



## **The book of Nehemiah**

### ***DESCRIPTION SHEET***

#### **Author**

The author of this book is not quite revealed in the text. Someone might think that it is Nehemiah, as is the case with many of the biblical books. But he would be wrong. According to Jewish and Christian traditions, the authorship of this book is attributed to the scribe Ezra, despite the fact that Nehemiah is the main character of this book. This is probably the reason why this book bears the name of Nehemiah. The fundamental reason for attributing authorship to Ezra is the fact that these two texts were originally one.

#### **Date**

Given that Ezra is recognized as the author of this text and that the texts of Ezra and Nehemiah were a single volume that was to be read in sequence, we date the writing of this text to the period of 445 – 420 B.C.

#### **Main theme and target audience**

The book of Nehemiah continues to tell the story of the return of the people of Israel from captivity in Babylon and the rebuilding of the Temple. While Nehemiah was in Persia during the reign of King Artaxerxes, he learned that the temple in Jerusalem had been rebuilt, but the city was not secured. He wanted to rebuild the wall that had been destroyed during the Babylonian invasion. He had permission from the king to go and rebuild the wall to secure the city. Despite the fact that he had opponents, Nehemiah managed to rebuild the wall in 52 weeks not only with the help of the king, but also with the involvement of the people of Israel. Nehemiah also encouraged the people to become a strong people by obeying the law of the Lord.

#### **Outline of the book**

1. The return of Nehemiah and the rebuilding of the wall. (Neh. 1:1 - 7:73a)
2. The spiritual awakening of the people through the reading of the law of God. (Neh. 7:73b - 10:39)
3. The repopulation and dedication of the wall of Jerusalem. (Neh. 11:1 - 12:47)
4. Nehemiah and the fight for the respect of God's word. (Neh. 13:1-31)