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WHEN INFLUENCE MOVES FROM STATIC TO DYNAMIC

Nehemiah 8:8

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MESSAGE NOTES

When promises come true, but we still are longing for more.

... so that the people could not distinguish the sound of the joyful shout from the sound of the people's weeping, for the people shouted with a great shout, and the sound was heard far away.. – Ezra 3:13 (ESV)

For I know the plans I have for you, declares the Lord, plans for welfare and not for evil, to give you a future and a hope. Then you will call upon Me and come and pray to Me, and I will hear you. You will seek Me and find Me, when you seek Me with all your heart. – Jeremiah 29:11 – 13 (ESV)

"For thus says the Lord: When seventy years are completed for Babylon, I will visit you, and I will fulfill to you My promise and bring you back to this place." – Jeremiah 29:10 (ESV)

As soon as I heard these words I sat down and wept and mourned for days, and I continued fasting and praying before the God of heaven. And I said, "O Lord God of heaven, the great and awesome God who keeps covenant and steadfast love with those who love Him and keep His commandments, let Your ear be attentive and Your eyes open, to hear the prayer of Your servant that I now pray before You day and night for the people of Israel Your servants, confessing the sins of the people of Israel, which we have sinned against You. Even I and my father's house have sinned. – Nehemiah 1:4 – 6 (ESV)

"We have acted very corruptly against You and have not kept the commandments, the statutes, and the rules that You commanded Your servant Moses. Remember the word that You commanded Your servant Moses, saying, 'If you are unfaithful, I will scatter you among the peoples, but if you return to Me and keep My commandments and do them, though your outcasts are in the uttermost parts of heaven, from there I will gather them and bring them to the place that I have chosen, to make My name dwell there.' "
– Nehemiah 1:7 – 9 (ESV)

"They are Your servants and Your people, whom You have redeemed by Your great power and by Your strong hand. O Lord, let Your ear be attentive to the prayer of Your servant, and to the prayer of Your servants who delight to fear Your name, and give success to Your servant today, and grant him mercy in the sight of this man." – Nehemiah 1:10 – 11 (ESV)

A cup-bearer was historically an officer of high rank in royal courts, whose duty was to pour and serve the drinks at the royal table. On account of the constant fear of plots and intrigues (such as poisoning), a person had to be regarded as thoroughly trustworthy to hold the position. He would guard against poison in the king's cup, and was sometimes required to swallow some of the drink before serving it. His confidential relations with the king often gave him a position of great influence. The position of cup-bearer has been greatly valued and given only to a select few throughout history.



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What are you capable of for the kingdom with the influence you have?

And all the people gathered as one man into the square before the Water Gate. And they told Ezra the scribe to bring the Book of the Law of Moses that the Lord had commanded Israel. So Ezra the priest brought the Law before the assembly, both men and women and all who could understand what they heard, on the first day of the seventh month. — Nehemiah 8:1 – 2 (ESV)

*And Ezra opened the book in the sight of all the people, for he was above all the people, and as he opened it all the people stood. And Ezra blessed the Lord, the great God, and all the people answered, "Amen, Amen," lifting up their hands. And they bowed their heads and worshiped the Lord with their faces to the ground.
— Nehemiah 8:5 – 6 (ESV)*

They read from the book, from the Law of God, clearly, and they gave the sense, so that the people understood the reading. — Nehemiah 8:8 (ESV)

But when the Pharisees heard that He had silenced the Sadducees, they gathered together. And one of them, a lawyer, asked Him a question to test Him. "Teacher, which is the great commandment in the Law?" And He said to him, "You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind. This is the great and first commandment. And a second is like it: You shall love your neighbor as yourself. On these two commandments depend all the Law and the Prophets." — Matthew 22:34 – 40 (ESV)

We continue to come back to the baseline, each and every time we reflect on what Jesus calls us too.

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Chronology of Nehemiah

Event	Month/ Day	Year	Reference
Hanani brings Nehemiah a report from Jerusalem (20th year of Artaxerxes I)		445-444 B.C.	1:1
Nehemiah before King Artaxerxes	1	445	2:1
Nehemiah arrives to inspect Jerusalem walls		445	2:11
Wall is finished	6/25	445	6:15
People of Israel gather	7	445	7:73-8:1
People of Israel celebrate Feast of Booths	7/15-22	445	8:14
People of Israel fast and confess sins	7/24	445	9:1
Nehemiah returns to Susa (32nd year of Artaxerxes I)		433	5:14; 13:6

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DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

- When you experience someone keeping their word, what is that like for you?
- Nehemiah 1 & Nehemiah 8 are two key chapters in this book. What do you notice about the leadership and heart of Nehemiah?
- These questions were asked during the message: *“What are you capable of for the kingdom with the influence you have? Often people want control, power & status before they act. What if we viewed where we are right now as a place of influence, what could we do for the kingdom of God where we are right now?”* How would you respond to this question?
- Jesus calls us to live out the Kingdom of Heaven here on earth. What are ways you are living out the Kingdom of Heaven in your life?
- Nehemiah chapter 8 looks at a pivotal moment of recentering Israel around worshiping God and reminding them of what God’s kingdom is about. Jesus reminds us in Matthew 22:34-40 what God’s Kingdom is about. When you find yourself wondering or even wandering, do you have a way to remind yourself how to use your time and energy for the kingdom of God?