

You Can Still Return to God

The Books of Ezra and Nehemiah
Wednesday, June 1

1. The First Return to God (Ezra 1-6)

(The first return to God was under the leadership of Zerubbabel to rebuild the temple in 538)

2. The Second Return to God (Ezra 7-10)

(The second return to God was under the leadership of Ezra to reform the people in 458, fifty-seven years after the temple was rebuilt and worship restored.)

A. The Return to the Land (chs.7-8). “The good hand of our God was upon us” (7:9; 8:18; 8:31)

B. The Reform of the People (chs. 9-10).

3. The Third Return to God (Nehemiah 1-13)

(The third return to God was under the leadership of Nehemiah to rebuild the walls in 444)

A. Rebuild the Walls of God’s City (Nehemiah 1-6) In only 52 days. There are Six Marks of Leadership from our previous study in Nehemiah.

B. Revive the People of God (Nehemiah 7-13). After the ribbon cutting ceremony it was time to go to work on an even more important building program: Building up God’s people.

1. He Selects Spiritual Leaders (ch. 7)

- a. He selected qualified leaders (7:1-60) with pure Jewish descent.
- b. He removed unqualified leaders (7:61-65) who had no record of their birth to prove they were kosher Jews and not half Samaritans).

2. He Preaches The Word (chs. 8-10). The first event after the Building Program was a Bible Conference.

- a. Philosophy of ministry (Ezra 7:10)
- b. Method of ministry (Nehemiah 8).
 - 1) Public Reading (8:5)
 - 2) Public Exposition (8:7)
 - a) The mind was informed “understand” is mentioned 6 times (vv. 2, 3, 7, 8, 12, 13)
 - b) The emotions were stirred (v. 9)
 - c) The will was changed (vv. 13-18)
 - 3) Public Confession of Sins (ch. 9)
 - 4) Public Commitment of Lives (ch. 10) Eighty-four families make commitments
 - a) Marry believers v. 30
 - b) Honor the Lord’s Day v.31

c) Support God's house v. 32

3. *He Procures Volunteers (ch. 11)*

a. Procurement of volunteers (11:1-2)

b. Praise of volunteers (11:3-12:26)

Three kinds of material in Nehemiah: Historic (36%) Prayers (11%) Lists (53%)

4. *He Rejoices in God's Goodness (ch. 12)*

5. *He Revives God's People Again (ch. 13)*. After Nehemiah's 12 year administration he returned to Susa. Now probably two years later, he returns to Jerusalem (13:1 "on that day" i.e., the day of his return). This Nehemiah faced an even greater challenge in getting the people of God to keep their commitments made in chapter 10.

a. Support God's House (13:4-14)

b. Honor the Lord's Day (13:15-22)

c. Marry Believers (13:23-31)