

# **The Book of Ezra and Nehemiah**

Exposition of the Old and New Testament

John Gill, [1746-63]

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## Presentation and Dedication

This reproduction of Dr. John Gills, exposition of the book of Ezra and Nehemiah is presented and dedicated to the students, pastors and teachers of Christ-Centered Churches Inc. Ministries, Philippines, under the care of William Ola Poloc, its founder and senior pastor (Bishop), on the, 16th January 2020, by David Clarke, founder of Trojan Horse International (TULIP) Inc.

### Brief History of the Baguio Christ-Centered Churches Ministries Inc.

Pstr William O. Poloc Sr. was released from the New Bilibid prison in August 2002, where he graduated with a Degree in Theology, and started prison ministries in his hometown Baguio City, with his wife and the aid of a certain missionary from UK, by name David Clarke, the founder of Trojan Horse International. In December 2002 they were able to baptize 22 inmates in Baguio City Jail, 9 inmates in Benguet Provincial jail, along with William's wife Beth Poloc and Josephine Ortis, along with her daughter Karen Basoon, who had all confessed their faith in the lord Jesus Christ. David Clarke returned to the UK in 2003 after his mission.

Later, God gave them a burden to open a church within the city so as to reach out to their families, relatives and friends and William's co-inmates who are still incarcerated at the New Bilibid Prison.

By His grace the Baguio Christ-Centered Church Inc. Stood up. As years go by God continued to bless the church by drawing more souls into it. He also bless us with a bible school to train ministers unable to study in an expensive bible schools. Graduates of our school were sent out to reach lost souls and augment Christ Centered mission churches to different places around the archipelago. As a result, by God's grace and providence Christ Centered Churches were established to the different places in the country.



God's work here in the Northern Philippines bloomed most especially here in the city of Baguio. The Baguio Christ-Centred Church is the mother church of all the Christ Centered Churches in the Philippines namely; The Pilot- Christ-Centred Church, The Kamog Christ-Centred Church, The Christ-Centered-Church Theological School(TULIP), The Christ-Centred Radio Ministry, The Christ-Centred Jail Ministries etc.). We'll, we are truly blessed by these works He has entrusted to us. To God be the glory!

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Christ-Centered Ministries Philippines

### Personal note from the publisher

It is noted and remarked that this date of publication is the Golden Jubilee <sup>1</sup>(Leviticus 25:8-13 King) of conversion of David Clarke, which took place on, 16th January 1971.

<http://www.Biertonparticularbaptists.co.uk>



David Clarke is the sole remaining member of Bierton Particular Baptists who was called by the Lord and sent by the church to preach the gospel in 1982. The doctrinal foundation of Trojan Horse Mission are those of the Bierton Particular Baptists Articles of religion.

View the Wikipedia Entry for Bierton and view [None Conformist Place of Worship](#)

### Who Is Dr. John Gill

John Gill (23 November 1697 – 14 October 1771) was an English Baptist pastor, biblical scholar, and theologian who held to a firm Calvinistic soteriology. Born in Kettering, Northamptonshire, he attended Kettering Grammar School where he mastered the Latin classics and learned Greek by age 11. He continued self-study in everything from logic to Hebrew, his love for the latter remaining throughout his life.

<sup>1</sup> 8 And thou shalt number seven Sabbaths of years unto thee, seven times seven years; and the space of the seven Sabbaths of years shall be unto thee forty and nine years.

### Pastoral Work

His first pastoral work was as an intern assisting John Davis at Higham Ferrers in 1718 at age 21. He became pastor at the Strict Baptists church at Goat Yard Chapel, Horselydown, Southwark in 1719. His pastorate lasted 51 years. In 1757 his congregation needed larger premises and moved to a Carter Lane, St. Olave's Street, Southwark. This Baptist church was once pastored by Benjamin Keach and would later become the New Park Street Chapel and then the Metropolitan Tabernacle pastored by Charles Spurgeon.

### Works

In 1748, Gill was awarded the honorary degree of Doctor of Divinity by the University of Aberdeen. He was a profound scholar and a prolific author. His most important works are:

- The Doctrine of the Trinity Stated and Vindicated London, 1731)
- The Cause of God and Truth (4 parts, 1725-8), a retort to Daniel Whitby's Five Points.
- An Exposition of the New Testament (3 vols., 1746–8), which with his Exposition of the Old Testament (6 vols., 1748–63) forms his magnum opus
- A Collection of Sermons and Tracts
- A Dissertation Concerning the Antiquity of the Hebrew Language, Letters, Vowel-Points, and Accents (1767)
- A Body of Doctrinal Divinity (1767)
- A Body of Practical Divinity (1770)

Gill also edited and re-published the works of **Rev. Tobias Crisp, D.D.** (1600-1643).

### NOTE:

We have not included the Greek, Hebrew or Latin text in the interest of economy.

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## INTRODUCTION TO EZRA

### Chapter 1

This chapter informs us of the proclamation of Cyrus king of Persia, for the Jews to return to their own country, and rebuild their temple, Ezr 1:1, and that, upon it, the chief of them rose up for that purpose, whose hands were strengthened and supplied by those about them, Ezr 1:5 and particularly by Cyrus, who gave orders that the vessels belonging to the temple should be delivered to them, Ezr 1:7.

#### **Ezra 1:1**

Now in the first year of Cyrus king of Persia,.... Not in the first of his reign over Persia, for he had been many years king over that, and now had all the kingdoms of the earth given him, Ezr 1:2, but over Babylon, and the dominions belonging to it, which commenced with Darius upon the taking of Babylon; he reigned in all thirty years, as Cicero (g) from a Persian writer relates; or twenty nine, according to Herodotus (h); but in what year this was is not certain; Africanus (i), has proved, from various historians, that it was the first year of the fifty fifth Olympiad, perhaps about the twentieth of Cyrus's Persian government (k); See Gill on Dan 10:1,

that the word of the Lord, by the mouth of Jeremiah, might be fulfilled; which foretold that the Jews should return from their captivity at the end of seventy years, which fell on the first of Cyrus, reckoning from the fourth of Jehoiakim, and the first of Nebuchadnezzar, see Jer 25:1.

The Lord stirred up the spirit of Cyrus king of Persia; who has the hearts of all men in his hands, and even of the kings of the earth, and can turn them as he pleases; he wrought upon him, put it into his heart, enlightened his mind, showed him what was right, and his duty to do, and pressed him to the performance of it; so that he could not be easy until he had done it, and he was made thoroughly willing, and even eager to do it:

that he made a proclamation throughout all his kingdom, and put it also in writing; gave it in writing to his heralds to read and proclaim throughout all his dominions:

saying; as follows.

(g) De Divinatione, l. 1. (h) Clio, sive, l. 1. c. 214. (i) Apud Euseb. Praepar. Evangel. l. 10. c. 10. p. 488. (k) Nic. Abrami Pharus, p. 303.

#### **Ezra 1:2**

Thus saith Cyrus king of Persia,.... Of whom, and this edict of his, Isaiah prophesied two hundred years before he was born, Isa 44:28

the Lord God of heaven hath given me all the kingdoms of the earth; many he had conquered before he took Babylon, and then the whole Babylonian monarchy fell into his hands. Herodotus (l) says, he ruled over all Asia; Xenophon (m) reckons up many nations that were under his government, Medes and Hyrcanians, Syrians, Assyrians, Arabians, Cappadocians, both the Phrygians, Carians, Phoenicians, Babylonians, Bactrians, Indians, Cilicians, Sacae or Scythians, Paphlagonians, Megadinians, and many other nations, the Greeks inhabiting Asia, and the Cyprians, and Egyptians; and elsewhere he says (n), the borders of his kingdom were, to the east the Red sea, to the north the Euxine Pontus, to the west Cyprus and Egypt, and to the south Ethiopia. And the possession of these kingdoms Cyrus ascribes, not to his own martial courage and skill, but to the providence and disposal of the God of heaven, which he seems to have had some notion of:

and he hath charged me to build an house at Jerusalem, which is in Judah; in the prophecy of Isaiah, which, according to Josephus (o), he had seen and read, and believed it to be a charge upon him, and a command unto him to rebuild the temple at Jerusalem; however, to give leave for the rebuilding of it, and to encourage to it,

and assist in it; an Arabic writer says (p), that Cyrus married a sister of Zerubbabel, and that it was at her request that the Jews had leave to return; which is merely fabulous.

(l) Clio, sive, l. 1. c. 130. So Sallust, Bell. Catalin. p. 2. (m) Cyropaedia, l. 1. in principio. (n) L. 8. c. 48. (o) Antiqu. l. 11. c. 1. sect. 1, 2. (p) Abulpharag. Hist. Dynast. Dyn. 5. p. 82.

### **Ezra 1:3**

Who is there among you of all his people?... The people of God, the Israelites, as well of the ten tribes, as of the two of Judah and Benjamin; for this edict was published throughout all his dominions, where were the one as well as the other:

his God be with him; to incline his heart to go, to protect him in his journey, and succeed and prosper him in what he goes about:

and let him go up to Jerusalem, which is in Judah, and build the house of the Lord God of Israel, he is the God; the one only living and true God:

which is in Jerusalem; who has been in former times, and is to be worshipped there; though Aben Ezra says, this is to be connected with “the house of the Lord”; as if the sense was, to build the house, that was in Jerusalem, or to be built there; and so our version connects them, putting those words into a parenthesis, “he is God”; but this is contrary to the accents.

### **Ezra 1:4**

And whosoever remaineth in any place where he sojourneth,... Is left behind, and cannot go up through poverty, not having a sufficiency to bear his charges in his journey to Jerusalem:

let the men of his place keep him with silver, and with gold, and with goods, and with beasts; with money to bear the expenses of his journey, with goods to furnish his house, or trade with, when he came to Judea, and with cattle to carry him, and his goods, and to till the ground with, when he came thither; and the men exhorted to this are either the Gentiles that dwelt in the cities where these poor Jews were, or the richer Jews, who chose as yet not to go up until they saw how things would succeed; and are therefore called upon to assist their brethren who had a will, but not ability:

besides the freewill offering for the house of God that is in Jerusalem: which they freely gave, and sent by them for the rebuilding of the temple.

### **Ezra 1:5**

Then rose up the chief of the fathers of Judah and Benjamin,... Princes of these tribes, and heads of families in them, and of some other tribes too, though chiefly of these, as appears from Ch1 9:3,

and the priests and the Levites: whose presence was necessary both to direct in the building of the temple, and to animate to it, and to set the vessels in their proper places; and particularly to assist in the setting up of the altar, and to offer sacrifices on it, which was the first thing done when come to Jerusalem, Ezr 3:2

with all them whose spirit God raised to go up, to build the house of the Lord, which is in Jerusalem; God, who “works” in men “both to will and to do”, wrought powerfully by his Spirit on their hearts, inclined their minds, and made them willing to go up, and set about this work; and such a divine, powerful, and efficacious operation upon them, was necessary to engage them in it, since the embarrassments, difficulties, discouragements, and objections, were many: some of them were well settled, and had contracted a pleasing acquaintance with many of their neighbours, and indeed to most of them it was their native place; and as for



Judea and Jerusalem, they knew nothing of but what their fathers had told them; the way to it unknown, long, and dangerous, at least fatiguing and troublesome to their wives and children; and Judea and Jerusalem desolate and in ruins, and in the hands of enemies, from whom they had reason to expect trouble.

**Ezra 1:6**

And all they that were about them,.... Their neighbours, the Chaldeans:

strengthened their hands with vessels of silver, with gold, with goods, and with beasts, and with precious things; which they either did of themselves at their own motion, or by the direction and example of Cyrus, Ezr 1:4 and perhaps many of them to ingratiate themselves into the favour of their new monarch:

besides all that was willingly offered: by the rich Jews, who thought fit, at least for the present, to remain in Babylon.

**Ezra 1:7**

And Cyrus brought forth the vessels of the house of the Lord,.... Or ordered them to be brought forth:

which Nebuchadnezzar had brought forth out of Jerusalem; out of the temple there, when he took it and burnt it:

and had put them in the house of his gods; in the temple of Belus at Babylon, see Ch2 36:7, by which means they were providentially preserved.

**Ezra 1:8**

Even these did Cyrus king of Persia bring forth by the hand of Mithredath the treasurer,.... Or Mithridates, a name common with the Persians, from their god Mithras, the sun they worshipped:

and numbered them unto Sheshbazzar prince of Judah; delivered them by tale to him; who, according to the Jewish rabbins, as Jarchi says, was Daniel, who was so called, because he stood in six tribulations; but it does not appear that Daniel went up to Jerusalem with the captivity, as this man did, but remained at Babylon; rather, with Aben Ezra, it is best by him to understand Zerubbabel, who did go up, and was the prince of Judah; and Cyrus, in his letter (q) to the governors of Syria, expressly says, that he delivered the vessels to Zerubbabel, the prince of the Jews. He had two names, Sheshbazzar, which signifies he rejoiced in tribulation, and Zerubbabel, which signifies either the seed of Babylon, being born there, or dispersed, or a stranger there, as others.

(q) Apud Joseph. Antiqu. l. 11. c. 1. sect. 3.

**Ezra 1:9**

And this is the number of them,.... Of the vessels delivered, as follows:

thirty chargers of gold, a thousand chargers of silver; these, according to Ben Melech, were vessels in which water was put to wash hands in; but rather they were, as Aben Ezra observes from the Jerusalem Talmud (r), vessels in which they gathered the blood of lambs and bullocks slain for sacrifices:

nine and twenty knives; which, because the handles of them were of gold or silver, were valuable, and might be very large knives, and what the priests used in slaying and cutting up the sacrifices.

(r) T. Hieros. Yoma, fol. 41. 1.

**Ezra 1:10**

Thirty basins of gold,.... Cups or dishes with covers, as the word seems to signify; but, according to Jarchi and Aben Ezra, they were vessels in which the blood of sacrifices was received, and out of which it was sprinkled on the altar:

silver basins of a second sort four hundred and ten; perhaps lesser than the other, however not so valuable, being of silver; in the Apocrypha:”And this was the number of them; A thousand golden cups, and a thousand of silver, censers of silver twenty nine, vials of gold thirty, and of silver two thousand four hundred and ten, and a thousand other vessels.” (1 Esdras 2:13)the number is 2410; and in the letter of Cyrus, before referred to, it is 2400:

and other vessels a thousand; which are not particularly mentioned; Junius and Tremellius render the words:

other vessels by thousands, there being near 3000 that are not described.

### **Ezra 1:11**

All the vessels of gold, and of silver, were five thousand and four hundred,.... Those that are mentioned make no more than 2499, which Aben Ezra thinks were the larger vessels; but this general sum takes in great and small, as in Ch2 36:18 in the letter of Cyrus, before mentioned, these vessels are more particularly described, and their several numbers given, which together amount to the exact number in the text, 5400; the apocryphal Ezra makes them 5469:

all these did Sheshbazzar bring up with them of the captivity, that were brought up from Babylon unto Jerusalem: of whom there is a large and particular account in the following chapter.

## **INTRODUCTION TO EZRA 2**

### **Chapter 2**

This chapter contains a list of those that went up from Babylon to Jerusalem, of their leaders, their chief men, princes and priests, Ezr 2:1 of the people, described by their families, towns, and cities, and number of persons, Ezr 2:3, of the priests, Levites, and Nethinims, Ezr 2:36, and of those that could not make out their genealogy, people and priests, Ezr 2:59, and then the sum total of the whole congregation is given, Ezr 2:64, besides men and maidservants, singing men and women, and cattle of divers sorts, Ezr 2:65, and the chapter is closed with an account of the freewill offerings of the principal men towards the building of the temple, and of the settlement of the people in their respective cities, Ezr 2:68.

### **Ezra 2:1**

Now these are the children of the province,.... Either of the province of Babylon, as Aben Ezra, where they were either born, or had dwelt for many years; or else rather, according to Jarchi, of the province of Judea, as it is called, Ezr 5:8 once a flourishing kingdom, but reduced to a province of the Babylonian monarchy, now in the hands of the Medes and Persians, of which province they and their fathers originally were:

that went out of the captivity, of those which had been carried away, whom Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon had carried away unto Babylon; who either in person, or in their parents, were carried captive by him, and who were the tribes of Judah and Benjamin; and they are only mentioned, because they were the principal that returned, though there were some of the other tribes that also came up with them:

and came again unto Jerusalem and Judah, everyone unto his city; that he dwelt in before, or was now assigned to him by lot, see Neh 11:1, &c.

### **Ezra 2:2**

Which came with Zerubbabel,.... The head of them, the prince of Judah; and the chief that came with him are the ten following; Jeshua, Nehemiah, Seraiah, Reelaiah, Mordecai, Bilshan, Mispar, Bigvai, Rehum, Baanah; the first of these, Jeshua, was Joshua the high priest, the son of Josedech, Hag 1:1. Dr. Lightfoot (s) thinks that Nehemiah is the same, whose name the following book bears; and that Mordecai is he who was uncle to Esther, so Aben Ezra; but, if so, they must both return again; for that Nehemiah came to Jerusalem in the twentieth year of Artaxerxes, Neh 1:1, and that Mordecai brought up his niece in the city of Shushan, in the times of Ahasuerus, is certain; and this, with respect to both, is denied by others (t), who take them to be different men of the same name; and the same writer is of opinion that Seraiah, and who is called Azariah, Neh 7:7 is the same with Ezra, who therefore must and did return, since he went up to Jerusalem in the seventh year of Artaxerxes, Ezr 7:1, as for the others, we know nothing more of them than their names:

the number of the men of the people of Israel; either of the principal of them before named, or of the common people, which next follows.

(s) Works, vol. 1. p. 127. So Broughton, Works, p. 258. (t) Vid. Rainold. de Libr. Apocryph. Praelect. 111, 117, 148.

### **Ezra 2:3**

The children of Parosh, two thousand an hundred and seventy two. From hence, to the end of Ezr 2:35, a list is given of the captives that returned, described by the families they were of, their ancestors from whence they sprung, or the towns and cities to which they originally belonged, and by their numbers; otherwise nothing more of them is known.

### **Ezra 2:36**

The priests,.... An account of them is given in this and the three following verses, and only four families are mentioned, those of Jedaiah, Immer, Pashur, and Harim, and the number of them amounted to 4289; these, according to the Jews, were heads of four courses, which were all that returned from Babylon (u).

(u) T. Hieros. Taanioth, fol. 68. 1.

### **Ezra 2:40**

The Levites,.... Singers and porters, who are reckoned in this, and the two following verses, whose numbers were no more than three hundred and forty one; whereas, in the times of David, they were 38,000, Ch1 23:3.

### **Ezra 2:43**

The Nethinims,.... Supposed by Aben Ezra and Jarchi to be the Gibeonites, who were “given” by Joshua, as the word Nethinims signifies, to the congregation, to be hewers of wood and drawers of water; but rather were those that were given by David to assist the Levites; of these is an account from hence to the end of Ezr 2:58, together with those who descended from Solomon’s servants, who seem to be the remains of the Canaanites in the land, whom Solomon made bondservants of, Kg1 9:20, who, and their posterity, became proselytes; or those sprung from men that were domestic servants of Solomon’s, and valued themselves on that account; the number of the Nethinims and these together were three hundred ninety and two.

### **Ezra 2:59**

And these were they that went up from Telmelah, Telharsa,.... Places in the land of Babylon, see Isa 37:12.

Cherub, Addan, and Immer; but they could not show their father’s house, and their seed, whether they were of Israel; these were such that professed the Jewish religion, and went for Jews in Babylon, but could not trace their pedigree, and tell what family they were of, who their ancestors, and where they had lived in Judea; they had lost their genealogical tables, if they ever had any, and could not make it out, whether their parents were

Israelites or proselyted Gentiles; or they were such who had been exposed, and taken out of the streets, and their parents unknown.

### **Ezra 2:60**

The children of Delaiah, the children of Tobiah, and the children of Nekoda, six hundred fifty and two. These, though their immediate parents were known, yet by their being mentioned here, it seems as if they could not carry their genealogy further, and make it clearly appear what was the house of their fathers, or what their family.

### **Ezra 2:61**

And of the children of the priests,.... Who could not make out their pedigree, for those that could are mentioned before:

the children of Habaiah, the children of Koz, the children of Barzillai; how the latter came by this name follows:

which took a wife of the daughters of Barzillai the Gileadite, and was called after their name; this man married a woman that descended from the famous Barzillai the Gileadite, in the times of David; and the priesthood being in disuse, and mean and despicable, in Babylon, he chose to take the name of his wife's family, and pass for a descendant from that, and perhaps destroyed, or at least neglected, to take care of the genealogy of his own family.

### **Ezra 2:62**

These sought their register among those that were reckoned by genealogy,.... To find their names written and registered there; for the Jews kept public registers of their priests, their descent, marriages, and offspring, that it might be known who were fit, and who not, to officiate as such:

but they were not found; their names were not there, nor any account taken of them:

therefore were they, as polluted, put from the priesthood; were not suffered to attend at the altar, and offer sacrifice, and enjoy the privileges belonging to that office.

### **Ezra 2:63**

And the Tirshatha said unto them,.... By whom Jarchi understands Nehemiah, and observes, that their rabbins say he was so called, because the wise men allowed him to drink the wine of the Gentiles, he being cupbearer to the king; but Aben Ezra, with greater probability, takes it to be a name of honour and grandeur in the Chaldee language, as a prince or governor; and no doubt Zerubbabel is meant, the prince of the Jews, the same with Sheshbazzar, Ezr 1:8 according to Gussetius (w), this office was the same with that of the king's commissary in a province, delegated to carry his orders, make them known, and see them put in execution; and that this name Tirshatha is the same with Tithraustes in Aelian (x); but that seems to be not the title of an office, but the personal name of a man that was a chiliarch:

that they should not eat of the most holy things; as of the shewbread, and those parts of the sin offerings, and of the peace offerings and meat offerings, which belonged to the priests, which the governor forbid these to eat of, who were rejected from the priesthood:

till there stood up a priest with Urim and Thummim; as yet there was not any priest that had them; they were not to be found at the return from Babylon; the governor might hope they would be found, and a priest appear clothed with them, when it might be inquired of the Lord by them, whether such priests, before described, might eat of the holy things or not; but since the Jews (y) acknowledge that these were one of the five things wanting

in the second temple; it is all one, as the Talmudists (z) express it, as if it had been said, until the dead rise, or the Messiah comes; and who is come, the true High Priest, and with whom are the true Urim and Thummim, lights and perfections to the highest degree, being full of grace and truth; of the Urim and Thummim; see Gill on Exo 28:30.

(w) Ebr. Comment. p. 809. (x) Var. Hist. l. 1. c. 21. Vid. Corn. Nep. Vit. Conon. l. 9. c. 3. (y) T. Bab. Yoma, fol. 21. 2. (z) T. Bab. Sotah, fol. 48. 2. & Gloss. in Kiddushin, fol. 60. 2.

#### **Ezra 2:64**

The whole congregation together was forty and two thousand three hundred and threescore. But the sums before given make no more, with Zerubbabel, and the ten principal men, than 29,829, so that there are more than 12,000 wanting; wherefore, in answer to the question, where are the 12,000? the Jews say in their chronology (a) these are they of the other tribes, who set up the altar on its bases, and gave money to the masons, &c. Ezr 3:1, this was a much larger number than were carried captive; see Kg2 24:14, but not to be compared with the number that came out of Egypt, Exo 12:37. An Arabic writer (b) makes them 50,000, but wrongly.

(a) Seder Olam Rabba, c. 29. p. 86. (b) Abulpharag. Hist. Dynast. Dyn. 5. p. 82.

#### **Ezra 2:65**

Besides their servants and their maids, of whom there were seven thousand three hundred thirty and seven,.... This shows that the greater part of those that returned were of the poorer sort, since there were so few servants that belonged unto them; these came not into the above account:

and there were among them two hundred singing men and singing women; among the servants, who were kept by persons of figure for their pleasure and recreation, see Ecc 2:8, for that these were such as were employed in sacred service is not so clear, especially the latter, though some conclude it from Ch1 25:5, but rather they were such as were employed at marriages, festivals, and funerals; though Jarchi thinks they were employed by the returning captives, to make them cheerful as they travelled along; see Gill on Isa 55:12.

#### **Ezra 2:66**

So that the far greatest part of them must walk on foot, since these can be thought to be little more than sufficient to carry their goods or baggage; some copies of the Vulgate Latin read six hundred and thirty six horses (c).

(c) Ed. of Sixtus V. and the Lovain in James's Contrariety of Popish Bibles, p. 295.

#### **Ezra 2:68**

And some of the chief of the fathers, when they came to the house of the Lord that is at Jerusalem,.... That is, when they came to the place where it formerly stood, and where were still the ruins of it:

offered freely for the house of God, to set it up in its place; to rebuild it upon the spot where it formerly stood; this they did besides the freewill offerings they brought with them from Babylon.

#### **Ezra 2:69**

They gave after their ability unto the treasure of the world threescore and one thousand drachms of gold,.... These "darcemons or darics" were a Persian coin; one of which, according to Brerewood (k), was of the value of fifteen shillings of our money, and so this quantity of them amounted to 45,750 pounds; but according to Bishop Cumberland (l) they were of the value of twenty shillings and four pence of our money, and so came to upwards of 61,000 pounds; these everyone, according to his ability, put into the common stock or treasury for

the work of building the temple; the Vulgate Latin (m) reads 40,000:

and five thousand pounds of silver; and an Hebrew “mina”, or pound, being of our money seven pounds, ten shillings, according to Brerewood (n), amounted to 31,250 pounds: but others (o), reckoning a drachm of gold at ten shillings, and a mina or pound of silver at nine pounds, make the whole to amount only to 75,500 pounds of our money:

and one hundred priests’ garments; which, as they were laid up among treasures, so were necessary for the service of the temple.

(k) De Pret. & Ponder. Vet. Num. ch. iii. v. (l) Scripture Weights & Measures, ch. 4. p. 115. (m) Sixtus V. Lovain & MSS. in James ut supra. (Contrariety of Popish Bibles, p. 295) (n) Ut supra, (De Pret. & Ponder. Vet. Num.) ch. iv. v. (o) Universal History, vol. 10. p. 183, marg.

### **Ezra 2:70**

So the priests and the Levites, and some of the people, and the singers, and the Nethinims, dwelt in their cities,.... Which were assigned to them out of the several tribes, and in which they or their forefathers had dwelt before the captivity:

and all Israel in their cities; as those of the tribes of Judah and Benjamin, so of the other ten, as many as returned and joined those who were left in the land.

## **INTRODUCTION TO EZRA 3**

### **Chapter 3**

This chapter relates how that the people of Israel returned from captivity, gathered to Jerusalem, and set up the altar, where sacrifices were offered, Ezr 3:1, and kept the feast of tabernacles, and offered the sacrifices of that, besides the daily sacrifice, and of other festivals; and contributed to the workmen that prepared for the building of the temple, Ezr 3:4 and began it by laying the foundation of it; which to some was matter of joy, to others of grief, on different accounts, Ezr 3:8.

### **Ezra 3:1**

And when the seventh month was come,.... The month Tisri, which answers to part of September and October; or when it “was approaching” (p), for before it was actually come some following things were done, the people met, and an altar was built; for on the first day of it sacrifices were offered, Ezr 3:6,

and the children of Israel were in the cities; their respective cities, settling their domestic affairs:

the people gathered themselves together as one man to Jerusalem; the thing was universal, and done with as much dispatch as if only one man was concerned; and it seems to denote as if they were under a divine impulse, and came together without any consultation, or knowledge of each other’s designs, and without summons.

(p) “cum appropinquaret”, Piscator.

### **Ezra 3:2**

Then stood up Jeshua the son of Jozadak,.... Who was the high priest, and the proper person to give the lead in the following work:

and his brethren the priests; the common priests, very fit to join him, and assist him in it:

and Zerubbabel, the son of Shealtiel; the prince and governor of Judah, whose presence was necessary to give countenance to the work, and animate to it:

and his brethren; the princes and heads of the people, particularly those mentioned Ezr 2:2

and builded the altar of the God of Israel; the altar of burnt offering, gave orders for the building of it, and directions about it:

to offer burnt offerings thereon, as it is written in the law of Moses the man of God; or prophet of God, as the Syriac version; see Lev 1:1.

### **Ezra 3:3**

And they set the altar upon his bases,.... Which might remain of the old altar; or the meaning is, that it was fixed and settled on the same spot where it stood before:

for fear was upon them, because of the people of those countries; and therefore they hastened to erect an altar, and offer sacrifices to the Lord, in hope that he would appear for them, and help them against their enemies; or rather, as some render the words (q) “though fear was upon them”, &c. yet they were not deterred from the work, worship, and service of God:

and they offered burnt offerings unto the Lord, even burnt offerings, morning and evening; the daily sacrifice, as directed to Exo 29:38.

(q) “quamvis”, Junius & Tremellius, Piscator, Patrick.

### **Ezra 3:4**

They kept also the feast of tabernacles, as it is written,.... According to the rules prescribed for the observation of it in Lev 23:34 this began on the fifteenth day of the seventh month:

and offered the daily burnt offerings by number, according to the custom, as the duty of every day required; for on all the eight days of the feast there was a certain number of sacrifices fixed for every day; and exactly according to the law concerning them did they offer them at this time; see Num 29:12.

### **Ezra 3:5**

And afterwards offered the continual burnt offering,.... Not after the feast of tabernacles, as if they then began to offer the daily sacrifice; for that they did as soon as the altar was set up, and on the first day of the month, Ezr 3:3, rather the sense is, that after the daily burnt offering of the morning, they offered the other sacrifices peculiar to the several days of the feast of tabernacles; they never neglected that, yea, always began with it; all the rest were after it, and so on other festivals:

both of the new moons, and of all the set feasts of the Lord that were consecrated; to the service of the Lord, and the honour of his name, as every first day of the month, and every other appointed festival, they offered the sacrifices appropriate to each; but not to the neglect of that sacrifice, and always after it:

and of everyone that willingly offered a freewill offering unto the Lord; these they were careful also to offer in their proper time.

### **Ezra 3:6**

From the first of the seventh month began they to offer burnt offerings unto the Lord,.... And which day was not only a new moon, but a grand festival, the feast of blowing of trumpets, Lev 23:24, and no doubt but they

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observed the tenth day of this month, with all the rites of it, which was the day of atonement, Lev 23:27,

but the foundation of the temple of the Lord was not yet laid; they began first with sacrifices, that having thereby given thanks to God for their return to their own land, and for all the benefits they enjoyed, and made atonement for their sins in a typical way, they might be the more prepared and fit for the work of building the temple; or, “though the foundation” of it was not laid (z), yet they offered the above sacrifices.

(z) Etsi, Michaelis.

### **Ezra 3:7**

They gave money also to the masons, and to the carpenters,.... To buy stone and timber with for the building of the temple:

and meat and drink and oil unto them of Zidon, and to them of Tyre; which were more agreeable to them than money, because there was not plenty of such things in their country, as in the land of Israel:

to bring cedar trees from Lebanon to the sea of Joppa; as they did at the first building of the temple by Solomon; they cut down cedars at Lebanon, which belonged to them, and sent them by sea to Joppa, the nearest seaport to Jerusalem, about forty miles from it: see Ch2 2:16,

according to the grant that they had of Cyrus king of Persia; for Tyre and Zidon being under his dominion as well as Judea, he not only gave leave to the Jews to get cedar wood from Lebanon, but gave orders to the Zidonians and Tyrians to furnish them with it, paying a valuable consideration for it; and so some (a) render the word, “according to the commandment of Cyrus”.

(a) “juxta praeceptum”, Vatablus; “juxta quod praeceperat”, V. L. So Ben Melech.

### **Ezra 3:8**

Now in the second year of their coming unto the house of God at Jerusalem,.... The place where it formerly stood; the Jews seem to have set out from Babylon, in the spring of the preceding year, as it was now of this; which to Jerusalem was a journey of about four months, as Ezra performed it, Ezr 7:9, but might take up longer time for such a body of people to do it in, being larger than that with him; wherefore, after they had visited their respective cities, and settled their affairs there, they came to Jerusalem on the seventh month, or September, and kept the feast of tabernacles, and then they returned to their cities again, the winter season being an improper time to begin the building of the temple; having given money to workmen to purchase materials with, and no doubt left a sufficient number to clear away the rubbish, and get things ready by the returning spring to set about the work:

in the second month; the month Ijar, as Jarchi observes, answering to part of April and May, having, as may be supposed, kept the passover the month before:

began Zerubbabel the son of Shealtiel, and Jeshua the son of Jozadak: the prince, and the high priest:

and the remnant of their brethren, the priests and Levites, and all they that were come out of the captivity unto Jerusalem; whose names and numbers are given in the preceding chapter:

and appointed the Levites from twenty years old and upwards to set forward the work of the house of the Lord; to put men to work upon it, and direct them what to do, and urge them to attend closely to it; ever since David’s time the Levites were employed at twenty years of age, when before not till thirty, or twenty five; see Ch1 23:24.



**Ezra 3:9**

Then stood Jeshua, with his sons,.... Not Jeshua the high priest before mentioned, but Jeshua the Levite, Ezr 2:40,

and his brethren, Kadmiel and his sons, the sons of Judah, together; the same with Hodaviah, Ezr 2:40

to set forward the workmen in the house of God; to give them orders to begin and lay the foundation, and hasten and animate them to it:

the sons of Henadad, with their sons and their brethren the Levites: two of this man's sons are mentioned in Neh 3:18.

**Ezra 3:10**

And when the builders laid the foundation of the temple of the Lord,.... The masons, whose work it was, Ezr 3:7

they set the priests in their apparel with trumpets; these were set in a proper place by the prince and the high priest, in their priestly garments, with trumpets in their hands to blow with, as the foundation was laying:

and the Levites the sons of Asaph, with cymbals to praise the Lord, after the ordinance of David king of Israel; these were instruments of brass, and made a tinkling sound, and were by the order of David; and the persons that made use of them; and the songs of praise they were played upon unto; all by his appointment, as well as harps and psalteries, which might now be used, though not expressed; see Ch1 15:16. So the Messenians, when the walls of their city were raised by Epaminondas, and their houses and temples erected, attended it with sacrifices and prayer, and with piping and singing (b).

(b) Pausan. Messenica, sive, l. 4. p. 368.

**Ezra 3:11**

And they sang together by course,.... They sang by turns in responses, and answered one another, as the word signifies; when one company had performed their part, another took theirs:

in praising and giving thanks to the Lord; for returning them to their own land, and giving them opportunity, ability, and will, to set about the rebuilding of the temple of the Lord, and restoring the pure worship of God:

because he is good, for his mercy endureth for ever towards Israel; which words are often repeated in Psa 136:1 and which might be the psalm the Levites now sung by responses:

and all the people shouted with a great shout when they praised the Lord; to express their joy, in the best manner they could, on this solemn occasion:

because the foundation of the house of the Lord was laid; which gave them hope the temple in due time would be rebuilt, and the service of it restored; see Job 38:6.

**Ezra 3:12**

But many of the priests and Levites, and chief of the fathers, who were ancient men,.... Seventy or eighty years of age:

that had seen the first house; the temple built by Solomon, as they very well might, since then it had been

destroyed but fifty two years; for the seventy years captivity are to be reckoned from the fourth of Jehoiakim, when it began, and which was eighteen years before the destruction of the temple; the beginning of the next clause:

when in the foundation, according to the Hebrew accents, is to be connected with this:

that had seen the first house; not when first founded, for that was five hundred years ago, but in “its foundation”; they saw it standing upon its foundation, in all its glory, and so the Septuagint version; and we may read on, when

this house was before their eyes, wept with a loud voice; seeing what it was like to be by the foundation now laid, and was in their sight as nothing in comparison of the former; see Hag 2:3 but Aben Ezra connects this clause as we do:

when the foundation of this house was laid; not but that the dimensions of this house strictly taken were as large as the former: see Ezr 6:3, but not the courts and appendages to it: besides, what might affect them, there was no likelihood of its being so richly decorated with gold and silver as the former temple, and many things would be wanting in it, as the Urim and Thummim, &c.

and many shouted aloud for joy; of the younger sort, who had never seen the grandeur of the first temple, and were highly delighted with the beginning of this, and the hope of seeing it finished.

### **Ezra 3:13**

So that the people could not discern the noise of the shout of joy from the noise of the weeping of the people,.... That is, not clearly and distinctly, they were so mixed and confounded together, and made such a jarring and discord:

for the people shouted with a loud shout, and the noise was heard afar off; the shouting being of young people, whose voice was strongest, and they the most numerous, the noise of shouting prevailed over the noise of weeping; and it was heard further, and at a distance appeared more distinctly to be the noise of shouting, that of weeping not reaching so far; though Jarchi is of opinion that the noise of weeping was heard further than the noise of shouting, which is not likely.

## **INTRODUCTION TO EZRA 4**

### **Chapter 4**

The contents of this chapter are the offer the Samaritans made to the Jews, to assist them in building the temple, which having refused, they gave them all the trouble they could, Ezr 4:1 and a letter of theirs to Artaxerxes, king of Persia, full of accusations of them, Ezr 4:7 and the answer of Artaxerxes to it, giving orders to command the Jews to cease building the temple, Ezr 4:17 which orders were accordingly executed, and the work ceased till the second year of Darius, Ezr 4:23.

### **Ezra 4:1**

Now when the adversaries of Judah and Benjamin,.... The Samaritans, as appears from Ezr 4:2,

heard that the children of the captivity; the Jews, who had been in captivity seventy years, and were just come out of it, and still were not quite free, but under the jurisdiction and control of the king of Persia:

builded the temple unto the Lord God of Israel; that they were going about it, and had laid the foundation of it, which might soon come to their ears, the distance not being very great. Josephus (c) says they heard the

sound of the trumpets, and came to know the meaning of it.

(c) Antiqu. 1. 11. c. 4. sect. 3.

**Ezra 4:2**

Then they came to Zerubbabel, and the chief of the fathers,.... These they addressed, as knowing that if they could not prevail with them, they could never succeed in their design; and these were no doubt the principal of the Samaritans that applied:

and said unto them, let us build with you; that is, the temple, they proposed to join with them, and assist them in it; which proposal at first sight might seem very agreeable and welcome, and would have been so had they been sincere, but they were not; they hoped, by getting among them, to have sown discord among them, and disunited them; and so by these or other means to have retarded the building; or if it went forward, that they might have a claim to it as theirs, at least as to set up their own idols in a part of it; the reasons they gave follow:

for we seek your God as ye do; which was false, for they did not worship him alone, but with idols, nor in the same manner as the Jews did:

and we do sacrifice unto him; but even that could not recommend them to the Jews, since they ought not to sacrifice, even to the Lord himself, but at Jerusalem: there is a various reading here; the textual reading is, “we do not sacrifice”; that is, to idols; the marginal reading is, “we sacrifice to him”, which we follow; Aben Ezra takes in both, perhaps most rightly; “we do not sacrifice to any other, but to him”; which was also false:

since the days of Esarhaddon, king of Assur, who brought us up hither; to Samaria, from Babylon, and other places; see Kg2 17:24.

**Ezra 4:3**

But Zerubbabel, and Joshua, and the rest of the chief of the fathers, said unto them,.... The prince and high priest, and chief of the people:

you have nothing to do with us to build an house to our God; being neither of the same nation, nor of the same religion:

but we ourselves together will build to the Lord God of Israel; we and we only, who are together as one man, united in one body of people, and in the same religious sentiments, being Israelites; we separately, without admitting strangers among us, will build a temple to the God of Israel:

as King Cyrus, the king of Persia, hath commanded us; thereby letting them know that they acted by his authority, and the commission they had from him only concerned themselves, and not others.

**Ezra 4:4**

Then the people of the land weakened the hands of the people of Judah, and troubled them in building. By threatening them, or by dissuading the workmen from going on, by endeavouring to hinder their having materials from the Tyrians and Zidonians, or money out of the king’s revenues to bear the expenses as ordered; see Ezr 6:4.

**Ezra 4:5**

And hired counsellors against them, to frustrate their purpose,.... Either to advise and persuade the king of Persia’s officers in those parts not to supply them with money, or to influence the great men at his court to get the edict revoked: and this they did

all the days of Cyrus king of Persia; who, though the hearty friend and patron of the Jews, yet being engaged in wars abroad with the Lydians and Scythians, and leaving his son as viceroy in his absence, who was no friend unto them, the work went on but slowly, attended with interruptions and discouragements:

even until the reign of Darius king of Persia; who was Darius Hystaspis, between whom and Cyrus were Cambyses the son of Cyrus, and Smerdis the impostor, who pretended to be Smerdis, the brother of Cambyses; a space of about fifteen years.

#### **Ezra 4:6**

And in the reign of Ahasuerus, in the beginning of his reign,.... According to Jarchi, this was Ahasuerus the husband of Esther; but, as most think (d), was Cambyses, the son and successor of Cyrus; so Josephus (e); who was an enemy to the Egyptians; and, fearing the Jews might take part with them, was no friend to them; their enemies therefore took the advantage of the death of Cyrus, and the first opportunity after Cambyses reigned in his own right:

and wrote they unto him an accusation against the inhabitants of Judah and Jerusalem; full of hatred and enmity, spite and malice, charging them as a turbulent, disobedient, and rebellious people.

(d) Spanhem. *Introduct. Chron. ad Hist. Eccl.* p. 54. & *Universal History*, Vol. 5. p. 203. Prideaux, p. 175. (e) *Ut supra*, (*Antiqu. l. 11. c. 4.*) sect. 4, 6. Vid. R. David Ganz. *Tzemach David*, par. 2. fol. 8. 2. So Dr. Lightfoot, *Works*, vol. 1. p. 139.

#### **Ezra 4:7**

And in the days of Artaxerxes,.... The same with Ahasuerus, in the preceding verse; and who also is Cambyses, which is his name in Heathen authors, Artaxerxes being a common name to the kings of Persia; though some (f) think this was Smerdis, the magician and impostor, who was between Cambyses and Darius; but as he reigned but seven months, it is not very likely that he should be wrote unto, and an answer received from him; besides he sent to every nation he ruled over (g), and so to the Jews, and proclaimed to them freedom from tribute and the militia for three years, to ingratiate himself to them:

wrote Bishlam, Mithredath, Tabeel, and the rest of their companions; or his company; for Jarchi thinks only one person is meant; that Mithredath Tabeel is the name of one of the adversaries of Judah; and that Bishlam is an appellative, and signifies that he wrote in peace, or in a way of salutation and greeting; but they seem to be the names of governors in the cities of Samaria under the king of Persia: these wrote

to Artaxerxes king of Persia; instigated by the Samaritans:

and the writing of the letter was written in the Syrian tongue, and interpreted in the Syrian tongue; or Chaldee, of which Ezra gives a copy in the Chaldee language; the meaning either is, that it was written both in Syriac letters, and in the Syriac language; for sometimes words are written in one language and in the character of another, as the Syriac is sometimes written in, Hebrew characters, and the Hebrew in Roman; or else there was a postscript added to this letter, explaining some things in it, which also was written in the same language: some take (h) the word “nishtevan”, rendered “written”, to be the name of a province on the borders of the country beyond Euphrates, whose figure and characters were in high esteem, and fit to write in to kings; but the words and language were Syrian, and needed interpretation.

(f) Prideaux’s *Connect.* par. 1. p. 175. *Authors of the Universal History*, vol. 5. p. 199, 203. So Vitringa, *Hypotypos. Hist. Sacr.* p. 108. (g) Herodot. *Thalia, sive*, l. 3. c. 67. Justin. l. 1. c. 9. (h) *Praefat. Arugas Habbosem apud Buxtorf. de liter. Heb. add.*

**Ezra 4:8**

Rehum the chancellor, and Shimshai the scribe, wrote a letter against Jerusalem to Artaxerxes the king in this sort. This means the same letter as before; which, according to Jarchi, was sent in the name of Mithredath Tabeel and his company, was endited by Rehum, master of words or sense, and written by Shimshai the scribe, whom he makes to be a son of Haman (i); but it was written rather in all their names.

(i) So Midrash Esther, fol. 85. 3.

**Ezra 4:9**

Then wrote Rehum the chancellor, and Shimshai the scribe, and the rest of their companions,.... who all signed the letter; namely, the governors of the following nations:

the Dinaites, the Apharsathchites, the Tarpelites, the Apharsites, the Archevites, the Babylonians, the Susanchites, the Dehavites, and the Elamites; which were colonies from several parts of Chaldea, Media, and Persia, and were settled in the several cities of Samaria, as several of their names plainly show, as from Persia, Erech, Babylon, Shushan, and Elimais; some account for them all, but with uncertainty; according to R. Jose (k) these were the Samaritans who first were sent out of five nations, to whom the king of Assyria added four more, which together make the nine here mentioned, see Kg2 17:24.

(k) Pirke Eliezer, c. 38.

**Ezra 4:10**

And the rest of the nations whom the great and noble Asnappar brought over,.... The river Euphrates:

and set in the cities of Samaria; placed there in the room of the Israelites carried captive; this Asnappar was, according to Jarchi and others (l) Sennacherib; but, with Grotius, Shalmaneser; rather he was Esarhaddon, the son of the former, and grandson of the latter; so Dr. Prideaux (m); though he might be only some commander of the Assyrian monarch, who carried them over by his orders:

and the rest that are on this side the river; the river Euphrates:

and at such a time; which may respect the date of the letter, which, no doubt, was expressed, though not here given; or this, as some think, was the same with our &c. something following, unto King Artaxerxes greeting, or something like that; though David de Pomis (n) takes it to be the general name of the people beyond the river.

(l) Kimchi Sepher Shorash. fol. 166. 2. & Vajikra Rabba in ib. T. Bab. Sanhedrin, fol. 94. 1. (m) Connexion, &c. vol. 1. p. 30. (n) Tzemach David, fol. 63. 3.

**Ezra 4:11**

This is the copy of the letter they sent unto him, even unto Artaxerxes the king,.... Which Ezra brought with him from Babylon, and is contained in the five following verses:

thy servants the men on this side the river, and at such a time; this was the inscription of the letter, or the beginning of it.

**Ezra 4:12**

Be it known unto the king,.... The intent of this letter was, that it might be known to the king what follows:

that the Jews which came up from thee to us are come unto Jerusalem; this they observe partly out of contempt of the Jews, having been lately captive in Babylon, and partly to insinuate what ingratitude they were

guilty of; that having got their liberty, and come to Jerusalem, they made use of it to the king's detriment:

building the rebellious and the bad city; as they suggest it had been to kings, even his predecessors, in former times, Ezr 4:15

and have set up the walls thereof, and joined the foundations; which was a falsehood; for the most they had done was setting up the walls of their houses in Jerusalem, and laying the foundation of the temple; as for the walls of the city, they had not as yet done anything unto them.

#### **Ezra 4:13**

Be it known now unto the king,.... And let it be seriously and thoroughly considered by him and his counsellors:

that if this city be builded, and its walls set up again, then will they not pay toll, tribute, and custom; being able to defend themselves against the king's forces, sent to reduce them to their obedience; these three words take in all sorts of taxes and levies on persons, goods, and merchandise:

and so thou shall endamage the revenue of the kings; not only his own, but his successors':

this they thought would be a very striking and powerful argument with him.

#### **Ezra 4:14**

Now because we have maintenance from the king's palace,.... Have posts under the king, to which salaries were annexed, by which they were supported, and which they had from the king's exchequer; or "salt" (o), as in the original, some places of honour and trust formerly being paid in salt; hence, as Pliny (p) observes, such honours and rewards were called "salaries":

and it was not meet for us to see the king's dishonour; to see any thing done injurious to his crown and dignity, to his honour and revenues, when we are supported by him; this would be ungrateful as well as unjust:

therefore have we sent and certified the king; of the truth of what is before related; and, for the further confirmation of it, refer him to the ancient records of the kingdom, as follows.

(o) "salem vel sale", Montanus, Vatablus, Michaelis. (p) Nat. Hist. 1. 31. c. 7.

#### **Ezra 4:15**

That search may be made in the book of the records of thy fathers,.... That is, his predecessors in the Babylonian monarchy; though, as the Medes and Persians were included in that, and joined the Babylonians in their wars with others, and particularly with the Jews, the records of the Medes and Persians might also be applied to:

so shalt thou find in the book of the records, and know that this city is a rebellious city, and hurtful unto kings and provinces, and that they have moved sedition within the same of old time; against the king of Babylon, particularly in the times of Jehoiakim and Zedekiah:

for which cause was this city destroyed; as it was by Nebuchadnezzar; see Kg2 24:1.

#### **Ezra 4:16**

We certify the king, that if this city be builded again, and the walls thereof set up,.... As it formerly was, and now attempted, as they suggest:

by this means thou shalt have no portion on this side the river; the river Euphrates; intimating that the Jews would not only shake off his yoke, and refuse to pay tribute themselves, but would seize on all his dominions on that side the river, and annex them to their own.

**Ezra 4:17**

Then sent the king an answer unto Rehum the chancellor, and to Shimshai the scribe,.... This affair, upon examination, being found to be of importance, the king of Persia thought fit to send an answer to the above letter, which was doing them an honour, and gave them the power and authority they wished to have:

and to the rest of their companions that dwelt in Samaria; in the kingdom, province, and cities of Samaria:

and unto the rest beyond the river; the river Euphrates, the rest of the nations before mentioned, Ezr 4:9.

Peace, and at such a time: that is, all health and prosperity, &c.

**Ezra 4:18**

The letter which ye sent unto us,.... The plural number is used, being now become courtly for kings thus to speak of themselves:

hath been plainly before me; by such that understood both the Syrian and Persian languages; the letter was written in the Syrian language, and the king being a Persian, it was necessary it should be interpreted and explained to him.

**Ezra 4:19**

And I commanded, and search hath been made,.... In the records of his predecessors, whether Chaldeans or Persians:

and it is found that this city of old time hath made insurrection against kings, and that rebellion and sedition have been made therein: and yet this could not be carried higher than to the times of Zedekiah and Jehoiakim, as before observed, which was not one hundred years ago, unless the rebellion of Hezekiah against the king of Assyria could be thought to be in these records, Kg2 18:7, and yet from hence it is concluded as if in ages past they had been guilty of rebellion and sedition, and even always.

**Ezra 4:20**

There have been mighty kings also over Jerusalem, which have ruled over all countries beyond the river,.... As David and Solomon; and the account of these they had in their records, see Sa2 8:1

and toll, tribute, and custom, was paid unto them; as appears from the places referred to; and this served to strengthen the insinuation made to the king, that if these people were suffered to go on building, he would lose his tribute and taxes in those parts.

**Ezra 4:21**

Give ye now commandment to cause these men to cease,.... From building:

and that this city be not builded until another commandment shall be given from me; he might suspect that this case, in all its circumstances, was not truly stated, and that hereafter he might see reason to recede from the present orders he gave; and the rather, as by searching, and perhaps on his own knowledge, must have observed, that his father Cyrus had shown favour to the Jews, and had not only set them at liberty, but had encouraged them to rebuild their temple; which might be what they were about, and was the case, and nothing else, except

their houses to dwell in.

#### **Ezra 4:22**

Take heed now that ye fail not to do this,.... To put his orders into execution, and at once, without any loss of time, oblige the Jews to desist from rebuilding the walls of their city, which he was told they were doing, though a great falsehood:

why should damage grow to the hurt of the kings? of him and his successors, to be deprived of their toll, tribute, and customs, and to have insurrections, mutinies, and rebellions, in the dominions belonging to them.

#### **Ezra 4:23**

Now when the copy of King Artaxerxes letter was read before Rehum, and Shimshai the scribe, and their companions,.... By him or them to whom it was particularly directed:

they went up in haste to Jerusalem unto the Jews; not only in obedience to the king's command, but from an eagerness of spirit to put a stop to the proceedings of the Jews, to whom they had an aversion, instigated by the Samaritans:

and made them to cease by force and power; from going on with the building of the temple, which they reckoned a part of the city, and within their commission; this they did by showing the power and authority they had under the king's hand, and by the forces they brought with them to compel them to it, should they refuse to obey; or, however, they threatened them highly what they would do, if they did not desist.

#### **Ezra 4:24**

Then ceased the work of the house of God, which is at Jerusalem,.... How far they had proceeded is not said, whether any further than laying the foundation of it; though probably, by this time, it might be carried to some little height; however, upon this it was discontinued:

so it ceased unto the second year of the reign of Darius king of Persia; not Darius Nothun, as some think, for from the first of Cyrus to the sixth of his reign, when the temple was finished, was upwards of one hundred years; yea, according to some, about one hundred and forty; which would carry the age of Zerubbabel, who both laid the foundation of the temple, and finished it, and the age of those who saw the first temple, to a length that is not probable; but this was Darius Hystaspis, who succeeded Cambyses the son of Cyrus, there being only, between, the short usurpation of Smerdis for seven months.

### **INTRODUCTION TO EZRA 5**

#### Chapter 5

This chapter relates, how that the people of the Jews were stirred up by the prophecies of Haggai and Zechariah to set about the building of the temple again, notwithstanding the orders to the contrary from the deputy governors of the king of Persia; nor could the present ones cause them to cease from it; though it must be owned they behaved towards them in a better manner than the former ones did, Ezr 5:1, and who, upon the answers received from the Jews, wrote a letter to Darius, to know the truth of things; and in which they seem to state fairly the case of the Jews, as they had it from them, so far as they understood it, Ezr 5:6.

#### **Ezra 5:1**

Then the prophets, Haggai the prophet, and Zechariah the son of Iddo,.... The grandson of Iddo; for he was the son of Berechiah, Zac 1:1,

propheesied unto the Jews that were in Judah and Jerusalem, in the name of the God of Israel; this they both



did in the second year of Darius; the one began in the sixth month, and the other in the eighth month of the year, Hag 1:1, even “unto them”; or “against them”, as De Dieu; reproving them for their sloth and neglect of building the temple, when they were careful enough to raise up goodly houses for themselves to dwell in; and for being intimidated by the command of the king of Persia, which only forbid the building of the city, that is, the walls of it, but not the temple any more than their own houses; and besides, there was now a new king, from whom they had not so much to fear.

Ezra 5:2

eZR 5:2

Then rose up Zerubbabel the son of Shealtiel, and Jeshua the son of Jozadak,.... Whose spirits were stirred up and quickened by the ministry of the prophets, the Lord accompanying it by his Spirit, Hag 1:12,

and began to build the house of God which is at Jerusalem; to go on with the building of it; for they had laid the foundation before, and perhaps had carried it up to some little height, at least, before they ceased from it, Ezr 3:10

and with them were the prophets of God helping them; with words of counsel, comfort, and exhortation, directing and encouraging them, and promising them protection and success: these are the prophets before named.

Ezra 5:3

eZR 5:3

At the same time came to them Tatnai, governor on this side the river, and Shetharboznai, and their companions,.... These were new governors and officers under the king of Persia in those parts, the old ones, Rehum, Shimshai, &c. being either dead, or removed upon this new king coming to the throne: these came to the Jews:

and said thus unto them, who hath commanded you to build this house, and to make up this wall? for it seems by this time they had raised up the walls of the temple from its foundation to some height; for of these it must be understood, see Ezr 4:8 for it can hardly be thought they were as yet enclosing it with a wall round about it; now they asked them by what authority they did this? who set them to work? and what were their names? for that this question was asked, though not here expressed, is clear from Ezr 4:10 and to which an answer is given in the next verse.

Ezra 5:4

eZR 5:4

Then said we unto them after this manner,.... In answer to their questions; namely, Ezra and other Jews replied; for though Ezra is said after this to come from Babylon in the seventh year of Artaxerxes, he might go thither on some business, and then return again at that time; some indeed think these are the words of Tatnai and those with him; so Ben Melech, which seems to be favoured by Ezr 4:10, and by reading the words with an interrogation, as we do; Aben Ezra says they are either the words of the builders, or of the scribes, the secretaries that came to question them; but they are the words of the former, as order requires, or otherwise no answer would be returned, at least as expressed; and the next clause may be read without an interrogation, and the sense be, that they told them not only that they acted according to an edict of Cyrus king of Persia, for this was said, as appears from Ezr 5:13, but they declared

what were the names of the men that did make this building; or employed them in it, namely, Zerubbabel,

Jeshua, and the chief men of the Jews; they made no scruple of telling them who they were; neither ashamed of their masters nor of their work, nor afraid of any ill consequences following hereafter.

Ezra 5:5

eZR 5:5

But the eye of their God was upon the elders of the Jews,.... He in his providence looked favourably at them, smiled upon them, encouraged them in the work by his good Spirit, and by the prophets, and gave them success, and protected and defended them, see Ch2 16:9,

that they could not cause them to cease, till the matter came to Darius; they were not intimidated by what the governor and those with him said to them, but went on in their work; nor did the governor attempt to interrupt them, they having referred him and their cause to Darius for the truth of what they had said, and for further information from him:

and then they returned answer by letter concerning this matter; that is, Tatnai and those with him sent a letter to Darius about this affair, to which they had an answer, which are both related in this and the following chapters.

### **Ezra 5:6**

The copy of the letter that Tatnai, governor on this side the river, and Shetharboznai, and his companions the Apharsachites, which were on this side the river,.... Which is thought by some to be one of the nations mentioned, Ezr 4:9 the name being pretty near alike to two of them; but perhaps might be a distinct colony in those parts Tatnai was governor of:

these sent unto Darius the king; and is as follows.

### **Ezra 5:7**

They sent a letter unto him, wherein was written thus,.... Or this was the inscription of it:

unto Darius the king, all peace; wishing him all kind of happiness and prosperity.

### **Ezra 5:8**

Be it known unto the king,.... This seems to have been the usual form of beginning a letter to a king in those days, Ezr 4:12 that we went into the province of Judea; which from a kingdom was reduced to a province, and was become a part of the Babylonian, now Persian, monarchy, see Ezr 2:1 to the house of the great God; as the Jews called the Lord their God; and even the Heathens had a notion that there was one supreme God, though they worshipped inferior ones; and some had a notion that Jehovah the God of the Jews was he:

which is builded with great stones; marble stones; as Jarchi (q), stones of rolling, as it may be rendered; which, according to Aben Ezra, were so large and heavy, that they could not be carried, but were obliged to roll them:

and timber is laid in the walls, cedar wood, as Aben Ezra interprets it, for beams, for flooring and raftering; or rather, is put upon the walls, for the lining and wainscoting of them, which was done with cedar wood:

and this work goeth fast on, and prospereth in their hands; and, unless timely prevented, will soon be finished.

(q) So David de Pomis, Tzemach David, fol. 15. 3.

**Ezra 5:9**

Then asked we those elders,.... The elders of the province of Judea; the chief men of it:

who commanded you to build this house, and to make up these walls? see Ezr 5:3.

**Ezra 5:10**

We asked their names also,.... The names of the elders, those that set men about this work:

to certify that we might write the names of the men that were the chief of them; take the names of them in writing, that they might with certainty acquaint the king who they were, and that if it was necessary they might be called to an account for what they were doing.

**Ezra 5:11**

And thus they returned us answer,.... To the purpose and in the manner following:

saying, we are the servants of the God of heaven and earth; signifying that they were doing his work, in obedience to his will, and to whom they were accountable:

and build the house that was builded these many years ago; even five hundred years ago, or thereabout; so that they were not erecting a building where there was none before, but were rebuilding what was in ruins:

which a great king of Israel builded and set up; King Solomon, who was a great king for wisdom, honour, riches, peace, prosperity, and extent of his kingdom.

**Ezra 5:12**

But after that our fathers had provoked the God of heaven unto wrath,.... By their idolatries; which accounts for it how it was that they who were the servants of the great God of heaven and earth, and this temple built for the honour of his name, were not preserved by him; but they were carried captive, and this house left desolate: it was for their sins for which

he (God) gave them into the hand of Nebuchadnezzar the king of Babylon the Chaldean, who destroyed this house, and carried the people away into Babylon; see Ch2 36:19.

**Ezra 5:13**

But in the first year of Cyrus the king of Babylon,.... That is, the first year he was king of Babylon, having taken it, otherwise he was king of Persia many years before:

the same King Cyrus made a decree to build this house of God; see Ezr 1:1.

**Ezra 5:14**

Of which, and of what is said concerning them, and particularly of the delivery of them to Sheshbazzar, whom Cyrus made governor of Judah, and ordered him to carry them to Jerusalem, and build the temple there, and put them in it, see Ezr 1:7.

**Ezra 5:16**

Then came the same Sheshbazzar, and laid the foundation of the house of God which is in Jerusalem,.... Which makes it clear, that by Sheshbazzar is meant Zerubbabel; for he it was that laid the foundation of the temple, or at least by whose order it was laid, see Zac 4:9

and since that time even until now; from the first of Cyrus to the second of Darius, a space of about eighteen years, and just seventy from the destruction of the temple:

hath it been in building, and yet it is not finished; the work going on slowly, not without interruption and intermission, through the enmity of the Samaritans unto them, who had made false representations of them; but these men, Tatnai and those with him, as the Jews gave them a very particular account of things, as above, so they fairly and fully related them in this their letter to the king.

### **Ezra 5:17**

Now therefore, if it seem good to the king, let there be search made in the king's treasure house, which is there at Babylon,.... Where were the archives of the kingdom, where the laws, decrees, edicts, and proclamations, and other things relating to the state, were laid up, that recourse might be had to them upon occasion:

whether it be so, that a decree was made of Cyrus the king to build this house of God at Jerusalem; which the Jews affirmed was made by him, and upon which they proceeded:

and let the king send his pleasure to us concerning this matter; whether the Jews should be allowed to go on with the building of their temple, and finish it, or whether they should be restrained from it; signifying they were ready to do his will and pleasure either way, as he thought fit.

## **INTRODUCTION TO EZRA 6**

### **Chapter 6**

Darius, on receiving the letter from his officers in Samaria, searched for the decree of Cyrus, and found it, and which he confirmed, Ezr 6:1 and made a fresh decree, and ordered expenses to be given out of his tribute for the building of the temple, and for the sacrifices of it; and that whosoever altered it should be hanged on the timber of his own house, and imprecated a curse on those that should destroy the house of God, Ezr 6:8 upon which the building went on, and was finished, Ezr 6:13 and the temple was dedicated to God in a solemn manner, Ezr 6:16, and the passover was kept by all the people, Ezr 6:19.

### **Ezra 6:1**

Then Darius the king made a decree,.... To make inquiry after the edict of Cyrus, to search the public records for it:

and search was made in the house of the rolls; or "books" (r), in a public library or museum:

where the treasures were laid up in Babylon; where things of worth and value were repositied; not only gold, silver, jewels, and precious stones, and things rare and curious, but all sorts of writings relating to the monarchy, and the dominions belonging to it; but it seems it could not be found here, and therefore the king ordered search to be made elsewhere.

(r) , , Sept. "in bibliotheca", V. L. "in bibliotheca librorum", Tigurine version; "in domo librorum", Pagninus, Montanus.

### **Ezra 6:2**

And there was found at Achmetha,.... Which Jarchi and Aben Ezra take to be the name of a vessel in which letters and writings were put for safety; but it was no doubt the name of a place; the Vulgate Latin version has it Ecbatana; and so Josephus (s); which was the name of a city in Media, where the kings of that country had their residence in the summer time (t); for it has its name from heat (u); the Persian kings dwelt at Shushan in the

winter, and at Ecbatana in the summer (w); hence they are compared by Aelian (x) to cranes, birds of passage, because of their going to and from the above places:

in the palace that is in the province of the Medes, here was found

a roll; which was the decree of Cyrus, which perhaps he took with him when he went thither:

and therein was a record thus written; as follows.

(s) Antiqu. l. 11. c. 4. sect. 6. (t) Curtius, l. 5. c. 8. Vid. Alex. ab Alex. Genial. Dier. l. 3. c. 6. (u) Hiller. Onomastic. Sacr. p. 618. (w) Athen. Deipnosophist, l. 12. c. 1. (x) De Animal. l. 3. c. 13.

**Ezra 6:3**

eZR 6:3

In the first year of Cyrus the king; the same Cyrus the king made a decree concerning the house of God at Jerusalem, let the house be builded,.... See Ezr 1:1,

the place where they offered sacrifices; to God in times past, ever since it was built by Solomon:

and let the foundations thereof be strongly laid; so as to bear and support the building erected on them, as the word signifies:

the height thereof sixty cubits; which were thirty more than the height of Solomon's temple, Kg1 6:2 though sixty less than the height of the porch, which was one hundred and twenty, Ch2 3:4 and which some take to be the height of the whole house; and hence it may be observed what Herod said (y), that the temple then in being wanted sixty cubits in height of that of Solomon's:

and the breadth thereof sixty cubits; whereas the breadth of Solomon's temple was but twenty, Kg1 6:2, but since it cannot reasonably be thought that the breadth should be equal to the height, and so very disproportionate to Solomon's temple; many learned men understand this of the extension of it as to length, which exactly agrees with the length of the former temple, Kg1 6:2.

(y) Apud Joseph. Antiqu. l. 15. c. 11. sect. 1.

**Ezra 6:4**

With three rows of great stones,.... Which Jarchi interprets of the walls of it, and these stones of marble; and so Ben Melech:

and a row of new timber; of cedar wood upon the rows of stone, see Kg1 6:36 or for the lining and wainscoting the walls:

and let the expenses be given out of the king's house; treasury, or exchequer; but it does not appear that this part of the decree was observed, at least hitherto; but the Jews built at their own expense, and perhaps did not exactly observe the directions given as to the dimensions of the house.

**Ezra 6:5**

And also let the golden and silver vessels,.... See Ezr 1:7 and which confirms what the Jews said to Tatnai, Ezr 5:14.

**Ezra 6:6**

Now therefore Tatnai, governor beyond the river,.... The river Euphrates, that side of it towards the land of Israel; Josephus (z) calls this man master of the horse:

Shetharboznai, and your companions the Apharsachites, which are beyond the river, be ye far from thence; keep at a distance from the Jews, and give them no disturbance, nor interrupt them in their work of building of the temple, but mind your own business and government.

(z) Ibid. (Antiqu.) l. 11. c. 4. sect. 7.

**Ezra 6:7**

Let the work of this house of God alone,.... Suffer them to go on with it, and do not hinder them; it looks, by these expressions, as if he had some suspicion or hint given him that they were inclined to molest them, or that there were some that stirred them up to it, and were desirous of it:

let the governor of the Jews, and the elders of the Jews, build this house of God in his place; where it formerly stood; that is, go on with the building of it.

**Ezra 6:8**

Moreover, I make a decree, what ye shall do to the elders of these Jews, for the building of this house of God,.... This must be considered as an additional decree of Darius, which was peculiarly made by him, in which more was granted in favour of the Jews, and as an encouragement to them to go on with the building of the temple; though Josephus (a) says this is no other than a confirmation of the decree of Cyrus; for, according to him, all that is here granted to them, or threatened to others, from hence to the end of Ezr 6:10, was contained in the decree:

that of the king's goods, even of the tribute beyond the river; what was collected out of his dominions on that side the river Euphrates, towards the land of Israel: according to Herodotus (b), this Darius was the first of the kings of Persia that exacted tribute; under Cyrus and Cambyses only presents were brought; but he imposed a tribute, and was therefore called an huckster, as Cambyses had the name of lord, and Cyrus that of father: the same writer gives an account of the several nations he received it from, and the particular sums, which in all amounted to 14,560 Euboic talents of gold; among whom are mentioned all Phoenicia and Syria, called Palestine, the tribute of which parts is the tribute beyond the river he referred to: and this king was well disposed to the Jewish nation, temple, and worship, before he was king, if what Josephus (c) says is true, that, while a private man, he vowed to God that, if he should be king, he would send all the sacred vessels that were in Babylon to the temple at Jerusalem: and out of the above tribute it is ordered:

that forthwith expenses be given unto these men, that they be not hindered; from going on with the building, for want of money to buy materials, and pay the workmen.

(a) Antiqu. l. 11. c. 4. sect. 6. (b) Thalia, sive, l. 3. c. 89-95. (c) Antiqu. l. 11. c. 3. sect. 1.

**Ezra 6:9**

eZR 6:9

And that which they have need of, both young bullocks, and rams, and lambs, for the burnt offerings of the God of heaven,.... All which were used for burnt offerings, see Lev 1:2

wheat, salt, wine, and oil; "wheat", or "fine flour", for the "minchah" or meat offering; "salt", for every offering; "wine", for the drink offerings; and "oil", to be put upon the meat offerings, see Lev 2:1,

according to the appointment of the priests which are at Jerusalem, let it be given them day by day without fail; for the daily sacrifice, and the meat and drink offerings which attended it, Exo 29:38.

### **Ezra 6:10**

That they may offer sacrifices of sweet savours unto the God of heaven,.... Such as will be acceptable to him, Gen 8:21

and pray for the life of the king, and of his sons; prayer being wont to be made at the time of the morning and evening incense; and the Jews used to pray for other people besides themselves, and especially when desired, and particularly for kings and civil magistrates, to whom they were subject, see Jer 29:7, the sons of Darius Hystaspis, for whose life, as well as his own, he would have prayer made, were, according to Herodotus (d), three by his first wife, the daughter of Gobryas, before he began to reign, the eldest of which was Artobazanes; which sons must be here meant, since this was towards the beginning of his reign; he had afterwards four more by Atossa the daughter of Cyrus, the eldest of which was Xerxes, who succeeded him: many of the Heathens had an high opinion of the God of the Jews, and of their prayers to him for them; even the Emperor Julian (e) styles him the best of all the gods, and desired the Jews to pray to him for the welfare of his kingdom; nor need it seem strange that Darius should desire the same, since he was a devout prince; his father Hystaspes is supposed by some to be the same that was one of the most famous among the Persian Magi, or ministers in sacred things; and Darius himself had so great a veneration for the men of that sacred order, that he commanded that it should be put upon his sepulchral monument, that he was master of the Magi (f); and by his familiarity with the priests of Egypt, and learning their divinity, had the honour, while alive, to have deity ascribed to him (g).

(d) Polymnia, sive, l. 7. c. 2. (e) Opera, par. 2. ep. 25. p. 153. (f) Porphy. de abstinentia, l. 4, c. 16. (g) Diodor. Sic. l. 1. p. 85.

### **Ezra 6:11**

Also I have made a decree, that whosoever shall alter this word,.... Act contrary to this command, will not obey it, but as much as in him lies changes and revokes it:

let timber be pulled down from his house, and being set up, let him, be hanged thereon; that is, let a beam be taken from it, and a gallows or gibbet made of it, and hang him on it:

and let his house be made a dunghill for this; be pulled down, and never rebuilt more; see Gill on Dan 2:2; see Gill on Dan 2:9.

### **Ezra 6:12**

And the God that hath caused his name to dwell there,.... Whose name is not only called upon there, and that called by his name; but who grants his presence, and causes his Shechinah, or divine Majesty, to dwell there, as in Solomon's temple, which Darius had some knowledge of:

destroy all kings and people; let them be who they will, high or low:

that shall put to their hand to alter and to destroy this house of God, which is at Jerusalem; this he said to deter from hindering the building of it now, and from attempting to destroy it hereafter:

I Darius have made a decree, let it be done with speed; be carried immediately into execution, especially with respect to the disbursement for the building of the temple, and for the sacrifices of it.

**Ezra 6:13**

Then Tatnai, governor on this side the river, Shetharboznai, and their companions,.... Having received and read the above letter:

according to that which Darius the king had sent, so they did speedily; acquainted the Jews with what the king had written; were so far from hindering the work going forward, that they encouraged it; and made disbursements to them out of the king's tribute, and furnished them with everything necessary for sacrifice: and this they did immediately, without delay.

**Ezra 6:14**

And the elders of the Jews builded,.... Went on with the building of the temple:

and they prospered through the prophesying of Haggai the prophet and Zechariah the son of Iddo; or grandson, as before; being animated and encouraged by them; and as they foretold and promised it would, be, so it was; they had success in their work, the Lord overruling the heart of Darius the king and his council in their favour:

and they builded and finished it; that is, the temple:

according to the commandment of the God of Israel; by the above prophets, who spoke to them, and prophesied in his name:

and according to the commandment of Cyrus, and Darius, and Artaxerxes king of Persia; the commandment of Cyrus is in Ezr 1:1 that of Darius in this, Ezr 6:8, but who Artaxerxes is, and his commandment, is not easy to say; he cannot be the Artaxerxes between Cyrus and Darius, but one that followed the latter; besides, he was a hinderer of the building, Ezr 4:21, some think this was Xerxes the son and successor of Darius, and who might be partner with his father in the empire at this time, and so is joined with him in this commandment; which is more probable than that he should be his grandson Artaxerxes Longimamus, in whose reign the temple, it is supposed, was beautified and ornamented, though the exterior building of it was before finished; and so he is spoken of by anticipation; and still more plausible than that he should be, with others, Artaxerxes Mnemon, the son of Darius Nothus; but, after all, I am most inclined to think, with Aben Ezra, that he is Darius himself; and the words to be read, Darius, that is, Artaxerxes, king of Persia; Artaxerxes being, as he observes, a common name of the kings of Persia, as Pharaoh was of the kings of Egypt; though this is by some rejected (h); and who goes by this name in the continuance of this history, in whose seventh year, the year after this, Ezra went up to Jerusalem, and, in the twentieth of his reign, Nehemiah, Ezr 7:1, and I find Dr. Lightfoot (i) was of the same mind; and, according to Diodorus Siculus (k), the kings of Persia were called by the name of Artaxerxes after Mnemon; and so they might before; Cambyses is so called in Ezr 4:7. Herodotus (l) says the name signifies "a mighty warrior".

(h) Vid. Rainold de Lib. Apocryph. praelect. 31. p. 271. (i) Works, vol. 1. p. 139. (k) Bibliothec. l. 15. p. 400. (l) Erato, sive, l. 6. c. 98.

**Ezra 6:15**

And this house was finished on the third day of the month Adar,.... The twelfth month of the year with the Jews, and answers to part of our February and part of March:

which was in the sixth year of the reign of Darius the king; four years after the decree came forth.

**Ezra 6:16**

And the children of Israel,.... Those of the ten tribes that remained after the body of the people were carried



captive, or came with the Jews at their return:

the priests and the Levites, and the rest of the children of the captivity; those of the tribes of Judah and Benjamin:

kept the dedication of this house of God with joy; they set it apart for sacred use and service, with feasting and other expressions of joy and gladness, as follows.

**Ezra 6:17**

And offered, at the dedication of this house of God, an hundred bullocks, two hundred rams, four hundred lambs,.... Hecatombs of various sorts, which were always reckoned grand sacrifices, even among Heathens, of which Homer sometimes speaks; some of these were for burnt offerings, and others peace offerings, by way of thankfulness to God for the finishing of the temple; part of which belonging to the offerers, they feasted upon it with great gladness of heart:

and for a sin offering for all Israel, twelve he goats, according to the number of the tribes of Israel; for though the ten tribes were carried captive by Shalmaneser, yet, as before observed, there were some of them that remained in the land, and others that went and returned with the two tribes; and therefore a sin offering was made for them all, for the typical expiation of guilt contracted since they had been in an Heathen land, and, temple service had ceased.

**Ezra 6:18**

And they set the priests in their divisions, and the Levites in their courses, for the service of God which is at Jerusalem,.... All in their proper classes and courses, to do the work of the temple at Jerusalem in their turns:

as it is written in the book of Moses; see Num 3:6, from hence it is plain the Pentateuch was not written by Ezra, as suspected by Spinosa (m), but by Moses; see the argument of the book of Genesis. See Gill on Gen 1:1.

(m) Tract. Theolog. Polit. c. 8. p. 163.

**Ezra 6:19**

And the children of the captivity kept the passover upon the fourteenth day of the first month. The month Nisan or Abib, which was the month following that in which the temple was finished, Ezr 6:15, this passover was kept at the exact time the law commanded, Exo 12:2.

**Ezra 6:20**

For the priests and the Levites were purified together, all of them were pure,.... They were all to a man pure, and all purified as one man; all were of one mind to purify themselves, and took care to do it, and did it with as much dispatch as if only one man was purified; so that they were more generally prepared for service now than in the times of Hezekiah, Ch2 29:34

and killed the passover for all the children of the captivity, and for their brethren the priests and for themselves; which seems to have been done by the Levites, for themselves and for the priests, and for all the people, who were not so pure as the priests and Levites; or otherwise they might have killed it themselves, Exo 12:6, as Bochart (n) thinks.

(n) Hierozoic. par. 1. l. 2. c. 50. col. 576.

**Ezra 6:21**

And the children of Israel, which were come again out of captivity,.... The tribes of Judah and Benjamin,

with some of the ten tribes mixed with them:

and all such as had separated themselves unto them, from the filthiness of the Heathen of the land, to seek the Lord God of Israel, did eat; such of the Gentiles in the dominions of Babylon, and came with the Jews from thence, who were enlightened into the knowledge and worship of the true God, and not only renounced their idolatry, here called filthiness, but were circumcised, and embraced the religion of the Jews, and so were proselytes of righteousness, as they call them; or otherwise they would not have been allowed to eat of the passover, as they did, Exo 12:48.

### **Ezra 6:22**

And kept the feast of unleavened bread seven days with joy,.... Which immediately followed upon the passover, Exo 12:18,

for the Lord had made them joyful; the building of the temple being finished, and the service of it restored to its original purity:

and turned the heart of the king of Assyria unto them, to strengthen their hands in the work of the house of God, the God of Israel; by giving them leave to go on in building the temple, and by encouraging and assisting them in it till they had finished it; this was Darius Artaxerxes, who, though called king of Persia, was also king of Assyria, being possessed of the Assyrian monarchy, as his predecessors were upon the taking of Babylon, and the same is therefore called also the king of Babylon, Neh 13:6. God, the God of Israel, who has the hearts of all men in his hands, and so the hearts of kings, and can turn them at his pleasure, inclined his heart to do them good, which was matter of joy unto them, see Ezr 7:27.

## **INTRODUCTION TO EZRA 7**

### Chapter 7

In this chapter we have the lineage and character of Ezra described, Ezr 7:1, his expedition to Jerusalem, and of many others with him, Ezr 7:7, a copy of the commission King Artaxerxes gave him to execute, Ezr 7:11, and his thankfulness, Ezr 7:27.

### **Ezra 7:1**

Now after these things,.... The finishing of the temple, and the dedication of it, and keeping the passover:

in the reign of Artaxerxes king of Persia; in the seventh year of his reign, Ezr 7:7, who is the same with Darius in the preceding chapter; so Jarchi and Aben Ezra; See Gill on Ezr 6:14.

Ezra the son of Seraiah; the high priest slain by Nebuchadnezzar Jer 52:24, this Ezra was a younger son of his, brother to Josedech, and uncle to Joshua, who were high priests in succession; his pedigree is carried in the ascending line up to Aaron, in this and the four following verses; only six generations, for brevity sake, are omitted, between Azariah and Meraioth, which may be supplied from Ch1 6:7; see Gill on

### **Ezra 7:6**

This Ezra went up from Babylon,.... A second time; for that he went up with Zerubbabel is clear from Neh 12:1, and is plainly intimated, Ezr 5:4,

and he was a ready scribe in the law of Moses, which the Lord God of Israel had given; the meaning is, not that he had a quick hand in writing out copies of it, but was well versed in the knowledge of it; had studied it thoroughly, well instructed in it, and was abundantly qualified to teach it others; he was an eminent doctor of the law; so scribes, in the New Testament, who are the same with the lawyers, were such as were teachers of the law; the word here used in the Arabic language signifies to be expert, as Jarchi (o) learned from one of their

doctors:

and the king granted him all his request, according to the hand of the Lord his God upon him; either upon Ezra, giving him favour with the king, and so success and prosperity; or it may denote the divine influence of the God of Ezra upon the heart of the king, moving him to grant what he asked of him, even everything he desired: he seems to have been sent upon an embassy to the king from the chief men at Jerusalem; perhaps the governors of Syria had not so fully made the disbursements the king in his decree had required them to make, since the following commission chiefly respects such things; and he was sent on that errand to acquaint the king with it, as well as to persuade those that remained to return, and to obtain leave for it.

(o) Comment. in Psal. xlv. 1. “acutus ingenio et solers fuit”, Golius, col. 2272. “in re exercitatus fuit et excultus”, Castel. col. 2008. Ethiop. “docuit, erudivit”, ib. col. 2007.

#### **Ezra 7:7**

And there went up some of the children of Israel,.... Perhaps some of the ten tribes, as well as others of the tribes of Judah and Benjamin; who, notwithstanding the edict of Cyrus, chose to remain in Babylon, and in the countries of it, until they saw how things would go in Judea; and hearing that the temple was finished, and that those that had returned had built them houses in their several cities, and prospered, thought fit to return also:

and of the priests, and the Levites, and the singers, and the porters, and the Nethinims, unto Jerusalem; to take their places, and execute their offices in the temple now built; for of the Levites especially, some of which were singers, and others porters, and of the Nethinims, there were but few that went up with Zerubbabel: now this journey of theirs was taken

in the seventh year of Artaxerxes the king; that is, of Darius Artaxerxes, and this was the year after the temple was finished: though it is thought by many learned men, and not without some show of reason, that Artaxerxes Longimanus is meant.

#### **Ezra 7:8**

And he came to Jerusalem in the fifth month,.... With the above company; this was the month Abib, answering to part of July and part of August: which was in the seventh year of the king; as in the preceding verse.

#### **Ezra 7:9**

For upon the first day of the first month began he to go up from Babylon,.... The month Nisan, answering to part of March and part of April; this was New Year’s day:

and on the first day of the fifth month came he to Jerusalem; the first of the month Ab, as in the preceding verse; so that he was just four months on his journey:

according to the good hand of his God upon him; his power and providence, which gave him and his company health and strength, supplied them with everything necessary, directed, protected, and defended them, and brought them in safety to their journey’s end.

#### **Ezra 7:10**

For Ezra had prepared his heart to seek the law of the Lord,.... To attain to the knowledge of it, that he might be master of it, and expert in it, and know what was not to be done, and what to be done; he had set his heart upon this, bent his studies this way, and taken a great deal of pains in searching into it, in reading of it, and meditating on it:

and to do it; he was not only concerned to get the theory of it, but to put it in practice, to exercise himself in it, that it might be habitual to him; and the rather, as his view and intentions were not merely for the sake of himself, but

to teach in Israel statutes and judgments: and therefore it was not only necessary that he should have a large and competent knowledge of the laws, moral, ceremonial, and civil, but that he should act according to them himself, that so by his example, as well as by his instructions, he might teach the people.

### **Ezra 7:11**

Now this is the copy of the letter that the King Artaxerxes gave unto Ezra the priest,.... This title relating to his office is justly given him, since he was the son of an high priest, and lineally descended from Aaron, as the above account of his pedigree shows:

the scribe, even a scribe of the words of the commandments of the Lord, and of his statutes to Israel; the doubling of the word “scribe” shows that he was very wise and learned in the law, in the commandments and statutes of it the Lord gave to Israel; not only in the language of it in which it was written, but in the matter and substance of it, in the things contained in it; for “dibre”, signifies “things” as well as words.

### **Ezra 7:12**

Artaxerxes, king of kings,.... Having many kings and kingdoms subject and tributary to him; for this was not merely a proud haughty title which the eastern kings (p) assumed, particularly the Persians; for after Cyrus they were so in fact, who took this title also, and had it put on his sepulchral monument, “Here I lie, Cyrus, king of kings (q);” this title was given to Grecian kings, particularly Agamemnon is called king of kings (r), he being general at the siege of Troy, under whom the rest of the kings fought; if this was Darius Hystaspis, of him Cyrus dreamed that he had wings on his shoulders, with one he covered Asia, and with the other Europe (s):

unto Ezra the priest, a scribe of the law of the God of heaven; of which titles see Ezr 7:11,

perfect peace, and at such a time; the word “perfect” belongs to Ezra’s title as a scribe, signifying that he was a most learned and complete scribe or teacher of the law of God; “peace” is not in the text, and the phrase “at such a time” respects the date of the letter, though not expressed, or is only an “et cetera”; see Gill on Ezr 4:10.

(p) See the Universal History, vol. 5. p. 16, 137. & vol. 11. p. 7, 8. margin, & p. 66. (q) Strabo, Geograph. l. 15. p. 502. (r) Vell. Patercul. Hist. Roman. l. 1. in initio. (s) Herodot. Clio, sive, l. 1. c. 209.

### **Ezra 7:13**

I make a decree,.... Which, according to the laws of the Medes and Persians, when signed, might not be changed, Dan 6:8,

that all they of the people of Israel, and of his priests and Levites, in my realm; who remained there, and took not the benefit of the edict of Cyrus, which gave them leave to go; but neglecting the opportunity, it seems as if they could not now go out of the realm without a fresh grant, which is hereby given:

which are minded of their own freewill to go up to Jerusalem, go with thee; this decree did not oblige them to go whether they would or not; for they might, notwithstanding this, continue if they pleased; it only gave them leave to make use of the present opportunity of going along with Ezra, if they chose it.

### **Ezra 7:14**

Forasmuch as thou art sent of the king, and of his seven counsellors,.... Such a number the kings of Persia

used to have from the times of Darius Hystaspis, who was chosen out of seven nobles to be king, and ever after the Persian kings had seven counsellors privileged, as those nobles were, Est 1:14, and Ezra had the honour to be sent with a commission from this king and his seven counsellors:

to inquire concerning Judah and Jerusalem; the inhabitants thereof, whether they had knowledge of and behaved

according to the law of thy God which is in thine hand; a copy of which he had with him, and was very expert in and conversant with, and could readily and at once pass judgment whether they acted according to it or not.

**Ezra 7:15**

And to carry the silver and gold, which the king and his counsellors have freely offered unto the God of Israel, whose habitation is in Jerusalem. In the temple built there; for the service of which, either for purchasing and procuring vessels that were wanting in it, or for sacrifices to be offered in it, the king and his nobles had made a voluntary contribution, and intrusted and sent Ezra with it.

**Ezra 7:16**

And all the silver and gold that thou canst find in all the province of Babylon,.... Not that he might take it wherever he found it, whether the owners of it were willing he should have it or not; but whatever was freely offered by them, as Jarchi, that he was allowed to take, whatever he could get in that way:

with the freewill offering of the people; of the people of the Jews, who thought fit to continue in the province:

and of the priests, offering willingly for the house of their God which is in Jerusalem; those freewill offerings, whether of the natives of Babylon, or of any of the Jewish nation, for the service of the temple at Jerusalem, he had leave and a commission to carry with him.

**Ezra 7:17**

That thou mayest buy speedily with this money,.... Thus freely contributed by one and another:

bullocks, rams, lambs; which were for burnt offerings:

with their meat offerings, and their drink offerings; which always went along with the burnt offerings, according to the law of Moses; and which the king seemed to have a right knowledge of, being, no doubt, instructed by Ezra, or some other Jew in his court:

and offer them upon the altar of the house of your God which is in Jerusalem; the altar of burnt offering in the temple there.

**Ezra 7:18**

And whatsoever shall seem good to thee, and to thy brethren,.... The priests, that he should think fit to take in to his assistance in this work:

to do with the rest of the silver and gold; which should be left after the sacrifices were offered up:

that do after the will of your God; as they should be directed by him, or was prescribed by him in the law.

**Ezra 7:19**

The vessels also that were given thee for the service of the house of thy God,.... These were vessels of silver, basins of gold, and vessels of fine copper; not what formerly belonged to the temple, they were delivered by Cyrus to Sheshbazzar; but what the present king and his counsellors freely offered at this time, see Ezr 8:25, those

deliver thou before the God of Jerusalem; perfect and complete, the full number of them, as the word signifies (t); meaning not to be delivered before him, or in his presence, as a witness thereof, but that they should be dedicated and devoted to his service, who was worshipped in the temple at Jerusalem, and by the inhabitants of it; he seems as if he thought him a topical deity, the God of that particular place, which was the notion of the Heathens, see Kg1 20:23, though he also speaks of him as the God of heaven.

(t) “*integra et pleno numero redde*”, Michaelis.

#### **Ezra 7:20**

And whatsoever more shall be needful for the house of thy God, which thou shall have occasion to bestow,.... For the beautifying and ornamenting the temple, Ezr 7:27,

bestow it out of the king’s treasure house; where the money collected by tribute, tax, and custom, was deposited; his exchequer, as it may be called, see Ezr 6:8.

#### **Ezra 7:21**

And I, even I Artaxerxes the king, do make a decree to all the treasurers which are beyond the river,.... The receivers of his tribute, tax, and custom, beyond the river Euphrates, on the side towards the land of Israel:

that whatsoever Ezra the priest, the scribe of the law of the God of heaven; see Ezr 7:12,

shall require of you, it be done speedily; which seems at first a grant at large for whatsoever he should want or demand, but is limited and restrained by what follows.

#### **Ezra 7:22**

Unto one hundred talents of silver,.... Which amounted to 35,300 pounds sterling; these, according to Jarchi, were to buy the offerings or sacrifices with:

and an hundred measures of wheat; or corn, the same measure with the homer, each of which held ten ephahs, or seventy five wine gallons, five pints, and upwards; these, according to the same writer, were for meat offerings, made of fine flour, or rather bread offerings, as they may be called:

and to an hundred baths of wine; which was the same measure in liquids as the ephah in things dry, a tenth part of the cor or homer, and held seven wine gallons, five pints, and upwards (u); these were for the drink offerings:

and to an hundred baths of oil; the same measure as before; these were to mix in the meat offerings:

and salt without prescribing how much; because it was used in all offerings, and was cheap, and therefore no measure is fixed, but as much as was wanting was to be given, see Lev 2:1.

(u) See Cumberland’s Scripture Weights and Measures, ch. 4. p. 137.

#### **Ezra 7:23**

Whatsoever is commanded by the God of heaven,.... In the law given by Moses to the people of Israel:

let it be diligently done for the house of the God of heaven; for the service of it, particularly sacrifices:

for why should there be wrath against the realm of the king and his sons? through the neglect of the service of God in the temple, and by reason of the default of the king's treasurers.

#### **Ezra 7:24**

Also we certify you, that touching any of the priests and Levites, singers, porters, Nethinims, or ministers of this house of God,.... The king had a right and perfect knowledge of the distinct offices and services of those persons, see *Ezr 7:7*,

it shall not be lawful to impose toll, tribute, or custom, upon them; that they might be the less encumbered with the affairs of life, and be more at leisure to attend divine service, and do it the more readily and freely; it was usual with the Heathens to except ecclesiastics from taxes, tributes, and imposts; so the priests in Egypt (w), and the Druids here in Britain (x).

(w) Diodor. Sicul. l. 1. p. 66. (x) Caesar. Comment. de Bello Gall. l. 6. c. 13.

#### **Ezra 7:25**

And thou, Ezra, after the wisdom of thy God, that is in thine hand,.... Which he had a large share of from the Lord, and could readily make use of to good purpose; and this may be meant of the law of God made with the highest wisdom, and to know and observe which is an instance of wisdom in men, *Deu 4:6*,

set magistrates and judges, which may judge all the people that are beyond the river, all such as know the laws of thy God; such as God, in his great wisdom, directed to in his wise law to be appointed over the people, to judge righteous judgment; to inform them in all matters of controversy that might arise among them, and decide them according to it; and lead them into a greater and better knowledge of it, *Deu 16:18*. Jarchi takes the word for "set" to be a comparative, and the sense to be, that the wisdom of Ezra was greater than the judges that judged the people, than them that knew the law:

and teach ye them that know them not; such people that were ignorant thereof; though the above writer interprets this of ignorant judges,"the judge that knows not to judge, make him know judgment to do it."

#### **Ezra 7:26**

And whosoever will not do the law of thy God, and the law of the king,.... Either the judge who delays judgment, or does not execute it according to the law of God, and of the king; or the people, that do not obey the law of God in matters of religion, and the law of the king in civil things, Judea being now a province of the Persian empire; though some think the law of the king only refers to this law or decree of the king, which gave the Jews power to execute their own laws:

let judgment be executed speedily upon him; immediately, without delay, according to the nature of his crime:

whether it be unto death; if guilty of a capital crime, deserving death, let him be put to death:

or to banishment; from his native country to a foreign distant land:

or to rooting out (y), as the word signifies; an utter extirpation of him and his family, a destroying him root and branch; or, as Jarchi expresses it, a rooting him out of the world, his seed and family:

or to confiscation of goods; to payment of mulcts and fines:

or to imprisonment; for such a term of time; all according to the breach of what law he may be guilty of; thus far the king's decree.

(y) "ad eradicationem ejus", Pagninus, Montanus; "ad eradicationem", Tigurine version, Vatablus, De Dieu, Michaelis.

#### **Ezra 7:27**

Blessed be the Lord God of our fathers,.... This is Ezra's thanksgiving to God for the above decree:

which hath put such a thing as this in the king's heart; which he rightly took to be of God, who wrought in him to will and to do:

to beautify the house of the Lord which is in Jerusalem; to provide for the ornamenting of it, for vessels in it, as well as for sacrifices; for as for the building of it, that was finished.

#### **Ezra 7:28**

And hath extended mercy unto me, before the king and his counsellors, and before all the king's mighty princes,.... Before Artaxerxes, his seven counsellors, Ezr 7:14 and the nobles of his realm, in being appointed by them to carry their freewill offerings to Jerusalem, and the king's commands to his treasurers, with leave to take as many of the Jews with him as were willing to go:

and I was strengthened as the hand of the Lord my God was upon me; animated to undertake this work, and execute this commission, being under the influence of divine favour and protection:

and I gathered together out of Israel chief men to go up with me; he went about in the several parts where Israelites dwelt, and persuaded some of the principal men among them to go along with him to Jerusalem, showing them the king's decree, which gave them leave; and their names and numbers are described in the next chapter.

## **INTRODUCTION TO EZRA 8**

### **Chapter 8**

In this chapter we are told who and how many went up with Ezra to Jerusalem, Ezr 8:1, the gathering of them together at a river, from whence he sent to Babylon for Levites to come to him, who did, Ezr 8:15, the proclaiming a fast for a safe and prosperous journey, Ezr 8:21, the delivery of the vessels and money given him into the hands of priests, to take the care and charge thereof, Ezr 8:24, their safe arrival at Jerusalem, where they deposited the gifts in the temple, offered sacrifices to God, and delivered the king's commissions to his lieutenants and governors, Ezr 8:31.

#### **Ezra 8:1**

These are now the chief of their fathers, and this is the genealogy of them,.... Which follows from hence to the end of Ezr 8:14,

that went up with me from Babylon; with Ezra the priest and scribe, the writer of this book:

in the reign of Artaxerxes the king; that is, Darius Hystaspis, in the seventh year of his reign, see Ezr 7:1, though many think Artaxerxes Longimanus is meant.



**Ezra 8:2**

Of the sons of Phinehas; Gershom: of the sons of Ithamar; Daniel,.... Not Daniel the prophet, he was of the royal blood, and of the tribe of Judah; this was a priest, a descendant of Ithamar, as Gershom was of Eleazar in the line of Phinehas:

of the sons of David; Hattush; perhaps the same with him in Ch1 3:22, who was a descendant of David the king; these three men seem to have come alone without any of their families, at least they are not mentioned, nor their numbers given, as the rest that follow be.

**Ezra 8:3**

Of the sons of Shechaniah, of the sons of Pharosh,.... Who is so described, to distinguish him from another Shechaniah, Ezr 8:5,

Zechariah: and with him were reckoned by genealogy, of the males an hundred and fifty; males only were reckoned, not women and children; though that there were such that went up is clear from Ezr 8:21, from hence to the end of Ezr 8:14 an account is given of the number of the males that went up with Ezra, who were chiefly, if not altogether, sons of those that went up with Zerubbabel; such of them as were left there behind, and now returned, at least a great number of them, see Ezr 2:1, it is particularly remarked of the sons of Adonikam, Ezr 8:13, that they were the last of them; not that they were the last that came in to go with Ezra, or were backward and dilatory, but the last with respect to the first of his sons that were gone before, and seem with them to be the whole of his family; the number of all that went up under their respective heads amounts to 1496.

**Ezra 8:15**

And I gathered them together to the river that runneth to Ahava,.... From whence also the river bore the same name; or that from the river, see Ezr 8:21, and may be the same with Adiabene, a country in Assyria, which had its name from the river Adiava:

and there abode we in tents three days; or pitched their camp; this was the place of their rendezvous:

and I viewed the people and the priests; mustered them, took the number of them, and what tribe and families they were of:

and found there none of the sons of Levi; excepting the priests.

**Ezra 8:16**

Then sent I for Eliezer, for Ariel, for Shemaiah, and for Elnathan, and for Jarib, and for Elnathan, and for Nathan, and for Zechariah, and for Meshullam, chief men; also for Joiarib, and for Elnathan, men of understanding. These were all in the camp, in some part of it, to whom Ezra sent messengers to come unto him; three of them are of the same name; the first nine were men of chief note, rank, and dignity in their family, and the other two were noted for men of good sense, and that could speak to a case well, and so fit to be sent on such an affair as they were.

**Ezra 8:17**

And I sent them with commandment unto Iddo the chief, at the place Casiphia,.... Not a place by the Caspian sea, and near the Caspian mountains, as Munster, which was too far off to go and return in the time they must, see Ezr 7:9, but, as Jarchi, a place in Babylon so called, a village near it, or a parish or street in it, where Ezra knew lived many of the Levites and Nethinims, and where Iddo was the chief of the Levites, and over them both:

and I told them what they should say unto Iddo, and to his brethren the Nethinims, at the place Casiphia;

but Iddo was not one of the Nethinims; for he was chief of the Levites, and by his authority many of them were sent as well as of the Nethinims; but none of the latter were over the Levites, for they were servants to them, Ezr 8:20, but, according to Jarchi, the Nethinims are not at all intended in this clause, who reads the words:

to Iddo and Achim, (the name of a man with him; perhaps it may be better rendered, “to Iddo and his brother”.)

who were appointed, or settled, in the place Casiphia; and with him De Dieu agrees, and so the Syriac version:

who dwelt in Casiphia: that they should bring unto us ministers for the house of our God; both Levites to be singers and porters there, and the Nethinims to wait on them.

### **Ezra 8:18**

And by the good hand of our God upon us,.... Favouring their designs and orders, protecting those that were sent, and inclining those they were sent to use their interest and authority with those that were under them, and making them willing also to agree to what was proposed to them:

they brought us a man of understanding of the sons of Mahli, the son of Levi, the son of Israel; an Israelite, of the tribe of Levi, in the line of Mahli a son of Merari, the third son of Levi:

and Sherebiah; or rather “even Sherebiah”; so Aben Ezra; for he is the understanding man that is meant, and described by his pedigree:

with his sons and his brethren, eighteen; all together made this number.

### **Ezra 8:19**

And Hashabiah, and with him Jeshaiiah of the sons of Merari,.... These were of the same division of Levites as Sherebiah:

his brethren and their sons, twenty; these thirty eight, with those they came with, were all Levites; the Nethinims follow.

### **Ezra 8:20**

Also of the Nethinims, whom David and the princes had appointed for the service of the Levites,.... To wait upon them, and minister to them, as they did to the priests; some think those were the same with the Gibeonites, whom Joshua gave to the service of the sanctuary, and David confirmed; but others are of opinion these were different from them, and an addition to them:

two hundred and twenty Nethinims: all of them were expressed by name; in the history that Iddo sent of them to Ezra; and so the names of the Levites, though not here expressed, only the names of those they came with.

### **Ezra 8:21**

Then I proclaimed a fast there, at the river Ahava,.... After the messengers to Iddo were returned with those they brought with them:

that we might afflict ourselves before our God; humble themselves before him for their sins, confess them, and declare their repentance of them, and ask forgiveness for them:

to seek of him a right way for us; to take from thence towards Jerusalem, to be directed by him in it: either by a prophet, or by a vision in a dream, as Eben Ezra; or rather by the guidance of his providence; this they sought in prayer by the river side, where it had been usual with them, and since has been, to perform religious exercises, see Eze 1:1, hence Tertullian (z) calls the prayers of the Jews “orationes littorales”; they sought not so much which was the shortest and easiest way for them to travel in, as which was the safest:

and for our little ones and for all our substance; for the safe conveyance of them; this shows, that though males only are numbered, as before, yet they had their wives and children with them; for little ones cannot be supposed without women to take care of them.

(z) Ad nationes, l. 1. c. 13. Vid. lib. de jejuniis, c. 16.

### **Ezra 8:22**

For I was ashamed to require of the kings band of soldiers and horsemen,.... Which he might have had, only asking for them; so great was the interest he had in the king’s favour:

to help us against the enemy in the way; the Arabs, Samaritans, and others, that might lie in wait for them, to rob them of their substance:

because we had spoken unto the king: of the special favour of God to them, his singular providence in the protection of them:

saying, the hand of our God is upon all them for good that seek him; that pray unto him, serve and worship him; his hand is open to them to bestow all needful good upon them, temporal and spiritual, and his power and providence are over them, to protect and defend them from all evil:

but his power and his wrath is against all them that forsake him; his word, his ways and worship; his powerful wrath, or the strength and force of it, is exerted against them and they are sure to feel the weight and dreadful effects of it: and now all this being said to the king, after this, to desire a guard to protect them, it would look as if they had not that favour in the sight of God, and did not believe what they had said, but distrusted his power and providence towards them; therefore, rather than reflect any dishonour on God, they chose to expose themselves to danger, seeking his face and favour, and relying on his goodness and power.

### **Ezra 8:23**

So we fasted, and besought our God for this,.... Sought the Lord by fasting and prayer for a good journey, and preservation in it:

and he was entreated of us; accepted their prayer, as Jarchi, so that they came safe to Jerusalem.

### **Ezra 8:24**

Then I separated twelve of the chief of the priests,.... That were in company with him; so that it seems there were more than the two mentioned, Ezr 8:2, very probably their families, or some of their brethren, were with them:

Sherebiah, Hashabiah, and ten of their brethren with them; these men named were Levites, and not priests, Ezr 8:18 and therefore the copulative “and” must be supplied:

and Sherebiah, &c. or with the twelve priests, Sherebiah, &c. and ten Levites more with them; so that the number of priests and Levites were equal, and in all twenty four.

**Ezra 8:25**

And I weighed unto them the silver, and the gold, and the vessels,.... When he delivered them to them; this he did as a proof of his own integrity and faithfulness, and as a security against any charge or accusation of embezzling any part of them, and to set them an example, and also that they might be under no temptation of acting such a part, and might be vindicated should they be charged with it: even

the offering of the house of our God; what was freely offered for the service of it:

which the king and his counsellors, and his lords, and all Israel there present, had offered; as freewill offerings, see Ezr 7:15.

**Ezra 8:26**

I even weighed unto their hand six hundred fifty talents of silver,.... Which, according to Scheuchzer (a) amount to 975,000 imperials, and, of our money, 2,229,450 pounds sterling: and silver vessels one hundred talents; which came to 35,300 pounds, or 50,000 imperials; according to Jarchi, there were one hundred vessels, and every vessel weighed a talent, and so Aben Ezra, which, with Brerewood (b), was three hundred and seventy five pounds:

and of gold one hundred talents; which, according to Scheuchzer (c), were equal to 1,222,000 ducats of gold; the value of gold now is above 14 and a 3d to the value of silver, by which may be judged the difference between one hundred talents of gold and one hundred talents of silver; according to David de Pomis (d), there were two sorts of talents; common talents, which weighed sixty pounds, and the talent of the sanctuary, which weighed double to that.

(a) *Physica Sacra*, vol. 4. p. 651. (b) *De Pond. & Pret. Vet. Num. c. 4.* (c) *Ut supra.* (*Physica Sacra*, vol. 4. p. 651.) (d) *Tzemach David*, fol. 57. 3.

**Ezra 8:27**

Also twenty basins of gold, of a thousand drams,.... Which were upwards of 1000 pounds of our money; for Bishop Cumberland says (e), the Persian “daric”, “drachma”, or “drachm”, weighed twenty shillings and four pence; and, according to Dr. Bernard, it exceeded one of our guineas by two grains; see Gill on Ch1 29:7.

and two vessels of fine copper, precious as gold; which perhaps is the same with the Indian or Persian brass Aristotle (f) speaks of, which is so bright and pure, and free from rust, that it cannot be known by its colour from gold, and that there are among the cups of Darius such as cannot be discerned whether they are brass or gold but by the smell: the Syriac version interprets it by Corinthian brass, which was a mixture of gold, silver, and copper, made when Corinth was burnt, and which is exceeding valuable; of which Pliny (g) makes three sorts, very precious, and of which he says, it is in value next to, and even before silver, and almost before gold; but this sort of brass was not as yet in being: Kimchi (h) interprets the word here of its colour, being next to the colour of gold.

(e) *Scripture Weights and Measures*, ch. 4. p. 115. (f) *De Mirabilibus*, p. 704, vol. 1. (g) *Nat. Hist.* 1. 34. c. 1, 2. (h) *Sepher Shorash. rad.*

**Ezra 8:28**

And I said unto them, ye are holy unto the Lord, the vessels are holy also,.... As they were dedicated and set apart to holy service, so the vessels were sacred to holy uses, and therefore not to be converted to any other:

and the silver and the gold are a freewill offering unto the Lord God of your fathers: and therefore not to be made use of but in his service.

**Ezra 8:29**

Watch ye, and keep them,.... The vessels, the gold, and the silver, that they be not hurt and diminished:

until ye weigh them before the chief of the priests and the Levites, and chief of the fathers of Israel at Jerusalem, in the chambers of the house of the Lord: that is, until they had delivered them in full weight, as they had received them, in the presence of those persons as witnesses, and into their hands, in order to be laid up in the chambers and treasuries of the temple.

**Ezra 8:30**

So took the priests and the Levites,.... The twelve priests and twelve Levites, mentioned in Ezr 8:24,

the weight of the silver and the gold, and the vessels, to bring them to Jerusalem unto the house of our God; this they undertook to do, and did.

**Ezra 8:31**

Then we departed from the river of Ahava, on the twelfth day of the first month, to go unto Jerusalem,.... The month Nisan, answering to part of March and part of April; this was two days before the passover began:

and the hand of our God was upon us; guiding, directing, and protecting them by his providence:

and he delivered us from the hand of the enemy, and of such as lay in wait by the way; either by intimidating them, that they dared not attack them, or by directing them to take a different road, whereby they escaped them, see Ezr 8:22.

**Ezra 8:32**

And we came to Jerusalem, and abode there three days. Before they went about any business, delivered what was committed to them for the use of the temple, and the commissions to the king's officers; as it was but proper they should have some rest after such a fatiguing journey.

**Ezra 8:33**

Now on the fourth day,.... After their arrival at Jerusalem:

was the silver, and the gold, and the vessels, weighed in the house of our God; the temple, that it might be seen and known that the exact weight which had been deposited with them was now faithfully delivered:

this was done by the hand of Meremoth the son of Uriah the priest, and with him was Eleazar the son of Phinehas; these were priests:

and with them was Jozabad the son of Jeshua, and Noadiah the son of Binnui, Levites; two priests and two Levites; for since there were of both that were charged with the above things, it was proper there should be some of both, when weighed, that they might be witnesses of their fidelity.

**Ezra 8:34**

By number and by weight of everyone,.... They were delivered in by tale and weight, which exactly agreed to the number and weight in which they received them:

and all the weight was written at that time; an account was taken in writing, and laid up, that it might not only be known hereafter what freewill offerings had been made in Babylon, but that it might be a voucher for the fidelity and integrity of those that brought them, should it ever be called in question.

**Ezra 8:35**

Also the children of those that had been carried away, which were come out of the captivity,.... Namely, those that now came along with Ezra:

offered burnt offerings unto the God of Israel; by way of thankfulness for their deliverance from captivity, and for their safe journey:

twelve bullocks for all Israel: according to the number of the tribes; and there might be some of every tribe that now came up:

ninety and six rams, seventy and seven lambs; these and the bullocks were burnt offerings:

twelve he goats for a sin offering; according to the number of the twelve tribes, also to make atonement for sins they had been guilty of:

all this was a burnt offering unto the Lord; excepting the twelve he goats, which were a sin offering.

**Ezra 8:36**

And they delivered the king's commissions unto the king's lieutenants, and to the governors on this side the river,.... The governors of the provinces of Syria, Palestine, and Judea, which were on that side of Euphrates the land of Israel was:

and they furthered the people, and the house of God; or "lifted them up" (i), eased them of all burdens, and freed them from all impediments, and assisted them and furnished them with everything, as the decree of Artaxerxes enjoined them; and provided everything as they required for ornamenting the temple, and for the sacrifices of it; all which is to be understood of the king's lieutenants and governors, who obeyed his commands.

(i) "elevaverunt", V. L. Piscator; "exaltaverunt", Pagninus, Montanus, Vatablus; "sublevarunt", Junius & Tremellius.

**INTRODUCTION TO EZRA 9**

## Chapter 9

Ezra being informed, by some of the princes who complained unto him, of the marriages of many of the Israelites with the people of the land, the Canaanites and others, was greatly grieved and distressed, Ezr 9:1, upon which he made a confession of their sins to God, with great shame, sorrow, and contrition, and deprecated the evils which they deserved, Ezr 9:6.

**Ezra 9:1**

Now when these things were done,.... When the captives with Ezra had refreshed themselves, and weighed the money and vessels they brought, and put them into the hands of proper persons, and offered sacrifices, and delivered the king's commissions to his lieutenants and governors, and shown his own:

the princes came to me; some of the nobles of Israel, the most religious of them, who were concerned at the corruptions that were among them, though not a sufficient number to reform them:

saying the people of Israel, and the priests, and the Levites, have not separated themselves from the people of the land: but joined with them, though not in idolatrous practices, yet by marrying with them, which might

lead them into them:

doing according to their abominations; not serving idols as they did, but imitating them in their marriages: even

of the Canaanites, the Perizzites, the Jebusites, the Ammonites, the Moabites, the Egyptians, and the Amorites; affinity with many of these was forbidden by an express law, Deu 7:1 all but the Moabites, Ammonites, and Egyptians, and from these for the same reason they were to abstain; namely, lest they should be drawn into idolatry; that the priests and Levites should do this, who ought to have known the law, and instructed the people better, was very sad and shocking.

### **Ezra 9:2**

For they have taken of their daughters for themselves, and for their sorts,.... Some that were widowers not only took wives to themselves of the above nations, either when they were of Babylon, where many of these nations also were, or rather since their return; but they took for their sons also; yea, some that had wives took Heathenish ones to them, see Mal 2:13,

so that the holy seed; such as the Lord had separated from other nations, chosen them to be an holy people above all others, and devoted them to his service and worship:

have mingled themselves with the people of those lands; before mentioned, by marrying with them:

yea, the hand of the princes and rulers hath been chief in this trespass; they were the first that went into it, were ringleaders of it, who should by their authority and example have restrained others; or they were

in this first trespass (i); which was the first gross and capital one the people fell into after their return from the captivity.

(i) "in praevaricatione ista prima", Pagninus, Montanus.

### **Ezra 9:3**

And when I heard this thing, I rent my garment and my mantle,.... Both inward and outward garments, that which was close to his body, and that which was thrown loose over it; and this he did in token of sorrow and mourning, as if something very dreadful and distressing, see Job 1:20

and plucked off the hair of my head and of my beard; did not shave them, and so transgressed not the law in Lev 19:27 but plucked off the hair of them, to show his extreme sorrow for what was told him: which has frequently been done by mourners on sorrowful occasions in various nations, see Isa 15:2. So in the apocryphal "addition" to Esther, "And laid away her glorious apparel, and put on the garments of anguish and mourning: and instead of precious ointments, she covered her head with ashes and dung, and she humbled her body greatly, and all the places of her joy she filled with her torn hair." (Esther 14:2) she is said to fill every place of joy with the tearing of her hair; and Lavinia in Virgil (k); several passages from Homer (l), and other writers, both Greek and Latin, are mentioned by Bochart (m) as instances of it:

and sat down astonished; quite amazed at the ingratitude of the people, that after such favours shown them, in returning them from captivity unto their own land, and settling them there, they should give into practices so contrary to the will of God.

(k) Aeneid. 12. prope finem. Vid. Ciceron. Tusc. Quaest. 1. 3. (l) Vid. Iliad. 10. ver. 15. & Iliad. 22. ver. 77, 78, 406. & Iliad. 24. ver. 711. (m) Hierozoic. par. 1. l. 2. c. 45. col. 481.

**Ezra 9:4**

There were assembled unto me everyone that trembled at the words of the God of Israel,.... That had a reverence for the word of God, and the things contained in it; feared to break the laws of God, and trembled at his judgments, which they might apprehend would come upon transgressors, see Isa 46:2,

because of the transgression of those that had been carried away; into Babylon, and were now returned, and which was an aggravation of their transgression:

and I sat astonished until the evening sacrifice: or until the ninth hour, as the Syriac version, which was about our three o'clock in the afternoon, at which time the evening sacrifice was offered; perhaps it was in the morning when Ezra first received his information from the princes.

**Ezra 9:5**

And at the evening sacrifice I rose up from my heaviness,.... The signs and tokens of it, particularly sitting on the ground; or "from my fasting" (n), having eaten nothing that day, it being early in the morning when he was told the above case:

and having rent my garment and my mantle; which he had done before, and still kept them on him in the same case:

fell upon my knees, and spread out my hands unto the Lord my God; in the posture and with the gesture of an humble suppliant.

(n) "jejunio meo", Michaelis; so Jarchi.

## Ezra 9:6

eZR 9:6

And said, O my God,.... Here begins the prayer of Ezra, and that with faith in God as covenant God, even when he was about to make confession of sin, and repentance for it; that prayer is right which is put up in faith, and that repentance genuine which is accompanied with faith, and flows from it:

I am ashamed, and blush to lift up my face to thee, my God; a true sight and sense of sin causes shame and blushing, and never more than when a man is sensible of his covenant interest in God, and of his grace and favour to him, particularly in the forgiveness of his sin, see Eze 16:61

for our iniquities are increased over our head; arisen and swelled like mighty waters, which seemed to threaten an overwhelming of them:

and our trespass is grown up unto the heavens; being done in an open, public, and insolent manner, and in such numbers, that they were, as it were, piled up in heaps, reaching to heaven, and calling down vengeance from thence. Ezra includes himself as being one of the same nation; and these sins being so common were become national ones, which involved all the individuals, and exposed them to the divine resentment.

## Ezra 9:7

eZR 9:7

Since the days of our fathers have we been in a great trespass unto this day,.... The sins they were guilty of had been long continued in, which was an aggravation of them:



and for our iniquities have we, our kings, and our priests, been delivered into the hand of the kings of the lands; the ten tribes and their king into the hand of the king of Assyria, the kings of Judah, Jehoiakim, Jeconiah, and Zedekiah, into the hands of the king of Babylon, with the priests and people:

to the sword, to captivity, and to a spoil; some were slain with the sword, others carried captive, and the houses of them all plundered and spoiled:

and to confusion of face, as it is this day; being filled with shame when they reflected on their sins, the cause of those evils; and besides, the captivity of the ten tribes continued, and of many others, which exposed them to shame among their neighbours.

Ezra 9:8

eZR 9:8

And now, for a little space, grace hath been showed from the Lord our God,.... It was but a small time since the Lord first began to show favour to them, so that they soon after began to revolt from him; which argued the strange propensity of their minds to that which is evil, and from which they could not be restrained by the recent goodness of God unto them:

to leave us a remnant to escape; out of captivity, from whence a small number were graciously and safely returned to their own land:

and to give us a nail in his holy place; a fixed settlement in the land of Judea, the holy land the Lord had chosen, and in the temple, the holy place sacred to his worship; or a prince of their own, Zerubbabel, to be the governor of them, under whom they might enjoy settled happiness and prosperity, see Isa 22:23,

that our God may lighten our eyes; refresh our spirits, cheer our souls, and give us light and gladness, see Sa1 14:27

and give us a little reviving in our bondage; for they were still in some degree of bondage, being in subjection, and tributaries to the kings of Persia; but yet being returned to their own land, it was as life from the dead unto them, at least it was giving them a little life, liberty, and joy.

**Ezra 9:9**

For we were bondmen,.... To the Chaldeans when in Babylon, which was more than the Jews in the times of Christ would own, Joh 8:33,

yet our God hath not forsaken us in our bondage; had not left them to continue in it always:

but hath extended mercy unto us in the sight of the kings of Persia; moved them to have pity and compassion on them, and release them:

to give us a reviving; while in captivity, they were as in their graves, and like the dry bones in Ezekiel's vision, but revived upon the proclamation of Cyrus, and the encouragement he gave them to return to their own land:

to set up the house of our God, and repair the desolations thereof; both to rebuild the temple, and to restore the worship of it:

and to give us a wall in Judah and in Jerusalem; not to set up the walls of Jerusalem, and of other cities, which as yet was not done; but rather the walls of their houses, which they had rebuilt; they had walled houses given them in Judah and Jerusalem; though the word signifies an hedge or fence, such as is about gardens and vineyards, and may denote the protection of the kings of Persia, which was a fence to them against the Samaritans and others; and especially the hedge of divine Providence about them, which guarded and defended them, see Job 1:10.

### **Ezra 9:10**

And now, O our God, what shall we say after this?... What apology or excuse can be made for such ingratitude? what can be said in favour of such a people? what kindness can be expected to be shown to a people who had behaved in so base a manner?

for we have forsaken thy commandments: particularly those which related to marriages with people of other nations.

### **Ezra 9:11**

Which thou hast commanded by thy servants the prophets,.... Moses, and Joshua, and others, see Deu 7:3

saying, the land, unto which ye go to possess it; meaning the land of Canaan:

is an unclean land with the filthiness of the people of the lands, with their abominations, which have filled it from one end to another with their uncleanness; which is to be understood not of their idolatries only, but of their incestuous marriages, and impure copulations, on which account the Lord spewed out the old inhabitants of it; for which reason the Jews ought to have been careful not to have defiled it again by similar practices; see Lev 18:1.

### **Ezra 9:12**

Now therefore give not your daughters unto their sons, nor take their daughters unto your sons,.... That is, in marriage, see Deu 7:3, where the prohibition is expressed in the same language:

nor seek their peace or their wealth for ever; that is, as long as they continue in their idolatries and impurities, see Deu 23:6,

that ye may be strong, and eat the good of the land, and leave it for an inheritance to your children for ever; that they might be strengthened and established in the land into which they were brought, and enjoy all the good things it produced, and leave their children in the possession of it, to hold at least until the Messiah came, see Isa 1:19.

### **Ezra 9:13**

And after all that is come upon us for our evil deeds, and for our great trespass,.... As famine, sword, pestilence, and captivity, for their idolatries and other heinous sins:

seeing that our God hast punished us less than our iniquities deserve; for they deserved eternal punishment, whereas it was temporal punishment that was inflicted, and this moderate, and now stopped; the sense is, according to Aben Ezra, "thou hast refrained from writing some of our sins in the book of remembrance, and thou hast let them down below in the earth, according to the sense of thou wilt cast all their sins into the depths of the sea;" but Jarchi better, "thou hast refrained thyself from exacting of us all our sins, and hast exacted of us beneath our sins (or less than they deserve), and hast not taken vengeance on us according to all our sins:"

and hast given us such deliverance as this; from captivity, which they now enjoyed.

**Ezra 9:14**

Should we again break thy commandments, and join in affinity with the people of these abominations?... That are guilty of abominable idolatries, and of all uncleanness:

wouldest thou not be angry with us till thou hadst consumed us; it might be justly expected:

so that there should be no remnant nor escaping? any left or suffered to escape the wrath of but all consumed by it.

**Ezra 9:15**

O Lord God of Israel, thou art righteous,.... And would appear to be so, should Israel be entirely cut off, and utterly consumed for their iniquities:

for we remain yet escaped, as it is this day; that they remained yet escaped out of captivity, and escaped the wrath and vengeance of God, was not owing to any deserts of theirs, but to the grace and mercy of God, who had not stirred up all his wrath, as their sins deserved:

behold, we are before thee in our trespasses; to do with us as seems good in thy sight; we have nothing to plead on our behalf, but cast ourselves at thy feet, if so be unmerited favour may be shown us:

for we cannot stand before thee because of this; this evil of contracting affinity with the nations; we cannot defend ourselves; we cannot plead ignorance of the divine commands; we have nothing to say for ourselves why judgment should not be passed upon us; we leave ourselves in thine hands, and at thy mercy.

**INTRODUCTION TO EZRA 10**

## Chapter 10

Upon Ezra's prayer and confession, it was proposed by Shechaniah, that those who had married strange wives should put them away with their children, which they swore to do, Ezr 10:1, and proclamation was made throughout the land for all to meet at Jerusalem in three days' time, and accordingly they did, Ezr 10:6 when, at the exhortation of Ezra, all agreed to it, and persons were appointed to see it done, and the work was finished in the space of three months, Ezr 10:10 and a list of the names of those is given who had married such wives, and now put them away; of the priests, Ezr 10:18, of the Levites, Ezr 10:23, of the other Israelites, Ezr 10:24.

**Ezra 10:1**

Now when Ezra had prayed, and when he had confessed, weeping,.... Had confessed the sins of the people in prayer and supplication, with many tears:

and casting himself down before the house of God; in the outward court before the temple, his face turned towards it, where he lay prostrate:

there assembled to him out of Israel a very great congregation of men, and women, and children; it was quickly spread abroad, both in Jerusalem and places adjacent, that such a great man, a commissioner from the king of Persia, and a priest of the Jews, was in the utmost distress, rending his garments, and plucking off his hair, and was crying and praying in a vehement manner; which brought a great concourse of people, who concluded some great sins were committed, and sore judgments were coming upon them:

for the people wept very sore; being affected with his confessions, cries, and tears, and fearing wrath would come upon them for their sins.

**Ezra 10:2**

And Shechaniah the son of Jehiel, one of the sons of Elam, answered and said unto Ezra,.... This man seems to be one of those that now came with Ezra from Babylon, see Ezr 8:3,

we have trespassed against our God, and have taken strange wives of the people of the land; not that he had taken any himself, being but just come into the land, nor is his name in the list of those that had; but inasmuch as many of the nation, of which he was a part, and his own father, and several of his uncles had, Ezr 10:26, he expresses himself in this manner:

yet now there is hope in Israel concerning this thing; of a reformation of this evil, and of pardon for it.

**Ezra 10:3**

Now therefore let us make a covenant with our God,.... Renew our covenant with him, and lay ourselves under fresh obligation by promise and oath, and unanimously agree

to put away all the wives, and such as are born of them; he means all the strange wives, such marriages being unlawful; and such wives might the more easily be put away, since bills of divorce were in frequent use with the Jews, and the children of such also being illegitimate; and the rather they were to be put away, lest they should corrupt other children, or get into the affections of their fathers, which might lead on to receive their mothers again, and especially this was to be done as a punishment of their sin: though no doubt but a provision was to be made, and was made, for the maintenance both of wives and children:

according to the counsel of my Lord; either of Ezra, whom he honours with this title, being a ruler under the king of Persia; or of the Lord God, according to his will declared in his words, which is his counsel:

and of those that tremble at the commandment of our God; feared to break it, and dreaded the effect of such a breach; and who no doubt would follow the counsel of the Lord, and join in their advice to act according to the proposal made:

and let it be done according to the law; as that directs in such cases.

**Ezra 10:4**

Arise,.... From the ground, where he lay prostrate:

for this matter belongeth unto thee; as a priest and scribe of the law, well versed in it, and therefore could direct what was to be done according to it; and as a ruler under the king of Persia, and a commissioner of his, to inquire whether the law of God was observed by the Jews, Ezr 7:14 and so had authority to put the law in execution:

we also will be with thee; to help and assist in the reformation of this evil:

be of good courage, and do it; do not despair of going through it, though there may be some opposition to it; begin, and doubt not of succeeding.

**Ezra 10:5**

Then arose Ezra,.... From the ground where he lay:

and made the chief priests, and the Levites, and all Israel, to swear that they should do according to this word: he took an oath of all that were present to do what was proposed, namely, to put away strange wives and

their children:

and they swear; by means of which they were kept to their word of promise, an oath being a solemn, sacred, thing.

#### **Ezra 10:6**

Then Ezra rose up from before the house of God,.... Departed from thence:

and went into the chamber of Johanan the son of Eliashib; who was of the family of the high priest. Eliashib was grandson of Joshua the high priest, and succeeded his father Joiakim as such; but though Johanan was never high priest, being a younger son, however he was a person of note, and had a chamber in the temple, whither Ezra went, either to advise with the princes and elders in it, Ezr 10:8 or to refresh himself with food:

and when he came thither, he did eat no bread, nor drink water; or rather “not yet had he ate bread” (o), as some render it; that is, not till he came thither, from the time he first heard of the evil the people had committed; which very probably was early in the morning, and it was now evening:

for he mourned for the transgression of them that had been carried away; into captivity, but were now returned from it, and it grieved him the more, that, after such kindness shown them, they should be guilty of such an evil.

(o) “nondum comederat”, Junius & Tremellius, Piscator.

#### **Ezra 10:7**

And they made proclamation,.... By the voice of an herald:

throughout Judah and Jerusalem, unto all the children of the captivity; who were returned from it:

that they should gather themselves together unto Jerusalem; within a time after mentioned.

#### **Ezra 10:8**

And that whosoever would not come within three days,.... Or at the end of three days, as Jarchi, this was the space of time allowed, and which was decided upon for the quick dispatch of this affair, to prevent any schemes that might be formed to obstruct it, and lest those who had agreed to it, and promised to assist in it, should repent and go from their word:

according to the counsel of the princes, and of the elders; for though Ezra had a commission at large from the king of Persia, to inquire into and reform all abuses, he chose not to act of himself, but to have the opinion and consent of the senate of the nation; this he prudently did to avoid their envy, and that he might have less opposition, and better success:

his substance should be forfeited; or “devoted” (p) to sacred uses, to be put into the treasury of the temple, and used in the service of it, and therefore never to be returned:

and himself separated from the congregation of those that had been carried away; into captivity, but now returned from it; that is, should be excommunicated from them as a church, and be no more reckoned of the body politic, or a freeman of Israel, and so deprived of all privileges both in church and state.

(p) “anathema erit vel fore”, Montanus, Junius & Tremellius, Piscator; “devoveretur”, Michaelis.

**Ezra 10:9**

Then all the men of Judah and Benjamin,..... And such of the ten tribes that returned and dwelt among them:

gathered themselves together unto Jerusalem within three days; the time fixed: which they were the more careful to observe, since it was enjoined by the authority of princes and elders, and the punishment in case of disobedience very severe:

it was the ninth month, on the twentieth day of the month; the month Chisleu, which answers to part of November and part of December, so that the twentieth day must be in the beginning of December; this was almost five months after Ezra came to Jerusalem:

and all the people sat in the street of the house of God: the street which led to the temple, the east street, Ch2 29:4 though some think this was the court of the people, called a street, because it lay open, not yet walled in; and, according to Josephus (q), it was in an upper room of the temple in which Ezra was, perhaps the same with the chamber of Johanan, Ezr 10:6,

trembling because of this matter; they were met about; some that were guilty, not knowing what punishment would be inflicted on them, and others that were not, yet dreaded the wrath of God, lest that should break out upon the whole congregation for it:

and for the great rain; which now fell, and which they interpreted as a token of the divine displeasure: for though it was in winter time, yet not with them a time of rain, for the former rain had fallen a month before; so that this being unusual and unexpected, they understood it as betokening evil to them.

(q) Antiqu. l. 11. c. 5. sect. 4.

**Ezra 10:10**

And Ezra the priest stood up,..... In the midst of the assembly to make his speech, acquainting them with the reason of their meeting together:

and said unto them, ye have transgressed; the law of God in the following instance:

and have taken strange wives; of the people of the land and others, idolatrous persons:

to increase the trespass of Israel; to add to former iniquities, which had been the cause of the captivity.

**Ezra 10:11**

Now therefore make confession to the Lord God of your fathers,..... Of their sin, and express their detestation of it, and repentance for it:

and do his pleasure; obey his will, and particularly in this case:

and separate yourselves from the people of the land; the Canaanites, &c. have no fellowship with them, make no covenants, contracts, and alliances with them for the future:

and from the strange wives; they had taken; put them away.

**Ezra 10:12**

Then all the congregation answered and said with a loud voice,..... That they might be heard, and to show that they were willing and ready to comply with what was proposed:

as thou host said, so must we do; being convinced of their sin, they saw it was a duty incumbent on them to put away their strange wives, and that there was a necessity of it, to avert the wrath of God from them.

**Ezra 10:13**

But the people are many,.... Who have been guilty of this evil:

and it is a time of much rain, and we are not able to stand without: in the street, because of the rain:

neither is this a work of one day or two; to inquire into this affair, who they are that have taken strange wives, and to persuade or oblige them to put them away:

for we are many that have transgressed in this thing; in marrying strange wives.

**Ezra 10:14**

Let now our rulers of all the congregations stand,.... Let the great sanhedrim, or court of judicature at Jerusalem, be fixed and continued, and others:

and let all them which have taken strange wives in our cities come at appointed times; to the court at Jerusalem, at certain and fixed known times of their sittings there for this purpose:

and with the elders of every city and the judges thereof; the principal magistrates of it, who were to testify that upon search and inquiry those were the men and all the men in their city, that had taken strange wives, and that they had put them away according to the order of the princes and elders; and this they proposed to be done in every city, and the account to be brought to the sanhedrim at Jerusalem, who were to sit at certain times till this affair was finished:

until the fierce wrath of our God for this matter be turned from us: which it seems had broke out in some instances, and they feared would do yet more, unless this step was taken, whereby they hoped it would be averted.

**Ezra 10:15**

Only Jonathan the son of Asahel, and Jahaziah the son of Tikvah, were employed about the matter,.... To see that this affair was conducted in the manner proposed; that the magistrates of every city brought the persons that had been delinquents, in their turns, of which they gave them notice, and took the account of them as they came:

and Meshullam and Shabbethai the Levite helped them; assisted them in this work; the other two perhaps were priests, and both these Levites; and these four were the only persons appointed over this matter, as the phrase in the preceding clause may signify; though Jarchi interprets it to a quite contrary sense, that they were the only persons that opposed and objected to it; and so Dr. Lightfoot (r) understands it, and renders it, “stood against this matter”; in which they were seconded by the two Levites, and the sense is very probable.

(r) Works, vol. 1. p. 144.

**Ezra 10:16**

And the children of the captivity did so,.... Put away their strange wives:

and Ezra the priest, with certain chief of the fathers, after the house of their fathers, and all of them by their names, were separated; from all their other business, and gave themselves up to attend to this wholly:

and sat down in the first day of the tenth month; the month Tebeth, which answers to part of December and January; this was ten days after the assembly of all the people met and broke up: these took their places in the great court, and there sat

to examine the matter; the accounts brought in from the several cities by the magistrates thereof, and recorded them.

**Ezra 10:17**

And they made an end with all the men that had taken strange wives,.... Finished their inquiry and examination of them:

by the first day of the first month; the month Nisan, answering to part of March and April; so that they were three months about this work.

**Ezra 10:18**

And among the sons of the priests there were found that had taken strange wives,.... So that it need not be wondered at that this evil should spread among the people, when those who understood the law, and should have instructed the people in it, set such an example: namely:

of the sons of Jeshua the son of Jozadak; who was the high priest; and perhaps for this fault of his, in not restraining his sons from such unlawful marriages, is he represented in filthy garments, Zac 3:3,

and his brethren, Maaseiah, and Eliezer, and Jarib, and Gedaliah; these were the brethren of Jeshua.

**Ezra 10:19**

And they gave their hands that they would put away their wives,.... They proposed to do it, and actually did it:

and being guilty; of which they were fully convinced:

they offered a ram of the flock for their trespass; to make atonement for it, and thereby set an example to others to do the like. Aben Ezra observes, that we do not find that the trespass offering was a mulct to such who married strange wives, and conjectures, that it was the advice of the chief men to do it. From hence, to the end of Ezzr 10:43, is a list of the men that had married strange wives, and put them away; those in Ezzr 10:20, were priests; in Ezzr 10:23, Levites, and those of them who were singers or porters; the rest were Israelites: and it is a very common distinction, in rabbinical writers, to distinguish the Jews into priests, Levites, and Israelites; of these we know no more than their names; some of the heads of the families may be observed in Ezzr 2:1.

**Ezra 10:44**

All these had taken strange wives,.... In all about one hundred and thirteen:

and some of them had wives by whom they had children; and yet they put them away, which made it the more difficult for them to do; and those that had none, it is thought to be a mark of God's displeasure at such marriages. No mention being made of the children being put away, as Shechaniah proposed, Ezzr 10:3, it may be concluded they were not, but were taken care of, to be educated in the true religion, and entered proselytes at a proper time; and the rather, as Ezra gave no orders about their putting away, Ezzr 10:11.

**INTRODUCTION TO NEHEMIAH**

This book is, by the authors of the Vulgate Latin and Arabic versions, called the "Second" Book of Ezra,



it being a continuation of the same history, and was by the Jews reckoned as one book with Ezra; Kimchi on Isa 9:7, calls it Ezra, so the Talmud (a); and it has been quoted by Christian writers under his name; see the argument of the book of Ezra; but not as if it was written by him; for it is a clear case it was written by Nehemiah, whose name it bears, as appears from Neh 1:1 and throughout Nehemiah speaks of himself under the first person; and the style also is very different from that of Ezra, being plainer and easier than his. It has always had a place in the canon of Scriptures, both with Jews and Christians; and is of use to show the fulfilment of the prophecy of Zechariah, and especially of Daniel concerning the building of the wall of Jerusalem in troublesome times; to carry on the history of the Jews, and describe the state of the church in those times, what opposition was made to it, and what enemies it had, and what must be expected when any work of God is set about; it is the last of the historical books that was written, as is thought, and contains an history of the space of about twelve years, from the twentieth of Artaxerxes to the thirty second of his reign, see Neh 1:1.

(a) T. Bab. Succah, fol. 37. 1. & Gloss. in ib. fol. 12. 1.

## INTRODUCTION TO NEHEMIAH 1

### Chapter 1

This chapter relates how that Nehemiah, being at Shushan in Persia, and meeting with some Jews, inquired of the state of Jerusalem, of which having a melancholy account, he betook to mourning, fasting, and prayer, Neh 1:1, and his prayer is recorded, Neh 1:5.

#### Nehemiah 1:1

The words of Nehemiah the son of Hachaliah,.... Or his transactions and deeds; for “dibre” signifies things done, as well as words spoken; who Hachaliah his father was is not known; the Arabic version adds, the high priest, without any foundation; though some have thought that Nehemiah was a priest, from a passage in “Therefore whereas we are now purposed to keep the purification of the temple upon the five and twentieth day of the month Chisleu, we thought it necessary to certify you thereof, that ye also might keep it, as the feast of the tabernacles, and of the fire, which was given us when Neemias offered sacrifice, after that he had builded the temple and the altar.” (2 Maccabees 1:18) and from signing and sealing the covenant at the head of priests, Neh 10:1, but he rather seems to be of the tribe of Judah, see Neh 2:3, and Nehemiah may be the same that went up with Zerubbabel, and returned again, and then became the king’s cupbearer; though some are of another opinion; see Gill on Ezr 2:2,

and it came to pass in the month Chisleu; the ninth month, as the Arabic version; of which see Ezr 10:9,

in the twentieth year; not of Nehemiah’s age, for, if he went up with Zerubbabel, he must be many years older; but in the twentieth year of the reign of Artaxerxes, Neh 1:1,

as I was in Shushan the palace; a city in Persia, the royal seat of the kings of it; as Ecbatana was in the summer time, this in the spring, as Cyrus made it, according to Xenophon (b); but others say (c) it was their seat in winter, and this was the season now when Nehemiah was with the king there; for Chisleu was a winter month, answering to part of November and of December; of Shushan; see Gill on Dan 8:2, to which may be added what a traveller of the last century says (d) of it, “we rested at Valdac, once the great city Susa, but now very ruinous; it was first built by Tythonus, and his son Memnon, but enlarged by Darius the son of Hystaspes; in the building whereof Memnon was so exceeding prodigal, that, as Cassiodorus writeth, he joined the stones together with gold--such was the beauty and delectableness of it for situation, that they called it “Susa”, which in the Persian tongue signified a “lily”, but now it is called Valdac, because of the poverty of the place;” and it is generally supposed to have its name from the abundance of lilies about it; but Dr. Hyde (e) gives another signification of its name, he says the Persians called it, “Sus”, which signifies “liquorice”, but for what reasons he says not. There is a city now called Shustera, and is thought by some travellers to be built at least very near where Shushan formerly stood (f).

(b) Cyropaedia, l. 8. c. 44. (c) Athenaeus, l. 12. c. 1. (d) Cartwright's Preacher's Travels, p. 87, 88. (e) Hist. Relig. Vet. Pers. c. 35. p. 414. (f) Tavernier, tom. 1. l. 4. c. 1.

### **Nehemiah 1:2**

That Hanani, one of my brethren,.... Either in natural relation, Neh 7:2, or being a Jew of the same nation and religion; so Jarchi interprets it, one of my companions or acquaintance:

he and certain men of Judah; who came from thence to Shushan on some account or another:

and I asked them concerning the Jews that had escaped, which were left of the captivity; who were returned from it to their own land; he inquired of their health and prosperity, in what circumstances they were, whether prosperous or adverse, whether they flourished, or were in distress:

and concerning Jerusalem; whether it was rebuilt, the houses and walls of it, and in what condition it was.

### **Nehemiah 1:3**

And they said unto me, the remnant that are left of the captivity there in the province,.... In Judea, now reduced to a province of the Persian empire:

are in great affliction and reproach; harassed and distressed, calumniated and vilified, by their enemies the Samaritans:

the wall of Jerusalem also is broken down, and the gates thereof are burnt with fire; that is, its wall and gates were in the same condition in which Nebuchadnezzar had left them, for since his times as yet they had never been set up; for this is not to be understood of what was lately done by their adversaries, which is not at all probable.

### **Nehemiah 1:4**

And it came to pass, when I heard these words,.... This sad and melancholy account of things:

that I sat down and wept, and mourned certain days; sat down upon the ground in dust and ashes, after the manner of mourners, and wept bitterly, and mourned in a most sorrowful manner, see Job 2:8,

and fasted and prayed before the God of heaven; that made it, and dwells in it.

### **Nehemiah 1:5**

And said, I beseech thee, O Lord God of heaven,.... He prayed not to the host of heaven, the sun in it, as the Persians, but to the God of it, in an humble supplicant manner:

the great and terrible God; who is to be feared, and had in reverence of all his creatures, because of his greatness and glory, being God over all, blessed for ever, and his name holy and reverend:

that keepeth covenant and mercy for them that love him, and observe his commandments; who keep them from a principle of love to him; to those he has made gracious promises in his covenant, which he truly and faithfully performs; and the consideration of these perfections in God animates and encourages good men in prayer to him.

### **Nehemiah 1:6**

Let thine ear be now attentive,.... To his prayer, as in Neh 1:11,

and thine eyes open; to behold with pity and compassion the distressed case of Jerusalem, and the Jews in it:

I pray before thee now, day and night, for the children of Israel thy servants; this he had continued to do ever since he heard of their trouble and calamity:

and confess the sins of the children of Israel, which we have sinned against thee: both I and my father's house have sinned; he considered sin as the cause of all this evil that had befallen his people, and confesses it with sorrow and humiliation, and not their sins only, but his own personal and family sins.

#### **Nehemiah 1:7**

We have dealt very corruptly against thee,.... Corrupted his covenant, laws, and precepts, as well as themselves, ways, and works; all which were against the Lord, contrary to his nature, mind, and will:

and have not kept the commandments, nor the statutes, nor the judgments, which thou commandedst thy servant Moses; the laws, moral, ceremonial, and judicial.

#### **Nehemiah 1:8**

Remember, I beseech thee, the word that thou commandedst thy servant Moses,.... To publish and declare to the children of Israel, Deu 28:64,

saying, if ye transgress; the law of God:

I will scatter you abroad among the nations; as now they had been among the Assyrians, Chaldeans, Medes, and Persians.

#### **Nehemiah 1:9**

But if ye return unto me, and keep my commandments, and do them,.... Return by repentance, and, as a proof of the genuineness of it, yield obedience to the commands of God, and continue therein:

though there were of you cast out unto the uttermost part of the heaven; that is, the uttermost parts of the earth, the most distant regions; so called, because at the extreme parts of the horizon, according to our apprehension, the heavens and earth touch each other; so that what is the uttermost part of the one is supposed to be of the other:

yet will I gather them from thence and will bring them unto the place that I have chosen to set my name there; that is to Jerusalem where the temple was built, and his name was called upon.

#### **Nehemiah 1:10**

Now these are thy servants, and thy people,.... Meaning those that were in Jerusalem and Judah, gathered out of several countries, and returned to Jerusalem:

whom thou hast redeemed by thy great power, and by thy strong hand; touching and moving the heart of Cyrus to proclaim liberty to them.

#### **Nehemiah 1:11**

O Lord, I beseech thee, let now thine ear be attentive to the prayer of thy servant,.... To the prayer of Nehemiah, put up at this time:

and to the prayer of thy servants, who desire to fear thy name; the prayer of the Jews in Judea, whose desire was to worship the Lord in his temple, according to his will:

and prosper, I pray thee, thy servant this day; meaning himself, who was to wait on the king of Persia that day, and, if he had opportunity, intended to lay the case of the Jews before him, and therefore entreats he might meet with success:

and grant him mercy in the sight of this man; King Artaxerxes, who was but a man, and whose heart was in the hands of God, and he could easily move him to pity and compassion towards his poor people the Jews:

for I was the king's cupbearer; in the execution of which office he was often in the king's presence, and hoped to have an opportunity of speaking to him in the behalf of the Jews; this with the Persians was reckoned a very honourable office (g). A son of Prexaspes, a very honourable man, was made cupbearer to Cambyses; and so it was with the Greeks and Romans (h); and the poets not only make Ganymedes to be Jupiter's cupbearer (i), but even Vulcan himself is put into this office (k).

(g) Herodot. Thalia, sive, l. 3. c. 34. Xenophon. Cyropaedia, l. 5. c. 36. (h) Vid. Athenaei Deipnosophist. l. 10. (i) Homer. Iliad. 21. ver. 234. (k) Homer. Iliad. 1. prope finem.

## INTRODUCTION TO NEHEMIAH 2

### Chapter 2

Nehemiah being sorrowful in the king's presence, the reason of it was asked by the king, which he declared, and then took the opportunity to request of the king that he might be sent to Jerusalem to rebuild it, which was granted him, Neh 2:1, upon which he set out, and came to Jerusalem, to the great grief of the enemies of Israel, Neh 2:9 and after he had been three days in Jerusalem, he privately took a survey of it, to see what condition it was in, unknown to the rulers there, Neh 2:12, whom he afterwards exhorted to rise up and build the wall of the city, which they immediately set about, Neh 2:17 not regarding the scoffs and taunts of their enemies, Neh 2:19.

### Nehemiah 2:1

And it came to pass in the month Nisan; in the twentieth year of Artaxerxes,.... It was still but in the twentieth year of his reign; for though Nisan or March was the first month of the year with the Jews, and from whence the reigns of their kings were dated (l); yet, with other nations, Tisri or September was the beginning of the reigns of their kings (m); so that Chisleu or November being since, see Neh 1:1, it was no more in Nisan or March than the twentieth of the said king's reign, and was three or four months after Nehemiah had first heard of the distress of his people; which time he either purposely spent in fasting and prayer on that account, or until now his turn did not come about to exercise his office, in waiting upon the king as his cupbearer: but now it was

that wine was before him; the king; it was brought and set in a proper place, from whence it might be taken for his use:

and I took up the wine, and gave it to the king; according to Xenophon (n), the cupbearer with the Persians and Medes used to take the wine out of the vessels into the cup, and pour some of it into their left hand, and sup it up, that, if there was any poison in it, the king might not be harmed, and then he delivered it to him upon three fingers (o):

now I had not been before time sad in his presence; but always pleasant and cheerful, so that the sadness of his countenance was the more taken notice of.

(l) Misn. Roshhashanah, c. 1. sect. 3. (m) T. Bab. Rashhashanah, fol. 3. 1. (n) Cyropaedia, l. 1. c. 11. (o) Vid.

Heliodor. Ethiopic. l. 7. c. 27.

### **Nehemiah 2:2**

Wherefore the king said unto me, why is thy countenance sad, seeing thou art not sick?.... He had no disorder upon him to change his countenance and make him sorrowful, and therefore asks what should be the reason of it:

this is nothing else but sorrow of heart; this is not owing to any bodily disease or pain, but some inward trouble of mind; or “wickedness of heart” (p), some ill design in his mind, which being conscious of, and thoughtful about, was discovered in his countenance; he suspected, as Jarchi intimates, a design to kill him, by putting poison into his cup:

then I was very sore afraid; lest the king should have suspicion of an ill design on him; or lest, since he must be obliged to give the true reason, he should not succeed in his request, it being so large, and perhaps many about the king were no friends to the Jews.

(p) , Sept. “malum nescio quod in corde tuo est”, V. L.

### **Nehemiah 2:3**

And I said unto the king, let the king live for ever,.... Which some think he said to take off the king’s suspicion of his having a design upon his life, though it seems to be a common salutation of the kings in those times, see Dan 6:6,

why should not my countenance be sad, when the city, the place of my fathers’ sepulchres, lieth waste, and the gates thereof are consumed with fire? a man’s native place, and where his ancestors lie interred, being always reckoned near and dear, the king and his nobles could not object to his being concerned for the desolations thereof.

### **Nehemiah 2:4**

Then the king said unto me, for what dost thou make request?.... The king supposed that there was a meaning in those looks and words of his, that he had a favour to ask of him, and therefore encourages him to it; or the king of himself moved this, as being desirous of doing anything for him he would propose, to make him easy:

so I prayed to the God of heaven; secretly, in an ejaculatory way, giving him thanks for thus disposing the king’s heart towards him, and entreating he might be directed what to ask, and in a proper manner, and that he might succeed.

### **Nehemiah 2:5**

And I said unto the king; if it please the king, and if thy servant have found favour in thy sight,.... He submits what he had to say wholly to the pleasure of the king, and puts it upon his unmerited favour, and not on any desert of his own:

that thou wouldest send me unto Judah, unto the city of my fathers’ sepulchres, that I may build it; the wall of it, and the houses in it; the favour was, that he might have leave to go thither, and set about such a work, for which he was so much concerned.

### **Nehemiah 2:6**

And the king said unto me, the queen also sitting by him,.... Which it seems was not very common for the queens of Persia to dine with the kings their husbands; though this may be observed, not so much for the

singularity of it, as for the providence of God in it, that so it should be, she having a good respect for Nehemiah, and the Jewish nation, and forwarded the king in his grant to him: if this king was Darius Hystaspis, this his queen was Atossa, daughter of Cyrus (q), who might be the more friendly to the Jews, on account of her father's great regard unto them:

for how long shall thy journey be? and when wilt thou return? what time would he ask to do this business in? this shows the king had a great respect for him, and was loath to part with him, at least for any great length of time:

so it pleased the king to send me, when he promised to return unto him, not in twelve years, which was the time of his government in Judea, but in a lesser space, perhaps a year at most, since in less than two months the wall of Jerusalem was finished; and it may be that he then returned to the king of Persia, who sent him again under the character of a governor, finding it was for his interest to have such a man in those parts.

(q) Herodot. Polymnia, sive l. 7. c. 1.

### **Nehemiah 2:7**

Moreover, I said unto the king, let letters be given me to the governors beyond the river,.... The river of Euphrates, on that side of it towards the land of Judea:

that they may convey me over till I come into Judah; furnish him with provisions, and a guard to protect him.

### **Nehemiah 2:8**

And a letter unto Asaph the keeper of the king's forest,.... The forest or mountain of Lebanon, which, because of its odoriferous and fruit bearing trees, was more like an orchard or paradise, as this word signifies, and so it is translated in Ecc 2:5 and at the extreme part of it, it seems, there was a city called Paradisus (r); such an officer as here was among the Romans, called Saltuarius (s), and is now among us:

that he may give me timber to make beams for the gates of the palace which appertaineth to the house; not the king's palace near the temple, for that might have occasioned suspicion in the king, that his view was to set up himself as king in Judea; but for the gates of the courts adjoining to the temple, and of the wall of the outward court, and of the wall which was to encompass the mountain of the house, the whole circumference of it:

and for the wall of the city; to make gates of in various places for that, where they stood before:

and for the house which I shall enter into; and dwell in during his stay at Jerusalem:

and the king granted me; all the above favours:

according to the good hand of my God upon me; the kind providence of God, which wrought on the heart of the king, and disposed it towards him, and overruled all things for good.

(r) Ptolem. Geograph. l. 5. c. 15. Plin. Nat. Hist. l. 5. c. 23. (s) Vid. Servium in Virgil. Aeneid. l. 2. ver. 485.

### **Nehemiah 2:9**

Then I came to the governors beyond the river,.... Who these governors were, whether the same who were in the second year of this king's reign eighteen years ago, Tatnai and Shetharboznai, is not certain:

now the king had sent captains of the army and horsemen with me; both to do him honour, and for his safety; and coming thus attended, must serve to recommend him to the governor, who received him from them at the river Euphrates, and conducted him to Judah.

### **Nehemiah 2:10**

When Sanballat the Horonite,.... Who either presided at Horonaim, or sprung from thence, a city of Moab, Isa 15:5

and Tobiah the servant, the Ammonite; who was formerly a slave, but now raised, from a low mean estate, to be governor in the land of Ammon, though still a vassal of the king of Persia:

heard of it, it grieved them exceedingly that there came a man to seek the welfare of the children of Israel; to which the Moabites and Ammonites were always averse, and ever bore an hatred to Israel, and envied everything that tended to their happiness.

Nehemiah 2:11

**So I came to Jerusalem, and was there three days. Before he entered on any business, resting himself from the fatigue of the journey, and receiving the visits of his friends, as Ezra before him did, Ezr 8:32.**

### **Nehemiah 2:12**

And I arose in the night, I and some few men with me,.... Both the season of the night, and the small number of men to accompany him, were chosen for greater secrecy, that the business he came upon might not as yet be known, and so no schemes formed to obstruct or discourage:

neither told I any man what God had put in my heart to do at Jerusalem; he was satisfied that what he had in view was from the Lord, who had stirred him up to it, but thought it prudent for the present to conceal it, until things were prepared to put it in execution:

neither was there any beast with me, save the beast that I rode upon; he only rode perhaps on a mule, being not yet recovered quite from the fatigue of his journey, and for the sake of honour; the rest went on foot, that there might be no noise made, and so pass on unheard and unobserved.

### **Nehemiah 2:13**

And I went out by night, by the gate of the valley,.... Where that formerly stood, for the gates had been burnt, and were not as yet rebuilt; this was the gate that led to the valley of Jehoshaphat, according to some; or rather to the valley of dead bodies, through which the brook Kidron ran, see Ch2 26:9 it is the gate through which Christ went to Calvary; it led to Shiloh, Bethhoron, and Golan:

even before the dragon well; so called from its winding about, just as a crooked winding river is called serpentine; though some think here stood an image of a dragon, either in wood, or stone, or brass, out of the mouth of which the water flowed from the well; and others, that since the desolations of Jerusalem, serpents or dragons had their abode here:

and to the dung port; by which they used to carry the dung out of the city, and by which they went to Joppa, the sea, and all the western parts:

and viewed the walls of Jerusalem: in what condition they were, what was necessary to be wholly taken down, and where to begin to build: it must have been a moonlight night or he could not have taken a view; for to have carried torches or lamps with them would have discovered them:

and the gates thereof were consumed with fire; nothing of them remained.

#### **Nehemiah 2:14**

Then I went on to the pool of the fountain, and to the king's pool..... That led to the fountain Siloah or Gihon, so called; it was the way to the potter's field, to Bethlehem, Hebron, Gaza, and Egypt. Rauwolff says (t) there is still standing on the outside of the valley Tyropaeum (which distinguishes the two mountains Zion and Moriah) the gate of the fountain, which hath its name, because it leadeth towards the fountain of Siloah, called the king's pool:

but there was no place for the beast that was under me to pass; because of the heaps of rubbish that lay there.

(t) Travels, par. 3. c. 3. p. 227.

#### **Nehemiah 2:15**

Then went I up in the night by the brook,.... The brook Kidron:

and viewed the wall; that was on that side:

and turned back; did not go quite round the wall, the way perhaps being obstructed with rubbish, and was unpassable or he had not time to do it:

and entered by the gate of the valley, and so returned; into the city, the same way he went out of it, Neh 2:13.

#### **Nehemiah 2:16**

And the rulers knew not whither I went, or what I did..... The rulers of the city of Jerusalem, who seem to be officers of the king of Persia, since they are distinguished from Jewish rulers in the next clause:

neither had I as yet told it to the Jews; what he came about and designed to do:

nor to the priests, nor to the nobles, nor to the rulers; the principal men among the Jews, both ecclesiastical and civil:

nor to the rest that did the work; of building and repairing; neither those that were employed in it, nor those that overlooked it.

#### **Nehemiah 2:17**

Then said I unto them,.... The priests and princes of the Jews:

you see the distress that we are in; lie open to our enemies, and exposed to their insults:

how Jerusalem lieth waste, and the gates thereof are burnt with fire, Neh 1:3,

come, and let us build up the wall of Jerusalem that we be no more a reproach; to their neighbours about them, who scoffed at them as a defenceless people and frequently came in upon them, and spoiled and plundered them of their goods and substance.

#### **Nehemiah 2:18**

Then I told them of the hand of my God which was good upon me..... Of the kind providence of God in exalting him in the court of the king of Persia, in giving him an opportunity of laying the sad case of Jerusalem



before him, and in inclining his heart to show favour to him, and grant his request:

as also the king's words that he had spoken to me; what passed between them on this subject, the commission he gave him, and the letters he sent by him to his governors on this side the river:

and they said, let us rise up and build; encouraged by this account of things, they proposed to set about the work immediately:

so they strengthened their hands for this good work; animated and encouraged one another to proceed to it at once with cheerfulness, and to go on in it with spirit and resolution.

### **Nehemiah 2:19**

But when Sanballat the Horonite, and Tobiah the servant, the Ammonite, and Geshem the Arabian,.... This third man might be both an Arabian by birth, and governor of some part of Arabia near Judea:

heard it; of their beginning to build:

they laughed us to scorn, and despised us; as very silly people, that undertook what they could never perform:

and said; adding threatenings to their scoffs:

what is this thing that ye do? do ye know what ye are about? have ye any authority to do it? it is unlawful, you will certainly suffer for it:

will ye rebel against the king? the king of Persia; it will be deemed rebellion and treason, and you will be taken up and treated as rebels and traitors; take care what you do, be it at your peril if you proceed.

### **Nehemiah 2:20**

Then answered I them, and said unto them,.... With much spirit and boldness, not at all intimidated by their scoffs or threats:

the God of heaven, he will prosper us; whom we serve, and under whose protection we are, who will supply us with everything we want, and succeed this undertaking, in whose name we engage in it, and on whom we depend, and we care not what man can do to us:

therefore we his servants will arise and build; in spite of all opposition, difficulties, and discouragements:

but you have no portion, nor right, nor memorial in Jerusalem; no part of the city belonged to them; they had no jurisdiction there; they had no name there, nor their ancestors, in times past; nor had they done anything to perpetuate their memory in it: in short, they had nothing to do with them, neither in religious nor in civil things; and it was best for them to mind their own affairs where they presided, and not trouble themselves about theirs.

## **INTRODUCTION TO NEHEMIAH 3**

### **Chapter 3**

This chapter contains the names of the builders of the wall of Jerusalem, the order in which they worked, where they began, and where they ended, which was the sheep gate, Neh 3:1.

### **Nehemiah 3:1**

Then Eliashib the high priest rose up with his brethren the priests,.... This was the grandson of Jeshua or Joshua the high priest, his father's name was Joiakim, Neh 12:10, being high priest, and rising first, he set a good example both to the priests and to the people, and served no doubt greatly to animate and encourage them:

and they built the sheep gate; so called, because the sheep were led through it to the temple, and near it was the sheep market, where they were sold, and the sheep pool, where the sacrifices were washed; and this being near the temple, and for the service of it, the priests undertook that; not that they laboured with their hands at it, though it is possible some of them might; but they were at the expense of it, employed labourers, and paid them, and directed them, and had the oversight of them: this gate was to the south of the city; and Rauwolff (u) says, it was still standing by Moriah, the mountain of the temple, which the Turks have taken to themselves, and built on it a Turkish mosque or temple. Near the gate you see still, he says, the sheep pond, which is large and deep, wherein the Nethinims used to wash the beasts, and then gave them to the priests; it is said (w) to lead to the mount of Olives, to Bethany, to Jericho, the desert, and all the east country to Jordan:

they sanctified it; this being for sacred use, and they sacred persons; and this the first part of the building, they prayed for a blessing on it, and in it on the whole work undertaken, of which this was the firstfruits:

and set up the doors of it; and so finished it:

even unto the tower of Meah they sanctified it, unto the tower of Hananeel; so far they built, and what they built they sanctified. The tower of Meah, or a "hundred", as the word signifies, might be so called, either because it was one hundred cubits from the sheep gate on one side, and as many from the tower of Hananeel on the other side, standing between both; or because it was one hundred cubits high: these two towers, perhaps, were firm and strong, and needed no repair, since no mention is made of any; though they seem to me to be one and the same tower; see Jer 31:38.

(u) Travels, par. 3. c. 3. p. 226, 228. (w) Vid. Quistorp. in loc.

### **Nehemiah 3:2**

And next unto him builded the men of Jericho,.... The posterity of those that formerly inhabited that city; these began where Eliashib and the priests ended, and went on from thence:

and next to them; or rather "to him", the high priest:

builded Zaccur the son of Imri; who probably was the chief of the men of Jericho.

### **Nehemiah 3:3**

neh 3:3

But the fish gate did the sons of Hassenaah build,.... So called, because fish was brought from the sea coasts through it, and near it was the fish market; this also was southward, according to Dr. Lightfoot (x); others say northward; some say it led to the sea of Galilee, Jordan, and all the east and north country: but it is most likely to be westward towards the Mediterranean sea, Tyre, and Joppa, from whence fish were brought; and Rauwolff says (y) it is still standing towards the west, behind Mount Sion, and over against Mount Gihon, see Ch2 33:14 he also says, this gate was called the gate of Hebron, because the road of Hebron went through it, which is about seven or eight hours' walking distant from it:

who also laid the beams thereof, and set up the doors thereof, the locks thereof, and the bars thereof; completely finished it.

(x) Chorograph. Cent. of the Land of Israel, c. 26. p. 27. vol. 2. (y) Ut supra, (Travels, par. 3. c. 3.) p. 226, 227.

Nehemiah 3:4

neh 3:4

And next unto them repaired Meremoth, the son of Uriah, the son of Koz,.... And the men under him; see Ezzr 8:33, this part of the wall on which they worked was not wholly demolished, only weakened, and therefore did not rebuild it, but repaired and strengthened it, and this phrase is used all along afterwards:

and next unto them repaired Meshullam, the sort of Berechiah, the son of Meshezabeel: and next unto them repaired Zadok, the son of Baana; but who they were cannot be said.

Nehemiah 3:5

neh 3:5

And next unto them the Tekoites repaired,.... The inhabitants of Tekoa, a city in the tribe of Judah; see Amos 1:1

but their nobles put not their necks to the work of their Lord; either of Nehemiah, as some, or rather of the lord and prince appointed over their families, as Aben Ezra, to whom they would not be subject; though it seems best, with Jarchi, to understand it of the Lord their God, by whose command this work was begun; but they refused to give any assistance to it with their purses or presence, but withdrew from it, as refractory oxen withdraw their necks from the yoke. This is observed to their disgrace, when the common people of their city were ready to work, and did.

Nehemiah 3:6

neh 3:6

Moreover, the old gate repaired Jehoiada, the son of Paseah, and Meshullam the son of Besodeiah,.... Which some think was so called because it led to the old city Salem. Dr. Lightfoot (a) thinks it is the same with the second or third gate, Zep 1:10. According to Vatablus, it was the gate of the old pool, Isa 22:11, or rather, perhaps, it was the gate of the old wall Josephus speaks of (b); it led to the north of the land:

they laid the beams thereof; as in Neh 3:3.

(a) Ut supra. (Chorograph. Cent. of the Land of Israel, c. 26. p. 27. vol. 2.) (b) De Bello Jud. l. 5. c. 4. sect. 2, 3.

Nehemiah 3:7

neh 3:7

And next unto them repaired Melatiah the Gibeonite, and Jadon the Meronothite, the men of Gibeon and Mizpah,.... Which places were both in the tribe of Benjamin, Jos 18:25 and one of these men was of the one place, and the other of the other:

unto the throne of the governor on this side the river; where the governor of those parts under the king of Persia had his seat, and now Nehemiah; but, according to Aben Ezra, Cisse, rendered "throne", is the name of a man who was the governor.

Nehemiah 3:8

neh 3:8

Next unto him repaired Uzziel the son of Harhaiah, of the goldsmiths,.... Or Tzorephim, which, according to Jarchi, was the name of a family so called from their trade and business:

next unto him also repaired Hananiah the son of one of the apothecaries; or confectioners, which also might be the name of a family so called for the same reason:

and they fortified Jerusalem unto the broad wall; which reached from the gate of Ephraim to the corner gate, which was broken down by Joash, king of Israel, but was rebuilt so strong by Uzziah, king of Judah, that it stood firm to this time; wherefore these men repaired up to it, but left that as they found it; see Ch2 25:23, and were not careful to repair it, it not wanting any repair.

Nehemiah 3:9

neh 3:9

And next unto them repaired Rephaiah, the son of Hur, the ruler of the half part of Jerusalem. That city belonging partly to the tribe of Judah, and partly to the tribe of Benjamin; one part of it was under a governor that was of the tribe of Judah, as this man seems to be; and the other part under one of the tribe of Benjamin; see Neh 3:12.

Nehemiah 3:10

neh 3:10

And next unto him repaired Jedaiah, the son of Harumaph, over against his house,.... That part of the wall which stood right against his house; and to take this part he could not well object to it, and it might be reasonably thought he would take care to repair it well, and make it strong for his own safety:

and next unto him repaired Hattush, the son of Hashabniah; but who he was is not known.

Nehemiah 3:11

neh 3:11

Malchijah the son of Harim, and Hashub the son of Pahathmoab,.... The fathers of these were heads of families that came out of captivity with Zerubbabel, Ezr 2:6

repaired the other piece: or second piece, below and next to that which Hattush repaired, the last builder mentioned:

and the tower of the furnaces; near to which were furnaces for the baking of bread, or of bricks.

**Nehemiah 3:12**

And next unto him repaired Shallum, the son of Hallohesh,.... So called, as Ben Melech says, from his being an enchanter of serpents, or a wise prudent counsellor:

the ruler of the half part of Jerusalem; of the other half; see Neh 3:9

he and his daughters; who were rich widows or heiresses, and employed men to build at their own expense; he seems to have had no sons.

**Nehemiah 3:13**

The valley gate repaired Hanun,.... Of which see Neh 2:13,

and the inhabitants of Zanoah; a city in the tribe of Judah, Jos 15:34,

they built it, and set up the doors thereof, &c. see Neh 3:3,

and a thousand cubits on the wall to the dung gate; that is, they repaired the wall to such a length from the valley gate to the dung gate; see Neh 2:13.

**Nehemiah 3:14**

But the dung gate repaired Malchiah the son of Rechab,.... If this was one of the Rechabites, they were forbid to build houses, Jer 35:7 but, perhaps, though they might not build private houses for themselves to dwell in, they might be employed in building walls and fortresses for public security; though it is more probable that this man was not of that family:

the ruler of part of Bethhaccerem; or of the tract of Bethhaccerem, a place between Tekoah and Jerusalem; see Jer 6:1,

he built it, and set up the doors thereof; &c. as in Neh 3:3.

**Nehemiah 3:15**

But the gate of the fountain,.... Of which see Neh 2:14

repaired Shallum, the son of Colhozeh, the ruler of part of Mizpah; of a tract, district, town, or city so called; perhaps that in the tribe of Benjamin; see Neh 3:7,

he built it, and covered it; roofed it, which is not said of any of the other gates, whether because of the fountain at it:

and set up the doors thereof, &c. finished it completely:

and the wall of the pool of Siloah, by the king's garden; which was formerly without the wall, on the west, but afterwards taken in by Manasseh, who built it; see Ch2 33:14, and from hence the king's garden was watered:

and unto the stairs that go down from the city of David: Zion, which was built on an eminence, from which they went down by steps into the lower city Acra.

**Nehemiah 3:16**

After him repaired Nehemiah the son of Azbuk, the ruler of the half part of Bethzur. A strong fortified place in the tribe of Judah, Jos 15:58,

unto the place over against the sepulchres of David; where he and his family, and the kings of his race, were buried, which remained to this time untouched by the Babylonians, and to many ages after; see Act 2:29

and to the pool that was made; not a natural, but an artificial one, which was made by Hezekiah, Kg2 20:20,

and unto the house of the mighty; where was a garrison of soldiers in former time for defence.

**Nehemiah 3:17**

After him repaired the Levites, Rehum the son of Bani,.... Who was one of them, as he that follows was another:

next unto him repaired Hashabiah, the ruler of the half part of Keilah: a city of the tribe of Judah, Jos 15:4

in his part; either with the men of that part of Keilah under his jurisdiction, or at the expense of that part of it.

Nehemiah 3:18

neh 3:18

After him repaired their brethren,.... Either the brethren of the two before named particularly, or the Levites their brethren in general, as Jarchi:

Bavai, the son of Henadad, the ruler of the half part of Keilah; the other half of that place.

**Nehemiah 3:19**

And next to him repaired Ezer, the son of Jeshua, the ruler of Mizpah,.... Either of another Mizpah, or of the other half of Mizpah, Neh 3:15

another piece; or a second piece; one of the two pieces; for another is mentioned in the next verse:

over against the going up to the armoury, at the turning of the wall; the western wall towards the south, near to which was a place where armour was laid up; perhaps the same with the tower of David, to which there is an allusion in Sol 4:4.

**Nehemiah 3:20**

After him Baruch the son of Zabbai earnestly repaired the other piece,.... Towards and next to that Ezer the last builder mentioned had repaired; and this he did “earnestly”, or in anger as the word signifies, being angry with himself or others that there was any backwardness shown to the work; and therefore, with all haste and eagerness imaginable, attended to it:

from the turning of the wall; see the preceding verse:

unto the door of the house of Eliashib the high priest; of whom see Neh 3:1, now either his house was upon the wall, or that part of the wall that was right against the door of his house is here meant.

Nehemiah 3:21

neh 3:21

After him repaired Meremoth the son of Uriah, the son of Koz, another piece,.... He had wrought before in another part, Neh 3:4, but having finished that, he sets his hand a second time to the work:

from the door of the house of Eliashib, even to the end of the house of Eliashib; the door of his house seems to have been at one end of it, and from that end to the other was a considerable length; he being a great man, the high priest, had a large house.

Nehemiah 3:22

neh 3:22

And after him repaired the priests, the men of the plain. Either of the plain of Jericho, where, in later times at least, there was a station of the priests, or of the plain about Jerusalem; those also assisted in the repairs of the wall.

Nehemiah 3:23

neh 3:23

After him,.... The last of the priests before mentioned:

repaired Benjamin, and Hashub, over against their house; as much of the wall as the length of their house, or houses, were:

after him repaired Azariah the son of Maaseiah, the son of Ananiah, by his house: as far as that reached.

Nehemiah 3:24

neh 3:24

After him repaired Binnui the son of Henadad, another piece..... Beginning where Azariah ended:

unto the turning of the wall, even unto the corner; the corner where the wall turned from the south to the east.

Nehemiah 3:25

neh 3:25

Palal the son of Uzai, over against the turning of the wall,.... Who dwelt there, and so repaired what was right against him:

and the tower which lieth out from the king's high house: which might be built for prospect, or his upper house:

that was by the court of the prison; and we often read in Jeremiah of the court of the prison being in or near the king's house, see Jer 32:2,

after him Pedaiah the son of Parosh; went on from hence with the repair.

### **Nehemiah 3:26**

Moreover, the Nethinims dwelt in Ophel,.... An high tower upon the wall, in this part of it, see Ch2 27:3, these were servants to the Levites, and repaired here, where their dwellings were:

unto the place over against the water gate toward the east: and as one part of their work was to fetch water for the temple, they were here very properly situated; it led to the king's garden, the valley of Jehoshaphat, and from thence a plain way to Bethany:

and the tower that lieth out; from the wall.

### **Nehemiah 3:27**

After them the Tekoites repaired another piece,.... Having finished what they undertook in another part of

the wall, Neh 3:5, they engage in this part of it; which shows their great zeal and diligence, when their nobles were so backward to it, and withdrew from it:

over against the great tower that lieth out; the same as in the preceding verse:

even unto the wall of Ophel; from right against the great tower unto the wall the Tekoites repaired.

### **Nehemiah 3:28**

From above the horse gate repaired the priests,.... So called, either because near it were stables for horses; or through it horses were led to be watered at the brook of Kidron, to which it was near; or to be exercised in the valley; Josephus (c) speaks of the “hippie”, or horse tower, which might be near it:

everyone over against his house; for it seems there was a row of houses in which the priests dwelt, and each of them repaired as much of the wall as was right against his house.

(c) Ut supra. (De Bello Jud. 1. 5. c. 4. sect. 2, 3.)

### **Nehemiah 3:29**

After them repaired Zadok the son of Immer, over against his house,.... After the last of the priests, this begun where they ended, and repaired as far as his house reached; and being, perhaps, a person of some note, his house might be a large one:

after him repaired also Shemaiah, the son of Shechaniah, the keeper of the east gate; that is, of the temple; for the gates of the city having been burnt so long, it cannot be thought there should be a keeper of any of them.

### **Nehemiah 3:30**

After him repaired Hananiah the son of Shelemiah, and Hanun the sixth son of Zalaph, another piece,.... This last man had six sons; but only his youngest son wrought at this work, which is observed to his great commendation:

after him repaired Shelemiah the son of Berechiah, over against his chamber; the same as in Neh 3:4 who having finished what he engaged in there, took his part where his chamber was, and repaired over against that.

### **Nehemiah 3:31**

After him repaired Malchiah, the goldsmith’s son,.... Or the son of Tzoreph, as some, so called from his business:

unto the place of the Nethinims, and of the merchants; he repaired up to the place where these dwelt:

over against the gate Miphkad; where some think was an house of visitation or correction; and others, where the sanhedrim sat, tried causes, and exercised justice:

and to the going up of the corner; from the east to the north.

### **Nehemiah 3:32**

And between the going up of the corner unto the sheep gate,.... Where the building first began and where it now ended:

repaired the goldsmiths and the merchants; or druggists; which was done at their expense; and so the wall all round, with the gates of it, were rebuilt and repaired, which was all done in fifty two days, Neh 6:15.



## INTRODUCTION TO NEHEMIAH 4

### Chapter 4

This chapter relates, how the Jews, while building, were mocked by their enemies, to which no answer was returned but by prayer to God, and they went on notwithstanding in their work, Neh 4:1 and how that their enemies conspired against them, to hinder them by force of arms, Neh 4:7 to oppose which, both spiritual and temporal weapons were made use of, so that the work was still carried on, Neh 4:13.

#### **Nehemiah 4:1**

But it came to pass, that when Sanballat heard that we builded the wall,.... Or were building it; for as yet it was not finished, see Neh 4:6,

he was wroth, and took great indignation; inwardly, though outwardly he pretended to treat the work with contempt, as if it never would be accomplished, which yet he feared:

and mocked the Jews; as a set of foolish builders, and unable to finish what they had begun.

#### **Nehemiah 4:2**

And he spake before his brethren,.... Tobiah the Ammonite, and Geshem the Arabian, and perhaps some other governors of the king of Persia in those parts:

and before the army of Samaria: which, and the inhabitants of it, were implacable enemies of the Jews:

and said, what do these feeble Jews? what do they pretend to do, or what can they do?

will they fortify themselves? by building a wall about their city; can they think they shall ever be able to do this, or that it will be allowed?

will they sacrifice? meaning not their daily sacrifice, as Jarchi, that they had done a long time, but for the dedication of their building, as Aben Ezra:

will they make an end in a day? they seem to be in as great a hurry and haste as if they meant it; and indeed, unless they can do it very quickly, they never will: they will soon be stopped:

will they revive the stones out of the heaps of the rubbish which are burnt? where will they find materials? do they imagine that they can make burnt stones firm and strong again, or harden the dust and rubbish into stones, or make that, which is as if dead, alive? to do this is the same as to revive a dead man, and they may as well think of doing the one as the other; burnt stones being reckoned as dead, as Eben Ezra observes.

#### **Nehemiah 4:3**

Now Tobiah the Ammonite was by him,.... Who was one of his brethren he spake before, Neh 4:2,

and he said; in the like contemptuous and scoffing manner:

even that which they build, if a fox go up, he shall break down their stone wall; signifying not only that it was so low that a fox could easily get up to it, or leap over it; but that the materials were so bad, and the work so poorly done, that the weight of a fox would break it down; of which creatures many were thereabout, since Jerusalem was desolate, see Lam 5:18.

#### **Nehemiah 4:4**

Hear, O our God, for we are despised,.... Here begins the prayer of Nehemiah, who had been informed of what these men said in contempt of him, and his builders, and to whom he sent no answer, but applied to God:

and turn their reproach upon their own head; as they have despised and reproached us, let them be despised and reproached by their neighbours:

give them for a prey in the land of captivity; let them be carried captive, as we have been, and become a prey and booty to their enemies.

#### **Nehemiah 4:5**

And cover not their iniquity, and let not their sin be blotted out from before thee,.... Let it not go unpunished, and even let it not be pardoned; which is spoken, not from a private spirit of revenge, but from a public spirit for the glory of God, and his justice; and not as a mere imprecation, but as a prophecy of what would be the case, in like manner as many of David's petitions in the Psalms; and for this there was a good foundation, since God had threatened the Moabites and Ammonites with utter destruction:

for they have provoked thee to anger before the builders; by despising his people, and mocking at the work the Lord had called them to; and this they did publicly, and on purpose to discourage the workmen.

#### **Nehemiah 4:6**

So built we the wall,.... Went on in building it, notwithstanding their scoffs and threats:

and all the wall was joined together unto the half thereof; it was carried all round the city to half the height of it:

for the people had a mind to work; their heart was in it, they had a good will to it, and they made haste to finish it.

#### **Nehemiah 4:7**

And it came to pass that when Sanballat, and Tobiah, and the Arabians,.... Who were under and influenced by Geshem the Arabian:

and the Ammonites; over whom Tobiah was governor:

and the Ashdodites; who were of Ashdod or Azotus, one of the principalities of the Philistines, who were always enemies to the Jews:

heard that the walls of Jerusalem were made up; or "the length of them went up" (d); that is, the height of them; that they rose up high apace, and were got up to, or almost to their proper height:

and that the breaches began to be stopped; for the walls were not all thrown down by the Chaldeans, but breaches made here and there, which were now repaired:

then they were very wroth; and could not avoid showing it; before they mocked them, as attempting what they could not go through with; but now, perceiving the work went on with great success, they were enraged.

(d) "ascendisset longitudo", Montanus; so Coeceius in rad.

#### **Nehemiah 4:8**

And conspired all of them together,.... All the above men and people entered into a confederacy and

combination:

to come and to fight against Jerusalem; to bring an army with them, and by force cause the Jews to desist; the Jews (e) pretend they came to war, and brought with them an army of 180,000 men, which is not probable:

and to hinder it; the building of the walls of it; or “to make a wandering for him” (f); for Nehemiah, or the people, or both, to, cause them to stray from their work, to frighten them from it, that they might become like men at their wits end, not knowing what to do, where to turn themselves, or what course to steer, but to wander about as persons out of their senses; so Aben Ezra. De Dieu joins this clause to the next verse, to cause everyone of them to wander, we prayed, &c.

(e) Pirke Eliezer, c. 38. (f) “ad faciendum ei errorem”, Montanus; “ei aberrationem”, Genevenses; “vagationem et palationem”, alii apud De Dieu.

#### **Nehemiah 4:9**

Nevertheless, we made our prayer unto our God,.... Spread their case before him in prayer, entreating direction and help from him:

and set a watch against them day and night, because of them; to give notice of their approach, that they might prepare to defend themselves; though they prayed to God, and trusted in him for deliverance, they did not neglect the use of means.

#### **Nehemiah 4:10**

And Judah said,.... Several of the men of Judah:

the strength of the bearers of burdens is decayed; through much labour, in carrying heavy loads of stone and timber to the builders, and yet more through fear of the enemy:

and there is much rubbish; which ought to be removed, but that the labourers were so weak that they could not do it:

so that we are not able to build the wall; to finish it before the enemy comes to attack us.

#### **Nehemiah 4:11**

And our adversaries said, they shall not know,.... Our designs upon them:

neither see; or perceive what we are about to do:

till we come in the midst of them; with an army suddenly, at an unawares, and unexpected:

and slay them; they being unarmed, and not prepared to defend themselves:

and cause the work to cease; as it must in course, the builders being slain.

#### **Nehemiah 4:12**

Near Samaria, Arabia, and Ashdod, and had intelligence of their designs:

came, they said to us ten times; that is, they came to them at Jerusalem, and often told them, as this phrase “ten times” signifies; see Gill on Gen 31:7,

from all places whence ye shall return unto us: they will be upon you, come which way you will, so that ye

<sup>76</sup>  
are in the utmost danger: or “from all places”; where you are repairing and rebuilding:

return to us; that ye may enjoy peace and prosperity with us under Sanballat, &c. and escape the wrath and fury you are now exposed to; or “from all places we come, that ye may return to us”; so De Dieu; these Jews, though they pretended to be friends, to their brethren, yet seemed to be in friendship with their enemies, and sought to discourage them, and weaken their minds, and cause them to cease building.

#### **Nehemiah 4:13**

Therefore set I in the lower places behind the wall,.... Where the wall was lowest, and the enemy could more easily break it down, or get over it:

and on the higher places; where the wall was higher; or rather on the towers upon the walls, as the word signifies the tops of rocks, which are dry and smooth, see Eze 24:2.

I even set the people after their families; according to their rank, number, strength, and valour:

with their swords, their spears, and their bows; with weapons they could use both near, and at a distance.

#### **Nehemiah 4:14**

And I looked,.... Took a view of the people, and observed that they were in their proper place, and sufficiently armed, and also whether the enemy was coming:

and rose up and said unto the nobles, and to the rulers, and to the rest of the people; who were under their nobles and rulers, as their captains and commanders:

be not ye afraid of them; of their enemies, their numbers, and their threats:

remember the Lord, which is great and terrible; who is greater than they, and is to be feared and trusted in by his people, and is terrible even to the kings of the earth:

and fight for your brethren, your sons and your daughters, your wives and your houses; intimating, that they were in danger of losing all that was near and dear, valuable and precious to them, if they did not fight for them; and therefore it became them to quit themselves like men, and be strong.

#### **Nehemiah 4:15**

And it came to pass, when our enemies heard it was known unto us,.... What they intended, as might be reported to them from the preparations made by the Jews to receive them, and defend themselves:

and God had brought their counsel to naught; which was to come upon them secretly and unawares; but being discovered, they dropped their design, and their scheme came to nothing:

so that we returned all of us to the wall, every man to his work; to that part of it where he wrought, in order to finish it.

#### **Nehemiah 4:16**

And it came to pass from that time forth,.... That they were thus alarmed of danger from their enemies:

that the half of my servants wrought in the work; of building the wall; his domestic servants, his guards, or mighty men, as Jarchi, men of war, the soldiers:

and the other half of them held both the spears, the shields, and the bows; some offensive, others defensive

weapons; some to fight with at a distance, others near at hand:

and the habergeons; coats of mail, which they took and clothed themselves with:

and the rulers were behind all the house of Judah; the Jews that were working at the wall, to animate and encourage them, protect and defend them.

#### **Nehemiah 4:17**

That laid the mortar and stones upon it, and timber where it was necessary:

and they that bore burdens; that carried the mortar, stones, and timber to the builders, and served them:

with those that laded; which prepared the above for them, and laid them on their shoulders:

everyone with one of his hands wrought in the work, and with the other hand held a weapon; which is not to be understood strictly and literally, for without both hands they could not well perform either of the above works; but proverbially, signifying that they were intent on both working and fighting, and were ready and prepared to do the latter, as well as the former, having weapons lying by them, or girt about them, as is explained in the following verse.

Nehemiah 4:18

neh 4:18

For the builders had everyone his sword girded by his side, and so builded,.... Thus accoutred he wrought, and was prepared for either service:

and he that sounded the trumpet was by me; to give the alarm of war, that everyone might lay aside his work, and prepare for the battle: this officer stood by Nehemiah, that when he found it necessary, might give him orders to sound his trumpet, for the men to gather to him.

Nehemiah 4:19

neh 4:19

And I said unto the nobles, and to the rulers, and to the rest of the people,.... See Gill on Neh 4:14,

the work is great and large; the building of the wall all around the city of Jerusalem:

and we are separated upon the wall one far from another; some at work on one part of it, and some at another, so that the distance between one another, at least in the further part, was very considerable.

Nehemiah 4:20

neh 4:20

In what place therefore ye hear the sound of the trumpet,.... Be it what part of the wall soever they were at work, even the most distant:

resort ye thither to us; to Nehemiah, and the half of his servants armed, where the trumpet was blown; that was to be the place of rendezvous:

our God shall fight for us; and give us victory over our enemies; none have any reason to be intimidated,

when they shall hear the sound of the trumpet.

Nehemiah 4:21

neh 4:21

So we laboured in the work,.... Of building the wall: and half of them held the spears; and other weapons before mentioned, Neh 4:16

from the rising of the morning till the stars appeared; that is, from morning to evening, the space of time the builders and labourers worked.

Nehemiah 4:22

neh 4:22

Likewise at the same time said I unto the people,.... That were at work upon the wall:

let everyone with his servant lodge within Jerusalem; every builder had a servant, or a lad, as the word signifies, to wait upon him, to bring mortar or stone, or what he wanted; and some of these builders, with their lads, came out of the country towns and villages in the morning, and returned at night; now Nehemiah proposed, for the safety of the city and its walls, that for the present they would lodge in Jerusalem:

that in the night they may be a guard unto us, and labour on the day; might help to protect them in the night, should they be surprised with the enemy, and be ready for their work in the daytime.

Nehemiah 4:23

neh 4:23

So neither I, nor my brethren,.... The nobles and rulers:

nor my servants; his domestic servants that waited upon him:

nor the men of the guard which followed me; his bodyguard, which attended him as a commissioner of the king of Persia for state and grandeur:

none of us put off our clothes; at night when they laid themselves down to sleep, but laid in, them, that they might be ready upon an alarm made:

saving that everyone put them off for washing; not for common washing, because dirty, but for washing on account of ceremonial uncleanness, which required washing both of bodies and garments, see Lev 15:5, &c. and the Vulgate Latin version expresses it by baptism, as the apostle calls such ceremonial ablutions in Heb 6:2. It is in the margin of our Bibles, "everyone went with his weapon for water"; when he went to Siloam, or any other place, for water, he took a weapon with him to defend himself upon occasion; which is no bad sense of the words. Noldius (g) renders the words, "everyone with his weapon (and) water"; both were at his bolster, ready, if wanted, see Sa1 26:11.

(g) Ebr. Concord. Partic. p. 322.

## INTRODUCTION TO NEHEMIAH 5

### Chapter 5

In this chapter is a complaint of the poor against the rich for oppression of them, Neh 5:1 for which Nehemiah being angry, reprov'd them, and made them promise, and swear to it, to make restitution, Neh 5:6 and set them an example himself, taking nothing of them during his twelve years' government, supporting himself and his at his own expenses, Neh 5:14.

### **Nehemiah 5:1**

And there was a great cry of the people, and of their wives,.... Those of the poorer sort:

against their brethren the Jews; the rich that oppressed them; and this cry or complaint was made to Nehemiah for redress.

### **Nehemiah 5:2**

For there were that said, we, our sons, and our daughters, are many,.... Not that they complained of the number of their children, for a numerous offspring was always reckoned a blessing with the Jews; but this they observed to show that their families, being large, required a considerable quantity of food to support them:

therefore we take up corn for them, that we may eat and live; that is, they were obliged to take it at an exorbitant price, which is the thing complained of; or otherwise they must starve, the rich taking the advantage of their poverty and present dearth.

### **Nehemiah 5:3**

Some also there were that said, we have mortgaged our lands, vineyards, and houses,.... Made them over to others, put them into their hands as pledges for money received of them:

that we may buy corn; for the support of their families:

because of the dearth; or famine; which might be occasioned by their enemies lying in wait and intercepting all provisions that might be brought to them; for this seems not to be the famine spoken of in Hag 1:10 for that was some years before this, and for a reason which now was not.

### **Nehemiah 5:4**

There were also that said,.... Who though they were able to buy corn for their families without mortgaging their estates: yet, say they:

we have borrowed money for the king's tribute, and that upon our lands and vineyards; for though the priests, Levites, and Nethinims, were exempted from it, yet not the people in common; and some of these were so poor, that they could not pay it without borrowing upon their estates, and paying large usury for it, see

### **Nehemiah 5:5**

Yet now our flesh is as the flesh of our brethren,.... We are of the same nature, nation, stock, and religion: our children as their children; are circumcised as they, and have a right to the same privileges in church and state:

and, lo, we bring into bondage our sons and daughters to be servants; shall be obliged to it, unless relieved:

and some of our daughters are brought into bondage already; sold to be servants, as they might in case of the poverty of parents, Exo 21:7, and some were sometimes taken to be bondmen in payment of their parents' debts, Kg2 4:1

neither is it in our power to redeem them, for other men have our lands and vineyards; as pledges for money

### **Nehemiah 5:6**

And I was very angry when I heard their cry, and these words. Their complaint expressed in this manner; it not only raised pity and compassion in his breast towards these poor distressed people, but indignation at the rich that oppressed them.

### **Nehemiah 5:7**

Then I consulted with myself,.... What was to be done, what method to be taken to redress such grievances:

and I rebuked the nobles and the rulers; who were the men that monopolized the corn in this dear season, and sold it at an extravagant price, and had got the lands, vineyards, and houses of the poor mortgaged to them, and to whom they had lent money on usury:

and said unto them, you exact usury everyone of his brother; which was contrary to the express law of God, Exo 22:25 and which even the Indians (h) strictly observed, who neither let out money, nor took any upon usury:

and I set a great assembly against them; either of the poor that were oppressed, who brought in their accusations and complaints against them, or a large body of the people, who were not guilty, to hear them, that the delinquents might be put to public shame; or he called a large court of judicature, and set them to examine these allegations, and to do justice.

(h) Aelian. Var. Hist. l. 4. c. 1.

### **Nehemiah 5:8**

And I said unto them,.... The nobles, and rulers, and other rich persons that exacted usury of the poor:

we after our ability; speaking of himself in the plural number, which now obtained in the court of Persia; or of Zerubbabel, Ezra, and others, who, according as their worldly circumstances, having been captives, would admit of:

have redeemed our brethren the Jews, which were sold unto the Heathen; not that they had given a ransom for them to Cyrus, or any other king of Persia, which would be contrary to the prophecies concerning their redemption, Isa 45:13 but such who had sold themselves to particular persons in Babylon, who, without being redeemed, could not take the advantage of the liberty granted by Cyrus, and his successors; and it may be there were others also in the like circumstances, in other neighbouring nations, that had been redeemed this way. The Jewish canon (i) now is, he that sells himself, and his children, to Gentiles, they do not redeem; but they redeem the children after their father's death; which the commentators (k) explain of the third time that he sells himself:

and will you even sell your brethren? their lands and vineyards mortgaged to them, and even their persons:

or shall they be sold unto us? must we be obliged to buy them, and to redeem them:

then they held their peace, and found nothing to answer; being convinced they had done wrong, by the arguments used, to which they could make no reply.

(i) Misn. Gittin, c. 4. sect. 9. (k) Maimon. & Bartenora in ib.

### **Nehemiah 5:9**



Also I said, it is not good that ye do,.... The meaning is, that it was very bad; it is a “meiosis”, by which more is intended than is expressed:

ought ye not to walk in the fear of our God; in reverence of him and his law, and according to that:

because of the reproach of the Heathen our enemies? whose mouths will be open to reproach the true religion, and the good ways of God; and say, these are the men that pretend to fear God, and serve him, and yet break his law, and use their brethren ill, see Rom 2:24.

#### **Nehemiah 5:10**

I likewise, and my brethren, and my servants, might exact of them money and corn,.... For our maintenance, in consideration of the services done by us, which would appear but reasonable, but this we decline for the sake of easing our poor brethren:

I pray you let us leave off this usury; and not exact it, as has been too much and too long used.

#### **Nehemiah 5:11**

Restore, I pray you, even this day, their lands, their vineyards, their oliveyards, and their houses,.... Which they had made over to them for corn they had had, or money they borrowed of them; it is entreated that an immediate restitution be made, and the rather, if what Aben Ezra observes is true, that this was the year of release, when debts were not to be exacted, but forgiven, Deu 15:1,

also the hundredth part of the money, and of the corn, the wine, and the oil, that ye exact of them; the hundredth part of the money might be what they took for usury, as the Romans did in later times, even so much a month; so that if the loan was one hundred pounds, a pound was given every month for it, and so one hundred and twelve pounds in the year; and the hundredth part of the corn, wine, and oil, might be the hundredth part of those fruits of the earth which the rulers demanded for their salary, see Neh 5:15.

#### **Nehemiah 5:12**

Then said they, we will restore them,.... The lands, vineyards, oliveyards, and houses:

and will require nothing of them; not the hundredth part of the fruits of the earth by way of salary:

so will we do as thou sayest; they approved of his proposal, and readily agreed to it:

then I called the priests, and took an oath of them that they should do according to this promise; not that the priests were delinquents, they were not charged with anything of this kind, nor were they the men that promised restitution; but the priests were called to administer the oath to the nobles, and rulers, and rich men, to oblige them the more to keep their word; an oath being sacred, priests in an holy office were made use of to give it, that it might be the more solemn, and the more strictly regarded.

#### **Nehemiah 5:13**

Also I shook my lap,.... The fore skirts of his garment, shaking the dust out of them, as a symbol of what follows; a like rite was used in the case of peace and war, the choice of either, by the Romans, as proposed by their ambassadors to the Carthaginians, as having either in their bosom to shake out (l):

and said, so God shake out every man from his house, and from his labour; what he has got by his labour:

that performeth not his promise; confirmed by an oath:

even thus be he shaken out, and emptied; of all that he has in the world, and out of the world too, as Jarchi adds:

and all the congregation said, Amen; so let it be, even those that had taken pledges and usury, as well as others:

and praised the Lord; that had given them such a governor to direct, advise, and exhort them to their duty, and had inclined their hearts to attend thereunto:

and the people did according to this promise; they punctually kept it, and the oath they had sworn.

(l) Florus, l. 2. c. 6. Liv. l. 21. c. 18.

#### **Nehemiah 5:14**

Moreover, from the time that I was appointed to be their governor in the land of Judah,.... That is, by the king of Persia, which was not done when he was first sent into Judea; but very probably when he had finished the wall in fifty two days, he returned to Persia, and gave the king an account of his success, and how things stood in those parts, when he judged it necessary to send him again in the character of a governor, and which was still within the same year, as follows: from the twentieth year, even unto the thirty second year of Artaxerxes, that is, twelve years; see Neh 13:6.

I and my brethren have not eaten the bread of the governor; which was fit and proper for him, and used to be given him; neither he, nor those that assisted him in the government, the principal men he brought along with him, and put into posts and places under him.

#### **Nehemiah 5:15**

But the former governors, that had been before me, were chargeable to the people,.... Between him and Zerubbabel, for Ezra was no governor; according to the Jewish chronology (m), when Ezra came to Jerusalem, Zerubbabel returned to Babylon, and there died, and his son Methullam was in his stead, and after him succeeded Hananiah his son:

and had taken of them bread and wine, besides forty shekels of silver; which amounted to between four and five pounds, and this they had every day:

yea, even their servants bare rule over the people; required a salary, or at least perquisites of them, which the governors connived at:

but so did not I, because of the fear of God; neither took anything himself of the people, nor suffered his servants; because the fear of God was upon his heart, and before his eyes, and therefore could not allow himself to oppress the poor.

(m) Seder Olam Zuta, p. 108, 109.

#### **Nehemiah 5:16**

Yea, also I continued in the work of this wall,.... Of building the wall of Jerusalem; here he gave his constant attendance to direct and encourage the workmen, and see that they kept to their work, and did it well:

neither bought we any land; neither he nor the principal men with him, though they could have bought it cheap, but they chose not to take the advantage of the poverty of the people:

and all my servants were gathered thither unto the work: all were employed in it, taking no wages for their work, being maintained at his expense.

#### **Nehemiah 5:17**

Moreover, there were at my table an hundred and fifty of the Jews and rulers,.... Every day at his own cost, which must be considerable to provide for such a number, and of such rank:

besides those that came unto us from among the Heathen that are about us; who were proselytes, and came thither to worship, or on a civil account, to give intelligence, and take directions.

#### **Nehemiah 5:18**

Now that which was prepared for me daily was one ox and six choice sheep,.... Or fat ones; of beef and mutton a considerable quantity, abundantly sufficient for his guests and servants, and shows what a good table he kept:

also fowls were prepared for me; what number is not said:

and once in ten days store of all sorts of wine; the country afforded; that is, either once in ten days his stock of wine was renewed, or a more liberal entertainment was made, a banquet of wine, Est 5:6,

yet for all this required not I the bread of the governor; the salary that used to be given him, but did this at his own expense, out of his own estate in Judea; or what he had got by his office as cupbearer to the king of Persia, the salary of which perhaps was continued:

because the bondage was heavy upon the people; the tribute of the king of Persia, and their labour and expense in building the walls of the city.

#### **Nehemiah 5:19**

Think upon me, my God, for good, according to all that I have done for this people. He expected not any recompence from the people, but from the Lord; and from him not in a way of merit, but of grace and good will, who forgets not what is done for his name's sake, Heb 6:10.

### **INTRODUCTION TO NEHEMIAH 6**

#### Chapter 6

Sanballat and his brethren, hearing the wall was finished, sent to Nehemiah, to have a meeting with him at a place named, which he refused, Neh 6:1, then they sent him a terrifying letter, suggesting that he, and the Jews with him, would be treated as rebels, since their intention, as reported, was to make him king, which letter he regarded not, Neh 6:3, then they employed some that pretended to be prophets to advise him to flee to the temple for safety, which he rejected, Neh 6:10 and so the work went on and was finished, though there was a secret correspondence carried on between their enemies and some false brethren among themselves, Neh 6:15.

#### Nehemiah 6:1

Now it came to pass, when Sanballat and Tobiah, and Geshem the Arabian, and the rest of our enemies, heard that I had builded the wall,.... Quite finished it:

and that there was no breach left therein; but all was made up firm and strong:

though at that time I had not set up the doors upon the gates; not upon all of them, though some might by the particular builders of them; and they all of them might be ready made, though not as yet put upon the hinges.

**Nehemiah 6:2**

Then Sanballat and Geshem sent unto me,.... Messengers:

saying, come, let us meet together in some one of the villages; in Cephirim, which Jarchi takes to be the name of a place, perhaps the same with Cephirah, a city in the tribe of Benjamin, Jos 18:26

in the plain of Ono; which was in the same tribe, see Ch1 8:12, they might pretend a friendly meeting, to accommodate differences between them, or to converse together about the general interest of the king of Persia in those parts:

but they thought to do me mischief; to kill him, or at least to confine him; this he either conjectured from their general character and behaviour, or he had intelligence of their design.

**Nehemiah 6:3**

And I sent messengers unto them,.... He did not show any open contempt of them, nor did he even return answer by the messenger that came from them, but sent some of his own people to them:

saying, I am doing a great work; was about an affair of great importance, very busy, and not at leisure to give them a meeting:

so that I cannot come down; Jerusalem being built on an eminence, and the place proposed to meet at in a plain, going thither is expressed by coming down:

why should the work cease, while I leave it, and come down to you? signifying that it would cease if he left it; and it being of greater consequence than anything they could have to converse about, he argues it would be wrong to relinquish it on such an account; this was the reason he thought fit to give, but was not the only, nor the principal reason, which is suggested in the preceding verse.

**Nehemiah 6:4**

Yet they sent unto me four times after this sort,.... Being very desirous of getting him into their hands, and therefore were very pressing and importunate:

and I answered them after the same manner; every time as before, he being as much bent on finishing the work as they were to divert him from it.

**Nehemiah 6:5**

Then sent Sanballat his servant unto me in like manner the fifth time,.... In his own name, neither Tobiah nor Geshem joining with him, he being more solicitous and anxious to get him into his hands than any of them; and it may be, as some think, pretending more friendship for him than the rest, and therefore writes alone, as if they knew nothing of his writing:

with an open letter in his hand: which having in it an intimation of Nehemiah being guilty of treason, anyone that would might read it, and so spread the defamation.

**Nehemiah 6:6**

Wherein was written, it is reported among, the Heathen,.... Among the several neighbouring nations; it was an affair that was not whispered about among a few only; it was common talk, it was in every body's mouth in divers nations:

and Gashmu saith it; the same with Geshem the Arabian; he affirms it, and will abide by his assertion, and engages to make good what he says; he mentions him by name, who he knew would not be offended with him for making use of it, and who doubtless agreed that he should; that Nehemiah might not think this was the talk of some of the lower rank of the people, but even was averred by no less than the king's governor in Arabia:

that thou and the Jews think to rebel; that they had formed a scheme, and were taking measures to raise a rebellion against the king of Persia, and revolt from him:

for which cause thou buildest the wall; the wall of Jerusalem, for their security against any force that might be sent to quell them:

that thou mayest be their king, according to these words; written in this epistle, and reported among the Heathens.

### **Nehemiah 6:7**

And thou hast also appointed prophets to preach of thee at Jerusalem,.... This he said to cover what he and Tobiah had been doing, tampering with, corrupting, and hiring the prophets to discourage him, and put him upon methods, whereby the work would cease:

saying, there is a king in Judah; besides Artaxerxes, whose yoke they were casting off, having got a king of their own, and among them:

and now shall it be reported to the king, according to these words; such a report as this, and in those very words, will soon reach the ears of the king of Persia:

come now, therefore, and let us take counsel together; contrive the best method to put a stop to this report, if a false one, and to wipe off the reproach that is upon thee, and may affect us; and thus partly terrifying him, and partly pretending friendship to him, hoped to get him into his hands.

### **Nehemiah 6:8**

Then I sent unto him,.... Whether a letter, or a messenger, is not said:

saying there are no such things done as thou sayest; that there was any scheme formed to rebel, and make him king, or that prophets were appointed to declare him such:

but thou feignest them out of thine own heart; in short, that they were no other than lies of his own inventing.

### **Nehemiah 6:9**

For they all made us afraid,.... Or you all, as Aben Ezra interprets it; or all the Heathen nations, as Jarchi; this was the design of all those scandalous reports, to intimidate them, and with this they pleased themselves, as follows:

their hands shall be weakened from the work, that it be not done; this they hoped would be the effect of those reports sent to them:

now, therefore, O God, strengthen my hands; and let them not have what they will, and hope for; according to Aben Ezra, these words are directed to Sanballat, that if he was a friend, as he pretended, that instead of weakening, he would strengthen his hands by a sincere reconciliation; so Vatablus; but they are an address to God, such short ejaculations being usual with Nehemiah.

**Nehemiah 6:10**

Afterward I came unto the house of Shemaiah the son of Delaiah, the son of Mehetabeel, who was shut up,.... Either in his own house, or in a chamber in the temple, as if he had given himself up to meditation, fasting, and prayer; or, as he might suggest to Nehemiah, for his safety, and so designed it as an example to him; this man might be a priest of the course of Delaiah, Ch1 24:18 or however he was a person Nehemiah had a good opinion of, and came to him on the letters sent to him by his enemies, to consult with him, and the rest, since they had suggested that he had appointed prophets to speak of him as a king:

and he said let us meet together in the house of God, within the temple, and let us shut the doors of the temple; this looks as if he was in his own house, or if in a chamber of the temple, that he thought that was not secret and safe enough, and therefore proposed going within the temple, into the holy place, where none but priests might go:

for they will come to slay thee; meaning his enemies, Sanballat and his companions:

yea, in the night they will come to slay thee; that very night, and therefore no time should be lost in providing for his safety.

**Nehemiah 6:11**

And I said, should such a man as I flee?.... The king's commissioner, who had the conducting and management of the whole affair of building the wall of Jerusalem, on whom it wholly depended; for, should he absent himself, the people would depart and leave their work, and the city and wall be left defenceless, which was what was hoped for from this scheme; and who had expressed such confidence in God, and had had such success:

and who is there, that, being as I am; in such a post, and in such circumstances, and on whom so much depended:

would go into the temple to save his life? or where there was little reason to believe it would be preserved long, should he take such a step as that:

I will not go in; as being neither lawful, nor honourable, nor safe.

**Nehemiah 6:12**

And, lo, I perceived that God had not sent him,.... Because he advised to that which was against the cause of God and true religion:

but that he pronounced the prophecy against me; for by fleeing, as he advised, it would seem that he was guilty of the crimes of rebellion and treason he was charged with; and leaving the people, as they would in course break up, he himself could not be long in safety, no, not in the temple:

for Tobiah and Sanballat had hired him; this he found out afterwards, on purpose to intimidate him, and take such measures as that thereby he would lose his character and his influence.

**Nehemiah 6:13**

Therefore was he hired, that I should be afraid, and do so,

and sin,.... By distrusting the power and providence of God to protect him, and by going into such a part of the temple, which he, being no priest, had no right to go into:

and that they might have matter for an evil report, that they might reproach me; as a rebel and traitor against the king, which had been reported of him, and which would be strengthened by such a step.

#### **Nehemiah 6:14**

My God, think thou on Tobiah and Sanballat according to these their works,.... Their wicked counsels and schemes, and not only confound and disappoint them, but reward them as they deserve:

and on the prophetess Noadiah: whom Aben Ezra takes to be the same with Shemaiah, because he said, “let us meet”, &c. Neh 6:10, but no doubt it is the name of a woman, a false prophetess, and was hired, and in the same scheme with Shemaiah:

and the rest of the prophets that would have put me in fear; and so put him on leaving the people, and the work he was engaged in, and flee for his safety; it seems there were more than are by name mentioned, who sought to discourage and intimidate him.

#### **Nehemiah 6:15**

So the wall was finished in the twenty fifth day of the month Elul,.... The sixth month, answering to part of August and part of September:

in fifty and two days; which Aben Ezra reckons from the time that Sanballat sent his letter to Nehemiah, when no more were wanting than to set the doors upon the gates, Neh 6:1, but rather these, with Jarchi, must be reckoned from the time the building was begun; which, reckoning back from the twenty fifth of Elul, it will appear it was begun the third day of the fifth month Ab; nor need this be thought incredible, considering the number of workmen, their ardour and diligence in building, and that the walls were not wholly built all around, only repaired, and breaches made up, and much of the old materials were made use of, which were at hand, and stone unhewed, and especially being attended with the blessing of God, which succeeded the undertaking: nor are there wanting examples similar to this; and as it is observed by many from Curtius (x), the walls of new Alexandria, which were sixty furlongs in length, or more than seven miles, were finished in seventeen days; if Nicephorus (y) is to be credited, the high walls which surrounded Constantinople, and were twenty miles in circumference, were finished in two months time. Josephus is not to be regarded, who, contrary to the Scriptures says (z), this wall of Jerusalem was two years and four months in building.

(x) Hist. l. 7. c. 6. Justin e Trogo, l. 12. c. 5. (y) Hist. l. 14. c. 1. (z) Antiqu. l. 11. c. 5. sect. 8.

#### **Nehemiah 6:16**

And it came to pass, that when all our enemies heard thereof,.... That the wall was finished:

and all the Heathen that were about us saw these things; the neighbouring nations, who not only heard with their ears, but saw with their eyes what was done:

they were much cast down in their own eyes; through shame and confusion, because of their own scoffs and jeers; through grief and vexation at the unexpected success of the Jews, and through the fear of them that was fallen upon them, as Jarchi notes:

for they perceived that this work was wrought of our God; his special providence and blessing attending it, as appeared by its being so soon effected.

Nehemiah 6:17

neh 6:17

Moreover, in those days,.... While the wall was building:

the nobles of Judah sent many letters to Tobiah, and the letters of Tobiah came unto them; letters passed between them frequently, they informing him how things went on at Jerusalem, and he advising them to what was detrimental to the true interest of their nation; such false friends had Nehemiah about him, and yet the work succeeded under him; which showed it the more to be of God.

Nehemiah 6:18

neh 6:18

For there were many in Judah sworn unto him,.... To Tobiah, who not only in a private manner corresponded with him by letters, but bound themselves by an oath to him to be true to his interest, and do as he should advise them:

because he was the son in law of Shechaniah, the son of Arah; of a family that came up with Zerubbabel from the captivity, Ezr 2:5 and very probably of considerable note:

and his son Johanan had taken the daughter of Meshullam the son of Berechiah; a very eminent person, concerned in building the wall, Neh 3:4.

Nehemiah 6:19

neh 6:19

Also they reported his good deeds before me,.... Recommended him as a very worthy man, deserving of respect and notice by Nehemiah, and to be taken into his friendship, and admitted to conversation with him, whose counsel and advice might be of service:

and uttered my words to him; reported both what he said and did; for the word used signifies both words and actions:

and Tobiah sent letters to put me in fear; perceiving, by the intelligence of his friends, that Nehemiah would have nothing to say to him, nor to do with him, he threatened him.

Next: Nehemiah Chapter 7

Nehemiah Chapter 7

Nehemiah

neh 7:0

INTRODUCTION TO NEHEMIAH 7

Nehemiah having built the wall, and set up the doors, appointed two persons to take the charge of the city, and set watches for the safety of it, and to take special care about opening and shutting the gates of it, Neh 7:1, and concerned he was for the peopling of it, and having found a register of the first comers to it, gives their names, Neh 7:4 and some account of the freewill offerings made for the work they came about, Neh 7:70.

Nehemiah 7:1



neh 7:1

Now it came to pass, when the wall was built, and I had set up the doors,.... Which was not done when Sanballat sent his first letter, but now was, Neh 6:1,

and the porters and the singers, and the Levites were appointed; not to attend the doors of the gates of the wall, but to return to their service in the temple, who had been employed in one thing or another, while the wall and gates were building and repairing; see Neh 3:17.

Nehemiah 7:2

neh 7:2

That I gave my brother Hanani,.... Who first brought him the melancholy account of the state of Jerusalem, Neh 1:2,

and Hananiah the ruler of the palace; the king's palace, in which the viceroy of the king of Persia dwelt, and now Nehemiah; to these two men he gave

charge over Jerusalem; committed it to their care during his absence, who may be supposed now to return to Persia, as he had promised, Neh 2:6,

for he was a faithful man; this is said of Hananiah, and given as a reason why such a trust was committed to him; Hanani's character was well known, and his journey from Jerusalem to Shushan was a full proof of his hearty concern for the interest of it:

and feared God above many; Hananiah was exemplary in his fear of God, few were equal to him, and none exceeded him; or of many days, as Jarchi; of a long time he had feared the Lord, and served him many years.

Nehemiah 7:3

neh 7:3

And I said unto them, let not the gates of Jerusalem be opened until the sun be hot,.... Or until the heat of the day, or near noon; at least not till the sun had been up some time, and shone out clearly, and caused much heat; that if any enemies were near, or lying in wait, they might be discovered, and the inhabitants also up and ready to defend themselves:

and while they stand by; according to Aben Ezra, Hanani and Hananiah were to be present at the opening and shutting of the gates, and so Grotius; but these being the chief rulers, it is not likely; but rather those whom they appointed to look after them, these were to stand by while their servants did it; they were not to leave it wholly to them, but to see it done themselves:

let them shut the doors, and bar them; or "lay hold" (a) on them, handle them to see whether they are shut fast or not:

and appoint watches of the inhabitants of Jerusalem, everyone in his watch, and everyone to be over against his house; no foreigners were to be of the watch, only inhabitants, and those everyone in their turn, and to be placed over against where they dwelt; and so it might be thought would be the more careful and diligent in their watch.

(a) "et tractate", Junius & Tremellius; "contrectate eas", Piscator.

**Nehemiah 7:4**

Now the city was large and great,.... The circumference of it, all within the wall; for that was built on its old foundation, and enclosed as much ground as ever it did: Hecataeus (b), an Heathen writer, says the circumference of Jerusalem was fifty furlongs, which was more than six miles; but Josephus (c) makes the circuit of it but thirty three furlongs or about six miles:

but the people were few therein; in comparison of the largeness of the place; for though there were 42,360 that came up at first with Zerubbabel, and many more with Ezra, yet a great number chose to settle in the towns and cities in the country, Jerusalem being in such a desolate condition:

and the houses were not builded; some were, but they were but few, many of them still lay in ruins.

(b) Apud Euseb. Praepar. par. Evangel. l. 9. c. 4. p. 408. & apud Joseph. contr. Apion, l. 1. c. 22. (c) De Bell. Jud. l. 5. c. 4. sect. 3.

**Nehemiah 7:5**

And my God put into mine heart,.... Every good motion in him, and whatever he thought of that was conducive to the good and welfare of Jerusalem, Nehemiah always ascribed it to God; see Co2 3:5

to gather together the nobles, and the rulers, and the people, that they might be reckoned by genealogy; that their number might be known, and of what families they were, and in what cities they formerly dwelt; and this was not only of use for the present purpose of Nehemiah, but was of service hereafter to show the pedigree of families, and that it might be clearly known from whence the Messiah sprung:

and I found a register of the genealogy of them which came up at the first; from Babylon to Jerusalem, along with Zerubbabel, as appears from Neh 7:7, and this was of great use to him, whereby he would know not only their names and number, but to what city they belonged, and who to the city of Jerusalem, that they might be called upon to come, and rebuild their houses, and take up their residence there:

and found written therein; the names of the persons and families after mentioned.

**Nehemiah 7:6**

These are the children of the province that went up out of the captivity,.... Who were of the province of Judea, as it was now reduced, and came up out of the captivity of Babylon through the edict of Cyrus; see Ezzr 2:1, where the same preface is given to the list of names as here; and from hence to the end of Neh 7:69 the same account is given of persons and families as there, with some little difference of numbers and names; in some instances there are more in this list, in others fewer, which may be thus accounted for; that list was made in Babylon, when, upon the edict of Cyrus, the Jews, who intended to go up with Zerubbabel, gave in their names, and they were registered; but this was made when they came to Jerusalem; now some of those that gave in their names changed their minds, and tarried in Babylon, and some might die by the way, which makes the numbers fewer in some instances; and others who did not give in their names at first, but, being better disposed towards their own country, followed after and joined those which were returning, and increased the number of others; to which may be added what Abendana observes, that in Ezra an account is given of those that came out of the captivity by the companies, in which they came not genealogized, and had a mixture of persons of other families in them, and some that had no genealogy; but afterwards, when they were genealogized according to their families, a register of their genealogies was made, and is what Nehemiah now found, and here gives; and, as for difference of names, that may be owing to the carelessness of copiers, or to the different pronunciation of names, or some men might have two names; the matter is of no great moment.

**Nehemiah 7:70**

And some of the chief of the fathers gave unto the work,.... Of building the city and the temple, and for that service, Ezr 2:68,

the Tirshatha gave to the treasure a thousand drachms of gold; each of which was one pound sterling, and so amounted to so many pounds: of these “dracmons”, or “darics”, a Persian coin, mention is made in Ezr 2:69, they were golden staters, or shekels and had their name as is said, not from Darius, the father of Xerxes, though it is certain, from Herodotus (d), that he coined golden money; but from some other king of the same name, more ancient (e), which must be Darius the Mede; and if they are the same with the Adarcon in Ezr 8:27 as they seem to be, then those in Ch1 29:7 were pieces of money not so called in the times of David, but of Ezra, the writer of that book: whether this Tirshatha was Zerubbabel, or Nehemiah, is not easy to say, since this donation is not the same with that in Ezra, not made at the same time nor are the gifts the same, nor the persons that gave them. Zerubbabel was Tirshatha when the Jews came out of Babylon, and Nehemiah now:

fifty basins; which were vessels, in the which the blood of the sacrifices was received and out of which it was sprinkled:

five hundred and thirty priests' garments; which were laid up in the wardrobe, and used on occasion.

(d) Melpomene, sive, l. 4. c. 166. (e) Scholiast. in Aristoph. Eccles. p. 741, 742. So Harpocraton. Lexic. in voce and Suidas on the same word.

#### **Nehemiah 7:71**

And some of the chief of the fathers gave to the treasure of the work,.... To be put into the treasure, out of which the expenses of the temple, and service of it were defrayed:

twenty thousand drachms of gold; which were so many pounds of our money, and somewhat more: for, according to Bishop Cumberland (f), a drachm of gold was of the value of twenty shillings and four pence: and 2200 pounds of silver; “the maneh”, or pound, with the Jews, was of the value of sixty shekels, Eze 45:12 and so is reckoned by our Brerewood (g) to be of our money seven pounds and ten shillings; he reckoning a shekel at half a crown, whereas it was little more than two shillings and four pence; and so sixty of them, or a “maneh”, came to about seven pounds; wherefore this sum here was seven times so many pounds of silver.

(f) Scripture Weights and Measures, ch. 4. p. 115. (g) De Ponder & Pret. Vet. Num. c. 4.

#### **Nehemiah 7:72**

And that which the rest of the people gave was twenty thousand drachms of gold,.... Worth as many pounds of our money, and somewhat more:

and two thousand pound of silver; of which See Gill on Neh 7:71,

and threescore and seven priests' garments; having been so long in Babylon, and no use of sacrifices, and so not of garments to minister in, no care was taken to provide any; which seems to be the reason why so many were given, when they returned to their own land, and sacrificed.

#### **Nehemiah 7:73**

So the priests and the Levites, and the porters, and the singers, and some of the people, and the Nethinims, and all Israel, dwelt in their cities,.... The same is said in Ezr 2:70; see Gill on Ezr 2:70,

and, when the seventh month came, the children of Israel were in their cities; the month Tisri, answering to part of September, in which month was the feast of tabernacles; at this time of the year they were in their cities

when they came forth out of Babylon, and so they were now; see Ezr 3:1.

## INTRODUCTION TO NEHEMIAH 8

### Chapter 8

Ezra being desired to bring forth the book of the law, read it to the people and others, expounded it to them, Neh 8:1 and Nehemiah exhorted the people to express joy and gladness on this occasion, which they did, Neh 8:9 and observing the feast of tabernacles was in the law commanded to be observed, they kept it very strictly and joyfully, Neh 8:13.

#### **Nehemiah 8:1**

And all the people gathered themselves together as one man into the street that was before the watergate,.... A large and commodious street for such a company of people, which led to the water gate, of which see Neh 3:26 hither the people gathered with great unanimity, zeal, and affection:

and they spoke unto Ezra the scribe; the same who is called Ezra the priest, and scribe of the law of God, and said to be a ready one, Ezr 7:6, who came to Jerusalem thirteen years before this time; but very probably returned to Babylon again, and was lately come from thence:

to bring the book of the law of Moses, which the Lord had commanded to Israel; to observe what was commanded in it, and which he had ordered to be read, particularly every seventh year, at the feast of tabernacles, Deu 31:10 which was now drawing near, though this was not the precise time of reading it; hence some have thought this year was the sabbatical year; see Neh 5:11.

#### **Nehemiah 8:2**

And Ezra the priest brought the law before the congregation,.... Having a perfect copy of it, which the people knew, and therefore desired him to bring it; he brought it either out of his own case or chest, or out of the temple where it was laid up; some restrain this to the book of Deuteronomy; this he produced in sight of the whole assembly:

both of men and women; adult persons of each sex, who met promiscuously; though Grotius thinks the women had a separate place:

and all that could hear with understanding; all under age, who yet were capable of hearing the law read to some advantage to them:

upon the first day of the seventh month; the month Tisri, answering to part of September and October; this was a high day, for not only the first of every month was a festival, but the first of the seventh month was the feast of blowing of trumpets, Lev 23:24, and besides, this was New Year's day, the first day of their civil year, as the first of Nisan was of their ecclesiastical year, and was of greater antiquity than that; and so Jarchi says, this was the first day of the year; to which may be added, that this was the day on which the altar was first set up, on the Jews' return from captivity, Ezr 3:6.

#### **Nehemiah 8:3**

And he read therein,.... Some passages in it, here and there, which it was necessary the people should have knowledge of; for it can hardly be thought he began and read on just in the order in which it was: this he did

before the street; at the top of it, at one end of it:

that was before the water gate; which looked directly to that:

from the morning until midday; from the rising of the sun to noon, so that he must read six hours; but very probably was relieved at times by the men with him, after mentioned:

before the men and the women, and those that could understand; see Neh 8:2,

and the ears of all the people were attentive unto the book of the law; to the hearing of it read, and to the things contained in it; hence Maimonides (h) gathers, that as soon as the reader begins the reading of the law, it is not lawful to speak about anything, not even the constitutions of the law, but silently to attend to what is read.

(h) Hilchot Tephillah, c. 12. sect. 9.

#### **Nehemiah 8:4**

And Ezra the scribe stood upon a pulpit of wood, which they had made for the purpose,.... Or to speak out of, as the Syriac and Arabic versions; this, in the Hebrew text, is called a “tower” (i), partly because of its height, and partly because in the form of one; and also for its largeness, considering the use it was for; for it was so large as to hold fourteen men, as appears by what follows: a pulpit of wood was made for the king in the court, to read the law from (k); though, according to Jacob Leo, it was a throne like an high tower; see Gill on Kg2 11:14, the pulpits, in the Jewish synagogues, made after the same manner, as Aben Ezra observes, are called by the same (l) name:

and beside him stood Mattithiah, and Shema, and Anaiah; and Urijah, and Hilkiah, and Maaseiah, on his right hand; and on his left hand, Pedaiah, and Mishael, and Malchiah, and Hashum, and Hashbadana, Zechariah, and Meshullam; in all thirteen; there were six on his right, and seven on his left, who stood here, not merely in honour to him, and as approvers and supporters of the truth of what he read, but to relieve him when weary.

(i) “super turrem ligni”, Montanus; so Dionysius is said, “concionari ex turri alta”, Ciceron. Tuscul. Quaest. 1. 5. (k) Schulchan Aruch, par. 1. c. 141. sect. 7. (l) Misn. Sotah, c. 7. sect. 8.

#### **Nehemiah 8:5**

And Ezra opened the book in the sight of all the people (for he was above all the people),.... So plainly seen by them, and what he did, and the more easily heard, for which purpose the pulpit was made for him to stand in:

and, when he opened it, all the people stood up; that they might the better hear the law read, as well as in honour and reverence of it; the Jews say (m), that from the times of Moses to Rabban Gamaliel, they learned the law only standing; but after his death a disease came into the world, and they learned it sitting; and now it is a canon with them, that it is not necessary to stand at the reading of the law (n).

(m) T. Bab. Megillah, fol. 21. 1. (n) Schulchan Aruch, par. 1. Orach Chayim, c. 146. sect. 4.

#### **Nehemiah 8:6**

And Ezra blessed the Lord, the great God,.... Before he began to read in the book of the law, he addressed himself to God in a short prayer, wholly in the benedictory way; ascribing blessing, honour, and glory to him, celebrating his being and perfections, setting forth his greatness and his excellency, who was the author and giver of the law he was about to read; and this he the rather did, that what he read might be the more carefully attended to, and come with the greater authority, weight, and influence on those that heard it; and so, Maimonides (o) says, it is the custom with the Jews, in their synagogues, for the reader, after he has opened the book, and looked out the place he reads, to say this blessing, “Blessed art thou, O Lord our God, King of the world, who hath chosen us out of all people, and hath given us his law; blessed art thou, O Lord, who hast given us the law; and all the people answer, Amen;” as they now did, as follows:

and all the people answered, Amen, Amen: repeating the word, to declare their hearty assent to what Ezra had expressed; the Jews have many rules concerning pronouncing the “Amen”, that it must not be too quick, curt, and short, nor with too high a voice (p):

with lifting up their hands; a prayer gesture, to which the apostle refers, Ti1 2:8,

and they bowed their heads, and worshipped the Lord with their faces to the ground; expressing hereby the awful sense they had of the Divine Being, and their profound adoration of him.

(o) Hilchot Tephillah, c. 12. sect. 5. (p) Schulchan Aruch, ut supra, (par. 1.) c. 124. sect. 12.

### **Nehemiah 8:7**

Also Jeshua, and Bani, and Sherebiah, Jamin, Akkub, Shabbethai, Hodijah, Maaseiah, Kelita, Azariah, Jozabad, Hanan, Pelaiiah, and the Levites,.... That is, others of them besides those named; for they seem all to be Levites, unless they can be thought to be priests, and so the Levites are distinguished from them; but the former seems evident from Neh 9:4 these also

caused the people to understand the law; as well as Ezra; from whence it is plain that he did not only read the law, but gave the sense of it, especially where there was any seeming difficulty, and these men were assisting in the same work: and the people stood in their place; to hear the law read and explained; they did not move from their first station, but continued in it from morning to noon; they were both attentive and constant.

### **Nehemiah 8:8**

So they read in the book,.... Ezra and those with him; he first began to read and expound, and when weary they relieved him, and did the same:

in the law of God distinctly; which was the book they read in, and which they read plainly and intelligibly, so as to be heard and understood; this seems to respect the clear and distinct pronunciation of the words of it, and not the explanation or meaning of it, which is after expressed; some think the sense is, that they first read it in Hebrew, and then translated it into Chaldee, that the people might better understand it, being just come out of Babylon, where they had been used to the Chaldee language; but though this was a practice in later times, it does not seem to have obtained so early, or that there was a necessity of it:

and gave the sense, and caused them to understand the reading; not hereby how to read it, but chiefly to understand what was read, that they might clearly know their duty to God and men: the Talmudists (q) give the meaning of the text thus; “by the law of God” they understand the Scripture; by the phrase “distinctly”, the Targum or translation of it into Chaldee; by “the sense”, the verses or the accents; and by “the reading”, the distinction of the accents: some think from hence came the practice of reading the law in the synagogues every sabbath day, Act 13:15.

(q) T. Bab. Nedarim, fol. 37. 2. & Megillah, fol. 3. 1. & Hieros. Megillah, fol. 74. 4.

### **Nehemiah 8:9**

And Nehemiah which is the Tirshatha,.... Or governor, as Zerubbabel had been, and now Nehemiah, see Ezr 2:63

and Ezra the priest and scribe; see Neh 8:1,

and the Levites that taught the people; see Neh 8:7

said unto all the people, this day is holy unto the Lord your God; being both the new moon and the feast of blowing of trumpets:

mourn not, nor weep; which was unsuitable to a festival, and especially such an one as this, in which trumpets were to be blown, and gladness to be shown, Num 10:10

for all the people wept when they heard the words of the law; perceiving they had not kept it, but had broke it in many instances, and so liable to the wrath and judgment of God in case of disobedience.

### **Nehemiah 8:10**

Then he said unto them,.... Nehemiah the Tirshatha or governor:

go your way; to their own houses, and refresh themselves; it being noon, and they had stood many hours attentive to the reading and expounding of the law:

eat the fat, and drink the sweet: not a common meal, but a feast, consisting of the richest provisions, the best of food and liquors

and send portions unto them for whom nothing is prepared; for the poor, who had no food at home provided for them; the widow, fatherless, and stranger, who at festivals were to partake of the entertainment, Deu 16:11

for this day is holy unto our Lord: neither be you sorry; confirming what the Levites had said and exhorted to, Neh 8:9

for the joy of the Lord is your strength; to rejoice, as the Lord commanded them on such days as these, was a means both of increasing their bodily strength and their inward strength, and of fitting them the more to perform their duty to God and men with cheerfulness, which sorrow and heaviness made unfit for; and the joy which has the Lord for its object, and comes from him, is the cause of renewing spiritual strength, so as to run and not be weary, walk and not faint, in the ways of God.

### **Nehemiah 8:11**

So the Levites stilled all the people,.... Made them quiet and easy, being backed by the governor:

saying, hold your peace; refrain from weeping and mourning:

for the day is holy; a festival, set apart for joy and gladness:

neither be ye grieved; inwardly; as they were not to show any signs of sorrow outwardly, so they were not to cherish grief inwardly.

Nehemiah 8:12

neh 8:12

And all the people went their way to eat and to drink,.... Freely and cheerfully:

and to send portions; to the poor, who had nothing to eat and drink:

and to make great mirth; with music, vocal and instrumental:

because they had understood the words that were declared unto them; the meaning of the several laws read

and explained unto them, whereby they better understood their duty, and in what instances and in what manner it was to be performed; how much more reason is there for joy and gladness, when the Gospel, and the doctrines of it, are clearly known and understood? Psa 89:15.

Nehemiah 8:13

neh 8:13

And on the second day were gathered together,.... The second day of the month, and of the new year, the day after the feast of blowing of trumpets, and after the law had been read and explained:

the chief of the fathers of all the people: heads of tribes and families: the priests and the Levites; who, though they were instructors of others, needed to be taught themselves, of which they were sensible: and therefore came

unto Ezra the scribe, even to understand the words of the law; some things in it, which, upon reading the day before, they observed had some difficulty in them, and which they did not clearly and thoroughly understand; and therefore applied to Ezra, a ready scribe in the law, for better information, and that they might be better able to teach the people; which was highly commendable in them.

Nehemiah 8:14

neh 8:14

And they found written in the law which the Lord had commanded by Moses,.... The children of Israel, to be observed by them; either by hearing it read the day before, or by conversation with Ezra, they perceived it was enjoined in the law, particularly in Lev 23:39

that the children of Israel should dwell in booths, in the feast of the seventh month: which was the same month, and this the second day of it, and therefore the time drew near for keeping it; for it was to begin the fifteenth.

Nehemiah 8:15

neh 8:15

And that they should publish and proclaim in all their cities, and in Jerusalem,.... That is, as Jarchi interprets it, by supplying it thus:

and they commanded that they should publish, &c. Ezra and those with him gave orders that heralds should proclaim in all cities where the Jews dwelt that the feast of tabernacles would be kept, and they should prepare for it; and which seems to be the true sense, since it is not written in the law that such a proclamation should be made; but this was an order of their own, thereby to give notice of it, that all might be provided:

go forth unto the mount, and fetch olive branches, and pine branches, and myrtle branches, and palm branches, and branches of thick trees, to make booths, as it is written; in Lev 23:40, where the first three of these seem to be called boughs of goodly trees; though the Jews (r) commonly understand them of pomecitrons, of which the Syriac version here interprets the myrtle branches; and by them are meant the citron branches, with the leaves and fruit, and which the Jews make absolutely necessary to the keeping of the feast, and for beautiful ones will give a large price; some of them go every year to Spain, and buy as many as they can, and dispose of them wherever Jews live (s): and those branches were to be fetched, not properly speaking to make the booths of, which were made of boards and planks, but for the decoration of them; and it was not necessary, according to Aben Ezra, that some of each of these should be gathered for that purpose, but of any sort of them; for he



interprets the words disjunctively olive branches, or pine branches, or myrtle branches, &c. these, according to the common notion of the Jews, were tied up in little bundles, and carried in the hand, which they call “lulabs”; and they observe (t), the thick branches were for them, which included the rest; now these they were to fetch from the mount of Olives, and other mountains about Jerusalem; near to which also there was a place called Motza (u); whither they went, and gathered the willows of the brook mentioned in Lev 23:39.

(r) T. Bab. Succah, fol. 35. 1. (s) Buxtorf. Synagog. Jud. c. 21. p. 454. (t) Succah, fol. 12. 1. (u) Misn. Saccah, c. 4. sect. 5.

### **Nehemiah 8:16**

So the people went forth, and brought them,.... Went out of Jerusalem to the mountains adjacent, and fetched in branches of the said trees, one or another:

and made themselves booths, everyone upon the roof of his house; which were flat, Deu 22:8, and they might be made anywhere, so be it they were open to the air:

and in their courts, and in the courts of the house of God; the common people in the courtyards belonging to their houses, and the priests and Levites in the courts of the temple, the yards or open places adjoining to them:

and in the street of the watergate; which led to that, and seems to have been a very large street, in which many booths might be built, Neh 3:26

and in the street of the gate of Ephraim; which led to the gate through which the road lay to the tribe of Ephraim, see Kg2 14:13, none were erected without the walls of the city, for fear of the enemy.

### **Nehemiah 8:17**

And all the congregation of them that were come again out of captivity made booths,.... These came to Jerusalem, and made them booths there; for there only was this feast kept, see Joh 7:2,

and sat under the booths; there they dwelt during the seven days of it, in commemoration of their ancestors dwelling in booths in the wilderness, see Lev 23:42

for since the days of Jeshua the son of Nun unto that day had not the children of Israel done so; Joshua observed it, when he had brought and settled the people of Israel in the land of Canaan; and it had been observed since, before this time, as appears from Kg1 8:2 Ezr 3:4; but not so, with such exactness, with such zeal and affection, with such a regard to the law of God, as to read it every day of the feast, as in the next verse, and with such joy and gladness; wherefore there is no reason to suspect a corruption in the text, as a learned man (w) does, who supposes that Joshua is put for Josiah:

and there was very great gladness; that they were restored unto and settled in their land, had the book of the law, and the knowledge of it, and were directed and enabled to observe it.

(w) Delancy’s Life of King David, vol. 1. p. 395. marg.

### **Nehemiah 8:18**

Also day by day, from the first day unto the last day, he read in the book of the law of God,.... That is, Ezra; this was done by him every day during the feast, whereas only the first and last days were the holy convocations on which it seems to have been read:

and they kept the feast seven days, and on the eighth day was a solemn assembly, according to the manner;

## INTRODUCTION TO NEHEMIAH 9

### Chapter 9

In this chapter we have an account of a fast kept by the Jews, which was observed, as by outward acts of humiliation, so by confession of sin, reading the law, and worshipping the Lord, Neh 9:1 and of a long prayer that the Levites made, in which they celebrate the divine perfections, take notice of various instances of the goodness of God to the people of Israel, acknowledge their manifold transgressions, observe the Lord's correction of them for them, in which they own he was righteous, Neh 9:4.

#### **Nehemiah 9:1**

Now in the twenty fourth day of this month,.... The seventh month, the month Tisri or September, two days after the feast of tabernacles was ended:

the children of Israel were assembled with fasting, and with sackclothes, and earth upon them; which were all outward tokens of mourning and humiliation, see Joe 1:8 which they could not show during the festival; but that being over, they return to it, see Neh 8:9.

#### **Nehemiah 9:2**

And the seed of Israel separated themselves from all strangers,.... Such as were genuine Israelites, of the seed of Abraham, who had married wives of the Gentiles, strangers to the commonwealth of Israel, either before the reformation by Ezra, not being then discovered, or had fallen into this evil since; but now, on the reading of the law, were convinced of it, and so separated themselves from such wives, which was a proof of the truth of their repentance:

and stood and confessed their sins, and the iniquities of their fathers: particularly their taking of strange wives, which their fathers had also done, and set them a bad example, which they had followed; of standing and confessing, see Luk 18:13.

#### **Nehemiah 9:3**

And they stood up in their place,.... In the outward court of the temple, where men used to stand when they prayed and confessed their sins: and read in the book of the law of the Lord their God; that they might the better know the mind and will of God, and do their duty: this they did

one fourth part of the day; the space of three hours, from sun rising, or six o'clock in the morning, to the time of the morning sacrifice, which was about nine o'clock:

and another fourth part they confessed; the goodness of God to them, and the sins they had been guilty of:

and worshipped the Lord their God; bowed down before him in prayer and supplication, and so spent three hours more, which reached to noon or twelve o'clock; and from thence to three o'clock, about the time of the evening sacrifice, and from thence to sun setting, or six o'clock, and so spent the whole day in the above exercises alternately.

#### **Nehemiah 9:4**

Then stood up upon the stairs of the Levites,.... On an ascent; an elevated place where the Levites used to stand when they sang at the time of sacrifice, and where they might be seen and heard by the people:

Jeshua and Bani, Kadmiel, Shebaniah, Bunni, Sherebiah, Bani, and Chenani; who seem to be all Levites, see

Neh 8:7,

and cried with a loud voice unto the Lord their God; praying with great fervency, and making bitter lamentation for the sins of the people and their own.

**Nehemiah 9:5**

Then the Levites, Jeshua,.... Or, then the Levites, even Jeshua:

and Kadmiel, Bani, Hashabniah, Sherebiah, Hodijah, Shebaniah, and Pethahiah; the same as before, with a little variation of their names, and perhaps some of them might have two names:

and said; to the men that stood and confessed their sins, Neh 9:2

stand up; for though they are before said to stand, yet, through shame and confusion of face, and awe of the Divine Majesty, might be fallen on their faces to the ground:

and bless the Lord your God for ever and ever; for all the great and good things he had done for them, notwithstanding their sins; and particularly for his pardoning grace and mercy they had reason to hope for:

and blessed be thy glorious name, which is exalted above all blessing and praise: the glory of which name, nature, and perfections of his, cannot be set forth by the highest praises of men, and the largest ascriptions of blessing and honour to him.

**Nehemiah 9:6**

Thou, even thou art Lord alone,.... Whose name alone is Jehovah, the one only true and living God:

thou hast made heaven, the heaven of heavens, with all their host; the airy and starry heavens, and the sun, moon, and stars in them, and the third heaven, the seat of God, angels, and saints:

the earth, and all things that are therein; men, beasts, trees, metals, minerals, &c.

the seas, and all that is therein; fishes, sea plants, &c. see Act 4:24,

and thou preservest them all; they consist in thee, and are upheld in their being by thee, Heb 1:3

and the host of heaven worshipped thee; not the sun, moon, and stars, only in their way, Psa 148:2 but the angels chiefly, Heb 1:6.

**Nehemiah 9:7**

Thou art the Lord the God, who didst choose Abram,.... From among the Chaldeans, and out of his father's family:

and broughtest him forth out of Ur of the Chaldees; by calling him from thence, of which see Gen 11:28, to which may be added what Amama (x) on that place observes; that some think that the sacred fire, which the Chaldeans worshipped, was kept in this city, from whence it was called Ur, that being worshipped by them and by the Assyrians under the name of Ur (y):

and gavest him the name of Abraham; which was changed when the covenant of circumcision was given him, Gen 17:5.

**Nehemiah 9:8**

And foundest his heart faithful before thee,.... A true believer in his word and promises, Gen 15:6 and closely attached to the fear of him, and observance of his commands, as abundantly appeared in the trial of him, in offering up his son, Gen 22:1,

and madest a covenant with him, to give the land of the Canaanites, the Hittites, the Amorites, and the Perizzites, and the Jebusites, and the Girgashites, to give it, I say, to his seed; not to him personally, but to his posterity, at least including and chiefly designing them; of which covenant see Gen 15:18,

and hast performed thy words, for thou art righteous; in all his ways and works, faithful to his promise, a covenant keeping God, and who kept and fulfilled this covenant, assisting Joshua to conquer the land of Canaan, and put Israel into the possession of it.

**Nehemiah 9:9**

And didst see the affliction of our fathers in Egypt,.... The hard bondage in which their lives were made bitter; and was not a mere spectator of it, but looked upon them in it with pity and compassion, and sent them a deliverer, Exo 2:23

and heardest their cry by the Red sea; which was before them, and the rocks on both sides of them, and the host of Pharaoh behind, pressing upon them, when he heard them, and wrought salvation for them, Exo 14:10.

**Nehemiah 9:10**

And shewedst signs and wonders upon Pharaoh, and on all his servants, and on all the people of his land,.... By inflicting the ten plagues upon them:

for thou knowest that they dealt proudly against them; behaved haughtily to them, and despised them, see Exo 18:11

so didst thou get thee a name, as it is this day; displayed his power on Pharaoh, and his goodness to Israel, the fame of which reached all over the world, and continued to that day, see Exo 9:16.

**Nehemiah 9:11**

And thou didst divide the sea before them, so that they went through the midst of the sea on dry land,.... That is, the Israelites, see Exo 14:21,

and their persecutors thou threwest into the deeps; with great ease, and with indignation, meaning the Egyptians, that pursued hotly after them, and were thrown into the sea:

as a stone into the mighty waters; where they sunk and perished, see Exo 15:4.

**Nehemiah 9:12**

Moreover, thou leddest them in the day by a cloudy pillar,.... The Israelites, to shelter them from the heat of the sun in a dry and barren wilderness:

and in the night by a pillar of fire, to give them light in the way wherein they should go; through a trackless desert, see Exo 13:21.

**Nehemiah 9:13**

Thou camest down also upon Mount Sinai,.... By some visible tokens of his presence, as a cloud, fire, smoke, &c. which must be understood consistent with his omniscience, see Exo 19:18,

and spakest with them from heaven; the decalogue or ten commandments, Exo 20:1,

and gavest them right judgments and true laws, good statutes and commandments; both judicial and ceremonial, which were of excellent use to them in their civil and ecclesiastical polity; these were not spoken to Israel, but given to Moses on the mount, to be delivered to them.

#### **Nehemiah 9:14**

And madest known unto them thy holy sabbath,.... Which was not made known to others, and was peculiar to the Jewish nation, and a privilege granted to them, to have rest corporeal and spiritual, typical of the rest in Christ:

and commandedst them precepts, statutes, and laws, by the hand of Moses thy servant; moral, ceremonial, and judicial, such as other nations had not, Deu 4:8.

#### **Nehemiah 9:15**

And gavest them bread from heaven for their hunger,.... To satisfy that, meaning the manna, Exo 16:3

and broughtest forth water for them out of the rock, for their thirst; to quench it; this was done both quickly after they came out of the land of Egypt, and a little before their entrance into the land of Canaan, see Exo 17:6

and promisedst them that they should go in to possess the land which thou hadst sworn to give them; which oath was made to them and to their fathers also, see Num 14:30.

#### **Nehemiah 9:16**

But they and our fathers dealt proudly,.... Behaved in a haughty manner towards God, their kind benefactor:

and hardened their necks; refused to take the yoke of his law, as refractory oxen, that withdraw their necks from the yoke:

and hearkened not to thy commandments; to do them, though they promised they would, Exo 24:7.

#### **Nehemiah 9:17**

And refused to obey,.... Though exhorted, admonished, and threatened, such was their obstinacy:

neither were mindful of thy wonders that thou didst among them; in delivering them at the Red sea, in raining manna about them, and giving them water out of the rock:

but hardened their necks; see the preceding verse:

and in their rebellion appointed a captain to return to their bondage; they not only proposed it, but determined upon it, which is reckoned the same as if they had done it, see Num 14:4,

but thou art a God ready to pardon, gracious and merciful, slow to anger, and of great kindness; as he had proclaimed his name before Moses, and as the whole of his conduct towards the people of Israel abundantly shewed, see Exo 34:6

and forsookest them not; when in the wilderness, where otherwise they must have perished, but still fed and

protected them, notwithstanding their provocations.

**Nehemiah 9:18**

Yea, when they had made them a molten calf,.... In imitation of the Apis, or ox of the Egyptians:

and said, this is thy god that brought thee out of Egypt; or the image of thy god, as the Arabic version, see Exo 32:4,

and had wrought great provocations; of all which nothing was greater than idolatry.

**Nehemiah 9:19**

Yet thou in thy manifold mercies forsookest them not in the wilderness,.... Where no supply could be had, if he had cast them off, see Neh 9:17,

the pillar of the cloud departed not from them by day, to lead them in the way; which, if it had, they would have been scorched by the heat of the sun:

neither the pillar of fire by night, to show them light, and the way wherein they should go; or otherwise they would have lost their way, and not have known which way to have gone.

**Nehemiah 9:20**

Thou gavest also thy good spirit to instruct them,.... In the knowledge of the laws delivered to them; the spirit of prophecy, according to Ben Melech, and which Aben Ezra interprets of the spirit put upon the seventy elders, Num 11:17,

and withheldest not thy manna from their mouth; all the while they were in the wilderness, until they came to Canaan's land; called the Lord's manna, because prepared by him, and given by him to them; a part or portion and gift from the Lord, as Ben Melech, from whence it had its name, see Exo 16:15

and gavest them water for their thirst; which seems to have respect to the last rock stricken for them, after their many provocations in the wilderness, Num 20:11.

**Nehemiah 9:21**

Yea, forty years didst thou sustain them in the wilderness, so that they lacked nothing,.... As not for food, so neither for raiment, as follows:

their clothes waxed not old, and their feet swelled not; of which see Deu 8:4.

**Nehemiah 9:22**

Moreover, thou gavest them kingdoms and nations,.... The two kingdoms of Sihon and Og, and the seven nations of Canaan:

and didst divide them into corners; or "corner"; into every corner of the land of Canaan, so that they possessed the whole of it, a few cities excepted; Jarchi interprets it of one corner, that they might not be mixed with the people of the land, but be all together in one place; but Aben Ezra understands it of the Canaanites, of their being divided and scattered into corners, when they fled from the Israelites; but the former sense seems best:

so they possessed the land of Sihon, and the land of the king of Heshbon; or "eren", or "namely" (z), "the land of the king of Heshbon"; for Sihon was king of Heshbon, and so the land the same:

and the land of Og king of Bashan; those lands both lay on the other side Jordan, and were possessed by the tribes of Reuben and Gad, and the half tribe of Manasseh.

(z) So Piscator, Patrick, Rambachius.

### **Nehemiah 9:23**

Their children also multipliedst thou as the stars of heaven,.... Fulfilling the promise made to Abraham, Gen 15:5 their number when they came out of Egypt, and just before they entered into the land of Canaan, being upwards of 600,000 men, besides women and children, Exo 12:37

and broughtest them into the land, concerning which thou hadst promised to their fathers, that they should go in to possess it; the land of Canaan, promised to Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, and their seed, into which the Lord brought them by Joshua; he was the instrument, but the thing was of God.

### **Nehemiah 9:24**

So the children went in and possessed the land,.... Not the fathers of the Israelites that came out of Egypt, they died in the wilderness, all excepting two, but their children, which seems to be the reason of this manner of expression, see Num 14:30

and thou subduedst before them the inhabitants of the land, the Canaanites; by means of Joshua, the general of the armies of Israel; there is an elegant paronomasia in the word for “subdue”, and the Canaanites, which cannot be expressed in our language:

and gavest them into their hands, with their kings, and the people of the land, that they might do with them as they would; no less than thirty one kings, see Jos 12:9.

### **Nehemiah 9:25**

And they took strong cities,.... Such as, in an hyperbolical way, are said to be walled up to heaven, Deu 1:28

and a fat land; of a good and fruitful soil, abounding with all good things, Deu 8:7

and possessed houses full of all goods; ready built and furnished for them, both with good provisions and good furniture:

wells digged; to supply them with water:

vineyards, and olive yards, and fruit trees in abundance; which they planted not:

and they did eat, and were filled, and became fat; in body, though in mind became wanton and wicked; they made their hearts fat, or stupid, as Aben Ezra interprets it, see Deu 32:15

and delighted themselves in thy great goodness; not in praising the Lord for it, and using it to his honour and glory, but indulged themselves to luxury and intemperance; though it may be understood of a lawful pleasure in the enjoyment of the great affluence they were brought into, which last agrees with what follows.

### **Nehemiah 9:26**

Nevertheless, they were disobedient, and rebelled against thee,.... Notwithstanding all these favours and mercies bestowed upon them, which was great ingratitude:

and cast thy law behind their backs; as of no account, and unworthy of their regard; that which they should have had continually before their eyes, as the rule and guide of their actions, they cast behind them, not caring to look into it, and read it:

and slew thy prophets, which testified against them to turn them to thee; the prophets that bore a testimony against their sins, admonished them of them, called heaven and earth to record against them should they continue in them, and all to turn them from them by repentance to the Lord; those they were so wroth with on this account as to slay them, see Mat 23:37,

and they wrought great provocations; serving Baalim and Ashtaroth, and other gods of the nations, than which nothing was more provoking to the Lord.

#### **Nehemiah 9:27**

Therefore thou deliveredst them into the hand of their enemies, who vexed them,.... As the kings of Mesopotamia, Moab, Canaan, and others:

and in the time of their trouble, when they cried unto thee; as they usually did, Jdg 3:9,

thou heardest them from heaven; and according to thy manifold mercies thou gavest them saviours, who saved them out of the hands of their enemies; such were judges, Othniel, Ehud, Barak, Gideon, &c. and this was, done for them, not on account of their merits, but the abundant unmerited mercy of the Lord towards them.

#### **Nehemiah 9:28**

But after they had rest,.... From their enemies, enjoyed their liberty, and were in prosperity:

they did evil again before thee; relapsed into idolatry:

therefore leftest thou them in the hand of their enemies, so that they had the dominion over them; as the Philistines had for the space of forty years, Jdg 13:1,

yet when they returned and cried unto thee, thou heardest them from heaven, and many times didst thou deliver them, according to thy mercies; this was their case frequently in the times of the judges; they sinned and fell into the hands of their enemies, then they repented, and cried to God for help, and he had compassion upon them, and saved them.

#### **Nehemiah 9:29**

And testifiedst against them,.... By sending prophets to them, to admonish them of their sins, and remind them of their duty:

that thou mightest bring them again unto thy law; to regard it, and walk according it:

yet they dealt proudly; with an haughty air rejected the counsel of God:

and hearkened not unto thy commandments; yielded not obedience to them:

but sinned against thy judgments; transgressed his laws, which were so just, righteous, reasonable, and equitable:

which if a man do, he shall live in them; or by them, in the land of Canaan, see Lev 18:5,



and withdrew the shoulder, and hardened their neck, and would not hear; like oxen, that wriggle and struggle, and draw back, and will not admit the yoke upon them.

### **Nehemiah 9:30**

Yet many years didst thou forbear them,.... Throughout the reigns of several kings, such was God's longsuffering towards them: or, "thou didst draw upon them"; that is, his mercy, as Jarchi interprets it; he drew it out of his heart, and prolonged it towards them:

and testifiedst against them by thy Spirit in thy prophets; who reprov'd and admonish'd them, as they were moved by the Holy Spirit of God in them, who spoke in his name, and what he suggested to them:

yet they would not give ear; to what the prophets said, and the Spirit of God in them:

therefore gavest thou them into the hand of the people of the lands: people that were lords of many countries, as the Assyrians and Chaldeans.

### **Nehemiah 9:31**

Nevertheless, for thy great mercies' sake, For the displaying of that, and the glorifying of it, which is so large and exceeding abundant:

thou didst not utterly consume them, nor forsake them; some were left in the land, and those that were carried captive found favour in the eyes of those that carried them away, and were suffered to live, and many of them now had returned to their own land:

for thou art a gracious and merciful God; of which they had abundant proof and evidence.

### **Nehemiah 9:32**

Now therefore, our God, the great, the mighty, and the terrible God, who keepest covenant and mercy,.... The same titles Nehemiah gives to the Lord, Neh 1:5 and it may be reasonably thought the whole prayer is his composure, which was delivered by him to the Levites:

let not all the trouble seem little before thee; as if it was not enough; let it be judged sufficient, and no more be added, but mercy shown; Aben Ezra thinks the word "little" is not to be connected with "trouble", but with the nearest antecedent "mercy", and so Gussetius (z); as if the sense was, let not thy mercy be small with thee, but let it be largely extended along with all the trouble, or at the time when trouble of every kind

comes upon us, on our kings, on our princes, and on our priests, and on our prophets, and on our fathers, and on all thy people, since the times of the kings of Assyria unto this day; but this sense is not clear, and makes it have respect to times to come; whereas it relates to time past, and to all the trouble and affliction they had met with from the Assyrian kings, from the time they invaded their land, and carried them captive, until this very time.

(z) Ebr. Comment. p. 937.

### **Nehemiah 9:33**

Howbeit, thou art just in all that is brought upon us,.... They own the justice of God, could not complain of any wrong done them; and had he shown them no mercy at all, it was but what they deserved:

for thou hast done right, but we have done wickedly; he had done according to the truth of his word of promise, he had faithfully kept it, but they had transgressed his righteous law.

**Nehemiah 9:34**

Neither have our kings, our princes, our priests, nor our fathers, kept thy law,.... All ranks of men, from the highest to the lowest, had shown no regard, nor yielded obedience to the holy law of God:

nor hearkened unto thy commandments, and thy testimonies, wherewith thou didst testify against them; moral and ceremonial, which were a testification of the will of God to them, and a testimony against them if they observed them not.

**Nehemiah 9:35**

For they have not served thee in their kingdom,.... When in it, whether of Israel or of Judah, and when in the most flourishing circumstances:

and in thy great goodness that thou gavest them; amidst all the prosperity and affluence of good things they enjoyed, which was an obligation upon them to serve the Lord:

and in the large and fat land which thou gavest before them; the land of Canaan, a land flowing with milk, which lay open for them, their enemies being driven out before them, see Neh 9:25,

neither turned they from their wicked works; their idolatries more especially.

**Nehemiah 9:36**

Behold, we are servants this day,.... For though they had leave to return to their land, and rebuild their city and temple, yet they were still in subjection to the kings of Persia:

and for the land thou gavest unto our fathers, to eat the fruit thereof, and the good thereof, behold, we are servants in it; though the rightful owners and proprietors of it by the gift of God to their ancestors, to hold it and enjoy the good of it, and yet were obliged to pay tribute for it to the kings of Persia, all excepting priests and Levites; see Ezr 6:8.

**Nehemiah 9:37**

And it yieldeth much increase unto the kings whom thou hast set over us, because of our sins,.... Though a very fruitful land, and brought forth much, yet not for them, but for foreign kings, that had the sovereignty over them, and enacted much toll, tribute, and custom from them, which greatly lessened the profit of the earth to them:

also they have dominion over our bodies; and could oblige them to work for them, and do any service they should command:

and over our cattle, at their pleasure; to carry burdens for them, or ride post with them:

and we are in great distress; being servants and tributaries to a foreign power.

**Nehemiah 9:38**

And because of all this,.... Of all this distress, and that it might be removed, and be clear of it; or “in all this distress and evil”, as Jarchi and Aben Ezra, in the midst of it all:

we make a sure covenant; or faithfully promise to observe the law of God, and particularly put away strange wives, and not intermarry with the people of the land:

and write it; that it may remain and be a testimony against them should they break it, being their own handwriting:

and our princes, Levites, and priests, seal unto it; as witnesses of it, and thereby binding themselves to observe the same things; their names that sealed are given in the next chapter.

## **INTRODUCTION TO NEHEMIAH 10**

### **Chapter 10**

In this chapter we have the names of the persons that signed and sealed the covenant mentioned in the last chapter, Neh 10:1, and the things they agreed unto and promised to perform; in general to observe the law of God, in particular not to marry with the people of the land, to keep the sabbaths weekly and yearly, to pay annually the third part of the shekel for the service of the temple, to bring into it the wood offerings, first fruits, firstborn, and tithes, Neh 10:28.

### **Nehemiah 10:1**

Now those that sealed were,.... That sealed the covenant, made Neh 9:38.

Nehemiah the Tirshatha, the son of Hachaliah; the governor of the Jews:

and Zidkijah; who seems also to have been a prince, since, without, it could not be said it was sealed by their princes, Neh 9:38 though some think both these were priests, and then the princes must be supposed to be among the chief of the people, Neh 10:14, from hence to the end of the twenty seventh their names follow; the names of the priests, Neh 10:2, who were in all twenty one; no mention is made either of Eliashib the high priest, nor of Ezra the priest and scribe; some think the former had not behaved well in his office, and that the latter was either sick, or returned to Babylon, or however hindered by some providence or another, since we hear of him both a little before and after, Neh 8:2 then the names of the Levites, Neh 10:9, in all seventeen, most of which we have met with in this book before; next follow the names of the chief of the people, Neh 10:14, their number in all forty four; and their names may be observed in the list of those that came out of Babylon with Zerubbabel; the whole number of those that sealed, princes, priests, Levites, and chief of the people, were eighty four.

### **Nehemiah 10:2**

Nehemiah See Gill Nehemiah 10:2 through to 10:28

### **Nehemiah 10:28**

And the rest of the people,.... That did not sign and seal:

the priests, the Levites, the porters, the singers, the Nethinims; the porters and singers were Levites; but those so called were such as waited upon the priests, as the Nethinims were persons that waited on them:

and all they that had separated themselves from the people of the lands unto the law of God; proselytes, who had renounced Heathenism, and embraced the true religion, had received the law of God, and professed to walk according to it:

their wives, their sons, and their daughters, everyone having knowledge, and having understanding; of the nature of the covenant, and the things contained in it, of what was required of them, and of what they promised, of the nature of an oath they entered into, and of the sin of perjury.

### **Nehemiah 10:29**

They clave to their brethren, their nobles,.... Who had signed and sealed the covenant, they declared their

approbation of it, attended to it, and ratified what they had done in their name:

and entered into a curse, and into an oath, to walk in God's law, which was given by Moses the servant of God; they bound themselves with an oath that they would keep the law of God, and added a curse or imprecation on themselves to it should they break it; or, according to Piscator, they went into the space between the two pieces of the calf, which they cut asunder for the confirmation of the covenant, and so they cursed themselves if they should break it, see Jer 34:18

and to observe and do all the commandments of the Lord our God, and his judgments and his statutes; all the laws, moral, ceremonial, and judicial; this they engaged to do in general; some particulars follow.

### **Nehemiah 10:30**

And that we would not give our daughters unto the people of the land, nor take their daughters for our sons,.... Intermarry with them as they had done, and were prone to do, and even did after this, Neh 13:23.

### **Nehemiah 10:31**

And if the people of the land bring ware,.... Any thing to be sold, any sort of goods, that being sold might be taken away, as the word signifies:

or any victuals on the sabbath day to sell; anything to make food of; wheat or barley, as Aben Ezra interprets it; the same word is rendered corn; see Gill on Gen 42:1; to sell which was not lawful on the sabbath day, see Amo 8:5

that we would not buy it of them on the sabbath, or on the holy day; any festival, as the feast of the passover, pentecost, and tabernacles:

and that we would leave the seventh year: the ground untilled in that year, the vines unpruned, and the fruits of the earth, which sprung of themselves, for the poor to gather, Lev 25:4,

and the exaction of every debt; that they would not demand the payment of any debt on the seventh year, as the law required they should not, Deu 15:2.

### **Nehemiah 10:32**

Also we made ordinance, for us,.... Laws among themselves, binding them to that which the laws of God did not:

to charge ourselves yearly with the third part of a shekel, for the service of the house of our God; the particulars of which follow in the next verse; for the defraying of which there used to be a treasury in the temple; but now there was none, and therefore they took this method to assess themselves; and being poor, instead of the half shekel, which in some cases was required, they only charged themselves with the third part of one; though Aben Ezra thinks this was added to the half shekel, and was paid over and above that; according to Brerewood (a), it was of the value of ten pence of our money: Waserus (b) has given us the figure of one of these coins, with this inscription, a "third" part of a shekel of Israel.

(a) De Pond. & Pret. Vet. Num. c. 1. (b) De Antiqu. Num. Heb. l. 2.

### **Nehemiah 10:33**

For the shewbread,.... To defray the expenses of the twelve loaves, which every week were set on the table of shewbread, Lev 24:5,

and for the continual meat offering, and for the continual burnt offering; for the daily sacrifice, morning and evening, which always had a meat offering along with it, Exo 29:38,

of the sabbaths, and of the new moons; on which were additional sacrifices, Num 28:9,

and for the set feasts; of passover, pentecost, and tabernacles; in which also were offered other sacrifices, besides the daily one, Num 28:16,

and for the holy things: which were both by way of thanksgiving to God, and that they might feast and rejoice together:

and for the sin offerings, to make an atonement for Israel; for the whole body of the people, and so were made at the public expense:

and for all the work of the house of our God; whatever else was necessary that is not mentioned.

#### **Nehemiah 10:34**

And we cast the lots among the priests, the Levites, and the people,.... The priests and Levites were in one lot, and the people in another, as Aben Ezra:

for the wood offering; for providing wood to burn upon the altar continually, concerning which Maimonides (c) thus writes: "what is the wood offering? there was a time fixed for families to go out unto the forests, and bring in wood of disposition (to be laid in order on the altar); and the day when it came to the turn of a family to bring the wood, they offered up freewill burnt offerings, which were called a wood offering; and it was to them as a good day (or festival), and they were forbid to mourn, fast, or do any work on it;" and he observes, that if a single person brought wood of his own free will, he was obliged to the same; and Josephus (d) speaks of a feast called when it was customary for all to bring wood to the altar, to keep alive the sacred fire, that it might not go out, which, according to him, was on the fourteenth of the month Lois, or August; but this was not the business of all the people, lots were cast, as here said, who should do it, and when:

to bring it into the house of our God; the temple, where there was a place called the "wood room", into which the wood was brought after it had been wormed by the priests (e).

after the houses of our fathers; or families on whom the lot fell to do it: some render it:

into the house of our fathers, meaning the same as before; the temple so called, because they built it, and worshipped God in it; so Jarchi and Aben Ezra:

at times appointed, year by year; as the lot directed; these, according to the Jewish doctors (f), were nine times in the year; on the first of Nisan (or March), the sons of Arach, of the tribe of Judah, brought the wood; on the twentieth of Tammuz (or June), the posterity of David, of the tribe of Judah; on the fifth of Ab (or July), the children of Parosh, of the tribe of Judah; on the seventh of the same month, the sons of Jonadab the son of Rechab; on the tenth of the same month, the posterity of Senaah, of the tribe of Benjamin; on the fifteenth of the same month, the children of Zattu, and with them the priests and Levites, and all who were of an uncertain tribe, &c. on the twentieth of the same month, the posterity of Pahathmoab, of the tribe of Judah; on the twentieth of Elul (or August), the children of Adin, of the tribe of Judah; on the first of Tebeth (or December), the posterity of Parosh again brought the wood:

to burn upon the altar of the Lord our God, as it is written in the law; the wood should be burnt upon it, and fire kept on it continually, Lev 6:12, for this refers only to that, the wood offering is nowhere spoken of in the

(c) Hilchot Cele Hamikdash, c. 6. sect. 9, 10. Vid. Maimon. & Bartenora in Misn. Taanith, c. 4. sect. 5. (d) De Bello Jud. 1. 2. c. 17. sect. 6. (e) See Lightfoot's Prospect of the Temple, ch. 25. (f) Misn. Taanith, c. 4. sect. 5.

### **Nehemiah 10:35**

And to bring the firstfruits of our ground,.... Not that they cast lots to do this, but they bound themselves with an oath, according to the law, to do it; this is the first of all the fruits of the earth, Exo 23:19, though Aben Ezra restrains it to the sheaf of the firstfruits, and to the two wave loaves, Lev 23:10,

and the firstfruits of all fruit of all trees; which, as Aben Ezra observes, their wise men restrain to the seven kinds only mentioned in Deu 8:8.

### **Nehemiah 10:36**

Also the firstborn of our sons and of our cattle,.... Such as were unclean, as Aben Ezra notes, as the ass, &c. and are distinguished from clean ones mentioned in the following clause; now both these, their sons, and this sort of cattle, were to be redeemed by a price paid to the priests: as it is written in the law, Exo 13:2,

and the firstlings of our herds, and of our flocks; clean cattle, which were to be offered, Num 18:17,

to bring to the house of our God, unto the priests that minister in the house of our God; a price for the one sort, and the other for sacrifice.

### **Nehemiah 10:37**

And that we should bring the first fruits of our dough,.... According to the law in Num 15:20

and our offerings; their heave offerings, Num 18:8

and the fruit of all manner of trees; bore by them on the fourth year after their planting, Lev 19:23

of wine and oil; to which Aben Ezra restrains the fruit of the trees, see Num 18:12, all these they were to bring

unto the priests, to the chambers the house of our God; there to be laid up for the use of it; and oil and wine were frequently used in sacrifices:

and the tithes of our ground unto the Levites, that the same Levites might have the tithes in all the cities of our village; the tenth part of the produce of their agriculture everywhere throughout the land, see Num 18:21.

### **Nehemiah 10:38**

And the priest the son of Aaron shall be with the Levites, when the Levites take tithes,.... There was always to be a priest with the Levites at such times, to take notice what quantity they received, that they might not be under any temptation, or lie under any suspicion of defrauding the priests of their due, who were to have a part in the tithes, as follows:

and the Levites shall bring up the tithes of the tithes unto the house of our God, to the chambers, into the treasure house: which were in the court of the priests for that purpose; for out of the tithes of the Levites there was another tithes or tenth part taken, and given to the priests, see Num 18:26.

**Nehemiah 10:39**

For the children of Israel, and the children of Levi, shall bring the offering of the corn, of the new wine, and the oil, unto the chambers,.... In the temple:

where are the vessels of the sanctuary; to put the said things into, that they might be ready at hand when wanted, as they often were for the meat and drink offerings:

and the priests that minister, and the porters, and the singers; who dwelt there when in their ministrations, and were supported by the above tithes and gifts:

and we will not forsake the house of our God; neither forsake the assembling themselves there for worship, nor neglect to make the necessary provisions for the service of it, as they had too much done, but now resolve for the future to behave better.

**INTRODUCTION TO NEHEMIAH 11****Chapter 11**

This chapter treats of the inhabitants of Jerusalem, those of the tribes of Judah and Benjamin, who settled there by lot, or of their own accord, their names and numbers, Neh 11:1, and of the priests and Levites who dwelt there, Neh 11:10, and of the rest of the people, priests, and Levites, that dwelt in the other cities and villages of Judah and Benjamin, Neh 11:20.

**Nehemiah 11:1**

And the rulers of the people dwelt at Jerusalem,.... Where it was proper they should, being the metropolis of the nation, both for the performance of their offices, and to protect and defend it, as well as to set an example to the people, and encourage them to dwell there also:

the rest of the people also cast lots to bring one of ten to dwell in Jerusalem the holy city; so called, because of the temple and the worship of God in it; and so it is called by Julian the emperor (g); and some (h) have thought that the Cadytis of Herodotus (i) is the same with Jerusalem, which had its name from "holy", and is now called by the Turks "cuds", that is, "holy" (k): now, though it was the chief city, and the place of public worship, yet the people were not forward of settling in it, partly because of the rage of the enemy, which this city was the butt of, and partly because it was more to their worldly advantage to dwell in the country, and where they could have better supplies; they consulted their own ease, safety, and profit; wherefore this method was taken to oblige some to dwell in it, by taking one out of ten by lot, that there might be a sufficient number to rebuild the houses of it, repopulate and defend it:

and nine parts to dwell in other cities; to which they belonged, or where they pleased, any where in the land of Israel.

(g) Ep. 25. p. 154. (h) Prideaux's Connection, par. 1. p. 56, 57. (i) Euterpe, sive, l. 2. c. 159. & Thalia, sive, l. 3. c. 5. (k) Sandys's Travels, l. 5. p. 121. Ed. 5.

**Nehemiah 11:2**

And the people blessed all the men that willingly offered themselves to dwell at Jerusalem. Who were not taken by lot, but of their own accord settled at Jerusalem; they praised them for it, and wished them all happiness and prosperity, since they denied themselves of ease and profit for the sake of the public good; and it is this which makes the difference between the list of the inhabitants of Jerusalem in Ch1 9:2 &c. and this here, that takes in all that settled there, whether voluntarily or by lot; this only such as were fixed by the lot, and of them only those who were of greatest note and esteem, as Jarchi observes, and so it follows.

**Nehemiah 11:3**

Now these are the chief of the province that dwelt in Jerusalem,.... That is, of Judea, reduced to a province by the king of Babylon, and now a province of the Persian monarchy:

but in the cities of Judah dwelt everyone in his possession in their cities; in which they or their ancestors had formerly dwelt: to wit, Israel: the people in general of the tribes of Judah and Benjamin, and such of the other tribes that returned with them:

the priests, and the Levites, and the Nethinims, and the children of Solomon's servants; of whom see Ezr 2:55.

**Nehemiah 11:4**

And at Jerusalem dwelt certain of the children of Judah, and of the children of Benjamin,.... It belonging partly to one tribe and partly to the other, and so inhabited by both, as it originally was, Jos 15:63

of the children of Judah; Athaiah; called Uthai, Ch1 9:4 whose lineage is traced through Uziah, Zechariah, Amariah, Shephatiah, Mahalaleel:

of the children of Perez; a son of Judah, see Ch1 9:4.

**Nehemiah 11:5**

And Maaseiah,.... Who seems to be the same with Asaiah, Ch1 9:5 and whose genealogy is carried up through Baruch, Colhozeh, Hazaiah, Adaiah, Joiarib, Zechariah, to Shiloni; perhaps the same with Shelah, another son of Judah, see Ch1 9:5.

**Nehemiah 11:6**

All the sons of Perez that dwelt at Jerusalem were four hundred threescore and eight valiant men. And so well qualified to defend the city against its enemies.

**Nehemiah 11:7**

And these are the sons of Benjamin,.... That were of that tribe, and inhabited Jerusalem, namely, that follow:

Sallu the son of Meshullam; who from him is traced up through Joed, Pedaiah, Kolaiah, Maaseiah, Ithiel, to Jesaiah.

**Nehemiah 11:8**

And after him,.... That is, Sallu: were Gabbai and Sallai; in all nine hundred and twenty eight; there were more of the tribe of Benjamin than of the tribe of Judah, they having perhaps a greater share in the city, or were better disposed to dwell in it.

**Nehemiah 11:9**

And Joel the son of Zichri was their overseer,.... Or chief governor of the city:

and Judah the son of Senuah was second over the city; or the deputy governor of it; so Pitholaus is called an under governor in Jerusalem by Josephus (1).

(1) Antiqu. l. 14. c. 6. sect. 1.

**Nehemiah 11:10**

Who dwelt in Jerusalem, of whom the same account is given in these two verses as in Ch1 9:10, only



Seraiah here is called Azariah there.

#### **Nehemiah 11:11**

And their brethren that did the work of the house were eight hundred twenty and two,.... That offered the sacrifices, burnt incense, set on the shewbread, lighted the lamps, &c.

and Adaiah the son of Jeroham; see Ch1 9:12 whose genealogy is traced here through Pelaliah, Amzi, Zechariah, Pashur, to Malchiah.

#### **Nehemiah 11:12**

And their brethren that did the work of the house were eight hundred twenty and two,.... That offered the sacrifices, burnt incense, set on the shewbread, lighted the lamps, &c.

and Adaiah the son of Jeroham; see Ch1 9:12 whose genealogy is traced here through Pelaliah, Amzi, Zechariah, Pashur, to Malchiah.

#### **Nehemiah 11:13**

And his brethren, chief of the fathers, two hundred forty and two,.... That is, the brethren or relations of Adaiah:

and Amashai; called Maasiai, Ch1 9:12, whose lineage is traced here through Azareel, Ahasai, Meshillemoth, to Immer.

#### **Nehemiah 11:14**

And their brethren, mighty men of valour, an hundred twenty and eight,.... The brethren of Adaiah and Amashai, who were able men to do the work of their office as priests, and men of courage to fight the enemy, and defend the city upon occasion:

and their overseer was Zabdiel, the son of one of the great men; or the son of Hagedolim, or Gedolim, as some, who take it to be the proper name of a man.

#### **Nehemiah 11:15**

Also of the Levites,.... Who dwelt in Jerusalem:

Shemaiah the son of Hashub: traced from him through Azrikam and Hashabiah to Bunni; these were of the sons of Merari, the third son of Levi, see Ch1 9:14.

#### **Nehemiah 11:16**

And Shabbethai and Jozabad, of the chief of the Levites,.... Along with Shemaiah; these had

the oversight of the outward business of the house of God: who had the care of the repairs of the temple, and of getting in the wood for the altar, as Jarchi, and collecting the third part of the shekel, to purchase things with for the use of the temple.

#### **Nehemiah 11:17**

And Mattaniah the son of Micha, the son of Zabdi, the son of Asaph,.... Zabdi is called Zichri in Ch1 9:15

was the principal to begin the thanksgiving in prayer: he was the precentor, or led the song at the time of the daily sacrifice, in which prayer was also made, as in many of the songs, hymns, and psalms of David:

and Bakkukiah the second among his brethren; he was the next singer, or deputy to Mattaniah; perhaps the same that is called Bakkakkar, Ch1 9:15

and Abda the son of Shammua; called Obadiah the son of Shemaiah, Ch1 9:16

the son of Galal, the son of Jeduthun: one of the three principal singers.

### **Nehemiah 11:18**

All the Levites in the holy city were two hundred fourscore and four. Who had their residence there, Neh 11:1.

### **Nehemiah 11:19**

Moreover, the porters, Akkub, Talmon, and their brethren that kept the gates, were one hundred and seventy two. Of whom see Ch1 9:17.

### **Nehemiah 11:20**

And the residue of Israel, of the priests and the Levites,..... All of them, besides those that dwelt at Jerusalem: were

in all the cities of Judah, everyone in his inheritance; the Israelites in the cities, houses, and estates enjoyed by their ancestors, and the priests and Levites in the cities given out of the several tribes.

### **Nehemiah 11:21**

But the Nethinims dwelt in Ophel,.... An high place or tower on the wall of Jerusalem, see Ch2 27:3,

and Ziha, and Gispa, were over the Nethinims; had the oversight of them, and took care that they did their work; they were such themselves, but the principal of them, see Ezr 2:43.

### **Nehemiah 11:22**

The overseer also of the Levites at Jerusalem was Uzzi, the son of Bani,.... He was the supervisor of them, that looked after them that they did their work in ministering to the priests, as they had occasion for them; this man's genealogy is further traced through Hashabiah and Mattaniah, to Micha the son of Asaph, Neh 11:17,

of the sons of Asaph, the singers were over the business of the house of God; which, according to Jarchi, was to take care of the repairs of the temple and other things; but one would think rather that part of the service of the house which lay in singing the songs of it is respected.

### **Nehemiah 11:23**

For it was the king's commandment concerning them,.... Either of King David as some, see Neh 12:24 or rather of the king of Persia:

that a certain portion should be for the singers, due for every day; he settled a daily salary for them, to be paid out of his treasury; having perhaps a peculiar respect for such sort of men, being a lover of music, by means of which they had a settled habitation in Jerusalem.

### **Nehemiah 11:24**

And Pethahiah the son of Meshezabeel, of the children of Zerah, the son of Judah,.... The twin brother of Pharez, Gen 38:30 was

at the king's hand in all matters concerning the people; to speak for them to the king, as Jarchi; when they

had a favour to ask of him, a petition to present to him, he delivered it for them, and by him the king returned the answer.

### **Nehemiah 11:25**

And for the villages, with their fields,.... The cities and villages in the country, an account of the inhabitants of them next follows:

some of the children of Judah dwelt at Kirjatharba, and in the villages thereof; the same with Hebron, Jos 15:54

and at Dibon; the same with Dimonah, Jos 15:22

and at Jekabzeel, and in the villages thereof; the same with Kabzeel, one of the uttermost cities of the tribe of Judah southward, Jos 15:21, of which city was Benaiah, one of David's worthies, Sa2 23:20, from hence to the end of Neh 11:30 mention is made of various cities and towns, in the tribe of Judah, inhabited by the men of it, which are to be met with in Jos 15:1 excepting Jeshua and Mekonah, Neh 11:26, of which we nowhere else read.

### **Nehemiah 11:31**

The children also of Benjamin, from Geba, dwelt at Michmash,.... Geba was a city on the southern border of Benjamin, Jos 18:24 and Michmash on the northern, of which see Sa1 13:2 in this and the four following verses are the names of several cities in the tribe of Benjamin, inhabited by the men of that tribe, as Alia, the same with Ai, that lay on the east of Bethel, here also mentioned, see Jos 7:2 Anathoth, the birth place of Jeremiah the prophet, Jer 1:1. Nob, a city of the priests, Sa1 21:1. Ananiah is nowhere else mentioned; Hazor is to be distinguished from another of this name in the tribe of Naphtali, Jos 19:36. Ramah, a place well known in Benjamin, Jos 18:25. Gittaim, of which see Sa2 4:3. Hadid, the same with Adida, which lay in a plain,"Simon also set up Adida in Sephela, and made it strong with gates and bars." (1 Maccabees 12:38)Zeboim, a valley of this name, is read in Sa1 13:18. Neballat we read of nowhere else; of Lod and Ono, see Ch1 8:12 and the valley of craftsmen, or Chorasin, Ch1 4:14.

Nehemiah 11:36

neh 11:36

And of the Levites were divisions in Judah, and in Benjamin. They were scattered about, some here and some there, in both these tribes, for the better instruction of the people.

## **INTRODUCTION TO NEHEMIAH 12**

### **Chapter 12**

This chapter gives an account of the chief of the priests and Levites in the days of Zerubbabel, Jeshua, Joiakim, Eliashib, and Nehemiah, Neh 12:1, of the dedication of the wall of Jerusalem, and of the joy expressed on that occasion, Neh 12:27, and of the appointment of some persons over the treasuries for the priests, Levites, singers, and porters, Neh 12:44.

### **Nehemiah 12:1**

Now these are the priests and the Levites that went up with Zerubbabel the son of Shealtiel, and Jeshua,.... Who went up from the captivity in Babylon to Jerusalem with them; the one was the prince, the other the high priest, the same with Joshua the high priest, Zac 3:1, the names of the priests are given in this and the six following verses:

Seraiah, Jeremiah, Ezra; not Jeremiah the prophet, who cannot be thought to live so long as through the

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captivity; but Ezra may be Ezra the priest and scribe, who might come up with Zerubbabel to Jerusalem, and return to Babylon again, and from thence come again as he did, in the seventh year of Artaxerxes, Ezr 7:1, though this by some (m) is not thought very probable.

(m) Vid. Rainold de Lib. Apocryph. praelect. 153. p. 402, &c.

### **Nehemiah 12:2**

Amariah, Malluch, Hattush,.... Whose names are among the sealers of the covenant, Neh 10:3. Malluch is afterwards called Melicu, Neh 12:14,

Shechaniah, called Shebaniah, Neh 12:14 and so in Neh 10:4

Rehum, who, by transposition of letters, is Harim, Neh 12:15, and so in Neh 10:5.

Meremoth, called Meraioth, Neh 12:15,

Iddo, Ginnetho, read Ginnethon, Neh 12:16 so in Neh 10:6.

Abijah; there was a course of a priest of this name, of which Zechariah the father of John the Baptist was, Luk 1:5.

Miamin, Maadiah, Bilgah; the first two are called Miniamin and Moadiah, Neh 12:17.

Shemaiah, Joiarib, Jedaiah, Sallu; called Sallai, Neh 12:20.

Amok, Hilkiyah, Jedaiah these were the chief of the priests, and of their brethren, in the days of Jeshua; heads of courses; or, however, priests of the greatest note in the times of Jeshua the high priest.

### **Nehemiah 12:8**

Moreover the Levites,.... Who lived in the same times: were

Jeshua, Binnui, Kadmiel, Sherebiah, Judah, and Mattaniah; most of these are made mention of in Neh 8:7, the last of them is said to be

over the thanksgiving, he and his brethren; he was the precentor, or had the directing and conducting of the songs of the temple, particularly the thanksgiving song at the daily sacrifices; Jarchi takes the word here used to be the name of a musical instrument.

### **Nehemiah 12:9**

Also Bakbukiah and Unni,.... Two other Levites; the first is mentioned in Neh 11:17,

their brethren, were over against them in the watches; the Levites were divided into twenty four wards, and these were placed one against another, Ch1 23:6.

### **Nehemiah 12:10**

And Jeshua begat Joiakim, Joiakim also begat Eliashib, and Eliashib begot Joiada, and Joiada begat Jonathan, and Jonathan begot Jaddua. This is an account of the high priests in succession in the second temple, the first six of them; and if Jaddua, the last mentioned, is the same with Jaddus, as Josephus (n) supposes, who went forth in his pontifical robes to meet Alexander the great returning from his conquests of Tyre and Gaza, from whom he obtained many favours, and whom he had into the temple, and showed him the prophecy of

Daniel concerning himself; this paragraph must be written by another hand, and not Nehemiah, since it can hardly be thought he should live so long; and as to his times, this account of him, or the history of his own times, seems not to have gone through the priesthood of Eliashib, the third of those high priests, see Neh 13:28, and to reach no further than to the thirty second of Darius Hystaspis, Neh 13:6 this fragment therefore might be inserted by some godly man under a divine direction in later times, as we have several insertions in the books of Moses and Joshua of the like kind; and particularly in Ch1 3:19 where the genealogy of Zerubbabel is carried down beyond the times of the Maccabees, and so could not be placed there by Ezra.

(n) Antiqu. l. 11. c. 8. sect. 5.

### **Nehemiah 12:12**

And in the days of Joiakim were priests, the chief of the fathers,.... This was the son and successor of Jeshua, or Joshua, the first high priest of the second temple; the principal men of the priesthood in his time were as follow, and who were the sons, or however the descendants of the priests in the time of his father before mentioned: these were Meraiah, Hananiah, Meshullam, Jehohanan, Jonathan, Joseph, Adna, Helkai, Zechariah, (the prophet of that name,) Meshullam, Zichri, Piltai, Shammua, Jehonathan, Mattenai, Uzzi, Kallai, Eber, Hashabiah, Nethaneel; in all twenty, whereas there are twenty two named, as in his father's days, there being no sons or descendants from two of them, namely, Hattush and Miamin.

### **Nehemiah 12:22**

The Levites, in the days of Eliashib,.... The third priest of the second temple:

Joiada; he was the son of Eliashib, and the fourth high priest:

and Johanan; the same with Jonathan, Neh 12:11 and whom Josephus (o) also calls Joannes:

and Jaddua; the same as in Neh 12:10 in the days of each of these were

recorded chief of the fathers; the principal men among the Levites:

also the priests, to the reign of Darius the Persian; thought to be Darius Codomannus, the last king of the Persian monarchy, whom Alexander conquered; and if so, this verse must be inserted after the death of Nehemiah, and as the next verse also seems to be; for these two verses interrupt the natural order of the relation: an account is given of the priests in the times of Joiakim, Neh 12:12, these verses being inserted, the account goes on, Neh 12:24, &c. of the chief of the Levites in the times of Joiakim only.

(o) Antiqu. l. 11. c. 7. sect. 1.

### **Nehemiah 12:23**

The sons of Levi, the chief of the fathers, were written in the book of the chronicles,.... Some think this refers to Ch1 9:14, &c.

until the days of Johanan the son of Eliashib; from whence Dr. Lightfoot (p) concludes, that the Chronicles were written by Ezra in the times of this Johanan.

(p) Works, vol. 1. p. 146.

### **Nehemiah 12:24**

And the chief of the Levites,.... Here the thread of the history of Nehemiah, interrupted by the insertion of the two preceding verses, is carried from the priests to the Levites in the times of the third high priest:

Hashabiah, Sherebiah, and Jeshua the son of Kadmiel; these were singers, since it follows:

with their brethren over against them, to praise and to give thanks, according to the commandment of David the man of God, ward over against ward; which office of theirs they performed by turns in courses, as David under a divine direction ordered, see Ch1 23:5.

#### **Nehemiah 12:25**

Mattaniah, and Bakbukiah, Obadiah, Meshullam, Talmon, Akkub, were porters,.... At the gates of the temple, see Ch1 9:15,

keeping the ward, at the thresholds of the gates; of the temple, where they stood and watched; or “at the collection of the gates”, meaning either where the people were gathered together, or where money gathered was laid up; and so some render it, “the treasuries of the gates”: unless a place called Asuppim should be meant, Ch1 26:15.

#### **Nehemiah 12:26**

These were in the days of Joiakim the son of Jeshua, the son of Jozadak,.... Who was high priest in Babylon, and whose grandson was now high priest in the time referred to:

and in the days of Nehemiah the governor; the writer of this book:

and of Ezra the priest, the scribe; who was contemporary with him.

#### **Nehemiah 12:27**

And at the dedication of the wall of Jerusalem,.... In which many priests and Levites assisted, and seems to be the reason of the above account of them; the dedication of the wall takes in the whole city, gates, and houses, Neh 12:30, and if a new house was to be dedicated, much more a new city, and especially the holy city, in which stood the temple of the Lord, see Deu 20:5, this dedication was made by prayer and songs of praise, as follow, and no doubt by sacrifices, and was kept as a festival; and indeed, according to the Jewish writers (q), it was annually observed on the seventh of Elul, or August; it was on the twenty fifth of that month that the wall was finished, Neh 6:15, but the gates were not set up, and all things for the dedication were not ready till Elul, or August, following; and then all being finished, they made and served the seventh of that month as a festival:

they sought the Levites out of all their places, to bring them to Jerusalem, to keep the dedication with gladness; to assist in the solemnity of the day both with vocal and instrumental music, as follows:

both with thanksgiving and with singing; with songs of praise and thankfulness vocally, that they had been able, notwithstanding all the malice of their enemies, to build the wall in so short a time; or with a song, perhaps the thirtieth psalm was sung on this occasion:

with cymbals, psalteries, and with harps; some playing on one, and some on another, which were the three principal instruments of music used by them, see Ch1 15:16.

(q) Megillath Thainith, c. 3. apud Selden. de Synedr. l. 3. c. 13. sect. 12.

#### **Nehemiah 12:28**

And the sons of the singers gathered themselves together,.... Such of the Levites that were singers, and their sons that were trained up as such:

both out of the plain country round about Jerusalem the plain of Jordan by Jericho, and the plain of Saron and Lydda:

and from the villages of Netophathi: see Ch1 9:16, here they dwelt, when not in their courses, to minister in the temple; but on this public occasion were summoned together.

### **Nehemiah 12:29**

Also from the house of Gilgal,.... Which likewise was in a champaign country in the plains of Jericho, Deu 11:30,

and out of the fields of Geba; which was a Levitical city in the tribe of Benjamin, Jos 21:17

and Azmaveth; the same with Bethazmaveth, Neh 7:28 where it follows Anathoth and Netophah, as it does in Ezz 2:24, and was very probably in the tribe of Benjamin:

for the singers had builded them villages round about Jerusalem; that they might be near it, to do their duty when required; by which it appears that the said places were near Jerusalem.

### **Nehemiah 12:30**

And the priests and the Levites purified themselves,.... By washing their bodies and their clothes, perhaps by sprinkling the water of purification on them, see Num 8:6.

### **Nehemiah 12:31**

Then I brought up the princes of Judah upon the wall,.... Which was so broad as to walk upon it, and there was a procession of the princes on it at its dedication, and here is described the manner of it; the princes of Benjamin must be included here:

and appointed two great companies of them that gave thanks; he divided the people who were met together to praise God on this occasion into two companies: whereof

one went on the right hand upon the wall; that is, on the southern part of it:

towards the dung gate; of which see Neh 2:13 some Jewish writers, as Jarchi and Ben Melech, give a different sense of , which we render "two companies", and take them to be two eucharistical loaves of leavened bread, with which a rite or ceremony was performed at the enlargement of a court or city; at the utmost boundary of which those were carried, and one was eaten and the other burnt (r); which rite is thus described by Maimonides (s),"how do they add to a city? the sanhedrim make two eucharistical sacrifices, and they take the leavened bread in them, and the sanhedrim go after the two eucharistical sacrifices, which follow one another, and they stand with harps, and psalteries, and cymbals, at every corner and at every stone in Jerusalem, and say, I will extol thee, for thou hast lifted up, &c. (#Ps 30:1) until they come to the end of the place they consecrate, there they stand and eat the thanksgiving loaf, one of the two, and the other is burnt."

(r) Miss. Shebuot, c. 2. sect. 2. & Maimon, & Bartenora in ib. (s) Hilchot, Beth-habechirah, c. 6. sect. 12. Vid. Selden. de Synedr. 1. 3. c. 13. sect. 6.

### **Nehemiah 12:32**

And after them went Hoshaiah, and half of the princes of Judah. The other half of them, with Hoshaiah at the head of them.

### **Nehemiah 12:33**

And Azariah, Ezra, and Meshullam. Not Ezra the priest and the scribe, for he has another place assigned him in this procession, Neh 12:36, but this seems to be one of the princes.

**Nehemiah 12:34**

Judah and Benjamin,.... Not the tribes, but the names of the two princes, as Jarchi:

and Shemaiah and Jeremiah; who were two others.

**Nehemiah 12:35**

And certain of the priests' sons with trumpets,.... To blow with on this occasion; for these the priests sounded: namely:

Zechariah the son of Jonathan, the son of Shemaiah, the son of Mattaniah, the son of Michaiah, the son of Zaccur, the son of Asaph; not the Levite, but a priest of this name.

**Nehemiah 12:36**

And his brethren,.... The brethren of Zechariah, the priest's son, and such are those that follow:

Shemaiah, and Azarael, Milalai, Gilalai, Maai, Nethaneel, and Judah, Hanani, with the musical instruments of David the man of God; which were invented by him, and ordered by him to be used in religious service, under the divine direction:

and Ezra the scribe before them; for he being a priest also, and a man of great eminence, was placed at the head of them in this procession.

**Nehemiah 12:37**

And at the fountain gate, which was over against them,.... Of which see Neh 2:14 and which was to the south of the dung gate:

they went up; that is, one of the two companies, that which took to the right on the wall, Neh 12:31 with which these words are to be connected:

by the stairs of the city of David; which went up to the city of Zion, built on an eminence:

at the going up of the wall, above the house of David; where the wall was higher, and there was an ascent to it:

even unto the water gate eastward; of which see Neh 3:26 turning from the south to the east, and so drew nigh the temple.

**Nehemiah 12:38**

And the other company of them that gave thanks went over against them,.... On the left hand, on the northern part of the wall:

and I after them; Nehemiah, he brought up the rear of his company, as Ezra led the van of his:

and the half of the people upon the wall; the chief of them, for all could not walk upon it:

from beyond the tower of the furnaces; where they baked their bread, or their bricks, see Neh 3:11,



even unto the broad wall; where the wall was broader than common, for some reason or another, see Neh 3:8.

#### **Nehemiah 12:39**

And from above the gate of Ephraim,.... The gate which led to the tribe of Ephraim, where that tribe formerly dwelt, see Neh 8:16

and above the old gate; of which mention is made, Neh 3:6

and above the fish gate, and the tower of Hananeel, and the tower of Meah, even unto the sheep gate; of all which see Neh 3:1, and they stood still in the prison gate; which was not a gate of the city, but of the court of the prison, Neh 3:25, which was near both the king's palace and the temple, see Jer 20:1.

#### **Nehemiah 12:40**

So stood the two companies of them that gave thanks in the house of God,.... Having made their procession on the wall in different ways, they met in the temple, that is, in the great court of it, for no other would hold them:

and I, and the half of the rulers with me; Nehemiah, and the other half with Hoshaiah, Neh 12:32.

#### **Nehemiah 12:41**

And the priests,.... They stood there also, whose names follow:

Eliakim, Maaseiah, Miniamin, Michaiiah, Elioenai, Zechariah, and Hananiah, with trumpets; to sound on this occasion.

#### **Nehemiah 12:42**

And Maaseiah, and Shemaiah, and Eleazar, and Uzzi, and Jehohanan, and Malchijah, and Elam, and Ezer,.... These seem to be all priests that blew the trumpets:

and the singers sang loud, with Jezrahiah their overseer; these were the Levites, that sung the songs of praise vocally, and raised their voices very high, Jezrahiah being precentor, who led the tune, as well as played on instruments.

#### **Nehemiah 12:43**

Also that day they offered great sacrifices, and rejoiced,.... Or many sacrifices, as Ben Melech interprets it; and these perhaps of the larger sort of cattle, oxen; and which, at least many of them, being peace offerings, the people feasted on them, so that it was a festival day:

for God had made them rejoice with great joy; on account of the wall being set up all around, and so were in greater safety from their enemies:

the wives also and the children rejoiced; while the priests blew the trumpets, and the singers sung and played on their instruments, the women and children gave loud shouts for joy:

so that the joy of Jerusalem was heard even afar off; as at the laying of the foundation of the temple, Eze 3:13.

#### **Nehemiah 12:44**

And at that time were some appointed over the chamber for the treasuries,.... On the selfsame day the

dedication was; while the people were in a good disposition, and a suitable frame for such service, certain persons from among the priests were appointed to be overseers of the chambers fixed upon for treasuries, to lay up safe in them the following things, and take care of them, that they were put to the use for which they were designed:

for the offerings, for the first fruits, and for the tithes, to gather into them out of the fields of the cities the portions of the law for the priests and Levites; what by the law of God were assigned them for their maintenance, and which the people had lately bound themselves to bring in, Neh 10:35,

for Judah rejoiced for the priests, and for the Levites that waited; at the temple, and performed their services there; they were so pleased with their ministrations that day, that they were determined to take care of them, and provide well for them, and that nothing should be wanting to them, enjoined by the law of God, and that they might not be obliged to dwell in fields and villages for the sake of their living, Neh 12:28.

#### **Nehemiah 12:45**

And both the singers and the porters kept the ward of their God, and the ward of their purification,.... The singers kept their turns in course in the temple, and were not wanting to officiate on all occasions, besides morning and evening services; and the porters they diligently kept the gates of the temple, that no impure person or thing in a ceremonial sense entered:

according to the commandment of David, and Solomon his son; who made very good rules and orders relative to the better and more regular performance of service by them; see Ch1 25:1.

#### **Nehemiah 12:46**

For in the days of David and Asaph of old there were chief of the singers,.... Persons appointed over the rest to instruct them, and see that they did their work aright, as besides Asaph, Haman, and Jeduthun, and their sons, Ch1 25:2

and songs of praise and thanksgiving unto God; such were made by them, some under divine inspiration, which bear the names of David and Asaph, as may be observed in the book of Psalms.

#### **Nehemiah 12:47**

And all Israel in the days of Zerubbabel, and in the days of Nehemiah, gave the portions of the singers and the porters every day his portion,.... While these two men governed they did their duty, and punctually paid the Levites their dues at the proper season:

and they sanctified holy things unto the Levites; set them apart for their use, and brought them to them, their offerings, firstfruits, and tithes: and the Levites sanctified them unto the children of Aaron; the Levites set apart the tenth part of the tithes, and delivered them to the priests, and so each had what belonged to them.

### **INTRODUCTION TO NEHEMIAH 13**

#### **Chapter 13**

This chapter relates the reformation of various abuses crept in among the Jews by Nehemiah, who removed the Moabites and Ammonites, mixed with them, Neh 13:1, threw the household goods of Tobiah out of a chamber of the temple, and restored it to its former use, Neh 13:4, took care that the Levites had their portion given them which had been kept from them, Neh 13:10 prevented the profanation of the sabbath by selling goods on that day, Neh 13:15, and put a stop to the marrying of strange wives, which had prevailed again among them, Neh 13:23.

#### **Nehemiah 13:1**

On that day,... Not when the wall of the city was dedicated, nor quickly after; for it cannot be thought that people should be so corrupted so soon as this chapter shows; but when Nehemiah had governed them twelve years, and had been at Babylon, and was returned again, as appears from Neh 13:6, compared with Neh 2:1,

they read in the book of Moses in the audience of the people; for from the time of the reading of the law by Ezra, Neh 8:1 it became a custom to read the law publicly:

and therein was found written, that the Ammonite and the Moabite should not come into the congregation of the Lord; that is, be admitted to marry with any of the people of Israel; See Gill on Deu 23:3.

### **Nehemiah 13:2**

Because they met not the children of Israel with bread,... The same reason is given, and what follows in this verse is observed in Deu 23:4; See Gill on Deu 23:4, Deu 23:5.

### **Nehemiah 13:3**

Now it came to pass, when they had heard the law,... Or the law concerning the Ammonite and the Moabite, and which included other nations also, and forbad marriage with them:

that they separated from Israel all the mixed multitude; all of these, and other nations, they had contracted affinity with.

### **Nehemiah 13:4**

And before this,... Before the above law was read, and observed and acted upon:

Eliashib the priest; whom some take to be a common priest; so Bishop Usher (a); but he seems rather to be the high priest, by comparing it with Neh 13:28,

having the oversight of the chamber of the house of our God; which has led some to the notion of his being a common priest; but chamber may be put for chambers, and those for the whole house or temple, which the high priest had the greatest concern in, and oversight of:

was allied to Tobiah; the servant and Ammonite, an inveterate enemy of the Jews, Neh 2:10, having married a daughter of Shecaniah, and his son a daughter of Meshullam, who were both priests, and so as it seems related to Eliashib, Neh 6:18.

(a) Annal. Vet. Test. p. 200.

### **Nehemiah 13:5**

And he had prepared for him a great chamber,... In the temple, by throwing together several chambers, as Piscator observes:

where aforetime they laid the meat offerings, the frankincense, and the vessels, and the tithes of the corn, the new wine, and the oil, which was commanded to be given to the Levites, and to the singers, and the porters, and the offerings of the priests; see Neh 10:37.

### **Nehemiah 13:6**

But in all this time was not I at Jerusalem,... Nehemiah, who was absent all the while these things were done by Eliashib, or otherwise they would not have been suffered:

for in the thirty second year of Artaxerxes, king of Babylon, came I unto the king from Jerusalem; after he

had governed there twelve years, to whom he came to give an account of affairs there; this was not Xerxes, as some (b) have thought, for he reigned but twenty one years; but Darius Hystaspis, who reigned thirty six years, according to Ptolemy's canon, and with which Herodotus (c) agrees; he is called king of Babylon, because that, with the whole empire, was in the hands of the king of Persia, as it had been from the times of Cyrus:

and after certain days obtained I leave of the king; to return to Jerusalem again; not after five years, as Dr. Prideaux (d) thinks; for it is not likely that Nehemiah would stay so long ere he asked leave of the king to return to Jerusalem, which was so much his care, and on whose prosperity his heart was so much set; rather at most it was but a full year he stayed ere he got leave to return, as Vatablus and Piscator interpret it; in which sense the phrase of certain days is used in Lev 25:29, and in other places quoted by the last mentioned interpreter.

(b) Apud Ganz. Tzemach David, par. 2. fol. 8. 2. (c) Polymnia, sive, l. 7. c. 1. (d) Connect. par. 1. p. 397.

### **Nehemiah 13:7**

And I came to Jerusalem,.... Through the king's leave, and with a commission from him:

and understood of the evil that Eliashib did for Tobiah; was informed of the mal-administration of his office:

in preparing him a chamber in the courts of the house of God; whereby it was profaned and polluted.

### **Nehemiah 13:8**

And it grieved me sore,.... That such a sacred place should be converted to common use, and to that of an Heathen, and of an enemy to the Jews and their religion:

therefore I cast forth all the household stuff of Tobiah out of the chamber; as being chief magistrate, and acting by commission under the king of Persia, and to regulate everything amiss, according to the Jewish laws, as well as those of the king, his power being, no doubt, as large as Ezra's, Ezr 7:25, by "household stuff" is meant what is movable in the house, as chairs, tables, vessels for dressing, caring, drinking, &c. there are various opinions about this with the ancients (e).

(e) Vid. Alex. ab Alex. Genial. Dier. l. 1. c. 19.

### **Nehemiah 13:9**

Then I commanded, and they cleansed the chambers,.... By which it appears there were more than one, or that several were thrown into one; which was done not only by washing them, but as this was a ceremonial uncleanness, contracted by the habitation of an Heathen in them, their purification might be by the water of separation, Num 19:9

and thither brought I again the vessels of the house of God, with the meat offering and the frankincense; replaced them where they were before.

### **Nehemiah 13:10**

And I perceived that the portion of the Levites had not been given them,.... The tithes, being removed to some other place, might be converted to another use; or the people, seeing what was done by Eliashib, neglected to bring them in, as judging they would not be properly disposed of; and besides, the Levites had deserted their station upon this:

for the Levites and the singers that did the work were fled everyone to his field; to look after their country farms, or to get their living by agriculture, since there was no care taken of them at Jerusalem; see Neh 12:28.

**Nehemiah 13:11**

Then I contended with the rulers;.... The ecclesiastical rulers, the priests that were appointed over those chambers, Neh 12:44, he expostulated with them warmly, and chode them severely for their conduct:

and said, why is the house of God forsaken? no care being taken of the maintenance of the ministers of it, contrary to the promise made Neh 10:37,

and I gathered them together; the Levites and singers that were dispersed in the countries round about:

and set them in their place; in the temple, and in the course of their ministry there.

**Nehemiah 13:12**

Then brought all Judah the tithes of corn, and the new wine, and the oil, into the treasuries. When they saw a reformation made, and things were going in their proper channel, and a right use would be made of their tithes, these given to proper persons, who were now reinstated in their office.

**Nehemiah 13:13**

And I made treasurers over the treasuries,.... New ones, since the others appointed were either dead or unfaithful to their trust, Neh 12:44,

Shelemiah the priest, and Zadok the scribe; who also was a priest, as Ezra was both priest and scribe; one that besides his office as a priest was expert in the law, and capable of instructing others:

and of the Levites, Pedaiah, and next to them was Hanan the son of Zaccur, the son of Mattaniah, for they were counted faithful; had a good report of all that knew them, for men of fidelity and uprightness, and so fit for such a trust:

and their office was to distribute unto their brethren; to deliver to them their share in the tithes, first fruits, &c.

**Nehemiah 13:14**

Remember me, O my God, concerning this,.... Not in a way of strict justice, as if he thought he merited anything at the hand of God for what he had done; but in a way of grace and mercy, that he would graciously accept thereof, as done for the honour of his name, and overlook all failings and infirmities therein, see Neh 13:22

and wipe not out my good deeds that I have done for the house of my God, and for the offices thereof; for the support of the worship of God in the temple, and for the regulating of the wards and courses in it, both priests and Levites, and for the maintenance of them; which being done from a right principle, love to God, and with a right view, the glory of his name, might be truly reckoned good works: and which he desires might not be wiped or blotted out of the book of his remembrance, see Hos 6:10.

**Nehemiah 13:15**

In those days saw I in Judah some treading winepresses on the sabbath,.... Which was not a work of necessity, and so did not drive away the sabbath, as the Jews express themselves, but might have been deferred to another day:

and bringing in sheaves; of wheat, it being the time of wheat harvest:

and lading asses; with goods to be carried from place to place, and sold on that day; this was contrary to the

express law, for the ass was to rest, Deu 5:14,

as also wine, grapes, and figs: it being the time of ingathering the fruits of the earth:

and all manner of burdens, which they brought into Jerusalem on the sabbath day; besides those borne on asses, others were carried on men's shoulders; this was contrary to the law of the sabbath, which required that both men and beasts should have rest:

and I testified against them in the day wherein they sold victuals; that is, the sabbath day; and if it was not lawful to sell food, then not anything else; so far from it, that according to the Jewish canons (f), such that were in partnership might not discourse together of what they should sell or buy on the morrow, the day after the sabbath; and so far from gathering and carrying grapes and figs, that a man might not go into his gardens and fields to see what were wanting, or how the fruits were: now Nehemiah admonished the Jews of these evils they committed, and testified against them as breakers of the law, and called heaven and earth to testify against them, should they go on to violate it.

(f) Maimon. Hilchot Sabbat, c. 24. sect. 1, 2.

### **Nehemiah 13:16**

There dwelt men of Tyre also therein, which brought fish,.... From Tyre and Zidon, and the parts adjacent: these they brought from Joppa, and from thence to Jerusalem, and had houses or lodgings near the fish gate or fish market, where they sold them:

and all manner of ware; or merchandise, which, being a trading city, they had from all nations:

and sold on the sabbath day unto the children of Judah, and in Jerusalem; or even in Jerusalem, the holy city, where stood the temple, and where the worship of God was kept, and where the magistrates lived, who should have been terrors to evildoers: indeed, the law of the sabbath was not binding on these Tyrians, but then they tempted the Jews to break it, by bringing their ware to sell.

### **Nehemiah 13:17**

Then I contended with the nobles,.... The rulers of the city, the civil magistrates, sharply reproved them for their neglect of duty:

and said unto them, what evil thing is this that ye do, and profane the sabbath day? by suffering servile works to be done in it, and things sold on it.

### **Nehemiah 13:18**

Did not your fathers thus,.... Profane the sabbath in like manner:

and did not our God bring all this evil upon us, and upon our city? suffered them to be carried captive into a strange land, and their city destroyed for their sins, and for this of sabbath breaking among the rest, see Jer 17:21,

yet ye bring more wrath upon Israel by profaning the sabbath; additional judgments to those that had been already upon them for the same evil with others.

### **Nehemiah 13:19**

And it came to pass, that when the gates of Jerusalem began to be dark before the sabbath,.... Or "were shaded" (g); that is, as Jarchi interprets it, when the shadows of the eve of the sabbath were stretched out upon

the gates; the sabbath did not begin till sun setting, and the stars appeared; but before that, as the sun was declining, the shadows through the houses in Jerusalem, and mountains about it, spread themselves over the gates: and when it was near dusk, and as soon as it was so,

I commanded that the gates should be shut, and charged that they should not be opened till after the sabbath; until sun setting the next day:

and some of my servants set I at the gates, that there should be burden brought in on the sabbath day; the porters being not to be trusted, being liable to be bribed and corrupted, which he knew his servants were not; and therefore, since it might be necessary on a few occasions to open the gates to let some persons in and out, and especially such who dwelt near, and came to worship, he placed his servants there, to take care that none were admitted that had any burdens upon them.

(g) “obumbratae”, Pagninus, Montanus; “obumbrarentur”, Junius & Tremellius, Piscator, Rambachius; “incidentibus umbris”, Tigurine version.

### **Nehemiah 13:20**

For the merchants and sellers of all kind of ware,.... The Tyrians particularly, Neh 13:16 lodged without Jerusalem once or twice; one sabbath day or two, not being able to get into the city, such strict watch and care being taken to keep the gates shut; this they did, hoping the Jews would come out to them and buy their goods, though they were not admitted to bring them within the city.

### **Nehemiah 13:21**

Then I testified against them,.... Against their continuance there, and threatened them, and called heaven and earth to witness what he would do to them, if they did not depart:

why lodge ye about the wall? of the city, waiting an opportunity to get in, and tempting the Jews to come out and buy their ware:

if ye do so again, I will lay hands on you; beat them, or slay them, at least imprison them:

from that time forth came they no more on the sabbath; finding there was no likelihood of getting into the city, and that they were liable to be taken up and punished.

### **Nehemiah 13:22**

And I commanded the Levites that they should cleanse themselves,.... From all ceremonial uncleanness, that they might be fit in a ceremonial sense to perform the duties of the office on the sabbath day:

and that they should come and keep the gates, to sanctify the sabbath day; not the gates of the city, his servants were placed there, nor was this the work of the Levites, and much less did this require a particular purification to fit for it; but the gates of the temple, that no impure person might enter there; and on that day it required the greater diligence, because of the number of people that came to worship:

remember me, O my God, concerning this also; with respect to his care to have the sabbath kept holy, as well as his concern for the honour of the house of God, and the maintenance of his ministers, Neh 13:14,

and spare me according to the greatness of thy mercy; he desired to be dealt with, not according to any merits of his own, but according to the abundant mercy of God; that he would kindly and graciously vouchsafe to accept any good that he had done for his mercy sake, and forgive whatever was amiss in him.

**Nehemiah 13:23**

In those days also I saw Jews that married wives of Ashdod, of Ammon, and of Moab. Ashdod, or Azotus, as it is called in Act 8:40, was one of the five cities of the Philistines; which, though none of the seven nations with whom marriage was forbid, yet it was very unfit and improper to marry with them, Jdg 14:3. This place was a mart of the Arabians (h), where they sold their goods, to which the Jews might resort, and thereby be ensnared into such marriages; and which with the Ammonites and Moabites were unlawful, Neh 13:1.

(h) Mela de Situ Orbis, l. 1. c. 10.

**Nehemiah 13:24**

And their children spoke half in the speech of Ashdod,.... Which they learned of their mothers, so that it was a mixed language they spoke, partly Jewish and partly Philistine; but some refer this not to their speech, but to the number of their children; that half of them, which Jarchi interprets many of them, spoke in the language of Ashdod, even as many as were most with their mothers, and chiefly brought up by them:

and could not speak in the Jews' language; not at all, or so much as to be understood well, which inclines to the last sense:

but according to the language of each people; their mothers were of, whether of Ashdod, or of Ammon, or of Moab.

**Nehemiah 13:25**

And I contended with them,.... Argued with them, faithfully admonished them, and sharply reproved them:

and cursed them; assuring them that the curse of God would come upon them, unless they repented. Aben Ezra interprets it of excommunicating them, either with "Cherem" or "Niddui", which were two sorts of excommunication among the Jews; but it is a question whether as yet those were used by them:

and smote certain of them; ordered them to be beaten with rods or scourges, as transgressors of the law:

and plucked off their hair; or ordered it to be plucked off by the executioner that smote them; which sort of punishment, as it was painful, it was disgraceful and ignominious, see Isa 1:6,

and made them swear by God, saying, ye shall not give your daughters unto their sons, nor take their daughters unto your sons, or for yourselves; not intermarry with them; this they had sworn to before, Neh 10:29.

**Nehemiah 13:26**

Did not Solomon king of Israel sin by these things?.... By marrying strange wives, by whom he was drawn into idolatry, Kg1 11:3,

yet among many nations was there no king like him; as not for grandeur and riches, so not for wisdom, and yet was ensnared by his idolatrous wives:

who was beloved of God; alluding to his name Jedidiah, which signifies beloved of the Lord, Sa2 12:24

and God made him king over all Israel; which was a proof of his love to him, and so he was under the greater obligation to serve him, and him only, and yet his heart, through his wives, was turned after other gods:

even him did outlandish women cause to sin; and if so great and wise a man was enticed by them to idolatry, much more may you, and therefore it was very dangerous to marry with them.



**Nehemiah 13:27**

Shall we then hearken unto you to do all this great evil,.... To suffer it to be done, and connive at it, and not punish for it:

to transgress against our God; his law, his mind, and will:

in marrying strange wives? forbidden by him, Deu 7:1.

**Nehemiah 13:28**

And one of the sons of Joiada, the son of Eliashib the high priest,.... A grandson of the high priest; for the high priest here is Eliashib, according to our version, and not Joiada his son, according to Dr. Prideaux (i); the person designed, Josephus (k) makes to be Manasseh, the brother of Jaddua the high priest: was

son in law to Sanballat the Horonite; married a daughter of his, who was the avowed enemy of the Jewish nation; and for whom, according to the same writer, Sanballat obtained leave of Alexander to build a temple on Mount Gerizim; but this is to protract the age of Nehemiah and Sanballat to too great a length; besides, Eliashib seems to have been now high priest, and not even his son Joiada, and much less Jaddua, a grandson of Joiada:

therefore I chased him from me; drove him from his court, suffered him not to minister at the altar; banished him from the city, as Jarchi, and even from the land of Judea.

(i) Connect. par. 1. p. 412. (k) Antiqu. l. 11. c. 8. sect. 2, 4.

**Nehemiah 13:29**

Remember them, O my God,.... The priests, and punish them: because they have defiled the priesthood; by marrying strange wives, and rendering themselves unfit to officiate in it:

and the covenant of the priesthood, and of the Levites; made with Levi, Aaron, and Phinehas, see Num 24:11, of the corruption of which, complaint is made, Mal 2:4.

**Nehemiah 13:30**

Thus cleansed I them from all strangers,.... Both people and priests from strange wives, obliging them to put them away, or flee their country:

and appointing the wards of the priests and the Levites, everyone in his business: to do the work of their office in their courses and turns.

**Nehemiah 13:31**

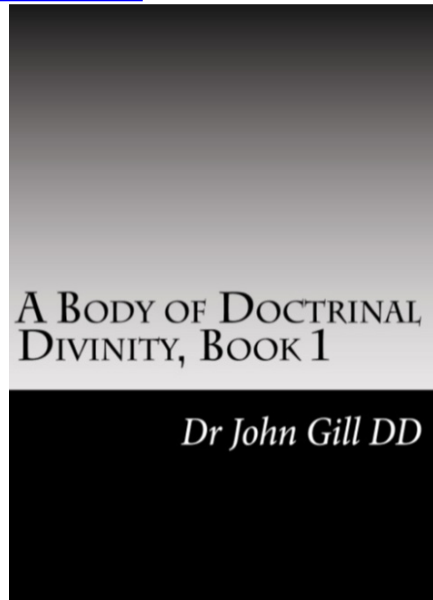
And for the wood offering, at times appointed,.... Of which see Neh 10:34. Levites were appointed to receive the wood that was brought at the times and by the persons fixed, and lay it up in its proper place, and carry it to the altar when wanted:

and for the first fruits; to receive and take care of them, and distribute them to the persons to whom they belonged:

remember me, O my God, for good; to bless him with all good things, temporal and spiritual, to keep him faithful, to make him useful in church and state, and protect him from all his enemies: or rather this may respect what goes before, that as to the wood offering and the firstfruits, that God would graciously remember him as to them, since the one was as necessary to the altar as the other was to those that minister at it.

**FURTHER PUBLICATIONS**

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**[A BODY OF DOCTRINAL DIVINITY BOOK 1](#)****A System of Practical Truths**

Authored by Dr John Gill DD, Created by David Clarke CertEd

BISAC: Religion / Christian Theology / Systematic

THIS IS BOOK 1

Treating The Subjects:

Of God, His Works, Names, Nature, Perfections And Persons. And Contains:

Chapters

- 1 Of The Being Of God
- 2 Of The Holy Scriptures
- 3 Of The Names Of God
- 4 Of The Nature Of God
- 5 Of The Attributes Of God In General, And Of His Immutability In Particular.
- 6 Of The Infinity Of God,
- 7 Of The Life Of God.
- 8 Of The Omnipotence Of God.
- 9 Of The Omniscience Of God.
- 10 Of The Wisdom Of God.
- 11 Of The Will Of God And The Sovereignty Of It
- 12 Of The Love Of God
- 13 Of The Grace Of God.
- 14 Of The Mercy Of God.
- 15 Of The Long suffering Of God.
- 16 Of The Goodness Of God.
- 17 Of The Anger And Wrath Of God.
- 18 Of The Hatred Of God.
- 19 Of The Joy Of God.
- 20 Of The Holiness Of God.
- 21 Of The Justice Or Righteousness Of God.
- 22 Of The Veracity Of God.
- 23 Of The Faithfulness Of God
- 24 Of The Sufficiency And Perfection Of God.

25 Of The Blessedness Of God.

26 Of The Unity Of God.

27 Of A Plurality In The Godhead, Or, A Trinity Of Persons In The Unity Of The Divine Essence.

28 Of The Personal Relations; Or, Relative

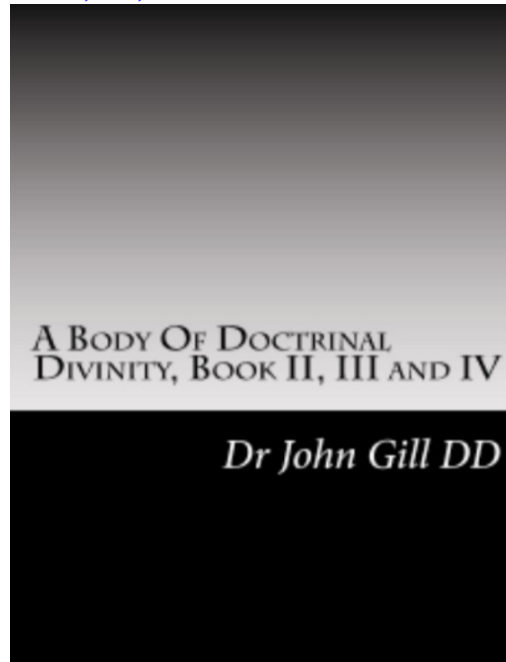
Properties, Which Distinguish The Three Divine Persons In The Deity.

29 Of The Distinct Personality, And Deity Of The Father.

30 Of The Distinct Personality, And Deity Of The Son.

31 Of The Distinct Personality, And Deity Of The Holy Spirit.

**A BODY OF DOCTRINAL DIVINITY II, III, IV.**



**A System Of Practical Truths**

Authored by Dr John Gill DD, Created by David Clarke Cert.Ed

**The contents of Book II treats the subject of Of The Acts and Works of God**

Chapter I Of The Internal Acts And Works Of God; And Of His Decrees In General

Chapter II Of The Special Decrees Of God, Relating To Rational Creatures, Angels, And Men; And Particularly Of Election.

Chapter III Of The Decree Of Rejection, Of Some Angels, And Of Some Men.

Chapter IV Of The Eternal Union Of The Elect Of God Unto Him.

Chapter V Of Other Eternal And Immanent Acts In God, Particularly Adoption And Justification.

Chapter VI Of The Everlasting Council Between The Three Divine Persons, Concerning The Salvation Of Men.

Chapter VII Of The Everlasting Covenant Of Grace, Between The Father, And The Son, And The Holy Spirit.

Chapter VIII

Of The Part Which The Father Takes In The Covenant.

Chapter IX Of The Part The Son Of God, The Second Person, Has Taken In The Covenant.

Chapter X Of Christ, As The Covenant Head Of The Elect

Chapter XI Of Christ, The Mediator Of The Covenant

Chapter XII Of Christ, The Surety Of The Covenant.

Of Christ, The Testator Of The Covenant

Chapter XIV Of The Concern The Spirit Of God Has In The Covenant Of Grace.

Chapter XV Of The Properties Of The Covenant Of Grace

Chapter XVI Of The Complacency And Delight God Had In Himself, And The Divine Persons In Each Other, Before Any Creature Was Brought Into Being.

**Book III treats the subjects Of The External Works Of God.**

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Chapter 5 Of The Confirmation Of The Elect Angels, And The Fall Of The Non-Elect.

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Chapter 5 Of The Burial Of Christ

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Chapter 7 Of The Ascension Of Christ To Heaven

Chapter 8 Of The Session Of Christ At The Right Hand Of God

Chapter 9 Of The Prophetic Office Of Christ

Chapter 10 Of The Priestly Office Of Christ

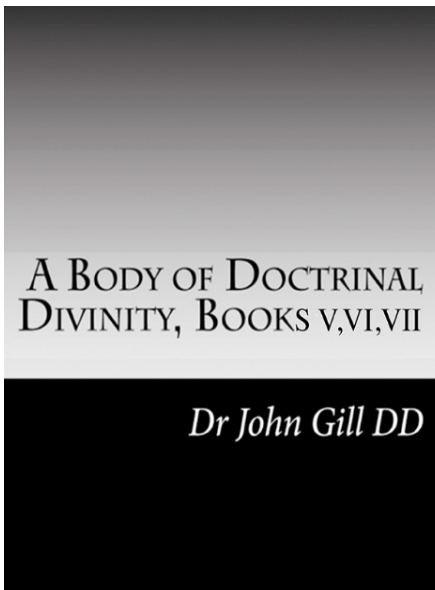
Chapter 11 Of The Intercession Of Christ

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As A Priest

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Chapter 14 Of The Spiritual Reign Of Christ

**[A BODY OF DOCTRINAL DIVINITY, V, VI, VII.](#)**



### A System OF Practical Truths

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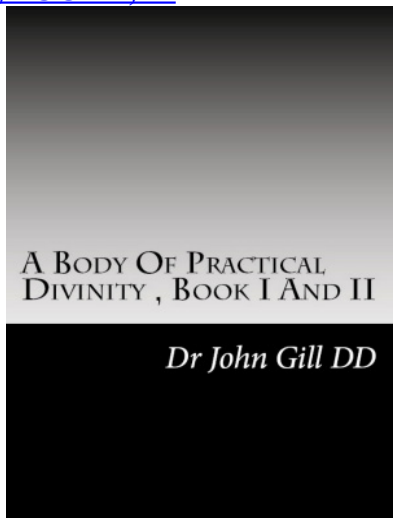
Years

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**A BODY OF PRACTICAL DIVINITY , BOOK I, II.**



**A System of Practical Truths**

Authored by Dr John Gill DD,

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This reproduction of Dr John Gill's Body of Divinity is book I and II of Practical Divinity of total of IV books.

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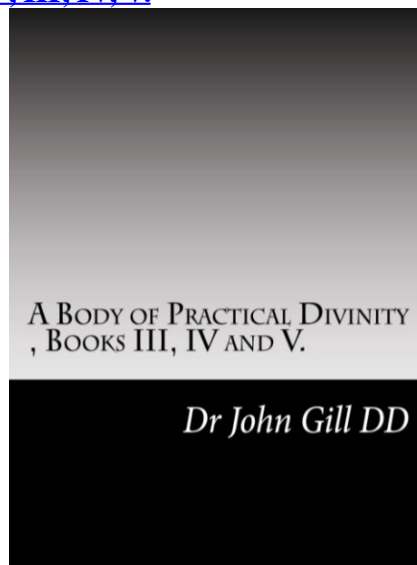
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**A BODY OF PRACTICAL DIVINITY, III, IV, V.**



**A System of Practical Truths**

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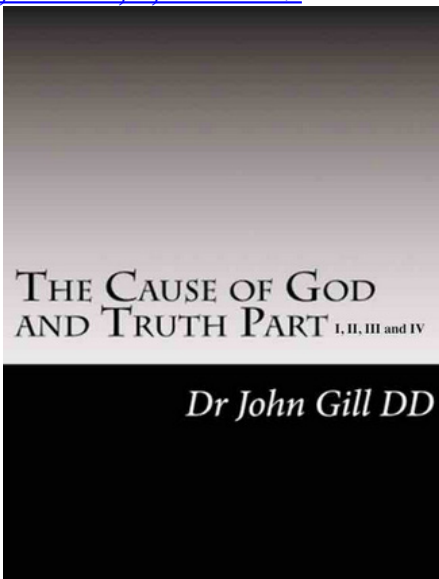
The Proof Of The Baptism Of Jewish Proselytes Inquired Into; Whether There Is Any Proof Of It Before, At, Or Quickly After The Times Of John And Christ.

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**THE CAUSE OF GOD AND TRUTH, PART I, II, III and IV.**

Authored by Dr John Gill DD, Created by David Clarke CertEd

It should be known by the reader, that the following work was undertaken and begun about the year 1733 or 1734, at which time Dr. Whitby's Discourse on the Five Points was reprinting, judged to be a masterpiece on the subject, in the English tongue, and accounted an unanswerable one ; and it was almost in the mouth of every one, as an objection to the Calvinists, Why do not ye answer Dr. Whitby ? Induced hereby, I determined to give it another reading, and found myself inclined to answer it, and thought this was a very proper and seasonable time to engage in such a work. In the year 1735, the First Part of this work was published, in which are considered the several passages of Scripture made use of by Dr. Whitby and others in favour of the Universal Scheme, and against



the Calvinistic Scheme, in which their arguments and objections are answered, and the several passages set in a just and proper light. These, and what are contained in the following Part in favour of the Particular Scheme, are extracted from Sermons delivered in a Wednesday evening's lecture.

The Second Part was published in the year 1736, in which the several passages of Scripture in favour of special and distinguishing grace, and the arguments from them, are vindicated from the exceptions of the Arminian, and particularly from Dr. Whitby, and a reply made to answers and objections to them.

The Third Part was published in 1737, and is a confutation of the arguments from reason used by the Arminians, and particularly by Dr. Whitby, against the above doctrines ; and a vindication of such as proceed on rational accounts in favour of them, in which it appears that they are no more disagreeable to right reason than to divine revelation ; to the latter of which the greatest deference should be paid, though the Rationalists of our age too much neglect it, and have almost quitted it ; but to the law and to the testimony, if they speak not according to this word it is because there is no light in them. In this part of the work is considered the agreement of the sentiments of Mr. Hobbes and the Stoic philosophers with those of the Calvinists, in which the difference between them is observed, and the calumny removed ; to which is added, a Defence of the Objections to the Universal Scheme, taken from the prescience and the providence of God, and the case of the Heathens.

The Fourth Part was published in 1738, in which the sense of the ancient writers of the Christian Church, before the times of Austin, is given ; the importance and consequence of which is shown, and that the Arminians have very little reason to triumph on that account.

This work was published at a time when the nation was greatly alarmed with the growth of Popery, and several learned gentlemen were employed in preaching against some particular points of it ; but the author of this work was of opinion, that the increase of Popery was greatly owing to the Pelagianism, Arminianism, and other supposed rational schemes men run into, contrary to divine revelation, This was the sense of our fathers in the last century, and therefore joined these and Popery together in their religious grievances they were desirous of having redressed ; and indeed, instead of lopping off the branches of Popery, the axe should be laid to the root of the tree, Arminianism and Pelagianism, the very life and soul of Popery.

This new edition, with some alterations and improvements, is now published by request.

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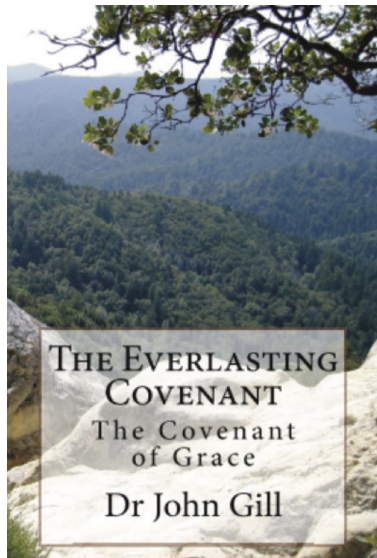
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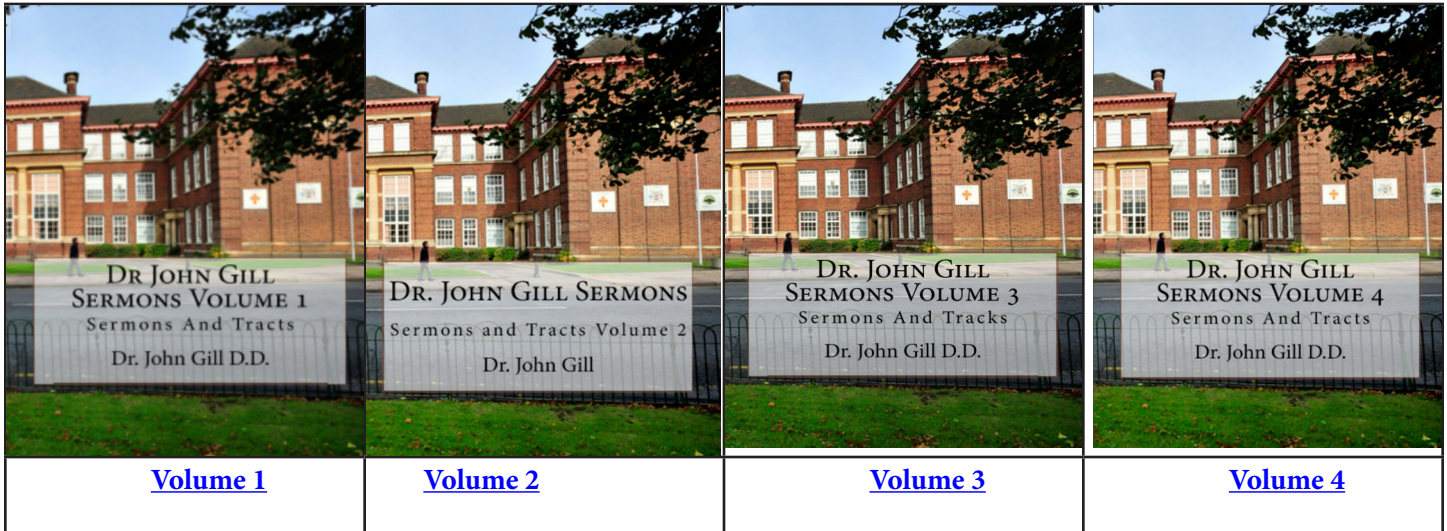
**THE EVERLASTING COVENANT**

**Dr. John Gill**

**Publisher Preface**

The publisher is the only surviving member of the Bierton Particular Baptists and his story of conversion from crime to Christ is told in, 'Bierton Strict and Particular Baptists,' advertised at the end of this book. At his conversion the publisher could hardly read. He educated himself by reading the bible and classical Christian literature and this book, 'The Everlasting Covenant,' by John Gill, extracted from John Gill's, 'A Body of Doctrinal and Practical Divinity,' was one of the writings that enabled him to understand the doctrines of grace and join the Bierton Particular Baptist Church, in 1976. About the Author Dr. John Gill (23 November 1697 – 14 October 1771) was an English Baptist pastor, biblical scholar, and theologian who held to a firm Calvinistic soteriology. Born in Kettering, Northamptonshire, he attended Kettering Grammar School where he mastered the Latin classics and learned Greek by age 11. He continued self-study in everything from logic to Hebrew, his love for the latter remaining throughout his life. In his biography of John Gill, Augustus Toplady states: "Perhaps, no man, since the days of St. Augustin, has written so largely, in defence of the system of Grace; and, certainly, no man has treated that momentous subject, in all its branches, more closely, judiciously, and successfully". What was said of Edward the Black Prince, "That he never fought a battle, which he did not win"; what has been remarked of the great Duke of Marlborough, "That he never undertook a siege, which he did not carry"; may be justly accommodated to our great Philosopher and Divine: who, so far as the distinguishing doctrines of the gospel are concerned, never besieged an error, which he did not force from its strong holds; nor ever encountered an adversary, whom he did not baffle and subdue."

## DR. JOHN GILL'S SERMONS



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This is 1 of a 4 volume set.

BISAC: Religion / Christian Theology / Eschatology

This is volume 1 of 4 volumes of Dr John Gills sermons and are reproduced for the benefit of Bierton Particular Baptists Pakistan with a view to promote the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ. It is the view of the publisher that Dr. J Gill is the clearest and most faithful in preaching and teaching the doctrines of grace. We dismiss the charges, that those who do not his writings, and call him a Hyper-Calvinist and ask you to read or your self and learn from a master in Israel. Bierton Particular Baptists have republished the whole of Dr. Gills Body of Doctrinal and Practical Divinity, The Cause of God And Truth.

### **Volume 1**

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- 1 The Doctrine Of The Saints Final Perseverance, Asserted And Vindicated
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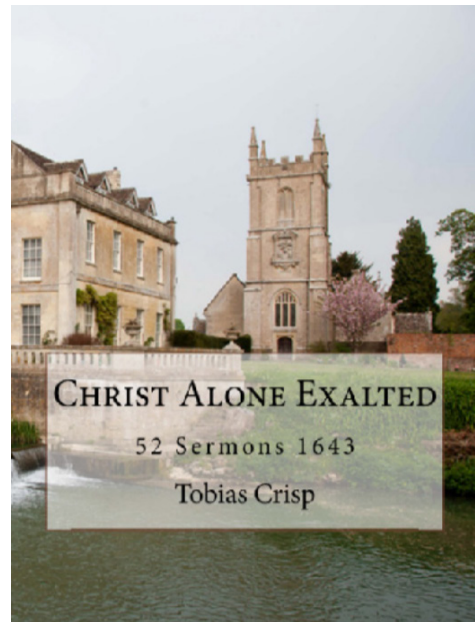
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 11 The Form Of Sound Words To Be Held Fast A Charge,  
 12 The Faithful Minister Of Christ Crowned.

## CHRIST ALONE EXALTED



52 Sermons 1643

Authored by Dr Tobias Crisp D.D., From an idea by Bierton Particular Baptists, Created by David Clarke

ISBN-13: 978-1977733160 (CreateSpace-Assigned)

ISBN-10: 1977733166

BISAC: Religion / Christian Theology / Soteriology

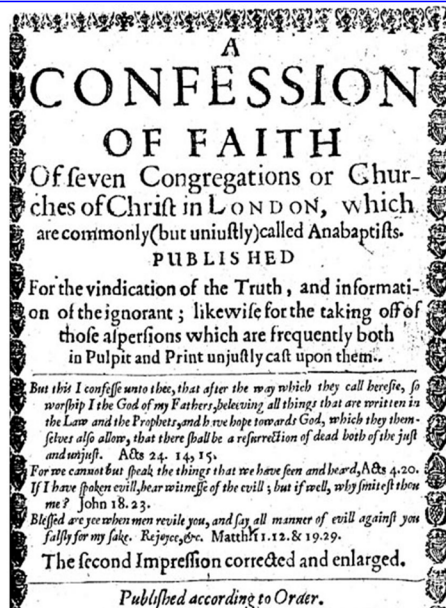
Tobias Crisp was a preacher of the gospel in England in the 17 century. He was born in 1600 and died in 1643 at which time these sermons were published.

He lived at the time when the First London Particular Baptist Confession of 1644 was published and it is clear from these sermons he taught Calvinists truths.

He preached the doctrines of grace and was charged with being an Antinomian and provoked opposition from various quarters.

Dr. John Gill republished these sermons along with comments, in his defense, showing that Tobias Crisp clearly taught the truths of the Lord Jesus Christ.

THE FIRST LONDON PARTICULAR BAPTISTS 1644-66 CONFESSION



Compiled by David Clarke

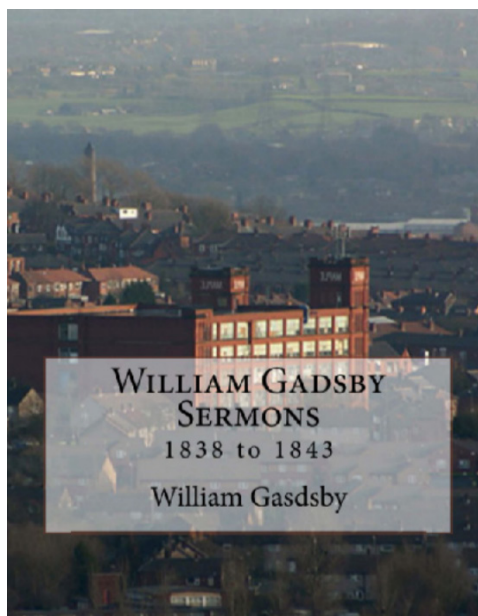
1 FIRST LONDON BAPTIST CONFESSION OF FAITH 1644

Subscribed in the Names of seven Churches in London

2 FIRST LONDON BAPTIST CONFESSION 1646, 2nd EDITION

The Second edition is better than the first confession as it is much less legalistic but strong in the teaching of salvation (Soteriology) and predestination. This book included a set of recommended readings relating to Reformed theology

WILLIAM GADSBY SERMONS



Sermons: 1838 to 1843

Authored by William Gadsby

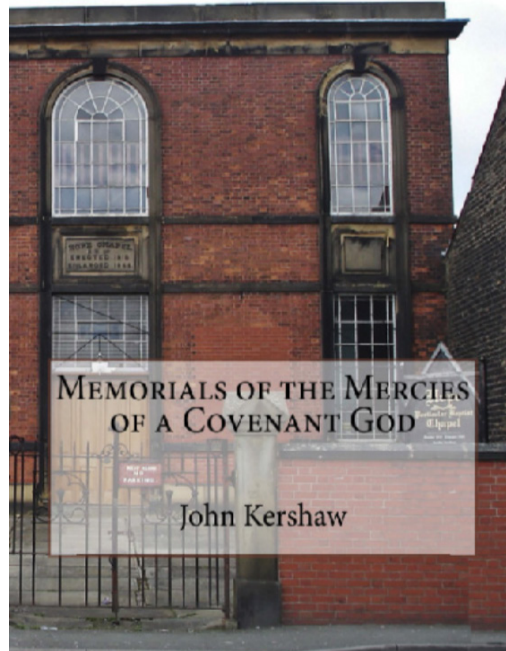
This volume contains a tribute of high esteem, given by J.C Philpot on the death of William Gadsby, in 1844 and contains series of sermons preached between September 1838 and 14th June 1843.

William Gadsby became a Particular Baptist minister in 1798 and went on to preach to many thousands of people. He later published Hymns, in a hymn books still used today by Particular Baptists.

He was born in Attleborough, Warwickshire in 1773. He had little or no education. In 1790, he went to see men hanged, and the horrid spectacle had such an effect on his mind that he was never afterward like the same youth. His memoirs tell of the lengths of folly into which he ran prior to this time and were often related by him in his ministry. These memoirs were published shortly after his death.

William Gadsby preached the distinguishing doctrines of grace that gave all the glory to the Lord Jesus Christ for his salvation.

### [MEMORIALS OF THE MERCIES OF A COVENANT GOD](#)



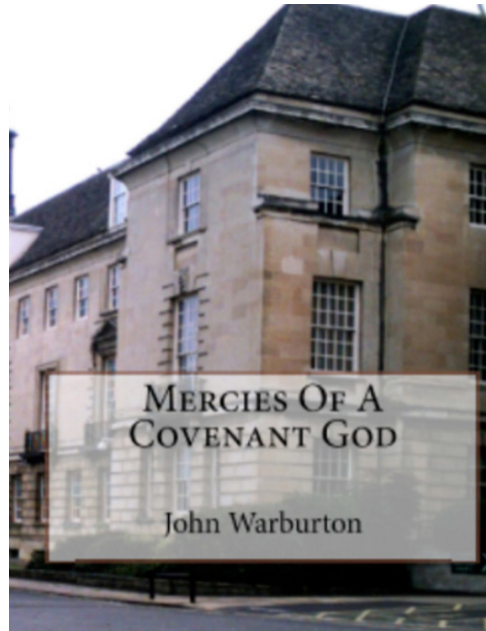
Authored by John Kershaw

BISAC: Biography & Autobiography / Personal Memoirs

John Kershaw (1792-1870) was a Particular Baptists pastor for fifty-two years of Hope Chapel, Rochdale. He exercised a powerful ministry among the church, and became an influential preacher across the country. Few ministers remain faithful to a single congregation for an extended period—Kershaw committed himself to the same church he attended as a boy. This autobiography “Memorials of the Mercies of a Covenant God while Traveling through the Wilderness”, is one of the best written of its genre.

He preached and taught the doctrines of grace along with his contemporaries William Gadsby, John Warburton, J.C. Philpot.

These men were all Calvinists maintaining the bible to be the word of God and giving all the praise and glory to the Lord Jesus Christ for their salvation



Mercies Of A Covenant God

Authored by John Warburton, Created by Bierton Particular Baptists

BISAC: Religion / Christianity / Baptist

God be merciful to me a sinner was the cry of John Warburton on discovering and realizing he ruined lost condition before God. He knew and felt the condemnation of God against him. He knew of no way but to mend his ways, repent to find mercy. He could think of no other way to save his soul but by mending his life, doing his duty and pleasing God.

This book, “Mercies of a Covent God” tells the life story of John Warburton, of his call by grace, and becoming a Particular Baptists ministry in England. This book is not dry or intellectual Calvinism but experiential Christian experience. Teaching the way of salvation as Gods way, Father, Son and Holy Spirit engaged in covenant to save not to propose salvation but call by grace. Faith alone in the person of the Lord Jesus Christ, his atoning blood, and imputed righteousness are clearly taught be blessings of grace.

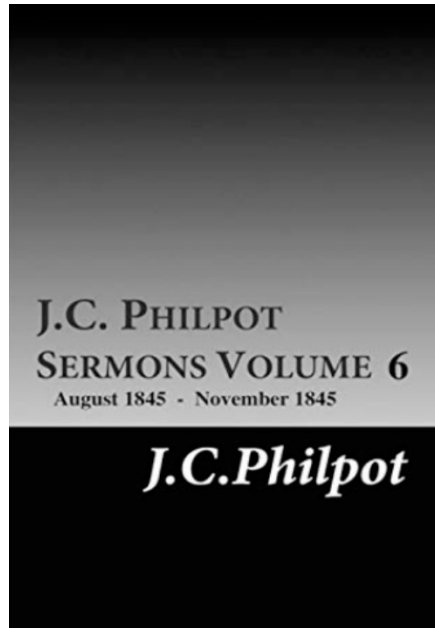
This is recommended read for Preterits as it is important, in order to have a correct understanding of Last things, we must have a correct view of first things, i.e. the beginnings to understand last things.

The Soteriology of John Warburton, like all Particular Baptists in the, is Calvinistic, but not textbook Calvinism. It is felt that a correct view of the way of salvation is important to understand eschatology, correctly and not in a dry textbook way. True religion is more than notion, Something must be known and felt.

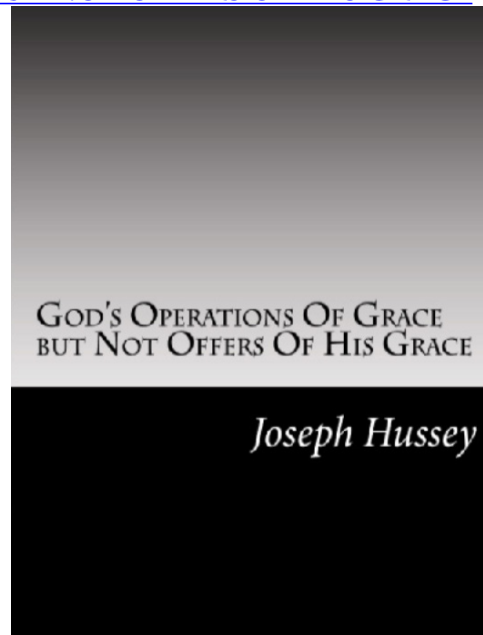
This book also contains short bibliographies of the hymn writers that are quoted in this book

J.C. PHILPOT SERMONS

12 Volumes 1837 to 1866

**Example August 1845-November 1845**

This contains the continuing series of J.C, Philpot sermons, there are 16 in this volume. Sermon 90 Divine Arithmetic 91 Miracles Not Ceased 92 Spiritual Delight, and Confiding Trust 93 Divine Enlargement And Spiritual Obedience 94 The Refuge Of The Oppressed 95 The Anchor within the Veil 96 Divine Husbandry 97 Blessings Imputed, And Mercies Imparted 98 The Promises Inherited through Faith and Patience 99 Blessings Imputed, And Mercies Imparted 100 The Believer's Gain His Loss, The Believer's Loss His Gain 101 The Precious And The Vile 102 The Knowledge Of Good And Evil 103 The Rule Of Christian Union And Communion 104 A Prayer Of The Church 105 The Glory Of Zion Her Sure Defence 106 Called Unto Divine Fellowship

**GOD'S OPERATIONS OF GRACE BUT NOT OFFERS OF HIS GRACE**

Published 1707

Authored by Joseph Hussey

This work of Joseph Hussey treats the subject of preaching the gospel in light of the distinguishing doctors of grace. This is as relevant today as it was in the 18 century as there are those who call themselves Calvinists but are not and advocate "Duty Faith" and "Duty Repentance", terms that are used to express a belief that it is the duty of

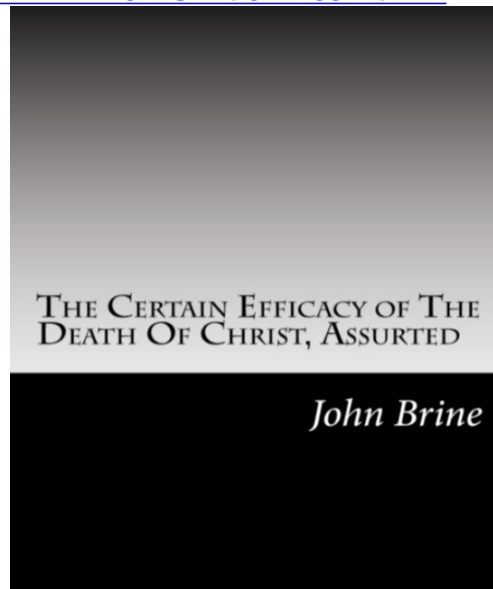
all men, every where, to receive and accept the Lord Jesus Christ as their own personal Saviour.

There are those historically, such as Richard Baxter and Andrew Fuller, who advocated, “Duty Faith” and ‘Duty Repentance’, in the UK and as a result brought about a great division the among Particular Baptists and Presbyterians and evangelicals. I am not sure about America.

This work of Joseph Hussey denies “Duty Faith” and “Duty Repentance” and demonstrates that saving faith is a free grace gift of God, bestowed upon those being effectually called by the Spirit of God, and who are stilled the elect. That is those for who the Lord Jesus died.

This book is published to assist Preterits’ studying eschatology and all Calvinists, as it is important to have a correct understanding of the nature of the fall of Man and the corruption of human nature in order to see the glory of free grace.

**THE CERTAIN EFFICACY OF THE DEATH OF CHRIST ASSERTED**



**Authored by John Brine**

BISAC: Religion / Christian Theology / Soteriology

This work declares the Glory of God in all his Perfections, the Honour of Christ, and the eternal Happiness of his People, all of which are intimately concerned in them. This is treated in four parts: In the First John Brine endeavours to prove the limited Extent of the Death of CHRIST, and the certain Salvation of all those for whom he died.

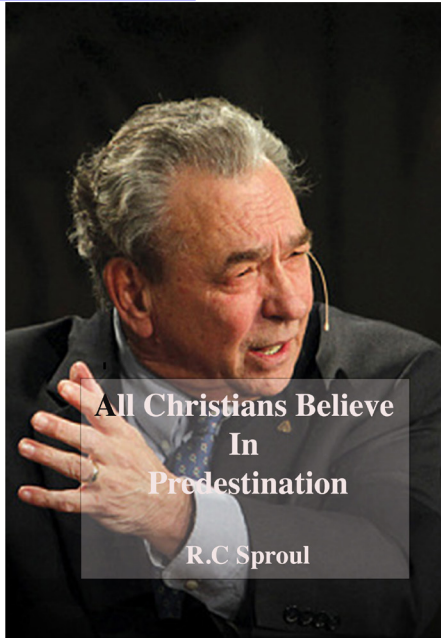
In the Second, the Objections which are usually urged by the Arminians, and others, will be answered.

In the Third shall attempt to prove the Impossibility of the Salvation of the Non-Elect, upon the Supposition of no other than a conditional Provision of Salvation being made for them.

In the Fourth Part shall attend to what he delivers on the Subjects of the Imputation of original Sin to Men, the Charge of Sin on CHRIST, and the Imputation of his Righteousness to his People.

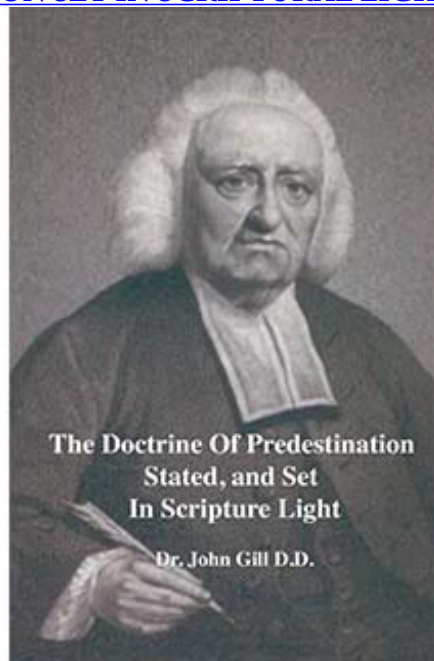
This has been republished by Bierton Particular Baptists to further the cause of God and truth, it opposes Arminianism, Islam, and duty faith.

## ALL CHRISTIANS BELIEVE IN PREDESTINATION



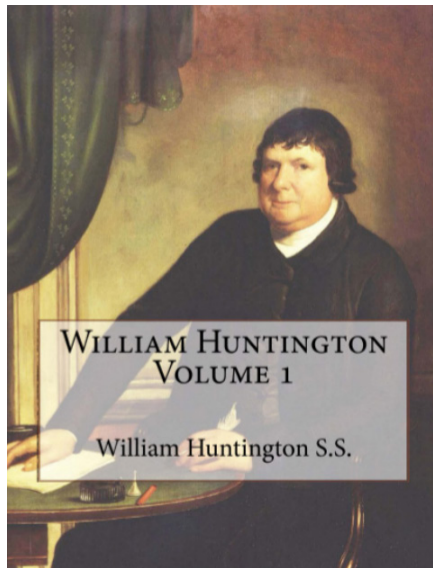
This lecture is republished for the help of those Christians having difficulties in understanding the bible teaching of Predestination. Further to this study we encourage students to study soteriology and also of eschatology, both of which we can help by referring you to the further publications we recommend and are listed at the end of this book. The lecture is available on Youtube under the title All Christians Believe In Predestination.

## THE DOCTRINE OF PREDESTINATION SET IN SCRIPTURAL LIGHT



Dr. John Gill

This matter of predestination was set forth by Dr. John Gill against John Wesley who denied the truth of the predestination of some to eternal life by Jesus Christ.

**WILLIAM HUNTINGTON VOLUME 1****Of a 20 Volume Set.**

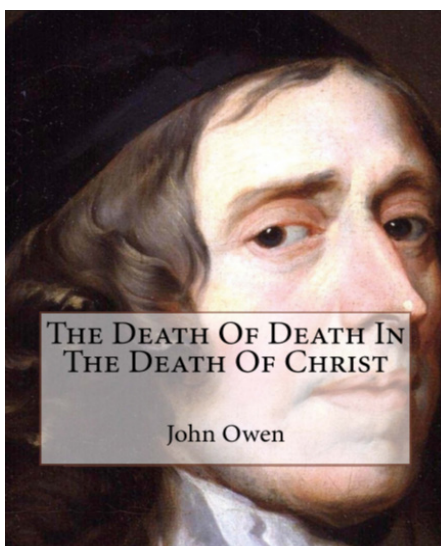
Authored by William Huntington S.S.

BISAC: Religion / Christianity / Calvinist

William Huntington S.S. (2nd February 1745- 1 July 1813) was an English preacher and the man who preached to the Queen of England as well as the Prime Minister, and signed his letters William Huntington, S.S. (Saved Sinner). He taught that the moral law, or the 10 commandments, as published by Moses, was not the rule of life for the believer but rather the gospel, which is the Law Christ. He delighted in talking of the everlasting love of God, blessed redemption, all conquering grace, mysterious providence, the Spirit's work in mens souls and many other good news themes. He was charge with being an Antinomian although his writings and sermons do not bear this out. Huntington was a strict Calvinist who believed some were predestined to eternal life and some were not. He founded or opened chapels throughout England, many of which survive to this day.

There are 20 volumes of his works that were published in 1811, this is volume 1 of that series.

This volume contains the Kingdom Of Heaven Taken By Prayer and The Spiritual Sea Voyage.

**THE DEATH OF DEATH IN THE DEATH OF CHRIST**

**John Owen**

BISAC: Religion / Christian Theology / Soteriology

The Death of Death in the Death of Christ is a polemical work, designed to show, among other things, that the doctrine of universal redemption is un-scriptural and destructive of the gospel. There are many, therefore, to whom

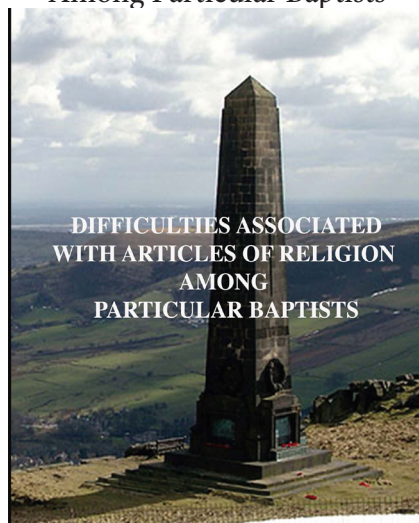


it is not likely to be of interest. Those who see no need for doctrinal exactness and have no time for theological debates which show up divisions between so-called Evangelicals may well regret its reappearance. Some may find the very sound of Owen's thesis so shocking that they will refuse to read his book at all; so passionate a thing is prejudice, and so proud are we of our theological shibboleths. But it is hoped that this reprint will find itself readers of a different spirit. There are signs today of a new upsurge of interest in the theology of the Bible: a new readiness to test traditions, to search the Scriptures and to think through the faith. It is to those who share this readiness that Owen's treatise is offered, in the belief that it will help us in one of the most urgent tasks facing Evangelical Christendom today—the recovery of the gospel.

This last remark may cause some raising of eyebrows, but it seems to be warranted by the facts. There is no doubt that Evangelicalism today is in a state of perplexity and unsettlement. In such matters as the practice of evangelism, the teaching of holiness, the building up of local church life, the pastor's dealing with souls and the exercise of discipline, there is evidence of widespread dissatisfaction with things as they are and of equally widespread uncertainty as to the road ahead. This is a complex phenomenon, to which many factors have contributed; but, if we go to the root of the matter, we shall find that these perplexities are all ultimately due to our having lost our grip on the biblical gospel. Without realising it, we have during the past century bartered that gospel for a substitute product which, though it looks similar enough in points of detail, is as a whole a decidedly different thing. Hence our troubles; for the substitute product does not answer the ends for which the authentic gospel has in past days proved itself so mighty. The new gospel conspicuously fails to produce deep reverence, deep repentance, deep humility, a spirit of worship, a concern for the church. Why? We would suggest that the reason lies in its own character and content. It fails to make men God-centred in their thoughts and God-fearing in their hearts because this is not primarily what it is trying to do. One way of stating the difference between it and the old gospel is to say that it is too exclusively concerned to be "helpful" to man—to bring peace, comfort, happiness, satisfaction—and too little concerned to glorify God. The old gospel was "helpful," too—more so, indeed, than is the new—but (so to speak) incidentally, for its first concern was always to give glory to God. It was always and essentially a proclamation of Divine sovereignty in mercy and judgment, a summons to bow down and worship the mighty Lord on whom man depends for all good, both in nature and in grace. Its centre of reference was unambiguously God. But in the new gospel the centre of reference is man. This is just to say that the old gospel was religious in a way that the new gospel is not. Whereas the chief aim of the old was to teach men to worship God, the concern of the new seems limited to making them feel better. The subject of the old gospel was God and His ways with men; the subject of the new is man and the help God gives him. There is a world of difference. The whole perspective and emphasis of gospel preaching has changed.

### [DIFFICULTIES ASSOCIATED WITH ARTICLES OF RELIGION](#)

Among Particular Baptists



By David Clarke

Articles of Religion are important when dealing with matters of the Christian Religion, however problems occur

when churches fail to recognize there is a growth in grace and knowledge of the Lord Jesus Christ in any believer. When a person first believes in the Lord Jesus Christ they cannot possibly have a comprehensive knowledge of a churches constitution or its articles of religion, before solemnly subscribing to them. The author David Clarke has introduced the Doctrines of Grace to Bierton Particular Baptists Pakistan, situated in Rahim Yar Khan, Pakistan and bearing in mind his own experience with articles of religion he has compiled Bierton Particular Baptists Pakistan articles of religion from the first Bierton Particular Baptists of 1831, of which he is the sole surviving member, the First London Baptist Confession, 2nd edition 1646, and those of Dr John Gill, in order to avoid some of the difficulties encounter by Particular Baptist during the later part of the 19 century and since. This booklet highlights the problem and suggests the Bierton Particular Baptists Pakistan is as step in the right direction.

**Isaiah 52:8 Thy watchmen shall lift up the voice; with the voice together shall they sing: for they shall see eye to eye, when the LORD shall bring again Zion.**

ISBN-13: 978-1532953446

BISAC: Religion / Christianity / Baptist

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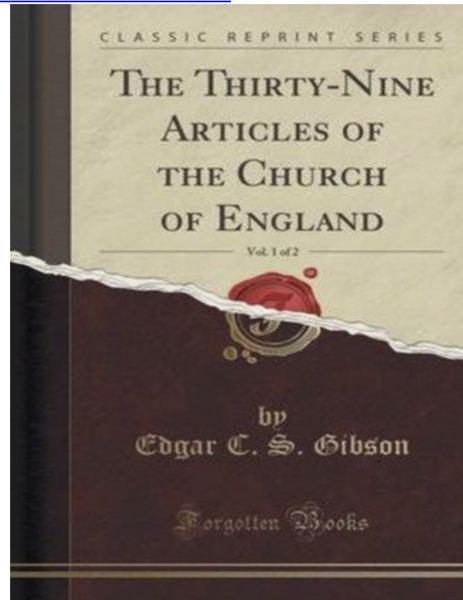
Serious Doctrinal Errors Held

Recommendation for Serious Minded

5 Bierton Particular Baptists Pakistan 2016

6 Appendix 60 Gospel Standard 31 Articles

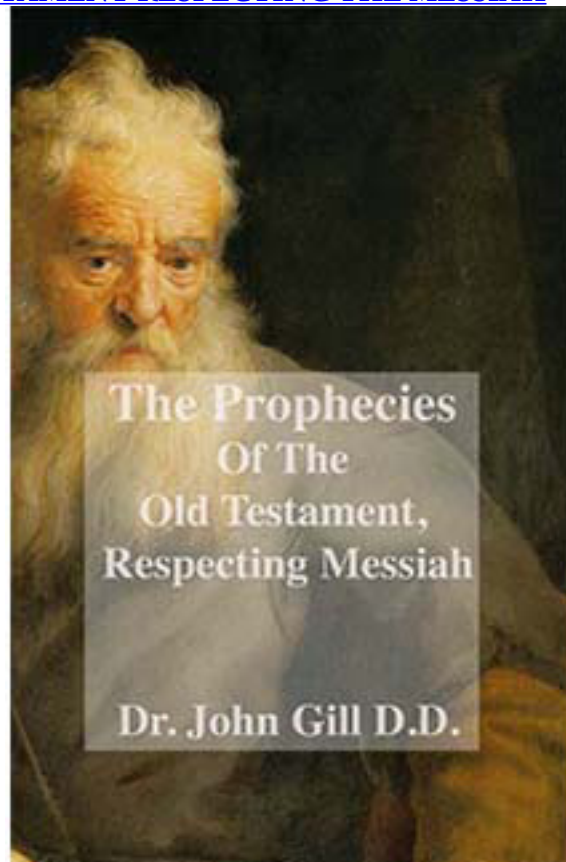
## [THE 39 ARTICLES OF THE CHURCH OF ENGLAND](#)



### Introduction

The 39 Articles of the Church Of England are a set of doctrines outlined by that church denomination in the year 1562 and revised several times with the final revision occurring in 1571. These articles were also referred to as “The Thirty-nine Articles of Religion”. These articles were created to address various theological and doctrinal controversies that developed in Christendom during the period of time known as the English Reformation. Most of the issues addressed by the 39 Articles pertained to the differences between the Roman Catholic Church and the Church of England which King Henry the 8th formed, after he was excommunicated from the Catholic Church.

## [PROPHECIES OF THE OLD TESTAMENT RESPECTING THE MESSIAH](#)



CHAPTER 1 The Introduction; with a particular consideration of that first prophecy, respecting the

MESSIAH, recorded in Genesis 3:15.

CHAPTER 2 Showing that the Messiah was promised to Abraham, and what advantages the nations of the world were to receive by him. CHAPTER 3 Concerning the Time of the Messiah's Coming

CHAPTER 4 Showing the Lineage and Descent of the MESSIAH. CHAPTER 5 Concerning the miraculous Conception and Birth of the MESSIAH.

CHAPTER 6 Concerning the place of the MESSIAH'S Birth.

CHAPTER 7 Showing the several Circumstances which were to attend or follow upon the MESSIAH'S Birth, according to the prophets; and how the; were punctually fulfilled in JESUS.

CHAPTER 8 Concerning the Prophetic office of the MESSIAH; wherein is proved, that he is the prophet spoken of in Deuteronomy 8:15 also inquiry is made, who was to be his fore-runner; what was his prophetic work; and where he was to perform his office.

CHAPTER 9 Concerning the remarkable occurrence of the MESSIAH'S riding to Jerusalem upon an ass, wherein the prophecy in Zechariah 9:9. Is particularly considered.

CHAPTER 10 Concerning the sufferings of the Messiah; wherein Psalm and Isaiah 53 are particularly considered: as also the several circumstances which were to attend these sufferings.

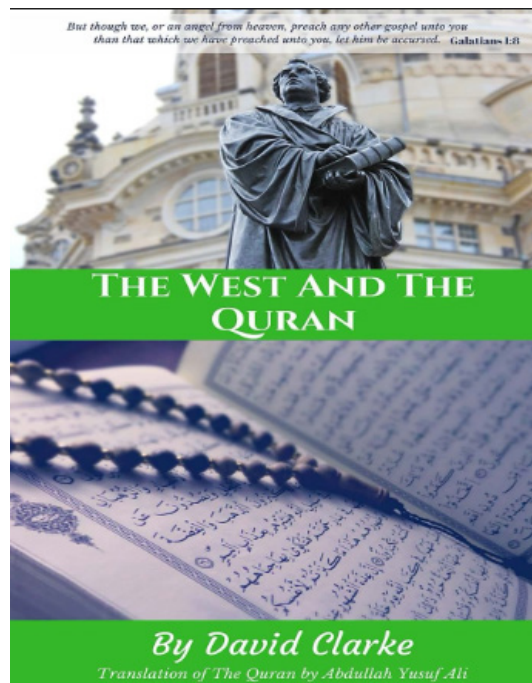
CHAPTER 11 Concerning the Resurrection of the MESSIAH from the dead.

CHAPTER 12 Concerning the Ascension of the MESSIAH to Heaven, his session at God's right hand, and second coming to judgment.

CHAPTER 13 Concerning the magnificent and august names and titles of the MESSIAH in the Old Testament Chapter.

14 Prophecies Concerning the second coming of Christ. The publisher introduces a fulfilled view of prophecy.

## [THE WEST AND THE QURAN](#)



### **Translation of The Quran**

Authored by David Clarke, Authored with Abdullah Yusuf Ali

ISBN-13: 978-1548914042 (CreateSpace-Assigned)

ISBN-10: 1548914045

BISAC: Religion / Biblical Criticism & Interpretation / General

This Publication treats the subject of the Quran and the reason for presenting this is due to a rise in Islamic terrorism which has caused great concern to many in the West. So with the current massive influx of Muslim's

migrating from the various parts of the world into Europe, Great Britain and the USA, it seems reasonable to discover the roots of Islam in order to deal with the problems that have occurred. Our Politicians seem clueless on how to deal with this enemy and when they are questioned they appear to know relatively little about Muhammad and his teaching. One of our greatest Prime-ministers in Britain William Gladstone declared the Quran an "Accursed book" and once held a copy of Muhammad's Quran up in Parliament, declaring: "So long as there is this book there will be no peace in the world".

Winston Churchill was one of the greatest leaders of the 20th Century, who served as Prime Minister of the United Kingdom during World War II and again from 1951 to 1955.

As an officer of the British Army in 1897 and 1898, he fought against a Pashtun tribe in the north west frontier of British India and also at the Battle of Omdurman in Sudan. In both of those conflicts, he had eye-opening encounters with Muslims. These incidents allowed his keen powers of observation and always-fluid pen to weigh in on the subject of Islamic society.

While these words were written when he was only 25-years-old (in 1899), they serve as a prophetic warning to Western civilisation today.

"How dreadful are the curses which Mohammedanism (Islam) lays on its votaries! Besides the fanatical frenzy, which is as dangerous in a man as hydrophobia in a dog, there is this fearful fatalistic apathy."

Churchill apparently witnessed the same phenomenon in several places he visited. "The effects are apparent in many countries: improvident habits, slovenly systems of agriculture, sluggish methods of commerce and insecurity of property exist wherever the followers of the Prophet rule or live."

He saw the temporal and the eternal tainted by their belief system. "A degraded sensualism deprives this life of its grace and refinement, the next of its dignity and sanctity," he wrote.

The second-class status of women also grated at the young officer. "The fact that in Mohammedan law every woman must belong to some man as his absolute property, either as a child, a wife, or a concubine, must delay the final extinction of slavery until the faith of Islam has ceased to be a great power among men," he noted.

"Individual Muslims may show splendid qualities, but the influence of the religion paralyses the social development of those who follow it. No stronger retrograde force exists in the world."

Well before the birth of modern Israel, its terror tactics and drive for world domination were felt. "Far from being moribund, Mohammedanism is a militant and proselytising faith. It has already spread throughout Central Africa, raising fearless warriors at every step, and were it not that Christianity is sheltered in the strong arms of science, the science against which it (Islam) has vainly struggled, the civilisation of modern Europe might fall, as fell the civilisation of ancient Rome."

With the influx of Muslim people from the various parts of the continent along with their culture all of which is shaped by the teachings of Muhammad in the Quran.

Some objections and Observations are as follows:

Islam means submission

Islam does not mean peace

Multiculturalism is a failure.

Islam denies the natural rights of women

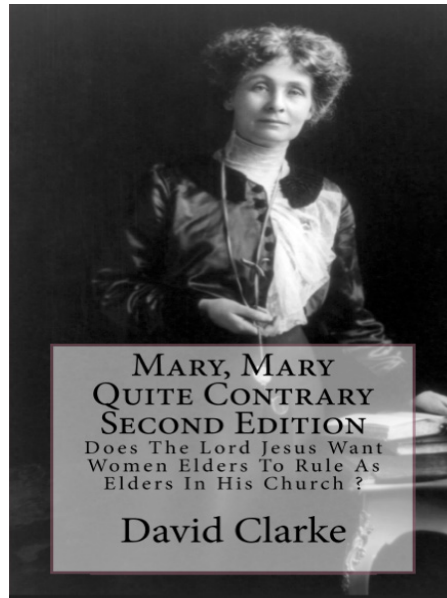
An Objection Halal Meat

An Objection To Shari-ah Law

Objects to Female Genital Mutilation (FGM)

An objection to Jihad which seeks over throw Western culture through education, Social activity, political activation and Law.

For this reason, this publication is made available for education purposes. With this prayer that God may grant us all wisdom as to how we may respond to the rise and threat of Islam.



Second Edition: Does The Lord Jesus Want Women To Rule As Elders In His Church ??  
 Authored by Mr David Clarke Cert E

ISBN-13: 978-1514206812 (CreateSpace-Assigned)

ISBN-10: 1514206811

BISAC: Religion / Christian Theology / General

When treating the subject of women elders in the church we are not dealing with the affairs of a secular society and so it has nothing to do with women's rights, equality of sex or race in the world. This matter only relates to men and women in a Christian church. It is about the rules of the house of God, which is the church of the living God and rules for those who are members of the body of Christ and members of an heavenly county.

### **The Suffragettes**

Emmeline Pankhurst 1858 -1928) was a Suffragette and worked very hard to bring equal rights for women to vote as men. In the year of her death all women over 21 gained the right to vote. The Suffragette movement brought about many changes for the better in a secular society but not so for women seeking to follow Christian principles. One of her famous quotes was, "Trust in God She shall provide". Terms which do not reflect Christian beliefs. We know God will provide and He is not a she.

In the USA and the UK, women's political rights were brought into general political consciousness by the suffragettes and since then there have been legal rights granted to the Lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender groups, same sex marriages, along with the development of the feminist movement and the appointment of persons from the LBGT community to responsible positions in the Church of England. All of this has caused conflict in the Christian community due to differences beliefs of right and wrong.

This book seeks to show what the bible has to say about the role of women in the church and family. Since these rules are taught by the Apostles of Christ they are the word of God to us and we should obey. The secular world may differ and turn from the narrow path taught in scripture but we should follow the word of God, this is our wisdom.

Video Youtube Playlist Mary, Mary Quite Contrary

## CONVERTED ON LSD TRIP

**The Bucks Herald** Second Edition  
 Not Weekly Sales: 23,342 THURSDAY FEBRUARY 11, 1971 price 8d 32 pages  
 Established 1832

### CONVERTED ON LSD TRIP

David Clarke who had a three-year career of undetected crime, experienced a "Christian conversion" whilst suffering from the effects of LSD, he told Aylesbury magistrates, on Tuesday. After writing with his conscience for a year, he confessed to 24 crimes, and gave information leading to the recovery of over £1000 worth of stolen property. In court

result of taking the drug, and went on "I warn any young person who hears my testimony, "The effects of LSD are so bad, and I warn you to stay clear". While in this condition he said he, "Called on the name of Jesus" and his torment went from him.

**Seeking Truth**  
 "Religion to me was rubbish, and for many people who could not stand on their own feet", he said.

**Voice Of Christ**  
 "Jesus Christ spoke to me as clearly as I speak here today saying, "David, I am with you", he said. "What you have been going through is nothing compared to what hell is like" Mr. Murray, of Manor Crescent Wendover said he was habitually sceptical of sudden conversions, and preferred to put them to the test of time. The time, which had elapsed, since Clarke's profession of faith had convinced him that this young man would now be salt and light to society. "He is in truth, a new man, and had experienced what Christ called a second birth". Murray said Clarke now put himself out to be of assistance, read the bible intently, always carried a New Testament, attended a wide circle of churches and would spend hours in discussion on spiritual things.

**Difficulty**  
 Clarke's difficulty during the months spent deciding how to make amends for his past had been the problem of accusing himself, without informing on others.

Continued inside

David Could these boys do any real wrong? Michael

he pleaded guilty to charges of stealing a £300 colour television set from an old peoples home, a £20 spray gun, and a hydraulic jack. He asked for 21 other charges to be taken into consideration, including stealing a builder's shed, two cars, and an electric arc welder, two other TV sets, two compressors, and a road trailer.

He had good prospects of getting on in life he went on but "I was not satisfied with what I had, I was greedy, selfish and boastful" Clarke had been using pop pills, and marijuana since he was 16 he told the court, but it was after taking LSD that he experienced what he described as, "a major thing in my life". He described the "torment" he suffered, as a

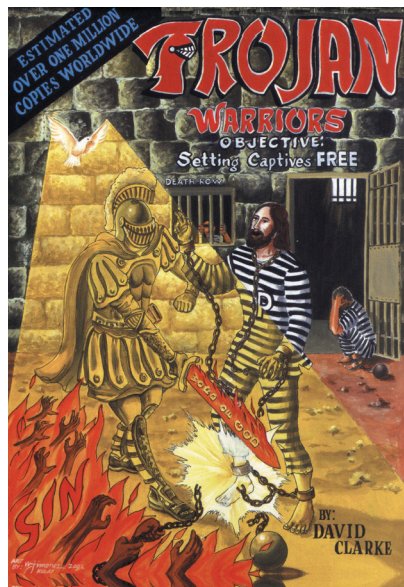
By David Clarke (Author)

3rd Edition Paperback – 3 Jun. 2020

This third edition of, 'Converted on LSD Trip', is written to bring attention to the reality of the work of the Lord Jesus Christ, in changing the lives of David Clarke, whilst on a bad trip on LSD, on 16th January 1970, and the life of his brother Michael Clarke, some 30 years later, when a prisoner, in the Philippines, and making them evangelist workers seeking to teach the gospel of Christ to men. It is intended to use this book as a tool for evangelism in order to encourage others in the work of preaching the gospel of Christ to men. This is also intended to draw attention to the work of Jesus Christ now in Baguio City, Philippines, by William O. Poloc a former inmate of New Bilibid Prison. It is believed and stressed that it is important to teach the traditional Christian doctrines of grace, to combat the error of modern-day Godliness, unbelief, homosexuality, feminism, Islam and of the importance of teaching the Deity of the Lord Jesus Christ, and the infallibility of the word of God

[View as a video book \(click to view\)](#)

## TROJAN WARRIORS



Setting Captives Free

Authored by Mr David Clarke CertEd, Authored by Mr Michael J Clarke

List Price: \$15.99

5.25" x 8" (13.335 x 20.32 cm)

Black & White on White paper

446 pages

ISBN-13: 978-1508574989 (CreateSpace-Assigned)

ISBN-10: 1508574987

BISAC: Religion / Christian Life / General

Trojan Warriors is a true story of two brothers, Michael and David Clarke, who are brought up in Aylesbury, Buckinghamshire, England. They became criminals in the 60's and were sent to prison for malicious wounding and carrying a fire arm without a license, in 1967.

They both turned from their lives of crimes in remarkable ways but some 25 years apart, and then they worked together helping other prison inmates, on their own roads of reformation.

David the younger brother became a Christian, after a bad experience on LSD, in 1970, and then went on to educate himself and then on to Higher Education. He became a baptist minister and taught electronics for over 20 years, in colleges of Higher and Further Education. Michael however remained untouched and continued his flamboyant life style ending up serving a 16 year prison sentence, in the Philippines, in 1996, where he died of tuberculosis in 2005.

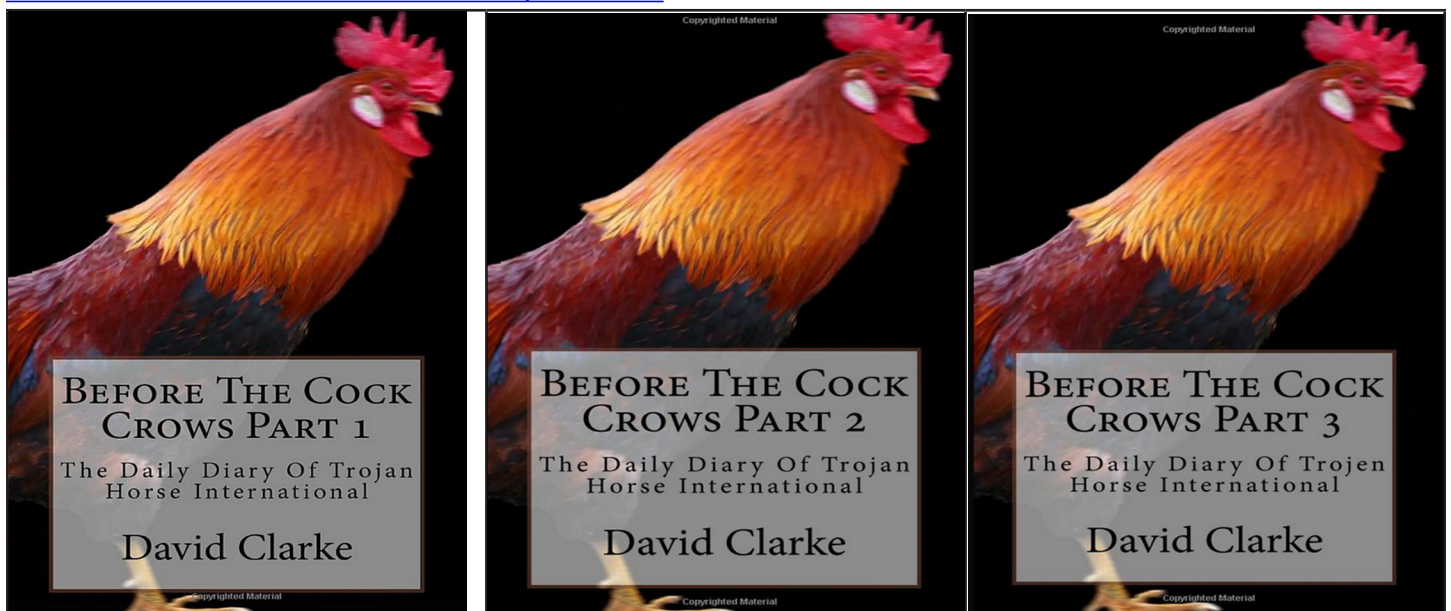
When David heard the news of his brothers arrest on an ITN television news bulletin he felt compelled to wrote their story. And then when he heard of his own brothers conversion from crime to Christ, after serving 5 year of his sentence, he published their story in his book, "Converted on LS Trip", and directed a mission of help to the Philippines to assist his brother. This book tells the story of this mission.

They then worked together with many former notorious criminals, who were inmates in New Bilibid Prison, who too had become Christians and turned their lives around. This help was to train them to become preachers of the gospel of Jesus Christ .

This book contains the 66 testimonies of some of these men who convicted former criminals, incarcerated in New Bilibid Prison. They are the, "Trojan Warriors", who had turned their lives around and from crime to Christ. Twenty two of these testimonies are men who are on Death Row scheduled to be executed by lethal injection.

Revelation 12 verse 11: And they overcame him by the blood of the lamb and the word of their testimony and they loved not their lives unto the death.

**[BEFORE THE COCK CROWS PART 1, 2 AND 3.](#)**



[PART 1](#)

[PART 2](#)

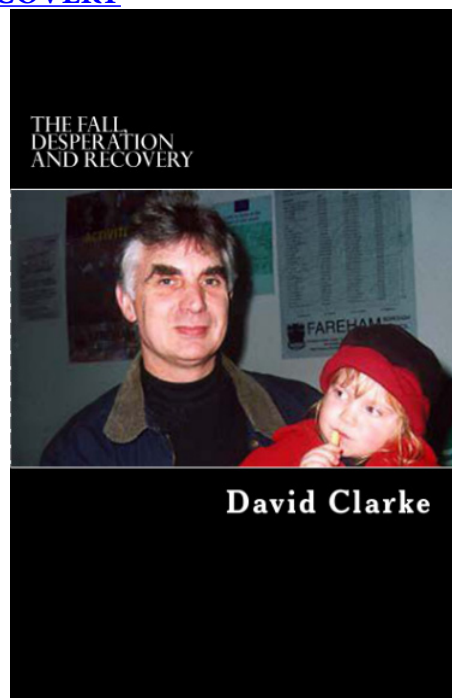
[PART 3](#)

By David Clarke



David Clarke the Director of Trojan Horse International CM encountered remarkable opposition from various quarters in New Bilibid Prison, Muntinlupa City Philippines between October 2002 and July 2003. Most of those who opposed the mission were men from among Asia's most notorious criminals in the National Penitentiary, which is situated on the Reservation at Muntinlupa City, 1770, Philippines. If one were to judge the success of the mission by that amount of opposition that it experienced, then the mission was a remarkable success. Newton stated that to every force there is an equal but opposite one to oppose it and like Newton, David suggests that to every proactive work there is and equal but opposite reaction and so if this reaction were to be the measure of success, then the mission was remarkably successful. It also serves to demonstrate that God always triumphs. That God saves, not by might, but by His Spirit. That God puts to fight thousands of his enemies and empowers the one's and two's, that trust in Him in order to show that Salvation is truly of the Lord. This prison comprises of three Compounds and penal farms housing over 23,550 inmates, which are all under the control of the Department of Justice (DOJ) and the Bureau of Corrections. (BUCOR). The Chaplaincy, headed by Msgr. Helley Barrido, is responsible for all religious groups and voluntary work done within the Prison. "Death Row" is in the Maximum Security Compound where over 1200 men are housed and they are all under the sentence of death. Some are doubly confirmed and due to be put to death by lethal injection. Trojan Horse International C.M. was established in the early part of 2001 and composed of a team of two from England, David Clarke and Gordon John Smith. The mission was set up as a Christian ministry, seeking to bring assistance to Michael John Clarke, David's older brother, and many inmates at the Prison. This was where Michael had been incarcerated, for a crime he did not commit, and was serving a prison sentence of 16 years. He had been baptized as a Christian. In an old 45-gallon US Oil drum, on the 16th September 2000 in the Maximum Compound. Michael, like his brother David, had been converted from crime to Christ whilst suffering the bitter effects of this form of injustice in the Philippines. However Michael's conversion was some thirty years after David who had been brought up in Aylesbury, Buckinghamshire and had been converted from crime to Christ, at the age of 20 years old, on the 16th January 1970.

### THE FALL, DESPERATION AND RECOVERY

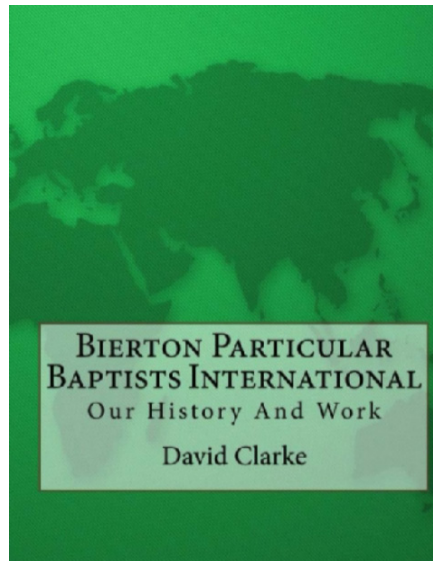


By Mr David Clarke CertEd (Author)

David encountered great conflicts of conscience whilst at the Bierton Strict and Particular Baptists Church and seceded over matters of conscience. For two years he wondered what the future held for him and wondered about the direction that he should go. This led him to severe depression thinking that God had rejected him and then to a desperate state of mind resulting in him turning away from God and to open sin. This is the continuing story of David life as told in his book, "Converted on LSD Trip", and relates the journey that led to his fall, the desperation, recovery and restoration to faith in Christ. He tells of the good news he received of his brother

Michael and his conversion from crime to Christ, that took place 5 years into a 16 year prison sentence, in the Philippines. This was 30 years after David 's own conversion from crime to Christ, which was the moving factor behind publishing his book, "Converted on LSD Trip." David believes this book will be very useful for people of all ages who wish to see the hand of God at work and in particular for those learning the Christian faith.

[BIERTON PARTICULAR BAPTISTS INTERNATIONAL](#)



Our History And Work

Authored by David Clarke

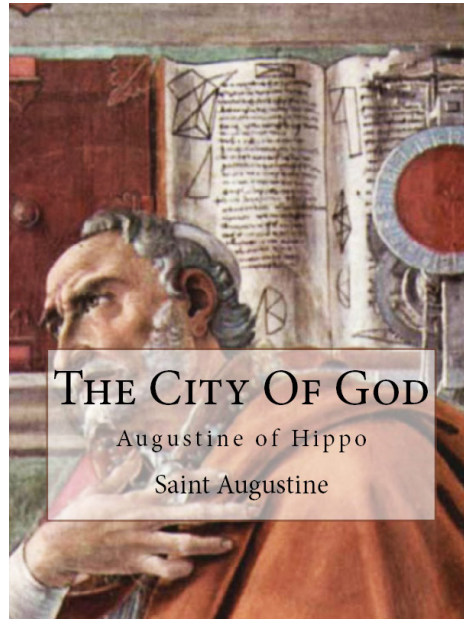
BISAC: Religion / Christian Ministry / Evangelism

Bierton Particular Baptists were founded in England in 1831 and has now extended to Pakistan. The chapel belonging to Bierton Particular Baptists was closed for worship in December 2002 and David Clarke, the sole remaining member of the Bierton church, commissioned and appointed Anil Anwar and Anwar Shahid John as over seers, of Bierton Particular Baptist church, in Pakistan, in 2016. This book contains the articles of religion for Bierton Particular Baptists and the Bierton Particular Baptist College. Bierton Particular Baptists were a Gospel Standard listed cause 1981.

Bierton Particular Baptists Pakistan is the first in Pakistan and founded by David Clarke. Mr Clarke is the sole surviving member of Bierton Particular Baptist, founded in 1831, in England, and was a Gospel Standard Cause. This book tells of the formation of Bierton Particular Baptist Pakistan 2016 along with the formation of a Minister Bible college. David Clarke appointed minister Anil Anwar and Anwar Shahid John of Rahim Yar Khan, as overseers work and the articles of religion and doctrinal foundation are those to the Bierton Particular Baptists 1831.

In these we express our belief in the sovereignty of God in creation and redemption and hold to Calvinistic soteriology. We also encourage those interested to investigate Covenant Eschatology, as a means of clearing up some of the many strange views held by some that teach end times theology. This magazine has been published to help Christians encourage and educate each other, in a way free from censorship. We encourage feedback and wish our readers to contribute further articles for publication. We believe the Lord Jesus Christ is the eternal son of the living God who alone is the saviour of mankind whether **Muslim Gentile or Jew**.

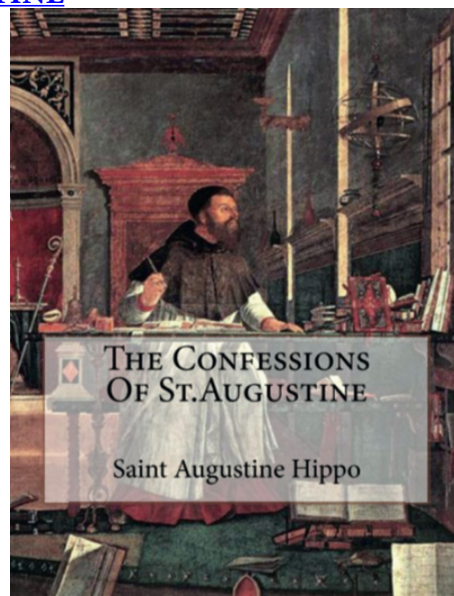
## THE CITY OF GOD



Augustin Of Hippo

The City of God, is a book of Christian philosophy written in Latin by Augustine of Hippo in the early 5th century AD. The book was in response to allegations that Christianity brought about the decline of Rome and is considered one of Augustine's most important works. The City of God is a cornerstone of Western thought, expounding on many profound questions of theology, such as the suffering of the righteous, the existence of evil, the conflict between free will and divine omniscience, and the doctrine of original sin. Augustine is recognized as a saint in the Catholic Church, the Eastern Christian Church, and the Anglican Communion and as a preminent Doctor of the Church. Many Protestants, especially Calvinists and Lutherans, consider him to be one of the theological fathers of the Protestant Reformation due to his teachings on salvation and divine grace. Lutherans, and Martin Luther in particular, have held Augustine in preeminence (after the Bible and St. Paul). Luther himself was a member of the Order of the Augustinian Eremites (1505–1521).

## THE CONFESSIONS OF ST. AUGUSTINE



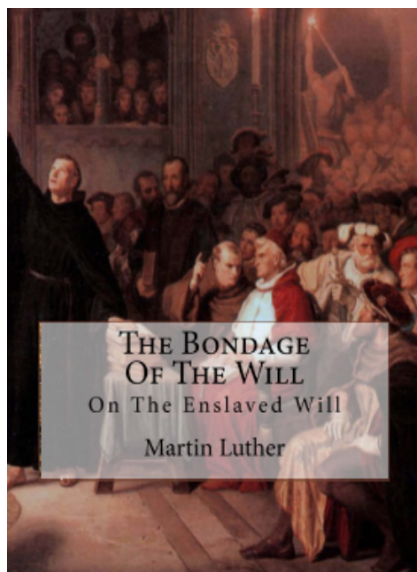
Augustine Of Hippo

This is an autobiography, a work, consisting of 13 books, by Saint Augustine of Hippo, written in Latin between AD 397 and 400. The work outlines Saint Augustine's sinful youth and his conversion to Christianity. Its original title was Confessions in Thirteen Books, and it was composed to be read out loud with each book being a complete unit. Confessions is generally considered one of Augustine's most important texts. It is widely seen as the first

Western autobiography ever written, and was an influential model for Christian writers throughout the Middle Ages. Professor Henry Chadwick wrote that Confessions will “always rank among the great masterpieces of western literature”. Written after the legalization of Christianity, Confessions dated from an era where martyrdom was no longer a threat to most Christians as was the case two centuries earlier. Instead, a Christian’s struggles were usually internal. Confessions was written between AD 397–398, suggesting self-justification as a possible motivation for the work. With the words “I wish to act in truth, making my confession both in my heart before you and in this book before the many who will read it” in Book X Chapter 1 Augustine both confesses his sins and glorifies God through humility in His grace, the two meanings that define “confessions,” in order to reconcile his imperfections not only to his critics but also to God.

Pelagius, a British monk, took exception to Augustines prayer “Grant what Thou commandest, and command what Thou dost desire.” Pelagius recoiled in horror at the idea that a divine gift (grace) is necessary to perform what God commands. For Pelagius and his followers responsibility always implies ability. If man has the moral responsibility to obey the law of God, he must also have the moral ability to do it. Augustine took up the cause of God clearly demonstrating the fall of man and the inability of man to do good and defended the truth of original sin.

### [THE BONDAGE OF THE WILL](#)

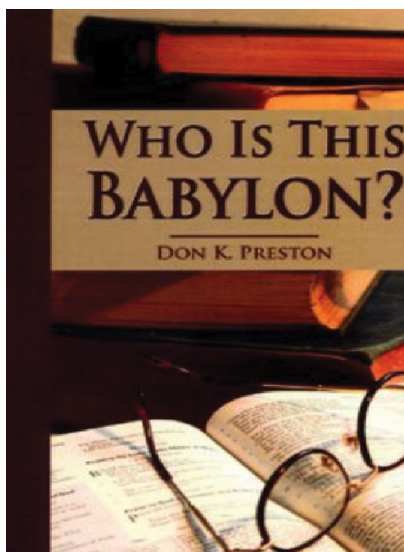


On The Enslaved Will

Authored by Martin Luther DD

This work of Martin Luther is very relevant today as so many who profess a knowledge of God in the person of the Lord Jesus Christ are unable to discern the error of so-called Free Will. So for any who find a problem with Calvinism and Arminianism it is important they grasp the issues discussed in this book. This was first published in 1525 and was Luther’s reply to Desiderius Erasmus on Free Will, which had appeared in 1524 and was his first public attack on Luther. The issue raised by Erasmus was human beings, after the fall of Man are free to choose good or evil. The debate between Luther and Erasmus is one of the earliest of the Reformation over the issue of free will and predestination.

## WHO IS THIS BABYLON ?

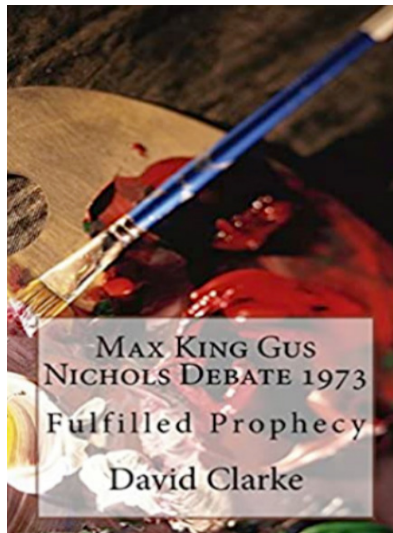


**By Don K. Preston (Author)**

When the first edition of this work was introduced, it was called “ground breaking” and even “definitive” by scholars and laymen alike. The logical, analytical, and most of all textual approach to understand Revelation has helped thousands to better understand this enigmatic book. Preston’s continued research has now resulted in this revised, enlarged, and vastly improved second edition. Here is a small sampling of what is added to the new version: 1.) A comparison between 1 Peter and Revelation. Everyone agrees that 1 Peter was written before A.D. 70. What is so important to realize is that Peter and John wrote to the same audiences. John predicted certain things to happen, but Peter, speaking of those identical things, said the things were present! This amounts to a very powerful argument in favor of the pre-A.D. 70 dating of the Apocalypse. 2.) The 144,000. Did you know that the 144,000 out of the 12 tribes comprise a veritable irrefutable argument that the Revelation is about the fall of Jerusalem and was written before that event? This is one of the simplest, but powerful elements in the Revelation! 3.) A comparative study between the book of Lamentations, and the Apocalypse! You may have never thought of this relationship before, seemingly, few have. Yet, I produce 21 parallels between Jeremiah’s historical lament over the fall of Jerusalem, and John’s prophetic vision of the fall of Babylon. You will not find this material anywhere else! 4.) Special material on the millennium. Without doubt, the millennium is one of the most perplexing aspects of Revelation. Many use that reference as proof for the late date, and other speculations. However, I have added a lot of material on the millennium that proves conclusively that John was standing near the end of the millennium, and anticipating the end of the millennial period! The millennium is not the Christian Age, nor did the millennium begin in A. D. 70. The millennium ended in A.D. 70!

**MAX KING GUS NICHOLS DEBATE 1973**

Fulfilled Prophecy Paperback – 27 Nov. 2016

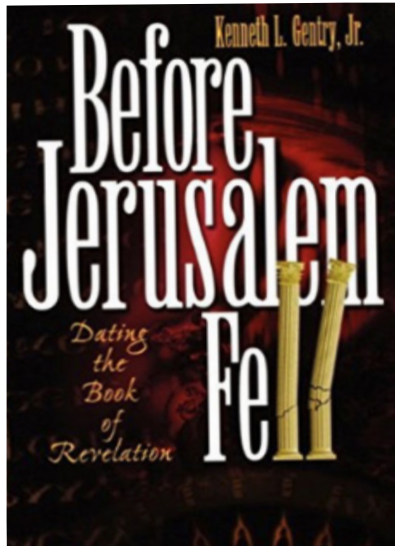


By David Clarke

The following debate was conducted on 17th to 20th July 1973 between Max R. King and Gus Nichols. This reading is by David Clarke, on 5th September 2016 and is available on our Youtube Channel as, 'Max King Gus Nichols Debate 1973'. 1 International Background To The Debate At the time of this debate, in 1973, the reader based in England, had been introduced to Dr John Gill by his Body of Doctrinal and Practical Divinity and also the Cause of God and Truth, both book he had been obtained from publishers in America. David had been converted to Christianity after a bad trip on LSD, On the 16th January, 1970, and turned his back on his criminal past, to follow Christ. He had been virtually illiterate until that time but learned to read by reading the bible and classical Christian literature. Well meaning Christian friend gave him books to read on the end of the world such as The Late Great Planet Earth and Clarence Larkin's, Dispensational Truth, all futurist views on the second coming of Christ. It was when he discovered that the Doctrines of Grace were those truths taught in the bible that he joined the Bierton Strict and Particular Baptists church, in England and soon realized the many old testament scriptures that futurist cited were made redundant by their views of eschatology. His story is told in his book Bierton Strict and Particular Baptists. It is with the advent of the Internet that he discovered and learned a more biblical view of the last things and realized that the many and various confessions of faith among the Particular Baptists and Calvinists from 1646 to 1878 were in need of revision and correction. Please read Difficulties Associated With Articles of Religion among Particular Baptist by David Clarke high lighting this matter. This video/audio series is offered to assist any seeing the truths of biblical eschatology.

A new edition of this book is being prepared to show up the errors of the Covenantal Body View Of The Resurrection.

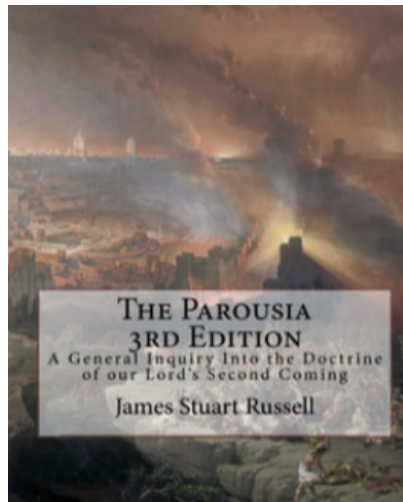
## BEFORE JERUSALEM FELL



**By Kenneth Gentry**

“Before Jerusalem Fell: Dating the Book of Revelation” is a doctoral dissertation seeking to demonstrate that Revelation was written prior to the destruction of the Jewish Temple in AD 70 and that it was prophesying that event. It proves this early date for Revelation by providing both internal evidence from within Revelation and external evidence from Church history and tradition. It provides much exposition of the text of Revelation. A large part of the argument deals with the identity of the beast (666) as Nero Caesar, the first imperial persecutor of the Church.

## THE PAROUSIA



**James Stuart Russell**

James Stuart Russell’s, ‘High Praise For The Parousia’, is an excellent work that looks at the New Testament teaching of the second coming of Jesus Christ, and the book of Revelation tells of those events leading up to and including his coming. Luke 23, verse 28. But Jesus turning into them said. ‘Daughters of Jerusalem weep not for me, but weep for your selves and for your children. 29. For behold, the days are coming, in the which they shall say blessed are the barren and the wombs that never bare, and the paps which never gave suck. 20 Then shall they begin to say to the mountains fall on us and to the hills cover us. 30. For if they do these things in the green tree what shall be done in the dry? The book of Revelation is a prophecy that Jesus gave to the Apostle John before the Neuronc persecution in 66 .A.D. He was told to write and inform the seven churches in Asia about those things that were shortly about to come to pass in his day. It relates to those things leading up to the destruction of Jerusalem and immediately afterwards. It told of the judgment God, styled the Day of Vengeance, on the city called Babylon for her sins and breach of the first Covenant. This Babylon was the city of Jerusalem who’s people and leaders had rejected the Lord Jesus Christ and turned their back on the Mosaic covenant. The day of vengeance

was day when the cup of God's wrath that was poured out on her who was called Mystery Babylon, The Mother of Harlots and this was to bring an end of rule of the Mosaic Law, bringing it to its fulfillment as Jesus had said I come not to destroy the law but to fulfill the Law and to bring in the New Covenant order called the law of Christ. It is impossible to understand the book of Revelation if one takes for granted that the date of its writing was after the fall and destruction by Titus, in 70 A.D. Most scholars assume the book was written about 96 A.D. 16 years after the event and so it has become impossible for them to establish a correct interpretation of the book.

Ed Stevens

FOREWORD BY EDWARD E. STEVENS

The word "Parousia" (**par-oo-see-ah**) is not a household word, but students of end time prophecy know it is a reference to the Second Coming of Christ. It comes from two Greek words ("**para**" beside, and "**ousia**" state of being) and literally means "to be beside" (present with someone). It came to be a more specific reference to important people coming for an extended (but not long-term) visit to one of their subject territories (a "visitation"). It can refer either to the initial arrival or the afterward presence. It is used in the New Testament almost exclusively of Christ's Second Coming.

Russell examines every significant New Testament text about Christ's return, to see when it would occur and what it would be like. Since he believed the Second Coming occurred in the first century at the destruction of Jerusalem in AD 70, his view is labeled "Preterist."

The word "Preterist" is another prophetic term with which many are unfamiliar. According to Webster's Unabridged Dictionary, a Preterist is "a theologian who believes the prophecies of the Apocalypse have already been fulfilled." A Preterist is the opposite of a Futurist. Futurists teach that the three major end time events (parousia, resurrection, judgment) are still future in fulfillment, whereas Preterists teach these events have already been fulfilled. Some may wonder what difference it makes?

Everything crucial to Christianity is at risk. The Deity of Christ, the integrity of the apostles and prophets, and the inspiration of the New Testament is at stake. How so?

Jesus and the NT writers repeatedly make time- restricted predictions about His return and the other end time events. They do not merely suggest that Christ's Parousia might occur in their lifetime, they unequivocally affirm it.

Liberals, skeptics, and Jewish/Islamic critics use those "time statements" to discredit Jesus and the New Testament. Inspired men cannot make mistakes. Since Jesus and the NT writers predicted Christ's return to occur in their lifetime, and it supposedly didn't happen, they assume Jesus and the NT writers were mistaken.

Indeed, if we cannot trust their prophetic utterances, we cannot trust anything else they say. Christianity is totally discredited if those predictions failed to materialize exactly as they prophesied.

You might wonder what these "time texts" are? Matthew 16:27-28 is a good example. This book deals with every one of them. They were not mistaken when they predicted Christ's return in their lifetime. It really occurred, at AD 70.

Theologians who study end time prophecy consider Russell's book a classic defense of the Preterist view. It is this book, more than any other during the past 125 years, which has moved so many toward Preterism.

Many in the Reformed faith (e.g., R. C. Sproul, Sr., David Chilton, Gary DeMar, Ken Gentry, Gary North, Jim Jordan, et al) credit Russell's book as having a significant impact on their eschatological views. R. C. Sproul, Sr. says he looks favorably at Preterism because it is the only view of prophecy which effectively counters the liberal-skeptic-critic attack. He has written much to recommend Russell's book and encourage the spread of Preterism, even though he does not go as far as Russell does. In his Foreword to the 1999 Baker Books reprint of *The Parousia* (pp. ix-x), Sproul says:

Russell's work is valuable chiefly for his analysis of the time-frame references of New Testament prophecy and his understanding of the main reference to the parousia. ...Russell's book has forced me to take the events surrounding the destruction of Jerusalem far more seriously than before, to open my eyes to the radical significance of this event in redemptive history. It vindicates the apostolic hope and prediction of our Lord's close-at hand coming in judgment.... I can never read the New Testament again the same way I read it before reading *The Parousia*.

Until this book appeared in 1878, Preterism had little systemization. This book began that process, and remains one of the most consistent and comprehensive explanations of Preterism available. The Preterist view flourished



in Germany and Britain. But America, still recovering from civil war, took little notice. In global terms, its impact is still marginal, but it has seen significant growth in the past ten years, and the Internet is one of the big factors stimulating that. What the Gutenberg printing press did for the Protestant reformation, the Internet did for the Preterist reformation.

The Internet is the perfect place to publish helpful material like this. One of the first books to be posted on Preterist websites was Russell's *Parousia*. Even though the electronic version has had many readers in the short five years it has been available, it has not diminished demand for printed copies. This book is destined to remain a Preterist classic.

Russell did a remarkable job of interpretation compared to previous centuries. He pointed the way in a number of areas that we are only just now beginning to develop further. He devoted over 170 pages to the book of Revelation. One of his best statements is there. He uses the "time" statements in the first three verses of Revelation to show how crucial the date of writing is to the interpretation of the book:

It may truly be said that the key has all the while hung by the door, plainly visible to every one who had eyes to see; yet men have tried to pick the lock, or force the door, or climb up some other way, rather than avail themselves of so simple and ready a way of admission as to use the key made and provided for them. (*Parousia*, p. 367)

Russell leaves no excuses for Futurism. His survey of all the "Parousia" (second coming) references is a tour de force in Preterist exegesis. This book was the first wave of what has become a whole storm of books defending the AD 70 fulfillment of end time prophecy.

Futurists and Partial Preterists for too long have hidden behind the excuse of wanting explicit "time indicators" before assigning a text to AD 70. Russell and modern Preterists have exhaustively shown that all NT end time texts have first century "audience relevance" written all over them, which functions as an implicit time indicator. The New Testament was not written to us originally. We are reading someone else's mail. The primary task of a Bible interpreter is to discover what the original author intended to communicate to his original audience, not just to ask what it "could" mean to us today.

### THREE DIFFICULT TEXTS SIMPLIFIED

There are three scriptures which most partial preterists think are yet to be fulfilled: Acts 1:11, 1 Cor. 15:20-57, and 1 Thess. 4:13-18. Russell shows that an AD 70 fulfillment is the most consistent interpretation of these texts. However, he does not deal very much with Acts 1:11. As a result, many Futurists and Partial Preterists have used this text to teach another major return of Christ still in the future. Modern Preterists have now shown that these three texts contain implicit time indicators and contextual clues which connect them inseparably to the Parousia and final consummation in AD 70. For a fuller explanation of these three texts from a Preterist perspective, see the three books written by this author (*Stevens Response To Gentry*, *Questions 5 About The Afterlife*, and *Expectations Demand A Rapture*).

[https://www.preteristarchive.com/Hyper/2002\\_stevens\\_rapture.html](https://www.preteristarchive.com/Hyper/2002_stevens_rapture.html)

In those books, we deal especially with the typological imagery of Christ's ascension into the cloud-filled heavenly Holy of Holies to present His own blood to make final atonement, and His "second appearance" back out of the heavenly temple to announce atonement to His anxiously waiting saints. The Acts 1:11 reference to the return of Christ is easy to apply to AD 70 when we realize it is speaking of the reverse of the visible ascent of Christ in Theophany form. His descent would follow the same Theophany pattern as His ascent, meaning that it would be visible like His departure. He ascended visibly with clouds and angels in the presence of a few disciples, and the two angels (Acts 1:10-11) promised that He would descend visibly "in like manner" in that same Theophany pattern to only those disciples whom He wished to see it. Both the going away and the return were "cloud comings" (Theophanies) accompanied by angels. He left the same way He would return (in clouds with the angels) to appear to his anxiously waiting disciples ("How long, O Lord?" and "O, our Lord, come!"). They expected His return before all of that generation died. Some of them were promised to remain alive until His return, and that they would literally "see" it before they all died (Matt. 16:27-28 and John 21:22f).

Even some partial preterists (e.g. Kenneth Gentry in his book, *Before Jerusalem Fell*) have agreed that Rev. 1:7 (which mentions a "cloud coming" or Theophany which "every eye would see") was fulfilled in AD 70. Since most expositors connect Rev. 1:7 with Acts 1:11, it seems reasonable to assign both Rev. 1:7 and Acts 1:11 to the visible Theophany that was seen by the Jewish people just before the war in AD 66. Notice what R. C. Sproul, Sr.

said about the angelic appearances in the sky in AD 66 and its connection to Rev. 1:7 – “...theop Old Testament prophets, when speaking of a real historical visitation of God in judgment upon cities and nations, used exactly this kind of language in a metaphorical way to describe that coming of divine judgment.... As some 19th century scholars...Jonathan Edwards...B. B. Warfield and others have suggested, what Jesus is talking about here on the Mount of Olives [Matt. 24:3] ...is the end of the Jewish age. And that the coming that he’s talking about, and that he’s warning these contemporaries about over and over again... that was coming on that generation...was the judgment of God that was coming on Jerusalem and the temple in the year 70 AD.... Was Jesus visible? Did “every eye see him” [Rev. 1:7] and all of that? No. Although, one of the weirdest passages you ever read in ancient history is the paragraph that is found in Josephus [Wars, Bk 6, Ch 5, Sect. 3]. I quote it in my book [The Last Days According to Jesus, p. 124]... After talking about some remarkable, astonishing celestial events that some people had reported, he said, “Besides these a few days after that feast, on the one-and-twentieth day of the month Artemisius ...before the setting of the sun, chariots and troops of soldiers in their armor were seen running about among the clouds....” ...The overwhelming testimony of the contemporaries (and he was there as an eyewitness) was that people did see something in the clouds. And what is it they saw? They saw chariots. Is that the first time the chariot throne of God is seen in the clouds over Palestine? What took Elijah to heaven? What were the whirling merkabahs [chariots] Ezekiel beheld? Was not the basic symbol in the Old Testament of the movable judgment throne of God, his chariots of fire? And here we have the testimony of many, many people saying they saw these chariots running about the clouds right before the end of Jerusalem. ...It lends credence to the further application of Jesus’ predictions of what would come in this judgment of the nation of Israel and of the city of Jerusalem...” [R. C. Sproul, Sr. “Last Days Madness” speech, 1999 Ligonier Ministries National Conference in Orlando. Bracketed material inserted by the author of this Foreword.]

Eusebius (Ecclesiastical History, Bk 3, Ch 8, Section 5) quotes this same material from Josephus, and Tacitus (Histories, Book 5, “About The Jews”) alludes to the same events. Sproul’s comments stimulate several thoughts. If Rev. 1:7 was fulfilled by the appearance of angels and chariots in the sky at AD 66, and if Acts 1:11 is speaking of the same judgment coming (or cloud coming, Theophany) of Christ, then what text teaches a still future visible coming of Christ? If the angelic armies literally seen in the clouds at AD 66 were the fulfillment of “every eye shall see Him” (Rev. 1:7) as Sproul has allowed as a possibility, then it was also the fulfillment of Acts 1:11! In Matt 16:27-28, which R. C. Sproul, Sr. affirms is AD 70, it states that some of those disciples would not taste death until they saw Christ return. It therefore seems logical that the visible coming of Christ at AD 66-70 which is mentioned in Matt. 16:27-28 must be the same coming dealt with in both Rev. 1:7 and Acts 1:11.

The commander of the angelic hosts (Christ) was present with His angelic armies on that occasion (AD 66), just like Rev. 19:11-21 pictures for us. This was the visible return of Christ with His angels to judge His enemies and reward His saints, as both Rev. 1:7 and Acts 1:11 had predicted. Matt. 24:29-31 and Luke 21:25-28 also indicated there would be visible “signs” accompanying the return of Christ with His angels to raise the dead out of Hades, perform the judgment, and reward His faithful saints. This fulfills the “in like manner” terms of the Acts 1:11 text. Both Rev. 1:7 and Acts 1:11 fit the Matt. 16:27-28 “visibility” pattern.

It is also clear from the similarities between 1 Cor. 15 and 1 Thess. 4 that these two “parousia” texts are speaking of the same AD 70 return of Christ. Since both texts state that the resurrection will occur in connection with the “parousia” (1 Cor. 15:23; 1 Thess. 4:15-17), and since the NT does not distinguish between two different parousias separated by thousands of years, and since this parousia is said to occur in the lifetime of some who would “live and remain” until it occurred (1 Cor. 15:51; 1 Thess. 4:15), then it is clear that these two texts were fulfilled in AD 70. This forces some adjustment in our concepts about the nature of fulfillment once we get the time of fulfillment straightened out. All three of these difficult second coming texts have been explained from a consistent AD 70 fulfillment. This leaves partial preterists nowhere to hide. We can thank Russell for pointing the way toward this approach to these three texts.

#### A LITERAL RAPTURE

Another area in which Russell greatly served the interests of future generations was the rapture. Four other scholars within a generation of Russell also taught the idea of a literal rapture in AD 70 (Milton S. Terry, E. Hampden-Cook, Richard Weymouth, and William S. Army). There are minor differences in the way each of these men described it, but all agreed there was a removal of some true Christians in connection with the return of Christ

in AD 70. Modern advocates of a literal AD 70 rapture (such as Garrett Brown, Walt Hibbard, Arthur Melanson, Ian Harding, Ed Stevens, and others) go further to assert that all true Christians (and nothing but true Christians) alive at the time of the destruction of Jerusalem were “snatched away” to be with Christ in the spiritual realm. Russell suggested that only some Christians were caught up – a “partial rapture” with the sleepers or unwatchful Christians left on earth. But it seems from Jesus’ sharp criticism of that group in Matthew 25 (and in the book of Revelation) that the sleepers or unwatchful were not true Christians. The tribulation and apostasy eliminated the insincere. By the time of the rapture the only watchful, awake, and “worthy ones” were the true Christians. There would have been few (if any) pretenders and “mere professing Christians.” So in either view, the group of saints actually raptured is basically the same, whether we see it as only the watchful Christians, or as true Christians only.

The arguments we all use to establish the necessity of a literal rapture in AD 70 are exactly the same. The strongest arguments are the Biblical “expectation statements.” Scripture alone is our standard, not scripture plus history, tradition or anything else. The only authoritative material that we can use to make any final decisions about what did or did not occur in AD 70 is the Bible. If it says the Parousia was going to occur in AD 70, that should be enough. We shouldn’t have to be convinced by history or any external arguments. If the text of scripture says something is going to occur within a certain time frame, then we are bound to believe it, regardless of whether we can find external historical or traditional support for it, and regardless of whether our credulity is stretched to the breaking point. The same thing happened in the field of archaeology in regard to the Hittites and Darius the Mede. The Bible was the only evidence we had for the existence of these people for a long time, yet that did not make advocates of sola scriptura doubt the veracity of the Bible. So for sincere believers, the question boils down to this: What did the NT writers believe, teach, and expect to see, hear, and experience at the Parousia? Did they expect to experience the Parousia in any conscious way? Did they expect to “know” it had occurred afterwards? Or did they expect it to happen totally in the invisible realm without being consciously aware of it in any way? It is these Biblical “expectation statements” that also need to be examined, not just the “time statements.”

We Preterists have pressed Futurists with the “time statements,” and rightly so, because they are “sola scriptura” arguments. They are Biblical statements that need to be dealt with. So are the “expectation statements.” What the “time statements” do for Preterism in general, the “expectation statements” do for the rapture view in particular. The time statements nail down the “time” of the parousia and its related events, while the expectation statements reveal the content and “nature” of those events in the experience of the Church.

Just because the Parousia may not have been validated historically in the way some might have preferred, it never stopped us from seeing it as a fulfilled “fact.” The “time statements” forced us to believe that it must have occurred, regardless of a lack of historical confirmation. Even if we are unable to find external historical proof for a literal rapture in AD 70, it does not invalidate the Bible’s affirmation of it. Our concern is simply, “What does Scripture actually teach?”

Rapture advocates have been accused of teaching a rapture based only on external historical “arguments from silence.” Not so! Scripture is the driving force. The expectation statements are Biblical arguments, just like the time statements. The time statements help establish the time of fulfillment, while the expectation statements help determine the nature of fulfillment. As you study the following list of Biblical passages, find the answers to these two questions: (1) What does Jesus say is actually going to be seen and experienced by His saints at the Parousia? (2) What do the NT writers and pre-70 Christians indicate that they were expecting to actually see and experience at the Parousia? (Matt. 16:27-28; 19:28; 24:31; John 14:2-3; 1 Cor. 15:51-54; 2 Cor. 5:1-4; Phil. 3:20-21; 1 Thess. 4:15-17; 2 Thess. 1:6-10; 2:1; and 1 Jn. 3:2). These texts show clearly what the first century Church expected to experience at the Parousia.

Paul said that when Christ would come to cast His enemies “away from His presence” and gather His saints (2 Thess. 1:6–2:1), that the saints would “marvel at Him” in His presence and in the presence of all who have believed, and Christ would be glorified by their collective presence with Him “on that day.” That doesn’t sound like a very silent occasion to me. Did they fail to “recognize the time of His visitation” and remain silent (as if it had not occurred). They should have been celebrating and proclaiming the fulfillment of His Parousia (if they were still around). There is a strange silence here, at the very time when we would have expected anything but silence, when they said they would be marveling at Christ in His presence. Their silence does not match their expectations, unless they were doing those things in the heavenly realm (no longer on the earthly scene).

If all living Christians remained on earth after AD 70, why didn't some of those who saw these incredible events in AD 70 say something about it? Why the silence, if they were still around? Russell and the other four scholars mentioned above proposed the literal rapture to explain that silence. Silence is not a significant argument all by itself. But as Sherlock Holmes would agree in the case of the dog that didn't bark when a supposed outsider broke in, sometimes silence is significant, especially when the circumstances would force us to expect otherwise. Expectations demand our attention even in the case of silence, if the Bible clearly teaches us to expect something other than silence. And it does.

For more in depth studies of the rapture at the parousia in AD 66-70, see this author's book entitled, *Expectations Demand A Rapture*, and the excellent series of articles written by Ian Harding.

#### THE MILLENNIUM

Russell was uncomfortable with any view of the Millennium which ended at AD 70 (p. 514). He considered such a short duration of the millennium (40 years or less) to be "so violent and unnatural that we cannot hesitate to reject it" (p. 514). He suggested the millennium only began at AD 70 with a limited "first" resurrection and judgment (of the righteous only), and is still ongoing in history and moving toward a yet future final resurrection and judgment of the rest of the dead (the wicked only – p. 518). It seemed to him that the Millennium was "introduced parenthetically" as an exception to the AD 70 time limits of the rest of the book (p. 514).

He noted that some people (such as myself) consider the idea of a Millennium after AD 70 as challenging the imminent time indicators throughout the book of Revelation. We would prefer a 40-year millennium (AD 30-70) which stays within those time limits.

Russell places a flashback to AD 70 at the end of the Millennium (Rev. 20:10), so that the white throne judgment in Rev. 20:11ff takes place in AD 70. Preterists who take the 40-year approach cannot disallow his flashback, since we insert one at the beginning of the millennium.

Russell's millennium interpretation deserves careful consideration. He acknowledged his understanding of it might not be perfect, and held out the hope that succeeding generations "will soon correct what is proved to be erroneous, and confirm what is shown to be right." (p. 535)

In conclusion, I have to repeat how impressed I am with Russell's exegetical work here. Many thousands of Bible students all over the world have been, and will continue to be, blessed by this book. We send this reprint forth with strong encouragement to seriously and objectively consider everything he has to say, and to "search the Scriptures daily to see whether these things are so." (Acts 17:11)

Edward E. Stevens

Bradford, Pennsylvania July, 2003.

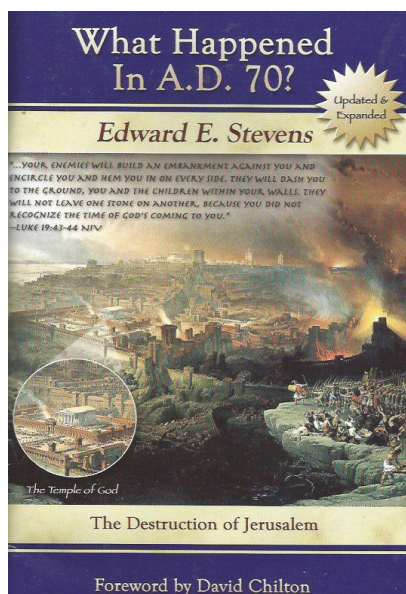
#### FOREWORD BY Don Preston

A reformation – indeed – a revolution of sorts is taking place in modern evangelical Christianity. And while many who are joining in and helping promote this movement are not even aware of it, the book you hold in your hand has contributed greatly to initiating this new reformation. This "new" movement is sometimes called full preterism, (Also, and preferably by this writer, Covenant Eschatology). It is the belief that all Bible prophecy is fulfilled. The famous evangelist Charles H. Spurgeon was deeply impressed with the scholarly, solid research in the book, although he did not accept the "final" conclusions reached by Russell. In modern times, this work has, and continues to impress those who read it. The reason is simple, the New Testament is emphatic and unambiguous in positing Christ's coming and the end of the age for the first century generation. To say this has troubled both scholars and laymen alike is an understatement of massive proportions. This book first appeared in 1878 (anonymously), and again in 1887 with author attribution. The book was well known in scholarly circles primarily and attracted a good bit of attention, both positive and negative. The public, however, seemed almost unaware of the stunning conclusions and the research supporting those conclusions, until or unless they read of Russell's work in the footnotes of the commentaries. Scholars have recognized and grappled with this imminence element, that is the stated nearness of the day of the Lord, seldom finding satisfactory answers. Scholars such as David Strauss accused Jesus of failure. Later, Bultmann said that every school boy knows that Jesus predicted his coming and the end of the world for his generation, and every school boy knows it did not happen. C.S. Lewis also could not resolve the apparent failed eschatology. Bertrand Russell rejected Christianity due to the failed eschatology - as he

perceived it - of Jesus and the Bible writers. As a result of these “skeptical” authors, modern Bible scholarship has followed in their path and Bible commentaries today almost casually assert the failure of the Bible writers - and Jesus - in their eschatological predictions. This is where Russell’s work is of such importance. While Russell was not totally consistent with his own arguments and conclusions, nonetheless, his work is of tremendous importance and laid the groundwork for the modern revolution known as the preterist movement. Russell systematically addressed virtually every New Testament prediction of the eschaton. With incisive clarity and logical acumen, he sweeps aside the almost trite objections to the objective nature of the Biblical language of imminence. With excellent linguistic analysis, solid hermeneutic and powerful exegetical skills, Russell shows that there is no way to deny that Jesus and his followers not only believed in a first century, end of the age parousia, but, they taught it as divine truth claiming the inspiration of the Holy Spirit as their authority. Russell not only fully established the undeniable reality of the first century imminence of “the end,” he powerfully and carefully shares with the reader that “the end” that Jesus and the N.T. Writers were anticipating was not the end of the time space continuum (end of the world). It was in fact, the end of the Old Covenant Age of Israel that arrived with the cataclysmic destruction of Jerusalem and the Temple in AD 70. Russell properly shows how the traditional church has so badly missed the incredible significance of the end of that Old Covenant Age. Russell’s work is a stunning rejection – and corrective -- of what the “Orthodox” historical “Creedal” church has and continues to affirm. The reader may well find themselves wondering how the “divines” missed it so badly! Further, the reader will discover that Russell’s main arguments are an effective, valid and true assessment of Biblical eschatology. And make no mistake, eschatology matters.

Don K. Preston.

### [WHAT HAPPENED IN A.D. 70](#)



### *Edward E. Stevens*

This book introduces a view of Bible prophecy which many have found extremely helpful in their Bible study. It explains the end time riddles which have always bothered students of Bible prophecy. It is a **consistent view** which makes the book of Revelation much easier to understand. It establishes when the New Testament canon of scripture was completed, demolishes the liberal attack on the inspiration of the New Testament, and is more **conservative on** most other issues than traditional views. And there is **no compromise** of any essential Biblical doctrine of the Christian faith.

The key to understand any passage of scripture has always been a good grasp of the historical setting in which it was originally written (**audience relevance**). Two thousand years from now our history, culture, politics and language will have changed dramatically. Imagine someone then having to learn the ancient language of “American English” to read our USA newspapers! If they saw one of our political cartoons with a donkey and elephant, what would they think? How would they go about understanding it? Not only would they have to study the language, but also our culture, history, politics and economics. The same applies to Bible study. If we are really

going to understand what all the “donkeys and elephants” (beasts, harlots, dragons, etc.) Symbolize in the book of Revelation, we will have to seriously and carefully study the language, history, culture and politics of the First Century. Of course, the truths essential for salvation are couched in simple language that everyone can grasp. But there are numerous scriptures in the Bible which are “hard to understand” (cf. 2 Pet 3:16), and Bible prophecy is one of those things which must be approached with much more focus on the original historical art cultural context (audience relevance)

One of the main purposes of this book is to provide a closer look at the historical framework behind the New Testament. Many have found it helpful to lay aside (at least temporarily) the legion of speculative opinions about the book of Revelation, and look at a more historical alternative, which is that **the book of Revelation was written to the first century church and had primary relevance to them.** It warned of events that were about to happen in their lifetime, and prepared them for the tribulation and other events associated with the End of the Jewish Age.

Atheists, skeptics, Jew, Muslims, and liberal critics of the bible use the supposed failure of those end times events to occur in the First Century to undermine the integrity of Christs and the inspired NT writings.

Non-Christian Jews laugh at this supposed non-occurrence, and use it as evidence that Jesus is not the Messiah. Their forefathers in the flesh rejected Jesus in His first coming because He did not fulfill the Old Testament prophecies in the materialistic and nationalistic way that they were expecting, even though Jesus told them that His Kingdom was not of this world, and that it would be within them instead. Yet it seems that many futurists today are expecting that same kind of materialistic and nationalistic kingdom to arrive at a future return of Christ Are they making the same mistake about the Second Coming that the Jews made about His first coming? Jesus repeatedly said His Kingdom is “not of this world” and that it would “not come with observation.” It is a spiritual entity, and it has arrived We live in it. Both futurist Christians and non-Christian Jews need to realize this.

Christians are finally beginning to seek alternatives to the fatally flawed **futurist** interpretation. This book introduces the Preterist view.

“Preterist” simply means past in fulfillment It means that Christ has already fulfilled His promise to return and consummate redemption in Himself and His ongoing spiritual kingdom (the church). We should be like the noble-minded Bereans and “search the scriptures daily to see whether these things are true” You might want to have your Bible open alongside as you read.

Edward E. Stevens

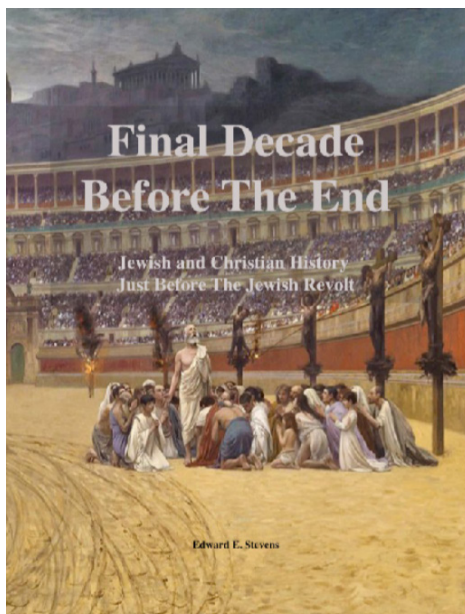
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Bradford, Pennsylvania

April 17,2010

**[FINAL DECADE BEFORE THE END](#)**



*Edward E. Stevens*

Ever since the booklet, **What Happened In AD 70?** Was published in 1980, there have been constant requests for more detailed information about the Destruction of Jerusalem and the Jewish, Roman, and Christian history associated with it. Over the years since then I have studied Josephus, Yosippon, Hegesippus, Tacitus, Suetonius, Eusebius, the Talmud, Midrash, Zohar, Pseudepigrapha, Church Fathers, Apocrypha, Dead Sea Scrolls and other Jewish/Christian writings, trying to determine exactly what happened, when it happened, and the effect it had upon the Church.

Then in 2002, after I began to promote J. S. Russell's view of a literal rapture, the demand for historical documentation of the fulfillment of all eschatological events dramatically increased. That forced me to dig much deeper. So in 2007 I put together a 21-page chronology of first century events. Two years later in 2009, we published a more substantial 73-page manuscript entitled, *First Century Events in Chronological Order*. That helped fill the void, but it did not go far enough. It only increased the appetite for a more detailed and documented historical reconstruction of first century events.

The book of Acts does not give a lot of details about the other Roman and Jewish events that were happening while Paul was on his various missionary journeys. For those events, we have to go to the other contemporary Jewish and Roman historians such as Josephus and Tacitus. The closer we get to AD 70, the more important all of those Jewish and Roman events become. They form an important backdrop behind the Christian events, and show how all the predictions made by Jesus were literally fulfilled. Every High Priest and Zealot leader that we encounter from AD 52 onwards are directly connected with the events of the Last Days. Things are heating up, not only for the Christians, but also for the Jews and the Romans.

Paul on his missionary journeys was clearly following a plan which was providentially arranged for him by Christ: (1) to plant new churches among all nations and not just Jews, (2) appoint elders and deacons in every church (Acts 14:23; 1 Cor. 4:17), (3) write inspired epistles to guide them, (4) instruct his fellow workers to "teach these things to faithful men who would be able to teach others also" (2 Tim. 2:2), and (5) establish the Gentiles in the Church and make them one united body with the Jews (Eph 4). Everywhere Paul went, he followed this pattern. We see this clearly as we study the historical narrative in Acts and Paul's other epistles that were written during this time. These are essential patterns that the apostles evidently bound upon both Gentile and Jewish Christians, and which were intended to be the pattern for all future generations of the eternal Church (Eph 3:21; 2Tim 2:2).

We begin our study by looking at the most likely dates for Matthew (AD 31-38) and Mark (AD 38- 44), and then proceed to the first three epistles of Paul (Galatians, 1 & 2 Thessalonians), which were written on his second missionary journey (AD 51-53). Including these five books in our study allows us to