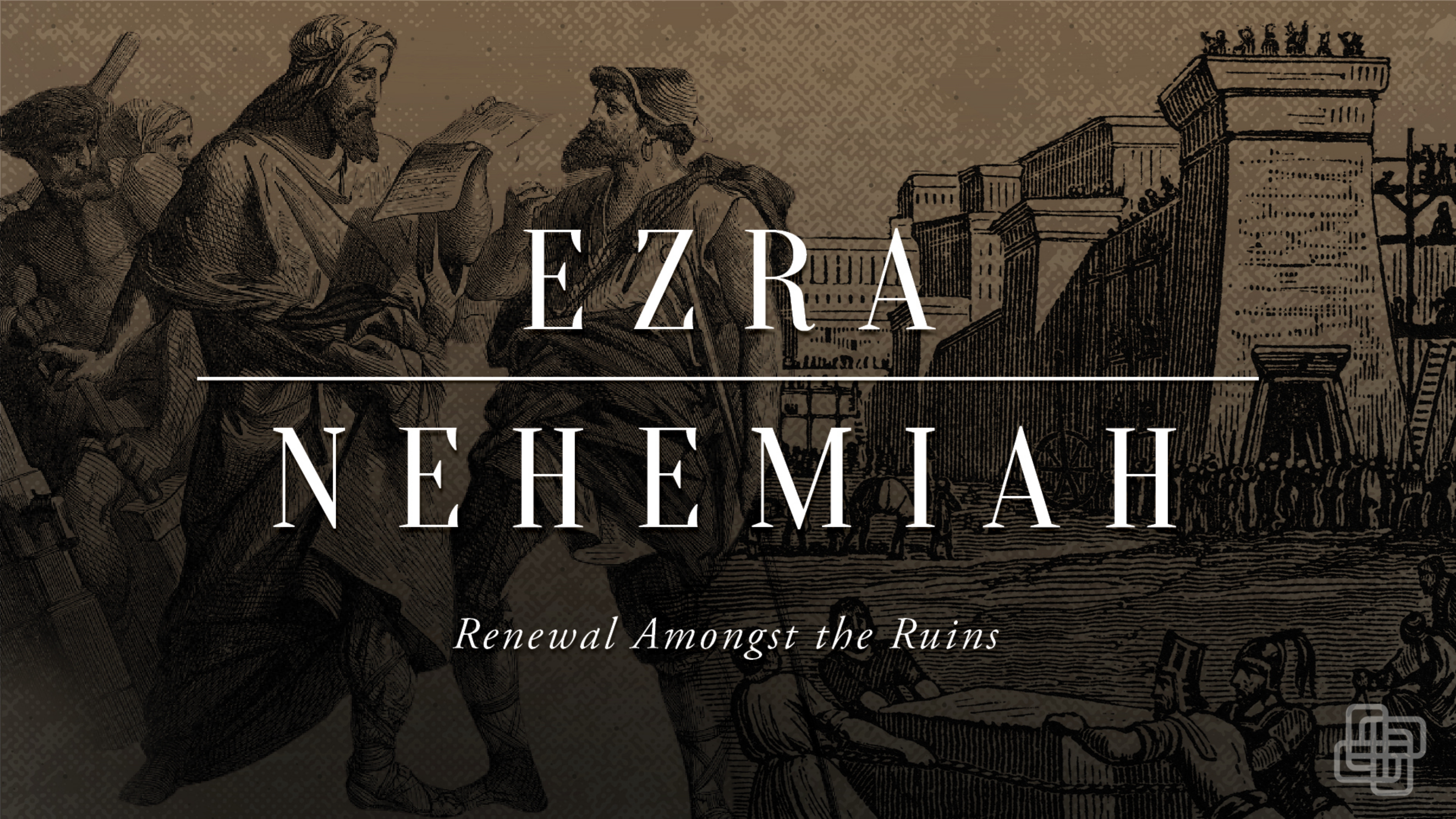




EASTER

at grace table church



EZRA

NEHEMIAH

Renewal Amongst the Ruins



CALL TO WORSHIP

I will greatly rejoice in the Lord;
my soul shall exult in my God,
for he has clothed me with the garments of salvation;
he has covered me with the robe of righteousness,...

-Isaiah 61:10a



Nehemiah 4:6-9

6 So we built the wall. And all the wall was joined together to half its height, for the people had a mind to work. 7 But when Sanballat and Tobiah and the Arabs and the Ammonites and the Ashdodites heard that the repairing of the walls of Jerusalem was going forward and that the breaches were beginning to be closed, they were very angry. 8 And they all plotted together to come and fight against Jerusalem and to cause confusion in it. 9 And we prayed to our God and set a guard as a protection against them day and night.



Nehemiah 4:10-14

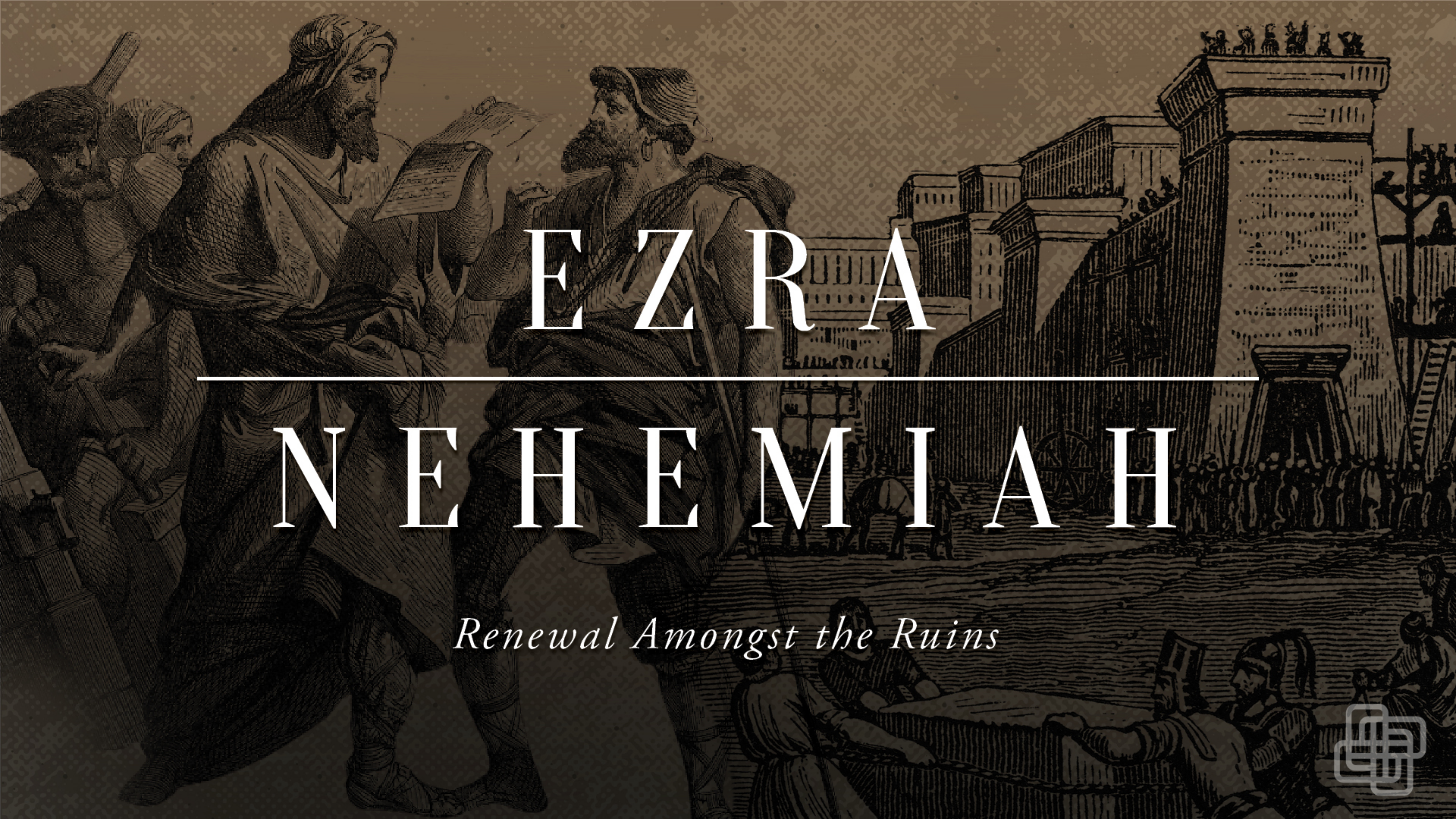
10 In Judah it was said, "The strength of those who bear the burdens is failing. There is too much rubble. By ourselves we will not be able to rebuild the wall." 11 And our enemies said, "They will not know or see till we come among them and kill them and stop the work." 12 At that time the Jews who lived near them came from all directions and said to us ten times, "You must return to us." 13 So in the lowest parts of the space behind the wall, in open places, I stationed the people by their clans, with their swords, their spears, and their bows. 14 And I looked and arose and said to the nobles and to the officials and to the rest of the people, "Do not be afraid of them. Remember the Lord, who is great and awesome, and fight for your brothers, your sons, your daughters, your wives, and your homes."



Nehemiah 6:15-16

15 So the wall was finished on the twenty-fifth day of the month Elul, in fifty-two days. 16 And when all our enemies heard of it, all the nations around us were afraid and fell greatly in their own esteem, for they perceived that this work had been accomplished with the help of our God.





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1. EXPECT OPPOSITION (Nehemiah 4)

A. External opposition is inevitable

Sanballat mocks, Tobiah ridicules, enemies threaten violence.



1. EXPECT OPPOSITION (Nehemiah 4)

1 Now when Sanballat heard that we were building the wall, he was angry and greatly enraged, and he jeered at the Jews. 2 And he said in the presence of his brothers and of the army of Samaria, “What are these feeble Jews doing? Will they restore it for themselves? Will they sacrifice? Will they finish up in a day? Will they revive the stones out of the heaps of rubbish, and burned ones at that?” 3 Tobiah the Ammonite was beside him, and he said, “Yes, what they are building if a fox goes up on it he will break down their stone wall!” 4 Hear, O our God, for we are despised. Turn back their taunt on their own heads and give them up to be plundered in a land where they are captives. 5 Do not cover their guilt, and let not their sin be blotted out from your sight, for they have provoked you to anger in the presence of the builders.



1. EXPECT OPPOSITION (Nehemiah 4)

A. External opposition is inevitable

Sanballat mocks, Tobiah ridicules, enemies threaten violence.

B. The response: Prayer + Action

9 “We prayed to our God... and set a guard.”

“Pray as though everything depended on God. Work as though everything depended on you.” St. Ignatius



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C. Internal discouragement is dangerous

10 “The strength of those who bear the burdens is failing...”

discouragement is real but it doesn't keep God from working in his people.



2. GUARD AGAINST COMPROMISE AND DISTRACTION (Nehemiah 5–6)

A. Compromise from within

The rich exploit the poor. Looking like every other kingdom is compromise.

“The church is not destroyed by enemies but by its own compromise.” John Calvin



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B. Distraction from without 6:1-14

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B. Distraction from without 6:1-9. From within 10-14

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“Discernment is not knowing the difference between right and wrong, but between right and almost right.”

C. Fear-based manipulation 10-14

11 “Should such a man as I run away?” The children of God have nothing to fear.



3. FINISH THE WORK, BUT STAY VIGILANT (Neh 6:15–7:4)

A. God completes the work

“So the wall was finished...”

B. The world takes notice

“They perceived this work had been accomplished with the help of our God.”

C. Success requires vigilance

Appointing guards and gatekeepers.



THE GOOD NEWS OF THE RESURRECTION

“The gospel is this: we are more sinful and flawed than we ever dared believe, yet more loved and accepted in Jesus Christ than we ever dared hope.” Tim Keller

The Resurrection Means You Now Live *from* Victory, Not *for* It



THE GOOD NEWS OF THE RESURRECTION

What this means for the believer:

- Your *identity* is secure

You are no longer defined by sin, failure, or performance but by Christ's finished work.

- Your *power* is real

The same power that raised Jesus from the dead is now at work in you (Romans 8:11).

- Your *future* is certain

Death is not the end. Resurrection is your promise.



THE GOOD NEWS OF THE RESURRECTION

What this means for outsiders:

- Your *identity* can be secure

- Your *power* can be real

The same power that raised Jesus from the dead is now at work in you (Romans 8:11).

- Your *future* can be certain

Death and separation doesn't have to be the end. Resurrection can be your promise.



THE GOOD NEWS OF THE RESURRECTION

Romans 10:9-17

9 because, if you confess with your mouth that Jesus is Lord and believe in your heart that God raised him from the dead, you will be saved. 10 For with the heart one believes and is justified, and with the mouth one confesses and is saved. 11 For the Scripture says, “Everyone who believes in him will not be put to shame.” 12 For there is no distinction between Jew and Greek; for the same Lord is Lord of all, bestowing his riches on all who call on him. 13 For “everyone who calls on the name of the Lord will be saved.”

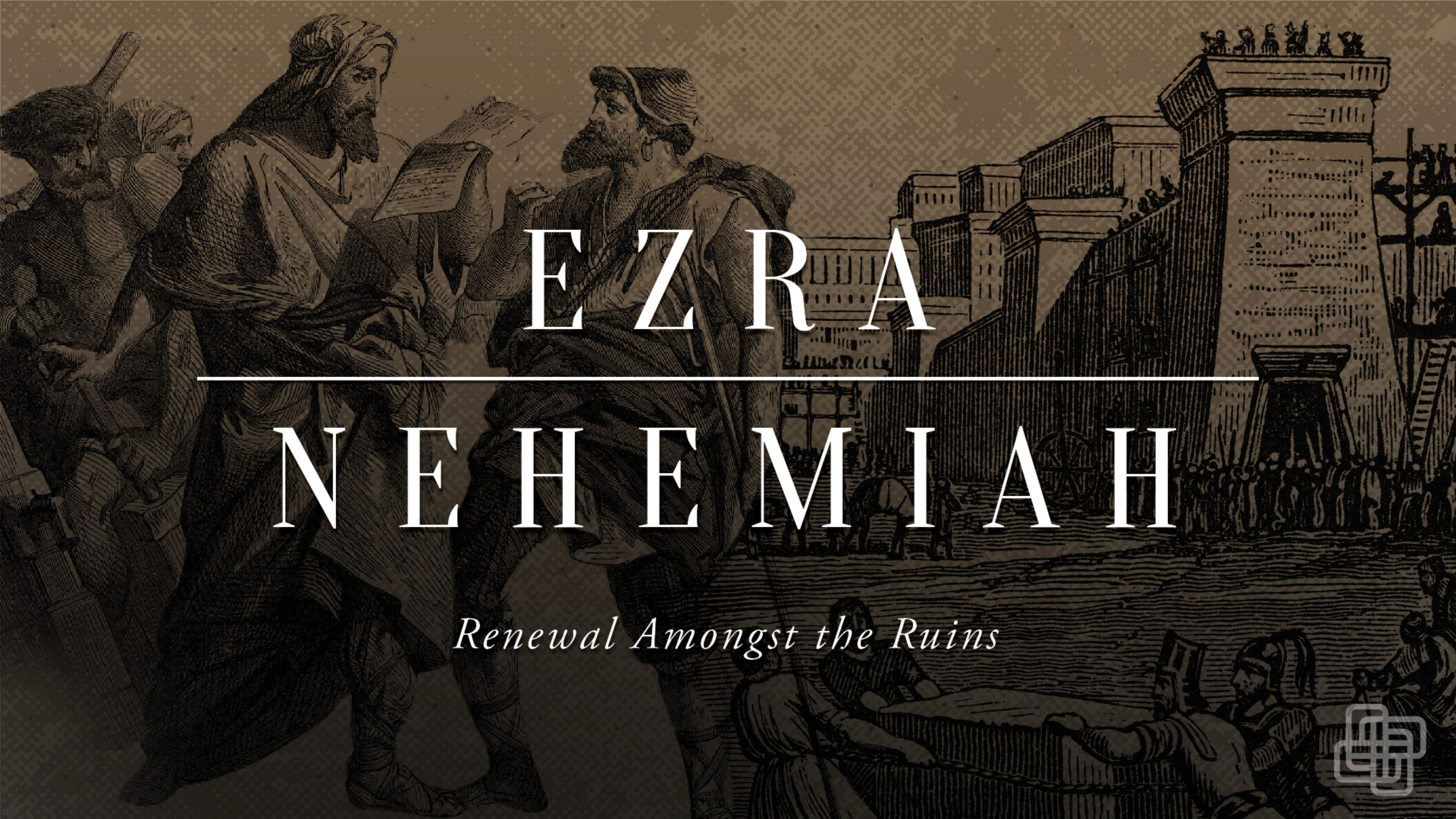


THE GOOD NEWS OF THE RESURRECTION

Romans 10:9-17

14 How then will they call on him in whom they have not believed? And how are they to believe in him of whom they have never heard? And how are they to hear without someone preaching? 15 And how are they to preach unless they are sent? As it is written, “How beautiful are the feet of those who preach the good news!” 16 But they have not all obeyed the gospel. For Isaiah says, “Lord, who has believed what he has heard from us?” 17 So faith comes from hearing, and hearing through the word of Christ.



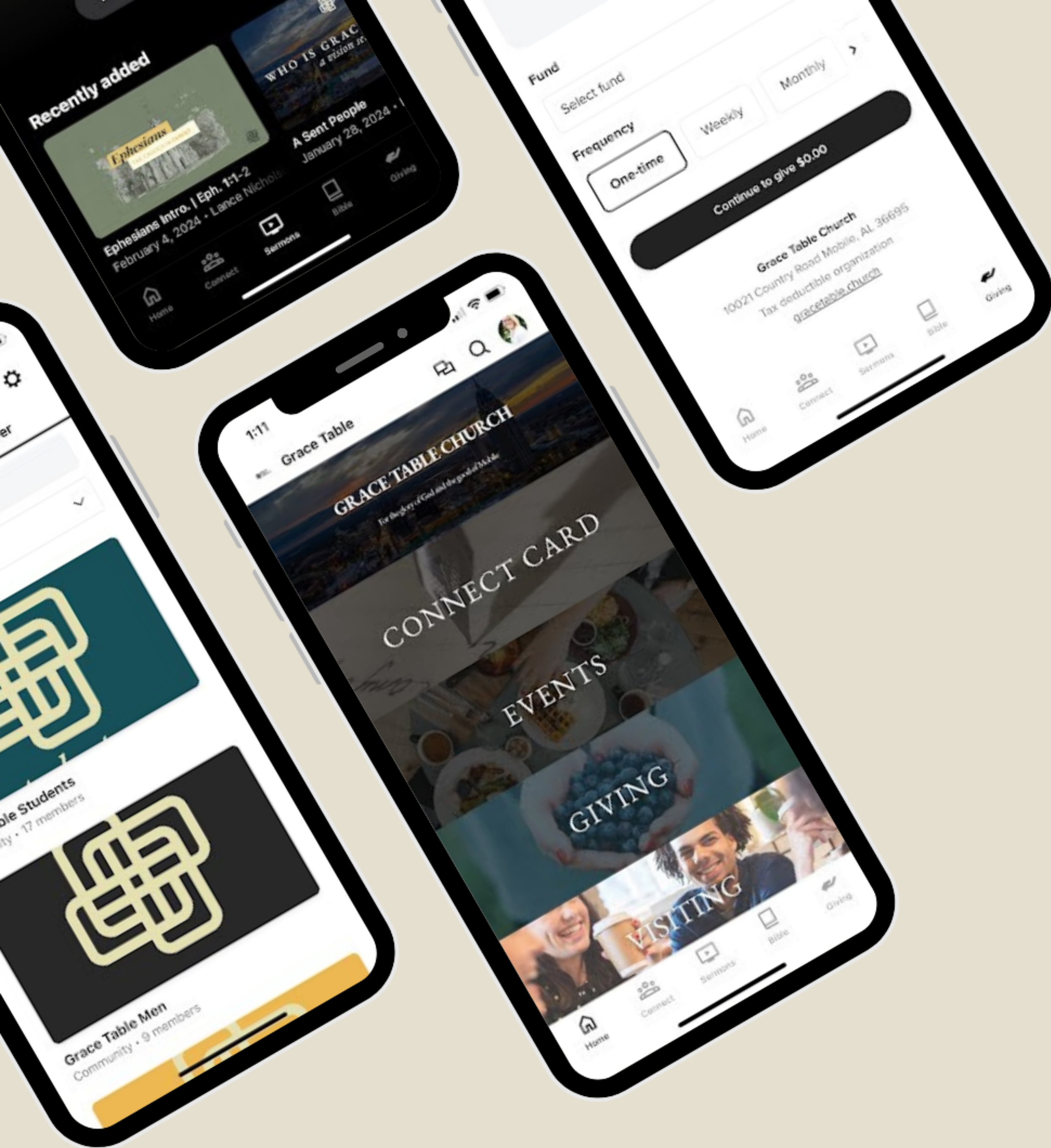


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PRAYER

over new facility

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BENEDICTION

Leader:

“The grace of the Lord Jesus Christ and the love of God and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit be with you all.”

-2 Corinthians 13:14

People:

And also with you.

