

#1437 (Re)building the Walls of the Christian New Israel and the Jewish new Israel – Nehemiah’s rebuilding of the Walls of Jerusalem

From *Nelson’s Illustrated Bible Dictionary*:

Nehemiah. Nehemiah was the governor of Jerusalem who helped rebuild the wall of the city (Nehemiah 1:1; 8:9; 10:1; 12:26, 47). Nehemiah was a descendant of the Jewish population that had been taken captive to Babylon in 587-586 B.C. In 539 B.C., Cyrus the Persian gained control over all of Mesopotamia. He permitted the Jewish exiles to return to the city of Jerusalem. Nearly a century later, in Nehemiah’s time, the Persian ruler was Artaxerxes I Longimanus (ruled 465-424 B.C.). Nehemiah was his personal cupbearer (Nehemiah 1:11).



Nehemiah was the king’s cupbearer

In 445 B.C. Nehemiah learned of the deplorable condition of the returned exiles in Jerusalem (Nehemiah 1:2-3). The wall of the city was broken down, the gates were burned, and the people were in distress. Upon hearing this, Nehemiah mourned for many days, fasting and praying to God. His prayer is one of the most moving in the Old Testament (Nehemiah 1:5-11).

Key Understanding: *Nehemiah was given authority to rebuild the city walls. Nehemiah then received permission from Artaxerxes to go to Judah to restore the fortunes of his people. He was appointed governor of the province with authority to rebuild the city walls.*

Nehemiah 1:1-11 (KJV) THE WORDS OF NEHEMIAH the son of Hachaliah. And it came to pass in the month Chisleu, in the twentieth year [of the reign of Artaxerxes], as I was in Shushan [Susa] the palace, 2 That Hanani, one of my brethren, came, he and certain men of Judah; and I asked them concerning the Jews that had escaped, which were left of the captivity, and concerning Jerusalem.

3 And they said unto me, The remnant that are left of the captivity there in the province are in great affliction and reproach: **THE WALL OF JERUSALEM ALSO IS BROKEN DOWN, and THE GATES THEREOF ARE BURNED WITH FIRE.**

4 And it came to pass, when I heard these words, that I sat down and wept, and mourned certain days, and fasted, and prayed before the God of heaven,

5 And said, I beseech thee, O LORD God of heaven, the great and terrible God, that keepeth covenant and mercy for them that love him and observe his commandments:



Nehemiah mourning over Jerusalem

6 Let thine ear now be attentive, and thine eyes open, that thou mayest hear the prayer of thy servant, which I pray before thee now, day and night, for the children of Israel thy servants, and confess the sins of the children of Israel, which we have sinned against thee: both I and my father's house have sinned.

7 We have dealt very corruptly against thee, and have not kept the commandments, nor the statutes, nor the judgments, which thou commandedst thy servant Moses.

8 Remember, I beseech thee, the word that thou commandedst thy servant Moses, saying, If ye transgress, I will scatter you abroad among the nations:

9 But if ye turn unto me, and keep my commandments, and do them; though there were of you cast out unto the uttermost part of the heaven, yet will I gather them from thence, and will bring them unto the place that I have chosen to set my name there.

10 Now these are thy servants and thy people, whom thou hast redeemed by thy great power, and by thy strong hand.

11 O Lord, I beseech thee, let now thine ear be attentive to the prayer of thy servant, and to the prayer of thy servants, who desire to fear thy name: and prosper, I pray thee, thy servant this day, and grant him mercy in the sight of this man. **For I was the king's cupbearer.**



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