

Nehemiah #1: Chapter 1, Rebuilding the Wall

by Stephen Kaung

God's people are in captivity and need to come out of Babylon and return to Jerusalem, rebuilding the wall and recovering the life of God's people with God and one another.

Duration: 1:09:37

Scripture: Deuteronomy 28:64, Deuteronomy 30:1-5, Nehemiah 1:3-4, Nehemiah 1:8-9, Romans 3:23, Revelation 2:7, Revelation 18:4

Topics: "Prayer Life", "Restoration Prophecy"

Description

In this sermon, the speaker discusses the burden that Nehemiah carried as the cup-bearer to the king. Despite his inner turmoil, Nehemiah had to maintain a joyful appearance before the king. However, after a few months, Nehemiah couldn't hide his sadness any longer and lifted his heart to God in prayer. The speaker emphasizes the importance of prayer and seeking God's favor before taking action. The sermon also touches on the vision given to Daniel regarding the restoration of the nation of Israel and the significance of the 70 weeks mentioned in the Bible.

Transcript

This is December 2nd, 1973, in Richmond, Virginia. The ministry is being given through Brother Stephen Kahn. We thank the Lord for giving us this opportunity of being together.

I'd like to read from the book of Nehemiah. We'll just read the first chapter. The book of Nehemiah, chapter 1. The words of Nehemiah, the son of Hecaliah.

And it came to pass in the month Chisleh in the twentieth year, as I was in Sushan, the fortress, that Hanani, one of my brethren, came, he and certain men of Judah. And I asked them concerning the Jews that had escaped, who were left of the captivity, and concerning Jerusalem. And they said unto me, Those who remain that are left of the captivity there in the province are in great affliction and reproach, and the wall of Jerusalem is in ruins, and its gates are burned with fire.

And it came to pass when I heard these words that I sat and wept and mourned for days, and fasted and prayed before the God of the heavens, and said, I beseech thee, Jehovah God of the heavens, the great and terrible God, that keepeth covenant and mercy for them that love him and keep his commandments. Let an ear now be attentive, and thine eyes open to hear the prayer of thy servant, which I pray before thee at this time, day and night. For the children of Israel, thy servants, confessing the sins of the children

of Israel, which we have sinned against thee.

Both I and my Father's house have sinned. We have acted very perversely against thee, and have not kept the commandments, nor the statutes, nor the ordinances that are commanded by servant Moses. Remember, I beseech thee, the word that thou commandest, thy servant Moses saying, If ye act unfaithfully, I will scatter you among the people.

But if ye return to me and keep my commandments and do them, though they were of you cast out unto the uttermost parts of the heavens, yet will I gather them from thence, and will bring them unto the place that I have chosen to set my name there. And they are thy servants and thy people, whom thou hast redeemed by thy great power and by thy strong hand. O Lord, I beseech thee, now let thy ear be attentive to the prayer of thy servant and to the prayer of thy servants who delight to fear thy name.

And prosper, I pray thee, thy servant this day, and grant him mercy in the sight of this man. Now I was the king's cupbearer. Because of the unfaithfulness of the children of Israel, God allowed them to be taken captive to Babylon.

The city of Jerusalem was destroyed. The temple was destroyed. And the people were carried beyond the river Euphrates to Babylon.

But after 70 years, according to what God had promised them through Jeremiah, even before this thing happened, when this thing was coming, God, through the prophet Jeremiah, prophesied, saying, they would be in the land of captivity for 70 years. And after the 70 years were fulfilled, God will look upon them and will bring them back to Jerusalem. And we know that when King Cyrus came to the throne, he made a proclamation, saying that whosoever of the people of God may now return to Jerusalem and to rebuild the temple.

A Gentile king, a Persian king. Because the Babylonian Empire at that time was already conquered by Middle Persia. And Cyrus was the second king in the Persian Empire.

A king who did not know God, and yet could issue such a decree to fulfill God's promise through his prophet Jeremiah. We will ask, how can this be? Of course, we should not forget that in the Persian court, very close to the king, there was a man, Daniel. Daniel was taken captive in the very early days.

And he remained in captivity. But he was, by God's sovereignty, made prime minister, not only in the days of the Babylonian Empire, but he was prime minister when King Darius was on the throne. So evidently this man, Daniel, was very close to the court, to the Persian court.

And most likely it was through Daniel that King Cyrus was informed of another prophecy by Isaiah, several hundred years ago. In the book of Isaiah, God prophesied through his servant, saying, God has chosen Cyrus. He named his name.

Cyrus, you are my chosen servant. Even though you do not know me, but I know you, I will open all the nations to you. You will conquer all the nations.

And you will do my will. You will rebuild my temple. That's in Isaiah 45 and Isaiah 44.

So evidently Daniel must have shared this prophecy of Isaiah with King Cyrus. Sure enough, all the nations were conquered by him. And even though he did not know God, but when he was told, several

hundreds of years ago, God had already prophesied about him and named his name.

He could not help but try to be God's servant. So most likely because of this, he wanted to do God's will, to show his gratitude and appreciation. So the decree went forth.

Indeed, this proclamation was not coming from King Cyrus. King Cyrus was just an instrument in God's hand. This decree came from heaven, from God.

Come out of Babylon, return to Jerusalem, and rebuild the temple. But unfortunately, only a remnant responded to God's call and returned. The rest of the children of Israel were so contented with their lives in the land of captivity that they had no desire to go back to Jerusalem.

They had built their houses, they had established their businesses, they prospered in the foreign land, they lived comfortably, they had their synagogues. They did not care to go back to Jerusalem to rebuild the temple for God. Only a remnant returned.

And we know this remnant returned, and by the grace of God, they rebuilt the temple after quite a number of years. Now, brothers and sisters, we mention this history because the Old Testament history is given to us for our admonition. God does not give us the history of Israel just for our interest, for interesting reading.

Such history is given to us because God has something to say to us today. He that has ear, let him hear what the Spirit said to the churches. Most commentators agree that Christianity today is in Babylonian captivity.

God's people is today in captivity. But by God's grace and mercy, there is a call to God's people. And the call is, come out of Babylon.

Return to Jerusalem. Rebuild the house. What is Babylon? Yesterday at lunchtime, I was in Columbus, Ohio, and a few brothers, we went out for lunch together in order to talk.

And this was one of the things we talked. What is Babylon? Babylon came from the word Babel. And Babel means Confucian.

Babylon represents the world. The world is a great Confucian. The whole world system is a Confucian.

Babylon represents the religious world because the children of Israel were delivered out of Egypt, which represents the world as it is. On the one hand, the granary of the world. Rich, everything you need.

Everything that can satisfy the lust of the eye, the lust of the flesh, and the pride of life as Egypt. But on the other hand, the tyranny of faith. Not even the hope to live.

That is what the world is. And by the grace of God, He has delivered us out of the world as it is. Thank God.

We are delivered out of the world. But one day, the children of Israel went into Babylon. Out of the world, and went back to the world.

But not Egypt. Babylon. Babylon in the Scripture represents the religious world.

God's people today is in captivity. Not only to the world as such, but even to the religious. What a confusion.

The complicity and the confusion that God's people are in today. And God's word to His people is, come out of Babylon. But not just come out.

That's negative. Return to Jerusalem. What is Jerusalem? Jerusalem is the city of peace.

Salem, peace. Jeru, city. The city of peace.

How can you have peace? In the book of James we find the wisdom that is from above is first, pureness. Then, peace. So I feel that Jerusalem represents the principle of the simplicity that is in Christ.

Oh, how simple. How pure. How peaceful.

God wants us to come out of the complicity and confusion that is in the world, even in the religious world. And God wants us to return to the simplicity, that pureness, that is in Christ. You know, this is what Paul desired for the believers in Corinth.

Paul said, I have betrothed you to Christ. And I am fearful for you that you may be deceived from the simplicity which is in Christ. And brothers and sisters, this is God's call to us today.

Return to the simplicity that is in Christ. Why? Why return? Not for our own sake, but for God's sake. So far as the children of Israel were concerned, they were quite comfortable in the land of captivity.

They not only prospered physically, mentally, materially, but they had invented this great invention of the system of synagogues. They could worship God. They were religious.

Even though it was not perfect and satisfying because without the temple there could be no sacrifice. And without the shedding of the blood there is no remission of sin. There is no salvation.

But they had enough religious activities to appease their conscience. If God's people want to live for themselves, they could live on in Babylon all their life. To return to Jerusalem is to return to a city that lies in ruin.

There was nothing there. Only those people who want to live for God. Why must the temple be rebuilt? That there might be a place where God's name was set.

Do you know during this period in the Old Testament history, God is never called the God of the heavens and of the earth. During that period, as you read the Bible, you'll find God is called the God of the heavens. But he is never called the God of the heavens and of the earth.

He has lost the earth. The heavens is God's. It is his throne.

The earth is his footstool. The heavens and the earth belong to him. But during that period, when the children of God were in captivity, God had no testimony of himself on this earth.

Who were the vessel of his testimony on this earth? The children of Israel. The nations did not know him. It was the children of Israel who testified to his name.

It was the temple where his name was set. It was Jerusalem, the place he chose to set his name. But now the children of Israel were in captivity.

The city lay in ruin. The temple was destroyed. God had no name on earth.

God had no testimony on earth. He was the God of heavens, but not the God of heavens and of the earth, but a remnant. They were willing to leave everything behind.

They were willing to go back to nothing because they want to rebuild the temple. They want to honor God's name. They want to sacrifice to God.

They want to worship God. They want to serve God. They want to satisfy.

That's the only reason to return. Dear brothers and sisters, God's people today are in captivity. The testimony of Jesus is almost unknown.

And God's call is, come out of the complicity and the perplexity of the world. Return to the simplicity that is in Christ. Gather together unto his name.

Where two or three are gathered together unto my name, there am I in the midst to worship him, to offer spiritual sacrifices to him, and to serve him, that the Lord Jesus may have a name on this earth. Thank God this remnant returned. And in great difficulties the temple was rebuilt.

But this was not what was my burden tonight. Here was just an introduction. In the history of the children of Israel, in going back to Jerusalem for the restoration of the testimony of God, it included not only the rebuilding of the temple, it included also the rebuilding of the city, the rebuilding of the wall.

In other words, the restoration was not complete with the rebuilding of the temple. It was to be completed after the wall was rebuilt and the city was rebuilt. Then the restoration.

If you read history, you know that from the first return of the remnant under Zerubbabel till the time that Nehemiah rebuilt the wall and set the city in order, it took about a hundred years. But until the wall of Jerusalem was rebuilt and the city was set in order, the restoration had only begun, had not completed. And you know, during that period, there was a danger or even what they had done would be completely destroyed.

Before we go on, I would like to point out what is meant by the rebuilding of the temple and what is meant by the rebuilding of the wall of Jerusalem. You will find that the rebuilding of the temple, in one sense, represents the recovery of the life of God's people with God. Because the temple is the house of God.

And in the temple, their relationship with God was restored. So let us say that in the rebuilding of the temple, it was the recovery of the life of God's people with God. How our relationship with God needs to be recovered.

Not only individually, but corporately. You know, sometimes our personal relationship with God needs to be recovered. But there is something bigger than your personal life with God.

The corporate life of the Church, the corporate life of God's people with God needs to be recovered. How we can be as God's house, being built together as a spiritual house, a holy priesthood, to offer spiritual sacrifices acceptable to God through Jesus Christ. It is more than just a personal restoration.

There needs to be a collective expression that our life with God may be recovered. Of course, this must be done first. But together with that, you'll find there is another recovery that must be.

If you do not have that other restoration, the first restoration may again end up in nothing. And that was the rebuilding of the wall. Because without the wall, the temple was exposed to the attack of the enemies.

Now, what is represented by the recovery, restoration of the wall of Jerusalem? I personally feel as the rebuilding of the temple represents the restoration of the life of God's people with God. The rebuilding of the wall of the city of Jerusalem is the recovery of the life of God's people with one another. Because a city is the congregation of a number of people dwelling together as one unit.

That's a city. And this dwelling together as one is represented by the wall that surrounds it. Dear brothers and sisters, I do believe that in these last days God is much interested, very much concerned, that His people should be restored to Him together.

And be restored to one another. Behold how good and how pleasant for the brethren to dwell together in unity. I think that's represented by the rebuilding of the wall.

Not only a collective life with God, but a corporate life with one another. The body life. So called.

What is a wall? When God first created man, He planted a garden. A beautiful garden. It must be beautiful.

You may have visited many beautiful gardens, but I don't think any can be compared with the Garden of Eden. All the trees that are good to look at and good for food. And God put man in that garden to attend to the garden and to guard it.

To guard it. Sometimes I wonder why did not God build a wall around that garden? If God would only build a wall around that garden, then Satan would have never had a chance to slip in and deceive man. No wall.

A beautiful garden without a wall. No wonder the enemy came in and destroyed man and the garden. Why no wall? Because God told man, Guard it.

You are the wall. God can plant a garden, but God cannot build a wall by Himself. Why? Because He built the wall with man.

But man did not cooperate with God. Man was careless, was not watchful, and the result was not only man built the garden, but you read the last two chapters of the Bible. The Holy City.

The New Jerusalem. Oh, when you see the Holy City, the New Jerusalem, brothers and sisters, what did you see? You see the wall. That was the first thing that would attract you.

You know, the Holy City, the New Jerusalem, is a garden. It's a garden city. Why? Because the tree of life is everywhere.

It's everywhere. But this garden city is wall. And the wall is very tall, high.

Very high. And the wall is built on tall foundations. And the wall is made of jasper, shining as the glory of God.

Think of that. What is jasper? In Revelation 4, you'll find when John saw in a vision the glory of God on the throne, he looks like the jasper. That's the glory of God.

Dear brothers and sisters, what is that wall? How is it made and built? Those who have received the life of Christ in there. Those who yield themselves to Christ. Those who allow the Holy Spirit to work in their lives.

To incorporate, to organize Christ in there. And as the Holy Spirit patiently works Christ in us, in us, in us, you'll find the wall begins to rise. It is your knowledge of Christ.

Living knowledge. Experimental knowledge. It is your allowing the Holy Spirit to reveal Christ to you.

And as Christ is revealed to you, He is incorporated within you. And this becomes the wall of the holy city, the neutral city. Why? A wall is a separation.

A wall will exclude all that are outside. And a wall will include all who are within the city. It is a separation.

Dear brothers and sisters, where is the separation of God's people from the world today? You cannot distinguish the world and the church today. There is no wall. But how do you build a wall? Not by laying down rules and regulations.

Saying that if you are Christian, don't go here, don't go there, don't do this, don't go there, don't wear this, don't wear that. Even if you don't do this, don't do that, don't go there, don't go here, or don't wear this, or don't wear that. You think you are out of the world, but you will discover one day the world is in you.

It doesn't work. Where is the separation? The separation is the living knowledge of Christ. The more you know Christ, the more you are separate.

All that our wall will reach to heaven, the wall represents separation. Because it is separation, it is protection. It keeps intact all that is behind the wall.

Dear brothers and sisters, if we are more separated from the world, we will be more united in Christ. Separation is a condition for unity. It may sound strange, it may sound contradictory, but that's the truth.

Not separated from one another we are bringing unity, but separated from the world will bring us in oneness. The reason why God's people are so divided is because they are not separated from the world. Too much world in God's people.

Oh, if only the world would be excluded and only Christ remains. Is Christ divided? Because of the wall. Those people who live behind the wall, they are one.

That is what is meant by the wall. The wall walled them together that they may dwell together in unity. Oh, how the lives of God's people need to be separated from the world that we may be united in Christ.

That is the wall. A city that is built on a mountain cannot be hid. We are here in this country, you do not see a walled city anywhere, I think.

I haven't seen any. But back in China, before you come to a city, the first thing you see is a wall. I always remember, my home is in Shanghai, there is no more wall in Shanghai.

But I study in Sichuan, and every time I travel on the train going to school, the first thing that attracts my eyesight is the wall. I see the wall, and I know I am right. Wall also represents a public testimony.

It is true! The testimony of Jesus is based on our life with God. If our life with God is right, then the testimony of Jesus is established. That is true.

But the testimony of Jesus to the world must be more than that. God's people must dwell together in unity. You remember our Lord Jesus in John chapter 17 said, Oh, that they may be one, as I and my Father are one.

Oh, that they may be perfected in one. Why? That the world may know thou hast said. Why is it the testimony of Jesus suffers today? Why is it the world cannot see the Lord Jesus? Why? Because God's people are not one.

God's people are divided. God's people are in the world, and the world is in God's people. There is no separation.

And because of that, there is no wall. And as long as there is no wall, there is no public testimony. Dear brothers and sisters, for this reason, the recovery must not only be the rebuilding of the temple, but it must be the rebuilding of the world.

All our lives with God must be restored as a people. Again, I will underline it. Not only individually.

Some people may have a very sweet fellowship alive with God individually. But is there a corporate expression? You may be a very living stone, but are you built with other living stones to be a house? Our life with God must be recovered. And then, our life with one another must be recovered.

I do believe in these days, God is exercising the heart of His people in these two areas. The wall. All right? Let's go back to Nehemiah.

Nehemiah, as you open the book of Nehemiah, so far as time wise is concerned, it is almost 80 or 90 years after the first return. 80 years. Around 80 years.

Or 75 years. After the first return of the remnant under Zerubbabel. The cub-bearer.

The cub-bearer to the king. Now today, we may think a cub-bearer is a waiter. A waiter is nobody.

But in those days the cub-bearer is one of the highest officials in the court. Why? Because in those days, those kings were tyrants. And tyrants were always afraid that people would murder them.

So, before they drink from the cup, the cub-bearer would drink it first. And then hand it to the king. There must be such closeness between the cub-bearer and the king.

The cub-bearer was the confidante of the king. A close friend of the king. The king, as it were, trusted his life to the cub-bearer.

And the cub-bearer was willing to give up his life for the king. Because if there was poverty, he died. He died for the king.

So there must be such intimate relationship between the king and the cub-bearer. A trusted friend. A bosom friend of the king.

And Nehemiah was the cub-bearer to the king. The Persian court at that time was the highest court in the world. Because the Persian Empire, it was the time of the Persian Empire.

And to be in the Persian court and to occupy such a high position, almost next to the king. Of course. He lived a life of comfort and luxury.

There was no want, whatsoever. He was a Jew. But providentially he was occupying such a position.

And he was enjoying all that the Persian Empire could offer to anybody. But his heart was in Jerusalem. If he was free to go back, he will be in Jerusalem.

How can I prove it? Because his brother Hananiah was in Jerusalem. He couldn't go to Jerusalem because he was the cub-bearer. He was not free to go.

He had to get permission from the king to go. But his heart was in Jerusalem. Oh, he was like Daniel.

Even though Daniel was in Babylon and yet his heart was in Jerusalem. Every day he opened a window towards Jerusalem and prayed three times. Dear brothers and sisters, where is your heart? You may be providentially placed somewhere else.

But where is your heart? To be where God wants you to be. To be where you should be. To be in Jerusalem for the testimony of God.

This is the place where every faithful one in Israel must be. Nehemiah couldn't go. But his heart was there.

He was concerned with the conditions of the remnant. His brother Hananiah and some came back from Jerusalem for a visit. And they brought back news to Nehemiah.

Nehemiah was anxious to hear the news. What happened to those who remained in Jerusalem? You remember, the temple was already built for 50 years. Or 55 years.

But evidently they were in such affliction and reproach. Because the city lay in ruin. There was no wall.

The gates were burned. There was no protection. They were surrounded by enemies.

Even though there was the temple and yet it was exposed. And because of that, many who returned probably at that time had come back. Because if you read carefully, Nehemiah said, those who escaped and remained probably many who at first went to Jerusalem to be where God wanted them to be.

And then it became so difficult, they got so discouraged, so they pack up and returned to them. But thank God there were still some hanging on. Difficult.

In much affliction and reproach. But they hang on. They surrounded the temple.

They refused to go away. They had no place to go. They were where they should be.

Where else could they go? But they were in great difficulties. In much affliction and reproach. No protection.

They could be annihilated any moment. Any moment. When Nehemiah heard this, he sat down and wept.

He prayed. He fasted for days, for nights. He was so concerned.

He went to the Lord. Not because he was in Persian court. He was well protected.

He was the favorite of the king. Therefore he forgot his brother. His heart was dead.

Oh, as Moses. When he grew up, he refused to be called the son of the daughter of Pharaoh. He would rather suffer with his brother.

He esteemed the reproach of Christ as more precious than all the riches of Egypt. Because he had seen the unseen. Brothers and sisters, this was Nehemiah.

He did not put himself in a different position. His heart was one with the suffering remnant. He confessed his sin.

His father's sin. For all Israel. He pleaded with God.

And as he pleaded with God, God's call came to him. Go back to rebuild the wall. Brothers and sisters, what is your concern today? Is it because you can live comfortably? You do not care.

Those who want to maintain the testimony of Jesus, it is difficult. Much affliction and reproach. On the verge of annihilation, do you give yourself to prayer? Do you plead with God on their behalf? And if you do, I believe the burden of the Lord will come upon you.

Go back. Rebuild the wall. The lives of God's people together needs to be rebuilt.

Nehemiah received a burden from the Lord. So he prayed, Lord, let me be found with that man. And that man is the king.

The king is but a man. Nehemiah knew the Lord called him to go back to rebuild the wall. But he did not move on his own.

He waited upon God. A few months passed. You know, sometimes if we feel we have received some mission from God, immediately we move out.

Ah. If we know God, don't do that. He waited upon God patiently.

Every day, every day, the burden gets heavier. Maybe after a few months, if you don't have faith, you will wonder whether you will ever go. And during all those months, as he served the cup before the king, he had to put up a joyful face.

His heart was crying, but he must smile. He tried. Until a few months passed, and one day as he lifted the cup to the king, the king noticed his face was sad.

And the king said, Why? There must be something that troubles. And Nehemiah was afraid. You know why? No one can appear before the king with a sad face.

Especially the cup bearer. Why? Because if the cup bearer should appear before the king with a sad face, the king immediately becomes suspicious and says, Well, what are you thinking? It was a capital crime. For Nehemiah, it couldn't happen.

After a few months, he just couldn't restrain himself anymore. So he lifted his heart to God before he answered the king. And God gave him that opportunity.

He said, Oh king, how can I be glad when my father's throne were in ruin? The king said, What do you want? Let me go back. Rebuild the city. Rebuild the wall.

And the good hand of the Lord was upon him. The king said, How long will you be away? And let him go. Dear brothers and sisters, how we need to wait upon the Lord.

And if we wait upon the Lord, He will open a way for us to rebuild the unity of the brethren. So the king in secular history, he was of Artaxerxes Longinus. In the twentieth year of his reign, he gave a decree to Nehemiah to rebuild Jerusalem.

Dear brothers and sisters, so far as Nehemiah was concerned, he was only concerned with the immediate need of the escape. That was his concern. To go back and rebuild the city.

That was all. But do you know, without his knowing, this marked the beginning of a much, much greater plan of God concerning His people. Why? You read the book of Daniel, chapter 9, and you know.

Let's read it. Daniel, chapter 9. In the first year of King Darius, Daniel learned from the book of Jeremiah that the seventy years were about to fulfill, because Darius was on the throne only two years. So after two years, King Cyrus will come to the throne.

And the seventy years will fulfill. So when Daniel read from the book of Jeremiah that only two years were left for the seventy years, what did he do? Did he sit back and say, Lord, only two years? No. He actively cooperated with God.

He gave himself to prayer that God's promise should be fulfilled. And as he was praying towards the evening oblation, you'll find God sent Gabriel to him. And let's read from verse 23.

At the beginning of thy supplication the word went forth, and I am come to declare it, for thou art one greatly beloved. Therefore consider the word, and have understanding in the vision. Now remember, Daniel was concerned only with the return of the children of Israel to Jerusalem.

The fulfillment of the seventy years. But when God gave him the vision, God gave him a vision of the entire plan of God for the full and final restoration of the nation of Israel. Not only just go back, but even to clean, cleanse them from their sins and to bring in the righteousness, and to seal up the prophets.

In other words, God will bring the nation of Israel to its final and full restoration. And what did he say? He said this. Seventy weeks.

The word weeks in the original is seven. Because seven is a week. Therefore, the translator just used seventy weeks.

But in the original it's seventy-sevens. Seventy-sevens are apportioned out upon thy people, and upon thy holy city. God cut out seventy-sevens out of time.

Time is running, and God cut out seventy- sevens in time to do something. For his people and for the holy city. And what was he going to do? To close the transgressions.

To make an end of sins. To make expiation for iniquity. To bring in the righteousness of the ages.

To seal the vision and prophet. To anoint the holy of holies. And you know, this is more than just the return of the remnant to Jerusalem after seventy years.

It was the full restoration of the nation of Israel at the return of Christ. Seventy-sevens. Know therefore and understand from the going forth of the word to restore and to build Jerusalem until Messiah the Prince of seven-sevens and sixty- sevens.

Now when did the seventy-seven begin in history, in time? It began with the word to restore and to build Jerusalem. The decree of King Cyrus was only to rebuild the temple. Not to rebuild Jerusalem.

But the decree of Artaxerxes Longinus to Nehemiah was to rebuild the city. So God's divine plan with Israel began with that. And from that to the time of Messiah will be seven-sevens and sixty-two-sevens.

And in history, it is exactly so. Exactly so. Of course, in computation we have to allow some margin because even when we say year number one, well, people are arguing that Christ actually was born in 4 B.C. And they made a mistake in the computation.

So we have to allow these things. But from the beginning of the decree to Nehemiah to rebuild the wall, to rebuild the city, until the coming of the Messiah Christ. Seven-sevens and sixty-two-sevens.

Each seven is seven years. Some people said from the time the decree given to rebuild the wall to Malachi, it is seven-sevens. Forty-nine years.

And from Malachi to Christ, sixty-two- sevens. But then suddenly, a break. The Messiah was violently cut off.

Crucified. And then one-seven was left. But in between the sixty-nine- seven and the last seven, there was a period unknown to the Old Testament prophets.

Because this is the mystery of the church. Then one day, the last seven were coming. So brothers and sisters, you know, this is a tremendous thing.

What Nehemiah did was something in God's mind way beyond he ever asked or dreamed. God answered him exceedingly, abundantly more than he can ever ask or think. Isn't it like that? Dear brothers and sisters, I often wonder if we are faithful in the little that we know, you do not know how much God may be working.

And thank God for the willingness, for the faithfulness of this man, Nehemiah. Brothers and sisters, may God raise up many Nehemiahs. Many Nehemiahs.

Shall we pray? Lord, for thy sake, raise up many Nehemiahs. People whose hearts are in Jerusalem, with the suffering in remnant, people are willing to offer themselves for the rebuilding of the world, to bring thy people together, that thy people may dwell in unity. O Lord, hear our cry.

Hear the cry of many whose hearts are towards thee, and answer in thy great loving name, the Lord Jesus. Amen.

Source: <https://sermonindex.net/speakers/stephen-kaung/nehemiah-1-chapter-1-rebuilding-the-wall/>

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