

Ezra/Nehemiah  
Community Presbyterian Church  
Lesson Three

1. “Now after these things, in the reign of Artaxerxes king of Persia, Ezra the son of Seraiah, the son of Azariah, the son of Hilkiah, the son of Shallum, the son of Zadok, the son of Ahitub, the son of Amariah, the son of Azariah, the son of Meraioth, the son of Zerahiah, the son of Uzzi, the son of Bukki, the son of Abishua, the son of Phinehas, the son of Eleazar, the son of Aaron the chief priest--Ezra came up from Babylon a scribe expert in the Torah of Moses which the Eternal God of Israel had given, and the king granted him all his request, according to the hand of the LORD his God upon him....(Ezra 7:6)

2. The words of Nehemiah son of Hakaliah: In the month of Kislev in the twentieth year, while I was in the citadel of Susa,

Nehemiah 1:1

3. I was cupbearer to the king.

Nehemiah 1:11

4. In the month of Nisan in the twentieth year of King Artaxerxes, when wine was brought for him, I took the wine and gave it to the king. I had not been sad in his presence before, so the king asked me, “Why does your face look so sad when you are not ill? This can be nothing but sadness of heart.”

I was very much afraid, but I said to the king, “May the king live forever! Why should my face not look sad when the city where my ancestors are buried lies in ruins, and its gates have been destroyed by fire?”

The king said to me, “What is it you want?”

Then I prayed to the God of heaven, and I answered the king, “If it pleases the king and if your servant has found favor in his sight, let him send me to the city in Judah where my ancestors are buried so that I can rebuild it.”

Nehemiah 2:1-5

5. Then I said to them, “You see the trouble we are in: Jerusalem lies in ruins, and its gates have been burned with fire. Come, let us rebuild the wall of Jerusalem, and we will no longer be in disgrace.”

Nehemiah 2:17

6. So the wall was completed on the twenty-fifth of Elul, in fifty-two days.

Nehemiah 6:15

7. Comfort, comfort (Nachamu, Nachamu) my people,  
says your God.

Speak tenderly to Jerusalem,  
and proclaim to her  
that her hard service has been completed,  
that her sin has been paid for,  
that she has received from the LORD's hand  
double for all her sins.

Isaiah 40:1

8. "These King Cyrus of Persia released through the office of Mithredath the treasurer who gave an inventory of them to Sheshbazzar the prince of Judah."

Ezra 1:8

9. "Then Jeshua son of Jozadak and his brother priests and Zerubbabel son of Shealtiel and his brothers set out to and built the altar of the God of Israel..."

Ezra 3:2

10. God's promise as spoken to David by the prophet Nathan:  
Your house and your kingship shall ever be secure before you; your throne shall be established forever.

II Samuel 7:16

11. The story of the final kings of Judah is complex and not well known. The last major king of Judah was Josiah who reigned for 31 years. He died in a battle at Megiddo in 608 BCE. Three of Josiah's sons and one of his grandsons ruled in Jerusalem during the final three decades of the First Temple period. Jeconiah was the King of Judah when Nebuchadnezzar conquered Jerusalem. Nebuchadnezzar brought Jeconiah to Babylonia and imprisoned him for 37 years. II Kings concludes with the story of Evil-merodach succeeding Nebuchadnezzar as King of Babylonia. He released Jeconiah from prison and gave him a proper position together with the other exiled kings of territories conquered by the Babylonian Empire.

12. The prophet Jeremiah cursed Jeconiah proclaiming explicitly that none of his descendants would ever sit on the throne of Israel:

Thus says the Eternal:  
Record this man as childless,  
One who shall never be found acceptable;  
For none of his offspring shall be accepted,  
To sit on the throne of David,  
And to rule again in Judah.

Jeremiah 22:30

