

**Strong Hands**  
*Nehemiah 2:1-8*  
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For 140 years, nothing was done to rebuild the promised city of God. In his brokenness, Nehemiah received a vision to rebuild God's city that was in ruins.

To Build Amid Ruins, You Need:

**#1 Vision – the destination**

Nehemiah caught a godly vision of what the city that was in ruins could be. He saw old problems with new eyes. Even amidst this pandemic, we need new eyes for a fresh godly vision to rebuild the ruins.

**#2 Prayer – the default**

Nehemiah's first action after receiving the great vision was prayer. He prayed for four months and clung to the character, promises and one true authority of the covenant keeping God to rebuild the city.

vv1-2 – Nehemiah was a cupbearer and a trusted servant to the king. The king had noticed the sadness within Nehemiah's heart; this sadness had tormented him for four months and he could not hide it. Nehemiah needed to do something. It is a fresh vision of change that will push us to prayer and God.

Nehemiah was also afraid because of what he needed to ask the king. He was risking his life by asking the king to reverse his own foreign policy.

Paul Tillich – Three Kinds of Fear

**1. The fear of death** – this was the most prominent fear in ancient times.

**2. The fear of guilt** – this was the most prominent fear during the reformation era.

**3. The fear of meaninglessness** – this is the fear that is the most prominent in our culture today.

Nehemiah faced all three fears, but he did not let them paralyze him. Fear is not bad. It is staying in our fear that is bad. Whatever

fears that the pandemic has brought, do not stay in them and let them paralyze you!

vv3-4 – Despite his fear, Nehemiah seized the opportunity and responded to the king winsomely and boldly. Before bringing his request to the king, he brought it through prayer to the King of kings – God. Prayer was a constant resource in Nehemiah's life that never ran out. Money, people, and family may run out on us, but prayer will never ever run out. It is a constant resource that we have. The loving ears of our heavenly Father are always there for us! In this pandemic and through the new seasons of life, make your personal prayer life a default!

vv5-6 – Throughout the four months of Nehemiah's praying and fasting, God had been weaving together the right scenario and preparing him for the rebuilding. The king, being in an informal setting and a good mood, granted Nehemiah his bold request.

**#3 Planning – the direction**

vv7-8 – As Nehemiah prayed, he also planned. The biblical model is both to pray and to plan. They go together and are not mutually exclusive. Redemptively, God continuously plans and at an appointed time, He makes it happen (Isa. 37:26). Like God, we have been given the ability to plan strategically. It is the planning and envisioning of the new future in this pandemic that will give us new meaning. In his planning, Nehemiah knew exactly what he needed. In this pandemic, pray earnestly and plan carefully!

Three things about Nehemiah's God (v8c):

**1) God is good** – in this pandemic, no matter what happens, God is still good.

**2) God is powerful**

**3) God is a personal God** – God is both good and powerful for you!

Jesus Christ revealed these truths about God to us through His life, death and resurrection. God's good and powerful hands are upon us because of what Jesus has done for us. Rise up to pray, plan and keep building amidst the ruins!