



CHAPTER 1

VERSES 1 - 11

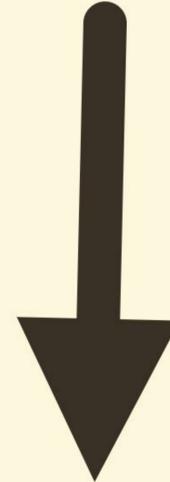


FLOURISHING IN THE MIDST OF OPPOSITION

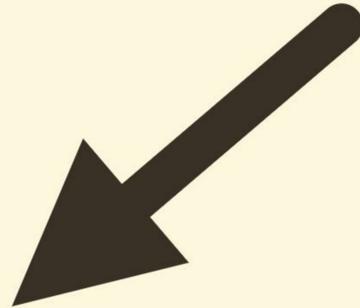
Jesus



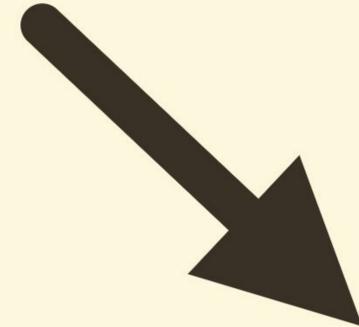
Nehemiah



You



Us



Here

Nehemiah

- Last OT narrative before Jesus
- Time period: 536BC - (445) - 431BC
- After 70 year destruction and exile
- Only narrative 'memoir'
- 'Ezra-Nehemiah' functions as 1 book
- The story of rebuilding a PEOPLE

**True flourishing always
depends on someone
overcoming opposition.**



Plants can't pick
where they are
planted.

We are more like
them than we
want to think we
are.



They have to
find a way to
overcome their
environment.









Some opposition
gets inside of you.

Insects Invade

WANTED



USDA 
U.S. Department of Agriculture
Forest Service

Program Aid 2148a
January 2014

INSIDE:
Bug Benefits
Insects on the Move
Meet the Troublemakers
You Can Make a Difference

Or smothers you...



Jesus

Isaiah 53:2 "He grew up before him like a tender shoot, and like a root out of dry ground. He had no beauty or majesty to attract us to him, nothing in his appearance that we should desire him."

Isaiah 11:1 "A shoot will come up from the stump of Jesse; from his roots a Branch will bear fruit."



True flourishing always depends on someone overcoming opposition.

1st lesson of Nehemiah:

Overcoming starts with sharing God's longing for our flourishing.



Neh 1:10 - 11

"They are your servants and your people, whom you redeemed by your great strength and your mighty hand. Lord, let your ear be attentive to the prayer of this your servant and to the prayer of your servants who delight in revering your name. Give your servant success today by granting him favor in the presence of this man."



Sharing God's heart...

**1. With a heart wide
enough to transcend
our experience.**

No one overcomes what
they can't see beyond.



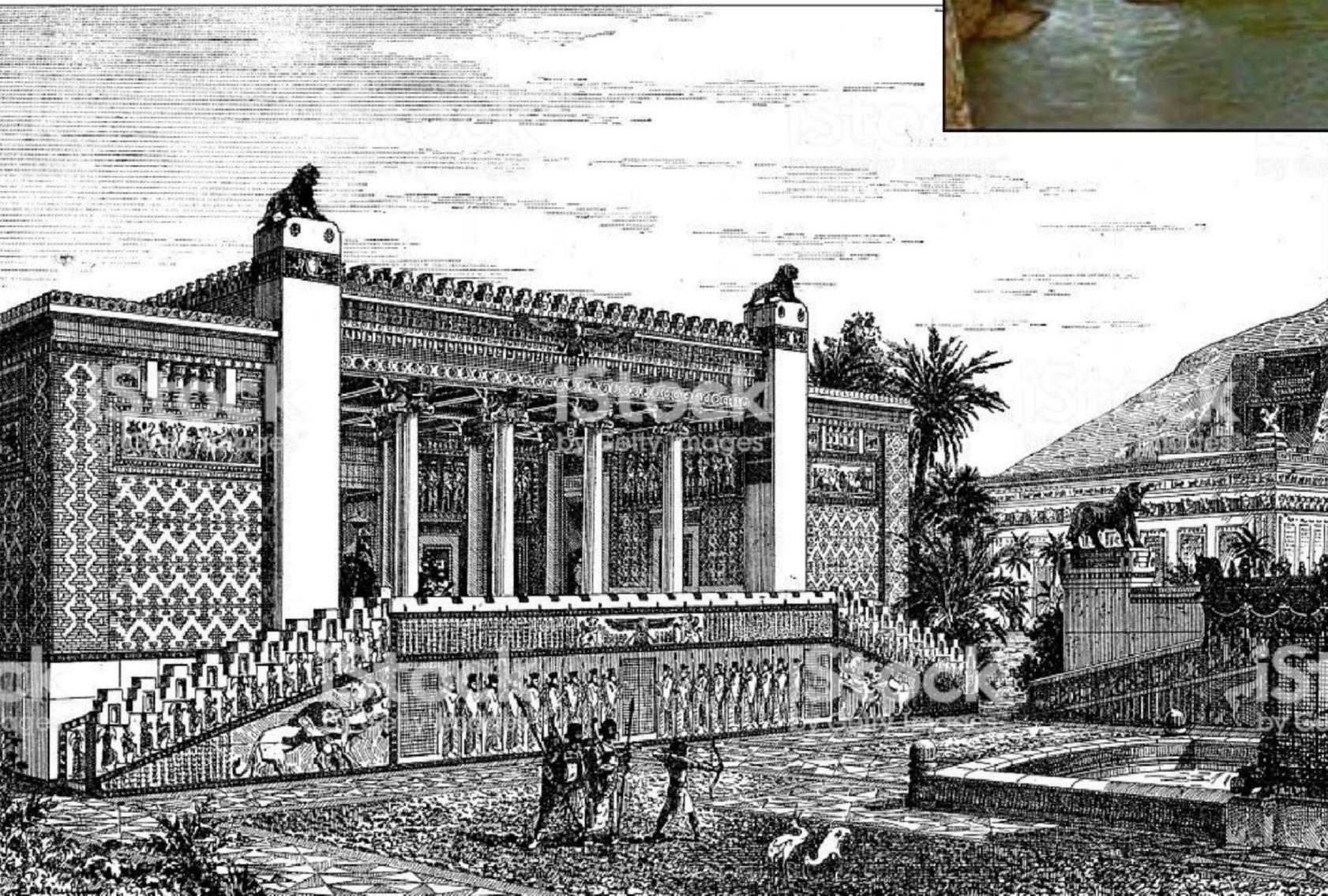
No one overcomes what they can't see beyond.

Neh. 1:1-3 While I was in the citadel of Susa..." Those who survived the exile and are back in the province are in **great trouble and disgrace.** The wall of Jerusalem is broken down, and its gates have been burned with fire."



Susa

"The Citadel"



Overcoming starts with sharing God's longing for our flourishing.

...with a heart wide enough to transcend our experience.

2...deep enough to become a permanent burden.



Nehemiah 1:4

“When I heard these things, I sat down and wept. For some days I mourned and fasted and prayed before the God of heaven.”



A Burden

a sickness of heart doesn't wear off.

It's something that wrecks your life as you had conceived of it—and yet you find the burden worth pursuing.



Sarcasm and Sincerity

Does the frequency of sarcasm
indicate more
a growth in sophistication
or
an expression of hurt?

Paths to deep feeling

Think about God's thoughts

Profess it out loud

Confess it out loud

Take the appropriate posture



James 4:8-10

“Come near to God and he will come near to you. Wash your hands, you sinners, and purify your hearts, you double-minded. Grieve, mourn and wail. Change your laughter to mourning and your joy to gloom. Humble yourselves before the Lord, and he will lift you up.”



So What?

Some applications if your imagination needs a hand overcoming opposition.



1. Will you be only a recipient or also someone who overcomes opposition to promote the flourishing of others?



2. Celebrity or qualification is not the means of renewal.

Burdened Integrity is.

Isaiah 66:2

Has not my hand made all these things, and so they came into being?" declares the LORD. "This is the one I esteem: he who is humble and contrite in spirit, and trembles at my word.



**3. Can you accept that
you have been
planted where you
have been planted?**



**4. Are you more likely
to give up because
of decadence or
desperation?**



5. What do you have a burden for that isn't part of your present experience?



6. What should you do to experience the deep feelings of real piety?

Thinking God's thoughts
Professing
Confessing
Posture



**7. You are not going to
be Nehemiah tomorrow**



Jesus is a true and better Nehemiah.

Leaving an everlasting city with an eternal burden for the flourishing of every image bearer in much worse trouble and disgrace.





FLOURISHING IN THE MIDST OF OPPOSITION