



# BEULAH FIRST BAPTIST

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## Focus: Rebuilding with God

**Roadmap/Introduction:** The book of Nehemiah is not just about rebuilding a wall. It's about God rebuilding His people. After exile, God raised up Ezra to restore worship and Nehemiah to restore community. Together, they show us that real renewal is both spiritual and communal. Over the next 8-weeks we'll walk through Nehemiah's story of prayer, leadership, perseverance, and restoration. We'll see how God still calls His people to **"rise up and build"** in our own **lives**, our **church**, and our **community** today.

### Series Roadmap

Week	Topic	Week	Topic
1	Overview of Nehemiah	5	Integrity & Justice
2	Prayer & Vision	6	Revival Through the Word
3	Building Together	7	Repentance & Renewal
4	Opposition & Perseverance	8	Lasting Reforms & Preparing for the Future

## I. Historical Context

### A. Setting:

- † Timeframe: ~445 BC, during Persian rule.
- † The Jews had returned from Babylonian exile (Ezra covers this return).
- † The temple was rebuilt, but Jerusalem's walls were still in ruins.

### B. Nehemiah's Role:

- † Cupbearer to King Artaxerxes (a position of trust).
- † Not a prophet or priest, but a lay leader whom God used.

### C. Big Picture:

- † *Ezra* → rebuilt the temple.
- † *Nehemiah* → rebuilt the walls.
- † *God* → rebuilt His people.

## II. Ezra & Nehemiah: Two Sides of Restoration

### Ezra: Building the Spiritual Foundation

- † **Focus:** Temple and worship.
- † Restored the temple (Ezra 1–6).
- † Reestablished the law and covenant (Ezra 7–10).
- † **Theological Emphasis:** True rebuilding begins with repentance, holiness, and worship.

### Nehemiah: Building the Communal Identity

- † **Focus:** Walls and society.
- † Rebuilt Jerusalem's walls (Nehemiah 1–7).
- † Reorganized civic and social life (Nehemiah 8–13).

## EZRA VS. NEHEMIAH

EMPHASIS	EZRA Spiritual renewal	NEHEMIAH Community renewal
REBUILT	Temple	Walls
SYMBOLISM	Heart	Hands
KEY THREAT	Unholiness	Neglect
APPLICATION	Align your soul with God	Engage with the world

† **Theological Emphasis:** Faith must be lived out in justice, leadership, unity, and public witness.  
**Theological Contrast:**

† **Ezra = Heart / Worship / Holiness** → Renewal begins with altar, temple, Scripture.

† **Nehemiah = Hands / Community / Witness** → Renewal continues with walls, reforms, public identity.

**Key Takeaway:** God's restoration is **holistic**. He rebuilds both the **soul (Ezra)** and the **society (Nehemiah)**. "Ezra teaches that without spiritual renewal, building is empty. Nehemiah teaches that without community renewal, spirituality cannot survive."

### III. Structure of Nehemiah

† **Ch. 1–7:** Rebuilding the walls.

† **Ch. 8–10:** Rebuilding the people through God's Word.

† **Ch. 11–13:** Reforming worship and community life.

### Major Themes of Nehemiah

#### 1. Prayer – Nehemiah prayed before he planned (God's Timing)

† **Nehemiah 1:4–11** – His prayer of confession and intercession.

† **Nehemiah 2:4** – "Then I prayed to the God of heaven, and I answered the king." (4 months later)

*He sat down and wept, he knelt down and prayed, and he stood up and worked (Proverbs 21)*

#### 2. Leadership – Vision, courage, persistence in the face of opposition

† **Nehemiah 2:12-13,17–19** – Casting vision: "Let us rise up and build."

† **When you are working for God you will face opposition.**

† **Nehemiah 6:3** – Refusing distraction: "I am doing a great work and I cannot come down."

#### 3. Community – Everyone had a role

† **Nehemiah 3:** Ordinary people building side by side.

Next to (16x), 38 People, 42 different groups, not 1 mention of Nehemiah (**1 Cor 12**)

† **Nehemiah 4:6** – "The people had a mind to work..."

† **Nehemiah 4:19–20** – "The work is great and widely spread... Our God will fight for us."

† **Nehemiah 6:15** – "So the wall was finished... in 52 days"

#### 4. Restoration – God restores not just structures but lives

† **Nehemiah 8:8–10** – The Word brings renewal; "The joy of the Lord is your strength."

† **Nehemiah 9:2–3** – The people confess sins and renew covenant faithfulness.

† **Nehemiah 10:28–29** – People bind themselves by oath to obey God's law.

† **Nehemiah 13:30–31** – Nehemiah purifies the people and restores worship practices.

### IV. Your Homework/Discussion

1. What stands out to you about Nehemiah's prayer in Chapter 1?

2. Why do you think God used Ezra (a priest) and Nehemiah (a lay leader) for different stages of rebuilding?

3. How does the contrast between Ezra (heart/holiness) and Nehemiah (hands/community) help Beulah or you specifically understand God's plan for His people?

4. What broken walls (spiritual or communal) do you see around us today?