



REBUILD

a study of Ezra and Nehemiah

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Chronology of Ezra and Nehemiah

Cyrus	Darius	Xerxes I	Artaxerxes
1st Return under Zerubbabel (Temple)	Events of the book of Esther	2 nd Return under Ezra (People)	3 rd Return under Nehemiah (Wall)
Ezra 1-6	Book of Esther	Ezra 7-10	Book of Nehemiah
538-515 B.C.	475 B.C.	458-457 B. C.	445-430 B.C.
Zechariah Haggai		Malachi	

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Nehemiah chapters 1-2

***When life is difficult,
our dialogue becomes
upward and outward.***



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Nehemiah chapters 3-4

***Be like elephants:
united like a family and
courageous for what is right.***



REBUILD

Nehemiah chapters 5-6

***Compassion, integrity and discernment
will carry the day
in the 'economy' of God.***

Nehemiah 5

Nehemiah Stops Oppression of the Poor: Compassion

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- 1 Now there arose a great outcry of the people and of their wives against their Jewish brothers.
- 2 For there were those who said,
*"With our sons and our daughters, we are many.
So let us get grain, that we may eat and keep alive."*
- 3 There were also those who said,
*"We are mortgaging our fields, our vineyards,
and our houses to get grain because of the famine."*
- 4 And there were those who said,
"We have borrowed money for the king's tax on our fields and our vineyards.
- 5 *Now our flesh is as the flesh of our brothers, our children are as their children.
Yet we are forcing our sons and our daughters to be slaves,
and some of our daughters have already been enslaved,
but it is not in our power to help it,
for other men have our fields and our vineyards."*

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6 I was very angry when I heard their outcry and these words.

7 I took counsel with myself, and I brought charges against the nobles and the officials.

I said to them,

"You are exacting interest, each from his brother."

And I held a great assembly against them

8 and said to them,

"We, as far as we are able, have bought back our Jewish brothers who have been sold to the nations, but you even sell your brothers that they may be sold to us!"

They were silent and could not find a word to say.

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Deuteronomy 23:19-20

19 "You shall not charge interest on loans to your brother, interest on money, interest on food, interest on anything that is lent for interest.

20 You may charge a foreigner interest, but you may not charge your brother interest, that the LORD your God may bless you in all that you undertake in the land that you are entering to take possession of it.

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9 So I said,

"The thing that you are doing is not good. Ought you not to walk in the fear of our God to prevent the taunts of the nations our enemies?"

10 *Moreover, I and my brothers and my servants are lending them money and grain. Let us abandon this exacting of interest.*

11 *Return to them this very day their fields, their vineyards, their olive orchards, and their houses, and the percentage of money, grain, wine, and oil that you have been exacting from them."*

12 Then they said,

"We will restore these and require nothing from them. We will do as you say."

And I called the priests and made them swear to do as they had promised.

13 I also shook out the fold of my garment and said,

"So may God shake out every man from his house and from his labor who does not keep this promise. So may he be shaken out and emptied."

And all the assembly said "Amen" and praised the LORD.

And the people did as they had promised.

Three fundamental worldviews of ownership
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3. God owns 'it' all and we are simply stewards of wealth for the good of all.

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It is a travesty when
someone takes advantage
of the disadvantaged
for their own personal advantage
and thus contributes to the high
probability of the demise
of those who are disadvantaged.

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Nehemiah's Generosity: Integrity



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14 Moreover, from the time that I was appointed to be their governor in the land of Judah, from the twentieth year to the thirty-second year of Artaxerxes the king, twelve years, neither I nor my brothers ate the food allowance of the governor.

15 The former governors who were before me laid heavy burdens on the people and took from them for their daily ration forty shekels of silver. Even their servants lorded it over the people.

But I did not do so, because of the fear of God.

16 I also persevered in the work on this wall, and we acquired no land, and all my servants were gathered there for the work.

17 Moreover, there were at my table 150 men, Jews and officials, besides those who came to us from the nations that were around us.

18 Now what was prepared at my expense for each day was one ox and six choice sheep and birds, and every ten days all kinds of wine in abundance. Yet for all this I did not demand the food allowance of the governor, because the service was too heavy on this people.

19 Remember for my good, O my God, all that I have done for this people.

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Nehemiah 6

Conspiracy Against Nehemiah: Discernment

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1 Now when Sanballat and Tobiah and Geshem the Arab and the rest of our enemies heard that I had built the wall and that there was no breach left in it (although up to that time I had not set up the doors in the gates),

2 Sanballat and Geshem sent to me, saying,

"Come and let us meet together at Hakkephirim in the plain of Ono."

But they intended to do me harm.

3 And I sent messengers to them, saying,

"I am doing a great work and I cannot come down.

Why should the work stop while I leave it and come down to you?"

4 And they sent to me four times in this way, and I answered them in the same manner.

5 In the same way Sanballat for the fifth time sent his servant to me with an open letter in his hand.

6 In it was written,

"It is reported among the nations, and Geshem also says it, that you and the Jews intend to rebel; that is why you are building the wall. And according to these reports you wish to become their king.

7 *And you have also set up prophets to proclaim concerning you in Jerusalem, 'There is a king in Judah.'*

And now the king will hear of these reports.

So now come and let us take counsel together."

8 Then I sent to him, saying,

"No such things as you say have been done, for you are inventing them out of your own mind."

9 For they all wanted to frighten us, thinking,

"Their hands will drop from the work, and it will not be done."

But now, O God, strengthen my hands.

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10 Now when I went into the house of Shemaiah the son of Delaiah, son of Mehetabel, who was confined to his home, he said,

"Let us meet together in the house of God, within the temple.

Let us close the doors of the temple, for they are coming to kill you.

They are coming to kill you by night."

11 But I said,

"Should such a man as I run away?

And what man such as I could go into the temple and live?

I will not go in."

12 **And I understood and saw that God had not sent him,** but he had pronounced the prophecy against me because Tobiah and Sanballat had hired him.

13 For this purpose he was hired, that I should be afraid and act in this way and sin, and so they could give me a bad name in order to taunt me.

14 Remember Tobiah and Sanballat, O my God, according to these things that they did, and also the prophetess Noadiah and the rest of the prophets who wanted to make me afraid.

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The Wall Is Finished: The hand of God is never without opposition.

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- 15** So the wall was finished on the twenty-fifth day of the month Elul, in fifty-two days.
- 16** And when all our enemies heard of it, all the nations around us were afraid and fell greatly in their own esteem,
for they perceived that this work had been accomplished with the help of our God.
- 17** Moreover, in those days the nobles of Judah sent many letters to Tobiah,
and Tobiah's letters came to them.
- 18** For many in Judah were bound by oath to him, because he was the son-in-law of Shecaniah the son of Arah: and his son Jehohanan had taken the daughter of Meshullam the son of Berechiah as his wife.
- 19** Also they spoke of his good deeds in my presence and reported my words to him.
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So...therefore...what now?

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The economy of God is accomplished with

compassion,

integrity,

and

discernment...

and yet it will always face opposition.

So...therefore...what now?

Compassion
*is the protective arm
that defends those
who do not have any margins to fall
back on in times of trouble.*

So...therefore...what now?

Integrity

is a commitment to understanding that all wealth is God's, and that we are simply stewards whose responsibility it is to willfully and generously bless those around us.

So...therefore...what now?

Discernment

*is the ability to see the true intentions
of those who stand in opposition to
what God wants to accomplish
through us and around us.*



REBUILD

Nehemiah chapters 5-6

***Compassion, integrity, and discernment
will carry the day
in the 'economy' of God.***

