

The Books Of
Ezra and
Nehemiah

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Welcome to Good Morning Girls! We are so glad you are joining us.

God created us to walk with Him, to know Him, and to be loved by Him. He is our living well, and when we drink from the water He continually provides, His living water will change the entire course of our lives.

Jesus said: "Whoever drinks of the water that I will give him will never be thirsty again. The water that I will give him will become in him a spring of water welling up to eternal life." ~ Johns 4:14(ESV)

So let's begin.

The method we use here at GMG is called the **SOAK** method.

- **S** – The S stands for **Scripture** – Read the chapter for the day. Then choose 1-2 verses and write them out word for word. (There is no right or wrong choice – just let the Holy Spirit guide you.)
- **O** – The O stands for **Observation** – Look at the verse or verses you wrote out. Write 1 or 2 observations. What stands out to you? What do you learn about the character of God from these verses? Is there a promise, command or teaching?
- **A** – The A stands for **Application** – Personalize the verses. What is God saying to you? How can you apply them to your life? Are there any changes you need to make or an action to take?
- **K** – The K stands for **Kneeling in Prayer** – Pause, kneel and pray. Confess any sin God has revealed to you today. Praise God for His word. Pray the passage over your own life or someone you love. Ask God to help you live out your applications.

SOAK God's word into your heart and squeeze every bit of nourishment you can out of each day's scripture reading. Soon you will find your life transformed by the renewing of your mind!

Walk with the King!

Courtney, *WomenLivingWell.org, GoodMorningGirls.org*

Join the GMG Community:
Share your daily SOAK on
Facebook.com/GoodMorningGirlsWLW
Instagram.com/WomenLivingWell #WomenLivingWell

GMG BIBLE COLORING CHART

COLORS	KEY WORDS
PURPLE	God, Jesus, Holy Spirit, Saviour, Messiah
PINK	women of the Bible, family, marriage, parenting, friendship, relationships
RED	love, kindness, mercy, compassion, peace, grace
GREEN	faith, obedience, growth, fruit, salvation, fellowship, repentance
YELLOW	worship, prayer, praise, doctrine, angels, miracles, power of God, blessings
BLUE	wisdom, teaching, instruction, commands
ORANGE	prophecy, history, times, places, kings, genealogies, people, numbers, covenants, vows, visions, oaths, future
GRAY	Satan, sin, death, hell, evil, idols, false teachers, hypocrisy, temptation

Introduction to the Book of Ezra

In the Book of Ezra, we see God's faithfulness even in times when the children of Israel were unfaithful. God had promised that the exiled would return to their land of promise, and he was faithful to keep his promise.

The Book of Ezra details the events surrounding the return of the exiled Jews back to Jerusalem and the rebuilding of the Temple. While Ezra contains only ten chapters, it covers the return of captives to Jerusalem under Zerubbabel and Ezra, as well as over eighty years of events during this very important time in Israel's history. We see that God sent faithful prophets, Haggai and Zechariah, to call them back to their very important task when discouragement led them to halt the reconstruction project.

The name Ezra most likely means, "The Lord Has Helped", and indeed he helped the children of Israel return to their homeland and rebuild the temple despite opposition. Through all this we see God as a God of hope and restoration. Though we may face consequences for our wrong choices in life, God will never forsake us. In his love, he forgives and restores.

The Purpose:

Ezra recalls the events of the first post-exilic return of the children of Israel to Jerusalem under Zerubbabel and Ezra, and the rebuilding of the Temple.

The Author: Although the author is anonymous, it is believed that Ezra wrote the book, or at the very least compiled it

Time Period: This book was written around 538-400 BC.

Key Verse: Ezra 3:11

*And they sang responsively, praising and giving thanks to the Lord,
"For he is good, for his steadfast love endures forever toward Israel."
And all the people shouted with a great shout when they praised the Lord,
because the foundation of the house of the Lord was laid.*

The Outline:

1. The return of the Children of Israel under Zerubbabel (1-2)

A list of the captives who returned to Jerusalem (2:2-58)

2. The beginning of the restoration of the Temple (3)

3. Opposition to the Temple's restoration and the work halted (4)

4. Restoration of the Temple resumes (5)

5. The completion and dedication of the Temple (6:13-22)

6. Ezra arrives (7)

7. Genealogy of the captives who returned with Ezra (8:1-14)

8. Ezra addresses sin and brings reform (9-10)

As we read and study the Book of Ezra, we will see God's love and faithfulness on display over and over again. When the children of Israel are discouraged and apathetic, he sends his prophets to encourage them to keep going. When they are, once again, unfaithful to him, he remains faithful to them.

The same is true for us today. Though at times we are unfaithful to God, he remains faithful to us. His grace, and forgiveness are unending toward us. He loves us so much!

So, let's get started studying His word. Be sure to set aside at least 15 minutes a day for your reading. I can't wait to see how God reveals himself personally to each of us, as we study the book of Ezra together.

Keep walking with the King,

Courtney

EZRA 1

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Introduction to the Book of Nehemiah

The Book of Nehemiah details the events surrounding rebuilding the walls of Jerusalem and restoring worship in the temple that was rebuilt under Ezra. Originally, the Book of Nehemiah was included in the Book of Ezra as one book, but when the Bible was translated into Latin, the two books were separated.

Nehemiah's name means, "Yahweh Comforts", and we see how God uses Nehemiah to bring the children of Israel comfort as they read the Law for the first time in the newly restored Temple, and they comprehend how far they had strayed from God's commands.

In the Book of Nehemiah, we follow along as the children of Israel begin the enormous job of rebuilding the walls of Jerusalem in only 52 days. With Nehemiah's expert leadership, they were able to complete this God-given task despite heavy opposition from their enemies, physical weariness, discouragement, and even attempts of direct sabotage through deception and manipulation.

The Purpose:

Nehemiah details the determined spirit of God's people as they undertake the daunting task of rebuilding the walls of Jerusalem so that the returning captives can once again live in their land of promise.

The Author: Although the author is anonymous, it is believed that Nehemiah wrote portions of the book and that Ezra helped to compile and even write it.

Time Period: This book was written around 423 BC.

Key Verse: Nehemiah 8:10

Then he said to them, "Go your way. Eat the fat and drink sweet wine and send portions to anyone who has nothing ready, for this day is holy to our Lord. And do not be grieved, for the joy of the Lord is your strength."

The Outline:

- 1. Nehemiah's prayer for the people (1)**
- 2. King Artaxerxes sends Nehemiah to Judah (2:1-10)**
- 3. Nehemiah assesses the ruined walls (2:11-20)**
- 4. The children of Israel begin rebuilding the walls (3)**
- 5. Opposition is met (4-6:14)**
- 6. The walls are completed (6:15-7:3)**
- 7. Genealogy of the captives who returned (7:6-73)**
- 8. Ezra reads the Law and the people confess their sins (8-9:3)**
- 9. The Levites seal a new covenant (9:5-10:39)**
A list of those who sealed the covenant (10:1-27)
- 10. A list of those dwelling in Jerusalem (11)**
A list of those dwelling outside of Jerusalem (11:25-36)
- 11. A list of the priests and Levites (12:1-26)**
- 12. Dedication of the wall and a cleansing of the temple and people (12:27-13:31)**

As we read and study the Book of Nehemiah, we are inspired by the determination and faithful leadership of Nehemiah to lead God's people to take on and successfully complete a seemingly impossible task, even in the face of strong opposition.

This serves as a reminder to us today. As we seek to live dedicated lives that testify of God's love and faithfulness, we can expect to face temptation, discouragement, and temptation. However, it is encouraging to know that we don't live this life alone. We live each day by the power of the Holy Spirit who leads and guides us, and gives us the power we need to daily walk in the purpose for which God created us.

So, let's get started studying His word. Be sure to set aside at least 15 minutes a day for your reading. I can't wait to see how God reveals himself personally to each of us, as we read the book of Nehemiah together.

Keep walking with the King,

Courtney

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