

A photograph of a stone archway in a ruined building. The archway is made of light-colored stone blocks and is set within a larger wall of similar stone. The ground in the foreground is covered in rubble, including broken stones and wooden planks. The scene is brightly lit, suggesting a sunny day. The text "REBUILDING the GATES" is overlaid on the image in a large, black, serif font. "REBUILDING" is in all caps and is the largest word. "the" is in lowercase and is smaller. "GATES" is in all caps and is the same size as "REBUILDING".

REBUILDING
the
GATES

The Faces of Opposition

The background image shows a stone archway in a ruined building. The arch is made of large, light-colored stone blocks. The ground in the foreground is covered in rubble and debris, including broken stones and wooden planks. The overall scene is one of destruction and decay.

1. The enemy becomes concerned (Neh 2:9 - 10)
2. False accusation (Neh 2:19 - 20)
3. Attack on faith and faithfulness (Neh 4:1 - 6)
4. Attack of fear, confusion and discouragement. (Neh 4:6 - 23)
5. Attack from within. (Neh 5)

The Faces of Opposition

Neh 5:1 - 13

1 And there was a great outcry of the people and their wives against their Jewish brethren. 2 For there were those who said, "We, our sons, and our daughters are many; therefore let us get grain, that we may eat and live."

3 There were also some who said, "We have mortgaged our lands and vineyards and houses, that we might buy grain because of the famine."

4 There were also those who said, "We have borrowed money for the king's tax on our lands and vineyards. 5 Yet now our flesh is as the flesh of our brethren, our children as their children; and indeed we are forcing our sons and our daughters to be slaves, and some of our daughters have been brought into slavery. It is not in our power to redeem them, for other men have our lands and vineyards."

The Faces of Opposition

Neh 5:1 - 13

6 And I became very angry when I heard their outcry and these words. 7 After serious thought, I rebuked the nobles and rulers, and said to them, "Each of you is exacting usury from his brother." So I called a great assembly against them. 8 And I said to them, "According to our ability we have redeemed our Jewish brethren who were sold to the nations. Now indeed, will you even sell your brethren? Or should they be sold to us?"

Then they were silenced and found nothing to say. 9 Then I said, "What you are doing is not good. Should you not walk in the fear of our God because of the reproach of the nations, our enemies?"

The Faces of Opposition

Neh 5:1 - 13

10 I also, with my brethren and my servants, am lending them money and grain. Please, let us stop this usury! 11 Restore now to them, even this day, their lands, their vineyards, their olive groves, and their houses, also a hundredth of the money and the grain, the new wine and the oil, that you have charged them.”

12 So they said, “We will restore it, and will require nothing from them; we will do as you say.” Then I called the priests, and required an oath from them that they would do according to this promise. 13 Then I shook out the fold of my garment and said, “So may God shake out each man from his house, and from his property, who does not perform this promise. Even thus may he be shaken out and emptied.”

And all the assembly said, “Amen!” and praised the LORD. Then the people did according to this promise.

The Faces of Opposition

The background image shows a stone archway in a ruined building. The arch is made of large, rectangular stone blocks. The ground in front of the arch is covered in rubble, including broken stones and debris. A wooden railing is visible in front of the arch. The overall scene is one of destruction and decay.

‘And there was a great outcry of the PEOPLE and their wives against their Jewish BRETHREN’

‘people’ - refers to the poor, or those in a difficult state.

‘brethren’ - refers to the wealthy

The Faces of Opposition

A photograph of a stone archway in a ruined building, with rubble on the ground. The archway is made of large, light-colored stone blocks. The ground in the foreground is covered in a large pile of broken stone and debris. The background shows more of the stone structure, including another archway and a window. The overall scene is one of destruction and decay.

‘There where those who said’

1. LARGE FAMILIES, ‘let us get grain that we may eat and live’
2. LARGE MORTGAGES, ‘we have mortgaged our lands and vineyards and houses that we might buy grain because of the famine’
3. LARGE TAXES, ‘We have borrowed money for the king’s tax on our lands and vineyards.’

The Faces of Opposition

A photograph of a stone archway in a ruined building, with rubble and debris scattered on the ground in the foreground. The archway is made of light-colored stone blocks and is set within a larger stone wall. The ground is covered in broken stones and debris, suggesting a state of ruin or destruction. The overall tone is somber and reflective.

Ex 22:25

25 “If you lend money to any of My people who are poor among you, you shall not be like a moneylender to him; you shall not charge him interest.

The Faces of Opposition

Lev 25:35 - 38

35 'If one of your brethren becomes poor, and falls into poverty among you, then you shall help him, like a stranger or a sojourner, that he may live with you. 36 Take no usury or interest from him; BUT FEAR YOUR GOD, that your brother may live with you. 37 You shall not lend him your money for usury, nor lend him your food at a profit. 38 I am the LORD your God, who brought you out of the land of Egypt, to give you the land of Canaan and to be your God. 39 'And if one of your brethren who dwells by you becomes poor, and sells himself to you, you shall not compel him to serve as a slave. 40 As a hired servant and a sojourner he shall be with you, and shall serve you until the Year of Jubilee. 41 And then he shall depart from you—he and his children with him—and shall return to his own family. He shall return to the possession of his fathers. 42 For they are My servants, whom I brought out of the land of Egypt; they shall not be sold as slaves. 43 You shall not rule over him with rigor, BUT YOU SHALL FEAR YOUR GOD.

The Faces of Opposition

Lev 25:23 - 30

23 'The land shall not be sold permanently, for the land is Mine; for you are strangers and sojourners with Me. 24 And in all the land of your possession you shall grant redemption of the land.

25 'If one of your brethren becomes poor, and has sold some of his possession, and IF HIS REDEEMING RELATIVE comes to redeem it, then he may redeem what his brother sold. 26 Or if the man has no one to redeem it, but he himself becomes able to redeem it, 27 then let him count the years since its sale, and restore the remainder to the man to whom he sold it, that he may return to his possession. 28 BUT IF HE IS NOT ABLE TO HAVE IT RESTORED TO HIMSELF, then what was sold shall remain in the hand of him who bought it until the Year of Jubilee; and in the Jubilee it shall be released, and he shall return to his possession.

The Faces of Opposition

A photograph of a stone archway in a ruined city, with rubble and debris in the foreground. The archway is made of large, light-colored stone blocks. The ground is covered in broken stones and debris. The background shows more stone walls and a dark opening in the distance.

Lev 25:23 - 30

29 'If a man sells a house in a walled city, then he may redeem it within a whole year after it is sold; within a full year he may redeem it. 30 But if it is not redeemed within the space of a full year, then the house in the walled city shall belong permanently to him who bought it, throughout his generations. It shall not be released in the Jubilee.

The Faces of Opposition

- Lev 25:35-36, “Take no usury or interest from him; **BUT FEAR YOUR GOD**, that your brother may live with you.” **USURY**
- Lev 25:42 - 43, “For they are My servants, whom I brought out of the land of Egypt; they shall not be sold as slaves. 43 You shall not rule over him with rigor, **BUT YOU SHALL FEAR YOUR GOD.**” **SLAVERY**

The Faces of Opposition

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The Enemy Within The Wall

The background image shows a stone archway in a ruined building. The arch is made of light-colored stone blocks. The ground in front of the arch is covered in rubble and debris, including broken stones and wooden planks. A simple wooden railing is positioned in front of the arch. The overall scene is one of destruction and decay.

- As an individual: The flesh, where self is at the center.
- As a body: How we treat one another, forgiveness.
- As a leadership: Selfish ambition and control.

Forgiveness

A photograph of a stone archway in a ruined building, with rubble on the ground. The archway is made of light-colored stone blocks and is set within a larger stone wall. The ground in the foreground is covered in broken stones and debris. The overall scene is one of destruction and decay.

“The truth of forgiveness, if seen in the biblical light and then practiced within a group of people; would turn any tide and overcome any darkness. Forgiveness pierces through all language, cultural, racial, political and generational barriers; it has power to overcome any obstacle the enemy puts in the path of Gods people.”

Foundation of Forgiveness

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The foundation for every form of forgiveness is built on the forgiveness we have received from God through Jesus Christ shedding His blood on the Cross.

What is Forgiveness

- To grant free pardon for - or remission of - ANY offense or debt, to give up all claim, even a claim of justice.
- Forgiveness is an act of the will, not the emotions.
- Forgiveness is part of God's nature
 - Ex 34:5 - 8, "And the LORD passed before him and proclaimed, 'The LORD, the LORD God, merciful and gracious, long-suffering, and abounding in goodness and truth, keeping mercy for thousands, forgiving iniquity and transgression and sin, by no means clearing the guilty, visiting the iniquity of the fathers upon the children and the children's children to the third and the fourth generation.'"

Forgiveness

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Matt 18:21 - 35

21 Then Peter came to Him and said, "Lord, how often shall my brother sin against me, and I forgive him? Up to seven times?"

22 Jesus said to him, "I do not say to you, up to seven times, but up to seventy times seven. 23 Therefore the kingdom of heaven is like a certain king who wanted to settle accounts with his servants.

Forgiveness

Matt 18:21 - 35

23 Therefore the kingdom of heaven is like a certain king who wanted to settle accounts with his servants. 24 And when he had begun to settle accounts, one was brought to him who owed him ten thousand talents. 25 But as he was not able to pay, his master commanded that he be sold, with his wife and children and all that he had, and that payment be made. 26 The servant therefore fell down before him, saying, 'Master, have patience with me, and I will pay you all.' 27 Then the master of that servant was moved with compassion, released him, and forgave him the debt. 28 "But that servant went out and found one of his fellow servants who owed him a hundred denarii; and he laid hands on him and took him by the throat, saying, 'Pay me what you owe!' 29 So his fellow servant fell down at his feet and begged him, saying, 'Have patience with me, and I will pay you all.' 30 And he would not, but went and threw him into prison till he should pay the debt.

Forgiveness

Matt 18:21 - 35

31 So when his fellow servants saw what had been done, they were very grieved, and came and told their master all that had been done. 32 Then his master, after he had called him, said to him, 'You wicked servant! I forgave you all that debt because you begged me. 33 Should you not also have had compassion on your fellow servant, just as I had pity on you?' 34 And his master was angry, and delivered him to the torturers until he should pay all that was due to him.

35 "So My heavenly Father also will do to you if each of you, from his heart, does not forgive his brother his trespasses."

Forgiveness

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Matt 18:29 - 31

29 So his fellow servant fell down at his feet and begged him, saying, 'Have patience with me, and I will pay you all.' 30 And he would not, but went and threw him into prison till he should pay the debt. 31 So when his fellow servants saw what had been done, they were very grieved, and came and told their master all that had been done.

Forgiveness

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Rom 3:21 - 24

21 But now the righteousness of God apart from the law is revealed, being witnessed by the Law and the Prophets, 22 even the righteousness of God, through faith in Jesus Christ, to all and on all who believe. For there is no difference; 23 for all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God, 24 being justified freely by His grace through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus, whom God set forth as a propitiation by His blood...”

Forgiveness & Spiritual Authority

Matt 18:15 - 20

15 “Moreover if your brother sins against you, go and tell him his fault between you and him alone. If he hears you, you have gained your brother. 16 But if he will not hear, take with you one or two more, that ‘by the mouth of two or three witnesses every word may be established.’ 17 And if he refuses to hear them, tell it to the church. But if he refuses even to hear the church, let him be to you like a heathen and a tax collector.

18 “Assuredly, I say to you, whatever you bind on earth will be bound in heaven, and whatever you loose on earth will be loosed in heaven.

19 “Again I say to you that if two of you agree on earth concerning anything that they ask, it will be done for them by My Father in heaven. 20 For where two

Forgiveness & Spiritual Authority

2 Cor 2:10 - 11

“Now whom you forgive anything, I also forgive. For if indeed I have forgiven anything, I have forgiven that one for your sakes, in the presence of Christ, lest satan should take advantage of us; for we are not ignorant of his DEVICES.”

Devices / Schemes:

- mental perception, thought.
- the mind which proposes
- an evil purpose

Forgiveness & Spiritual Authority

A photograph of a stone archway in a ruined building, with rubble on the ground and a wooden railing in front of the arch. The image is in a muted, sepia tone.

Prov 26:17

“He who passes by and meddles in a quarrel not his own
Is like one who takes a dog by the ears.”

Forgiveness & Spiritual Authority

The background image shows a stone archway in a ruined building. The arch is made of light-colored stone blocks. The interior of the arch is dark. The floor is covered in rubble and debris, including broken stones and wooden planks. The walls are made of the same stone blocks, some of which are cracked and crumbling. The overall scene is one of destruction and decay.

The use and impact of the authority which has been delegated to us, is directly linked to the way we treat one another and how we forgive one another.

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