

הַיּוֹם בַּאֲשֶׁר קוֹמֵם יֵשׁוּעַ
הַמָּשִׁיחַ מִן־הַמָּתִים



**The Resurrection Day
Of Messiah Yeshua**

When It Happened

According To The Original
Texts

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Nehemiah.³⁴⁶

In Ezra 9:9, the “wall” (גִּדָּר) is referred to:

For we are slaves; yet in our bondage, our Almighty has not forsaken us, but has extended loving-kindness to us in the sight of the kings of Persia, to give us reviving to raise up the house of our Almighty, to restore its ruins, and to give us a wall in Judah and Jerusalem.

This wall had to be the one that Nehemiah built in 445 B.C. and that he himself had helped dedicate in 431 B.C. This shows that Ezra 7 comes 49 years after Nehemiah 8, because in 458 B.C. there was no completed wall. Of course, opponents re-explain “wall” to mean some other wall³⁴⁷ (or spiritualize the idea of “wall” to the concept of unseen protection), but this is not very parsimonious given the fact that the walls which actually succeeded in protecting Jerusalem were those that Nehemiah rebuilt, and here we have Ezra crediting the Almighty with providing these walls as divine providence.³⁴⁸ There was no divine providence attached to the walls that were torn down prior to Nehemiah. For evidently those walls were not sanctioned by the Almighty for the beginning of the prophetic word in Daniel 9.

John Bright continues:

In addition, various indexes, though no one in itself decisive, better suit the assumption that Nehemiah arrived before Ezra. Whether Ezra 9:9 refers to Nehemiah’s wall or not, Nehemiah certainly found the city largely in ruins (Neh. 7:4), whereas when Ezra arrived it seems to have been inhabited and relatively secure. Further, Nehemiah early corrected economic abuses (ch. 5:1-13) of

³⁴⁶ *A History of Israel*, John Bright, page 393.

³⁴⁷ Such as the wall in Ezra 4:7-23 (4:12= שׁוֹר), and referred to in Neh. 1:3 (חֹמַת). But Ezra 4:7-23 is part of a parenthetical detail of the opposition placed in the context of chapters 1-6, before Ezra ever mentions himself, and then he begins at 7:1, “And after these things” (וְאַחֵר הַדְּבָרִים הָאֵלֶּה). So it does seem that the Artaxerxes of 4:7 is not the one of 7:1.

³⁴⁸ It may not be doubted that Ezra also implies spiritual protection to go with the physical, and that by “wall” he also means the favor of Artaxerxes and his decree that Yahweh granted Judah at this time. But also Ezra’s pointed reference to “Jerusalem” is best understood in light of a literal “wall.”

which there is no hint in the story of Ezra. Would not the godly Ezra have been as shocked at such things as Nehemiah, had they existed when he came (as they would had he preceded Nehemiah)? Again: Nehemiah's reforms (ch. 13), if not milder than Ezra's, were certainly less consequent, having the earmarks of a series of *ad hoc* measures.

And there is another minor point. One "Meremoth son of Uriah" a descendent of "Hakkoz" was a wall builder (Neh. 3:4, 21), and is not called a priest in Nehemiah because the sons of Hakkoz could not prove their priestly status (cf. Ezra 2:61-62; Neh. 7:63-64). Later, in Ezra 8:33 the title is restored: "Meremoth son of Uriah the priest." Evidently the sons of Hakkoz were able to prove their priestly descent after the time of Nehemiah. The omission Meremoth's title in Nehemiah and restoration in Ezra 8:33 only makes parsimonious sense if Ezra 8:33 comes after the wall building, and it is assumed that the records were found, and then the title restored. Not convincing is the assumption that a lay family (with a claim to the priesthood) just happened to have the same father and son name as a different priestly family. Even less convincing is the assumption that Ezra "acknowledged Meremoth" when he arrived, and then deposed him, since there is no record that a priest Meremoth son of Uriah son of Hakkoz was deposed. The last assumption is simply an *ad hoc* attempt to explain why the title is lacking in Nehemiah.

On a more subtle level, we might note that the figure of Meremoth son of Uriah, who appears to be a vigorous wall builder with Nehemiah (Neh. 3:4, 21), is a mature priestly leader with Ezra in Ezra 8:33-34, which is strange if Ezra is to be placed before Nehemiah chronologically.³⁴⁹

Ezra began his reforms as soon as he arrived, yet advocates of a 458 B.C. date posit a 13 year gap until Ezra read the Torah in Nehemiah 8:1. Since Ezra was skilled in the Torah (Ezra 7:6; 10, 12, 21), the Torah would have required one sabbatical year reading before the reading in 445 B.C. (Deut. 31:10). This Torah reading was not optional. It was mandatory. Why then does a 458 B.C. "Ezra" skip over this resulting in the sorrow and ignorance we meet with in Nehemiah

³⁴⁹ *A Biblical History of Israel*, Provan, Long, and Longman, pg. 299.

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