

Commitment to Rebuilding 致力於重建

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The 1997 movie “As Good as it Gets” features Jack Nicholson and Helen Hunt. Nicholson, in the film, has obsessive-compulsive disorder, putting off every person he comes in contact with. He is a challenging person to be around. Until his favourite waitress leaves, and he pursues her. At the movie’s end, sorry to spoil a 25-year-old film, Nicholson says to Helen Hunt, ‘You make me want to be a better man.’

1997 年的電影「盡善盡美(中)/貓屎先生(香)/愛在心裡口難開(臺)」由積·尼高遜和海倫亨特主演。影片中的尼高遜患有潔癖強迫症，使每一個接觸到他的人都望而卻步。他是一個很有挑戰性的人。直到他最喜歡的女服務員離開，他才開始追求她。在電影的結尾，很抱歉破壞了一部 25 年前的電影，尼高遜對海倫亨特說：「你讓我想成為一個更好的人。」

It’s a famous scene and really heartfelt. And the thing sitting behind it is that Nicholson has found a person. He found a motivation to change who he is.

這是一個著名的場景，真的很感人。它的背後是尼高遜找到了一個人。他找到了改變自己的動力。

Maybe you’ve had that in life. Not that someone says – you must meet these standards, but instead, you want to pursue them.

也許你在生命中也經歷過。並不是有人對你說——你必須達到這些標準，而是你自己想要追求它們。

What motivates us in our relationship with God? Is it who He is or his love, compassion, or mercy to us throughout our lives and generations?

是什麼促使我們與上帝建立關係？是他是誰，還是他在我們的一生和世世代代中對我們的愛、同情或憐憫？

Are we aware of what motivates us? Do we know when we are guilted into obedience or driven by a desire to please other people?

我們知道是什麼激勵著我們嗎？我們知道什麼時候我們會因為內疚而服從或被取悅他人的慾望所驅使嗎？

We are coming to the end of the book of Nehemiah.

我們讀到了《尼希米記》的結尾。

A section of Israel has moved back from Babylon. The walls have been built. The people have trusted in God and are not afraid of their enemies.

以色列已經從巴比倫遷回的部分。城牆已經建成。百姓信賴上帝，不懼怕敵人。

Coming to the point of considering why the walls were broken down and needed to be rebuilt in the first place.

去考慮起初為什麼城牆被毀壞並需要重建。

They had sinned for generations, and God's patience ran out, so they were exiled. But in his great compassion, he has called them back into the promised land. And now, Israel reminds themselves about how sinful they have been, how good God has been to them, and then they recommit.

他們世世代代犯罪，神的忍耐耗盡，所以他們被放逐。但在他豐富的憐憫，他已將他們召回應許之地。而現在，以色列人提醒自己，他們曾經是多麼的罪惡，上帝對他們是多麼的好，然後他們重新承諾。

They meditate on the character of God and how that motivates them to recommit, change their behaviour and follow him.

他們默想上帝的品格，以及這如何激勵他們重新承諾、改變他們的行為並跟隨他。

The challenge for us today will be to consider what motivates us in our relationship with God. Is it a duty, compulsion by family, fear of hell or harm? Or is it like Israel? Are we motivated to grow like him and love him because of who he is?

今天我們面臨的挑戰是去思考是什麼促使我們與上帝建立關係。這是一種責任、家庭的強迫、對地獄或傷害的恐懼嗎？還是像以色列？我們是否因為他是誰而有動力成長為像他一樣並愛他？

1. Confession 認罪

In Chapter 8 of Nehemiah, we left Israel celebrating and rejoicing. But now they grieve. Why?

在《尼希米記》第8章結尾，以色列人都大大喜樂。但現在他們悲傷了。為什麼？

Before you can appreciate who God is, you have to know who you're not.

在你能欣賞上帝是誰之前，你必須知道你的不是。

Chapter 9 verse 1.

第9章第1節。

On the twenty-fourth day of the same month, the Israelites gathered together, fasting and wearing sackcloth and putting dust on their heads.

這月二十四日，以色列人聚集禁食，他們披麻蒙灰。

God's people own their sins. They know who they are and who they're not.

神的百姓承認他們的罪。他們知道自己的是，與不是。

They put on a burlap sack, which is so itchy! They are literally clothing themselves with discomfort. And put dirt on their heads.

他們套上了一個麻袋，麻袋好癢！他們實際上是在給自己穿上不舒服的衣服。並把灰垢放在他們的頭上。

They are not comfortable with their sin and see themselves as dirty. It's a picture of humility. "I'm a real mess, and I'm dirty. I need help."

他們對自己的罪感到不安，認為自己骯髒。這是謙卑的寫照。「我真是一團糟，而且我很髒。我需要幫助。」

We should do this if we ever find ourselves comfortable in our sin. We must acknowledge that we have sin in our lives, it is a mess, and God is the only one to help and clean us.

如果我們發現自己對自己的罪感到安心，我們就應該這樣做。我們必須承認我們的生活中有罪，是一團糟，而上帝是唯一幫助和清洗我們的人。

They also separate themselves from foreigners. Not that there is anything wrong with people of other nations being there. But it is an act to say, 'these are our sins to deal with.'

他們也將自己與所有的外邦人分別出來。並不是說外邦人有什麼問題。而是說，「這些是我們自己要負責處理的罪。」

So they now confess. They confess their sins and the sin of their ancestors. They are not blaming anyone else for being exiled. They own their sin. And it is not just a 'sorry for whatever wrong I've done.' Verse 3.

所以他們都認罪。站著承認自己的罪和祖先的罪孽。他們並沒有因為被流放而責備其他任何人。他們承認自己的罪。這不僅僅是「對我所做的任何錯誤感到抱歉。」第3節，

3 They stood where they were and read from the Book of the Law of the Lord their God for a quarter of the day, and spent another quarter in confession and in worshiping the Lord their God.

3 那日的四分之一，他們站在自己的地方念耶和華—他們上帝的律法書，又在那日的四分之一認罪，敬拜耶和華—他們的上帝。

They read the Book of the Law, and as the reading went on, they would see all the places where they fell short. And they spend a quarter of the day in confession. Six hours which might seem like a lot!

他們閱讀律法書，隨著閱讀的進行，他們會看到所有他們不足的地方。他們用那天的四分之一時間認罪。六個小時似乎很多！

Even if we just went through the first of the ten commandments, 'You shall have no other God but me.' I'm sure we could spend a lot of time in confession.

即使我們只看十誡中的第一條，「除了我以外，你不可有別的神。」我相信我們可以花很多時間去認罪。

God, I'm sorry when I made myself God over you and chose selfishness. I'm sorry when I made money my God and worshipped at the altar of work or possessions.

上帝啊，當我把自己當神而不是你並選擇自私時，我很抱歉。對不起，我把錢當成我的上帝並在工作或財產的祭壇上敬拜。

And Jesus says of adultery that lust is just as bad as murder, and anger is just as bad. Imagine if we went into detail and confessed our lust, anger, theft, envy, and jealousy.

耶穌說姦淫和殺人，動怒和殺人也一樣糟糕。想像一下，如果我們詳細說明並承認我們的淫念、憤怒、偷盜、和嫉妒。

There is much to confess.

有很多罪要認。

To appreciate who God is, we need to have humility, take a good hard look at ourselves, and know who we are not.

要欣賞上帝是誰，我們需要謙卑，仔細審視自己，知道我們的不是。

One of the challenges of our time is that we are all told that our views are valuable and that we are right, our emotions are right, and the view of ourselves is right. We are losing the ability to say what is right and wrong, and they are completely self-chosen.

我們這個時代的挑戰之一是，我們都被告知我們的觀點是有價值的，我們是對的，我們的情緒是對的，我們對自己的看法是對的。我們正在失去判斷對錯的能力，他們完全是以自我作選擇的。

God sits outside of time and culture; he himself is good and tells us what is good and right.

上帝身處時間和文化之外；祂自己是美好的，並告訴我們什麼是好和正確的。

Israel realises they have gone far away from this God and turned back to him.

以色列意識到他們已經遠離了這位神，轉而歸向了祂。

2. Character 特點

They read the Law and have clarity over where they fell short. But their own sinfulness is not what motivates them.

他們閱讀律法書並清楚自己的不足之處。但他們自己的罪惡並不是他們的動機。

It is not a faith that is based on pulling up your socks or trying really hard to follow God. Their desire to confess and motivation to change is based on the character of God.

這不是一種建立在振作起來或努力跟隨上帝的基礎上的信仰。他們認罪的願望和改變的動力是基於上帝的品格。

In verse 5, the Levites, the priests, stand up and praise God with a summary of their history. 2 key highlights - how awful Israel has been and how good God has been.

在第5節中，利未人和祭司都站起來讚美上帝，總結他們的歷史。2 兩個主要亮點是，以色列有多糟糕，上帝有多好。

Verse 6.

第6節。

You alone are the LORD. You made the heavens,... You give life to everything...

惟獨你是耶和華！你造了天和天上的天…一切的生命全都是你賞賜的…

God is lifted high as the one who is in charge of all, responsible for all, and has power over all. And described as the one who chose Abraham in verse 7. God chose to make a covenant with people.

神被高舉為掌管一切、對一切負責、對一切都有權能的那一位。並在第7節描述為揀選亞伯拉罕的那一位。上帝選擇與人立約。

God heard Israel stuck in Egypt and saved them. Verse 13, God gave them laws and regulations that are good and right. Verse 15, God provided for their physical needs and gave them a land to live.

上帝聽到以色列人被困在埃及並拯救了他們。第 13 節，賜給他們正直的典章、真實的律法、美好的律例與誡命。第 15 節，上帝供應他們物質上的需要，並賜給他們土地去作居住。

Up to this point, it all looks good and rosy. God has been good and saved his people. Everything changes in verse 16. The leaders recount every time they failed as a people to follow God, but it also reveals the true character of God.

到目前為止，一切看起來都很美好。上帝一直很好，拯救了他的百姓。一切都在第 16 節發生了變化。領袖們講述了他們作為一個民族未能跟隨上帝的每一次失敗，但這也揭示了上帝的真實品格。

16 "But they, our ancestors, became arrogant and stiff-necked, and they did not obey your commands.

16 但我們的祖先行事狂傲，硬著頸項不聽從你的誡命。

Stiff-necked is the opposite of humility—an inability or unwillingness to bend. But now Israel has been humbled. Their necks have softened by the exile.

硬著頸項是謙卑的對立面——不能或不願屈服。但現在以色列已經謙卑了。他們的脖子因流亡而軟化。

Verse 17.

第 17 節。

17 They refused to listen and failed to remember the miracles you performed among them.

17 他們不肯順從，也不記念你在他們中間所行的奇事。

They forgot the God who made everything, who took them and made them a people, saved them out of Egypt, gave them good laws to follow, and gave them a land. They forgot him.

他們忘記了創造萬物的上帝，上帝選納他們並使他們成為一個民族，將他們從埃及拯救出來，賜給他們良好的法律以供他們遵守，並賜給他們一片土地。他們忘記了祂。

And this is where the character of God is revealed. If you've ever heard someone say that the God of the Old Testament is just an angry God, take them here to Nehemiah 9.

這就是上帝的品格被揭示的地方。如果你曾經聽過有人說舊約的神只是一位憤怒的神，請把他們帶到《尼希米記》9 章。

Verse 17

第 17 節

But you are a forgiving God, gracious and compassionate, slow to anger and abounding in love. Therefore you did not desert them,

但你是樂意饒恕人，有恩惠，有憐憫，不輕易發怒，有豐盛慈愛的上帝，並沒有丟棄他們。

God had compassion on them when they made a golden calf.

他們雖然為自己鑄了一頭牛犢，上帝仍憐憫他們。

Verse 19, God had compassion on them and didn't leave them in the wilderness and sustained them instead.

第 19 節，上帝憐憫他們，不把他們丟棄在曠野，而是仍引導他們行當行的路。

God gave them land, and then they disobeyed again, and enemies came and oppressed them. And again verse 27, God had compassion.

上帝給了他們土地，然後他們又不順從，所以上帝讓敵人來折磨他們。在第 27 節再次，神照祂豐富的憐憫賜給他們拯救者。

The cycle happens time and time again. The people follow God, take him for granted, worship other gods, and forget him; he sends enemies against them, so they cry out. Verse 28

循環一次又一次地發生。人們追隨上帝，把他視為理所當然，崇拜其他神靈，忘記他；祂派仇敵攻擊他們，他們就呼求。第 28 節

And when they cried out to you again, you heard from heaven, and in your compassion you delivered them time after time.

然而他們轉回哀求你，你就從天上垂聽，屢次照你的憐憫拯救他們

God is beyond gracious to us. Even after we commit the most heinous acts against his people and him, he continues to find a way to be loving and compassionate. And even when his people aren't repenting, he doesn't completely destroy them.

神對我們的恩典是無可比擬的。即使在我們對他的百姓和他犯下了最令人髮指的罪行之後，他仍然繼續尋找一種充滿愛心和同情心的方法。即使他的百姓沒有悔改，他也不會完全摧毀他們。

They are in a disastrous situation where they have been exiled, their country destroyed, and the whole nation shamed, and yet Israel is remembering how good God continues to be to them.

他們在被流放的地方處於災難性的境地，他們的國家被摧毀，整個國家蒙羞，但以色列人仍然記得上帝對他們的恩惠。

Verse 31 summarises the character of God.

第 31 節總結了上帝的品格。

But in your great mercy you did not put an end to them or abandon them, for you are a gracious and merciful God.

然而因你豐富的憐憫，你不全然滅絕他們，也不丟棄他們，因為你是有恩惠、有憐憫的上帝。

God did not destroy them, and He continued to have compassion because of who he is. Because of his character.

上帝並沒有全然滅絕他們，他繼續因為他是誰而充滿憐憫。因為他的性格。

As I read through this, the word that jumped out to describe God's character is compassion. It's in there four times in chapter 9. *Gracious and compassionate, in God's great compassion, great compassion, in your compassion you delivered time and time again.*

當我讀到這裡時，憐憫是描述上帝品格最突出的詞。在第9章裡有四次。有恩惠，有憐憫，因你豐富的憐憫，照你豐富的憐憫，屢次照你的憐憫。

God is gracious and merciful to his people. But the key to this is his compassion.

上帝對他的百姓是有恩惠和憐憫的。但關鍵是他的同情心。

Compassion is two words put together, 'Com' means with or together, as in company. 'Passion' is not strong emotions but suffering. If you remember the movie the Passion of Christ. The original meaning of passion is suffering.

同情是兩個詞放在一起，「Com」的意思是像在公司中一樣的或與在一起。「Passion」不是強烈的情緒，而是痛苦。如果你還記得電影《耶穌受難記》。這字的本義是受苦。

So when we have compassion, we are with someone in their suffering. So if you know of a really compassionate person, they will sit with you while you're grieving.

因此，當我們有憐憫時，我們會與受苦的人同在。因此，如果您認識一個真正富有同情心的人，他們會在您悲傷時與您坐在一起。

God is not absent. He is with his people every step of the way. God is with them when they are faithfully following. But more so, he's with them when they rebel and suffer. God is ready to show mercy and forgive. He is present every step of the way. And wonderfully, he does this fully in Jesus Christ.

上帝並不缺席。他在每一步都與他的百姓在一起。當他們忠實地跟隨他們時，上帝與他們同在。但更重要的是，當他們反叛和受苦時，他也與他們同在。上帝已準備好施以憐憫和寬恕。他在每一步都同在。奇妙的是，他完全在耶穌基督裡做到了這一點。

God became man and is with us in every way. He knows our experience, and he knows our joys and our pains and our sufferings. Jesus is compassion

神成為人，並在各方面與我們同在。他知道我們的經歷，他知道我們的快樂、痛苦和苦難。耶穌是滿有憐憫。

Jesus suffered on the cross. Suffered in every way as we suffer. Physical pain. Betrayed by those closest to him. Distant from God. All so that God could have mercy and grace on us.

耶穌在十字架上受苦。在我們受苦的時候，在各方面都受苦。身體上的疼痛。被最親近的人背叛。遠離神。一切都是為了上帝可以給我們憐憫和恩惠。

3. Commitment 承諾

God is with Israel in their suffering. His compassion has motivated Israel to change. Israel, in verse 37, cries out to God.

上帝與以色列同在他們的苦難中。他的憐憫促使以色列做出改變。以色列在第37節向上帝呼求。

Verse 37, "We are in great distress." End of chapter 9:38

第37節，「我們遭了大難。」第9章38節的結束說，

38 *“In view of all this, we are making a binding agreement, putting it in writing, and our leaders, our Levites and our priests are affixing their seals to it.*

38 因這一切，我們立確實的約，寫在冊上。我們的領袖、利未人和祭司都用了印。

The people know their history and who God is and are motivated by his compassion, love and mercy. So they want to represent God better. They want to honour him. They want to remain God's people and not take it for granted. So they recommit.

百姓認識他們的歷史和上帝是誰，並受到他的恩惠、慈愛和憐憫的激勵。所以他們想更好地代表上帝。他們想向他致敬。他們想繼續做上帝的百姓，而不是認為這是理所當然的。所以他們重新承諾。

They rededicate themselves.

他們重新奉獻自己。

Something really important is being done. The people make a binding agreement, put it in writing, and all the key people, the leaders, the Levites, and the priests sign it. It is not just one person, but the whole people.

一些非常重要的事情正在做。百姓訂立有約束力的協議，寫成文字，所有主要人物、首領、利未人和祭司都在上面簽字。不只是一個人，而是全體百姓。

God, by his grace, has called his people back to him, and they have seen that and are saying – yes! We want to follow this God. And we are going to commit.

神，藉著他的恩典，呼召他的百姓回到他身邊，他們已經看到並說——是的！我們要跟隨這位神。我們將承諾。

The following three chapters, 10, 11 and 12, show the people recommit to God. Chapter 10 starts with a list of all the groups of people. And verse 29 describes that they

接下來的第 10、11 和 12 章三章表明人們重新委身於上帝。第 10 章以所有人群的列表開始。第 29 節描述他們

bind themselves with a curse and an oath to follow the Law of God given through Moses the servant of God and to obey carefully all the commands, regulations and decrees of the Lord our Lord.

都隨從他們貴族的弟兄發咒起誓，要遵行上帝藉他僕人摩西所賜的律法，謹守遵行耶和華——我們主的一切誠命、典章、律例。

It is as if they are saying – we swear that we are going to follow God and walk following his ways, and if we don't, let us be cursed.

就好像他們在說——我們發誓我們將跟隨上帝並按照他的方式行事，如果我們不這樣做，讓我們受到詛咒。

The commitment is outlined in 10:30-39 and really is just a return to God's Law. Their first step towards recommitting to God is to turn back to his word, the scriptures.

10:30-39 中概述了那承諾，實際上只是回歸上帝的律法。他們重新委身於上帝的第一步是回到他的話語，即聖經。

They will honour the Sabbath day to rest and trust in God.

他們會在安息日安息並信靠上帝。

They won't give their daughters in marriage to people from other religions because they will bring in the worship of other Gods.

他們不會把自己的女兒嫁給其他宗教的人，因為他們會帶來對其他神的崇拜。

They will honour God's temple, the place where sacrifices were made. They would tithe and give their money and first fruits, crops, and animals.

他們會榮耀上帝的聖殿，就是獻祭的地方。他們會作十分之一的奉獻，捐出他們的錢和初熟的果實、莊稼和牲畜。

God has continued to be committed to them, so they are committing to God with their money, successes, families, time, and worship.

上帝一直向他們守信，所以他們將金錢、成功、家庭、時間和敬拜承諾交託給上帝。

And finally, at the end of chapter 12, I know we've been flying through these chapters. At the end of chapter 12, we return to the wall.

最後，在第 12 章的結尾，我知道我們像飛一樣越過了這些章節。在第 12 章結束時，我們回到城牆上。

The wall that Nehemiah came to rebuild. It was built a couple of chapters ago. But it had not been dedicated. God first wanted to work on his people.

尼希米來重建城牆。在幾章前已建造好。但並沒有被奉獻。上帝首先想在他的百姓身上工作。

They've read the Law, confessed their sin, and recommitted to the Lord. Now they are ready to celebrate what God has been doing in their community. Nehemiah orders all the musicians and the choirs, and he positions them.

他們已經閱讀了律法，承認了自己的罪，並重新委身於主。現在他們準備慶祝上帝在他們的社群中所做的一切。尼希米把所有的歌唱的人和稱謝的人分隊，安排他們在不同的位置。

And they offered many sacrifices and in verse 43,

他們獻了許多豐盛的祭物，在第 43 節，

they were rejoicing because God had given them great joy. The women and children also rejoiced. The sound of rejoicing in Jerusalem could be heard far away.

並且歡樂，因為上帝使他們大大歡樂，連婦女帶孩童也都歡樂，甚至從遠處都可聽到耶路撒冷的歡聲。

Jerusalem is beginning to become the city of God again, not just the place, but the people.

Restoration and reconciliation between God and his people should always be celebrated. When a sinner comes to God, there is feasting in heaven. When someone commits their life to God, and we do a baptism, we celebrate.

耶路撒冷再次開始成為上帝的城市，不僅是地方，還有百姓。上帝與他的百姓之間的關係恢復與和解應該永遠被慶祝。當罪人來到神面前時，天上就有筵席。當有人將他們的生命交託給上帝，而我們進行洗禮時，我們就會慶祝。

Brothers and sisters,
弟兄姊妹，

We've seen such a wonderful journey that Israel has gone on. God has worked to restore them to their land. They read the bible and confessed their sins.

我們看到了以色列所經歷的一段如此美妙的旅程。上帝已努力使他們回到自己的土地上。他們閱讀聖經並承認自己的罪過。

They have meditated on how good God has been. Particularly his compassion for centuries. And God's character has motivated them to recommit to him. So they've signed up again to follow him. 他們思想上帝是多麼美好。特別是祂幾個世紀以來的憐憫。上帝的品格促使他們重新委身於他。所以他們再次立約跟隨他。

Maybe today is a good day for us to do the same thing. To confess our sin, where we have walked far away from him. To remind ourselves of his compassion in Jesus. He dealt with our sins so that we can know him.

也許今天是我們做同樣事情的好日子。承認我們的罪，承認我們已經遠離他。提醒我們祂在耶穌裡的憐憫。他處理了我們的罪，以便我們認識他。

How do we sit in his compassion to be motivated to commit to him?

我們如何坐在他的憐憫中去被感動去委身於他？

Jack Nicholson said, 'you make me want to be a better man.'

積·尼高遜說，「你讓我想成為一個更好的人。」

God's compassion in Jesus means we get to be his people. Reminding ourselves of his goodness throughout hard times when he is still there calls us to say,

上帝在耶穌裡的憐憫意味著我們可成為祂的百姓。在艱難時刻提醒我們自己祂的同在和祂的良善，好讓我們說，

God, your compassion and love make me want to be a better Christian. Thank you, God, you are with me each step. Help me recommit to you today. To love your word. To choose to follow and obey you, trusting in you today.

上帝啊，你的憐憫和愛讓我想成為一個更好的基督徒。謝謝你，上帝，你與我每一步同在。幫助我今天再次向你承諾。愛你的話。選擇跟隨和服從你，今天信任你。