

Nehemiah 12: Restoring the City of God or How to Preach a List of Names

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Introduction

During the last forty years I have heard many sermons on Nehemiah. Although the church has neglected the Old Testament in general, the Book of Nehemiah was not excluded by this practical Marcionism. Probably the attention it received was due to the fact that this is a part of the Old Testament that the average preacher or teacher felt could be easily understood. The book was eminently practical and applications were immediate, whether in terms of aiding and abetting a church building program, or finding principles to inspire a church in spiritual disrepair to work together in the face of various kinds of opposition from within and without and accomplish great things for God. Some have focused on leadership tips. I have not, however, heard a single sermon on Nehemiah 12. Its dry and dusty lists of unpronounceable names remained as opaque to understanding as other parts of the Old Testament and utterly irrelevant for the Christian church, unless one were to see a parallel between it and lists of charter members duly recorded and encased in the cornerstone of a church edifice: "Built to the Glory of God 1964."

Such an approach, however, belies our claims for biblical inspiration and inerrancy and reveals, in practical terms, a low view of scripture. "Every word of God is perfect," says Agur (Prov 30:5), and Nehemiah 12 is no exception. It is a powerful word from the Lord, especially for the church today. After briefly reviewing the

historical and literary context of chapter 12 and devoting some attention to its contents, this brief study will seek to identify its message by correlating the chapter to the book of Nehemiah as a whole and to the entire flow of biblical theology.

Outline of Nehemiah 12

- A. A New Generation of Leaders 12:1-26
 - 1. Priests in the Homecoming Generation 12:1-7
 - 2. Levites in the Homecoming Generation 12:8-9
 - 3. High Priestly Line After the Exile 12:10-11
 - 4. A New Generation of Priests 12:12-21
 - 5. A New Generation of Levites 12:22-25a
 - 6. A New Generation of Gatekeepers 12:25b-26
- B. Re-Dedication of the City of God to Worship 12:27-13:3
 - 1. Preparation of the Priests & Levites 12:27-32
 - 2. Procession A 12:33-37
 - 3. Procession B (Antiphonal Choir) 12:38-42
 - 4. Dedication Ceremony 12:40-43
 - 5. Support of the Service of God 12:44-47
 - 6. Exclusion of Foreigners 13:1-3

Chronology

- 538 B.C. Decree of Cyrus the Persian permitting return from exile. Return under Sheshbazzar,

	Zerubbabel, and Jeshua (high priest)
537	Altar rebuilt
536	Work on temple begun
520	Work on temple resumed
516	Temple completed and dedicated
458	Return under Ezra, the priest and scribe ¹
445-432	Nehemiah, governor of Judah
Later	Return of Nehemiah

Judah, destroyed the city of Jerusalem and its temple, and carried the people away into exile. For seventy years they were in Babylon under the discipline and punishment of God. But after judgement came restoration. (It is wonderful that the last word of the Old Testament is restoration rather than judgement.) In 538 B.C., Cyrus the Great, King of Persia, gave the decree which permitted the Jews to return to Judah and Jerusalem.

There were several stages to the return. Right away in 538 B.C. a large number returned under the leadership of Sheshbazzar, Zerubbabel, and Jeshua, the high priest as detailed in Ezra 1-2 and Nehemiah 7. First they rebuilt the altar in 537 and then laid the foundation for the temple in 536. Later, in 520, after the work was stalled for some time due to opposition, the prophets Haggai and Zechariah stirred up the people to finish the temple led by Zerubbabel and Joshua the high priest.

Some eighty years after the first return, another group returned under the leadership of Ezra, priest and scribe (cf. Ezra 8). From 445-332, Nehemiah was made governor of Judah by Artaxerxes I (Neh 5:14), and under his leadership the city walls were rebuilt in fifty-two days.

Historical Context

At the exodus from Egypt, God created Israel as a nation and the people willingly entered into an agreement, a covenant relationship, when the Law/Torah was given at Sinai. For loyalty and obedience there were blessings in the land, and for disobedience there were curses—ultimately exile. Subsequent history showed immediate and repeated violation of the covenant by the people of God.

They rebelled against the Kingship of God by disobeying his guidelines for a right relationship with him and for right relationships with others that showed dignity, honesty, love, and respect. Instead of following the ways set down in the covenant, they attempted to grab the good life by means of extortion, by injustices of all sorts, by oppression of the poor and powerless, and by violence. Now the lifestyle of the people contradicted the meaning of their services in the temple and their worship became hollow and hypocritical. They defiled the temple by many corrupt and evil practices. For all of this—and not until they were repeatedly warned over the years by the prophets—the judgment of God fell upon them.

In a series of three separate attacks, made in 605, 597, and 587 B.C., Nebuchadnezzar II, King of Babylon, conquered

Literary Context

Nehemiah is a book about re-building and restoring the city of God. While chapters 1-6 focus on restoring the city in physical terms, chapters 7-13 focus on restoring the city as a group of people devoted to the service and worship of their God. Chapters 7 and 11 deal with repopulating Judah and Jerusalem respectively. Next, 8-10 are concerned with a return to Torah (the word of God) and the worship of God (ch. 8), to repentance and

confession of sin (ch. 9), and to renewal of covenant commitment (ch. 10). Chapter 11 refers five times to Jerusalem as the Holy City. The emphasis is upon a city once more devoted to God and his service. Israel will fulfill God's purpose expressed at Sinai that they become a holy nation and a kingdom of priests (Exod 19:6). Nehemiah 12 is therefore climactic in its position in the book as it focuses on the renewal of leadership and the dedication of the walls, i.e., the city, to the worship of God.

Dieter Böhler shows that the chapters of Nehemiah are arranged in chiasmic, concentric circles with the reading and teaching of the word of God and a return to worship at the center:²

according to the standards established by King David. The exclusion of foreigners, an aspect of maintaining purity in worship is addressed in 13:1-3. Thus, when all the parts are put together, the central focus is on restoring the city of God as a place devoted to the worship of God.

While a number of difficulties exist in historical matters and aspects of the transmission of the text, the main points are clear. The first half of chapter 12 is organized as follows:

Homecomers' Generation of Priests	12:1-7
Homecomers' Generation of Levites	12:8-9

City Walls:	Neh 1-6	Neh 12:27-13:3
Repopulation:	Neh 7	Neh 11
Torah/Worship	Neh 8-10	

This concentric structure focusing on the word of God and worship matches the same emphasis in the climactic chapter 12.

Details of Chapter 12

The chapter is divided roughly into two parts (see outline above). The first half provides a series of lists of names which represents passing the torch to a new generation of spiritual leaders: priests, Levites, and gatekeepers. The second half depicts a ceremony of celebration and dedication: Two choirs march around on top of the walls and meet at the temple to give praise and thanks to God for a city whose walls are restored and to dedicate the city to the service and worship of God. Nehemiah 12:44-47 deals with establishing stewards for the storerooms where the offerings and tithes were stored, the support of the priests, Levites, and gatekeepers, and the maintenance of worship

Chronology: High Priestly Line After Exile	12:10-11
Later Generation of Priests Chronology: Leaders of Priests & Levites Recorded	12:12-21 12:22-23
Later Generation of Levites & Gatekeepers	12:24-25

A chronological framework is supplied by the family line of the high priest given in 12:10-11 and further information on the high priests in 12:22-23. The genealogy in 12:10-11 locates the lists in 12:1-9 in the time of the first return. Nehemiah 12:22-23 provides a list of high priests from the time of the second return and afterwards and notes when the lists of priests and Levites were recorded. This additional information can be used to determine the chronology of the lists in 12:12-21 and 24-25. Thus the family line of the high priest is an anchor for the lists of names.

Jeshua, or Joshua as he is called in the books of Haggai and Zechariah, was the high priest at the time of the first return when the altar and temple were rebuilt. Eliashib was high priest in 445 B.C., because, according to 3:1, 20-21, he helped to build part of the wall with Nehemiah and had a house in Jerusalem at the time. This leaves Joiakim between Jeshua and Eliashib. In 12:10, however, Joiada and Jonathan are listed after Eliashib, but 12:22 lists Joiada and Johanan. This discrepancy may be resolved by noting that according to 12:10-11 and 13:28, Joiada was the son of Eliashib and Jonathan the son of Joiada. According to 12:23, Johanan was also a son of Eliashib and therefore an uncle of Jonathan.³ It may be that both sons of Eliashib held office as high priest before moving to Jonathan in the next generation. Thus the family line in 12:10-11 gives only the bare backbone of the genealogy and does not list all who were high priests.

The family line may go down to about 400 or perhaps even 330 depending upon how one interprets Darius the Persian in 12:23. There were three kings by the name of Darius: Darius I (Hystaspes), 522-486; Darius II (Nothus), 423-405; and Darius III (Codomannus), 335-330 B.C.⁴ If Darius I is meant, then v. 22 is saying that priests were recorded by family heads in the time of Darius I and Levites by family heads later in the time of Eliashib to Jaddua. Darius may be designated “the Persian” to differentiate him from Darius the Mede (Dan 5:31).⁵ On the other hand, the verse may be saying that the lists of priests were recorded in the time of Darius II or III.⁶

The remaining lists compare and contrast lists of priests and Levites from the generation of the first return with lists of priests, Levites, and gatekeepers from a subsequent generation (i.e., during the

time of Joiakim, the next high priest for the priests and during the time of Eliashib to Jaddua for the Levites). The lists in 10:2-8 and 10:9-13 show the priests and Levites for Nehemiah’s generation. These latter lists may be subsequent to the later generation of priests in 12:12-21 and prior to the Levites in 12:24-25.⁷

When one compares the lists of priests in 12:1-7 and 12:12-21, the correspondence is closer than appears in our present Hebrew text, since problems have occurred in the course of textual transmission (see Table 1, next page). The family of Hattush seems to be missing in the subsequent generation and either Mijamin has no family leader in the second list, or Piltai is leader for both the families of Mijamin and Maadiah. The main point is that there is continuity and, therefore, legitimacy and purity in qualified leadership for the next generation.

First Chronicles 24:6-18 gives a list of twenty-four divisions of priests as organized in the time of King David. The priests were essentially farmers. An organization of twenty-four divisions allowed each division to go to Jerusalem and minister for only two weeks and work on their farms the rest of the year. In this way the temple worship was always provided with priests who were supported from their own labor as well as from the offerings. The relation between the lists in Nehemiah 12 and 1 Chronicles 24 is debated,⁸ but the main point is that the organization established by David is, by and large, intact, and the returned exiles have again succeeded in maintaining continuity in leadership in worship.

	Homecomers' Generation		Later Generation	Nehemiah's Generation
	12:1b-7a	12:12-21	12:12-21	10:2-8
1	Seraiah	Seraiah	Meraiah	Seraiah
2	Jeremiah	Jeremiah	Hananiah	Azariah
3	Ezra	Ezra	Meshullam	Jeremiah
4	Amariah	Amariah	Jehohanan	Pashhur*
5	Malluch	Malluchi ⁹	Jonathan	Amariah
6	Hattush			Malkijah*
7	Shecaniah	Shebaniah ¹⁰	Joseph	Hattush
8	Rehum	Harim ¹¹	Adna	Shebaniah
9	Meremoth	Meriaoth ¹²	Helkai	Malluch
10	Iddo	Iddi ¹³	Zechariah	Harim
11	Ginnethoi ¹⁴	Ginnethon	Meshullam	Meremoth
12	Abijah	Abijah	Zicri	Obadiah*
13	Mijamin	Minjamin ¹⁵	?	Daniel*
14	Maadiah	Moadiah ¹⁶	Piltai	Ginnethon
15	Bilgah	Bilgah	Shammua	Baruch*
16	Shemaiah	Shemaiah	Jehonathan	Meshullam
17 and	Joiarib	Joiarib	Mattenai	Abijah
18	Jedaiah	Jedaiah	Uzzi	Mijamin
19	Sallu	Sallai ¹⁷	Kallai	Maaziah
20	Amok	Amok	Eber	Bilgai
21	Hilkiah	Hilkiah	Hashabiah	Shemaiah
22	Jedaiah	Jedaiah	Nethanel	

Table 1

The lists of Levites are not given in as much detail as those of the priests. What we are given are the leaders of the worship choirs arranged as a lead choir and an antiphonal or responsive choir. This arrangement goes back to the time of King David who was a man after God's own heart (1 Sam 13:14), because he was the first man to rule over God's people as king and at the same time understand the priority of worship. This is what God had intended for Adam at the start. Genesis 1 depicts humanity made in the divine image to rule as king under God, and Genesis 2 shows that the first priority in this task is worship as God places Adam as a king-priest in a garden sanctuary.¹⁸

The fact that some names in a subsequent generation of Levites are the same as those in an earlier generation shows that, in these famous families that led in worship, sons were named after fathers. Similarly, American historians 1000 years from now may have difficulties distinguishing two presidents who are both named George Bush. The Levites played musical instruments and led in songs of praise and thanksgiving according to 12:27-29. Again the main point is continuity in qualified worship leaders. Men named after their fathers are faithfully carrying on the work of a previous generation of leaders.

The verse division between vv. 24 and 25 presents a problem. Verse 24

should be translated as follows: “And the leaders of the Levites were Hashabiah, Sherebiah, Jeshua son of Kadmiel, and their associates opposite them (to give praise and thanks according to the command of David, the man of God, worship group corresponding to worship group), namely Mattaniah, Bakbukiah, and Obadiah.” Thus Hashabiah, Sherebiah, and Jeshua led the main choir, and Mattaniah, Bakbukiah, and Obadiah the antiphonal choir. In this way vv. 24-25a better match vv. 8-9. Meshullam, Talmon, and Akkub, then, begin the list of gatekeepers in v. 25b.

A list of gatekeepers is not given in 12:1-9 for the homecomers’ generation, but v. 25b lists them for a subsequent generation. We can find the list for the homecomers’ generation in Ezra 2:42. Here again, famous names like Akkub and Talmon are being passed on to sons who maintained the family tradition. The gatekeepers were a vital part of the worship of God because they closed the city gates for commerce and trade on the Sabbath (see 13:15-22) and so ensured a focus on worship.

The central message of the first half of chapter 12 is clear. The city of God cannot be devoted to worship unless there are spiritual leaders who will lead the people to worship God.

The second half of chapter 12 depicts a ceremony of celebration and dedication. Verses 27-32 describe the Levitical leaders of worship being called and assembled in Jerusalem from the outlying areas and villages around the city where they lived. They prepared themselves for worship by purifying themselves and the people.

Next, the ceremony of dedication is described in three stages. Nehemiah assembles two choirs according to the

model of lead and response choir. The two choirs are incorporated into two processions whose itineraries are detailed. Each of the two processions begins at the dung gate on the south western side of the city wall and proceed in opposite directions around the wall until they meet at the temple. The third stage is then a service of celebration, worship, and dedication held at the temple.

The description of the first two stages, the two processions, is arranged in a chiasmic or A-B-B-A pattern of Procession-A (31b-36), Itinerary-B (37), Itinerary-B (38-40a), Procession-A (41-42). The two processions are also arranged symmetrically as follows:¹⁹

- (1) Thanksgiving Choir (vv. 31 and 38)
- (2) A Prominent Lay Leader: Hoshaiiah (v. 32) and Nehemiah (vv. 38, 40)
- (3) Half of the Lay Leaders (vv. 32 and 40)²⁰
- (4) Seven Priests with Trumpets²¹ (vv. 33-35a and 41)
- (5) A Worship Director/Leader: Zechariah (v. 35b) and Izrahiah (v. 42b)
- (6) Eight Levitical Musicians (vv. 36 and 42)

Ezra the Priest went in front of the first procession while Nehemiah the governor went behind the second (vv. 36 and 38). There is thus beauty, order, and symbolic meaning to a carefully prepared service of celebration, dedication, and worship. Nothing is casual here. In the second half of Nehemiah 12, the theme of continuity, legitimacy, and purity in leadership is being maintained, for we see that Zechariah can trace his ancestry all the way back to Asaph, one of the key worship leaders in the time of King David and author of eleven canonical Psalms (73-83).

As the two choirs/processions marched

around on top of the wall, one going one way, one going the other, both meeting at the temple, they were symbolically claiming these logs and stones, these gates and walls for the Lord God. In fact, they were dedicating the entire city once again for the service and worship of God. The service at the temple involved sacrifices, celebration (rejoicing), and dedication, supported by songs of thanks using musical instruments (cymbals, lutes, and lyres).

Nehemiah 12 and the Flow of Biblical Theology

The word “dedication” in Hebrew involves initiating or using something for the first time as well as devoting it to a particular purpose or use. Nonetheless, the full meaning of dedicating the city of God can only be understood within the larger story of biblical theology. Only the barest bones of this can now be sketched out to try and locate Nehemiah 12 within it.

In the beginning God created humanity in his image (Gen 1:26-28). The divine image entails a covenant relationship between us and the creator God on the one hand, and between us and the creation on the other. The relationship with God is to be characterised by love, trust, and above all obedience, and is summed up by sonship. Our relationship with the creation involves implementing the divine rule in the world and is summed up by kingship and servanthood. In short, God is establishing his kingdom through covenant.

Genesis 2 proceeds to show how mankind is to go about implementing the divine rule in the world. The garden of Eden is presented not only as a center of blessing in the world, but also as a divine sanctuary, the point where the divine

presence was experienced and enjoyed in a close and immediate way. What the narrative is saying is this: Man is created in the world and given dominion over it, but he is immediately abstracted from the world and placed directly in the divine presence.²² This tells us how the royal rule is to be exercised. Mankind was to control the world, not primarily by immersing himself in the tasks of ordering it, but by recognizing that there was a system of priorities by which all of life was to be regulated. If he were rightly related to his Creator, then he would rightly respond to creation. Included in the covenant was an ordering of male/female relationships and family life so that part of responding rightly to creation was true humanness defined in proper ways of treating each other. The kingdom of God is thus fostered through maintaining the priority of worship.

After the fall in Genesis 3, God made a new start with Noah. But this, too, ends up in chaos and loss at Babel. Another new start is made with Abram and his family. The call of Abram in Genesis 12 picks up the threads of Genesis 1 and 2. Note in particular that the first of the six promises in 12:1-2 is that God will make of Abram a great nation (*gôy*); the last is that through him all the clans (*mishpachôt*) of the earth will be blessed.

These two Hebrew words, nation and clan, are chosen and used with great purpose and meaning. The basic meaning of *gôy* is an *organized* community of people having *governmental, political, and social structure*. By definition a *gôy* is a group governed by a king.²³ This contrasts with the fact that the other nations are simply termed clans (*mishpachah*). The word refers to an amorphous kin group larger than an extended family and smaller than a tribe,

with no particular governmental leadership or structure. The language in the text emphasizes that Abram and his family will become a kingdom, the kingdom of God, while the other people groups which we normally think of as great nations will not amount to anything lasting in the grand scheme of things.

When Abram's family becomes a nation and gains possession of Canaan, the city of Zion conquered by King David subsumes earlier expressions of the kingdom of God. Zion is the city where God lives in the midst of his people as king. The city is to be characterized by right relationships with God as well as by social justice, i.e., treating each other in a truly human way and being good stewards of the earth's resources.

The city of God is celebrated not only in the Psalms (e.g., 46 and 87) but also in Isaiah. The prophet's expansive and grand vision begins with the earthly Zion in the old creation where the city of faithfulness/truth has become a prostitute, a whore (Isa 1:21), and ends with Zion in the new creation, a covenant community whose hallmark is social justice. Glimpses of this future Zion are given in Isaiah 2 and 4. It is furthered in the oracles to the foreign nations in Isaiah 13-27 which are divided into three cycles of five. The last five in Isaiah 23-27 summarize the kingdoms of this world raised in pride and rebellion against the Creator as the city of man in contrast to the future city of God. Four times it refers to the city of man (24:12; 25:2 [2x]; 27:10) and once to the city of God (26:1), matching the five sections in each of the three division. It is here that Isaiah achieves an extremely high peak in his vision of the future with the banquet on the mountain in chapter 25 where death and tears are gone and the song celebra-

ting the strong city of God in chapter 26.

Zechariah the prophet, a near contemporary of Nehemiah, borrows directly from Isaiah's vision and sees the harlot city restored as the city of truth (Zechariah 8). And the first priority of the city of God is worship. This is why Nehemiah 12 has so many references to what was prescribed by King David or traces roots back to Asaph. It is because King David is a model of what God intended for Adam in extending the divine rule; he is an Adamic figure in seeing the priority of worship in the kingdom or city of God.

Nehemiah 12 and the Church Today

In order to apply the truths of Nehemiah 12 to our lives we must ask first where we are in the history of the irruption of God's kingdom into this world. This grand story can only be sketched in the briefest of terms.

Daniel 9 shows that the return from exile for God's people will require not seventy years but seventy weeks of years. It is one thing to bring his people out of Babylon, but how do you get Babylon out of the people? It will take much longer than seventy years. The prophets portray this return from exile using the language of the exodus: God will bring about a new exodus which will deal effectively with sin and its consequences (Dan 9:27). Mark 1:1-3 shows that this new exodus begins with the first coming of Jesus Christ when he announces the beginning of the gospel applying Isa 40:3 to the story of John and Jesus. The quotation from Isaiah is announcing a future salvation using the language of the exodus (which included the journey through the desert). According to Paul in 1 Thessalonians 4, the return from exile is over at the second coming of Christ when the trump of God is sounded.

This is a direct reference to Isa 27:12-13 where the trumpet is sounded to bring all the exiles home. It will be clear, too, by this point in Isaiah that the exiles include the Gentiles in the one people of God (see Isa 19:25). We are then in the period of the already and not yet, when God has begun the new exodus but has not completed the gathering of the exiles.

We are now in a position to apply Nehemiah 12. The chapter brings the focus of the book to a climax. The city of God is to be restored and key to this is (1) maintaining continuity, legitimacy, and purity in leadership and (2) getting back to the priority of true worship, focused on the hearing and understanding of God's word.

Just as the world was created by the word of God, so Israel was constituted as the people of God by the hearing of his word at Sinai. Israel's subsequent worship entailed traveling to Jerusalem three times a year. In essence, they were reenacting Sinai as they gathered to hear his Torah at the yearly festivals. In the New Testament, Christians gather around Christ to hear his word. This is at least Matthew's picture of the church in Matt 28:16-20. Thus the reading and teaching of God's word in Christ are at the heart of Christian worship. This is how the city of God is advanced.

Our own denomination has suffered from a failure to raise up a new generation of church leaders. Years of liberalism have taken a toll. When senior leaders die, finding good and godly replacements in the age bracket from 35-55 is problematic. We have done little to stem the tide of biblical illiteracy in our churches as our worship is not focused by our musicians and preachers on the word of God. Musical styles and oratory are more highly

valued than biblical content. Nehemiah 12 is a powerful word from the Lord for the church today, if we are to be faithful as agents in renewing the city of God.

ENDNOTES

¹Debate exists as to whether Ezra preceded Nehemiah or not. For a brief discussion, see E. Merrill, *Kingdom of Priests* (Grand Rapids: Baker, 1987), 502-514. The traditional view of the chronology (Ezra preceded Nehemiah) is adopted here.

²Adapted somewhat from D. Böhler, "On the Relationship Between Textual and Literary Criticism: The Two Recensions of the Book of Ezra: Ezra-Neh (MT) and 1 Esdras (LXX)," in *The Earliest Text of the Hebrew Bible: The Relationship Between the Masoretic Text and the Hebrew Base of the Septuagint Reconsidered*, ed. Adrian Schenker (Septuagint and Cognate Studies 52; Atlanta: Scholars Press, 2003), 35-50.

³See H. G. M. Williamson, *Ezra, Nehemiah* (Word Biblical Commentary 16; Waco, TX: Word, 1985), 363.

⁴E. M. Yamauchi, *Persia and the Bible* (Grand Rapids: Baker, 1990), 129.

⁵See Williamson, *Ezra, Nehemiah*, 364-365.

⁶See D. Kidner, *Ezra & Nehemiah* (Tyndale Old Testament Commentaries 11; Downers Grove: InterVarsity, 1979), 123-124, 143-146. The matter is controversial and not unimportant; nonetheless, the interpretation given here is not affected greatly either way. The only priests listed in chapter 12 are all from the time of Darius I or before.

⁷Asterisks in Table 1 mark names that are unique, i.e., not from the homecomers' generation or from the later generation.

⁸See Williamson, *Ezra, Nehemiah*, 361-62.

⁹Malluchi is due to dittography of *yod*.

¹⁰Confusion of *beth* and *kaph*.

¹¹Transposition of *het* and *resh*.

¹²Clearly the name is the same; palaeographic confusion of *yod* and *mem* is possible.

¹³Confusion of *yod* and *waw*. Iddo is correct.

¹⁴Confusion of *yod* and final *nun*. Many MSS have Ginnethon; cf. 10:7(6) and 12:16.

¹⁵Assimilation of *nun* in Mijamin is normal.

¹⁶Difference in vocalisation.

¹⁷Confusion of *yod* and *waw*. Sallu is correct.

¹⁸See W. J. Dumbrell, *The Search for Order* (Grand Rapids: Baker, 1994), 24-25; and Gordon J. Wenham, "Sanctuary Symbolism in the Garden of Eden Story," in *I Studied Inscriptions From Before the Flood*, ed. Richard S. Hess and David Toshio Tsumura (Winona Lake: Eisenbrauns, 1994), 399-404.

¹⁹Adapted from Williamson, *Ezra, Nehemiah*, 371.

²⁰"People" in v. 38 refers to community officials and not to the common people, see D. Barthélemy et al., *Critique Textuelle de l'Ancien Testament*, 1, Josué, Judges, Ruth, Samuel, Rois, Chroniques, Esdras, Néhémie, Esther (Orbis Biblicus et Orientalis 50/1; Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1982), 574.

²¹The Hebrew word employed here is "definitely a trumpet made of beaten or hammered silver (Nu. 10:2) about a cubit long (40 cm.) with a narrow body and a broad, bell-shaped end (Josephus, *Ant.* iii. 12.6)" J. Braun, *Music in Ancient*

Israel/Palestine (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2002), 14.

²²See W. J. Dumbrell, *Covenant and Creation: A Theology of Old Testament Covenants* (Nashville: Thomas Nelson, 1984), 35-36.

²³See D. I. Block, "The Foundations of National Identity: A Study in Ancient Northwest Semitic Perceptions" (Ph.D. diss., University of Liverpool, 1981), 120, 493-509.