

BETHANY BIBLE STUDY & DISCUSSION



NEHEMIAH PART-2 CHAPTER 2

KJV

7.09.2025

BOLD REQUEST TO the KING | RISE & BUILD

MEETING WITH THE KING (1-3): How long did Nehemiah pray? How was his countenance before the king, and why was it risky? How did the king respond?

NEHEMIAH'S REQUEST (4-8): What was Nehemiah's request to the king? What did he do before requesting? Was the request reasonable? What gave him the boldness?

JOURNEY TO JERUSALEM (9-16): How was Nehemiah welcomed? What did the king provide for his journey? Why did he take a tour of the ruined sites?

CALL TO BUILD (17-20): How did Nehemiah encourage participation in rebuilding? How did people react? How did Nehemiah deal with the opposition?

REVIEW: CHAPTER 1

(ENQUIRY | REACTION | PRAYER)

Nehemiah **enquires** about the condition of the Jews in Jerusalem

- Suffering due to famine, Slavery & Oppression, Opposition by community
- Walls are broken & Gates burned with fire

Nehemiah **reacts** with sorrow, weeping, fasting & prayer

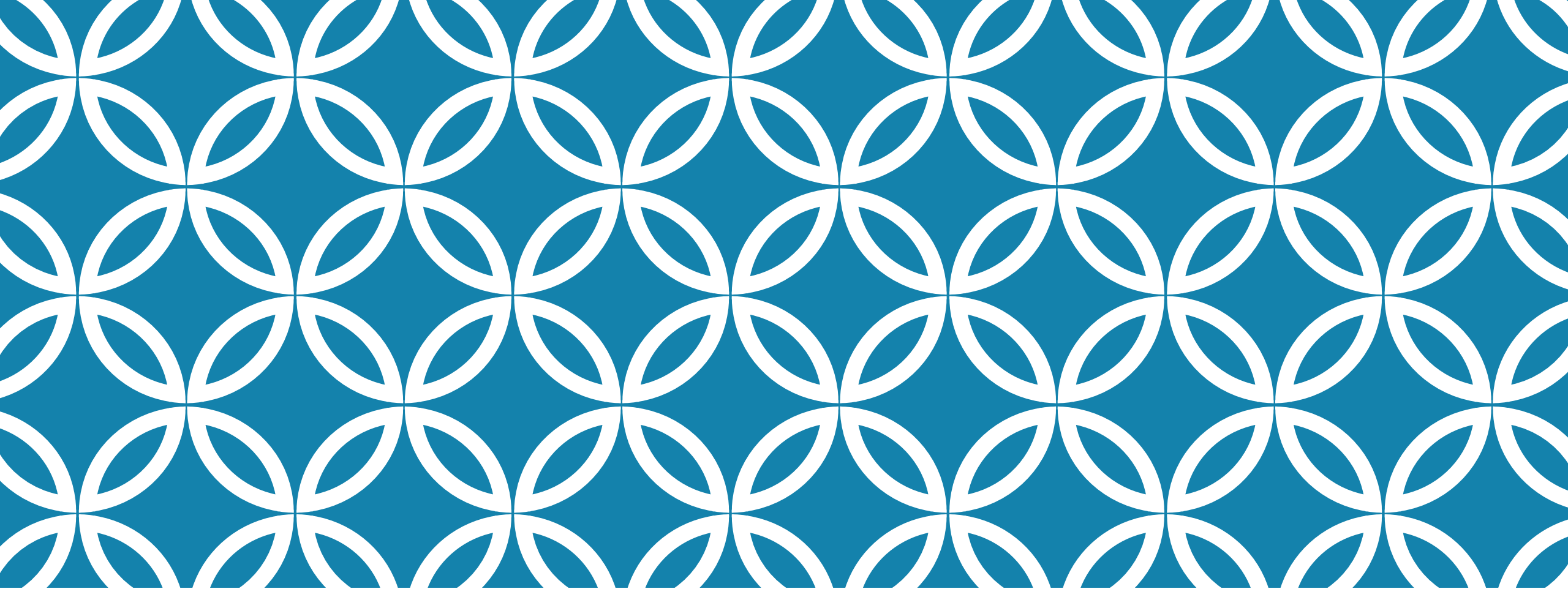
Nehemiah's Prayer: corporate confession, covenant promise & confidence, request



NEHEMIAH

Chapter 2, Part-2

July 9, 2025



HOW LONG DID NEHEMIAH PRAY?
HOW WAS HIS COUNTENANCE BEFORE THE KING, AND
WHY WAS IT RISKY?

MEETING WITH THE KING

2:1-3

2:1-3

MEETING WITH THE KING

And it came to pass in the month Nisan, in the twentieth year of Artaxerxes the king, that wine was before him: and I took up the wine, and gave it unto the king. Now I had not been beforetime sad in his presence.

² Wherefore the king said unto me, Why is thy countenance sad, seeing thou art not sick? this is nothing else but sorrow of heart. Then I was very sore afraid,

³ And said unto the king, Let the king live for ever: why should not my countenance be sad, when the city, the place of my fathers' sepulchres, lieth waste, and the gates thereof are consumed with fire?

NEHEMIAH

Nehemiah - A cup bearer, A slave born in captivity

How did Nehemiah get the courage to approach the king with a bold request?

He PRAYED!

Isaiah 40:31 But they that wait upon the Lord shall renew their strength; they shall mount up with wings as eagles; they shall run, and not be weary; and they shall walk, and not faint.

MEETING WITH THE KING

Fasting & Prayer before the meeting: 3-4 months
(month Chiselev, 1:1 to month Nissan, 2:1)

How long must we pray before moving forward with our plans? Until we hear from God

Answer could be: GO | NO | WAIT

GO: Sometimes God may reveal the full plan, but most of the time only a partial plan is revealed. Missing pieces are revealed as we take steps of faith and Go.

MEETING WITH THE KING: SAD COURTENANCE

To be sad before the king is 'not acceptable', hence Nehemiah was fearful.

Esther 4:2 ... for none might enter into the king's gate clothed with sackcloth (Mordecai)

Nehemiah shows courage and chooses to be sad to accomplish a greater purpose. He put his job, loyalty, and life at risk.

Courage-in-fiery situations is possible when God is with us

Psalms 56:3 "What time I am afraid, I will trust in thee"

II Timothy 1:7 For God hath not given us the spirit of fear; but of power, and of love, and of a sound mind.

MEETING WITH THE KING: SAD COUNTEenance

Nehemiah's sadness gets the attention of the king

Nehemiah expresses burden and sorrow for the condition of Jerusalem.



WHAT WAS NEHEMIAH'S REQUEST TO THE KING?
WHAT DID HE DO BEFORE REQUESTING?
WAS THE REQUEST REASONABLE?
WHAT GAVE HIM THE BOLDNESS?

NEHEMIAH'S REQUEST
4-8

NEHEMIAH'S REQUEST

⁴ Then the king said unto me, For what dost thou make request? So I prayed to the God of heaven. ⁵ And I said unto the king, If it please the king, and if thy servant have found favour in thy sight, that thou wouldest send me unto Judah, unto the city of my fathers' sepulchres, that I may build it.

⁶ And the king said unto me, (the queen also sitting by him,) For how long shall thy journey be? and when wilt thou return? So it pleased the king to send me; and I set him a time. ⁷ Moreover I said unto the king, If it please the king, let letters be given me to the governors beyond the river, that they may convey me over till I come into Judah;

⁸ And a letter unto Asaph the keeper of the king's forest, that he may give me timber to make beams for the gates of the palace which appertained to the house, and for the wall of the city, and for the house that I shall enter into. And the king granted me, according to the good hand of my God upon me.

PRAYER BEFORE RESPONDING TO THE KING

⁴ Then the king said unto me, For what dost thou make request? So I prayed to the God of heaven.

Nehemiah knew what he had to say. Yet, he chose to pray before responding

Result: king shows sympathy and favor

Do we respond impulsively or do we pause to pray before speaking?

NEHEMIAH'S (UNREASONABLE) REQUEST

1. Send me to Judah
2. Release me from my duty as a cup bearer (for extended leave, 12 years, 5:14)

Purpose: to rebuild the broken walls

Not a reasonable request as it does not benefit the king.

The king loses a valuable employee + faces threat of potential future rebellion of Jerusalem once the city is secured with walls.

The mission also goes against the previous ruling of the king to 'not build' 13 years back (Ezra 4:21)

NEHEMIAH EXPANDS HIS BOLD REQUEST

3. Timber for building gates, city walls, and his residence
(Asaph? Maybe overseer of forest closer to Jerusalem)

4. Papers for security (asked king) (Ezra had declined security but Nehemiah asks)

Again, a pagan king grants Nehemiah's request and supports the rebuilding efforts.

Nehemiah's exercises wisdom in asking: Initial request followed by expanded request

(UNREASONABLE) REQUEST GRANTED ... WHY?

PROVERBS 21:1

The king's heart is in the hand of the Lord, as the rivers of water:
he turneth it whithersoever he will.

NEHEMIAH'S PREPARATION

Beyond praying, Nehemiah was prepared to respond to the king

He did not waste his time with the king

We miss many opportunities to be fruitful because of lack of preparation.

We must be ready to share God's Word in all seasons. *Are we ready?*

II TIMOTHY 4:2 Preach the word; be instant in season, out of season;



HOW WAS NEHEMIAH WELCOMED?
WHAT DID THE KING PROVIDE FOR HIS JOURNEY?
WHY DID HE TAKE A TOUR OF THE RUINED SITES?

JOURNEY TO JERUSALEM

9-16

JOURNEY TO JERUSALEM (9-16)

⁹ Then I came to the governors beyond the river, and gave them the king's letters. Now the king had sent captains of the army and horsemen with me. ¹⁰ When Sanballat the Horonite, and Tobiah the servant, the Ammonite, heard of it, it grieved them exceedingly that there was come a man to seek the welfare of the children of Israel.

¹¹ So I came to Jerusalem, and was there three days. ¹² And I arose in the night, I and some few men with me; neither told I any man what my God had put in my heart to do at Jerusalem: neither was there any beast with me, save the beast that I rode upon.

¹³ And I went out by night by the gate of the valley, even before the dragon well, and to the dung port, and viewed the walls of Jerusalem, which were broken down, and the gates thereof were consumed with fire.

¹⁴ Then I went on to the gate of the fountain, and to the king's pool: but there was no place for the beast that was under me to pass. ¹⁵ Then went I up in the night by the brook, and viewed the wall, and turned back, and entered by the gate of the valley, and so returned.

¹⁶ And the rulers knew not whither I went, or what I did; neither had I as yet told it to the Jews, nor to the priests, nor to the nobles, nor to the rulers, nor to the rest that did the work.

JOURNEY TO JERUSALEM, 2:9-16

Arrives in Jerusalem, escorted by captains of the army and horsemen.

Gave king's letter to the governors

king's letters gave authority to do the work

Despite king's authority two officials opposed, Sanballat and Tobiah

God's work has always faced opposition. But we have the promise.

Mathew 16:18 "I will build my church and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it"

TOUR OF JERUSALEM'S BROKEN WALLS

Nehemiah takes a personal tour with a few chosen men.

It is important to assess the scope of work before leading and delegating

Route: Valley gate, past Serpant or Jackal wall and the dung gate (12-13), on to fountain gate and to the king's pool, paused due to rubble (14), through Kidron valley to survey the wall from a distance.

Luke 14:28 For which of you, intending to build a tower, sitteth not down first, and counteth the cost, whether he have sufficient to finish it?



HOW DID NEHEMIAH ENCOURAGE PARTICIPATION IN
REBUILDING? HOW DID PEOPLE REACT?
HOW DID NEHEMIAH DEAL WITH THE OPPOSITION?

CALL TO BUILD

17-20

CALL TO BUILD | IGNORE OPPOSITION

¹⁷ Then said I unto them, Ye see the distress that we are in, how Jerusalem lieth waste, and the gates thereof are burned with fire: **come, and let us build** up the wall of Jerusalem, that we be no more a reproach. ¹⁸ Then I told them of the **hand of my God which was good upon me**; as also the king's words that he had spoken unto me. And they said, Let us rise up and build. So they strengthened their hands for this good work.

¹⁹ But when Sanballat the Horonite, and Tobiah the servant, the Ammonite, and Geshem the Arabian, heard it, they laughed us to scorn, and despised us, and said, What is this thing that ye do? will ye rebel against the king?

²⁰ Then answered I them, and said unto them, The God of heaven, he will prosper us; therefore **we his servants will arise and build**: but ye have no portion, nor right, nor memorial, in Jerusalem.

NEHEMIAH'S CALL TO BUILD (18-19)

Nehemiah seeking to revive Jews to return to rebuilding (of wall) efforts
Just like prophets Malachi and Zechariah revived Zerubbabel

LET US RISE & BUILD so that we will not be a reproach
Hand of God is upon me
The king supports this rebuilding project

RESPONSE

They strengthened their hands for this good work (18)

PRAYER leads to a PLAN & PROVISION (of materials) & COOPERATION (of people)

OPPOSITION FROM INSIDERS (19)

¹⁹ BUT WHEN SANBALLAT THE HORONITE, AND TOBIAH THE SERVANT, THE AMMONITE, AND GESHEM THE ARABIAN, HEARD IT, THEY LAUGHED US TO SCORN, AND DESPISED US, AND SAID, WHAT IS THIS THING THAT YE DO? WILL YE REBEL AGAINST THE KING?

Tobiah: associated with family of priests, 13:4

Sanballat: connected by marriage to priestly families, 13:28

They were like thorn in the flesh and continued to
discourage and oppose the work till the end

OPPOSITION FROM INSIDERS (19)

¹⁹ BUT WHEN SANBALLAT THE HORONITE, AND TOBIAH THE SERVANT, THE AMMONITE, AND GESHEM THE ARABIAN, HEARD IT, THEY LAUGHED US TO SCORN, AND DESPISED US, AND SAID, WHAT IS THIS THING THAT YE DO? WILL YE REBEL AGAINST THE KING?

Tobiah & Sanballat opposed & discouraged

Mocked Nehemiah (similar to how people may have mocked Noah)

Made fun of him ... rebel against the king? (ignorant that king had already approved)

Nehemiah may have been hurt. Opposition, Criticism & Discouragement from insiders is hurtful.

He expected encouragement and strength from insiders for his good work.

[John 1:11](#) He came unto his own, and his own received him not.

NEHEMIAH'S STRONG RESPONSE (20)

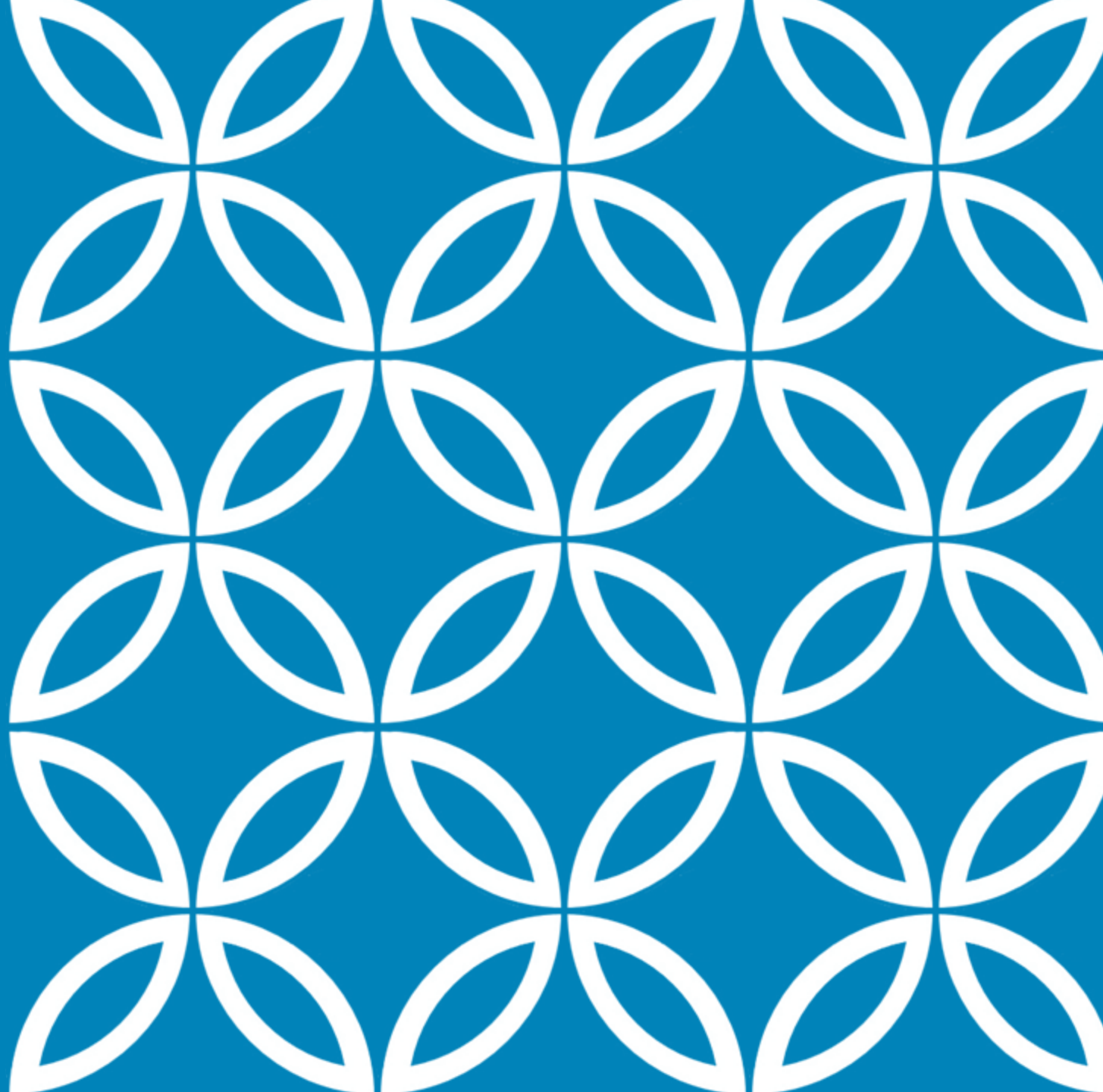
Nehemiah was confident of God's will, so he was not distracted or discouraged by nay sayers.

Nehemiah reinforces his confidence in God **“The God of heaven, he will prosper us; therefore, we his servants will arise and build”**

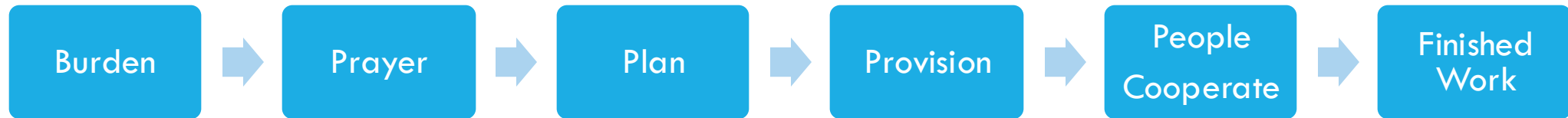
Those opposing will have no claim in Jerusalem. The city will be rebuilt without their cooperation, and they will have no heritage.

Those opposing lost an opportunity to be part of God's work ... a tragedy!

REFLECTION



1. NEHEMIAH'S CLEAR PATH TO VICTORY ... WE CAN BE VICTORIOUS TOO!



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#2 ONCE GOD SAYS GO, KEEP MOVING

Don't be distracted or discouraged by criticizers and discouragers



#3. PRAYER WILL GIVE US STRENGTH & BOLDNESS

Pray before entering the battlefield



#4. GOD WANTS US TO BE BUILDERS

What are we being 'called to build'?

“Only one life, it will soon be past.

Only what's done for Christ will last”

C.T. Studd, British Missionary to China



#5 UNITY BRINGS GROWTH AND PROGRESS (IN REBUILDING)

Leaders cannot build on their own. Vision brought to life through participation of all.

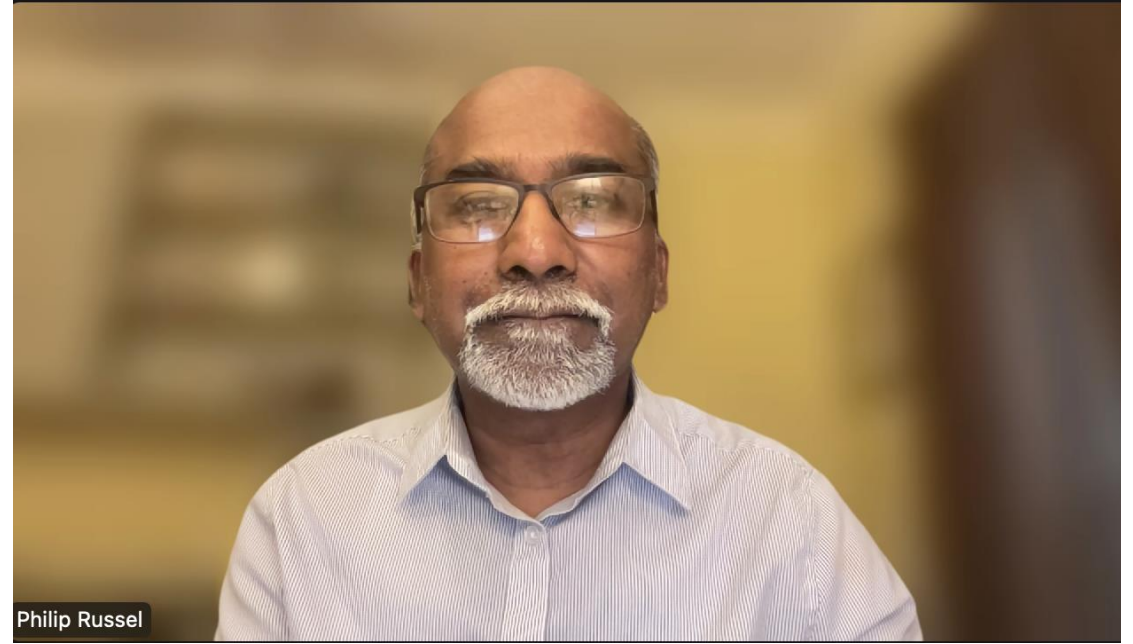
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#6 IF WE BEGIN WITH PRAYER,
WE WILL END WITH SUCCESS

Philip Russel

Philip Russel



ZOOM IS *BETTER* WITH VIDEO ON 😊