

Title: Rebuilding What Is Broken -
Accept Reality

Text: Nehemiah 1

Memory:

Big Idea:

Date: June 5, 2022

Meaningful spiritual conversations.

Our Bold, Daring, Audacious Dream and Prayer: *In the next ten years Cold Springs Church will raise up 10,000 local, national and international leaders who live and lead out of the overflow of a Jesus-trusting life resulting in restored and strengthened families.*

A disciple of Jesus is someone who follows Jesus in an ever deepening relationship of love with God and others and helps others do the same.

- *Confidence in knowing deeply*
- *Encouragement in experiencing fully*

- *Courage in living intentionally*

A Blueprint For Rebuilding What Is Broken

Have you ever been overwhelmed by some sort of brokenness? Maybe it is your life or your family. Perhaps you look at the world around you and despair that anything can be done. Or maybe it is where you work. Jesus reminded his disciples that “with God, all things are possible.” It was a reminder in the face of what looked like the impossible.

The Book of Nehemiah can give us a blueprint for partnering with God to accomplish the impossible. Join us as we get a vision for rebuilding what is broken. Whatever, wherever it might be. With God, all things are possible.

1. Accept Reality - Nehemiah 1
2. Look For God’s Provision - Neh 2:1-10
3. Get Down and Dirty; Share A Greater Reality - Neh 2:11-20

4. Don't Do It Alone - Nehemiah 3
5. Get Ready To Fight For The Vision - Nehemiah 4
6. Do What Is Important To God - Nehemiah 5
7. Don't Cater To The Hater - Nehemiah 6:1-14
8. Finish The Work - Nehemiah 6:15-7:3
9. Reinforce The Foundation With Truth - Nehemiah 8, 9,
10. Celebrate! - Nehemiah 12

What is God saying?

1. **What** Can God Do?

1. What the Story of God Tells Us...

1. **"Is** *anything too hard for the Lord? I will return about this time next year, and Sarah will have a son."* (Genesis 18:14, NLT)

2. *““Let’s go across to the outpost of those pagans,” Jonathan said to his armor bearer. “Perhaps the Lord will help us, for nothing can hinder the Lord. He can win a battle whether he has many warriors or only a few!”” (1 Samuel 14:6, NLT)*
3. *““I know that you can do anything, and no one can stop you.” (Job 42:2, NLT)*
4. *““O Sovereign Lord! You made the heavens and earth by your strong hand and powerful arm. Nothing is too hard for you!” (Jeremiah 32:17, NLT)*
5. *““I am the Lord, the God of all the peoples of the world. Is anything too hard for me?” (Jeremiah 32:27, NLT)*

6. *“This is what the Lord of Heaven’s Armies says: All this may seem impossible to you now, a small remnant of God’s people. But is it impossible for me? says the Lord of Heaven’s Armies.”*
(Zechariah 8:6, NLT)
7. *“The disciples were astounded. “Then who in the world can be saved?” they asked.”* (Matthew 19:25, NLT)
8. *“So they brought the boy. But when the evil spirit saw Jesus, it threw the child into a violent convulsion, and he fell to the ground, writhing and foaming at the mouth. “How long has this been happening?” Jesus asked the boy’s father. He replied, “Since he was a little boy. The spirit often throws him into the fire or into water, trying to kill him.*

Have mercy on us and help us, if you can.” “What do you mean, ‘If I can’?” Jesus asked. “Anything is possible if a person believes.”

The father instantly cried out, “I do believe, but help me overcome my unbelief!”” (Mark 9:20–24, NLT)

2. What’s Your Impossible?

1. Where do you need God to show up?

2. The Book of Nehemiah can give us a blueprint for partnering with God to accomplish the impossible. Join us as we get a vision for rebuilding what is broken. Whatever, wherever it might be. With God, all things are possible.

3. Two Things To Keep In Mind

1. Who’s In Control?

1. Ezra-Nehemiah interacts with three kings and emphasizes their direct intervention in providing the opportunity for the Jews to return to Zion:

Cyrus II (also known as Cyrus the Great),
Darius the Great, and
Artaxerxes.¹²

Cyrus the Great (559–530 BC)—the unifier of the Mede and Persian tribes and the conqueror of Babylon (539 BC)—provides the initial impetus with his famous decree (Ezra 1:1–4) that allowed indigenous peoples freedom of religion (within limits) throughout the provinces of the empire. Populations were allowed

to worship their gods and
rebuild their temples.

2. The mention of the three primary kings and their decrees magnifies the fact that God is truly the King of kings, since these Persian rulers end up doing precisely the bidding of Yahweh to restore worship in Zion.

1. Petter, Donna; Petter, Thomas. Ezra-Nehemiah (The NIV Application Commentary) (p. 25). Zondervan Academic. Kindle Edition.

2. **Who** Gets The Credit?

1. **Just** as Creation is about the worship of God, Restoration is about the worship of God.

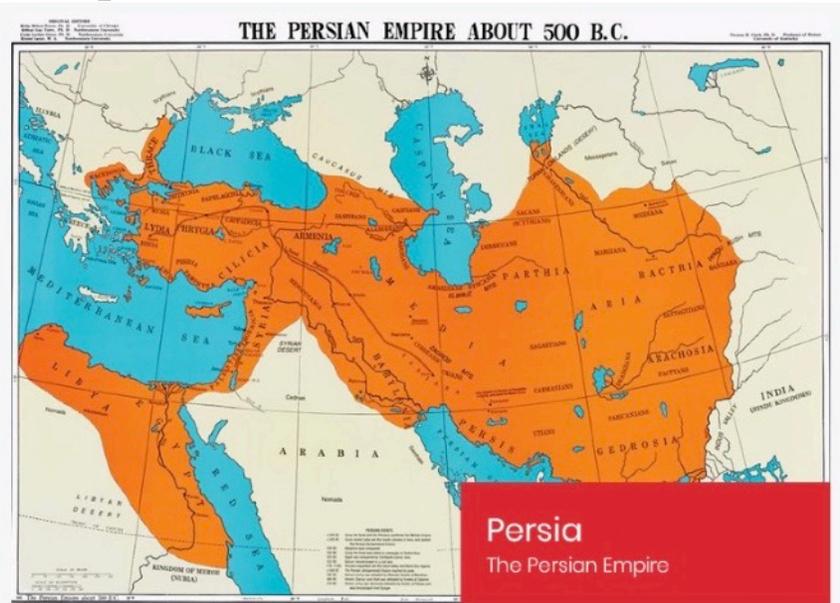
4. **How's** It Going?

1. **Have** you ever asked that question to someone...and then regretted it?
2. My joke is this - you have to ask someone how they are doing three times because the first two answers are lies. By the third they figure out you're serious.
 1. "**These** are the memoirs of Nehemiah son of Hacaliah. [cupbearer for the Persian King - an important position]

In late autumn, in the month of Kislev,
[November/December]

in the twentieth year of King Artaxerxes'
reign, [Persian King - think

Iran]



I was at the fortress of Susa. [the winter residence of Persian Kings]

Hanani, one of my brothers, came to visit me with some other men who had just arrived from Judah.

I asked them about the Jews who had returned there from captivity and about how things were going in Jerusalem.”
(Nehemiah 1:1–2, NLT)

5. **When** Bad News Hits

1. *“They said to me, “Things are not going well for those who returned to the province of Judah. They are in great trouble and disgrace. The wall of Jerusalem has been torn down, and the gates have been destroyed by fire.””* (Nehemiah 1:3, NLT)
2. Jerusalem still lay in ruins from its destruction by Nebuchadnezzar II 140 years earlier.

A city that had its walls and gates broken down was entirely vulnerable to outside aggression.

The book of Ezra describes an earlier aborted attempt to restore the walls during the reign of Artaxerxes I (c. 458 b.c.).

1. Matthews, V. H., Chavalas, M. W., & Walton, J. H. (2000). [*The IVP Bible background commentary: Old Testament*](#) (electronic ed., Ne 1:2–3). InterVarsity Press.

3. More than 90 years had passed since Cyrus' decree allowing Jews to return to Jerusalem in 538 bc.

A number of factors probably led to the failure of the returned exiles to rebuild the city during this time, including fear of enemies (Ezra 4:1–4; Neh 4–6) and

the denial of permission earlier in Artaxerxes' reign (see Ezra 4:7–23).

In addition, they may have had misplaced priorities, as happened earlier in the case of rebuilding the temple (Hag 1).

If the Jews were reluctant to rebuild the temple, they may also have been reluctant to rebuild the city.

1. Barry, J. D., Mangum, D., Brown, D. R., Heiser, M. S., Custis, M., Ritzema, E., Whitehead, M. M., Grigoni, M. R., & Bomar, D. (2012, 2016). [Faithlife Study Bible](#) (Ne 1:3). Lexham Press.

6. A God-Centered Response To Brokenness

1. Engaging Your Heart

1. *“When I heard this, I sat down and wept. In fact, for days I mourned, fasted, and prayed to the God of heaven.”* (Nehemiah 1:4, NLT)

7. Praying In The Midst of Brokenness

1. Engaging Your Mind

1. Prayer is connecting the truth of God with the heart of what is happening in life.

“Then I said, “O Lord, God of heaven, the great and awesome God who keeps his covenant of unfailing love with those who love him and obey his commands, listen to my prayer!”

Look down and see me praying night and day for your people Israel. I confess that we have sinned against you.

Yes, even my own family and I have sinned!

We have sinned terribly by not obeying the commands, decrees, and regulations that you gave us through your servant Moses.

“Please remember what you told your servant Moses: ‘If you are unfaithful to me, I will scatter you among the nations.

But if you return to me and obey my commands and live by them, then even if you are exiled to the ends of the earth, I will bring you back to the place I have chosen for my name to be honored.’

“The people you rescued by your great power and strong hand are your servants. O Lord, please hear my prayer! Listen to the prayers of those of us who delight in honoring you.

Please grant me success today by making the king favorable to me. Put it into his heart to be kind to me.”

In those days I was the king’s cup-bearer.”
(Nehemiah 1:5–11, NLT)

Praying In The Midst of Brokenness

2. Remember Who God Is (v 5)

“Then I said, “O Lord, God of heaven, the great and awesome God who keeps his covenant of unfailing love with those who love him and obey his

*commands, listen to my
prayer!*

1. How you see God in your story will shape what you tell yourself and others.

1. Angry and Vindictive God?

2. Benevolent Grandfather?

3. Disinterested, Distant Benign Dictator

4. If You Want To Know What God is Like, Look At Jesus

1. *“For in [Jesus] all the fullness of God was pleased to dwell, and through [Jesus] to reconcile to himself all things, whether on earth or in heaven, making peace by the blood of his cross.”*

(Colossians 1:19–20, ESV)

2. How You See God Changes How You...

1. Think

1. Orthodoxy is aligning with what is true.
2. Know God through his Word will direct us and keep us in truth
3. This gives us something outside of ourselves to challenge the thoughts within and the narratives from without

2. Pray

1. Praying to get God on your side (God, come to me)
2. Praying to be living in alignment to story of God (God, let me live in you)

3. Act

1. Be Still

1. *“But Moses told the people, “Don’t be afraid. Just stand still and watch the Lord*

rescue you today. The Egyptians you see today will never be seen again. The Lord himself will fight for you. Just stay calm.” (Exodus 14:13–14, NLT)

Praying In The Midst of Brokenness

3. **Admit Who You Are** (vv 5-7)

[“Then I said, “O Lord, God of heaven, the great and awesome God who keeps his covenant of unfailing love with those who love him and obey his commands,]

listen to my prayer! Look down and see me praying night and day for your people Israel. I confess that we have sinned against you. Yes, even my own family and

I have sinned! We have sinned terribly by not obeying the commands, decrees, and regulations that you gave us through your servant Moses.”
(Nehemiah 1:5–7, NLT)

1. We Prayers

1. Repenting that I am part of the problem

1. This goes against our culture! In huge ways!

2. Me Prayers

1. Repenting that I am the problem.

3. What Is The Measure of Your “Goodness”

1. The Word of God

1. *“For the word of God is alive and powerful. It is sharper than the sharpest two-edged sword,*

cutting between soul and spirit, between joint and marrow. It exposes our innermost thoughts and desires. Nothing in all creation is hidden from God. Everything is naked and exposed before his eyes, and he is the one to whom we are accountable.” (Hebrews 4:12–13, NLT)

2. BIBLE APP

2. The Spirit of God

1. *“And when he comes, he will convict the world of its sin, and of God’s righteousness, and of the coming judgment.” (John 16:8, NLT)*

Praying In The Midst of Brokenness

4. **Lean** On The Promises Of God (vv 9-10)

1. His Promises Are The Revelation Of His Character

“But if you return to me and obey my commands and live by them, then even if you are exiled to the ends of the earth, I will bring you back to the place I have chosen for my name to be honored.” “The people you rescued by your great power and strong hand are your servants.” (Nehemiah 1:9–10, NLT)

1. Bible App - Praying God's Truth Over My Fears - YouVersion

1. Great 10-day plan of praying God's word into your life.

2. BibleStudyTools.com - 50 Bible Verses on God's Promises

3. God keeps his Word!!

1. Remember, context is important!

Praying In The Midst of Brokenness

5. **Ask** For What You Want and What You Need (v 11)

“O Lord, please hear my prayer! Listen to the prayers of those of us who delight in honoring you. Please grant me success today by making the king favorable to me. Put it into his heart to be kind to me.” In those days I was the king’s cup-bearer.” (Nehemiah 1:11, NLT)

1. When we pray, we pray with an open hand. It is the posture of surrender and openness.

1. Open hands relinquish control.

2. Open hands give freely.

3. Open hands receive fully.

1. God has better things for you than what you can come up. But there isn't room for both your thing and God's thing.

Praying In The Midst of Brokenness

6. Actively Wait

“but they who wait for the Lord shall renew their strength; they shall mount up with wings like eagles; they shall run and not be weary; they shall walk and not faint.” (Isaiah 40:31, ESV)

1. Get ready to engage your actions.

8. Keep Your Focus

1. God Is Able

1. He is Sovereign

2. Keep Jesus At The Center

1. This is about worship

9. Questions To Consider

1. Where do you need God to show up?
2. What is happening in your heart?
3. What are two promises of God you want and need to come true for you?
4. Are you willing to do what God asks you so you can work with God to bring about his restoration?

Key Verse:

“In his kindness God called you to share in his eternal glory by means of Christ Jesus. So after you have suffered a little while, he will restore, support, and strengthen you, and he will place you on a firm foundation. All power to him forever! Amen.” (1 Peter 5:10–11, NLT)

