

# STRENGTHENED

O GOD, STRENGTHEN MY HANDS

NEHEMIAH 6:9

Sunday Morning, January 12, 2025 » Pastor Josiah Kagin

**Message Title:** Seeking the Strength of God

**Message Text:** Nehemiah 1

## Introduction:

Nehemiah had received word in Persia, while serving King Artaxerxes, that the walls around the city of Jerusalem were still lying in ruin. This troubled him. A city without walls was a city without respect. The temple in Jerusalem had been rebuilt, but the walls were still in heaps.

Nehemiah sensed direction from the LORD to return to Jerusalem and rebuild the walls. The task was like a mountain. It was much larger than Nehemiah could handle on his own and would be met with significant opposition. This did not stop Nehemiah. He proceeded forward with much prayer and dependence upon God. His heart is seen in this key prayer, “O God, strengthen my hands.”

As we open up another year, we continue to embrace the task that God has given to us — to go into all the world and preach the Gospel. Related to this task is our personal growth, the raising of our families in the nurture and admonition of the Lord and our functioning part within the body of the church. The task is like a mountain. It is much larger than us and there will be opposition. Without the strength of God, we cannot succeed.

Collectively, may our sincere prayer be, “O God, strengthen my hands.”

### THE BOOK OF NEHEMIAH

Rebuilding the Walls  
[1-6]

Restoring the People  
[7-13]

## 1. The \_\_\_\_\_ of God's Servant (1)

### A. Placement in \_\_\_\_\_ (1)

*Nehemiah 1:1 The words of Nehemiah the son of Hachaliah. And it came to pass in the month Chisleu, in the twentieth year, as I was in Shushan the palace,*

CHISLEU — The 9th month of the Civil Jewish Calendar corresponding with our November-December. (It was the 20th year of Artaxerxes' reign)

*Esther 4:14 ...and who knoweth whether thou art come to the kingdom for such a time as this?*



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sermon notes

## B. Placement in \_\_\_\_\_ (1)

*Nehemiah 1:1 The words of Nehemiah the son of Hachaliah. And it came to pass in the month Chisleu, in the twentieth year, as I was in Shushan the palace,*

*Nehemiah 1:11 ...For I was the king's cupbearer.*

SHUSHAN — the capital city; suggested to be the winter palace.

CUPBEARER — a high ranking officer in the Persia court tasked with guarding the king from poisoning and other administrative duties.

## 2. The \_\_\_\_\_ of God's People (2-3)

### A. Nehemiah's \_\_\_\_\_ (2)

*Nehemiah 1:2 That Hanani, one of my brethren, came, he and certain men of Judah; and I asked them concerning the Jews that had escaped\*, which were left of the captivity, and concerning Jerusalem.*

CONCERN FOR THE REMNANT\* — the group that had returned with Sheshbazzar (537BC) and Ezra (458BC).

*Isaiah 10:21 The remnant shall return, even the remnant of Jacob, Unto the mighty God.*

CONCERN FOR JERUSALEM

*Isaiah 49:6 And he said, It is a light thing that thou shouldest be my servant To raise up the tribes of Jacob, And to restore the preserved of Israel: I will also give thee for a light to the Gentiles, That thou mayest be my salvation unto the end of the earth.*

*Matthew 5:14 Ye are the light of the world. A city that is set on an hill cannot be hid.*

### B. Jerusalem's \_\_\_\_\_ (3)

*Nehemiah 1:3 And they said unto me, The remnant\* that are left of the captivity there in the province are in great affliction and reproach: the wall of Jerusalem also is broken down, and the gates thereof are burned with fire.*

DEFINITION—AFFLICTION: calamity (event); an event resulting in great loss and misfortune.

## Timeline

**605 BC**

Jeremiah prophecies of 70 years of captivity

**586 BC**

Jerusalem [Judah] Falls: Temple destroyed

**538 BC**

Cyrus' decree to rebuild the temple

**537 BC**

Sheshbazzar leads 42,360 Israelites back to Jerusalem [Ezra 1-2]

**516 BC**

The Temple completed

**479 BC**

Esther becomes queen of Persia

**458 BC**

King Artaxerxes sends Ezra to oversee in Jerusalem

**444 BC**

Nehemiah hears about Jerusalem's condition and returns to rebuild the walls

**430 BC**

Malachi is written

DEFINITION—REPROACH: shame (state); a state of dishonor.

THE BROKEN DOWN WALLS AND BURNED GATES— It had been 142 years since the destruction Jerusalem and 72 years since the rebuilding of the temple.

NOTE — To *build a city* often meant...to build walls around a town already inhabited. —Freeman

QUESTION: Can you think of specific physical and spiritual afflictions, reproaches and brokenness among God's people today that should concern us?

### 3. The \_\_\_\_\_ of God's Servant (4-11)

#### A. Nehemiah's \_\_\_\_\_ (4)

*Nehemiah 1:4 And it came to pass, when I heard these words, that I sat down and wept, and mourned certain days, and fasted, and prayed before the God of heaven,*

SAT DOWN—WEPT— MOURNED— FASTED— PRAYED UNTO GOD

*See Psalm 119:136)*

QUOTE: The anguish of the survivors became his own personal sorrow. 'Since Nehemiah's natural bent was for swift, decisive action, his behavior here is remarkable. It shows where his priorities lay. It also reveals, by every phrase in this verse [4], the unhurried and far from superficial background to the famous "arrow prayer" of 2:4 and to the achievements which were to follow it.' —Evers

QUOTE: We ought to weep when we consider the ineffectiveness of so many evangelical churches to reach the unconverted masses in our country. Our hearts should also be profoundly disturbed at the fragmented state of evangelicalism at the present time. —Evers

*Luke 19:41-42 And when he was come near, he beheld the city, and wept over it, 42 Saying, If thou hadst known, even thou, at least in this thy day, the things which belong unto thy peace! but now they are hid from thine eyes.*

#### B. Nehemiah's \_\_\_\_\_ (5-11)

*Nehemiah 1:5-11 [A] And said, I beseech thee, O Lord God of heaven, the great and terrible God, that keepeth covenant and mercy for them that love him and observe his commandments: [C] 6 Let thine ear now be attentive, and thine eyes open, that thou mayest hear the prayer of thy servant, which I pray before thee now, day and night, for the children of Israel thy servants, and confess the sins of the children of Israel, which we have sinned against thee: both I and my father's house have sinned. 7 We have dealt very corruptly against thee, and have not kept the commandments, nor the statutes, nor the judgments, which thou commandedst thy servant Moses. 8 Remember, I beseech thee, the word that thou commandedst thy servant Moses,*

saying, *If ye transgress, I will scatter you abroad among the nations: 9 But if ye turn unto me, and keep my commandments, and do them; though there were of you cast out unto the uttermost part of the heaven, yet will I gather them from thence, and will bring them unto the place that I have chosen to set my name there.* [T] 10 *Now these are thy servants and thy people, whom thou hast redeemed by thy great power, and by thy strong hand.* [S] 11 *O Lord, I beseech thee, let now thine ear be attentive to the prayer of thy servant, and to the prayer of thy servants, who desire to fear thy name: and prosper, I pray thee, thy servant this day, and grant him mercy in the sight of this man. For I was the king's cupbearer.*

*Psalms 105:4 Seek the Lord, and his strength: Seek his face evermore.*

## A.C.T.S. PRAYER GUIDE

**Adoration**  
[5]

**Confession**  
[6-9]

**Thanksgiving**  
[10]

**Supplication**  
[11]

### C. Nehemiah's \_\_\_\_\_ (5-11)

*Nehemiah 1:1 ...And it came to pass in the month Chisleu, in the twentieth year...*

*Nehemiah 2:1 And it came to pass in the month Nisan, in the twentieth year of Artaxerxes the king...*

NOTE — Nehemiah prayed for his suffering kinsmen from Kislev (November–December) 445BC until Nisan (March–April) 444BC, a period of four months, until the opportunity arose for him to approach the king.—Evers

*Nehemiah 6:9 For they all made us afraid, saying, Their hands shall be weakened from the work, that it be not done. Now therefore, O God, strengthen my hands.*

*Nehemiah 6:15 So the wall was finished in the twenty and fifth day of the month Elul, in fifty and two days.*

## Conclusion

*Nehemiah 6:16 And it came to pass, that when all our enemies heard thereof, and all the heathen that were about us saw these things, they were much cast down in their own eyes: for they perceived that this work was wrought of our God.*

*Isaiah 40:29 He giveth power to the faint; And to them that have no might he increaseth strength.*

## Personal Considerations

- Am I willing to stop and seek God's strength and not my own for the tasks and obstacles that are front of me.
- Am I willing to fast and pray this week for strength from God for me and my church family so that we might do the will of God together. A fast could be for a meal, from a certain food item, or a piece of technology in order to seek the strength of God in prayer.



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