

NEHEMIAH

A TIME TO BUILD



The Remnant Nehemiah – Week 1

01. INTRODUCTION

I want to welcome everyone to week one of our brand new series entitled **Nehemiah: A Time To Build**.

- I am so excited about this series because we are going to learn how God uses us to do big things that impact the lives of people.

02. TRANSITION TO MESSAGE

TRANSITION: You know, one thing I have learned about walking with God over the last twenty two years is that any life, family, or church that makes an impact **must first have a strong sense of God's vision.**

If you're familiar with Nehemiah, you know the story is all about vision and leadership.

CONTEXT: Before we jump in, I want to help you understand a little something about Nehemiah.

- *Nehemiah loved God and was committed to his purpose – but he was exiled and living in Persia.*
- *Nehemiah was the king's cupbearer – this wasn't a lowly, menial job – it required a huge level of trust.*

- *Nehemiah was comfortable, provided for, had a great job and essentially enjoyed his life.*
- *God leads him to a divine partnership with a priest named Ezra and they change their nation & the course of history.*

Nehemiah is not a priest, he's a normal guy. He's doing really well in life. He doesn't have a lot of needs. He lived in the palace, had the respect of the king and was great at what he did.

To firmly place Nehemiah in your mind, you need to understand that His story didn't happen in a vacuum but is a continuation of the Story of the Bible....

The time stretching from Abraham to Nehemiah pretty much covers the entire Old Testament. Roughly speaking, the time in question is **2000 BC - 400 BC (or 1,600 years)**

03. MESSAGE

The Remnant:

1. Abraham to Mount Sinai.

Genesis 22:18 (NLT) And through your descendants all the nations of the earth will be blessed—all because you have obeyed me.”

- Call of Abraham, all nations will be blessed. Why does Satan hate Israel, because of Jesus.

Joseph saved the family and God delivered them out of Egypt, Scripture they plundered the Egyptians. Watch series: Joseph

Exodus 12:36 (NLT) The Lord caused the Egyptians to look favorably on the Israelites, and they gave the Israelites whatever they asked for. So, they stripped the Egyptians of their wealth!

Moses and The 10 Commandments

Deuteronomy 6:6-8 (NLT) And you must commit yourselves wholeheartedly to these commands that I am giving you today. ⁷ Repeat them again and again to your children. Talk about them when you are at home and when you are on the road, when you are going to bed and when you are getting up. ⁸ Tie them to your hands and wear them on your forehead as reminders.

- They didn't do that and Scripture about people crying out for a king...

2. The Three Kings of Israel.

1 Samuel 8:1-5 (NLT) As Samuel grew old, he appointed his sons to be judges over Israel. ² Joel and Abijah, his oldest sons, held court in Beersheba. ³ But they were not like their father, for they were greedy for money. They accepted bribes and perverted justice. ⁴ Finally, all the elders of Israel met at Ramah to discuss the matter with Samuel. ⁵ "Look," they told him, "you are now old, and your sons are not like you. Give us a king to judge us like all the other nations have."

When God's Leaders are weak, the people cry out for a king. The false notion that Government is the answer.

Overview of 3 Kings:

1. Saul was the King the people wanted but David was the King the people needed.
2. Solomon led an entire nation astray. Prosperity made him weak. Weakness made him forget.
3. David is a type of Christ, His lineage will bring Jesus through Joseph.

These three kings are a picture of the cycle that always happens in humanity:

They Knew God, They Knew About God, They Knew Not God.

Judges 2:10 (NLT) After that generation died, another generation grew up who did not acknowledge the Lord or remember the mighty things he had done for Israel.

3. Israel's Disobedience and The Evil Kings.

1 Kings 11:4-6 (NLT) In Solomon's old age, they turned his heart to worship other gods instead of being completely faithful to the Lord his God, as his father, David, had been. ⁵ Solomon worshiped Ashtoreth, the goddess of the Sidonians, and Molech, the detestable god of the Ammonites. ⁶ In this way, Solomon did what was evil in the Lord's sight; he refused to follow the Lord completely, as his father, David, had done.

Everytime God's People abandon Him, Evil Kings arise to take advantage of them.

Proverbs 29:2 (NLT) When the godly are in authority, the people rejoice. But when the wicked are in power, they groan.

4. The Exile & The Remnant.

Elijah – Evil Kings, Queens & Prophets Rule... Elijah cries out "I'm the only one left... nope." It feels like that sometimes, we are the only one and God isn't moving but nothing could be further from the truth.

1 Kings 19:18 (KJV) Yet I have left me seven thousand in Israel, all the knees which have not bowed unto Baal, and every mouth which hath not kissed him.

The People abandon God, Government become God and all hell breaks loose... But God always preserves a remnant.

NEXT: Exile into Babylonians, Meads & Persians.

5. God's Unfailing Love.

Daniel 2:26-28a (NIV) The king asked Daniel (also called Belteshazzar), "Are you able to tell me what I saw in my dream and interpret it?" ²⁷ Daniel replied, "No wise man, enchanter, magician or diviner can explain to the king the mystery he has asked about, ²⁸ but there is a God in heaven who reveals mysteries.

Daniel 3:26 (NLT) Then Nebuchadnezzar came as close as he could to the door of the flaming furnace and shouted: "Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego, servants of the Most High God, come out! Come here!" So Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego stepped out of the fire.

Daniel 6:16 (NLT) So at last the king gave orders for Daniel to be arrested and thrown into the den of lions. The king said to him, "May your God, whom you serve so faithfully, rescue you."

God delivers His people and gives favor when they refuse to bow.

Three ways that God delivers you:

1. From the Fire. (God delivers you from it)
2. In the Fire. (God delivers you in it)
3. Through the Fire. (Other's watch you burn) - Bonhoeffer

6. A Return to God's Word.

The Book of Ezra begins with a decree from King Cyrus of Persia, allowing the Jews to return to Jerusalem to rebuild the temple that had been destroyed by the Babylonians in 587 BC.

Ezra 1:1-4 (NLT) In the first year of King Cyrus of Persia, the Lord fulfilled the prophecy he had given through Jeremiah. He stirred the heart of Cyrus to put this proclamation in writing and to send it throughout his kingdom: ²"This is what King Cyrus of Persia says:

“The Lord, the God of heaven, has given me all the kingdoms of the earth. He has appointed me to build him a Temple at Jerusalem, which is in Judah. ³ Any of you who are his people may go to Jerusalem in Judah to rebuild this Temple of the Lord, the God of Israel, who lives in Jerusalem. And may your God be with you! ⁴ Wherever this Jewish remnant is found, let their neighbors contribute toward their expenses by giving them silver and gold, supplies for the journey, and livestock, as well as a voluntary offering for the Temple of God in Jerusalem.”

The Book of Ezra, Zerubbabel is the governor of Judah and he laid the foundation for the Temple. He was given sanction to rebuild the Temple and return the sacred Temple vessels that Nebuchadnezzar II had preserved after the conquest of Babylon.

Then Ezra follows to reinstitute temple worship. Then...

7. The Burden to Rebuild.

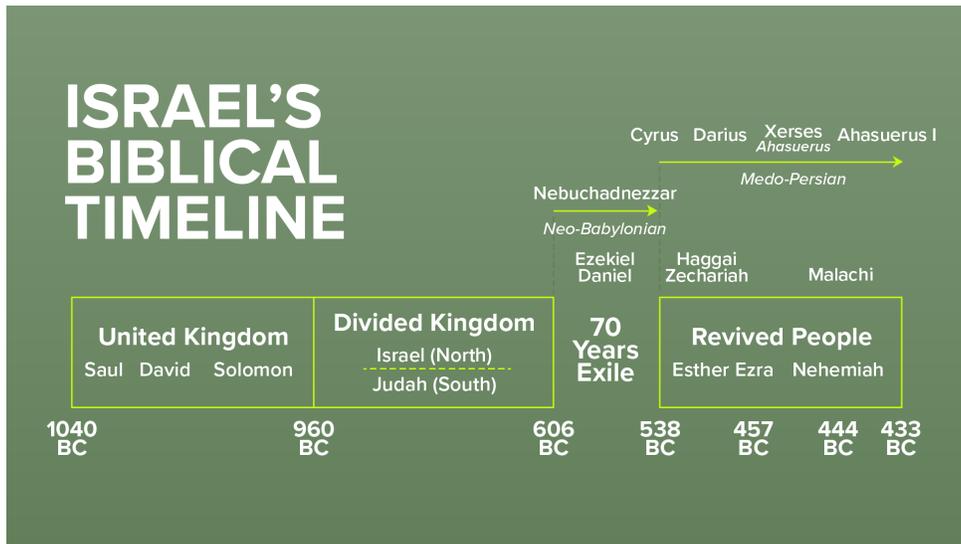
Nehemiah returns to rebuild the walls.

Nehemiah 1:1-11 (NLT) In late autumn, in the month of Kislev, in the twentieth year of King Artaxerxes' reign, I was at the fortress of Susa. ² 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.³ 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.”

⁴ When I heard this, I sat down and wept. In fact, for days I mourned, fasted, and prayed to the God of heaven. 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, ⁶ 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! ⁷ We have sinned terribly by not obeying the commands, decrees, and regulations that you gave us through your servant Moses.

⁸“Please remember what you told your servant Moses: ‘If you are unfaithful to me, I will scatter you among the nations. ⁹ 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.’ ¹⁰“The people you rescued by your great power and strong hand are your servants. 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.



04. CLOSING & PRAYER

Five Characteristics of The Remnant

1. Prayer & Thankfulness

Example: Daniel

Daniel 6:10 (NLT) "But when Daniel learned that the law had been signed, he went home and knelt down as usual in his upstairs room, with its windows open toward Jerusalem. He prayed three times a day, just as he had always done, giving thanks to his God."

2. Radical Obedience To God.

Example: Noah

Genesis 6:22 (NLT) "So Noah did everything exactly as God had commanded him."

3. Courage in the Face of Death.

Example: Esther

Esther 4:16 (NLT) "Go and gather together all the Jews of Susa and fast for me. Do not eat or drink for three days, night or day. My maids and I will do the same. And then, though it is against the law, I will go in to see the king. If I must die, I must die."

4. Passion for God's Glory

Example: Elijah

1 Kings 18:37-38 (NIV) "Answer me, LORD! Answer me, so these people will know that you, LORD, are God, and that you are turning their hearts back again. Then the fire of the LORD fell and burned up the sacrifice, the wood, the stones and the soil, and also licked up the water in the trench."

5. Counter-Cultural Righteousness

Example: Joseph

Genesis 39:9 (NLT) "No one here has more authority than I do. He has held back nothing from me except you, because you are his wife. How could I do such a wicked thing? It would be a great sin against God."

Let's Pray