

LESSONS THIS QUARTER.....LIVE AS GOD WANTS

- 01) 3 Dec (12/10)..... Ezra 1:1-3:13 Seizing New Opportunities
- 02) 10 Dec (12/17)..... Ezra 4:1-6:22 Working w/ Confidence in God
- 03) 17 Dec (12/24).....Ezra 7:1-10:44 Following Godly Spiritual Leaders
- 04) 31 Dec Neh 1:1-3:32 Working Cooperatively
- 05) 07 Jan..... Neh 4:1-7:73Devising Strategies
- 06) 14 Jan..... Neh 8:1-10:39Rededicating Lives
- 07) 21 Jan..... Ps 139:1-24 Valuing Every Life
- 08) 28 Jan..... Neh 11:1-13:31 Keeping Commitments
- 09) 04 Feb..... Esth 1:1-2:23When Life turns upside Down
- 10) 11 Feb Esth 3:1-4:17 When Service is Risky
- 11) 18 Feb..... Esth 5:1-7:10 How Courage Triumphs
- 12) 25 Feb Esth 8:1-10:3 What is Worth Celebrating

INTRODUCTION / QUESTIONS / COMMENTS

- Godly people in ungodly situations doing their godly mission
 - ♦ Nehemiah – Cup Bearer (aka bartender). Akin to a captured Al Qaeda being a trusted advisor to the U.S. President.
 - ♦ Esther – part of a harem, unequally yoked to an unbeliever
- Two different leaders (Ezra & Nehemiah), two different approaches, same accomplishment – resolution of problems

Comparison Event	Nehemiah (bad cop)	Ezra (good cop)
Type of leader	Governor (2:7-10)	Priest/Scribe (7:1-5)
Mission	Wall Builder (2:13)	Worship Leader (7:10)
800 mile trip to Jerusalem	Accepted military escort (2:9)	Prayed for protection (8:21,22)
Response to leaders oppressing the people	Used mob intimidation. Set up a great assembly against them (5:6-13)	N/A
Response to mix marriages	Contended, cursed, smote, pulled hair, and made them vow to be good (13:25)	Pulled hair & beard out of himself (9:3)
Response to heathens in the temple	Threw their stuff out in the street (13:7-9)	Ezra may have lost his effectiveness (possibly due to age) or he had died by this time.
Response to temple neglect	Contended w/ the rulers (13:10-13)	
Response to Sabbath neglect	Contended w/ nobles and threatened to use violence on Sabbath violators (13:15-21)	
Response to one priest being related to Sanballat – who sought to kill Nehemiah	Chased him away from his presence (13:28)	

Date	Event	Scripture
516	Temple is completed	Ezra 5-6
478	Esther is Queen to Ahasuerus (Xerxes)	Esther
457	Artaxerxes sends Ezra to Jerusalem	Ezra 7-10
444	Artaxerxes sends Nehemiah to rebuild	Neh 1-12
432	Nehemiah makes a 2 nd trip to Jerusalem	Neh 13

Date	Persian King	Event	Scripture
486-465	Xerxes (Ahasuerus)	Esther's King (Assassinated)	Ezra 4:6; Est 1-10
465-424	Artaxerxes I (Longimanus); Esther's stepson	Allows Ezra & Nehemiah to travel to Jerusalem	Ezra 7-12; Neh 1-13

LESSON PLAN

- 1) **Begin with PrayerNeh 1:1-11**
 - a) v1: Chislew/Kislev was the 9th month of the Jewish Calendar (Nov/Dec)
 - b) v4: Prayer & Fasting – Jews were expected to fast 1 day each year – Day of AtonementLev 23:26-32
 - c) Neh's first priority was to pray for God's intervention. Praying was not a last resort for him. 13 Prayers in Neh.

- i) Pray even for the obvious Zech 10:1
- ii) It's OK to pray few words Ecc 5:1,2
- 2) **Take Steps of FaithNeh 2:1-16**
 - a) v1: Nisan was the 1st month of Jewish calendar (Mar/Apr). Timing is part of answered prayer (4 months)
 - b) vv5-8: Decree to “restore and build Jerusalem” – 69-wk countdown to the Messiah (cf Dan 9:25, Ezr 17:13)
- 3) **To win Volunteers – Be a Motivator.....Neh 2:17-20**
 - a) State the need and how God is proceeding vv17,18
 - i) Watch out for serving in the flesh vs in the Spirit
 - ii) Church Programs can be powerful ministry tools or a detriment to people. Always evaluate the walls...
 - b) Be ready for persecution vv19,20
- 4) **Complete the Task Quickly or Risk Destruction.....3:1-32**
 - a) v1: Jewish tradition, per a TBN telecast on 4/13/05, says there has only been 87 high priests (~3100 yrs since Moses / 87 = 35 yrs per high priest)
 - b) Repair of Gates crucial for safety & commerce
Illus. how many doors must be locked at FBC?
 - c) v5: some leaders/nobles avoided doing godly work - some will, some won't, so what?
- We can only go so far to receive help from volunteers

	Prayer	Request
1.	1:4-11	Mourned, fasted & prayed many days – praised God for His greatness and faithfulness, repented of 'our' national sins; asked for mercy from the king
2.	2:4	Short, unknown prayer, shot up in a moment's notice to quickly respond
3.	4:4-5	Cursed the enemies of God (Sanballat, Tobiah, et al)
4.	4:9	Unknown prayer for protection backed up w/ guard duty
5.	5:19	God - Bless my hard work for you
6.	6:9	Short prayer for strength against God's enemies
7.	6:14	God – Curse those who seek to harm your work
8.	9:1-5	People mourned, fasted & prayed w/ confession of sins
9.	9:6-38	Longest Prayer in the Bible – Godly Praise, acknowledgement of sins, & renewed commitment
10	13:14	God - Bless my hard work for you
11	13: 22	
12	13:31	
13	13:29	God – Curse the Priests & Levites who take their job lightly

	Jewish Months	#Days	Gregorian
1	Nissan	30	March-April
2	Iyar	29	April-May
3	Sivan	30	May-June
4	Tammuz	29	June-July
5	Av	30	July-August
6	Elul	29	Aug-Sept
7	Tishri	30	Sept-Oct
8	Cheshvan	29 or 30	Oct-Nov
9	Kislev	30 or 29	Nov-Dec
10	Tevet	29	Dec-Jan
11	Shevat	30	Jan-Feb
12	Adar I or Adar II	30 or 29	Feb-March

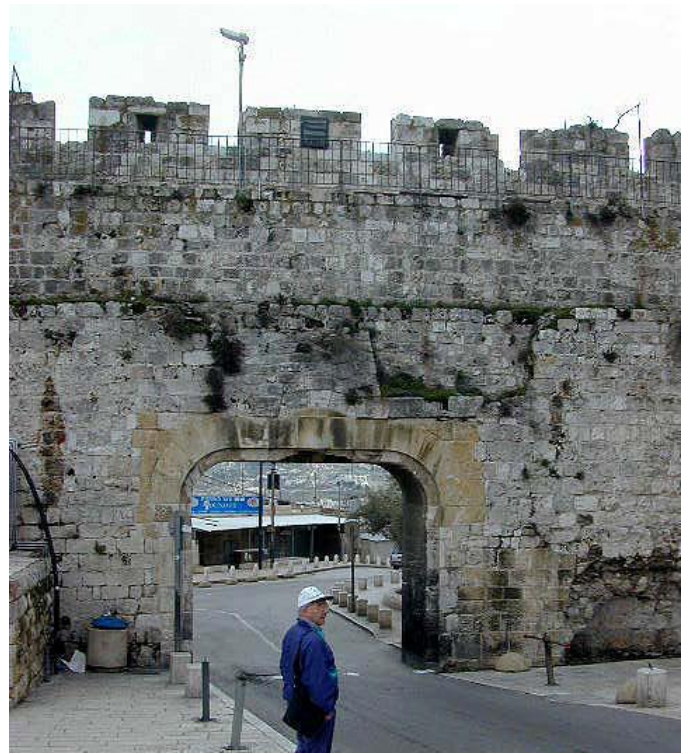
CONCLUSION

- Never underestimate PRAYER – Be devoted to it, Col 4:2)
- Always evaluate the walls...

SUPPORTING PASSAGES

Ecc 5:1, 2 ... For God is in heaven and you are on the earth; therefore let your words be few
Col 4:2 Devote yourselves to prayer...

Passage	City Gates	Repairers	Significance [Spiritualization]	
1	3:1	Sheep	Eliashib the High Priest & clan Entrance for sacrificial animals [Salvation]	
2	3:3	Fish	Sons of Hassenaah [Evangelism]	
3	3:6	Old	Jehoiada & Meshullam [The Law]	
4	3:13	Valley	Hanun & Zanoah inhabitants [Character Testing]	
5	3:14	Dung	Malchiah [Repentance]	
6	3:15	Fountain	Shallum (2 nd) [Baptism]	
7	3:26	Water	Nethinims – Temple servants [Word of God]	
8	3:28	Horse	Priests [Warriors for God]	
9	3:29	East/Golden	Son of Shechaniah [Messiah] - Sealed	
10	3:31	Inspection	Malchiah [Judgment]	
11	8:16	Ephraim		
12	12:39	Guard		
13	Jer 31:38	Corner	Other Jerusalem Gates mentioned in the Bible	
14	Jer 39:3	Middle		
15	Eze 8:3	North		
16	Eze 9:2	Upper		
17		New	Modern Gates	
18		Damascus		
19		Herod's		
20		Lion/Stephen's		
21		Zion		
22		Jaffa/David's		
23		Single		Sealed Shut
24		Double		Sealed Shut
25		Triple	Sealed Shut	



Jerusalem's Dung Gate

