabians, the Ammonites, and the Ashdodites heard that the repairing of the walls of Jerusalem was going forward and that the breaches had begun to be filled, then they were very angry, 8and they conspired all of them together to come and fight against Jerusalem and to cause confusion in it. 9But we made our prayer to our God, and set a watch against them day and night because of them.

10Judah said,

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|  | “The strength of the ones who carry burdens is fading,  and there is much rubbish,  so that we are not able  to build the wall.” |

11Our adversaries said, “They will not know nor see until we come into their midst and kill them and cause the work to cease.” 12And when the Jews who lived by them came, they said to us ten times from all places, “Wherever you turn, they will attack us.” 13Therefore I set *men* behind the wall at the lowest points, at the exposed places of the space; I set the people according to their families with their swords, their spears, and their bows. 14I looked, and rose up and said to the nobles and to the rulers and to 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 and your daughters, your wives and your houses.”

Sword and Trowel

15And when our enemies heard that it was known to us, and God had brought their counsel to nothing, we returned—all of us—to the wall, everyone to his work. 16And from that day on, half of my servants worked in the work, and half of them held the spears, the shields, and the bows and the coats of mail, and the leaders stationed themselves behind the whole house of Judah. 17They all built the wall, and those who carried burdens loaded themselves so that with one of his hands he labored on the work and with the other hand he held his weapon, 18and the builders—everyone—wore his sword on his side and built that way. But the one who sounded the shofar was by me. 19I said to the nobles and to the rulers and to the rest of the people, “The work is extensive and widely spread, and we are separated far from each other on the wall. 20Wherever you hear the sound of the shofar, gather there to us. Our God will fight for us.” 21So we worked in the work, and half of them held the spears from the rising of the morning until the stars appeared. 22I also said to the people at that same time, “Let everyone with his servant spend the night inside Jerusalem, so that in the night they will be a guard to us and *also* can labor during the day.” 23So neither I, nor my brothers, nor my servants, nor the men of the guard who followed me, none of us took off our clothes. Everyone took his weapon, *even* to the water.

**Nehemiah Chapter 5**

Social Injustice

1Now there arose a great outcry from the people and from their wives against their brothers the Jews. 2For there were those who said, “We, our sons and our daughters, are many. We must have grain so that we can eat and live.” 3There were also those who said, “We are mortgaging our fields and our vineyards and our houses in order to get grain because of the famine.” 4There were also those who said, “We have borrowed money in order to pay the king’s tax on our fields and our vineyards. 5And now, though our flesh is *the same* as the flesh of our brothers, *and* our children are *the same* as their children, we are forced to subject our sons and our daughters to slavery, and some of our daughters have already been taken into slavery. And we do not have any power to stop this, because other men have our fields and our vineyards.”

6I was very angry when I heard their outcry and these words. 7Then I pondered these things in my heart, and then accused the nobles and the rulers and said to them, “Every one of you is taking interest from his brother.” So I called together a great assembly against them. 8I said to them, “We, as far as we were able, have bought back our Jewish brothers that were sold to the nations. Now you are selling your *Jewish* brothers, only to have them sold *back* to us!” Then they remained silent and could not say a word. 9Also I said, “What you are doing is not right. Shouldn’t you walk in the fear of our God, and avoid the reproach of the nations our enemies? 10Also, I *and* my brothers and my servants lend them money and grain. Please, let’s stop charging interest. 11Please, return to them this very day their fields, their vineyards, their olive groves and their houses, and the one-hundredth of the money and the grain *and* the new wine, and the oil, that you have been charging them.”

12Then they said, “We will return them, and will require nothing of them. We will do just as you say.”

Then I called the priests and took an oath from them, that they would do what they had said. 13Also I shook out the folds of my cloak and said, “So may God shake out every man from his house and from his labor that doesn’t perform this promise. Even like this may he shaken out and have nothing.”

All the assembly said, “Amen,” and praised Yahweh. And the people did what they had promised.

Good and Bad Governors

14Also, from the time that I was appointed to be their governor in the land of Judah, from the twentieth year even to the thirty-second year of Artaxerxes the king, which is 12 years, I and my brothers have not eaten the food allotted to the governor. 15But the former governors who were before me were supported by the people and took food and wine from them, in addition to 40 shekels of silver.[[2]](#footnote-23767) Even their servants[[3]](#footnote-14081) domineered the people, but I did not do that because of the fear of God. 16I also continued in the work on this wall. We did not acquire any land, and all my servants were gathered there for the work.

17Furthermore, there were at my table 150 men, Jews and rulers, besides those who came to us from the nations that were around us. 18Now what was prepared for me *to eat* for one day was one ox and six choice sheep, *and* also fowls were prepared, and every ten days *there was* an abundance of all kinds of wine. Yet in spite of all this, I did not demand the food allotted to the governor because the burden on the people was so heavy.

19Remember me, my God, for good, all that I have done for this people.

**Nehemiah Chapter 6**

Attempts to Discourage the Builders

1Now when it was reported to Sanballat, and Tobiah, and to Geshem the Arabian, and to the rest of our enemies, that I had rebuilt the wall and that there was no gap left in it (though even to that time I had not set up the doors in the gates) 2that Sanballat and Geshem sent to me, saying, “Come, let’s meet together in Hakkephirim in the plain of Ono.” But they intended to harm me.

3I sent messengers to them, saying, “I am doing a great work so that I cannot come down. Why should the work cease while I leave it and come down to you?” 4They sent to me four times in this way, and I answered them in the same manner. 5Then Sanballat sent his servant to me the same way the fifth time with an open letter in his hand 6in which was written,

“It is reported among the nations, and Gashmu[[4]](#footnote-18145) says it, that you and the Jews intend to rebel; that is why you are building the wall. And according to these reports you want to be their king 7and you have also appointed prophets in Jerusalem to proclaim about you, saying, ‘There is a king in Judah!’ Now it will be reported to the king according to these words. So come, let us confer together.”

8Then I sent to him, saying, “Nothing like what you are saying has been done, but you are inventing them in your own mind.” 9They all wanted to make us afraid, saying, “Their hands will be weakened from the work, so that it not be completed.”

“So now, *O God,* strengthen my hands.”

Attempts to Intimidate Nehemiah

10I went to the house of Shemaiah the son of Delaiah the son of Mehetabel who was confined to his home, and he said,

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|  | “Let’s meet together in the house of God,  inside the Holy Place,  and let’s shut the doors of the Holy Place;  for they will come to kill you,  yes, in the night they will come to kill you.” |

11I said, “Should a man like me run away? Should a man like me go into the Temple to save his life? I will not go in.” 12Then I understood and saw that God had not sent him, for he pronounced this prophecy against me. Tobiah and Sanballat had hired him. 13He was hired so that I would be afraid and act in this way and sin, and *also* so that they could give me a bad name in order to discredit me.”

14O my God, remember Tobiah and Sanballat for these works of theirs, and also *remember* the prophetess Noadiah and the rest of the prophets that wanted to make me afraid.

The Wall Completed

15So the wall was finished in the twenty-fifth day of Elul, in 52 days. 16And when all our enemies heard of it, all the nations that were around us were afraid and their self-esteem fell greatly, for they recognized that this work had been accomplished *with the help* of our God.

17Also, in those days the nobles of Judah sent many letters to Tobiah, and Tobiah’s letters kept coming to them. 18For there were many in Judah who were bound by oath to him because he was the son-in-law of Shecaniah the son of Arah, and his son Jehohanan had taken the daughter of Meshullam the son of Berechiah as a wife. 19Also, they kept speaking to me about his good deeds and they reported my words to him. And Tobiah sent letters to put me in fear.

**Nehemiah Chapter 7**

The Exiles Return

1Now it came to pass when the wall was built and I had set up the doors, and the gatekeepers and the singers and the Levites were appointed, 2that I put my brother Hanani, and Hananiah the governor of the castle, in charge of Jerusalem; for he was a faithful man, and feared God more than many. 3I said to them, “Do not let the gates of Jerusalem be opened until the sun is hot; and while they stand guard, let them shut the doors, and you bar them, and appoint watches of the inhabitants of Jerusalem, everyone in his watch, with everyone near his house.”

4Now the city was wide and large, but the people were few in it and the houses were not built. 5My God put into my heart to gather together the nobles and the rulers and the people that they might be reckoned by genealogy. I found the book of the genealogy of those who came up at the first, and I found written in it:

6These are the sons of the province who went up out of the captivity of those exiles whom Nebuchadnezzar the king of Babylon had carried into exile and who returned to Jerusalem and to Judah, every one to his city; 7who came with Zerubbabel, Jeshua,[[5]](#footnote-28918) Nehemiah, Azariah, Raamiah, Nahamani, Mordecai, Bilshan, Mispereth, Bigvai, Nehum, Baanah.

The number of the men of the people of Israel:

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| 8 | The sons of Parosh, 2,172. |
| 9 | The sons of Shephatiah, 372. |
| 10 | The sons of Arah, 652. |
| 11 | The sons of Pahathmoab, 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 sons 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,47the sons of Keros, the sons of Sia, the sons of Padon, |
| 48 | the sons of Lebana, the sons of Hagaba, the sons of Salmai,49the sons of Hanan, the sons of Giddel, the sons of Gahar, |
| 50 | the sons of Reaiah, the sons of Rezin, the sons of Nekoda,51the sons of Gazzam, the sons of Uzza, the sons of Paseah. |
| 52 | The sons of Besai, the sons of Meunim, the sons of Nephushesim,53the sons of Bakbuk, the sons of Hakupha, the sons of Harhur, |
| 54 | the sons of Bazlith, the sons of Mehida, the sons of Harsha,55the 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 Perida,58the 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 those who went up from Tel Melah, Tel Harsha, Cherub, Addon, and Immer; but they could not show their fathers’ houses nor their seed, 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 called according to their name.64These searched for their genealogical records, but could not find them. Therefore were they deemed defiled and excluded from the priesthood.65The governor said to them that they could not eat of the most holy things until a priest arose *who could consult* with the Urim and Thummim. |
| 66 | The whole assembly together was 42,360, |
| 67 | besides their male servants and their female servants of whom there were 7,337; and they had 245 singing men and singing women. |
| 68 | Their horses were 736, their mules, 245, |
| 69 | their camels, 435, their donkeys, 6,720. |

70Some from among the heads of fathers’ households gave to the work. The governor gave to the treasury 1,000 darics of gold, 50 basins and 530 priests’ garments. 71Some of the heads of fathers’ households gave into the treasury of the work 20,000 darics of gold and 2,200 minas of silver. 72That which the rest of the people gave was 20,000 darics of gold, and 2,000 minas of silver and 67 priests’ garments. 73So the priests, and the Levites, and the gatekeepers, and the singers, and some of the people, and the Temple servants, and all Israel, lived in their cities.

Public Reading of the Law

When the seventh month had come, the children of Israel were in their cities.

**Nehemiah Chapter 8**

1All the people gathered themselves together as one man into the wide place that was before the Water Gate, and they spoke to Ezra the scribe to bring the book of the Law of Moses that Yahweh had commanded to Israel. 2Ezra the priest brought the law before the assembly, both men and women and all who could hear with understanding, on the first day of the seventh month. 3He read from it facing the open space that was in front of the Water Gate from early morning until midday, in the presence of the men and the women and of those who could understand; and the ears of all the people were attentive to the book of the law. 4Ezra the scribe stood on a pulpit of wood that they had made for the purpose; and beside him stood Mattithiah, and Shema, and Anaiah, and Uriah, and Hilkiah, and Maaseiah on his right hand; and on his left hand Pedaiah, and Mishael, and Malchijah, and Hashum, and Hashbaddanah, Zechariah and Meshullam. 5Ezra 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 6and Ezra blessed Yahweh the great God. All the people answered, “Amen, amen,” with the lifting up of their hands. They kneeled and worshiped Yahweh with their faces to the ground.

7Also Jeshua, and Bani, and Sherebiah, Jamin, Akkub, Shabbethai, Hodiah, Maaseiah, Kelita, Azariah, Jozabad, Hanan, Pelaiah and the Levites caused the people to understand the law, and the people stayed in their place. 8They read in the book, in the law of God, distinctly, and they gave the sense so that they understood the reading. 9Nehemiah, who was the governor, and Ezra the priest the scribe, and the Levites who taught the people, said to all the people, “This day is holy to Yahweh your God. Do not mourn nor weep.” For all the people wept when they heard the words of the law. 10Then he said to them, “Go your way. Eat the fat, drink the sweet, and send portions to him for whom nothing is prepared; for this day is holy to our Lord. Do not be grieved, for the joy of Yahweh is your strength.” 11So the Levites stilled all the people, saying, “Be quiet, because the day is holy. Do not be grieved.” 12All the people went off to eat and to drink and to send portions *to others* and to have a great celebration, because they had understood the words that were explained to them.

Festival of Booths Observed

13On the second day the heads of fathers’ households of all the people, *and* the priests and the Levites gathered together to Ezra the scribe to gain insight into the words of the law. 14They found written in the law that Yahweh had commanded by Moses that the children of Israel were to dwell in booths during the feast of the seventh month, 15and that they should proclaim in all their cities and in Jerusalem, saying, “Go out to the mountain and get olive branches and branches of the pine, and myrtle branches, and palm branches, and branches of thick trees to make booths, as it is written.” 16So the people went out and brought them and made booths for themselves, each on the roof of his house and in their courtyards, and in the courtyards of the house of God and in the wide place of the Water Gate and in the wide place of the Gate of Ephraim. 17All the assembly of those who had come back from the captivity made booths and lived in the booths, for since the days of Joshua the son of Nun to that day the children of Israel had not celebrated in that way. There was very great gladness. 18Also day after day, from the first day to the last day, he read in the book of the law of God. They kept the feast seven days; and on the eighth day was a solemn assembly according to the ordinance.

**Nehemiah Chapter 9**

National Confession of Sin

1Now in the twenty-fourth day of this month the children of Israel were assembled with fasting and with sackcloth and dirt on their heads. 2The seed of Israel separated themselves from all foreigners and stood and confessed their sins and the iniquities of their fathers. 3They stood up in their place and read in the book of the law of Yahweh their God a fourth part of the day; and a fourth part they confessed and worshiped Yahweh their God. 4Then Jeshua, and Bani, Kadmiel, Shebaniah, Bunni, Sherebiah, Bani, and Chenani of the Levites stood up on the stairs and cried out with a loud voice to Yahweh their God. 5Then the Levites, Jeshua and Kadmiel, Bani, Hashabneiah, Sherebiah, Hodiah, Shebaniah and Pethahiah said, “Stand up and bless Yahweh your God from everlasting to everlasting!

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|  | “Blessed be your glorious name,  which is exalted above all blessing and praise! |
| 6 | You are Yahweh, you alone.  You have made heaven,  the heaven of heavens with all their army,  the earth and all things that are on it,  the seas and all that is in them,  and you preserve them all.  The army of heaven worships you. |
| 7 | You are Yahweh,  the God who chose Abram  and brought him out of Ur of the Chaldees,  and gave him the name “Abraham.” |
| 8 | And you found his heart to be faithful before you,  and you cut a covenant with him  to give the land of the Canaanite,  the Hittite, the Amorite and the Perizzite,  and the Jebusite and the Girgashite,  to give it to his seed,  and you have kept your words  because you are righteous. |
| 9 | “You saw the affliction of our fathers in Egypt  and heard their cry by the Red Sea,[[6]](#footnote-22202) |
| 10 | and you did signs and wonders against Pharaoh  and against all his servants and against all the people of his land;  for you knew that they acted arrogantly against them  and you made a name for yourself,  as it is this day. |
| 11 | You divided the sea before them  so that they went through the midst of the sea on the dry land,  and you threw their pursuers into the depths  like a stone into the mighty waters. |
| 12 | Moreover, you led them by a pillar of cloud during the day,  and by a pillar of fire at night  to give them light on the path that they were to travel. |
| 13 | Also, you came down on Mount Sinai  and spoke with them from heaven  and gave them right rules and true laws,  good statutes and commandments, |
| 14 | and made known to them your holy Sabbath,  and commanded them commandments and statutes  and a law by Moses your servant, |
| 15 | and gave them bread from heaven for their hunger  and brought out water for them from the rock for their thirst,  and commanded them to go in and take possession of the land  that you had sworn to give them. |
| 16 | “But they and our fathers acted arrogantly  and stiffened their necks, and did not listen to your commands, |
| 17 | and refused to obey.  They did not keep in mind your wonders  that you did among them,  but they stiffened their necks, and in their rebellion they appointed a leader  to return to their slavery *in Egypt*.  But you are a God ready to pardon,  gracious and merciful,  slow to anger and abundant in covenant faithfulness,  and did not abandon them. |
| 18 | Yes, when they had made themselves a cast metal calf and said,  ‘This is your god who brought you up out of Egypt,’  and had committed awful blasphemies, |
| 19 | yet you in your abundant mercies  did not abandon them in the wilderness.  The pillar of cloud  that led them on the path  did not depart from over them by day,  nor did the pillar of fire at night  that showed them light and the path that they were to travel *depart from them*. |
| 20 | You also gave your good spirit to instruct them  and did not withhold your manna from their mouth,  and you gave them water for their thirst. |
| 21 | Yes, 40 years you sustained them in the wilderness.  They lacked nothing.  Their clothes did not grow old  and their feet did not swell. |
| 22 | “You also gave them kingdoms and peoples  and you allotted to them every corner *of the land.*  And they took possession of the land of Sihon,  even the land of the king of Heshbon,  and the land of Og king of Bashan. |
| 23 | You also multiplied their children  as the stars of heaven  and brought them into the land  concerning which you said to their fathers that they were to go in and take possession of it. |
| 24 | So the children *of Israel* went in and took possession of the land,  and you subdued before them the inhabitants of the land, the Canaanites,  and gave them into their hands,  with their kings and the peoples of the land,  that they might do with them as they pleased. |
| 25 | They took fortified cities and a rich land,  and took possession of houses full of all good things,  cisterns *that had been* dug out, vineyards  and olive groves and fruit trees in abundance.  So they ate, were filled,  became fat, and delighted themselves in your great goodness. |
| 26 | “Nevertheless they were disobedient and rebelled against you  and cast your law behind their back,  and killed your prophets  that testified against them  in order to turn them back to you,  and they committed awful blasphemies. |
| 27 | Therefore you delivered them into the hand of their adversaries  who oppressed them.  In the time of their trouble, when they cried out to you,  you heard from heaven;  and according to your abundant mercies  you gave them saviors who saved them  out of the hand of their adversaries. |
| 28 | But after they had relief,  they again did evil in your presence,  so you left them in the hand of their enemies  and they had dominion over them.  But when they returned and cried out to you,  you heard from heaven,  and you delivered them according to your mercies many times |
| 29 | and you testified against them in order to bring them back to your law.  But they acted arrogantly  and did not listen to your commandments,  but sinned against your ordinances,  (which if a man does, he will live by them)  turned their backs,  stiffened their necks, and would not hear. |
| 30 | And for many years you put up with them  and testified against them by your spirit through the hand of your prophets,  but they would not give ear.  Therefore you gave them into the hand of the peoples of the lands. |
| 31 | Nevertheless in your abundant mercy  you did not completely destroy them, nor abandon them  because you are a gracious and merciful God. |
| 32 | “Now therefore, our God, the great, the mighty,  and the awesome God who keeps covenant and covenant faithfulness,  do not let all the hardship that has come upon us seem little to you;  upon our kings, upon our leaders  and upon our priests, and upon our prophets,  and upon our fathers, and upon all your people  since the time of the kings of Assyria to this day. |
| 33 | However you are righteous in all that has come upon us  because you have acted truly,  but we have acted wickedly, |
| 34 | and our kings, our leaders, our priests,  and our fathers have not kept your law,  nor listened to your commandments  and your testimonies with which you testified against them. |
| 35 | For they have not served you in their kingdom,  and in your great goodness that you gave them  and in the large and rich land that you gave before them,  neither did they turn from their wicked works. |
| 36 | “Behold, we are servants this day,  and as for the land that you gave to our fathers  to eat its fruit and its good,  behold, we are servants in it. |
| 37 | It yields much increase to the kings  whom you have set over us  because of our sins:  also they have power over our bodies  and over our livestock at their pleasure,  and we are in great distress.” |

Israel’s Vow of Faithfulness

38Now because of all this, we cut a firm covenant and write it, and our officials *and* our Levites, and our priests seal it.

**Nehemiah Chapter 10**

1Now those who sealed *the document* were:

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|  | 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 | The Levites: namely, Jeshua the son of Azaniah, Binnui of the sons of Henadad, Kadmiel, |
| 10 | and their brothers, Shebaniah, Hodiah, Kelita, Pelaiah, Hanan, |
| 11 | Mica, Rehob, Hashabiah, |
| 12 | Zaccur, Sherebiah, Shebaniah, |
| 13 | Hodiah, Bani, Beninu. |
| 14 | The chiefs of the people: Parosh, Pahathmoab, Elam, Zattu, Bani, |
| 15 | Bunni, Azgad, Bebai, |
| 16 | Adonijah, Bigvai, Adin, |
| 17 | Ater, Hezekiah, Azzur, |
| 18 | Hodiah, Hashum, Bezai, |
| 19 | Hariph, Anathoth, Nobai, |
| 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 | and Ahiah, Hanan, Anan, |
| 27 | Malluch, Harim, Baanah. |

28The 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, along with their wives, their sons and their daughters—everyone who had knowledge and understanding— 29joined with their brothers, their nobles, and entered into a curse and into an oath, to walk in God’s law that was given by Moses the servant of God and to observe and do all the commandments of Yahweh our Lord, and his ordinances and his statutes,

Details of the Vow

30and that we would not give our daughters to the peoples of the land, nor take their daughters for our sons.

31And if the peoples of the land bring wares or any grain on the Sabbath day to sell, that we would not buy from them on the Sabbath or on a holy day; and that we would leave *the land uncultivated* the seventh year, and leave off the collection of every debt.

32Also we made ordinances for ourselves to charge ourselves yearly one-third of a shekel[[7]](#footnote-26109) for the service of the house of our God, 33for the Bread of the Presence, and for the regular grain offering, and for the burnt offering, for the Sabbaths, for the new moons, for the set feasts, and for the holy things, and for the sin offerings to make atonement for Israel, and for all the work of the house of our God.

34And we cast lots—the priests, the Levites, and the people—for the *donation of the* wood offering, to bring it into the house of our God according to our fathers’ houses at times appointed, year after year, to burn it on the altar of Yahweh our God as it is written in the law,

35and to bring the firstfruit of our soil and the firstfruit of all fruit from all kinds of trees, year after year, to the house of Yahweh, 36and the firstborn of our sons and of our livestock just as it is written in the law, and the firstborn of our herds and of our flocks, to bring to the house of our God, to the priests who minister in the house of our God; 37and that we were to bring the firstfruit of our dough and our wave offerings, and the fruit of all kinds of trees, the new wine and the oil, to the priests, to the rooms of the house of our God; and the tithes of our ground to the Levites, for they, the Levites, receive the tithes in all the cities where we work. 38The priest, the son of Aaron, must be with the Levites when the Levites take tithes. And the Levites are to bring up a tithe of the tithes to the house of our God, to the rooms, into the treasure house. 39For the children of Israel and the children of Levi are to bring the wave offering of the grain, of the new wine and of the oil to the rooms where the accessories of the sanctuary are *kept*, and *where* the priests who serve, and the gatekeepers, and the singers *are*. We will not abandon the house of our God.

**Nehemiah Chapter 11**

Resettling Jerusalem

1The leaders of the people lived in Jerusalem, and the rest of the people cast lots to bring one of ten to live in Jerusalem the holy city, and nine-tenths in the other cities. 2The people blessed all the men who willingly offered themselves to live in Jerusalem.

3Now these are the chiefs of the province who lived in Jerusalem, but in the cities of Judah everyone lived in his possession in their own cities, that is, Israel, the priests and the Levites, and the Temple servants, and the children of Solomon’s servants. 4In Jerusalem lived certain of the children of Judah and of the children of Benjamin.

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|  | Of the children of Judah: Athaiah the son of Uzziah, the son of Zechariah, the son of Amariah, the son of Shephatiah, the son of Mahalalel of the children of Perez;5and Maaseiah the son of Baruch, the son of Colhozeh, the son of Hazaiah, the son of Adaiah, the son of Joiarib, the son of Zechariah, the son of the Shilonite.6All the sons of Perez who lived in Jerusalem were 468 valiant men. |
| 7 | These are the sons of Benjamin: Sallu the son of Meshullam, the son of Joed, the son of Pedaiah, the son of Kolaiah, the son of Maaseiah, the son of Ithiel, the son of Jeshaiah.8After him Gabbai, Sallai, 928.9Joel the son of Zichri was their overseer, and Judah the son of Hassenuah was second over the city. |
| 10 | Of the priests: Jedaiah the son of Joiarib, Jachin,11Seraiah the son of Hilkiah, the son of Meshullam, the son of Zadok, the son of Meraioth, the son of Ahitub, the ruler of God’s house,12and their brothers who did the work of the house, 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,13and his brothers, chiefs of fathers’ households, 242; and Amashsai the son of Azarel, the son of Ahzai, the son of Meshillemoth, the son of Immer,14and their brothers, mighty men of valor, 128; and their overseer was Zabdiel, the son of Haggedolim. |
| 15 | Of the Levites: Shemaiah the son of Hasshub, the son of Azrikam, the son of Hashabiah, the son of Bunni;16and Shabbethai and Jozabad of the chiefs of the Levites who had the oversight of the outward business of God’s house;17and Mattaniah the son of Mica, the son of Zabdi, the son of Asaph, who was the chief to begin the thanksgiving in prayer, and Bakbukiah, the second among his brothers; and Abda the son of Shammua, the son of Galal, the son of Jeduthun.18All the Levites in the holy city were 284. |
| 19 | Moreover the gatekeepers, Akkub, Talmon, and their brothers who kept watch at the gates were 172. |

20The rest of Israel, the priests, *and* the Levites, were in all the cities of Judah, everyone in his inheritance. 21But the Temple servants lived in Ophel, and Ziha and Gishpa were over the Temple servants.

The Levites and Priests

22The overseer also of the Levites at Jerusalem was Uzzi the son of Bani, the son of Hashabiah, the son of Mattaniah, the son of Mica, of the sons of Asaph, the singers, over the business of the house of God. 23For there was a commandment from the king concerning them, and a settled provision for the singers as every day required. 24Pethahiah the son of Meshezabel of the children of Zerah the son of Judah was at the king’s hand in all matters concerning the people. 25As for the villages with their fields,

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|  | some of the children of Judah lived in Kiriath-arba and its towns, and in Dibon and its towns, and in Jekabzeel and its villages, |
| 26 | and in Jeshua, and in Moladah, and Beth-pelet, |
| 27 | and in Hazar-shual, and in Beer-sheba and its towns, |
| 28 | and in Ziklag, and in Meconah and in its towns, |
| 29 | and in En-rimmon, and in Zorah, and in Jarmuth, |
| 30 | Zanoah, Adullam and their villages, Lachish and its fields, Azekah and its towns. So they encamped from Beer-sheba to the valley of Hinnom. |
| 31 | The children of Benjamin also lived from Geba onward, at Michmash and Ai,[[8]](#footnote-19293) and 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 | Of the Levites, certain divisions in Judah settled in Benjamin’s territory. |

**Nehemiah Chapter 12**

1Now these are the priests and the Levites who went up with Zerubbabel the son of Shealtiel, and Jeshua:

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|  | 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, Hilkiah, Jedaiah. |

These were the chiefs of the priests and of their brothers in the days of Jeshua.

8Moreover the Levites:

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|  | Jeshua, Binnui, Kadmiel, Sherebiah, Judah, and Mattaniah, who was over the thanksgiving, he and his brothers. |
| 9 | Also Bakbukiah and Unno, their brothers, were over against them according to their offices. |
| 10 | Jeshua fathered Joiakim, and Joiakim fathered Eliashib, and Eliashib fathered Joiada, |
| 11 | and Joiada fathered Jonathan, and Jonathan fathered Jaddua. |

12In the days of Joiakim were priests, heads of fathers’ households:

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|  | 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 | and of Joiarib, Mattenai; of Jedaiah, Uzzi; |
| 20 | of Sallai, Kallai; of Amok, Eber; |
| 21 | of Hilkiah, Hashabiah; of Jedaiah, Nethanel. |

22As for the Levites, in the days of Eliashib, Joiada, and Johanan and Jaddua, there were recorded the heads of fathers’ households; also the priests, in the reign of Darius the Persian. 23The sons of Levi, heads of fathers’ households, were written in the Book of the Chronicles, even until the days of Johanan the son of Eliashib. 24The chiefs of the Levites: Hashabiah, Sherebiah, and Jeshua the son of Kadmiel, with their brothers over against them, to praise and give thanks according to the commandment of David the man of God, watch next to watch. 25Mattaniah, and Bakbukiah, Obadiah, Meshullam, Talmon, Akkub, were gatekeepers, keeping the watch at the storehouses of the gates. 26These were 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 the scribe.

Dedication of the Wall

27At the dedication of the wall of Jerusalem they sought the Levites out of all their places to bring them to Jerusalem, to keep the dedication with gladness, both with giving thanks and with singing, with cymbals, with lyres, and with harps. 28The sons of the singers gathered together, both out of the plain around Jerusalem and from the villages of the Netophathites; 29also from Beth-gilgal, and out of the fields of Geba and Azmaveth, for the singers had built them villages around Jerusalem. 30The priests and the Levites purified themselves, and they purified the people and the gates and the wall.

31Then I brought up the officials of Judah on the wall and appointed two great choirs who gave thanks and went in procession. One went on the right hand on the wall, *south* toward the Dung Gate, 32and after them went Hoshaiah and half of the officials of Judah, 33and Azariah, Ezra, and Meshullam, 34Judah and Benjamin and Shemaiah and Jeremiah, 35and certain of the priests’ sons with trumpets: 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; 36and his brothers, Shemaiah, and Azarel, Milalai, Gilalai, Maai, Nethanel, and Judah, Hanani, with the musical instruments of David the man of God; and Ezra the scribe was before them. 37By the spring gate, and straight before them, they went up by the stairs of the city of David, at the ascent of the wall, above the house of David, even to the Water Gate eastward.

38The other choir of those who gave thanks went to the north, and I after them with half of the people, on the wall past the Tower of the Ovens, as far as the Broad Wall, 39and above the Gate of Ephraim, and by the Old Gate, and by the Fish Gate, and the Tower of Hananel, and the Tower of the Hundred, to the Sheep Gate; and they stood still at the Gate of the Guard. 40So the two choirs of those who gave thanks stood in God’s house, and I and the half of the rulers with me; 41and the priests,

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|  | Eliakim, Maaseiah, Miniamin, Micaiah, Elioenai, Zechariah and Hananiah, with trumpets; |
| 42 | and Maaseiah, and Shemaiah, and Eleazar, and Uzzi, and Jehohanan, and Malchijah, and Elam, and Ezer. |

The singers sang loud with Jezrahiah their overseer.43They offered great sacrifices that day, and rejoiced, for God had made them rejoice with great joy; and the women also and the children rejoiced, so that the joy of Jerusalem was heard far away.

Support of the Levites’ Ministry

44On that day men were appointed for the storerooms for the wave offerings, the firstfruits, and the tithes, to gather into them the portions required by the Law for the priests and Levites according to the fields of the cities, for Judah rejoiced over the priests and for the Levites who ministered. 45They performed the duty of their God and the duty of the purification, and so did the singers and the gatekeepers, according to the commandment of David and of Solomon his son. 46For long ago, in the days of David and Asaph, there was a director of the singers, and songs of praise and thanksgiving to God. 47In the days of Zerubbabel and the days of Nehemiah, all Israel gave the daily portions to the singers and the gatekeepers, and *then* they set apart what was for the Levites, and the Levites set apart what was for the sons of Aaron.

**Nehemiah Chapter 13**

Nehemiah’s Further Reforms

1On that day they read from the book of Moses in the hearing of the people, and in it was found written that no Ammonite or Moabite was to ever enter into the assembly of God, 2because they did not meet the children of Israel with food and with water, but hired Balaam against them to curse them (however our God turned the curse into a blessing). 3And when they had heard the law they separated from Israel all those who were of mixed ancestry.

4Now before this, Eliashib the priest, who had been appointed over the storerooms of the house of our God, and who was related to Tobiah, 5had prepared for him a large room where previously they had put the grain offerings, the frankincense, and the *Temple* accessories, and the tithes of the grain, the new wine, and the oil, which were commanded to be given to the Levites, and the singers, and the gatekeepers; and *also* the contributions for the priests.

6But during all this *time* I was not at Jerusalem, for in the thirty-second year of Artaxerxes king of Babylon I went to the king. Then after some time I asked the king for a leave of absence 7and I came to Jerusalem and discovered the evil that Eliashib had done for Tobiah by providing him a room in the courtyard of God’s house. 8And I was greatly displeased and threw all the household goods of Tobiah out of the room. 9Then I gave orders that they purify the rooms, and I brought back there the accessories of the house of God, with the grain offerings and the frankincense. 10I also discovered that the portions of the Levites had not been given to them, so the Levites and the singers who did the work had fled, everyone to his own field. 11So I contended with the rulers, and said, “Why is God’s house abandoned?” Then I gathered the Levites[[9]](#footnote-29042) together and restored them to their places. 12Then all Judah brought the tithe of the grain and the new wine and the oil to the storerooms. 13As supervisors over the storehouses I appointed Shelemiah the priest and Zadok the scribe, and from the Levites, Pedaiah, and next to them was Hanan the son of Zaccur, the son of Mattaniah; for they were considered faithful, and their task was to distribute to their fellow Levites.[[10]](#footnote-12504)

14Remember me, O my God, concerning this, and do not wipe out my good deeds that I have done for the house of my God and for its service.

15In those days saw I in Judah some people treading winepresses on the Sabbath, and bringing in heaps *of grain* and loading *them on* donkeys, and also wine, grapes, and figs, and all kinds of loads that they brought into Jerusalem on the Sabbath day. And I warned them on the day in which they sold food. 16Men of Tyre who lived in the city,[[11]](#footnote-15824)brought in fish and all kinds of goods, and sold *them* on the Sabbath to the children of Judah, even in Jerusalem!

17Then I contended with the nobles of Judah and said to them, “What is this evil thing that you are doing, and profaning the Sabbath day? 18Didn’t your fathers do thus, and didn’t our God bring all this evil on us and on this city? Yet you bring more wrath on Israel by profaning the Sabbath.”

19So when the gates of Jerusalem began to be dark before the Sabbath *day began*, I commanded that the gates were to be shut, and commanded that they should not be opened until after the Sabbath. I set some of my servants at the gates so that no load would be brought in on the Sabbath day. 20Then the merchants and sellers of all kinds of goods camped overnight outside of Jerusalem once or twice. 21But I warned them and said to them, “Why are you staying over against the wall? If you do that again, I will lay hands on you.” From that time on, they didn’t come on the Sabbath. 22I commanded the Levites to purify themselves and that they were to come and guard the gates, in order to keep the Sabbath day holy.

Remember me, O my God, for this also, and have compassion on me in accord with the greatness of your covenant faithfulness.

23In those days I also saw the Jews who had married women of Ashdod, Ammon, and Moab, 24and half of their children spoke the language of Ashdod, and they could not speak in the language of Judah, but only the language of each people. 25I contended with them and cursed them and beat some of them, and pulled out their hair. And I made them swear by God, *saying* “You must not give your daughters to their sons, nor take their daughters for your sons, or for yourselves. 26Didn’t Solomon king of Israel sin by these things? Yet among the many nations was there no king like him, and he was beloved by his God, and God made him king over all Israel. Nevertheless foreign women caused even him to sin. 27Should we then listen to you all and do all this great evil, to be unfaithful against our God by marrying foreign women?”

28One of the sons of Joiada, the son of Eliashib the high priest, was son-in-law to Sanballat the Horonite, so I chased him from me.

29Remember them, my God, because they have defiled the priesthood and the covenant of the priesthood, and of the Levites.

30Thus I cleansed them from all foreigners and appointed duties for the priests and for the Levites, everyone in his work; 31and *I arranged for* the wood offering at appointed times, and for the firstfruit.

Remember me, O my God, for good.

1. About 500 yards (457 meters) [↑](#footnote-ref-11648)
2. Roughly a pound (453.5 grams) [↑](#footnote-ref-23767)
3. I.e., their officials [↑](#footnote-ref-14081)
4. Spelled Geshem in v. 2 [↑](#footnote-ref-18145)
5. The High Priest; spelled “Joshua” in Zech. 3:1 [↑](#footnote-ref-28918)
6. Lit. “Reed Sea” [↑](#footnote-ref-22202)
7. Roughly 0.13 ounces (3.7 grams) [↑](#footnote-ref-26109)
8. “Ai” is spelled “Aia” in the Hebrew text. [↑](#footnote-ref-19293)
9. Lit. “them” [↑](#footnote-ref-29042)
10. Lit. “brothers” [↑](#footnote-ref-12504)
11. Lit. “in it” [↑](#footnote-ref-15824)