

Restoring Society's Foundations Isn't a Lost Cause

Were you to peer into my brain in recent months, you would find that a main thought running through it is our country's desperate need for restoration and repair. Not so much in the physical sense, but in the mental, emotional, and spiritual sense—a renewal of the foundations upon which basic life in this country has long been built: faith, family, and education.

It's easy to look at the swampy mess that surrounds us, throw up our hands, and [bemoan with the Psalmist](#), "If the foundations be destroyed, what can the righteous do?"

But the answer to that question is not a glum, "Nothing." Just the opposite, really: we, the average folks who are just trying to live an upright life, can do a whole lot.

I thought of this while reading through the biblical account of Nehemiah. A historical figure living in the 5th century B.C., Nehemiah served as a Judean governor under the Persian king Artaxerxes I. Originally the king's cupbearer, Nehemiah returned to his homeland of Judah and found the walls of its main city, Jerusalem, in sad disarray, leaving the people who lived there defenseless against their enemies.

But Nehemiah didn't sit there and moan that all was lost. No, he rolled up his sleeves and encouraged the population to start repairing the city's ruined foundations. And they fell into line, too, even when enemies threatened them, eventually restoring the walls in a record 52 days!

The story of Nehemiah and his cohorts rebuilding the foundations of their city in record time should give us hope

that all is not lost for our own nation. We, too, can help restore the foundations of our society, especially if we take a few cues from Nehemiah's book.

Rebuilding Locally

One of the fascinating things about Nehemiah's rebuilding project is that he didn't rely on some big building firm. Instead, he went local, relying on the surrounding community to do the work. In the biblical account [we see individuals from all walks of life pitching in](#). The goldsmiths worked on one section, the apothecaries labored next to them, and a city leader worked on a third portion.

One of the city leaders involved in the building project was a man named Shallum. But he didn't work on his section alone. He pulled his daughters in and had them work alongside him, providing an on-the-job training session for them.

In our quest to rebuild our country's foundations, we often have the urge to go to the top—the politicians and the big-name influencers—relying on national elections to start the restoration project. These individuals can certainly be a help, but the real strength of a movement comes by working at the local level, strengthening, encouraging, and training those in our communities and families to be the ones to do the hard work of rebuilding. Before they can do the work, however, they must be equipped with the proper tools.

A Trowel

While we don't know exactly what Nehemiah's builders used to complete their work, it's likely they used a tool such as a trowel to smooth the mortar while building the wall. Today, our rebuilding tools vary, but two possibilities immediately come to mind.

Good books from the past function as an antidote to the fluff

and continual flood of woke drivel we're subjected to in the media and elsewhere. If we're going to rebuild the foundations of our society, we need to be filling our minds with good, wholesome material and ideas, and then teaching our children to do the same.

The family is another tool that will rebuild society, and we should seek to do everything we can to encourage and strengthen our own families and other families around us. Planning or doing activities that keep the family together as a unit, rather than dividing it by age, is one way to do this. Another way is to encourage young adults to actually have families—and not just small ones of one or two children—rather than pushing them toward college and career until mid-life when building a family is less of an option.

The list could continue, but churches, homeschool groups, and community gatherings are some of the many other daily, average things we can use as tools to change people's hearts and minds and rebuild the foundations of our society.

A Sword

Unfortunately for Nehemiah's crew, rebuilding didn't go as smoothly as they hoped. It wasn't long before their enemies recognized their rapid progress on the wall and began threatening them with violence. As a result, his laborers [strapped their swords on while they worked](#), ready at a moment's notice to defend against attack.

Those of us seeking to rebuild society's foundations won't be without attack either. As such, we need to be equipped with good weapons of warfare, such as a thorough knowledge of the truth we're standing for, and the logic and debate skills to defend that truth. Training our children in these same skills will pass the weapons of warfare successfully down to the next generation.

But these weapons are not to be used continually. Just as Nehemiah and his cohorts were prepared to defend, but continued rebuilding while they waited for the attack, so we must not allow our weapons of warfare to distract us from the real work. Getting continually caught up in arguments or Twitter debates may show off our skills, but continually engaging in them often serves to drive others away from the real message of rebuilding and restoration that we want to convey. Knowing *how* to use our tools and *when* to use them effectively is key.

One Forgotten Tool

The sword and the trowel used in local community were the main components Nehemiah's builders used in their restoration work. But I would be remiss if I failed to mention one other ingredient that gave Nehemiah success: God.

Nehemiah was prepared for battle and he had equipped his workers with the tools they needed to finish the job, yet his little band was still weak against the enemy. Instead of growing disheartened at the giants they were facing, Nehemiah relied on God, telling his people "our God shall fight for us."

The same is true for us. We like to think we can rebuild and restore and repair the foundations on our own. But we can't. The disrepair is far greater than we could ever fix in our own strength. We must rely on the Lord to give us the wisdom, insight, and strength to fight the battle for truth and right. If we seek him and his guidance, he will not fail to deliver.

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This [article](#) was originally published at Annie's [Substack](#). You can subscribe to it [here](#).

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