

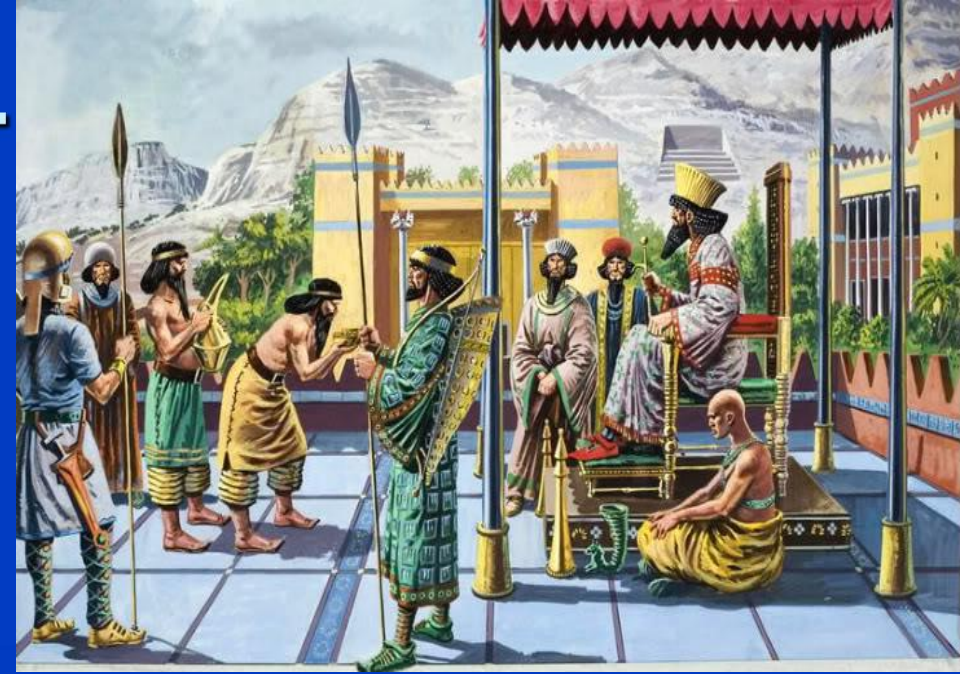
FROM JOY, TO PAIN, TO JOY

- The fruit of repentance was finally paying off!
- The wall dedication theme is JOY
- The dedication is the climax of Ezra & Nehemiah
- Often the end of the road of running from God is pain
- Usually our troubles aren't over because we come to Christ.....the road back can be long, bumpy, and exhausting

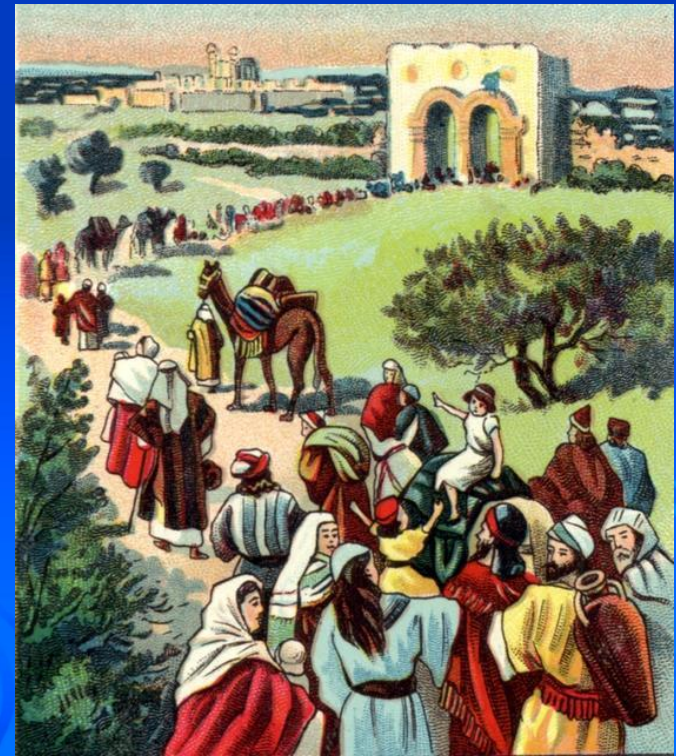
choose
JOY
חַדָּה



BETTER THE DEVIL YOU KNOW?



- Jews had the opportunity to come home
- 5% chose to return to Judah
- True repentance is to admit our sin, see our wrong, and then to ACT
- Persia was NOT the Jews' home
- Luke 14:25 - 33



“Bring in the first.....”



- “At that time” means this has a connection to the wall dedication ceremony
- All of Judah was on a spiritual high
- Neh.10:38 – 40
- Men were assigned to oversee the storage chambers at the Temple
- Rotation of Priests and Levites set up in the same manner as David and Solomon
- Entire community saw their tithing as a happy obligation

What Goes UP ...

...Must Come

DOWN

NEHEMIAH CHAPTER 13

- Vs. 1 “at that time” is mostly connected to “When they were reading the scroll of Moshe”
- Deut. 23:4 – 5
- Foreigners, specifically Ammonites and Moabites, not allowed in congregation of Israel
- Ex. 12:38 “A mixed multitude.....”
- *Ereb* = NOT interbreeding among races, but rather simply various races who are not Hebrews
- Context is a sacred religious gathering

NO LONGER A MOABITE

Ruth to Naomi:

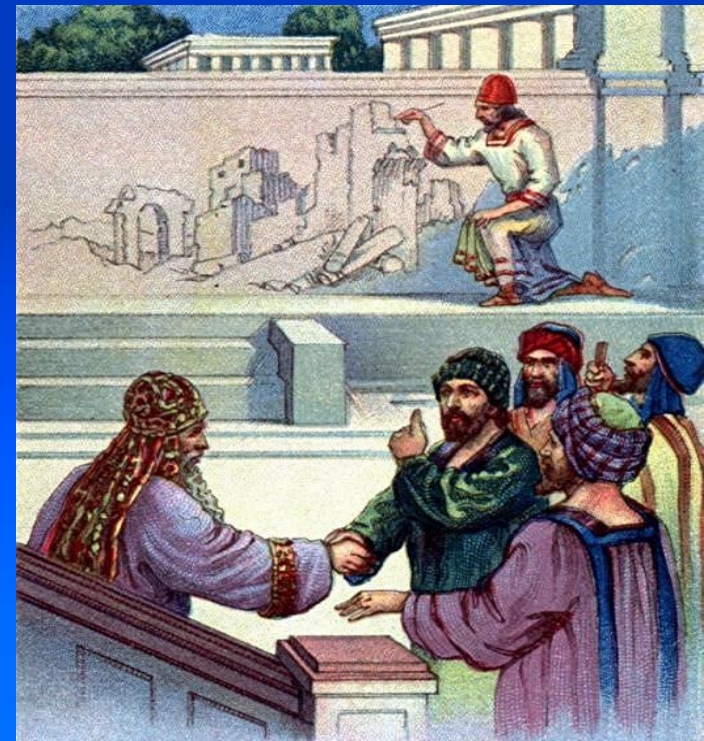
*“...for wherever you go,
I will go,
wherever you lodge, I will lodge,
your people shall be my people,
and your God, my God...
if naught but death
separates me from you.”*
(Ruth 1:16-17)

Ruth marries Boaz of Judah
(Ruth 4)



A DIFFERENT *ELYASHIV*

- A continuing concern to follow God's Torah even if it hurt the economy, caused hurt feelings, caused civil discord
- Many people in the Bible have the same names
- Names went in popularity cycles just like in modern times
- Toviya a nemesis of Nehemiah
- Neh.4:1 – 2
- Elyashiv and Toviya related through intermarriage of families
- Elyashiv gave one of the sacred Temple chambers to Toviya for personal use



ANOTHER SIDE OF NEHEMIAH



- All this was happening while Nehemiah was away
- Every reform was unraveling
- Nehemiah had returned to King Artaxerxes
- Nehemiah orders Toviyah and all his stuff out
- The promised tithes to support the Priests and Levites had ceased
- Levites had to abandon their posts to farm



ABANDONING GOD



- To stop supporting the Temple is to “abandon the Temple”
- In just a few years after promising to adhere to their statement of faith, the people broke their promises
- God equates His peoples’ disobedience as abandoning Him
- The LORD shall determine our abandonment, we don’t get to decide

NEHEMIAH HAD POWER

- Although called back to Babylon, he was still the governor of Judah
- Babylon one of 4 places the King of Persia had palaces
- He removed Elyashiv's authority and gave it to 3 men
- Knew all 3 and thought them "reliable"



NEHEMIAH: EPITOME OF GODLY LEADERSHIP



- ALL Believers should use Nehemiah as our leadership example
- High moral principles, using God's standards
- Principle without deeds is pointless
- Intention without action is dishonest
- Bowing to pressure from the enemy is cowardly
- **"Holiness is not negotiable"**