

# Going Deeper

WITH

# A LIFE THAT MATTERS



# THE CAUSE THAT CHANGES YOUR WORLD

BY RON HUTCHCRAFT

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Nehemiah was a relatively ordinary guy who had an extraordinary job working for the King of Persia as his cupbearer. The life of the king was trusted into Nehemiah's hands. Nehemiah graduated from an ordinary life to a life that became unforgettable. He had a passion to do something great and accomplished the absolute total rebuilding of the city of Jerusalem—God's city—in the face of enemies who did everything they could to shut him down.

A passion is an enthusiastic desire and governs what you do. The passions that we see in the book of Nehemiah are enthusiastic desires and they're very uncommon. Our lives today are a circle of responsibilities, and we're running and running in our circle where we've run for so long. Sometimes we have run for so long that we forget what we were born to do.

There are specific things that you were born to do—things you were wired to do when God made you. Ephesians 2: 10 says, "For we are God's workmanship, created in Christ Jesus to do good works, which God prepared in advance for us to do." There is a specific purpose for your life and a specific calling. You were hard-wired by God to carry out His plans, which is the only thing that will fill up your soul. Maybe you know what it's like to have a life that is extremely full but not fulfilling.

There is a cause that could change your world. Ask God to shake up your status quo. He'll use a variety of circumstances such as your kids, your marriage, your job, your finances, your health, and any number of things to begin a great work in the world around you. He wants to shake up your status quo because He's getting ready to include you in something big that He's about to do.

God took Nehemiah's ordinary life and made it unforgettable. Let God take you through five steps to include you in a great work He's about to do. Nehemiah went through them, it changed his personal world, and it changed his larger world forever. Find out what you were wired for, and discover Nehemiah's five steps to a great work of God.

## 1. He Gives You a Broken Heart

The first step to a great work of God is He gives you a broken heart. Nehemiah got word about the condition of the city of Jerusalem.

Nehemiah 1:3-4 says, "They said to me, '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.' When I heard these things, I sat down and wept. For some days I mourned and fasted and prayed before the God of heaven."

There was no city on this planet that meant more to God than Jerusalem, and for Jerusalem to be in ruins was an abomination. God's name was disgraced by the fact that His city was in ruins because of the sin of His people. God calls Nehemiah to a cause that will become what consumes him with a passion that will govern the rest of his life.

When God wants you to do a great work for Him, He first gives you a broken heart for something that breaks His heart. For Nehemiah, it was the condition of God's city and God's people. When you get that broken heart, you have a heart connection to Jesus that

connects you to Him in a brand new, deep way because you are feeling part of His passion with Him. He has decided to include you in something He weeps over and make His burden your burden. Other Christians without a broken heart might look at the same situation differently.

Isn't it amazing that the miracle of the rebuilding of God's city begins with one man weeping? He's not even in the country where he can do anything about the situation; he's in Persia. That one man weeping in his room started a great work of God; he had a broken heart.

If God has burdened, maybe even broken your heart about something that should not be and a status quo that needs to change, it's about more than just a burden on your heart. God may intend to turn your broken heart into an assignment.

Look what He did with Nehemiah. Nehemiah 2:12 says, "I set out during the night with a few men. I had not told anyone what my God had put in my heart to do for Jerusalem." A broken heart turned into an assignment. Back then, God wanted to build His city. Now He wants to build broken marriages, families, and lives.

There are new things God wants to build today. He wants to change the fact that believers are not spreading the love of Jesus. He wants to build men who lead spiritually instead of making spiritual leadership their wife's responsibility. These are just two of the burdens of God's heart. He wants your heart to be broken and for it to become a governing passion of your life. He will break your heart as a preliminary step to help you do what you were born to do.

## **2. He Reveals the Plan**

The second step to a great work of God is He reveals the plan. First comes the broken heart, and then comes the plan. Nehemiah 1:4 says, "When I heard these things, I sat down and wept. For some days I mourned and fasted and prayed before the God of heaven." Nehemiah prayed extensively about what was breaking his heart.

In Nehemiah chapter 2, Nehemiah risks everything to go to the same king that had shut down the rebuilding of Jerusalem. Nehemiah says, "The king asked me, 'Why does your face look so sad when you are not ill? This can be nothing but sadness of heart.'...The king said to me, 'What is it you want?' Then I prayed to the God of heaven, and I answered the king, 'If it pleases the king and if your servant has found favor in his sight, let him send me to the city in Judah where my fathers are buried so that I can rebuild it.'" When the king asked questions about his plan, Nehemiah was ready to go. He asked the king for the things he needed. God breaks your heart, and then He reveals the plan as you bathe your broken heart in prayer.

Do you know why you've been through what you've been through? Do you know why you are where you are? Do you know why you do what you do? Do you know why you have the interests that you have? It's all to give you a launch pad for a great work for God. Nehemiah didn't get a lucky break but a divine assignment!

Everything that's happened in your life so far has been to get you ready for the big thing. You have been globally positioned by God to make a unique difference for Him as Nehemiah was. Esther had a similar situation; she risked her life because she realized she was divinely positioned by God to save lives. So are you.

You live where you live because you've been assigned there by Jesus to take some of the people in that neighborhood to heaven with you. You work where you work so those people would have a chance at heaven. You're their chance. How are you doing? That's why you're there. It's no accident you are where you are. Your biography credentials you to tell them about Christ because people like you will listen to someone like you.

You are a disciple of Jesus Christ cleverly disguised as a golfer, a mom, a student, a cancer survivor, an engineer, an investor, a teacher, or something else. Take the garbage of your life, how Jesus has made a difference, and share it with others to draw them closer to Jesus. It's part of God's plan for you to use those credentials to help take people to heaven with you.

You're going to find God's plan in the same place Nehemiah did—extended prayer over what has broken your heart. When you pray, pray with a blank piece of paper. If you want to know what God's plan is, you'll find that there are things you feel consistently when you're praying. When you get off your knees and you listen to all the other voices, you get confused. When you're on your knees and you're in the throne room of the Most High God, listen to and write down what He says when you're praying. He's giving you the plan that goes with your broken heart.

### **3. He Opens All the Doors**

The third step to a great work of God is He opens all the doors. 1 Thessalonians 5:24 says, "The one who calls you is faithful and he will do it." He will not leave you stranded in the middle of your calling.

Nehemiah needed some things to rebuild the city of Jerusalem. He didn't have building materials, builders, or money. He had nothing but a broken heart and a plan, which would not be enough to rebuild the city of Jerusalem. The king asked him what he wanted and Nehemiah told him about the needs of the city. He not only had a great plan, but he also anticipated all the obstacles. In Nehemiah 2:8, he says, "Because the gracious hand of my God was upon me, the king granted my requests." The doors were thrown open to the resources he needed. His plan couldn't be fulfilled without the king. He needed the resources to accomplish his mission and God provided.

That's how it is when you take a step for God. You take the first step in faith, and then the support comes. God is in the heart-match business. He brings together someone with the passion and the plan, and someone else with the resources. The work of God happens because of that partnership.

With virtually every person who's ever come to Christ through a Christian worker in 2,000 years, there have been two people involved: a sendee and a sender. The king in this case was the sender and Nehemiah was the sendee. Romans 10:14-15 says, "How can they believe in the one of whom they have not heard? And how can they hear without someone preaching to them? And how can they preach unless they are sent."

Do you know who is at the foundation of the pyramid of rescuing a lost life? It's not the preacher, but the sender. They are the beginning of the process of a spiritual rescue. There must be somebody who's going to reach them, and somebody who says, "I'm going to send you." Paul said in Philippians 1:4-5, "I always pray with joy because of your partnership in the gospel from the first day until now." There are two fronts in a great work of God: the front lines and the supply lines.

If God uses you to substantially support any work of God, prepare to be seriously attacked. There is a picture of that in Nehemiah chapter 4. The enemy was trying to shut down the rebuilding of the wall. Nehemiah 4:16-18 says, "From that day on, half of my men did the work, while the other half were equipped with spears, shields, bows and armor. The officers posted themselves behind all the people of Judah who were building the wall. Those who carried materials did their work with one hand and held a weapon in the other, and each of the builders wore his sword at his side as he worked." They had to do it fast because the enemy was moving in to shut them down. There were two groups of people who got it done—the builders and the people who supplied the materials. That is a picture of the work of God around the world. God opens the doors to provide all the resources needed.

The other thing Nehemiah needed was recruits to rebuild the wall. He took some of them for a tour of the wall and the gates to show them the need. His passion was contagious. His broken heart was contagious. He said, "Look at this wall. Look at these gates! This is God's city. We can't stand this, can we?" When you present a need, people rally around that broken heart and doors are opened.

#### **4. He Gives You a Passion That's Bigger Than Your Fears**

The fourth step to a great work of God is He gives you a passion that's bigger than your fears.

In Nehemiah chapter 2, Nehemiah was frightened to go to the king with what was on his heart, so he prayed to the God of heaven. Then Nehemiah 4:12-14 says, "The Jews who lived near them came and told us ten times over, 'Wherever you turn, they will attack us.' Therefore I stationed some of the people behind the lowest points of the wall at the exposed places, posting them by families, with their swords, spears and bows. After I looked things over, I stood up and said to the nobles, the officials and the rest of the people, 'Don't be afraid of them. Remember the Lord, who is great and awesome, and fight for your brothers, your sons and your daughters, your wives and your homes.'"

Nehemiah knew that they were prepared and didn't want them to be afraid because the Lord was great and awesome. Fear is what keeps us from doing what Jesus tells us to do. Do you know why we don't talk to people about Jesus? Fear. It is the fear of rejection, failure, or even inadequacy that keeps us from doing a great work of God. Our fears all have one thing in common: they're all about us. We fear that we will be rejected, they won't like us, or we might mess it up.

Rescue is all about them. Fear is all about us. We have been intimidated into a deadly silence and we have the information upon which their eternity depends. Some people say, "Well, I'll just live a Christian life. I believe in lifestyle evangelism so I shouldn't have to say anything." You should live a lifestyle of living proof of what Christ can do, but there's a missing part to that. People could watch you for the next fifty years, but they're not going to say, "You know, Joe is such a nice guy, I'll bet Jesus died on the cross for my sins." They're not going to figure that out! You're going to have to tell them what Jesus did. You have to both show and tell.

Fear will keep you from God's great work, but fear of what's going to happen will cause a great work of God. It is our fear of what will happen if we don't rescue others that pushes us to risk it all. Think about what will happen if you don't show and tell others about what Jesus did. Often our fear of what will happen if we don't try to rescue them is so much greater than our fear of what might happen if we try. We're afraid of the wrong thing.

On the anniversary of September 11, PBS had interviews with survivors. A British gal who worked in a brokerage firm in one of the towers was interviewed, and she said, "You know, my very good friend was there that day." Then she started to cry and broke down in front of the camera. She said, "I only wish I'd asked him to come with me. I'll always be sorry for that."

Who will that be for us when we get to eternity? "I only wish I'd asked him to come with me. I only wish I'd asked her to come with me." Let that be what you're afraid of. Think about what will happen to them if you don't tell them about Jesus, not what will happen to you if you do.

## **5. He Gives You Your Part of the Mission**

The final step in a great work of God is He gives each person their part of the mission. We find that in Nehemiah chapter 3 there's a plan. Each person takes the responsibility of rebuilding the area near them.

What if every Christian did that and took the spiritual responsibility for rescuing the people around them? There's a rescue zone you've been assigned to. God gave you an assignment even though you might not think you're the best person for the job. Our world is changed when every child of God takes responsibility for what's right around them. You are responsible for the people in your world. You've been assigned a spiritual rescue zone that begins with a mission with a name.

When Andrew came to Christ, the first thing he did was go find his brother Simon to bring him to Jesus. He had a mission with a name. Ask God to break your heart for one person. A community transformation takes place when every person says, "I am a divine rescuer. I am the life guard assigned to this stretch of beach. If they die here, it's on my watch." The great work of God launches when each person takes their part of the mission.

The norm is settling for a safe status quo. We are passionate about being comfortable, safe, and secure. The common passion is to stay where it's safe. The uncommon passion of the unforgettable life abandons the safe status quo for a cause that can change your world. You have had planted in your heart by God a cause that becomes the governing passion of your decisions and priorities.

Ronald Reagan entered into what they call the long goodbye—ten years slowly dying of Alzheimer's disease. Over those ten years, he slowly lost portions of his life mentally. Nancy set up an office for him in L.A. where he could go and feel at least some dignity of going to work. There was a picture in his office of a river and people would come in and say, "Mr. Reagan, what's that picture?" He'd smile and say, "Oh, that's the Rock River in western Illinois. That's where I was a life guard when I was seventeen years old and where I saved seventy-seven lives." When being a star, being a governor, and being a president was gone, one thing remained—the lives he had saved.

Nehemiah was an ordinary man with enthusiastic desires and a passion to live an unforgettable life. He was involved in an incredible work of God. In the busyness of our lives, sometimes it's easy to forget what we were born to do. We want to feel like we are living a fulfilling life, but it often seems difficult to find God's purpose.

There is a cause that governs your life, an uncommon passion. Commit to the Lord that you will work through this process as He gives you a broken heart, He reveals the plan He has

for you, He opens all the doors for the plan to be accomplished, He gives you a passion that's bigger than your fears, and He gives you your part of the mission—your piece of the work of God on earth.

God is getting ready to do something big, and He wants to include you in what He's about to do. Ask Him for a wide open heart to do whatever He is summoning you to do. Don't waste one more day of your life running in the same old circles. Do what you were born to do and begin to change your world. When all the titles and achievements are gone, your legacy will be the lives you led to Christ.

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## **About Ron Hutchcraft**

Ron Hutchcraft is committed to communicating the Gospel of Jesus Christ to the lost in their language and to motivating and equipping believers to communicate Christ to the lost in their world. In all he does, he seeks to reach the lost and the young with the life-changing message of Jesus Christ.

As President of Ron Hutchcraft Ministries, Ron and his team specialize in developing authentic, relevant, and creative tools to reach people with the message of Jesus. A veteran of over 48 years of youth and family work, Ron has presented the Gospel across North America and around the world. Mr. Hutchcraft is also involved in work with Native Americans, and is founder of the On Eagles' Wings® Native leadership program.

For more information about Ron Hutchcraft Ministries, visit [www.Hutchcraft.com](http://www.Hutchcraft.com).

To find out how you can begin a personal relationship with Jesus Christ, please visit [www.ANewStory.com](http://www.ANewStory.com) or call 1-888-966-7325.

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