

Establishing His Kingdom (Nehemiah Chapter 9)

Sunday, November 17, 2024

Our study of the book of Nehemiah has focused on this singular theme - ESTABLISHING HIS KINGDOM. Can I tell you church that this is more than a bible study, this is the heartbeat of our God. To establish His kingdom in our hearts. To establish His kingdom in our families. To establish His kingdom in our city, to establish His kingdom in our state, to establish His kingdom in our Nation. To establish His kingdom in our world. That is what He has called us to do. That is what we must be about.

The same passion that Nehemiah had for rebuilding the walls of Jerusalem and reestablishing true worship of the one true God should exist in our hearts as well. And The Holy Spirit has given us a model for doing just that through the book of Nehemiah. To establish His kingdom we need...

- Chapter 1 - IGNITING/REIGNITING THE FIRE TO ESTABLISH THE KINGDOM
- Chapter 2 - PROTECTING THE FIRE
- Chapter 3 - TEAMWORK - THE POWER OF UNITY IN THE BODY OF CHRIST
- Chapter 4 - OVERCOMING THE OPPOSITION OF THE ENEMY
- Chapter 5 - INTERNAL TRANSFORMATION
- Chapter 6 - DEFEATING THE TACTICS OF THE ENEMY
- Chapter 7 - THE THIRD BATTLEFRONT - GUARDING THE GATES OF OUR FAMILIES
- Chapter 8 - PRIORITIZING THE WORD

As we move into chapter 9, there is a powerful truth we need to understand about Establishing His Kingdom. So often in our thinking about kingdom principles **we focus on an EVENT and forget to consider what needs to happen to MAINTAIN the results of that event in our lives.**

For instance we focus more on getting someone to the EVENT of Salvation but forget to teach them how to WALK the rest of their lives in that salvation.

We emphasize the importance of Being FILLED with the Holy Spirit, but neglect the importance of STAYING FULL of the Holy Spirit

Nehemiah's work in ESTABLISHING HIS KINGDOM was more than just rebuilding the walls and setting the gates in place. The Wall was rebuilt in 52 days. If that was all there was to Establishing His Kingdom then Nehemiah would have been finished. But he stayed for 12 years before returning to Babylon. And even then he was not finished because, as we will learn in Chapter 13, he returned once more to Jerusalem after a period of time in Babylon to find spiritual life again compromised and in need of repair.

Can I propose to you that ESTABLISHING HIS KINGDOM is not just about Building His Kingdom, it is about MAINTAINING it.

Marriage gives us the perfect example of this... In premarital counseling I tell the couple that they are going to spend lots of time, effort and money of the wedding itself. Then I point out that all of that time, money and effort will culminate in one day and then that day - that event - will be over. Shouldn't they be willing to make an equal if not greater investment in what will be needed to MAINTAIN that marriage (Premarital counseling).

Because it not just about GETTING TO the Marriage but it's about MAINTAINING that marriage for the rest of your lives

It's not just SAYING our VOWS; It's about KEEPING THEM

In our corresponding New Testament passage for this series Jesus says

Matthew 16:18

18 And I tell you that you are Peter, and on this rock I will build my church, and the gates of Hades will not overcome it.

Here we see both aspects of Establishing His Kingdom. BUILDING IT and MAINTAINING IT.

Chapter 9 - MAINTAINING THE SPIRITUAL HEALTH OF THE KINGDOM

Nehemiah 9

9 On the twenty-fourth day of the same month, the Israelites gathered together, fasting and wearing sackcloth and putting dust on their heads. 2 Those of Israelite descent had separated themselves from all foreigners. They stood in their places and confessed their sins and the sins of their ancestors. 3 They stood where they were and read from the Book of the Law of the Lord their God for a quarter of the day, and spent another quarter in confession and in worshiping the Lord their God. 4 Standing on the stairs of the Levites were Jeshua, Bani, Kadmiel, Shebaniah, Bunni, Sherebiah, Bani and Kenani. They cried out with loud voices to the Lord their God. 5 And the Levites—Jeshua, Kadmiel, Bani, Hashabneiah, Sherebiah, Hodiah, Shebaniah and Pethahiah—said: “Stand up and praise the Lord your God, who is from everlasting to everlasting.”

“Blessed be your glorious name, and may it be exalted above all blessing and praise. 6 You alone are the Lord. You made the heavens, even the highest heavens, and all their starry host, the earth and all that is on it, the seas and all that is in them. You give life to everything, and the multitudes of heaven worship you.

7 “You are the Lord God, who chose Abram and brought him out of Ur of the Chaldeans and named him Abraham. 8 You found his heart faithful to you, and you made a covenant with him to give to his descendants the land of the Canaanites, Hittites, Amorites, Perizzites, Jebusites and Girgashites. You have kept your promise because you are righteous.

9 “You saw the suffering of our ancestors in Egypt; you heard their cry at the Red Sea. 10 You sent signs and wonders against Pharaoh, against all his officials and all the people of his land, for you knew how arrogantly the Egyptians treated them. You made a name for yourself, which remains to this day. 11 You divided the sea before them, so that they passed through it on dry ground, but you hurled their pursuers into the depths, like a stone into mighty waters. 12 By day you led them with a pillar of cloud, and by night with a pillar of fire to give them light on the way they were to take.

13 “You came down on Mount Sinai; you spoke to them from heaven. You gave them regulations and laws that are just and right, and decrees and commands that are good. 14 You made known to them your holy Sabbath and gave them commands, decrees and laws through your servant Moses. 15 In their hunger you gave them bread from heaven and in their thirst you brought them water from the rock; you told them to go in and take possession of the land you had sworn with uplifted hand to give them.

16 “But they, our ancestors, became arrogant and stiff-necked, and they did not obey your commands. 17 They refused to listen and failed to remember the miracles you performed among them. They became stiff-necked and in their rebellion appointed a leader in order to return to their slavery. But you are a forgiving God, gracious and compassionate, slow to anger and abounding in love. Therefore you did not desert them, 18 even when they cast for themselves an image of a calf and said, ‘This is your god, who brought you up out of Egypt,’ or when they committed awful blasphemies.

19 “Because of your great compassion you did not abandon them in the wilderness. By day the pillar of cloud did not fail to guide them on their path, nor the pillar of fire by night to shine on the way they were to take. 20 You gave your good Spirit to instruct them. You did not withhold your manna from their mouths, and you gave them water for their thirst. 21 For forty years you sustained them in the wilderness; they lacked nothing, their clothes did not wear out nor did their feet become swollen.

22 “You gave them kingdoms and nations, allotting to them even the remotest frontiers. They took over the country of Sihon[c] king of Heshbon and the country of Og king of Bashan. 23 You made their children as numerous as the stars in the sky, and you brought them into the land that you told their parents to enter and possess. 24 Their children went in and took possession of the land. You subdued before them the Canaanites, who lived in the land; you gave the Canaanites into their hands, along with their kings and the peoples of the land, to deal with them as they pleased. 25 They captured fortified cities and fertile land; they took possession of houses filled

with all kinds of good things, wells already dug, vineyards, olive groves and fruit trees in abundance. They ate to the full and were well-nourished; they reveled in your great goodness.

26 “But they were disobedient and rebelled against you; they turned their backs on your law. They killed your prophets, who had warned them in order to turn them back to you; they committed awful blasphemies. 27 So you delivered them into the hands of their enemies, who oppressed them. But when they were oppressed they cried out to you. From heaven you heard them, and in your great compassion you gave them deliverers, who rescued them from the hand of their enemies.

28 “But as soon as they were at rest, they again did what was evil in your sight. Then you abandoned them to the hand of their enemies so that they ruled over them. And when they cried out to you again, you heard from heaven, and in your compassion you delivered them time after time.

29 “You warned them in order to turn them back to your law, but they became arrogant and disobeyed your commands. They sinned against your ordinances, of which you said, ‘The person who obeys them will live by them.’ Stubbornly they turned their backs on you, became stiff-necked and refused to listen. 30 For many years you were patient with them. By your Spirit you warned them through your prophets. Yet they paid no attention, so you gave them into the hands of the neighboring peoples. 31 But in your great mercy you did not put an end to them or abandon them, for you are a gracious and merciful God.

32 “Now therefore, our God, the great God, mighty and awesome, who keeps his covenant of love, do not let all this hardship seem trifling in your eyes—the hardship that has come on us, on our kings and leaders, on our priests and prophets, on our ancestors and all your people, from the days of the kings of Assyria until today. 33 In all that has happened to us, you have remained righteous; you have acted faithfully, while we acted wickedly. 34 Our kings, our leaders, our priests and our ancestors did not follow your law; they did not pay attention to your commands or the statutes you warned them to keep. 35 Even while they were in their kingdom, enjoying your great goodness to them in the spacious and fertile land you gave them, they did not serve you or turn from their evil ways.

36 “But see, we are slaves today, slaves in the land you gave our ancestors so they could eat its fruit and the other good things it produces. 37 Because of our sins, its abundant harvest goes to the kings you have placed over us. They rule over our bodies and our cattle as they please. We are in great distress.

38 “In view of all this, we are making a binding agreement, putting it in writing, and our leaders, our Levites and our priests are affixing their seals to it.”

Chapter 9 - MAINTAINING THE SPIRITUAL HEALTH OF THE KINGDOM

ACKNOWLEDGE OUR ONGOING NEED FOR CONFESSION AND REPENTANCE

9 On the twenty-fourth day of the same month, the Israelites gathered together, fasting and wearing sackcloth and putting dust on their heads. 2 Those of Israelite descent had separated themselves from all foreigners. They stood in their places and confessed their sins and the sins of their ancestors. 3 They stood where they were and read from the Book of the Law of the Lord their God for a quarter of the day, and spent another quarter in confession and in worshiping the Lord their God.

This wasn't about the walls now... This was about maintaining the security that had been provided by those walls by dealing with the spiritual condition of the people who lived inside those walls. It was because previous generations did not care about God's laws nor did they confess transgressions of that law or repent of their sins that the walls had been broken down in the first place.

They just finished having the Word of God read in their presence and being taught its meaning. They didn't try to justify their actions or change God's word to fit their lifestyles... They confessed and repented, for their sins and for the sins of their ancestors.

Repentance is [reviewing one's actions](#) and feeling [contrition](#) or regret for past or present wrongdoings, which is accompanied by commitment to and actual actions that show and prove a change for the better. - Dr. Jeremiah Unterman

Acts 3:19

19 Repent, then, and turn to God, so that your sins may be wiped out, that times of refreshing may come from the Lord,

Revelation 2:5

5 Consider how far you have fallen! Repent and do the things you did at first. If you do not repent, I will come to you and remove your lampstand from its place.

1 John 1:9

9 If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just and will forgive us our sins and purify us from all unrighteousness.

Matthew 3:8

8 Produce fruit in keeping with repentance.

VIDEO: Repentance

PURSUE RIGHTEOUSNESS, HOLINESS AND GODLINESS

2 Those of Israelite descent had separated themselves from all foreigners.

- Blessed are those who hunger
Matthew 5:6
6 Blessed are those who hunger and thirst for righteousness, for they will be filled.
- Blessed are the Pure in Heart
Matthew 5:8
8 Blessed are the pure in heart, for they will see God.
- Come out and be separate
2 Corinthians 6:17
17 Therefore, "Come out from them and be separate, says the Lord. Touch no unclean thing, and I will receive you."
- Be holy
1 Peter 1:16
16 for it is written: "Be holy, because I am holy."
- Pursue righteousness
2 Timothy 2:22
22 Flee the evil desires of youth and pursue righteousness, faith, love and peace, along with those who call on the Lord out of a pure heart.

1 Timothy 6:11
11 But you, man of God, flee from all this, and pursue righteousness, godliness, faith, love, endurance and gentleness.

LEARNING FROM THE PAST (Both Positive and Negative Examples)

- **There is only one true God**

6 You alone are the Lord.

- **He created everything**

6 ...You made the heavens, even the highest heavens, and all their starry host, the earth and all that is on it, the seas and all that is in them. You give life to everything, and the multitudes of heaven worship you.

- **He chooses us and changes us**

7 “You are the Lord God, who chose Abram and brought him out of Ur of the Chaldeans and named him Abraham.

- **He makes a covenant with us and always keeps His Promises**

8 You found his heart faithful to you, and you made a covenant with him to give to his descendants the land of the Canaanites, Hittites, Amorites, Perizzites, Jebusites and Girgashites. You have kept your promise because you are righteous.

- **He fights for us and defeats the enemies who come against us**

9 “You saw the suffering of our ancestors in Egypt; you heard their cry at the Red Sea. 10 You sent signs and wonders against Pharaoh, against all his officials and all the people of his land, for you knew how arrogantly the Egyptians treated them. You made a name for yourself, which remains to this day.

24 ...You subdued before them the Canaanites, who lived in the land; you gave the Canaanites into their hands, along with their kings and the peoples of the land, to deal with them as they pleased.

- **He makes a way where there is no way**

11 You divided the sea before them, so that they passed through it on dry ground, but you hurled their pursuers into the depths, like a stone into mighty waters.

- **He leads us in the way we should go**

12 By day you led them with a pillar of cloud, and by night with a pillar of fire to give them light on the way they were to take.

- **He speaks to us**

13 “You came down on Mount Sinai; you spoke to them from heaven.

- **He gives us His laws and decrees**

13 ...You gave them regulations and laws that are just and right, and decrees and commands that are good. **14** You made known to them your holy Sabbath and gave them commands, decrees and laws through your servant Moses.

- **He provides for us**

15 In their hunger you gave them bread from heaven and in their thirst you brought them water from the rock; you told them to go in and take possession of the land you had sworn with uplifted hand to give them.

25 They captured fortified cities and fertile land; they took possession of houses filled with all kinds of good things, wells already dug, vineyards, olive groves and fruit trees in abundance. They ate to the full and were well-nourished; they reveled in your great goodness.

- **He has an inheritance for us**

15 ...you told them to go in and take possession of the land you had sworn with uplifted hand to give them.

22 “You gave them kingdoms and nations, allotting to them even the remotest frontiers. They took over the country of Sihon king of Heshbon and the country of Og king of Bashan. **23** You made their children as numerous as the stars in the sky, and you brought them into the land that you told their parents to enter and possess. **24** Their children went in and took possession of the land.

- **We need to be careful not to become arrogant and stiff-necked**

16 “But they, our ancestors, became arrogant and stiff-necked, and they did not obey your commands.

- **Disobedience leads to destruction**

26 “But they were disobedient and rebelled against you; they turned their backs on your law. They killed your prophets, who had warned them in order to turn them back to you; they committed awful blasphemies. **27** So you delivered them into the hands of their enemies, who oppressed them.

36 “But see, we are slaves today, slaves in the land you gave our ancestors so they could eat its fruit and the other good things it produces. **37** Because of our sins, its abundant harvest goes to the kings you have placed over us. They rule over our bodies and our cattle as they please. We are in great distress.

- **We must not fail to remember the miracles He has done**

17 They refused to listen and failed to remember the miracles you performed among them.

- **Don't return to Egypt**

17 ...They became stiff-necked and in their rebellion appointed a leader in order to return to their slavery.

- **God is compassionate, merciful, gracious and faithful even when we are not**

17 ...But you are a forgiving God, gracious and compassionate, slow to anger and abounding in love. Therefore you did not desert them, **18** even when they cast for themselves an image of a calf and said, ‘This is your god, who brought you up out of Egypt,’ or when they committed awful blasphemies.

19 “Because of your great compassion you did not abandon them in the wilderness. By day the pillar of cloud did not fail to guide them on their path, nor the pillar of fire by night to shine on the way they were to take. **20** You gave your good Spirit to instruct them. You did not withhold your manna from their mouths, and you gave them water for their thirst.

- **He sustains us**

21 For forty years you sustained them in the wilderness; they lacked nothing, their clothes did not wear out nor did their feet become swollen.

- **He warns us before sending His judgement**

29 “You warned them in order to turn them back to your law, but they became arrogant and disobeyed your commands. They sinned against your ordinances, of which you said, ‘The person who obeys them will live by them.’ Stubbornly they turned their backs on you, became stiff-necked and refused to listen. **30** For many years you were patient with them. By your Spirit you warned them through your prophets. Yet they paid no attention, so you gave them into the hands of the neighboring peoples. **31** But in your great mercy you did not put an end to them or abandon them, for you are a gracious and merciful God.

- **He will judge us in order to draw us back to Himself**

- **In spite of all we may have done we can cry out to Him with a repentant heart and come back into agreement with Him**

36 “But see, we are slaves today, slaves in the land you gave our ancestors so they could eat its fruit and the other good things it produces. **37** Because of our sins, its abundant harvest goes to the kings you have placed over us. They rule over our bodies and our cattle as they please. We are in great distress.