

Harvesters, Perimeter Church

“Nehemiah: Faithfulness in one’s calling”

February 18, 2024

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President

GENEVA

Where are we going?

- February 4, 2024 - Introduction Nehemiah 1:1-13 “Nehemiah: Faithfulness amid the Fragments”
- February 11, 2024 - “Nehemiah: Faithfulness to one’s call” (Nehemiah 1:1-2:8)
- February 18, 2024 - “Nehemiah: Faithfulness in one’s calling” (Nehemiah 2:1-3:32)
- February 25, 2024 - “Nehemiah: Faithfulness in the face of opposition, part 1” (Nehemiah 4:1-7:72)
- March 3, 2024 - “Nehemiah: Faithfulness in the face of opposition, part 2” (Nehemiah 4:1-7:72)
- March 10, 2024 - “Nehemiah: Faithfulness rooted in the Word” (Nehemiah 7:73-10:39)
- March 17, 2024 - “Nehemiah: Faithfulness leading to urban renewal” (Nehemiah 11:1-12:47)
- March 24, 2024 - “Nehemiah: Faithfulness for the long haul” (Nehemiah 13) Wrap-up

Review

539 BC – First Return

1. Led by Zerubbabel
2. King - Cyrus
3. Goal - rebuild the temple

458 BC – Second Return

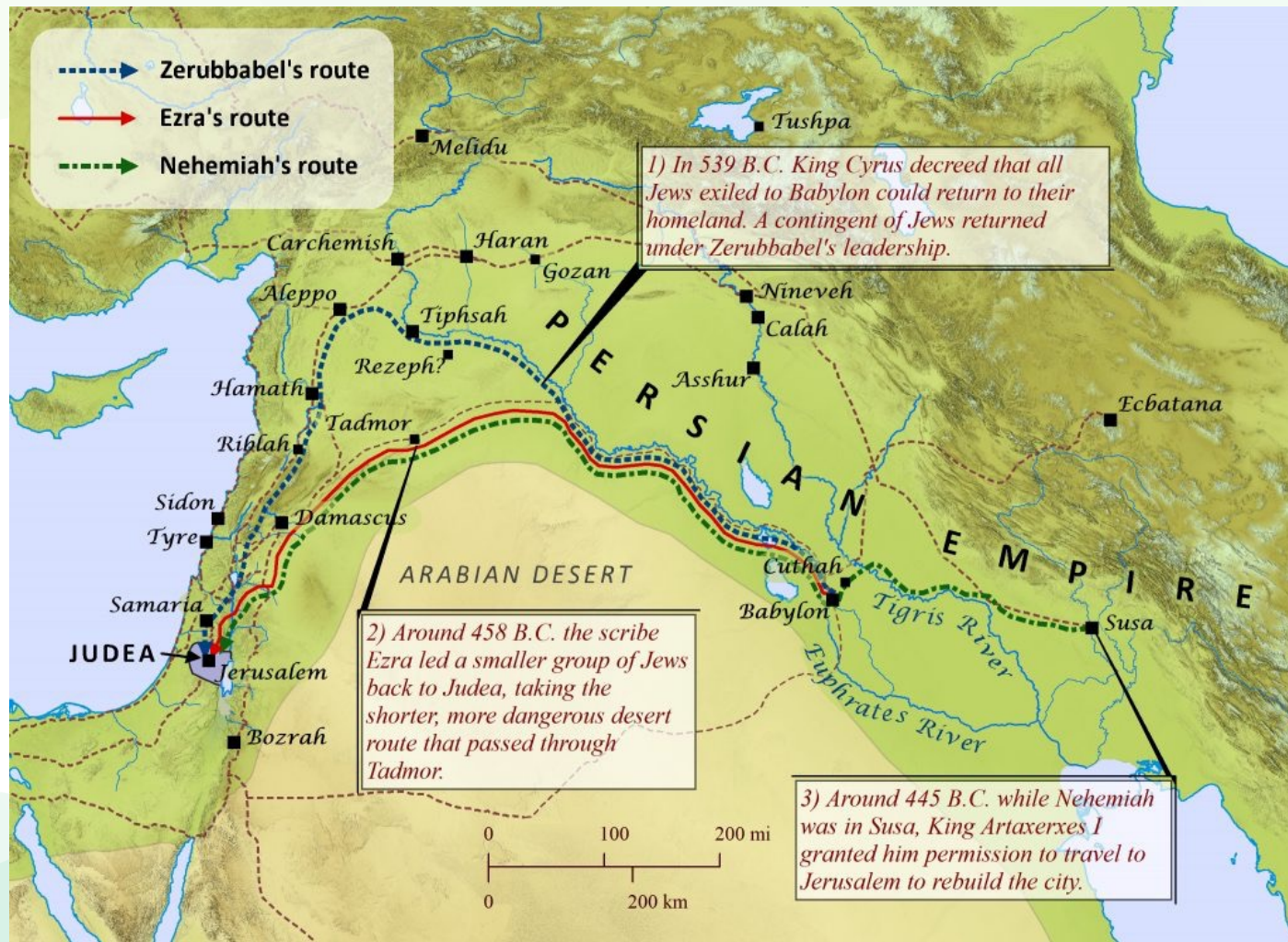
1. Led by Ezra
2. King - Artaxerxes
3. Goal – retrain God’s people

445 BC – Third Return

1. Led by Nehemiah
2. King - Artaxerxes
3. Goal - rebuild the walls

Context – Time and Place

Place



Lessons in Prayer

1. Personal – “my God”
2. Persistent - months
3. Penitent
4. Petitionary

“Nehemiah’s public life was the outflow, and thus the revelation, of his personal life, and his personal life...was steeped in, and shaped by habitual petitionary prayer, in which devotion to God, dependence on God, and desire for the glory of God found equal expression.”

- J.I. Packer

Nehemiah 2:1-4

In the month of Nisan, in the twentieth year of King Artaxerxes, when wine was before him, I took up the wine and gave it to the king. Now I had not been sad in his presence. ² And the king said to me, “Why is your face sad, seeing you are not sick? This is nothing but sadness of the heart.” Then I was very much afraid. ³ I said to the king, “Let the king live forever! Why should not my face be sad, when the city, the place of my fathers' graves, lies in ruins, and its gates have been destroyed by fire?” ⁴ Then the king said to me, “What are you requesting?” So I prayed to the God of heaven.

Nehemiah 2:5-8

⁵ And I said to the king, “If it pleases the king, and if your servant has found favor in your sight, that you send me to Judah, to the city of my fathers' graves, that I may rebuild it.” ⁶ And the king said to me (the queen sitting beside him), “How long will you be gone, and when will you return?” So it pleased the king to send me when I had given him a time. ⁷ And I said to the king, “If it pleases the king, let letters be given me to the governors of the province Beyond the River, that they may let me pass through until I come to Judah, ⁸ and a letter to Asaph, the keeper of the king's forest, that he may give me timber to make beams for the gates of the fortress of the temple, and for the wall of the city, and for the house that I shall occupy.” And the king granted me what I asked, for the good hand of my God was upon me.

Nehemiah 2:1-8 – Nehemiah's call

Rooted in Humble Dependence upon God

Zealous for God's glory

“It is not wildness; it is not irresponsible enthusiasm; it is not any form of pushy egoism. It is, rather, a humble, reverent, businesslike, single-minded commitment to the hallowing of God's name and the doing of his will.”

- J.I. Packer

Nehemiah 2:1-8 – Nehemiah's call, cont.

A zealous man in religion is pre-eminently a man of one thing. It is not enough to say that he is earnest, hearty, uncompromising, thoroughgoing, whole-hearted, and fervent in spirit. He only sees one thing, he cares for one thing, he lives for one thing, he is swallowed up in one thing; and that one thing is to please God. Whether he lives, or whether he dies – whether he has health, or whether he has sickness – whether he is rich, or whether he is poor – whether he pleases men, or whether he gives offense – whether he is thought wise, or whether he is thought foolish – whether he gets honor, or whether he gets shame – for all this the zealous man cares nothing at all. He burns for one thing; and that one thing is, to please God, and to advance God's glory.”

- J.C. Ryle

Nehemiah 2:1-8 – Nehemiah's call, cont.

Rooted in Humble Dependence upon God

1. Word based
2. Indwelling Spirit led
3. Community affirmed
4. Opportunity to serve

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Nehemiah 2:9-12 – Nehemiah's calling

9 Then I came to the governors of the province Beyond the River and gave them the king's letters. Now the king had sent with me officers of the army and horsemen. **10** But when Sanballat the Horonite and Tobiah the Ammonite servant heard this, it displeased them greatly that someone had come to seek the welfare of the people of Israel.

11 So I went to Jerusalem and was there three days. **12** Then I arose in the night, I and a few men with me. And I told no one what my God had put into my heart to do for Jerusalem. There was no animal with me but the one on which I rode.

Nehemiah 2:13-16 – Nehemiah's calling

13 I went out by night by the Valley Gate to the Dragon Spring and to the Dung Gate, and I inspected the walls of Jerusalem that were broken down and its gates that had been destroyed by fire. **14** Then I went on to the Fountain Gate and to the King's Pool, but there was no room for the animal that was under me to pass. **15** Then I went up in the night by the valley and inspected the wall, and I turned back and entered by the Valley Gate, and so returned. **16** And the officials did not know where I had gone or what I was doing, and I had not yet told the Jews, the priests, the nobles, the officials, and ***the rest who were to do the work.***



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Nehemiah's calling, cont.

Fulfilling one's calling is an invitation to:

1. Work

“any exertion of effort that aims at producing a new state of affairs...work in the Bible is always goal-oriented; it is action with an end in view.”

- J.I. Packer

Nehemiah's calling, cont.

“If...we should become work-shy and give ourselves to pursuing leisure and amusement instead, we should sentence ourselves to deep-level dissatisfaction with life. No form of work can guarantee that virtue, love, and joy will become ours, but we need not expect that virtue, love, and joy will ever mark us out if our lives have in them no form of work.”

- J.I. Packer

Nehemiah's calling, cont.

“Remember the verse, ‘Whatever your hand finds to do, do it with all your might’ (Eccl 9:10). You will be surprised how enjoyable a task becomes when you master it. Make it your aim to do your daily job superbly, and you will turn drudgery into a craft and a craft into an art. Nothing is so boring as sloppy work.”

- John White

Nehemiah's calling

Fulfilling one's calling is an invitation to:

1. Work

2. Wisdom

Nehemiah 2:17-20 – Nehemiah's calling

17 Then I said to them, “You see the trouble we are in, how Jerusalem lies in ruins with its gates burned. Come, let us build the wall of Jerusalem, that we may no longer suffer derision.”

18 And I told them of the hand of my God that had been upon me for good, and also of the words that the king had spoken to me. And they said, “Let us rise up and build.” So they strengthened their hands for the good work. **19** But when Sanballat the Horonite and Tobiah the Ammonite servant and Geshem the Arab heard of it, they jeered at us and despised us and said, “What is this thing that you are doing? Are you rebelling against the king?” **20** Then I replied to them, “The God of heaven will make us prosper, and we his servants will arise and build, but you have no portion or right or claim in Jerusalem.”

Nehemiah's calling

Fulfilling one's calling is an invitation to:

1. Work
2. Wisdom
3. Identify with the people and the plan
4. Identify whose work it really is

Nehemiah 3:1-5 – Nehemiah's calling

Then Eliashib the high priest rose up with his brothers the priests, and they built the Sheep Gate. They consecrated it and set its doors. They consecrated it as far as the Tower of the Hundred, as far as the Tower of Hananel. ² And next to him the men of Jericho built. And next to them Zaccur the son of Imri built.

³ The sons of Hassenaah built the Fish Gate. They laid its beams and set its doors, its bolts, and its bars. ⁴ And next to them Meremoth the son of Uriah, son of Hakkoz repaired. And next to them Meshullam the son of Berechiah, son of Meshezabel repaired. And next to them Zadok the son of Baana repaired. ⁵ And next to them the Tekoites repaired, but their nobles would not stoop to serve their Lord.

Nehemiah 3:6-10 – Nehemiah's calling

6 Joiada the son of Paseah and Meshullam the son of Besodeiah repaired the Gate of Yeshanah.^[c] They laid its beams and set its doors, its bolts, and its bars. **7** And next to them repaired Melatiah the Gibeonite and Jadon the Meronothite, the men of Gibeon and of Mizpah, the seat of the governor of the province Beyond the River. **8** Next to them Uzziel the son of Harhaiah, goldsmiths, repaired. Next to him Hananiah, one of the perfumers, repaired, and they restored Jerusalem as far as the Broad Wall. **9** Next to them Rephaiah the son of Hur, ruler of half the district of Jerusalem, repaired. **10** Next to them Jedaiah the son of Harumaph repaired opposite his house. And next to him Hattush the son of Hashabneiah repaired.

Nehemiah 3:11-15 – Nehemiah's calling

11 Malchijah the son of Harim and Hasshub the son of Pahathmoab repaired another section and the Tower of the Ovens. **12** Next to him Shallum the son of Hallohesh, ruler of half the district of Jerusalem, repaired, he and his daughters.

13 Hanun and the inhabitants of Zanoah repaired the Valley Gate. They rebuilt it and set its doors, its bolts, and its bars, and repaired a thousand cubits of the wall, as far as the Dung Gate.

14 Malchijah the son of Rechab, ruler of the district of Beth-haccherem, repaired the Dung Gate. He rebuilt it and set its doors, its bolts, and its bars. **15** And Shallum the son of Col-hozeh, ruler of the district of Mizpah, repaired the Fountain Gate. He rebuilt it and covered it and set its doors, its bolts, and its bars. And he built the wall of the Pool of Shelah of the king's garden, as far as the stairs that go down from the city of David.

Nehemiah 3:16-22 – Nehemiah's calling

16 After him Nehemiah the son of Azbuk, ruler of half the district of Beth-zur, repaired to a point opposite the tombs of David, as far as the artificial pool, and as far as the house of the mighty men. **17** After him the Levites repaired: Rehum the son of Bani. Next to him Hashabiah, ruler of half the district of Keilah, repaired for his district. **18** After him their brothers repaired: Bavai the son of Henadad, ruler of half the district of Keilah. **19** Next to him Ezer the son of Jeshua, ruler of Mizpah, repaired another section opposite the ascent to the armory at the buttress.^[f] **20** After him Baruch the son of Zabbai repaired^[g] another section from the buttress to the door of the house of Eliashib the high priest. **21** After him Meremoth the son of Uriah, son of Hakkoz repaired another section from the door of the house of Eliashib to the end of the house of Eliashib.

Nehemiah 3:23-27 – Nehemiah's calling

22 After him the priests, the men of the surrounding area, repaired. **23** After them Benjamin and Hasshub repaired opposite their house. After them Azariah the son of Maaseiah, son of Ananiah repaired beside his own house. **24** After him Binnui the son of Henadad repaired another section, from the house of Azariah to the buttress and to the corner. **25** Palal the son of Uzai repaired opposite the buttress and the tower projecting from the upper house of the king at the court of the guard. After him Pedaiah the son of Parosh **26** and the temple servants living on Ophel repaired to a point opposite the Water Gate on the east and the projecting tower. **27** After him the Tekoites repaired another section opposite the great projecting tower as far as the wall of Ophel.

Nehemiah 3:28-32 – Nehemiah's calling

28 Above the Horse Gate the priests repaired, each one opposite his own house. **29** After them Zadok the son of Immer repaired opposite his own house. After him Shemaiah the son of Shecaniah, the keeper of the East Gate, repaired. **30** After him Hananiah the son of Shelemiah and Hanun the sixth son of Zalaph repaired another section. After him Meshullam the son of Berechiah repaired opposite his chamber. **31** After him Malchijah, one of the goldsmiths, repaired as far as the house of the temple servants and of the merchants, opposite the Muster Gate,^[h] and to the upper chamber of the corner. **32** And between the upper chamber of the corner and the Sheep Gate the goldsmiths and the merchants repaired.

Reflections for the week

1. How is Nehemiah's speech (2:17-18) so critical in motivating the people?
2. How might you emulate Nehemiah's posture and words to motivate people around you to serve Christ?
3. Rubble in our work can take many forms: procrastination, discouragement, fear, unbelief, boredom, or just plain dislike for the work. What rubble do you need to clear away before you can get on with the task God has given you?