

An illustration depicting the rebuilding of Jerusalem's walls. In the background, several men are working on a high stone wall, with one man pulling a rope to move a large stone block. In the foreground, a man in a blue robe carries a wooden box on his head, while another man in a brown robe works with a hammer and chisel. To the right, a group of men are gathered around a donkey and large earthenware jars, possibly preparing food or supplies. The scene is set in a dusty, outdoor environment with a clear sky.

Ezra and Nehemiah

“Let us rise up and build.”

(Nehemiah 2:18)

2. The foundation

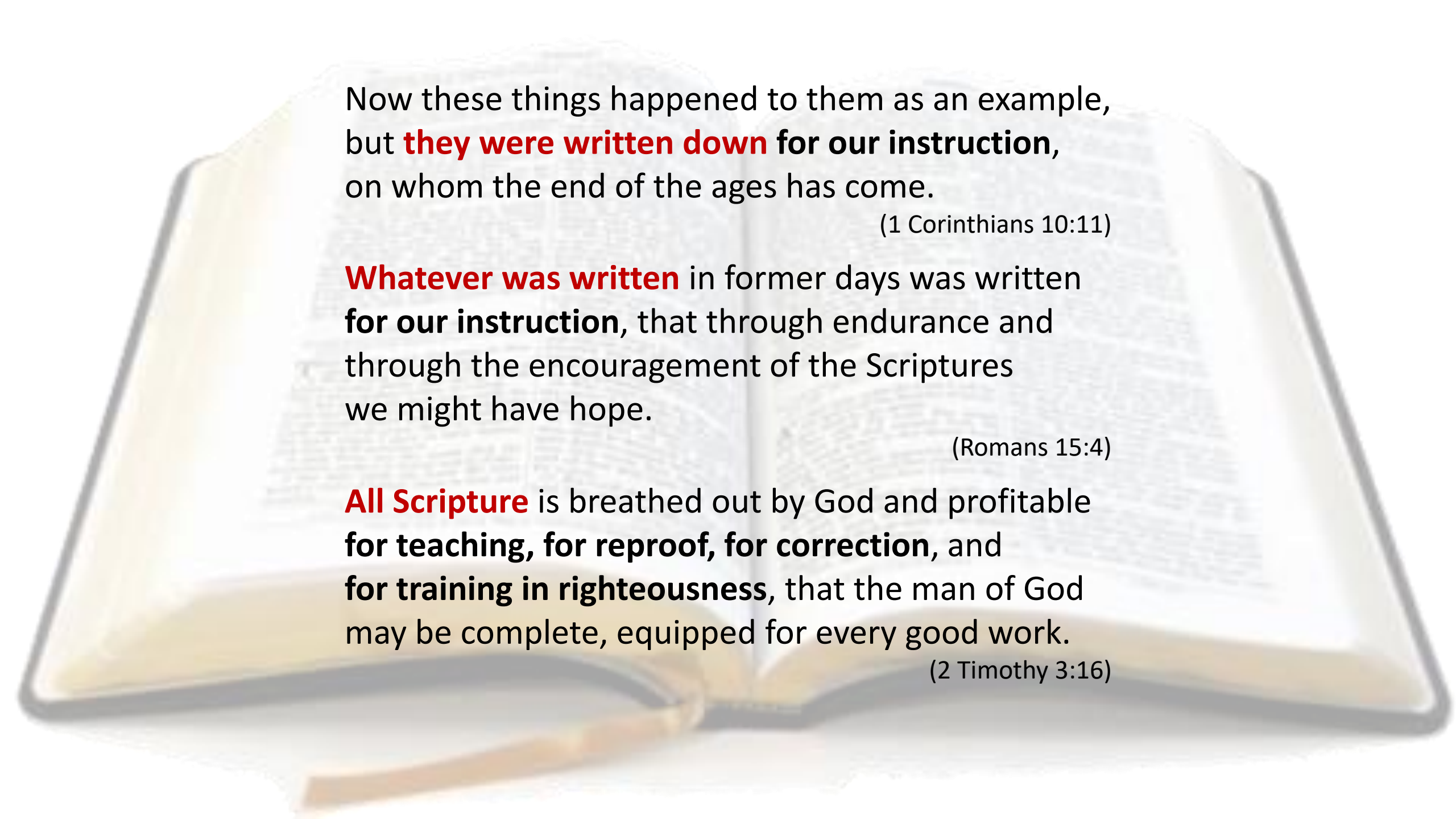
The Old Testament	
Law	1. Genesis
	2. Exodus
	3. Leviticus
	4. Numbers
	5. Deuteronomy
History	6. Joshua
	7. Judges
	8. Ruth
	9. 1 Samuel
	10. 2 Samuel
	11. 1 Kings
	12. 2 Kings
	13. 1 Chronicles
	14. 2 Chronicles
	15. Ezra
	16. Nehemiah
	17. Esther
Wisdom	18. Job
	19. Psalms
	20. Proverbs
	21. Ecclesiastes
	22. Song of Solomon
Prophets	23. Isaiah to 39. Malachi

The place of Ezra and Nehemiah in the Old Testament

The history of Israel (both the northern and southern kingdoms) from Samuel until **the destruction of Jerusalem**.

The history of Judah (the southern kingdom) from David up to **the destruction of Jerusalem**, and in **Ezra** and **Nehemiah**, **the return to Jerusalem and the work to rebuild it**.

Ezra and Nehemiah are about recovering what had been lost

An open book with a light-colored cover and pages. The pages are slightly aged and show some texture. Overlaid on the book is text in black and red. The text is centered and reads: "Now these things happened to them as an example, but **they were written down** for our instruction, on whom the end of the ages has come." Below this is a reference in parentheses: "(1 Corinthians 10:11)".

Now these things happened to them as an example,
but **they were written down** for our instruction,
on whom the end of the ages has come.

(1 Corinthians 10:11)

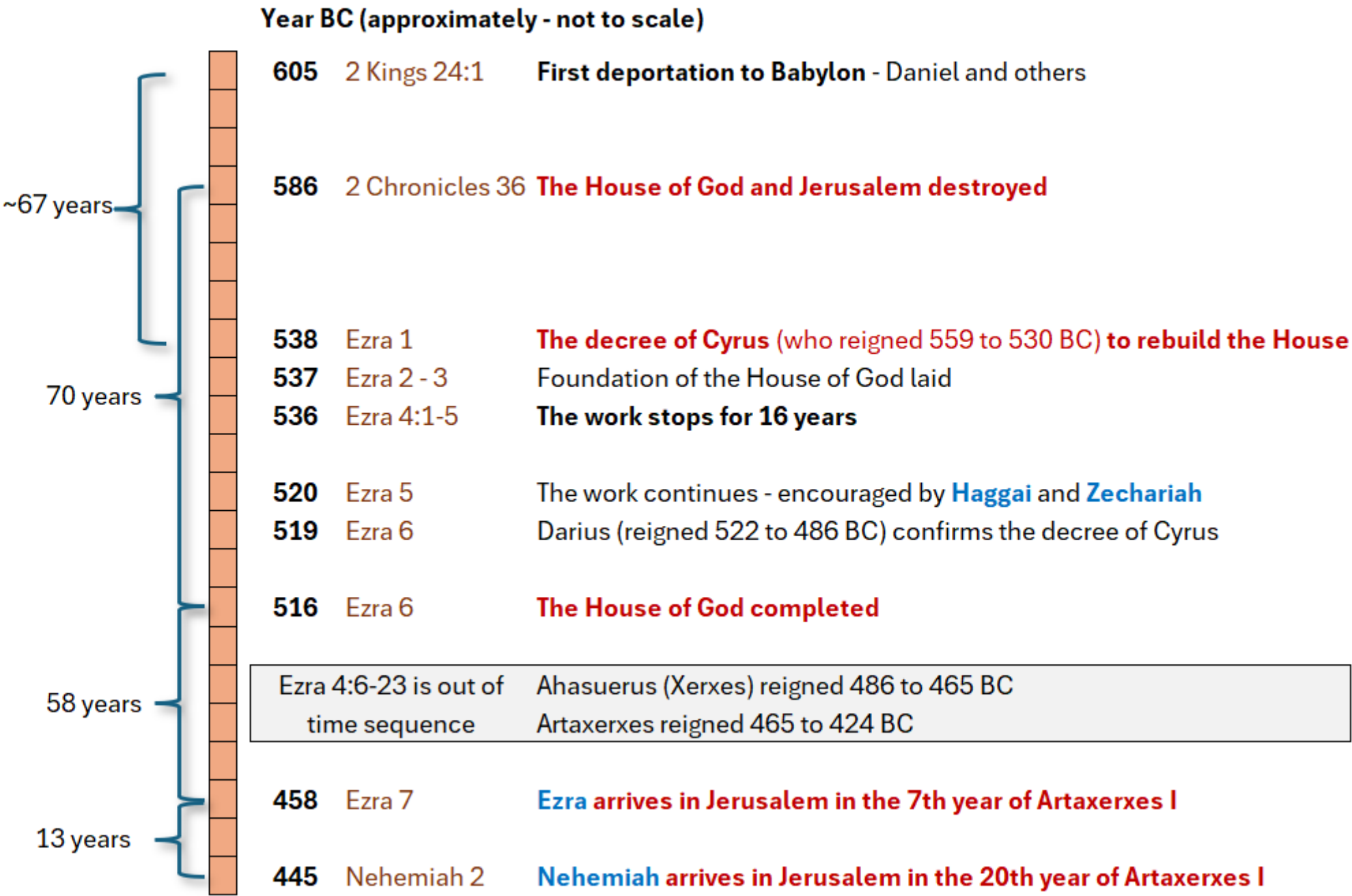
Whatever was written in former days was written
for our instruction, that through endurance and
through the encouragement of the Scriptures
we might have hope.

(Romans 15:4)

All Scripture is breathed out by God and profitable
for teaching, for reproof, for correction, and
for training in righteousness, that the man of God
may be complete, equipped for every good work.

(2 Timothy 3:16)

Time in Ezra and Nehemiah



Esther became queen in the 7th year of the reign of Ahasuerus (Xerxes) which is about 479 BC, well before Ezra went to Jerusalem

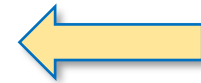
Time in Ezra and Nehemiah



Exiles return to the Land

The decree of Cyrus led to

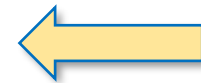
- ✓ some of God's people
- ✓ going on a difficult journey
- ✓ willingly
- ✓ to rebuild God's House.



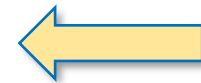
Not all of them



It was easier to stay in Babylon



They chose to go



The House was for God

The House in the New Testament

*“Destroy this temple,
and in three days I will raise it up.”*

(John 2:19)

In Him you also are being built together
into **a dwelling place for God** by the Spirit.

(Ephesians 2:22)



Ezra and Nehemiah

"Let us rise up and build"

(Nehemiah 2:18)

Ezra 3:1 to Ezra 4:5, 24

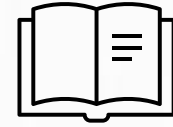
- ❖ The Altar
- ❖ The Foundation
- ❖ The Opposition



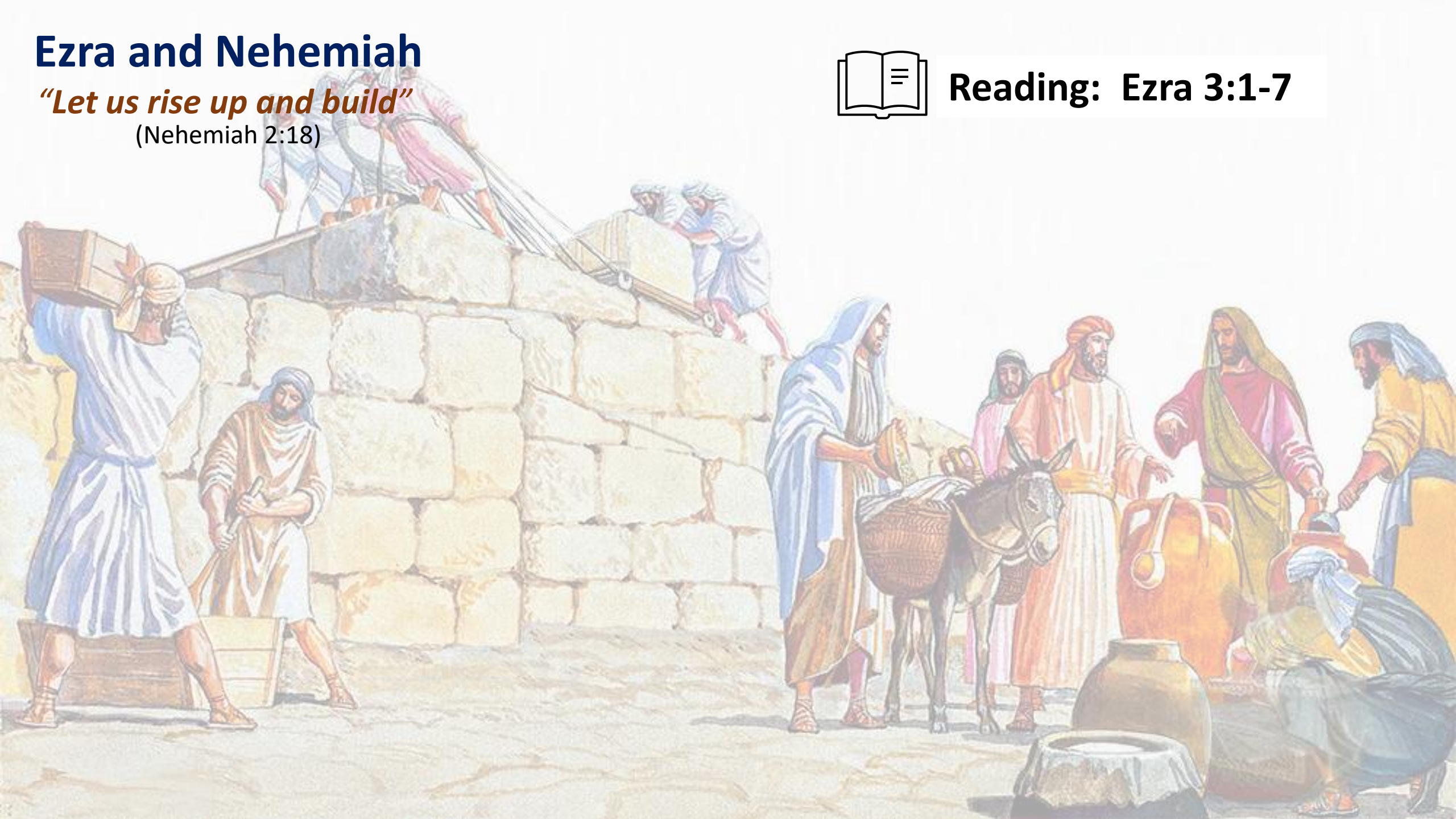
Ezra and Nehemiah

"Let us rise up and build"

(Nehemiah 2:18)



Reading: Ezra 3:1-7



Ezra 3:1-7 - The Altar

In the first year
of their return

When the seventh month came,
and the children of Israel were in the towns,
the people gathered as one man to Jerusalem.

To keep the feast
of Tabernacles

The high priest

Then arose **Jeshua** the son of Jozadak, with his fellow priests,
and **Zerubbabel** the son of Shealtiel with his kinsmen,
and **they built the altar of the God of Israel**,
to offer burnt offerings on it, **as it is written
in the Law of Moses the man of God.**

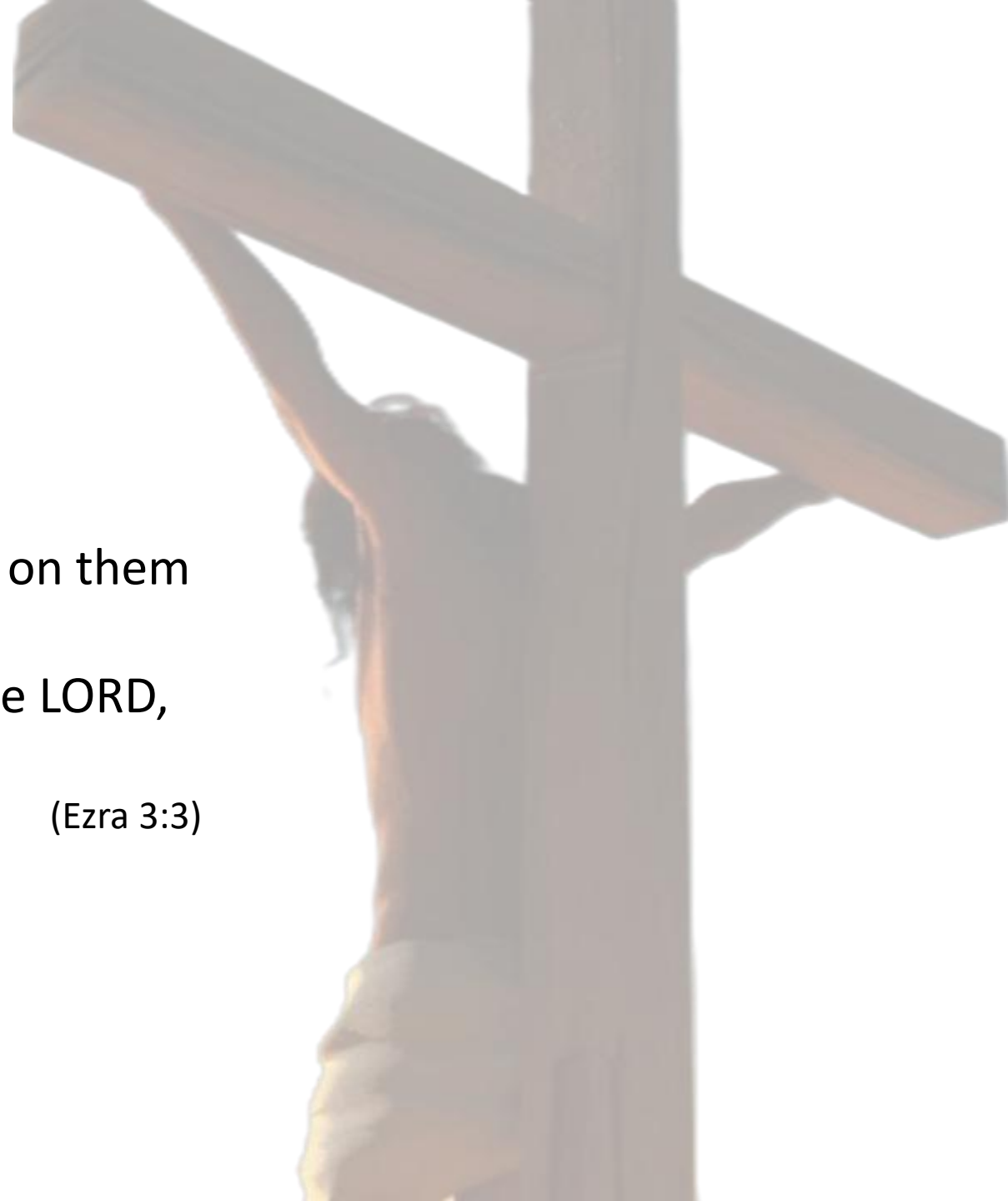
The governor

(Ezra 3:1-2)

Ezra 3:1-7 - The Altar

They set the altar in its place, for fear was on them because of the peoples of the lands, and they offered burnt offerings on it to the LORD, burnt offerings morning and evening.

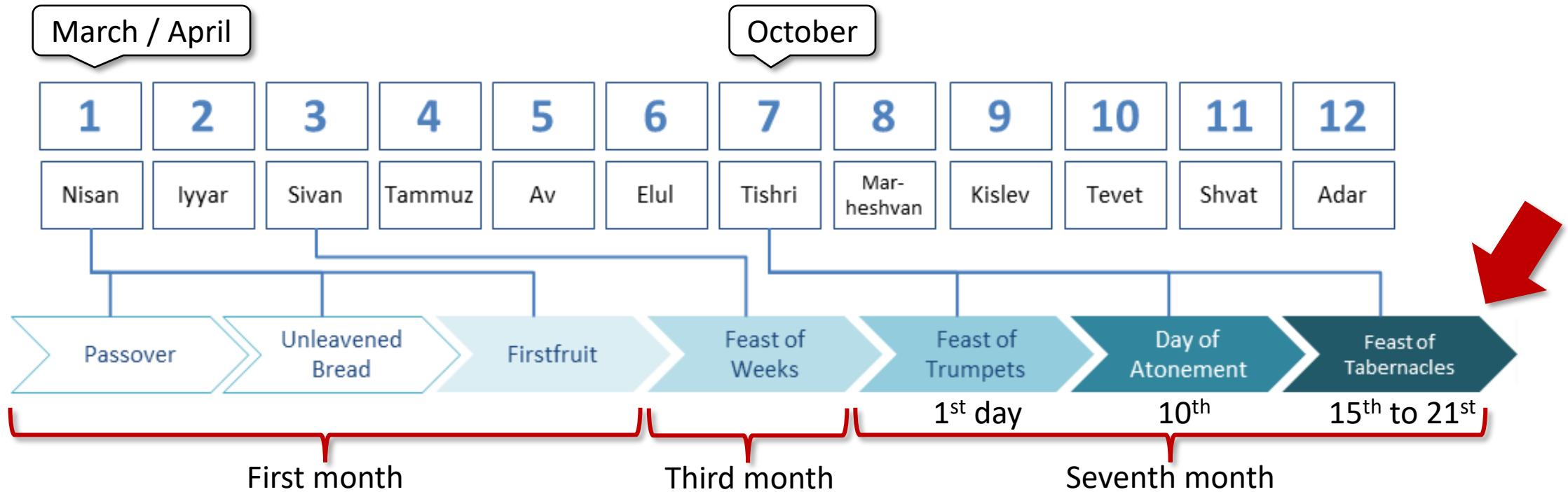
(Ezra 3:3)



Ezra 3:1-7 - The Altar

The Feast of Tabernacles

And they kept the Feast of Booths, **as it is written**,
and offered the daily burnt offerings by number
according to the rule, as each day required...



At the Feast of Tabernacles, the people **remembered the wilderness journey to Canaan**

Ezra 3:1-7 - The Altar

The Feast of Tabernacles

And they kept the Feast of Booths, **as it is written**, and offered the daily burnt offerings by number **according to the rule**, as each day required and after that the regular burnt offerings, the offerings at the new moon and at **all the appointed feasts of the LORD**, and the offerings of everyone who made a **freewill offering** to the LORD.

From **the first day of the seventh month** they began to offer burnt offerings to the LORD.

The Feast of Trumpets

Is something missing?

But the foundation of the temple of the LORD was not yet laid.

(Ezra 3:4-6)

What can we see?

❖ The Altar

❖ The Foundation

❖ The Opposition



- ✓ The altar speaks of the death **and** the resurrection of the Lord Jesus.
- ✓ David prepared for the House, but Solomon built the House.
- ✓ The true House is built with living stones - see 1 Peter 2:4-5
- ✓ Our faith is in all that is accomplished and promised in the cross of the Lord Jesus.
- ✓ *"Whoever does not bear his own cross and come after Me cannot be My disciple."*
(Luke 14:27)

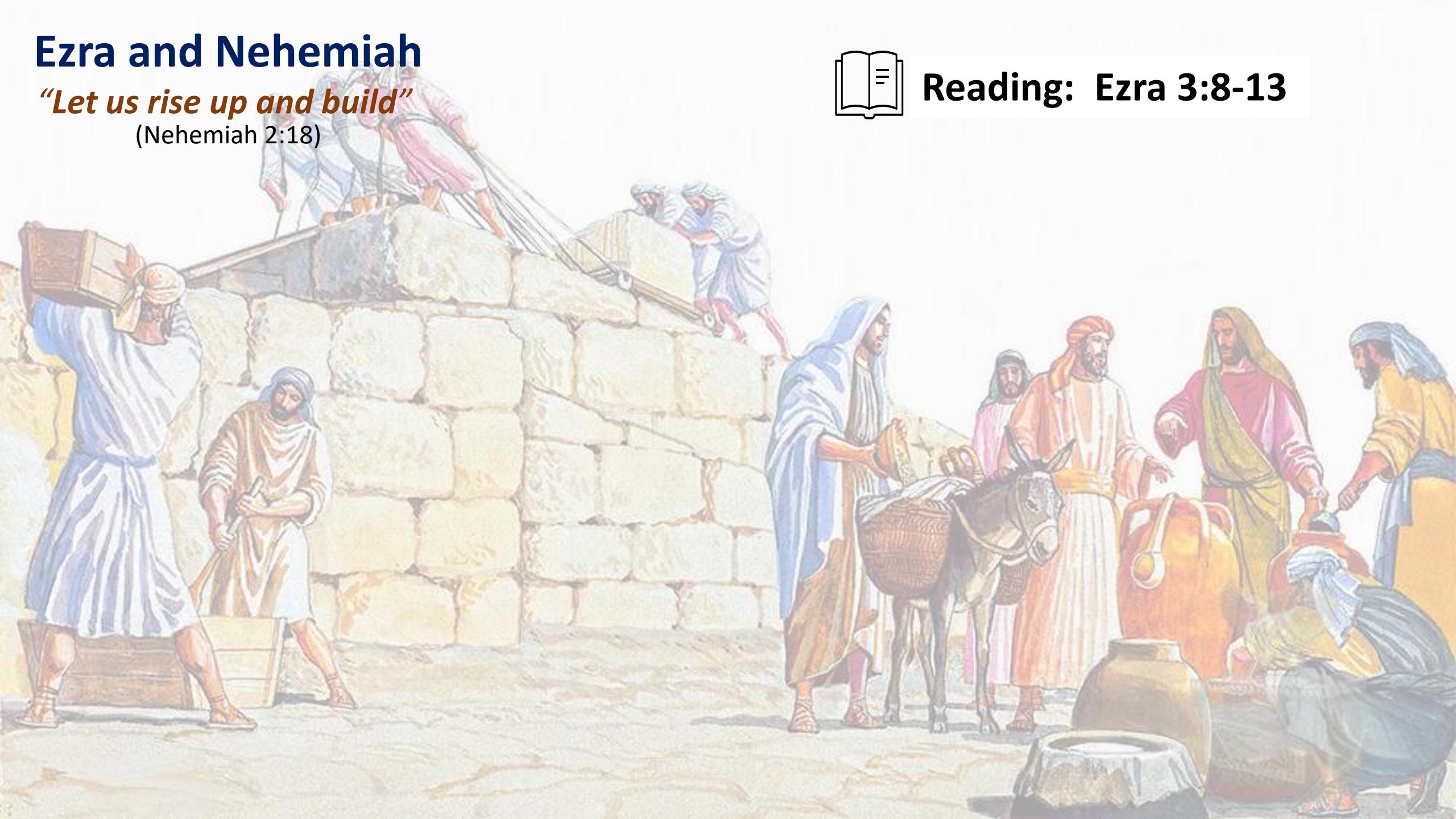
Ezra and Nehemiah

"Let us rise up and build"

(Nehemiah 2:18)



Reading: Ezra 3:8-13



Ezra 3:8-13 - The Foundation

Now in **the second year** after their coming to the house of God at Jerusalem, in **the second month**, Zerubbabel the son of Shealtiel and Jeshua the son of Jozadak **made a beginning...**

(Ezra 3:8)

Seven months later

Ezra 3:8-13 - The Foundation

And when the builders **laid the foundation of the temple of the LORD**,
the priests in their vestments came forward with trumpets,
and the Levites, the sons of Asaph, with cymbals,
to praise the LORD, **according to the directions of David king of Israel.**

And they sang responsively, praising and giving thanks to the LORD,

*“For He is good,
for His steadfast love endures forever toward Israel.”*

Psalm 136:1

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.

(Ezra 3:10-11)

Ezra 3:8-13 - The Foundation

But many of the priests and Levites and heads of fathers' houses, **old men who had seen the first house**, **wept with a loud voice** when they saw the foundation of this house being laid, though **many shouted aloud for joy**, so that the people could not distinguish the sound of the joyful shout from the sound of the people's weeping, for the people shouted with a great shout, and **the sound was heard far away**.

(Ezra 3:12-13)

What can we see?

❖ The Altar

❖ **The Foundation**

❖ The Opposition



✓ *For no one can lay a foundation other than that which is laid, which is **Jesus Christ**.*
(1 Corinthians 3:11)

✓ *“See that you make **everything** according to the design shown to you on the mountain.”*
(Hebrews 8:5)

✓ ***Be careful** not to allow anyone to captivate you through an empty, deceitful philosophy that is according to human traditions and the elemental spirits of the world, **and not according to Christ**.* (Colossians 2:8)

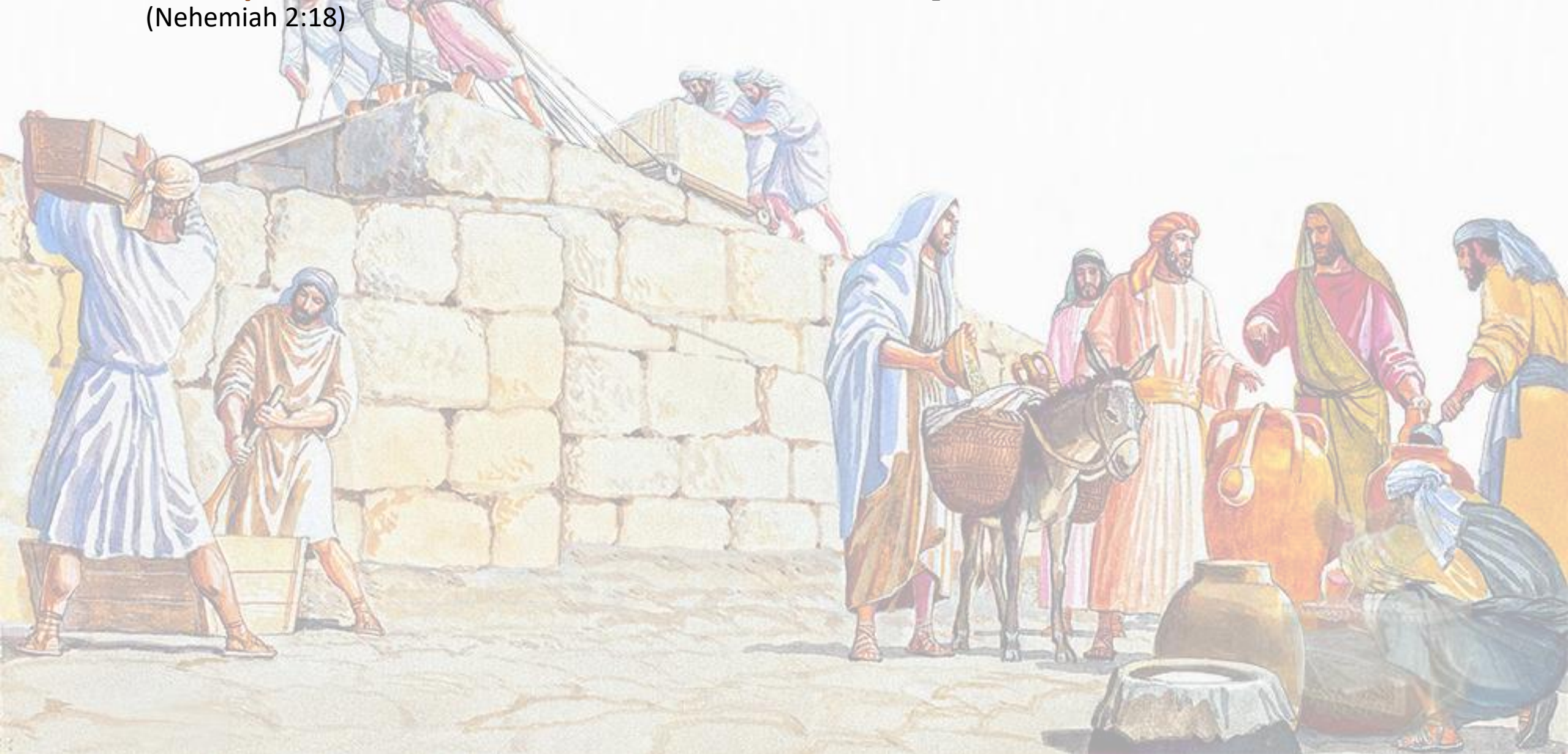
Ezra and Nehemiah

"Let us rise up and build"

(Nehemiah 2:18)



Reading: Ezra 4:1-5



Ezra 4:1-5 - The Opposition



Now when **the adversaries** of Judah and Benjamin heard that the returned exiles were **building a temple to the LORD, the God of Israel**, they approached Zerubbabel...



“Let us build with you, for we worship your God as you do, and we have been sacrificing to Him ever since the days of Esarhaddon king of Assyria who brought us here.”

(Ezra 4:1-2)



They feared the LORD, yet served their own gods—according to the rituals of the nations from among whom they were carried away.

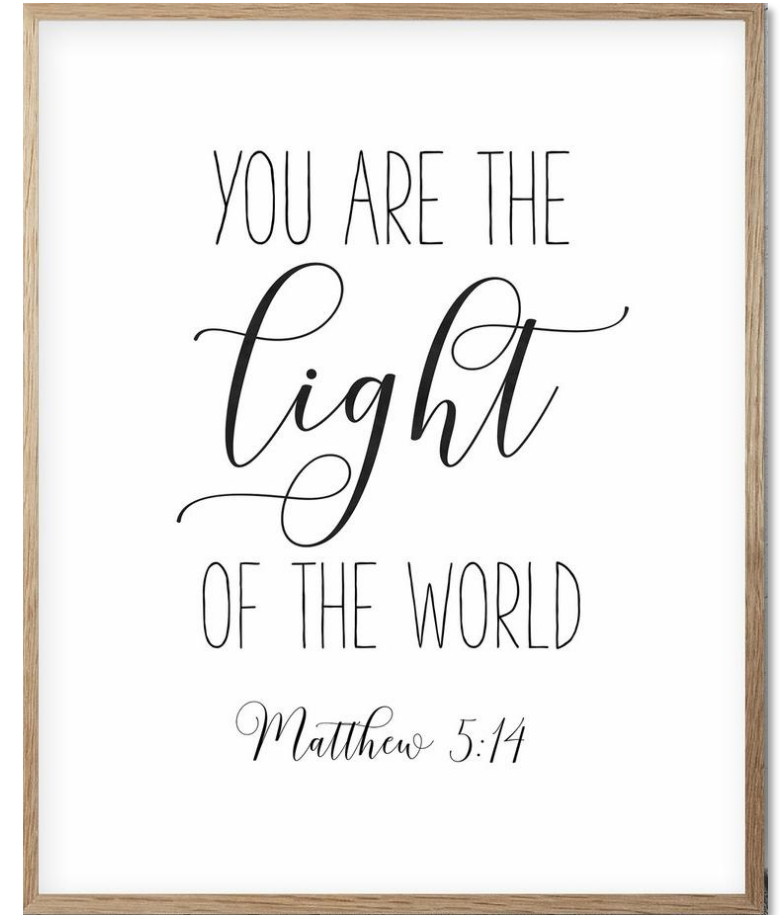
(2 Kings 17:33)

Ezra 4:1-5 - The Opposition

Zerubbabel, Jeshua, and the rest of the heads of fathers' houses in Israel said to them:

**“You have nothing to do with us
in building a house to our God;
but we **alone** will build to the LORD,
the God of Israel, as King Cyrus
the king of Persia has commanded us.”**

(Ezra 4:3)



Ezra 4:1-5 - The Opposition



It worked!

Then **the people of the land** discouraged **the people of Judah** and made them afraid to build and bribed counsellors against them to frustrate their purpose...

Then the work on the house of God that is in Jerusalem stopped, and it ceased until the second year of the reign of Darius king of Persia.

(Ezra 4:4-5,24)

For 16 years!

What can we see?

❖ The Altar

❖ The Foundation

❖ **The Opposition**



✓ *We do not wrestle against flesh and blood, but against ... the spiritual forces of evil in the heavenly places.* (Ephesians 6:12)

✓ *“Otherwise, when he has laid a foundation and is not able to finish, all who see it begin to mock him, saying, ‘This man **began to build and was not able to finish.**’”* (Luke 14:29-30)

✓ *Though we walk in the flesh, we are not waging war according to the flesh.* (2 Corinthians 10:3)

What can we see?

❖ The Altar



Through the sacrifice of the Lord Jesus,
we come onto resurrection ground.

❖ The Foundation



"...gold, silver, precious stones..." (1 Corinthians 3:12)
– the House is built by Him and *"in Him"*

❖ The Opposition



*"Whoever is not with Me is against Me,
and whoever does not gather with Me scatters."*
(Luke 11:23)