

RISE AND REBUILD

A GUIDE TO OVERCOMING ADVERSITY

DISCOVER THE POWER OF NEHEMIAH'S
EXAMPLE TO REBUILD YOUR LIFE AND
FULFILL YOUR PURPOSE.

ROBERT STEARNS

FOREWORD BY
SAMUEL RODRIGUEZ

Rise and Rebuild: A Guide to Overcoming Adversity

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ENDORSEMENTS

The Scriptural ministry of the apostle is one of a master builder (1 Cor. 3:10). They are to be, alongside the prophets, the foundation of the church (Eph. 2:20) and those who direct the execution of its Kingdom mandate upon the earth.

Bishop Robert Stearns walks in a global office of the Apostle, carrying within him the architectural vision and blueprints of this glorious building of the church both inwardly in the lives of people and outwardly through raising them up as equipped Kingdom Ambassadors (2 Cor. 5:20). In “Rise and Rebuild,” Bishop Robert begins to release these revolutionary blueprints to the body of Christ.

Walking alongside Bishop Robert as both Spiritual Son and Successor to Tommy and Spiritual brother and mentor to Aimee, has been the greatest privilege of our lives. We have watched him navigate seemingly insurmountable obstacles, pain, and wrestling and come through not only with victory, but with a depth of the word of the Lord, His presence and glory, and a readiness to bring the global community of faith into an intentional building plan rooted in the ancient pathways (Jer. 6:16-17).

BISHOP ROBERT STEARNS

We invite you into this journey with our beloved friend, Bishop Robert, as we “come Home again” and rebuild.

—Bishop Tommy Reid

The Tabernacle Bishop Emeritus

COVNet Bishop

—Pastor Aimee Reid-Sych

The Tabernacle Worship Pastor

COVNet President

United Women Rise President

*I am very pleased to highly recommend to you the ministry and the latest book *Rise and Rebuild of Bishop Robert Stearns*, one of the foremost leaders in the Church today. We are glad to have Bishop Robert as one of the Board members of CGI.*

Bishop Robert is making an extraordinary impact around the world, mobilizing support for Israel and a deeper Biblical understanding of the Jewish roots of our faith. In his new book, he guides you through the story of Nehemiah, producing powerful insights that will challenge, teach, and equip you to be an effective wall builder in the Kingdom of God.

—Dr. Younghoon LEE, Senior Pastor

Yoido Full Gospel Church & General Superintendent,

Assemblies of God of Korea

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With trowel in one hand and sword in the other, Nehemiah takes on the immense task of rebuilding a broken people. Robert Stearns personalizes the story for every believer in hope and a new beginning.

A must read and worthy addition to your library.

—Rev. A. R. Bernard, Sr.

Christian Cultural Center
New School of Biblical Theology
Commission of Religious Leaders
Sheen Center for Thought and Culture

Bishop Robert Stearns is a very strategic and discerning leader in the global body of Christ. He is a man with a long proven history of integrity and humility and deep love for Jesus and the Scriptures. He has a unique gift for uniting the Church and awakening us to the importance of standing together for the biblical narrative for Israel.

Eagles' Wings ministry has been significant in preparing many to walk in a new prophetic season in salvation history—one in which Gentile leaders in the Church love and relate to leaders in Israel and vice versa.

Bishop Stearns' latest book on the life and ministry of Nehemiah, "Rise and Rebuild," is a call to this generation to access God's work of restoration in our own lives and to use what He has given

BISHOP ROBERT STEARNS

us to be rebuilders of God's Kingdom in every sphere of society around us. In it he presents fresh prophetic perspectives combined with practical insights for our lives. I highly recommend this book—it will be a catalyst for powerful change in many lives!

—Mike Bickle

Founder, International House of Prayer of Kansas City

In his new book “Rise and Rebuild,” Bishop Robert Stearns gives you powerful and practical application for living a lifestyle of an overcomer! I have been so enriched and blessed to know and partner with Bishop Robert and his ministry, and I believe you will be greatly strengthened as you read and apply the truths in this book into your own life circumstances.

Our nation needs righteous wall builders like never before, and you are holding in your hands an invitation and opportunity to be part of a mighty move of God in this generation!

—Kathy Branzell

President, National Day of Prayer Task Force

A lot of people are all house and no foundation. Dr. Robert Stearns, in his latest book “Rise And Rebuild,” is destined to be the quintessential book to turning wreckage into worship and shambles into success.

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As a wise master builder, I encourage you to buy a book for yourself and a box of books for your team. Read it now and reap for years to come!

—Dr. James O. Davis

Founder/President

Global Church Network

Greater Orlando, Florida Area

www.GCNW.tv

After a half-century serving the nation of India and building on the promises of God in my beloved homeland, I have seen time and again that the broken people of this world, the poor, the oppressed, the marginalized, are people of great worth and dignity. The broken ones can be great men and women of God and can be used to accomplish significant things for Him.

Bishop Stearns' exposition of the life and work of Nehemiah will encourage any reader that they, too, can be image bearers of God in this world. After reading "Rise and Rebuild," followers of Jesus will seek their role in building the Kingdom of God on earth today.

—Rev. Dr. Joseph D'souza

Archbishop/Moderator

Good Shepherd Church of Asia/Middle East

It is with profound admiration and brotherly affection that I put pen to paper in endorsing my dear friend, Bishop Robert Stearns. He is not merely a remarkable influencer and pioneer in his field — he is also an extraordinary individual who, with steadfast determination, is illuminating a new path in the intricate tapestry of Jewish-Christian relations, particularly with regard to the Evangelical Christian embrace of the State of Israel.

Throughout our shared endeavors over many years, the collaboration has been much more than a partnership—it has been a profound spiritual journey that has fostered a genuine appreciation for the sacred task that binds us together. The essence of this holy mission, especially in the world’s present state, is all the more poignant, serving as a beacon of unity and understanding between kindred spirits of different faiths.

Bishop Stearns’ most recent book, a deeply insightful exploration of the trials and triumphs of Nehemiah, transcends the boundaries of mere text on paper. It is a heartfelt testament, imbued with tangible emotion and irrefutable wisdom, which urges every reader to find their divine calling, and overcome the personal impediments that may obstruct their path to God and His holy word as revealed to us in the words of the Hebrew Scriptures.

Each chapter of this magnificent work has the potential to touch your soul, generating a profound transformation within. I am confident that the illumination Bishop Stearns has poured into these pages will not just inspire, but also empower you to draw deep into your reservoir of potential, unraveling the Divine plan crafted

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specifically for you. Furthermore, this book can also serve as a conduit, bridging the distance between individuals worldwide who are on a similar journey, seeking their purpose and overcoming their unique challenges by doing it together, and with each other. Through this bond, we can nurture a global community of enlightenment and growth, fostering mutual respect and understanding.

In endorsing Bishop Stearns, I am not just endorsing an esteemed author or a revered religious leader—I am endorsing a noble spirit whose tireless efforts and unflinching dedication to fostering unity is a testament to his extraordinary character. As you embark on this journey through the lens of Nehemiah, under the guidance of Bishop Stearns, prepare to be stirred, challenged, and inspired like never before.

—Rabbi Pini Dunner

Senior Rabbi, YINBH Beverly Hills Synagogue

I have personally witnessed the impressive work of Bishop Robert Stearns, his tireless commitment to work for a better, brighter world, and specifically his bridge-building between Christians and Jews. Israel and the world are the beneficiaries of his inspired efforts.

Bishop Stearns' insightful new book about the life of Nehemiah is a dynamic application of a story from ancient Israel that still speaks with relevance today.

BISHOP ROBERT STEARNS

I heartily recommend to you this book and the groundbreaking work of Bishop Stearns in this vital time in history.

—David M. Friedman

Former United States Ambassador to Israel

My friend Bishop Robert Stearns has done it again! Bishop Stearns shows us how to trust the God of the impossible when we face broken dreams and disappointments in this timely book on Nehemiah's life and journey.

This book is inspirational and thought-provoking, allowing the reader to go deeper in self-reflection and move from broken to building! Bishop Stearns' ministry continues to have a significant impact around the world. You don't want to miss out on this transformative read.

—Dr. John-Paul C. Foster

Senior Pastor, Faithful Central Bible Church

Rebuild, raise up, repair, and restore from Isaiah 58:12 were the strong verbs that motivated our restart in 1985, coupled with a daily devotional pursuit of Nehemiah's journal.

Bishop Stearns' book, "Rise and Rebuild: A Guide to Overcoming Adversity," could have very well been our roadmap,

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had it been available. He is a seasoned and gifted communicator whose life and ministry underscore the message.

—Bishop Joseph L. Garlington

Presiding Bishop of Reconciliation Ministries

Over the last number of years, I have had the honor of working alongside and personally experiencing the impact of Bishop Robert Stearns and Eagles' Wings, and I can say unequivocally that he is a leader who is changing the landscape of interfaith relations, particularly in advancing Christian support for Israel.

In this new book inspired by the biblical account of Nehemiah, he ties together our two faith communities for the changing of individual lives and for strategic purpose through key scriptural lessons. This is a superbly done and highly relatable manuscript that will greatly benefit you on your journey of faith."

—Mark Gerson

Entrepreneur, Philanthropist, and Author of the best-selling book *The Telling: How Judaism's Essential Book Reveals the Meaning of Life*

I was blessed to have met Robert many years ago. His faithful work through Eagles' Wings has pioneered wonderful support for Israel which is near and dear to my heart.

BISHOP ROBERT STEARNS

As you read Robert's book Rise and Rebuild from the story of Nehemiah, I know you will be filled with new courage to overcome obstacles and live with a deeper hope that will make a tangible difference for you and all those you love and whose lives you touch.

—Kathie Lee Gifford

Former co-host of NBC's TODAY and Author of NYT
bestseller *The Rock, The Road & The Rabbi* and
The God of The Way

Bishop Robert Stearns not only imparts valuable knowledge through this book, but also shares profound revelation and personal experience that will resonate with the reader's own journey. In a time when so many people are hurt and broken, without knowing how to fix themselves, this book is set to bring hope and restoration to those in need. There is no doubt that this book carries a message that will not only cause people to be healed but will help others to let go of the past and be propelled towards their destiny.

—Teófilo Hayashi

Senior Leader of Zion Church
Leader and Founder of Dunamis Movement

FOREWORD

BY SAMUEL RODRIGUEZ

In every generation, I believe that God has His “Generals” who are appointed to stand at the crossroads of history, to survey what needs to be done, and to mobilize the people of God to action. From ancient Israel to the 21st century, this narrative has never changed, because God Himself never changes and His purpose to raise up a people for Himself, who live, breathe, and act like Him has never wavered.

When I met Bishop Robert Stearns a few decades ago, I immediately knew I had met a dynamic leader to whom I was going to be connected for a long time. Those of us who know Robert Stearns know that he literally wakes up daily and works to make our world a better, more equitable, just, and meaningful place for all people. His passion and zeal to make a difference inspire me, and to this day I am honored to call Robert Stearns my personal friend.

I have been so impacted by Bishop Robert’s tireless work on behalf of Israel and the Jewish people around the world, through groundbreaking efforts like the annual Day of Prayer for the Peace of Jerusalem, for which I have the privilege of serving as co-chair

with him. And while this book is about so much more than that, Robert's first-hand understanding of the Jewish people and decades of experience in Jewish / Christian dialogue serve as the unmistakable backdrop for his insights in his powerful book *Rise and Rebuild*.

The biblical character Nehemiah, one of those mighty generals of God and the central figure of this book, is a profound example of determination, faith, courage, and covenant faithfulness. His “never-take-no-for-an-answer” attitude set the stage for a massive moment in Israel's history through the rebuilding of the walls of Jerusalem.

Nehemiah is known for being the pioneer, the leader of the charge to rebuild God's Holy City, in a time filled with many naysayers. He defied the odds by internalizing the promises of God spoken to his people the Jews and by doing something about it.

As my brother Robert so aptly shares, Nehemiah first had to have a personal experience with Israel's God, encountering His faithfulness and knowing Him to be the One who had the power to rebuild Broken Places. Nehemiah's mission was God's mission – which is why no amount of opposition could derail it. But Nehemiah had a choice to make, each and every day that he walked through the arduous and at times exhausting process of seeing his God do the impossible.

Because Nehemiah chose well and led the people well, we are still here today talking about it—and the people of Israel have

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continued in their perpetual bond to their homeland, even when being dispersed to the nations before their nation was reborn centuries later.

Make no mistake, our God is a God of miracles – but He is also looking for those who will partner with Him to see those epic miracles take place in the here and now.

This book is not an empty historical study. It is a battle guide to stand in the Broken Places of today's culture and the Broken Places of our own lives and declare, "I serve the God of Nehemiah, the One who can rebuild broken-down walls!" It's going to take tangible work to live like this; but as they say, nothing worth doing was ever easy. The price is high, but the rewards are limitless.

I don't know about you, but I want "in" on that kind of lifestyle in this enormously crucial hour. The fact that you are reading this book right now is a strong indication that you are the kind of person who is not satisfied by simply keeping the status quo. If you're hungry for more – to restore, to advance, to rebuild – then you are about to be equipped in a life-defining way as you read the following pages.

I can't think of anyone more suited to lead us through this process of timely discovery than Bishop Robert Stearns. Without a doubt, he is one of the Nehemiah's that God has raised up in this generation, bridging the gap between Jew and Gentile and bringing us back to the ancient covenants instituted by the God of Israel. You

are in the right place and the right time... and you picked up the right battle guide.

Where evil and chaos have ripped society apart and torn righteous walls down, let's rise up and rebuild. If we don't do it, who will?

Join me and my friend Robert on the adventure of a lifetime... a 900-mile trek with Nehemiah through the desert, through adversity, through the pain of the past, and into the promise of the future. The world will never be the same because of your "yes" to the God of Nehemiah.

Let's become wall builders together!

—Rev. Samuel Rodriguez

Senior Pastor, New Season Church, Sacramento, CA
President, National Hispanic Christian Leadership Conference
(NHCLC)

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PREFACE

Lately, I've been struck by the overwhelming, all-pervasive power of story. We are surrounded by, formed by, carried by, and compelled by stories. Stories have far more power in our lives than we consciously realize.

Family stories, national stories, fables, folklore, religious stories—stories surround us from our very earliest consciousness. They are with us in the last season of our lives, when we especially reflect on the stories of our past.

The farther we are removed from these stories in time, what seems to emerge as important is not the exact and precise details of the story but rather the overarching theme and “point,” which makes the story still relevant to us today. If the story doesn't have a strong, enduring, timeless, and universal message, it tends to fade. The stories that endure are the ones with a lesson worth remembering and relaying to the next generation.

Nehemiah is surely such a story.

All the necessary elements are here to keep us on the edge of our seats. Why Hollywood hasn't told this story yet, I don't know. But maybe they yet will.

I'm honored to retell this story for you. As I did in two of my previous books, "Keepers of the Flame" and "The Cry of Mordecai," I'm attempting to lift the curtain from the most reductive perspective ("Oh yeah - Nehemiah's the guy who rebuilt the walls of Jerusalem") and take us deeper, higher, and broader into a multi-dimensional consideration of this epic tale.

I'm forever grateful for the amazing team without whom I am truly and fully lost and ineffective. The entire immediate and extended 40-plus member unified team of Eagles' Wings and The Tabernacle is such a blessing and inspiration, and I thank each of them for all they do. In particular, Wendy Miller has run my schedule and the details of my life for the past 24 years. I regularly check with her to ask her where I am supposed to be and what I'm supposed to be doing, and somehow she always knows.

My sons, Isaac, Daniel, and Michael, live out the challenges and blessings of having me as their father. It's not always easy on them, and I pray that, somehow, the blessings outweigh the challenges. May you walk in Nehemiah's example and always be lovers of God, servants of mankind, and defenders of Jerusalem, all the days of your life.

Over the last months of finishing this book, five people who are precious to me "graduated to Glory." Each of them touched my life

PREFACE

in a profound and enduring way. Each of them shared their stories with me, and part of them lives on in me. I will never, ever forget them. I honor Pastor Jack Hayford, Pastor Al Baun, Billie Ann Smith, Sister Lorraine Minor (widow of the late Dr. David Minor), and Dolly Eleiott. I owe each of them so much and cherish my memories with them.

I pray that we will look deeper into this incredible drama and be renewed in faith, hope, and determination in the personal, communal, and even global aspects of our lives to, like Nehemiah, “Rise and Rebuild.”

INTRODUCTION

BROKEN PLACES IN A BROKEN WORLD

To live is to build.

Each of us is building something. We may be building a family, a career, a company, a ministry, a plan for retirement, a relationship. But each of us, consciously or not, is involved in building. We may have a crystal-clear blueprint, or we may just be going by some unspoken, vague, inner idea. But we are building—successfully or unsuccessfully—nonetheless.

In the midst of our building, it is inevitable that we are going to face the pain and disappointment of times and places of brokenness.

We live in a broken world. Each of us can easily point to so many things, in our individual lives, our families, our communities, our nations, our world, that are not “as they should be.” These things cause us emotional or physical challenges, pain, frustration, or at times even trauma in some way.

Divorce, a lost or struggling relationship with a child, a bankruptcy in business, a conflict in a house of worship, an inner

**There are those
courageous ones
who look at what
is but see what
could be.**

brokenness that no amount of prayer or time has been able to heal—there is no shortage of places where brokenness becomes evident.

The question for you and me is quite simple.

What are we going to do about it?

What are we going to do, if anything, about the Broken Places?

THE CHOICE OF A LIFETIME

Be clear. You DO have a choice. You can do nothing. You can accept the Broken Places as they are and leave them there. Some (many, in fact!) have decided that trying to repair the Broken Places is too risky, too costly, too dangerous, and the outcome too uncertain. Better to accept things as they are, this line of thinking goes, than to risk losing what little security you have.

But there are those courageous ones who look at what is but see what could be. They see themselves as part of a long line of dreamers and doers who throw themselves into places of breakdown and chaos and decide to become Builders and Repairers. They realize, with full clarity, that they may very well not succeed.

Except—they have redefined success.

Success is not the completion of the goal. Success, for them, is in getting up every day, no matter how tired, how cold, how alone...

and putting themselves to the task again. Success is in the effort. The commitment. The call. The cause.

A year after he left office, former U.S. President Theodore Roosevelt delivered a speech in Paris that was entitled “Citizenship in a Republic,” often referred to also as “The Man in the Arena.” In this well-known April 1910 address, he stated:

It is not the critic who counts; not the man who points out how the strong man stumbles, or where the doer of deeds could have done them better. The credit belongs to the man who is actually in the arena, whose face is marred by dust and sweat and blood; who strives valiantly; who errs, who comes short again and again, because there is no effort without error and shortcoming; but who does actually strive to do the deeds; who knows great enthusiasms, the great devotions; who spends himself in a worthy cause; who at the best knows in the end the triumph of high achievement, and who at the worst, if he fails, at least fails while daring greatly, so that his place shall never be with those cold and timid souls who neither know victory nor defeat.¹

The good news is that history shows that Builders and Repairers have a great ally—the person of God Himself. Isaiah prophesied about the Builders. “Those from among you shall build the old waste places; you shall raise up the foundations of many generations; and you shall be called the Repairer of the Breach, the Restorer of Streets to Dwell In” (Isaiah 58:12).

“Those from among you shall build the old waste places; you shall raise up the foundations of many generations; and you shall be called the Repairer of the Breach, the Restorer of Streets to Dwell In.”

—Isaiah 58:12

Our God is not afraid of brokenness. Not yours, and not mine. In fact, one could make the case that He actually gravitates towards impossible situations, heart-aches, and pain. I like to think it allows Him to “show off” and display His God-ness.

He is the Healer of the brokenhearted (see Psalm 147:3), and in describing the

Presence of God that shines into the hearts of all who believe in Him, 2 Corinthians 4:7 says, “But we have this treasure in earthen vessels, that the excellence of the power may be of God and not of us.”

Earthen vessels... so easily broken by those who would seek to trample on them. So often marred by the winds and floods of life that beat against the structure. So despairingly shattered by the unexpected tragedies that assail friend and foe alike in this life.

What are your Broken Places today?

I want to dare you to dream. To challenge you to believe. God wants to partner with you in healing your Broken Places, and then

in using your life and testimony to help heal Broken Places in our world.

GO TO YOURSELF

In Genesis 12:1, centuries before Nehemiah, God commanded Abram to leave everything that was comfortable to him and step out to make a new home for his family, which was to be in the land of Canaan. The name for the *parsha* (Torah Portion) that begins with this verse is *Lech Lecha*, which in Hebrew means “go to yourself.” Before anything else, God’s command to Abram was first a challenge to make changes in his life that would affect himself.

As we will see throughout Nehemiah’s life story, true leadership only happens when the leader is willing to step forward and break through his or her own process, no matter how painful, before those whom that person is leading.

God is in the business of taking broken things and somehow using them for good. Unfortunately for us, this is much more easily said than experienced. We may never know the meaning, the “why,” we had to experience certain things. God might never find it necessary to tell us. And what if He doesn’t? What will our response be?

REPAIRING THE WORLD

There is a concept in Judaism that has become a plumb line, a word of direction for me in my life. It is known as *tikkun olam*—or the repairing of the world. Ever since the fall of man—and even

Your brokenness does not disqualify you from being used by God. Rather, it can become the very thing that *qualifies* you.

before, in the vastness of His wisdom—God’s desire has been for a people who will participate with Him in His ultimate story of redemption and restoration in the earth. He calls us to join Him in the timeless work of

“re-creating” the world that He created as perfectly good.

I invite you to study with me the incredible life of one such Builder and Repairer. Nehemiah has become one of my heroes. His story is epic, but also very relatable.

One of the things I especially love about his story is that there are not any “miraculous” or “supernatural” aspects to his story, as there are in so many other stories in scripture. No angels, no weather-related miracles, no supernatural multiplication of food. In other words, Nehemiah’s story, which is epic and some might say has miraculous results, came about through simple but profound human obedience, passion, perseverance, courage, and hard work.

As we discover these life lessons together, I hope you will find with me what I have found to be true: that our brokenness does not disqualify us from being used by God. Rather, it can become the very thing that *qualifies* us. The rubble of our brokenness can produce the building blocks of our beautiful future, the open door towards the unfolding of a glorious destiny that is part of the vast story that God Himself is telling in the earth.

Come with me as we delve into this remarkable biblical story together—the story of Nehemiah.

FOR FURTHER STUDY:

1. What can you identify as an area or multiple areas of deep brokenness in your own life that you know God wants to heal, rebuild, and restore?

2. Name the Hebrew phrase that means “the repairing of the world.” What could this concept mean for you when lived out on a daily basis?

3. Do you see yourself as qualified to be used by God? Why or why not?

4. If there was one thing you could build in and through your life, what would it be?
