

October 21/22, 2023
"The Qualities of Rebuilding"
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SPEND DAILY TIME WITH GOD AS YOU READ, THINK, PRAY + ACT.

2023 SPIRITUAL PRACTICES

Intentional activities to deepen our relationship with God and mold us to be more like Jesus.

OCTOBER PRACTICE Serving

Day 1 Nehemiah 2:11-20 | Qualities of Rebuilding

I went to Jerusalem, and after staying there three days I set out during the night with a few others. I had not told anyone what my God had put in my heart to do for Jerusalem. There were no mounts with me except the one I was riding on. Nehemiah 2:11-12

Nehemiah receives devastating news about the city of Jerusalem and the condition of its walls and people. He grieves, fasts and prays before doing anything. He boldly approaches the king and sees God's provision as the king lends support and supplies. Nehemiah then makes the long journey (over 800 miles) from Susa to Jerusalem. As he begins this monumental task, Nehemiah exhibits key character traits needed for any rebuild.

We see in Nehemiah's rebuilding efforts the necessity of character for any effective rebuild. True, biblical character is about godliness in action. This week, we'll discuss key character traits—humility, honesty, initiative and perseverance—required to rebuild in a God-honoring way. The sort of people we are becoming determines how we approach and conduct any rebuild. We can trust the Holy Spirit's help in growing these qualities in us as we depend on God during a rebuild.

IN YOUR CHAIR TIME TODAY Think about the four character traits we'll discuss this week—humility, honesty, initiative and perseverance. Which of these four traits do you need to focus the most on right now? Write the trait in your journal or mobile device and ask God to help you do what you need to do to grow in these areas.

Day 2 Nehemiah 2:11-15 | Humility

Then I moved on toward the Fountain Gate and the King's Pool, but there was not enough room for my mount to get through; so I went up the valley by night, examining the wall. Finally, I turned back and reentered through the Valley Gate. Nehemiah 2:14-15

Nehemiah arrives in Jerusalem after a long journey. After staying three nights, his first order of business is to examine the walls. Nehemiah spends time surveying the lay of the land to understand better what sort of work is needed. Nehemiah doesn't approach the city with a preconceived plan for what he will do. He spends time trying to understand the full situation. Nehemiah's approach to the rebuild is one of humility—a submissive posture that genuinely seeks to learn what is best.

We see this posture of humility demonstrated in James's instructions elsewhere in the New Testament, "My dear brothers and sisters, take note of this: Everyone should be quick to listen, slow to speak and slow to become angry" (James 1:19). A posture of humility recognizes that we often do not have all the information or answers. Learning is a key part of growth and is often essential to any effective rebuild.

Being humble during a rebuild looks different. If it is a financial rebuild, maybe we complete a budgeting course or Financial Peace University class. If it is a relational rebuild, perhaps we humbly confess where we've contributed to wrong and ask for help to make changes. If it is a career-based rebuild, maybe we examine our blind spots and work on those things.

IN YOUR CHAIR TIME TODAY One of the best ways to cement biblical truths into your heart and mind is through Scripture memory. Memorize [James 1:19](#) to remember the value of humility in a rebuild. Write the verse somewhere and post it where you often see it to practice.

Day 3 Nehemiah 2:16-17 | Honesty

The officials did not know where I had gone or what I was doing, because as yet I had said nothing to the Jews or the priests or nobles or officials or any others who would be doing the work. Then I said to them, “You see the trouble we are in: Jerusalem lies in ruins, and its gates have been burned with fire. Come, let us rebuild the wall of Jerusalem, and we will no longer be in disgrace.” Nehemiah 2:16-17

Nehemiah enters Jerusalem with the city in a state of severe disrepair. The wall is broken, and rubble still permeates the city. People are likely planning their lives around the wreckage. Shops, vendors, merchants and travelers might re-route their daily routines just to maneuver around the mess. A part of their lives for 70 years—those living in the city are accustomed to the rubble.

The same is often true regarding the rebuilds of our lives. Sometimes, we become accustomed to or comfortable with the rubble. Maybe we have learned to live with relational tension or strain rather than beginning the process of piecing things back together. Perhaps we become accustomed to unavoidable financial stress rather than take steps to rebuild financially. Instead of settling for inaction—it’s best to admit a rebuild is necessary. This is the role of honesty. The first step to a successful rebuild is often admitting a rebuild is necessary.

IN YOUR CHAIR TIME TODAY Ask God to help you see where you’ve grown comfortable with rubble and need to rebuild. Ask him to reveal any hidden sins or habits holding you back. Confess what he reveals and commit to rebuilding. “God, I confess I’ve grown comfortable with _____. Please forgive me and help me begin the process of rebuilding. Show me what steps to take in your power. Amen.”

Day 4 Nehemiah 2:17-18 | Get Started

I also told them about the gracious hand of my God on me and what the king had said to me. They replied, “Let us start rebuilding.” So they began this good work. Nehemiah 2:18

Nehemiah speaks with the city leaders, addressing the sorry condition of Jerusalem and its walls. Nehemiah then charges the leaders to wait no longer but to rebuild the wall. Their response is swift and positive, “Let us start rebuilding.’ So they began this good work” ([Nehemiah 2:18](#)). It is needed work, AND it is good work.

Rebuilding work in our lives is good work too. Like rebuilding the city walls—it won’t happen on its own. We must act and engage steps to start. Walls will not rebuild themselves. Nehemiah’s story reminds us that there is a time to grieve and then a time to get moving. Rebuilding takes initiative.

Initiative comes in many forms. Maybe it’s time to call a counselor if we struggle with depression, anxiety or other issues holding us back in life. Perhaps now is the time to say “no more” and get help concerning an addiction. We might need to cancel a credit card if we struggle with spending too much. We don’t do this good work alone. God is with us as we get started.

IN YOUR CHAIR TIME TODAY Consider one thing you can do today to get started or continue rebuilding. Be as specific as possible. Maybe it is someone to call, a habit to begin or stop, or a financial decision that needs to be made. Discern what your next step is and commit to taking it. If you would like to talk with someone or need help finding a counselor, please email care@adabible.org. We would love to connect and come alongside you.

Day 5 Nehemiah 2:19-20 | Perseverance

But when Sanballat the Horonite, Tobiah the Ammonite official and Geshem the Arab heard about it, they mocked and ridiculed us. “What is this you are doing?” they asked. “Are you rebelling against the king?” I answered them by saying, “The God of heaven will give us success. We his servants will start rebuilding, but as for you, you have no share in Jerusalem or any claim or historic right to it.” Nehemiah 2:19-20

Nehemiah and the city officials start rebuilding the walls, but there is one small problem. Not everyone is happy the walls are being rebuilt. Sanballat, Tobiah, and Geshem are warlords from neighboring cities who do not want to see the walls rebuilt or Jerusalem thriving again. These men mock Nehemiah and the builders, “What is this you are doing?” they ask. “Are you rebelling against the king?” ([Nehemiah 2:19](#)).

We shouldn’t be surprised when we face resistance in our rebuilds too. This resistance could come from internal desires, outer circumstances or spiritual oppression. When starting a good work, such as a rebuild, sometimes an enemy gets in the way. The Apostle Peter reminds believers that we have an enemy, but we are not alone and can resist, “Be alert and of sober mind. Your enemy the devil prowls around like a roaring lion looking for someone to devour. Resist him, standing firm in the faith...” ([1 Peter 5:8-9a](#)).

IN YOUR CHAIR TIME TODAY Consider what opposition you might face in your rebuild efforts. Then join the Ada Bible Worship team as they sing “Promises.” Praise God that no matter what you face, “You remain the same. Though the earth may pass away, your word remains the same. There’s nothing you can’t do. You’re faithful and true.”