

**Come  
Together**

# Nehemiah

**Prophet Priest Soldier Spy**

# Recap

These are the **memoirs** of Nehemiah son of Hacaliah. **1:1a**

They said to me, “Things are not going well for those who returned to the province of Judah. They are in great **trouble** and **disgrace**. The wall of Jerusalem has been torn down, and the gates have been destroyed by fire.” **vs 3**

When I heard this, I sat down and wept. In fact, **for days** I **mourned, fasted,** and **prayed** to the God of heaven. **vs 4**

Recap

# Nehemiah's Prayer

Worship

Humility

Remember

“Other” Focused

# Recap

Nehemiah was **born** in Babylon and **raised** in exile.

What if your faith/salvation is for the benefit of **others**?

This is what the Lord of Heaven's Armies, the God of Israel, says to all the captives he has exiled to Babylon from Jerusalem: "Build homes, and plan to stay. Plant gardens, and eat the food they produce. Marry and have children. Then find spouses for them so that you may have many grandchildren. Multiply! Do not dwindle away! And work for the peace and prosperity **of the city where I sent you into exile**. Pray to the Lord for it, **for its welfare will determine your welfare.**" **Jeremiah 29:4-7**

# Bonhoeffer: Pastor, Martyr, Prophet, Spy by Eric Metaxas

“Being a Christian is less about cautiously avoiding sin than about **courageously** and **actively** doing God`s will.”

“If it is I who determine where God is to be found, then I shall always find a God who **corresponds to me in some way**, who is obliging, who is connected with my own nature. But if God determines where he is to be found, **then it will be in a place which is not immediately pleasing to my nature and which is not at all congenial to me.**”

# Bonhoeffer: Pastor, Martyr, Prophet, Spy by Eric Metaxas

“A major theme for Bonhoeffer was that every Christian must be 'fully human' by bringing God into his whole life, not merely into some 'spiritual' realm. To be an ethereal figure who merely talked about God, but somehow refused to get his hands dirty in the real world in which God had placed him, was bad theology. Through Christ, God had shown that he meant us to be in this world and to obey him with our actions in his word. **So Bonhoeffer would get his hands dirty, not because he had grown impatient, but because God was speaking to him about further steps of obedience.**”

First, Nehemiah saw the great need, which burdened his heart. He also saw what God wanted to accomplish. And, he committed himself to see it through in spite of the many difficulties. Steven J. Cole

Early the following spring, in the month of Nisan,  
during the twentieth year of King Artaxerxes'  
reign, I was serving the king his wine. **I had never  
before appeared sad in his presence. 2:1**

So the king asked me, “Why are you looking so sad? You  
don’t look sick to me. You must be deeply troubled.” **vs 2**

Then I was **terrified,**

As was true in the courts of many ancient kings, **it was forbidden to be sad in the presence of the king.** The idea was that the king was such a wonderful person that merely being in his presence was supposed to make you forget all of your problems. When Nehemiah looked sad, it could have been taken as a terrible **insult** to the king.



Why wait **four** months before speaking to the king?

**but** I replied, “Long live the king! **How can I not be sad?**  
For the city where my ancestors are buried is in ruins,  
and the gates have been destroyed by fire.” **vs 3**

The king asked, “Well, how can I help you?” **vs 4a**

**With a prayer to the God of heaven, I replied, “If it please the king, and if you are pleased with me, your servant, send me to Judah to rebuild the city where my ancestors are buried.” vs 4a-5**

**Nehemiah’s character (faithfulness) was attached to his request**

The king, with the queen sitting beside him, asked, “How long will you be gone? When will you return?” **After I told him how long I would be gone,** the king agreed to my request. **vs 6**

Nehemiah's despair led to his **preparation**

**I also said** to the king, “If it please the king, let me have letters addressed to the governors of the province west of the Euphrates River” **vs 7a**

But when Sanballat the Horonite and Tobiah the Ammonite official heard of my arrival, they were very **displeased** that someone had come to help the people of Israel **vs 10**

**Sanballat the Horonite** - Sanballat was probably from a town named Horonaim in Moab and thus most likely was a **Moabite**. Chemosh was their chief deity and required human sacrifice

**Tobiah the Ammonite** - Molech was a fire-god with the face of a calf; his images had arms outstretched to receive the babies who were sacrificed to him.

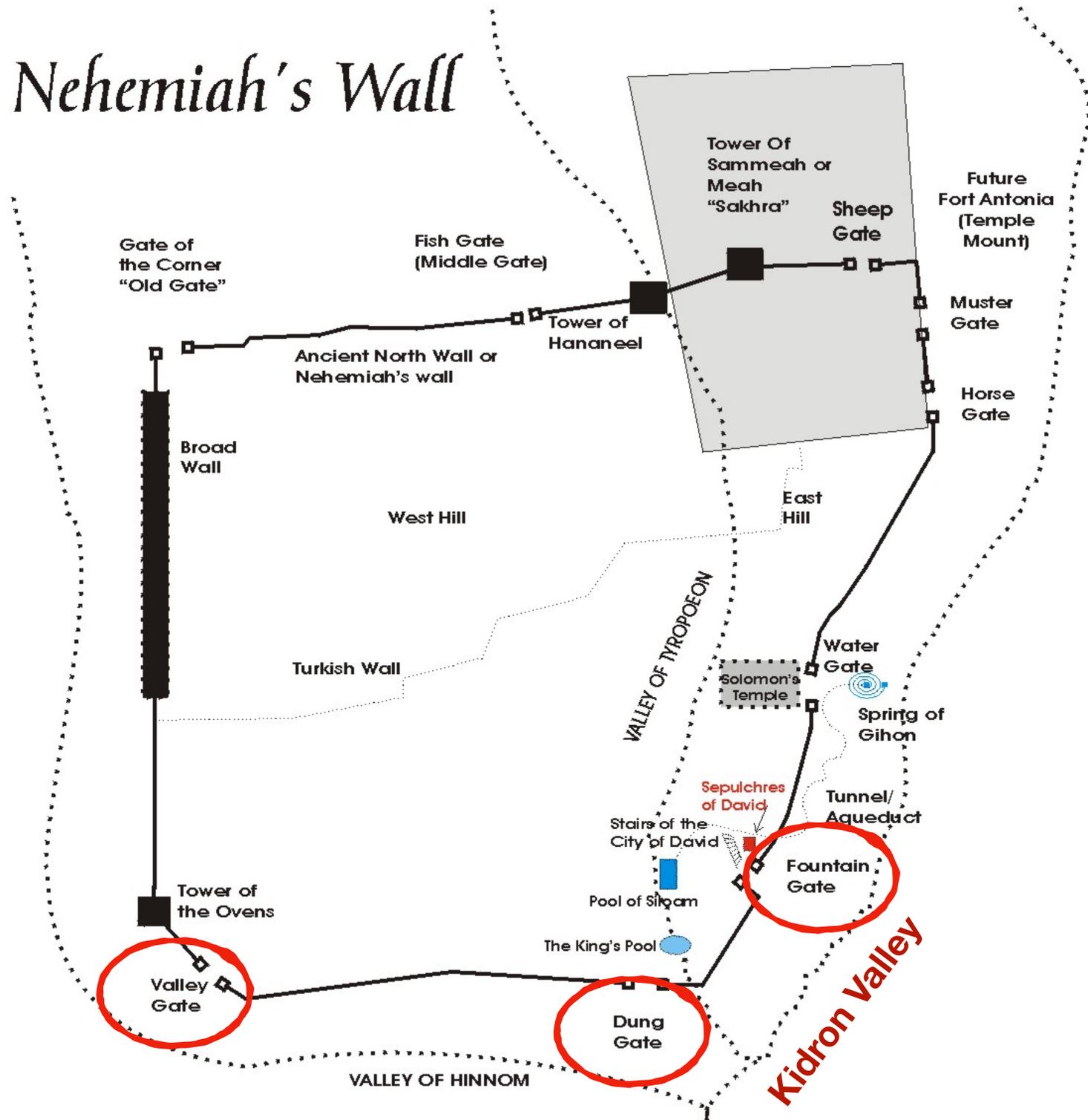
I arrived in Jerusalem. Three days later, I slipped out during the night, taking only a few others with me. I had not told anyone about the plans God had put in my heart for Jerusalem. We took no pack animals with us except the donkey I was riding. vs 11-12

Having served the King of Persia Nehemiah had wisdom and discernment in political maneuverings

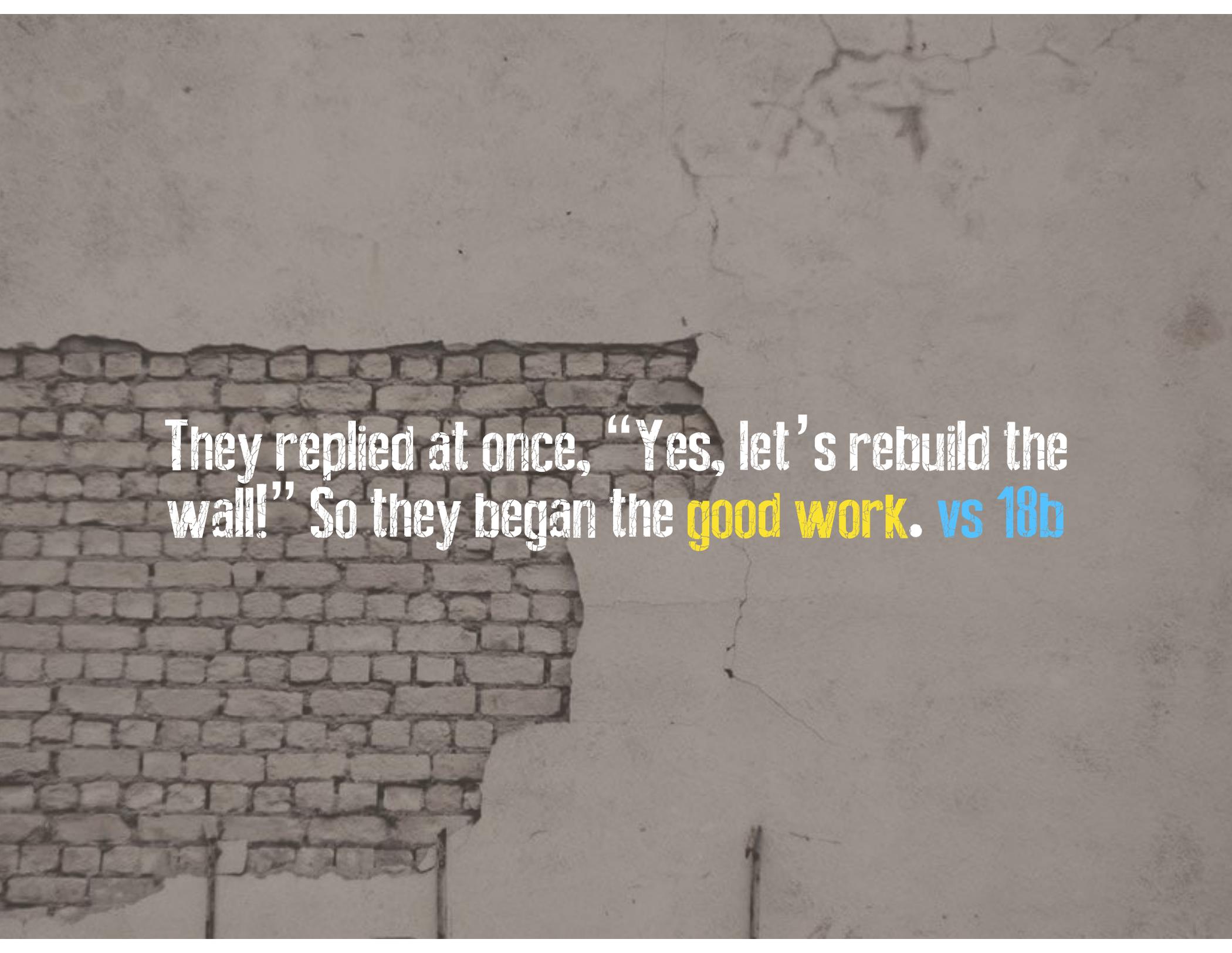
Be wise like snakes and gentle like doves. Matthew 10:16

After dark I went out through the **Valley Gate**, past the Jackal's Well, and over to the **Dung Gate** to inspect the broken walls and burned gates. Then I went to the **Fountain Gate** and to the King's Pool, but my donkey couldn't get through the rubble. So, though it was still dark, I went up the **Kidron Valley** instead, inspecting the wall before I turned back and entered again at the Valley Gate. **vs 13-15**

# Nehemiah's Wall



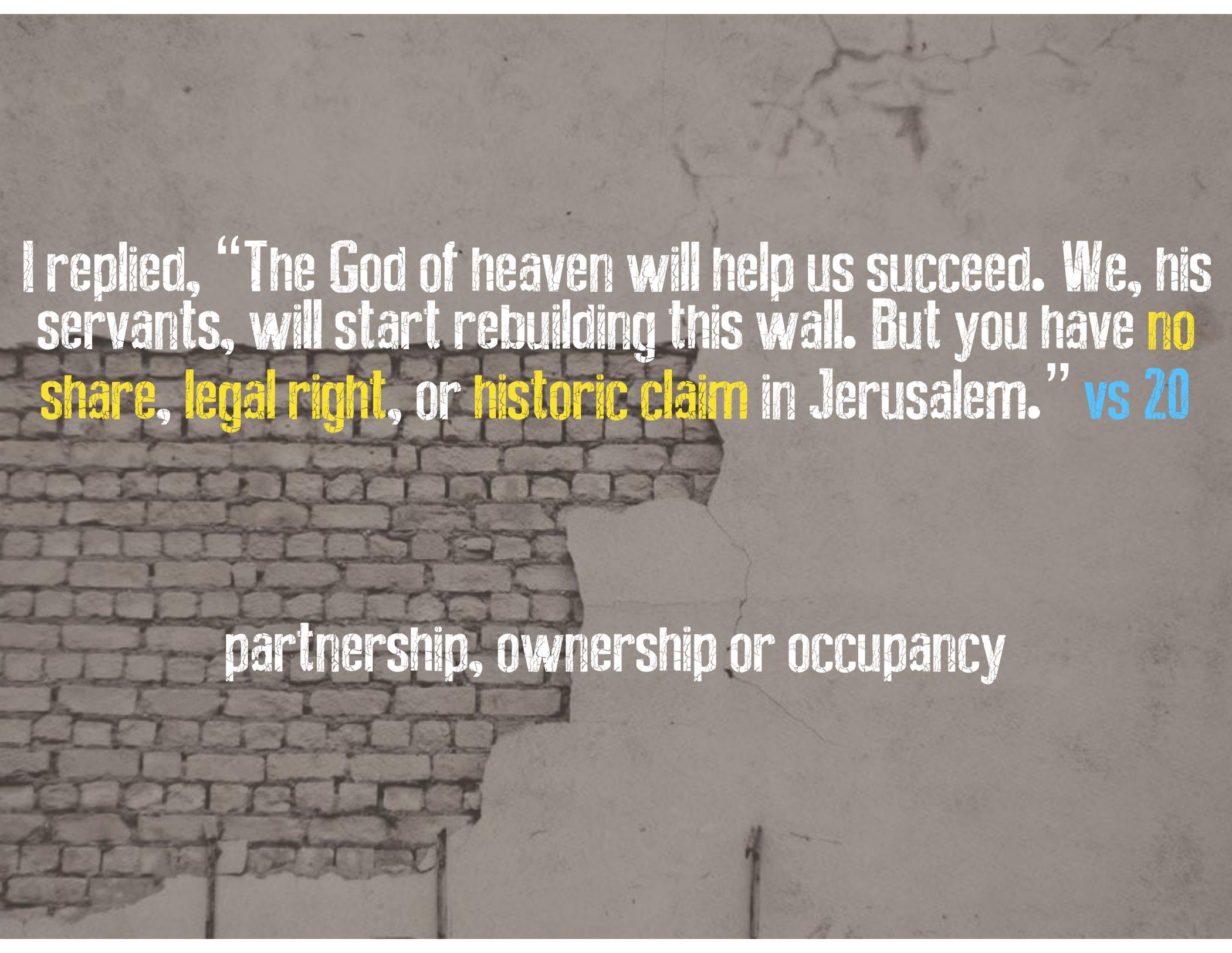
The city officials did not know I had been out there or what I was doing, **for I had not yet said anything to anyone about my plans.** I had not yet spoken to the Jewish leaders—the priests, the nobles, the officials, or anyone else in the administration. **But now** I said to them, “You know very well what trouble we are in. Jerusalem lies in ruins, and its gates have been destroyed by fire. Let us rebuild the wall of Jerusalem and end this disgrace!” **Then I told them about how the gracious hand of God had been on me, and about my conversation with the king. vs 16-18**



They replied at once, “Yes, let’s rebuild the wall!” So they began the **good work.** vs 18b

as we need to be cunning so are our  
enemies

But when Sanballat, Tobiah, and Geshem the  
Arab heard of our plan, **they scoffed  
contemptuously.** “What are you doing? **Are you  
rebellious against the king?**” they asked. **vs 19**



I replied, “The God of heaven will help us succeed. We, his servants, will start rebuilding this wall. But you have **no share, legal right, or historic claim** in Jerusalem.” **vs 20**

**partnership, ownership or occupancy**

# Lessons from Nehemiah (Thus Far)

Changing the world requires determination and **planning**

Never listen to our **enemies** advice

**Wisdom** is needed for the endeavours of God.

Now may the God of peace—who brought up from the dead our Lord Jesus, the great Shepherd of the sheep, and ratified an eternal covenant with his blood—may he **equip** you with all you need for doing **his will**. May he produce in you through the power of Jesus Christ, every good thing that is pleasing to him. **All glory to him forever and ever! Amen. Hebrews 13:20-21**