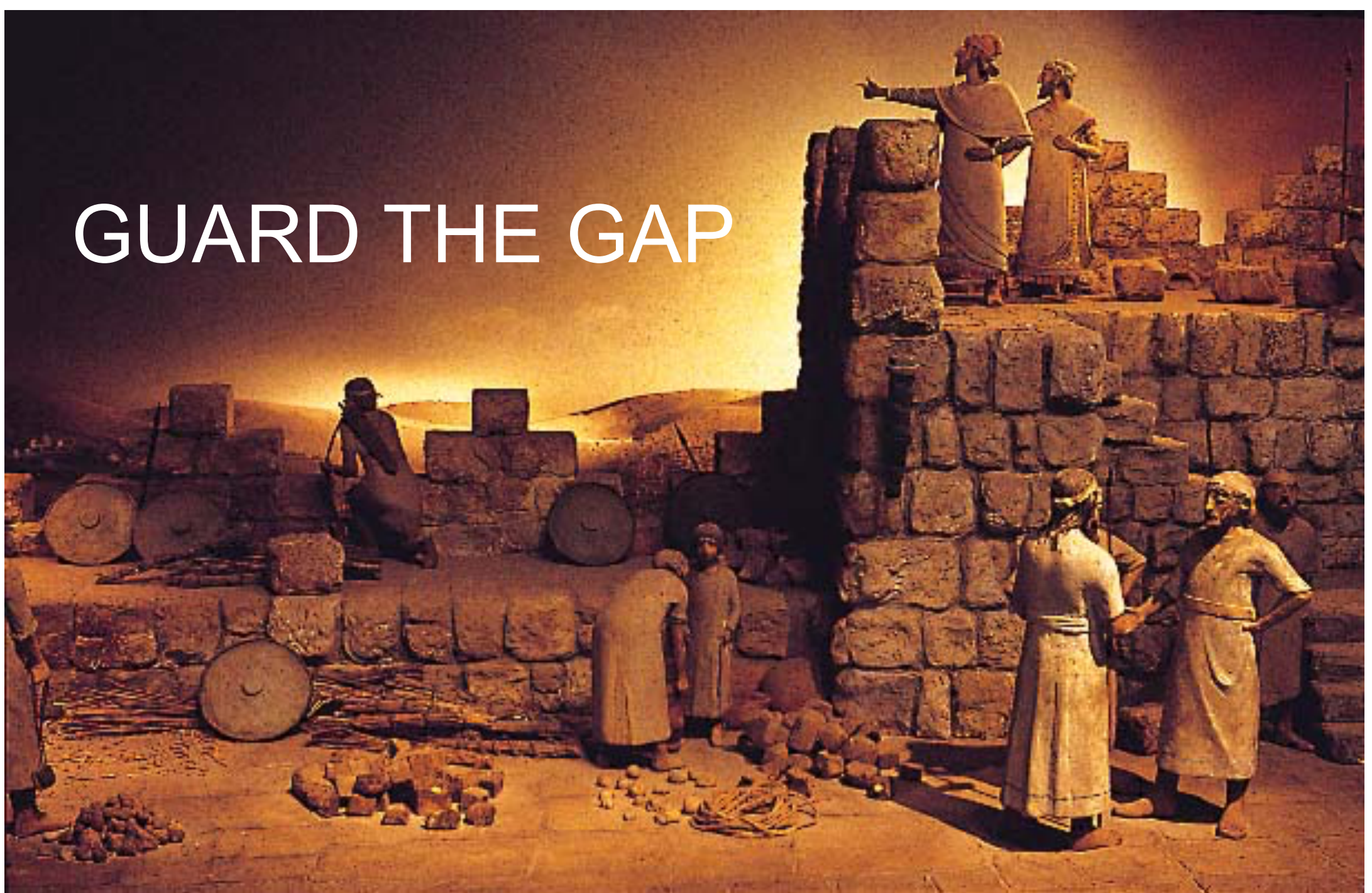


# GUARD THE GAP



**Time** – 450 B.C. **Place** = Iran (Susa)

**Person** = Nehemiah (palace servant)

- ✓ Report: sad state of affairs  
in Jerusalem... no security
- ✓ Nehemiah travels to Jerusalem to give  
leadership and rebuild city wall

# **LEADERSHIP**

- emotional trauma
- physical work
- social need
- enemy attack

Meanwhile, the people in Judah said,  
“The strength of the laborers is giving  
out, and there is SO MUCH RUBBLE  
That we cannot rebuild.” (*Neh. 4:10*)



## PRINCIPLE

When the past **HINDERS** the present,  
it must be **REMOVED**.

Growth requires “letting go”  
**IN ORDER TO** “hold on”

This principle applies to all areas of life.

• Physical • Emotional • Relational • Spiritual

No man can serve two masters. Either he will hate the one and love the other or hold on to the one and despise the other. (Jesus)

Removing rubble is exacting,  
demanding, thankless, brutal work!



You were taught, with regard to your former way of life, to PUT OFF your old self, which is being corrupted by its evil desires; to be made new in the attitude of your minds, and to PUT ON the new self, created to be like God in true righteousness and holiness.

*(Eph. 4:22-24)*

When clearing rubble from the past:

- cannot be sentimental, double minded, or hesitant
- must be motivated by a clear goal
- each small step is significant
- not everyone is going to be your cheerleader

In the task of completing a protective wall, some areas needed to be repaired while other areas needed to be replaced. There were GAPS where any enemy attack would have free access.





- a) Nehemiah assigned **families** to guard the gap and do repair near their **own** residence.
- b) They were also expected to be **available** to assist others who had **immediate** needs (responding to a trumpet signal)

Each of us has areas of strength and also areas of weakness where our **vulnerability** is **great**. (This is true for individuals, families, and communities).

We need to be willing to “stand in the gap” for others. This is an attitude of radical **intervention** and protective **responsibility**!

“It may happen someday, but NOT ON MY WATCH!”

“You may get in, but it will be OVER MY DEAD BODY!”

“I’m their defense attorney, and I’LL BE SPEAKING ON  
THEIR BEHALF!”

“They may be easy prey, but I’M YOUR WORST  
NIGHTMARE!”



“You may get away with that elsewhere,  
but NOT UNDER MY ROOF!”

“No one else may care, but this is MY brother...  
MY family... MY community!”

The long term goal was to fill the gap with **stones** i.e. transform its very nature into a place of strength. But the immediate need was to fill the gap with **bodies** simply to block entrance of the enemy. At times this is necessary. This is the passion of love!

**ARE YOU WILLING TO DO THIS  
FOR ANYONE?**