



## RE:BUILDING

### Discontent

Sunday 4<sup>th</sup> January 2026

Nehemiah 1:1-7

1

Nehemiah saw a task that was beyond himself, beyond his resources, beyond his experience but somehow not beyond His heart. God's Holy City – His dwelling place – was in ruins. Jerusalem at its best, represented the joy, peace, and hope of God's people. **When the city was ruined it was a symptom of the brokenness inside.**

2

In this new series – RE:BUILDING – we will experience a personal rebuilding from the inside out. Let's step into **Nehemiah's story, in verses 1-3,**

The words of Nehemiah the son of Hacaliah.

Now it happened in the month of Chislev, in the twentieth year, as I was in Susa the citadel, <sup>2</sup>that Hanani, one of my brothers, came with certain men from Judah. And I asked them concerning the Jews who escaped, who had survived the exile, and concerning Jerusalem. <sup>3</sup>And they said to me, "The remnant there in the province who had survived the exile is in great trouble and shame. The wall of Jerusalem is broken down, and its gates are destroyed by fire."

3

**If someone gave a report on your life,** the state of your mind and heart, your relationships, your work ethic, the secrets you hold, your marriage, your past hurts, your anxieties and fears, your relationship with God, **how would it read?**

Maybe as you think on these things you have many feelings just like the Israelites – great trouble and shame. Before we continue, I want you to hold onto the hope of Jesus' words in **Luke 10:41-42,**

4

But the Lord answered her, "Martha, Martha, you are anxious and troubled about many things, <sup>42</sup>but one thing is necessary, Mary has chosen the good portion, which will not be taken away from her."

5

Mary was sitting at the feet of Jesus. She had chosen Jesus over every other yes. And He said that will not be taken away from her. **When you choose Jesus, He will not be taken from you.**

None of you is too far gone, too sinful, too messed up, too confused, too troubled and shamed, for the Maker of heaven and earth to redeem, renew, and rebuild.

So where do we start?

6 **It all starts with a personal sense of discontentment** (not annoyance or frustration). Listen to these words from Jim Cymbala in his book *Storm*,

7 *All changes — spiritual revivals, a turnaround in a church, a barren life now bearing fruit — begin when there is a discontentment that says, “I refuse to accept this.”*

8 **You cannot see change and hold onto the status quo.** Let’s see how Nehemiah responded to these reports in **Nehemiah 1:4-7**,

9   
As soon as I heard these words I sat down and wept and mourned for days, and I continued fasting and praying before the God of heaven. <sup>5</sup> And I said, “O Lord God of heaven, the great and awesome God who keeps covenant and steadfast love with those who love him and keep his commandments, <sup>6</sup> let your ear be attentive and your eyes open, to hear the prayer of your servant that I now pray before you day and night for the people of Israel your servants, confessing the sins of the people of Israel, which we have sinned against you. Even I and my father's house have sinned. <sup>7</sup> We have acted very corruptly against you and have not kept the commandments, the statutes, and the rules that you commanded your servant Moses.

To start out the right way, something needs to break. **Something needs to STOP us from all our crazy life of busy.** As Nehemiah did,

- 10
1. **Sit down** – spend time with your thoughts and the words of truth
  2. **Tears** – allow yourself to cry over your troubles and shame
  3. **Omit** food/activity. Leave out what you are eating/doing (food, activity, appointments)
  4. **Pray** – to God with childlike trust and honesty

You cannot sense what is wrong through other people.

11

You need 3 things:

1. See the problems God sees (compare where you are to where God wants you to be)
2. Define the problem as God defines it (feelings, addictions, health, anxiety, shame, running, are the symptoms, not the problems)
3. Respond to the problem under the goodness of God's hand.

This is why most New Years resolutions fail, because they rely on us to fix the symptoms with our own strength.

12

However, Nehemiah did something very different – **he took personal responsibility for the problems!**

He developed a God-facing sense of personal responsibility. In God's word is the perfect blueprint for humanity to relate to Him through His Son's death burial, and resurrection. Why we see so little progress away from our troubles and shame is because we have wandered from God's true description of the symptoms and His diagnosis of the underlying causes.

13

Nehemiah identifies 3 areas of failings. **Firstly in verse 6b,**

...confessing the sins of the people of Israel, which we have sinned against you. Even I and my father's house have sinned.

1. *Everyone has sinned against God (including me and my family).* Paul says this in **Romans 3:22-23,**

14

For there is no distinction: <sup>23</sup> for all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God,

15

**Secondly in verse 7,**

We have acted very corruptly against you

2. *We have acted out our mess towards God*

16

**Thirdly in verse 7b,**

[we] have not kept the commandments, the statutes, and the rules that you commanded your servant Moses.

3. *We have not paid full attention to all God has said and commanded*

17

As it says in **James 2:10**,

For whoever keeps the whole law but fails in one point has become guilty of all of it.

God never asked us to do our best or try harder. He asked for a full commitment to the truth of His word.

18

Let us close with the words of Jesus who promised His disciples in **John 14:18**,

I will not leave you as orphans; I will come to you.

You are not expected to do this without the loving strength of a Father in heaven. So let us choose as Mary did to come and sit at the feet of Jesus for a fresh view on who we really are and next week we will see how that translates into a God-centred vision for the RE:BUILDING.