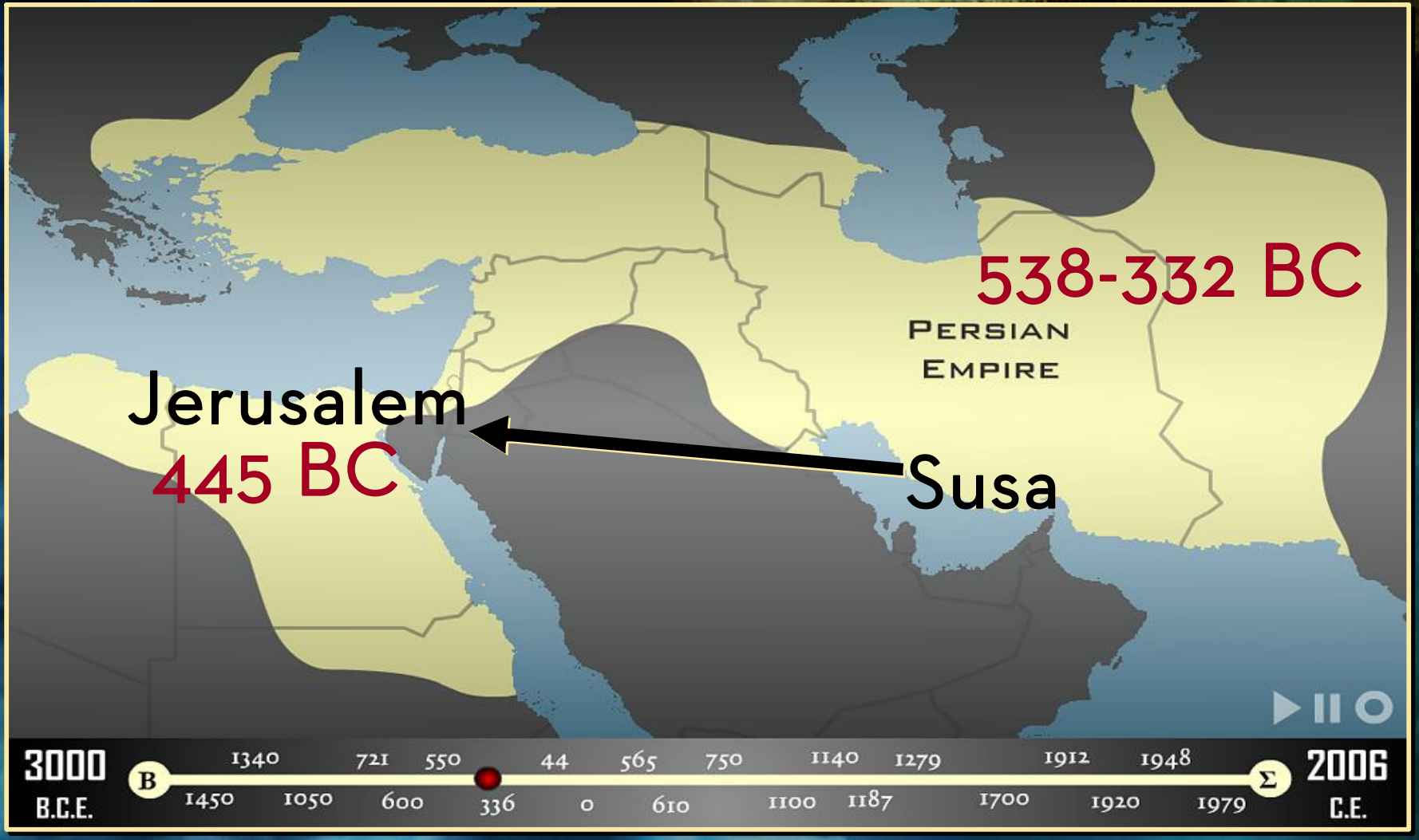
God's Plan
Nehemiah
For Renewal
Nehemiah 5
Renew Our Holiness

Headlines:

- Families buying power falls.
- Bad loans are defaulting at record pace.
- Mortgage bankruptcy foreclosures rise.
- Lenders taking over property.
- Credit crunch.
- Tax burdens weigh down citizens.

Jews returning to Jerusalem

- 538 BC—1st return, 49,897 Jews to Jerusalem, led by Zerubbabel,
- 458 B C –2nd return, 4,000-5,000 return, Ezra 7-10
- 444 BC--3rd return led by Nehemiah



Nehemiah in Susa, 445 BC

Nehemiah
God's Plan For Renewal

Moving from Sin to Holiness: Nehemiah 5

Nehemiah learns of the problem in Jerusalem: Economic ruin and financial exploitation of the Jewish people. Nehemiah 5:1-5

Financial exploitation of the people:

Vs. 2 Not enough money to buy food. Food shortage.

Vs. 3. Losing property to bad loans, bankruptcy and mortgage default.

Vs. 4. taxation increasing heavy burden.

Vs. 5 sell children to slavery

Moving from Sin to Holiness: Nehemiah 5

Nehemiah leads the people to holiness: From greed and selfishness to sacrificial giving so they can care for the people of Jerusalem.

Nehemiah 5:1-13

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How to move from sin to holiness:

Confront the real sin issues of the day:

- Confront thoughtfully. Nehemiah 5:6, 7

Then I was very angry…I consulted with myself…

How to move from sin to holiness:

Confront the real sin issues of the day:

- Confront those most responsible. Nehemiah 5:7

Contented with the nobles and rulers…

Deuteronomy 23:19,20

You shall not charge interest to your countrymen: interest on money, food, or anything that may be loaned at interest. "You may charge interest to a foreigner, but to your countrymen you shall not charge interest, so that the Lord your God may bless you in all that you undertake in the land which you are about to enter to possess.

Leaders need to lead on morality:

On Abortion:

Only 8% believe abortion should be unlimited

71% of registered voters would support a candidate who maintains life begins at conception.

84% believe abortion should be significantly restricted.

On Same Sex marriage:

70% say would vote for one who believes in one man, one woman marriage.

How to move from sin to holiness:

Confront the real sin issues of the day:

- Confront based on biblical commands. Nehemiah 5:7

  You are exacting usury…

Truth Matters: By Laws of Calvary

Present:

2.1.5 We believe in the universality and exceeding sinfulness of sin.

Proposed:

2.1.4 We believe that all people are born with a sin nature and commit sins by falling short of God's holiness and violating His commands.
Romans 2:23; I John 3:4

Truth Matters: By Laws of Calvary

Proposed:

2.1.13 We believe that biblical marriage consists only of the union of one man and one woman, and that biblical marriage is the only legitimate and acceptable context for a sexual relationship.
Genesis 2:24; Romans 1:26, 27

Change to holy standards.

Change because of who you are in Christ. Nehemiah 5:8

...redeemed our Jewish brothers...

Live like a child of Christ. I Peter 1:14-16

As obedient children, do not be conformed to the former lusts *which were yours* in your ignorance, but like the Holy One who called you, be holy yourselves also in all *your* behavior; because it is written, "You shall be holy, for I am holy."

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Change to holy standards.

Change because of who God is to you. Nehemiah 5:9

...walk in the fear of God...

II Corinthians 7:1

Therefore, having these promises, beloved, let us cleanse ourselves from all defilement of flesh and spirit, perfecting holiness in the fear of God

Ecclesiastes 12:13, 14

The conclusion, when all has been heard, *is:* fear God and keep His commandments, because this *applies to* every person. For God will bring every act to judgment, everything which is hidden, whether it is good or evil.

Change to holy standards.

Change because of your testimony to others. Nehemiah 5:9

...because of the reproach of the nations...

Colossians 4:5, 6

Conduct yourselves with wisdom toward outsiders, making the most of the opportunity. Let your speech always be with grace, *as though* seasoned with salt, so that you will know how you should respond to each person.

"Outsiders" view of Christians: David Kinnaman, *Unchristian*.

1. Hypocritical.
2. Too focused on getting converts.
3. Antihomosexual.
4. Sheltered, boring, out of touch.
5. Too political.
6. Judgmental

Commit to a holy life for the future.

- Commit sacrificially.
  Nehemiah 5:11 12

  Please give back to them this very day…Then they said, "We will give *it* back and will require nothing from them; we will do exactly as you say."

Acts 26:19-20

"So, King Agrippa, I did not prove disobedient to the heavenly vision, but *kept* declaring both to those of Damascus first, and *also* at Jerusalem and *then* throughout all the region of Judea, and *even* to the Gentiles, that they should repent and turn to God, performing deeds appropriate to repentance.

I Timothy 5:8

But if anyone does not provide for his own, and especially for those of his household, he has denied the faith and is worse than an unbeliever.

I Timothy 6:9-11

But those who want to get rich fall into temptation and a snare and many foolish and harmful desires which plunge men into ruin and destruction....

...For the love of money is a root of all sorts of evil, and some by longing for it have wandered away from the faith and pierced themselves with many griefs.

But flee from these things, you man of God, and pursue righteousness, godliness, faith, love, perseverance *and* gentleness.

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I Timothy 6:17-19

Instruct those who are rich in this present world not to be conceited or to fix their hope on the uncertainty of riches, but on God, who richly supplies us with all things to enjoy....

...*Instruct them* to do good, to be rich in good works, to be generous and ready to share, storing up for themselves the treasure of a good foundation for the future, so that they may take hold of that which is life indeed.

Commit to:

CROWN class on Biblical stewardship

Next Sunday 10:45

Commit to a holy life for the future.

- Commit publicly and with accountability. Nehemiah 5:12, 13

  ...took an oath from them...all the assembly said, "Amen."

Nehemiah 5:14-19: Nehemiah lived what he preached on money and power.

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