

***Cover to Cover: From Genesis to Maps***  
**Sermon # 16 – “Nehemiah”**  
**September 16, 2007**

The Books of Ezra and Nehemiah are closely related. The two men were contemporaries. Their ministries overlapped.

Following their 70 years in Babylonian Captivity, the Jewish exiles were released by King Cyrus of Persia and allowed to return home.

- The first group came with Zerubbabel to build the temple.
- 80 years later, a second group came with Ezra to reform the people.
- 14 years after that, Nehemiah came to rebuild the city walls.

Ezra and Nehemiah were quite a team. Ezra was a priest. Nehemiah was a layman. Ezra’s prime duty was religious. Nehemiah’s prime duty was civil. Each was used uniquely by God to accomplish His purposes.

***Outline of Nehemiah***

The book of Nehemiah is a book about walls. It focuses on the literal walls that Nehemiah built. But it also focuses on the figurative walls that he faced.

**1. A Wall of Challenge.**

- Nehemiah’s burden. 1:1-4
- Nehemiah’s prayer. 1:5-11
- Nehemiah’s approach. 2:1-8
- God’s provision. 2:8

**2. A Wall of Opposition. (2:10 – A foreshadowing of what is to come)**

- Nehemiah investigates the situation. 2:11-16
- Nehemiah inspires and encourages the people. 2:17-18
- The opposition commences. 2:19-20
  - Sanballat = “thorn”
  - Tobiah = “Jehovah is good” (i.e., the pious one)

- Geshem = “rain” (as in “rain on your parade”)
- Uniting for a common purpose. Chapter 3
  - Key phrases: “...*next to him/them*...”
  - “...*rebuilt/ repaired*...”
- Resisting external opposition in its various forms. Chapter 4
 

<i>Threat</i>	<i>Response</i>
○ Ridicule	Prayer
○ Threat of <u>violence</u>	Prayer & watchfulness
○ Discouragement	Reorganization & workers <u>armed</u>
- Resisting internal opposition. Chapter 5
  - Greed & oppression            Open confrontation & restitution
- Resisting more external opposition. Chapter 6
  - Intrigue                            Remaining resolute & focused
  - Innuendo                           Denial & prayer
  - Intimidation                      Courage & prayer
- 3. A Wall of **Success**. (6:15 – The work is finished in 52 days!)
  - Revival based on the Word of God. Chapter 8
  - Prayer of confession. Chapter 9
  - Renewal of the covenant. Chapter 10
  - Resettlement of Jerusalem. Chapters 11-12
  - Dedication of the walls. 12:27-47
  - Nehemiah’s final reforms. Chapter 13