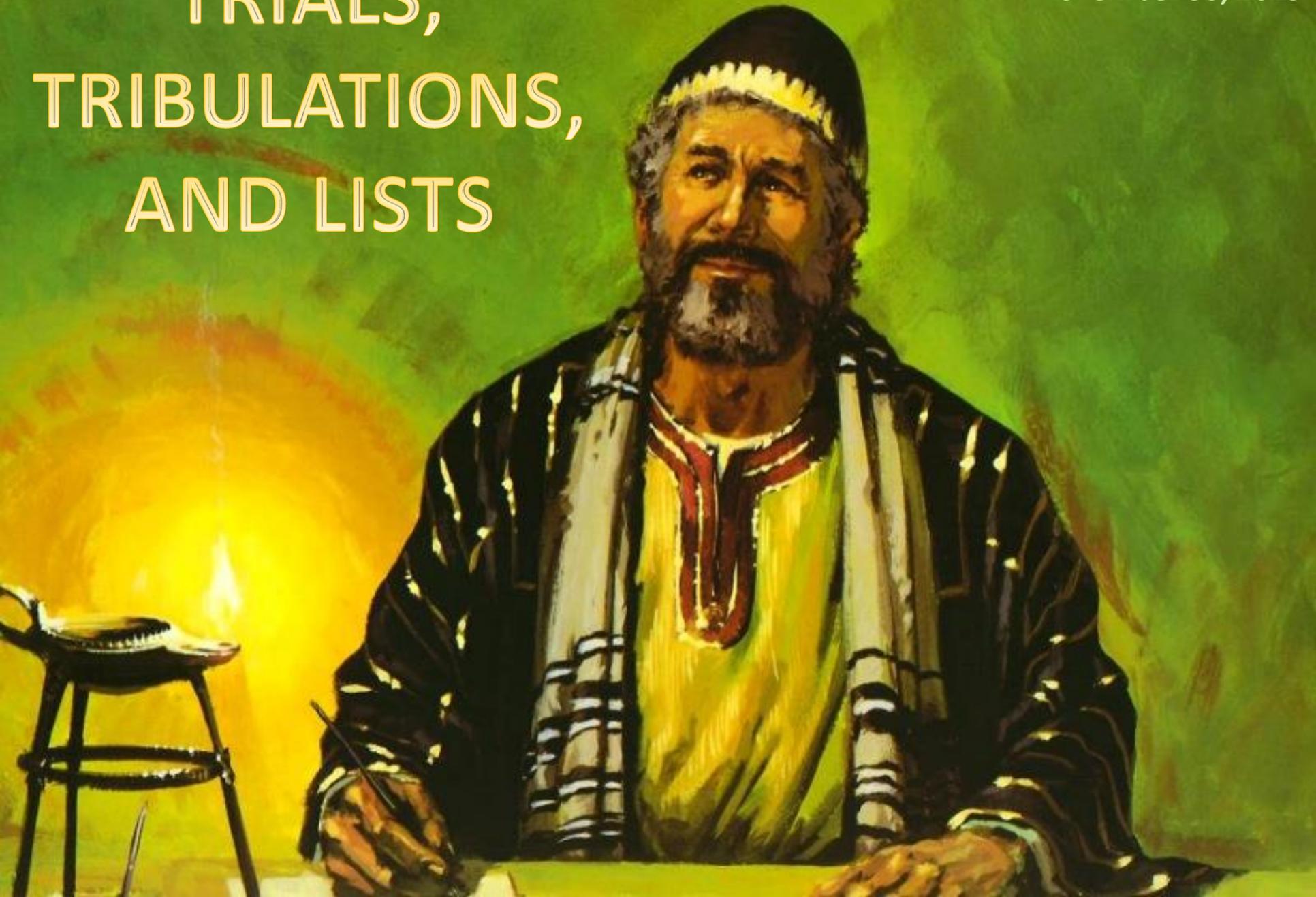
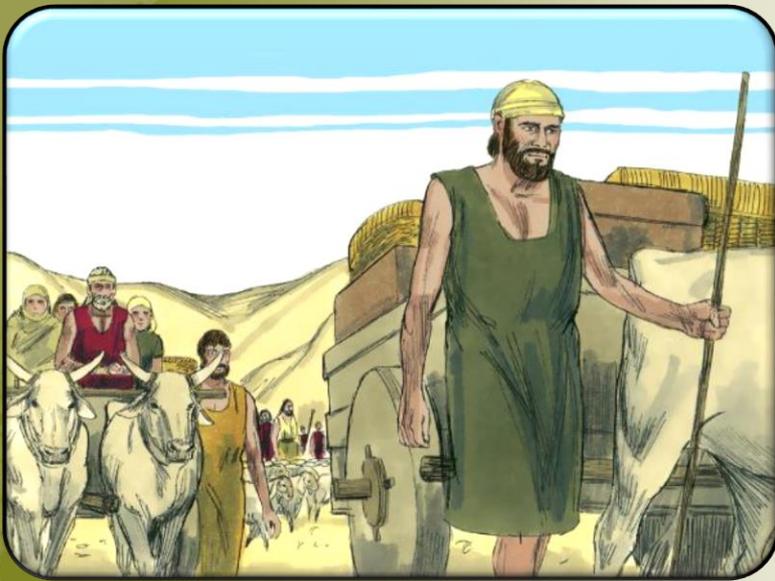


TRIALS, TRIBULATIONS, AND LISTS



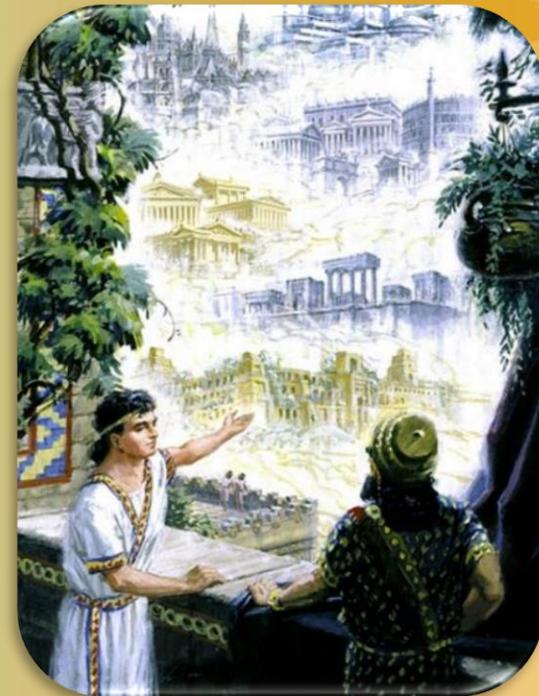


The people of Israel went through trials and tribulations as they returned from Babylon.

Returning to the Promised Land was not easy. However, God always protected and strengthened them.

The lists in the books of Ezra and Nehemiah show how God is in control of history. He also cares for each one of us and for the details of our lives.

- Sacred articles (Ezra 1:9-11)
- The repatriated (Ezra 2:1; Nehemiah 7:5-7)
- Lagged behind: the Levites (Ezra 8:1-20)
- Dwellers of Jerusalem (Nehemiah 11:1-24)
- Members of the choir (Nehemiah 12)



SACRED ARTICLES

"While he tasted the wine, Belshazzar gave the command to bring the gold and silver vessels which his father Nebuchadnezzar had taken from the temple which had been in Jerusalem, that the king and his lords, his wives, and his concubines might drink from them." (Daniel 5:2)



Daniel 1:2 tells that Nebuchadnezzar took the articles of the temple and placed them in his god's temple.

Ezra listed 2,499 articles of the 5,400 that were returned to the Temple in Jerusalem.

God kept account of all the articles, and none was left in Babylon. He's in control of history and takes care of every detail.



Belshazzar was punished for trying to use the sacred articles in a banal way. He didn't want to accept the holiness of God.



THE REPATRIATED

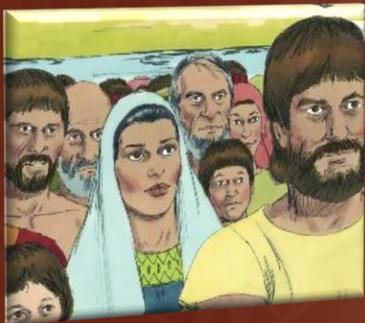
"The whole assembly together was forty-two thousand three hundred and sixty." (Ezra 2:64)



Most of the Jews kept track of their genealogy. They didn't lose their identity during the exile. They knew their tribe and family.

God knows every family and individual, as well as their work. This is reflected in the lists of names in Ezra.

Even those who didn't know their genealogy (more than 10,000 Jews) were also included in the list of the repatriated.



Each one of us has a personal and unique part in God's work.



LAGGED BEHIND: THE LEVITES

“that the Lord your God will bring you back from captivity, and have compassion on you, and gather you again from all the nations where the Lord your God has scattered you.” (Deuteronomy 30:3)

Many were reluctant to leave their birth country despite the surprising fulfillment of the prophecy in Deuteronomy 30:1-6.

Nevertheless, Ezra's call motivated some of them to go to Judah and join the people who had already gone 80 years before.



Ezra was surprised when he saw no Levites in the list of volunteers that were leaving (Ezra 8:15).



LAGGED BEHIND: THE LEVITES

"Now I gathered them by the river that flows to Ahava, and we camped there three days. And I looked among the people and the priests, and found none of the sons of Levi there." (Ezra 8:15)

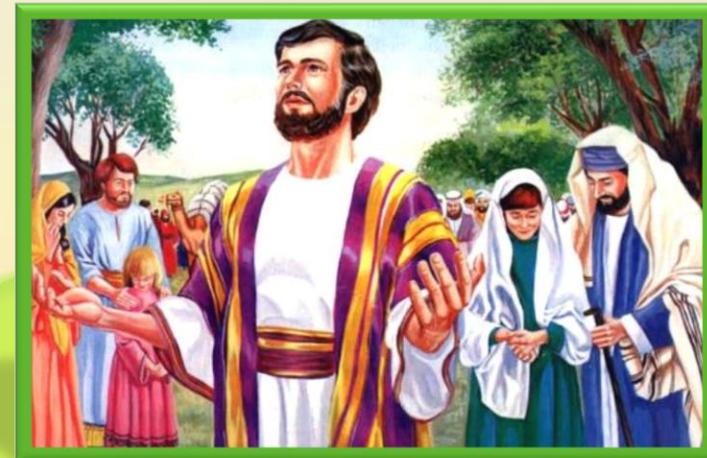


The Levites were essential. They had to help the priests in order to carry out Ezra's spiritual reformation. Therefore, a second call was made to convince some Levites to go to Jerusalem.

Ezra sent some messengers to Casiphia to speak to the Levites. Iddo sent 38 Levites and 220 servants for the temple (v. 17-20).

They gathered, fasted and humbled before God. God had promised they would return to their home land, so they asked for His protection to get there.

They acknowledge that they relied on God only.



E.G.W. (That I May Know Him, September 1)

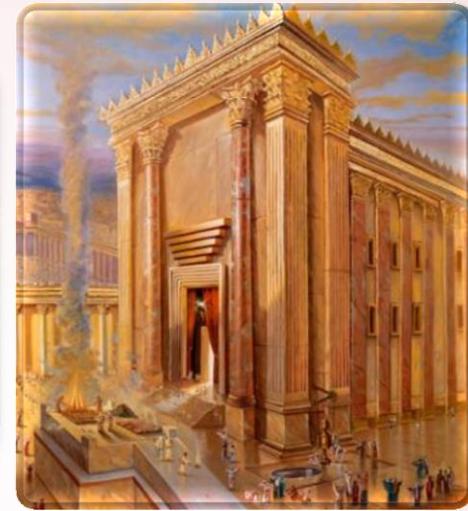
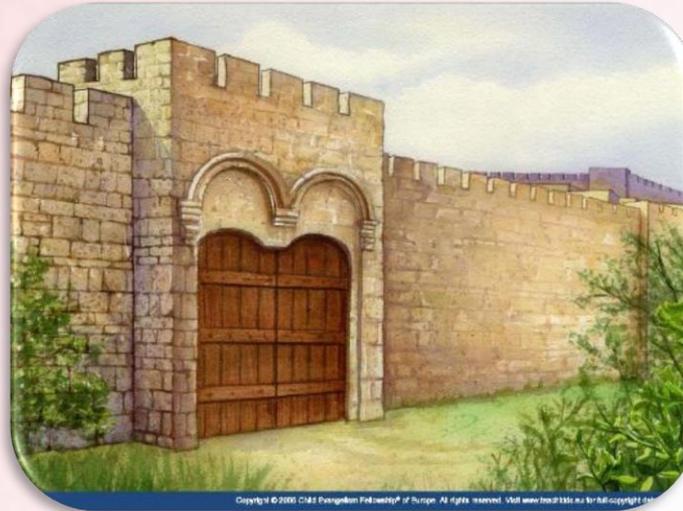
“If we are of one mind with God, our will will be swallowed up in God’s will and we shall follow wherever God leads the way. As a loving child places his hand in that of his father, and walks with him in perfect trust whether it is dark or bright, so the sons and daughters of God are to walk with Jesus through joy or sorrow.”

DWELLERS OF JERUSALEM

“Now the leaders of the people dwelt at Jerusalem; the rest of the people cast lots to bring one out of ten to dwell in Jerusalem, the holy city, and nine-tenths were to dwell in other cities.” (Nehemiah 11:1)

The wall of Jerusalem had been rebuilt. Then daily life should return to normal. Each person had to return to their home.

Most people lived in villages throughout the land of Judah.



Only some people were willing to leave the lands of their ancestors and move to Jerusalem, adapting to the lifestyle of the city (Nehemiah 11:2).

It was a significant sacrifice, but Jerusalem had to be repopulated, and the services of the Temple had to remain active.

MEMBERS OF THE CHOIR



**“So the two thanksgiving choirs stood in the house of God, likewise I and the half of the rulers with me.”
(Nehemiah 12:40)**

God had helped them rebuild the wall. Now, they had to dedicate it and thank God publicly for His help.

Nehemiah made a list of the priests and Levites, Then, he appointed the singers of the two choirs who would dedicate the wall.

On the wall, Ezra led one of the choirs and Nehemiah led the other. Each choir went to different parts of the city then met at the Temple.

All the people praised God. His celebration was heard from far away (Nehemiah 12:43).



E.G.W. (Sons and Daughters of God, July 10)

“When we have a deeper appreciation of the mercy and loving-kindness of God, we shall praise Him, instead of complaining. We shall talk of the loving watchcare of the Lord, of the tender compassion of the Good Shepherd. The language of the heart will not be selfish murmuring and repining. Praise, like a clear, flowing stream, will come from God’s truly believing ones.”