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NEHEMIAH

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## Nehemiah 5:1-13

<sup>1</sup> Now there arose a great outcry of the people and of their wives against their Jewish brothers.

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## Nehemiah 5:1-13

<sup>2</sup> For there were those who said,  
“With our sons and our daughters,  
we are many. So let us get grain,  
that we may eat and keep alive.”

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## Nehemiah 5:1-13

<sup>3</sup> There were also those who said,  
“We are mortgaging our fields, our vineyards,  
and our houses to get grain because  
of the famine.”



## Nehemiah 5:1-13

<sup>4</sup> And there were those who said,  
“We have borrowed money for the king's tax  
on our fields and our vineyards. <sup>5</sup> Now our flesh  
is as the flesh of our brothers, our children  
are as their children.



## Nehemiah 5:1-13

Yet we are forcing our sons and our daughters to be slaves, and some of our daughters have already been enslaved, but it is not in our power to help it, for other men have our fields and our vineyards.”



## Nehemiah 5:1-13

<sup>6</sup> I was very angry when I heard their outcry and these words. <sup>7</sup> I took counsel with myself, and I brought charges against the nobles and the officials. I said to them, “You are exacting interest, each from his brother.”

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## Nehemiah 5:1-13

And I held a great assembly against them <sup>8</sup> and said to them, “We, as far as we are able, have bought back our Jewish brothers who have been sold to the nations, but you even sell your brothers that they may be sold to us!”



## Nehemiah 5:1-13

They were silent and could not find a word to say.

<sup>9</sup> So I said, “The thing that you are doing is not good. Ought you not to walk in the fear of our God to prevent the taunts of the nations our enemies?”

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## Nehemiah 5:1-13

<sup>10</sup> Moreover, I and my brothers and my servants are lending them money and grain. Let us abandon this exacting of interest.

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## Nehemiah 5:1-13

<sup>11</sup> Return to them this very day their fields, their vineyards, their olive orchards, and their houses, and the percentage of money, grain, wine, and oil that you have been exacting from them.”

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## Nehemiah 5:1-13

<sup>12</sup> Then they said, “We will restore these and require nothing from them. We will do as you say.” And I called the priests and made them swear to do as they had promised.



## Nehemiah 5:1-13

<sup>13</sup> I also shook out the fold of my garment and said, “So may God shake out every man from his house and from his labor who does not keep this promise.

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## **Nehemiah 5:1-13**

So may he be shaken out and emptied.” And all the assembly said “Amen” and praised the Lord. And the people did as they had promised.





# Recap

- Jerusalem fell to the Babylonian Empire in 586BC
- Nehemiah in despair about Jerusalem
- He gets permission to lead a group to return and rebuild
- They undergo many challenges to the rebuild project





# What happened

The wealthy exploited and ignored the needs of the poor





# The Exploited

- People who owned no land but needed food
- Landowners who mortgaged their property for food
- People who had to borrow money to pay taxes
- People who had to sell their children into slavery



# Why it happened

## 1. Selfishness



## James 4:1-2

What causes fights and quarrels among you? Don't they come from your desires that battle within you? <sup>2</sup> You desire but do not have, so you kill. You covet but you cannot get what you want, so you quarrel and fight. You do not have because you do not ask God.



# Why it happened

1. Selfishness
2. They were not walking in the fear of God

## **Exodus 22:25**

If you lend money to one of my people among you who is needy, do not treat it like a business deal; charge no interest.

## **Deuteronomy 23:19**

Do not charge a fellow Israelite interest, whether on money or food or anything else that may earn interest.



## Leviticus 25:39

If any of your fellow Israelites become poor and sell themselves to you, do not make them work as slaves.

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# Nehemiah's wise response to what happened

## 1. Righteous indignation

# Nehemiah's wise response to what happened

1. Righteous indignation
2. Careful contemplation

# Nehemiah's wise response to what happened

1. Righteous indignation
2. Careful contemplation
3. Direct confrontation



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**“Dealing with an Internal Threat” – Pastor Steve Durand**