

Jesus in the Old Testament

The Return to Jerusalem

Points to Consider

1. Zerubbabel Returns to Rebuild the Temple
2. Ezra Returns to Restore the Law
3. Nehemiah Returns to Rebuild the Wall

Zerubbabel Returns to Rebuild the Temple

Ezra 1:1-4 *Now in the first year of Cyrus king of Persia, that the word of the Lord by the mouth of Jeremiah might be fulfilled, the Lord stirred up the spirit of Cyrus king of Persia, so that he made a proclamation throughout all his kingdom, and also put it in writing, saying, Thus says Cyrus king of Persia:*

All the kingdoms of the earth the Lord God of heaven has given me. And He has commanded me to build Him a house at Jerusalem which is in Judah. 3 Who is among you of all His people? May his God be with him, and let him go up to Jerusalem which is in Judah, and build the house of the Lord God of Israel (He is God), which is in Jerusalem. 4 And whoever is left in any place where he dwells, let the men of his place help him with silver and gold, with goods and livestock, besides the freewill offerings for the house of God which is in Jerusalem.

Cyrus sent out a decree stating that the people of Judah could return to Jerusalem and rebuild the _____.

Those not wanting to return to Jerusalem were instructed to _____ give to those returning to rebuild the temple.

Cyrus also sent back some of the gold and silver that was taken from the temple by _____.

Ezra 2:64-67 *The whole assembly together was forty-two thousand three hundred and sixty, 65 besides their male and female servants, of whom there were seven thousand three hundred and thirty-seven; and they had two hundred men and women singers. 66 Their horses were seven hundred and thirty-six, their mules two hundred and forty-five, 67 their camels four hundred and thirty-five, and their donkeys six thousand seven hundred and twenty.*

The first group that went back included about _____ people.

Ezra 3:10-13 *When the builders laid the foundation of the temple of the Lord, the priests stood in their apparel with trumpets, and the Levites, the sons of Asaph, with cymbals, to praise the Lord, according to the ordinance of David king of Israel. 11 And they sang responsively, praising and giving thanks to the Lord: "For He is good, For His mercy endures forever toward Israel." Then all the people shouted with a great shout, when they praised the Lord, because the foundation of the house of the Lord was laid. 12 But many of the priests and Levites and heads of the fathers' houses, old men who had seen the first temple, wept with a loud voice when the foundation of this temple was laid before their eyes. Yet many shouted aloud for joy, 13 so that the people could not discern the noise of the*

shout of joy from the noise of the weeping of the people, for the people shouted with a loud shout, and the sound was heard afar off.

In the _____ year of their return the foundation of the temple was laid. They sang the same song that Solomon had led when the _____ of the Covenant was moved from the tabernacle to the newly constructed temple. The people who had seen the first temple started **to** _____, while everyone else shouted for _____.

During the time of Ahasuerus (Artaxerxes) the adversaries of Judah wrote the king a letter telling him that the Jews were rebuilding the temple.

Ezra 4:24 *Thus the work of the house of God which is at Jerusalem ceased, and it was discontinued until the second year of the reign of Darius king of Persia.*

Artaxerxes put a _____ to the rebuilding of the temple. During the reign of Darius, Haggai and Zechariah encouraged Zerubbabel to _____ building the temple.

When they started rebuilding the temple, Tattenai, the governor of the region beyond the River, sent a letter to Darius informing him of Judah's _____ efforts to build the temple.

Ezra 6:6-10 *Now therefore, Tattenai, governor of the region beyond the River, and Shethar-Boznai, and your companions the Persians who are beyond the River, keep yourselves far from there. 7 Let the work of this house of God alone; let the governor of the Jews and the elders of the Jews build this house of God on its site. 8 Moreover I issue a decree as to what you shall do for the elders of these Jews, for the building of this house of God: Let the cost be paid at the king's expense from taxes on the region beyond the River; this is to be given immediately to these men, so that they are not hindered. 9 And whatever they need — young bulls, rams, and lambs for the burnt offerings of the God of heaven, wheat, salt, wine, and oil, according to the request of the priests who are in Jerusalem — let it be given them day by day without fail, 10 that they may offer sacrifices of sweet aroma to the God of heaven, and pray for the life of the king and his sons.*

Darius tells the opposition to leave God's people _____ and allow them to finish building the temple.

He also tells them to send their _____ money straight to the Jews rebuilding the temple.

Ezra 6:15-17 *Now the temple was finished on the third day of the month of Adar, which was in the sixth year of the reign of King Darius. 16 Then the children of Israel, the priests and the Levites and the rest of the descendants of the captivity, celebrated the dedication of this house of God with joy. 17 And they offered sacrifices at the dedication of this house of God, one hundred bulls, two hundred rams, four hundred lambs, and as a sin offering for all Israel twelve male goats, according to the number of the tribes of Israel.*

Once the temple was finished, they _____ and offered sacrifices to the Lord.

Ezra 6:19-20 *And the descendants of the captivity kept the Passover on the fourteenth day of the first month. 20 For the priests and the Levites had purified themselves; all of them were ritually clean. And they slaughtered the Passover lambs for all the descendants of the captivity, for their brethren the priests, and for themselves.*

They also celebrated the _____ at the appropriate time of the year.
Between the times of Zerubbabel and Ezra, _____ saved the entire nation.

Ezra 7:1-10 *Now after these things, in the reign of Artaxerxes king of Persia, ...6 this Ezra came up from Babylon; and he was a skilled scribe in the Law of Moses, which the Lord God of Israel had given. The king granted him all his request, according to the hand of the Lord his God upon him. ... 10 For Ezra had prepared his heart to seek the Law of the Lord, and to do it, and to teach statutes and ordinances in Israel.*

Around 80 years after Zerubbabel returned to rebuild the temple, Ezra came back to reestablish the _____.

Ezra 9:1-4 *When these things were done, the leaders came to me, saying, "The people of Israel and the priests and the Levites have not separated themselves from the peoples of the lands, with respect to the abominations of the Canaanites, the Hittites, the Perizzites, the Jebusites, the Ammonites, the Moabites, the Egyptians, and the Amorites. 2 For they have taken some of their daughters as wives for themselves and their sons, so that the holy seed is mixed with the peoples of those lands. Indeed, the hand of the leaders and rulers has been foremost in this trespass." 3 So when I heard this thing, I tore my garment and my robe, and plucked out some of the hair of my head and beard, and sat down astonished. 4 Then everyone who trembled at the words of the God of Israel assembled to me, because of the transgression of those who had been carried away captive, and I sat astonished until the evening sacrifice.*

Ezra finds out that the people who came back with Zerubbabel had married _____ woman.

The leaders and rulers were _____ in the trespass.

Ezra tore his garments and pulled hair from his head and _____.

Ezra 10:10-13 *Then Ezra the priest stood up and said to them, "You have transgressed and have taken pagan wives, adding to the guilt of Israel. 11 Now therefore, make confession to the Lord God of your fathers, and do His will; separate yourselves from the peoples of the land, and from the pagan wives." Then all the assembly answered and said with a loud voice, "Yes! As you have said, so we must do.*

The people _____ to put away their unlawful wives.

Neh 1:3-4 *And they said to me, "The survivors who are left from the captivity in the province are there in great distress and reproach. The wall of Jerusalem is also broken down, and its gates are burned with fire." 4 So it was, when I heard these words, that I sat down and wept, and mourned for many days; I was fasting and praying before the God of heaven.*

Several years after Ezra departed for Jerusalem, _____ got a report back that the land was still in great distress and the walls were still in ruins.

Neh 2:1-5 *And it came to pass in the month of Nisan, in the twentieth year of King Artaxerxes, when wine was before him, that I took the wine and gave it to the king. Now I had never been sad in his presence before. 2 Therefore the king said to me, "Why is your face sad, since you are not sick? This is nothing but sorrow of heart." So I became dreadfully afraid, 3 and said to the king, "May 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 are burned with fire?"
4 Then the king said to me, "What do you request?" So I prayed to the God of heaven. 5
And I said to the king, "If it pleases the king, and if your servant has found favor in your
sight, I ask that you send me to Judah, to the city of my fathers' tombs, that I may rebuild it."

Nehemiah asked the king if he could return to Judah to _____ Jerusalem. The king agreed.

The king also gave Nehemiah letters so he could pass through the territory safely, and so those in the region would _____ by giving him materials to rebuild the wall.

Neh 2:17-18 *Then I said to them, "You see the distress that we are in, how Jerusalem lies waste, and its gates are burned with fire. Come and let us build the wall of Jerusalem, that we may no longer be a reproach." 18 And I told them of the hand of my God which had been good upon me, and also of the king's words that he had spoken to me. So they said, "Let us rise up and build." Then they set their hands to this good work.*

When Nehemiah told the people that he was planning on rebuilding the wall, they agreed to help.

Neh 2:19-20 *But when Sanballat the Horonite, Tobiah the Ammonite official, and Geshem the Arab heard of it, they laughed at us and despised us, and said, "What is this thing that you are doing? Will you rebel against the king?" 20 So I answered them, and said to them, "The God of heaven Himself will prosper us; therefore we His servants will arise and build, but you have no heritage or right or memorial in Jerusalem." ... Neh 4:1 But it so happened, when Sanballat heard that we were rebuilding the wall, that he was furious and very indignant, and mocked the Jews. 2 And he spoke before his brethren and the army of Samaria, and said, "What are these feeble Jews doing? Will they fortify themselves? Will they offer sacrifices? Will they complete it in a day? Will they revive the stones from the heaps of rubbish — stones that are burned?" 3 Now Tobiah the Ammonite was beside him, and he said, "Whatever they build, if even a fox goes up on it, he will break down their stone wall."*

Sanballat rose up and _____ the rebuilding of the wall.

Tobiah commented that if a _____ were to walk on a wall built by the Jews it would fall.

Neh 4:6 *So we built the wall, and the entire wall was joined together up to half its height, for the people had a mind to work. 7 Now it happened, when Sanballat, Tobiah, the Arabs, the Ammonites, and the Ashdodites heard that the walls of Jerusalem were being restored and the gaps were beginning to be closed, that they became very angry, 8 and all of them conspired together to come and attack Jerusalem and create confusion. 9 Nevertheless we made our prayer to our God, and because of them we set a watch against them day and night.*

The people were successful because they had a _____ to work.

God's enemies were also _____ and kept pressure on God's people.

God brought His enemies plans to _____.

After Nehemiah solved the external conflict an _____ conflict arose. The people were taking advantage of one another.

Neh 5:9-12 *Then I said, "What you are doing is not good. Should you not walk in the fear of our God because of the reproach of the nations, our enemies? 10 I also, with my brethren*

and my servants, am lending them money and grain. Please, let us stop this usury! 11 Restore now to them, even this day, their lands, their vineyards, their olive groves, and their houses, also a hundredth of the money and the grain, the new wine and the oil, that you have charged them." 12 So they said, "We will restore it, and will require nothing from them; we will do as you say."

Nehemiah _____ the people to treat their brethren correctly.

Neh 6:1-3 *Now it happened when Sanballat, Tobiah, Geshem the Arab, and the rest of our enemies heard that I had rebuilt the wall, and that there were no breaks left in it (though at that time I had not hung the doors in the gates), 2 that Sanballat and Geshem sent to me, saying, "Come, let us meet together among the villages in the plain of Ono." But they thought to do me harm. So I 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 go down to you?"*

Sanballat tried to lure Nehemiah away from the city to _____ him. Nehemiah was wise to his plot and refused his offer 5 times.

Sanballat then sent a letter to Nehemiah _____ to tell the king that Nehemiah is planning a revolt.

A _____ prophet came and told Nehemiah that there was a plot to kill him and he needed to hide in the temple to escape harm.

Neh 6:11-13 *And I said, "Should such a man as I flee? And who is there such as I who would go into the temple to save his life? I will not go in!"*

Nehemiah refused to run and _____. He knew this was a plot conceived by Sanballat so he would have something bad to say about Nehemiah.

They finished the wall in _____ days.

The completion of the wall _____ God's enemies.

Neh 8:1-3 *Now all the people gathered together as one man in the open square that was in front of the Water Gate; and they told Ezra the scribe to bring the Book of the Law of Moses, which the Lord had commanded Israel. 2 So Ezra the priest brought the Law before the assembly of men and women and all who could hear with understanding on the first day of the seventh month. 3 Then he read from it in the open square that was in front of the Water Gate from morning until midday, before the men and women and those who could understand; and the ears of all the people were attentive to the Book of the Law.*

Ezra continued to _____ the law.

The people confessed their sins.

They kept the Feast of _____.

However, their repentance did not stick.

Mal 3:1 *Behold, I send My messenger, And he will prepare the way before Me. And the Lord, whom you seek, Will suddenly come to His temple, Even the Messenger of the covenant, In whom you delight. Behold, He is coming," Says the Lord of hosts.*

Malachi _____ the people for their sin.

He also prophesied that God would send a messenger to prepare the way of the Lord.

The Lord remained _____ for 400 years.