

# Establishing His Kingdom (Nehemiah Chapter 8)

Sunday, November 10, 2024

For several weeks we have been working our way through the book of Nehemiah with a focus that I believe was given to me by The Holy Spirit - ESTABLISHING HIS KINGDOM. Nehemiah's passion to restore Jerusalem by rebuilding its walls, its worship, its obedience to God's Word and its inhabitant's relationship to God and to each other is similar to our call to Establish His Kingdom - the call that Jesus gave to His disciples in Matthew 16 - ***"I will build my church, and the gates of Hades will not overcome it. 19 I will give you the keys of the kingdom of heaven; whatever you bind on earth will be bound in heaven, and whatever you loose on earth will be loosed in heaven."***

It is a call to Establish His Kingdom in our own hearts, in this world, and as we learned two weeks ago, by guarding the gates of our families. Here is a quick review of what we have learned so far...

## Chapter 1 - IGNITING/REIGNITING THE FIRE TO ESTABLISH THE KINGDOM

- Of Passionate Concern
- Of Confession and Repentance
- Of Prayer and Fasting
- Of Obedience
- Of Taking Action

## Chapter 2 - PROTECTING THE FIRE

- From DOUBT and FEAR
- By TRUSTING God for the PROVISION of all that I need
- From the RESISTANCE of the enemy
- Through times of WAITING
- From the DISCOURAGEMENT of others
- While ASSESSING the SCOPE of the work to be done
- While ACKNOWLEDGING the DIFFICULTIES that lie ahead
- By STARTING the work
- By REMINDING ourselves and others about the TESTIMONIES of what God has already done
- From The DISCOURAGEMENT of the enemy

## Chapter 3 - TEAMWORK - THE POWER OF UNITY IN THE BODY OF CHRIST

- ACKNOWLEDGE that EVERYONE is NEEDED
- APPRECIATE the UNIQUE SKILLS, GIFTINGS, and PERSONALITIES that God has called to be a part of the TEAM
- WORK TOGETHER through RELATIONSHIP, RESPECT, HUMILITY, LOVE, PATIENCE, KINDNESS and FORGIVENESS
- LEADERSHIP is a part of God's PLAN for the team - God wants us to respect them, follow them, protect them and pray for them
- Be AWARE of WOLVES in sheep's clothing; but also know that sometimes what appears to be a TARE might actually turn out to be WHEAT

## Chapter 4 - OVERCOMING THE OPPOSITION OF THE ENEMY

- The enemy RIDICULES us and TEARS us down
- He gets us to focus on the ENORMITY and IMPOSSIBILITY of the work, our lack of strength
- He questions the VALUE OF OUR WORK and He tells us it won't last (it's not good)
- I want to remind you IT IS GOD'S WORK not ours, He chooses to use us as His tools.
- TAKE it to God, GIVE it to God
- KEEP WORKING
- The enemy is not going to quit... He will ramp up his attacks...
- Keep PRAYING and BE ON GUARD to meet his threats. (do not be unaware of the devils schemes)
- It's a LOT OF WORK and it's NEVER ENDING
- One of the enemies greatest tactics is to instill fear in your heart over WHAT MIGHT HAPPEN
- Sometimes our own brothers and sisters in Christ are better at CREATING FEAR than ENCOURAGING FAITH
- KNOW YOUR VULNERABILITIES, Don't be AFRAID, Remember that God is GREAT and FIGHT
- The POWER OF UNITY is still important
- Fight WITH EACH OTHER not AGAINST EACH OTHER
- LISTEN to those whom God has placed in LEADERSHIP
- ALWAYS BE READY

## Chapter 5 - INTERNAL TRANSFORMATION

- DOING the things (THINKING and ACTING like) the world does
- RELYING on our OWN STRENGTH
- TRUSTING God for PROVISION
- Not LORDING our POSITION over others
- INTEGRITY
- HONESTY
- HUMILITY
- COMPASSION
- THE FRUIT of the Holy Spirit

## Chapter 6 - DEFEATING THE TACTICS OF THE ENEMY

- He repeatedly tries to stop the work (REPEATED ATTACKS)
- He tries to get us alone (ISOLATION)
- He zeroes in on where we are most vulnerable (WEAK SPOTS)
  - Focus on what God has called you to do (not your own wants and desires)
  - Stay close to Jesus and close to other believers
  - Learn to walk in your strengths rather than be controlled by your weaknesses
- He seeks to instill fear to cause us to act inappropriately (INTIMIDATION)
- At the same time, he subtly uses false flattery in an attempt to trip us up. (PRIDE)
  - Do not be afraid
  - Walk In Humility
- He secretly attacks us where we least expect it (DARK ALLEYS)
  - We need discernment
- ONGOING BATTLES
  - STAY ALERT

## Chapter 7 - The Third Battlefield - Guarding The Gates of Our Families

- INSTILL The FEAR OF THE LORD
- Set RIGHTEOUS BOUNDARIES
- MAINTAIN PURITY from the INFLUENCE of The World
- SPEND TIME TOGETHER in the Presence of The Lord

I know that sometimes we look around and we feel like we are making little progress in Establishing His Kingdom. We often feel we are fighting a losing battle, that we are losing ground, not making a difference. But I want to encourage you this morning that Jesus is indeed BUILDING HIS CHURCH.

### Illustration: Election Map

#### Nehemiah 8

8 1 all the people came together as one in the square before the Water Gate. They told Ezra the teacher of the Law to bring out the Book of the Law of Moses, which the Lord had commanded for Israel.

2 So on the first day of the seventh month Ezra the priest brought the Law before the assembly, which was made up of men and women and all who were able to understand. 3 He read it aloud from daybreak till noon as he faced the square before the Water Gate in the presence of the men, women and others who could understand. And all the people listened attentively to the Book of the Law.

4 Ezra the teacher of the Law stood on a high wooden platform built for the occasion. Beside him on his right stood Mattithiah, Shema, Anaiah, Uriah, Hilkiah and Maaseiah; and on his left were Pedaiah, Mishael, Malkijah, Hashum, Hashbaddanah, Zechariah and Meshullam.

5 Ezra opened the book. All the people could see him because he was standing above them; and as he opened it, the people all stood up. 6 Ezra praised the Lord, the great God; and all the people lifted their hands and responded, "Amen! Amen!" Then they bowed down and worshiped the Lord with their faces to the ground.

7 The Levites—Jeshua, Bani, Sherebiah, Jamin, Akkub, Shabbethai, Hodiah, Maaseiah, Kelita, Azariah, Jozabad, Hanan and Pelaiah—instructed the people in the Law while the people were standing there. 8 They read from the Book of the Law of God, making it clear and giving the meaning so that the people understood what was being read.

9 Then Nehemiah the governor, Ezra the priest and teacher of the Law, and the Levites who were instructing the people said to them all, “This day is holy to the Lord your God. Do not mourn or weep.” For all the people had been weeping as they listened to the words of the Law.

10 Nehemiah said, “Go and enjoy choice food and sweet drinks, and send some to those who have nothing prepared. This day is holy to our Lord. Do not grieve, for the joy of the Lord is your strength.”

11 The Levites calmed all the people, saying, “Be still, for this is a holy day. Do not grieve.”

12 Then all the people went away to eat and drink, to send portions of food and to celebrate with great joy, because they now understood the words that had been made known to them.

13 On the second day of the month, the heads of all the families, along with the priests and the Levites, gathered around Ezra the teacher to give attention to the words of the Law. 14 They found written in the Law, which the Lord had commanded through Moses, that the Israelites were to live in temporary shelters during the festival of the seventh month 15 and that they should proclaim this word and spread it throughout their towns and in Jerusalem: “Go out into the hill country and bring back branches from olive and wild olive trees, and from myrtles, palms and shade trees, to make temporary shelters”—as it is written.

16 So the people went out and brought back branches and built themselves temporary shelters on their own roofs, in their courtyards, in the courts of the house of God and in the square by the Water Gate and the one by the Gate of Ephraim. 17 The whole company that had returned from exile built temporary shelters and lived in them. From the days of Joshua son of Nun until that day, the Israelites had not celebrated it like this. And their joy was very great.

18 Day after day, from the first day to the last, Ezra read from the Book of the Law of God. They celebrated the festival for seven days, and on the eighth day, in accordance with the regulation, there was an assembly.

## Chapter 8 - Prioritizing The Word

2 Timothy 3:16-17

16 All Scripture is God-breathed and is useful for teaching, rebuking, correcting and training in righteousness, 17 so that the servant of God may be thoroughly equipped for every good work.

- Hunger for the word

8 1 all the people came together as one in the square before the Water Gate. They told Ezra the teacher of the Law to bring out the Book of the Law of Moses, which the Lord had commanded for Israel.

Matthew 4:4

4 Jesus answered, "It is written: 'Man shall not live on bread alone, but on every word that comes from the mouth of God.' "

1 Peter 2:2 (NIVR)

2 Like newborn babies, you should long for the pure milk of God's word. It will help you grow up as believers.

- Listen to The Word

2 So on the first day of the seventh month Ezra the priest brought the Law before the assembly, which was made up of men and women and all who were able to understand. 3 He read it aloud from daybreak till noon as he faced the square before the Water Gate in the presence of the men, women and others who could understand. And all the people listened attentively to the Book of the Law.

*He who has ears let him hear*

- Time with the Word

3 He read it aloud from daybreak till noon as he faced the square before the Water Gate in the presence of the men, women and others who could understand. And all the people listened attentively to the Book of the Law.

Psalms 1:2

2 but whose delight is in the law of the Lord, and who meditates on his law day and night.

- Elevate the Word

4 Ezra the teacher of the Law stood on a high wooden platform built for the occasion. Beside him on his right stood Mattithiah, Shema, Anaiah, Uriah, Hilkiah and Maaseiah; and on his left were Pedaiah, Mishael, Malkijah, Hashum, Hashbaddanah, Zechariah and Meshullam.

5 Ezra opened the book. All the people could see him because he was standing above them; and as he opened it, the people all stood up.

Psalm 119:72

72 The law from your mouth is more precious to me than thousands of pieces of silver and gold.

- Relationship with The Word

2 So on the first day of the seventh month Ezra the priest brought the Law before the assembly, which was made up of men and women and all who were able to understand. 3 He read it aloud from daybreak till noon as he faced the square before the Water Gate in the presence of the men, women and others who could understand. And all the people listened attentively to the Book of the Law.

John 1:1

1 In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God.

John 6:33-35

33 For the bread of God is the bread that comes down from heaven and gives life to the world.”

34 “Sir,” they said, “always give us this bread.”

35 Then Jesus declared, “I am the bread of life. Whoever comes to me will never go hungry, and whoever believes in me will never be thirsty.

- Agreement with The Word

6 Ezra praised the Lord, the great God; and all the people lifted their hands and responded, “Amen! Amen!” Then they bowed down and worshiped the Lord with their faces to the ground.

Psalm 18:30

30 As for God, his way is perfect: The Lord’s word is flawless;

Psalm 33:4

4 For the word of the Lord is right and true;

- Submission to The Word

6 Ezra praised the Lord, the great God; and all the people lifted their hands and responded, “Amen! Amen!” Then they bowed down and worshiped the Lord with their faces to the ground.

Psalm 119:9

9 How can a young person stay on the path of purity? By living according to your word.

- Studying The Word

7 The Levites—Jeshua, Bani, Sherebiah, Jamin, Akkub, Shabbethai, Hodiah, Maaseiah, Kelita, Azariah, Jozabad, Hanan and Pelaiah—instructed the people in the Law while the people were standing there. 8 They read from the Book of the Law of God, making it clear and giving the meaning so that the people understood what was being read.

Psalm 119:130

130 The unfolding of your words gives light; it gives understanding to the simple.

- Rejoicing in the word

10 Nehemiah said, “Go and enjoy choice food and sweet drinks, and send some to those who have nothing prepared. This day is holy to our Lord. Do not grieve, for the joy of the Lord is your strength.”

Romans 15:4

4 For everything that was written in the past was written to teach us, so that through the endurance taught in the Scriptures and the encouragement they provide we might have hope.

- Sharing The Word

10 Nehemiah said, “Go and enjoy choice food and sweet drinks, and send some to those who have nothing prepared. This day is holy to our Lord. Do not grieve, for the joy of the Lord is your strength.”

2 Timothy 4:2

2 Preach the word; be prepared in season and out of season; correct, rebuke and encourage—with great patience and careful instruction.

Romans 10:14

14 How, then, can they call on the one they have not believed in? And how can they believe in the one of whom they have not heard? And how can they hear without someone preaching to them?

**VIDEO: Don't Judge A Book By Its Cover**



- Practicing The Word

14 They found written in the Law, which the Lord had commanded through Moses, that the Israelites were to live in temporary shelters during the festival of the seventh month 15 and that they should proclaim this word and spread it throughout their towns and in Jerusalem: “Go out into the hill country and bring back branches from olive and wild olive trees, and from myrtles, palms and shade trees, to make temporary shelters”—as it is written.

16 So the people went out and brought back branches and built themselves temporary shelters on their own roofs, in their courtyards, in the courts of the house of God and in the square by the Water Gate and the one by the Gate of Ephraim. 17 The whole company that had returned from exile built temporary shelters and lived in them. From the days of Joshua son of Nun until that day, the Israelites had not celebrated it like this. And their joy was very great.

James 1:22

22 Do not merely listen to the word, and so deceive yourselves. Do what it says.

Luke 11:28

28 He replied, “Blessed rather are those who hear the word of God and obey it.”

Matthew 7:24

24 “Therefore everyone who hears these words of mine and puts them into practice is like a wise man who built his house on the rock.

- Dwelling with The Word

17 The whole company that had returned from exile built temporary shelters and lived in them.

- Continuing in the Word

18 Day after day, from the first day to the last, Ezra read from the Book of the Law of God. They celebrated the festival for seven days, and on the eighth day, in accordance with the regulation, there was an assembly.