

“Let Us Rise Up and Build”

Lesson Text: **Nehemiah 2:17-18**

INTRODUCTION:

A. **Nehemiah 2:17-18** — Then I said to them, "You see the distress that we are in, how Jerusalem lies waste, and its gates are burned with fire. Come and let us build the wall of Jerusalem, that we may no longer be a reproach."

And I told them of the hand of my God which had been good upon me, and also of the king's words that he had spoken to me. So they said, "Let us rise up and build." Then they set their hands to this good work.

1. Background:

- a. Nehemiah, a contemporary of Ezra and a cupbearer to Artaxerxes I in the Persian palace, leads the third and last return to Jerusalem after the Babylonian exile.
- b. The ten tribes that had made up Northern Kingdom of Israel had fallen to the mighty Assyrian world empire nation in 722 B.C.
- c. 96 years later in 626 B.C., Babylon rebelled against the Assyrian Empire.
- d. 16 years later in 612 B.C. Babylon overthrew the Assyrian capital of Nineveh. Thus, the capital city of Nineveh was destroyed some 150 years after Jonah had cried out against it in about 762 B.C.
- e. 7 years later in 605 B.C. the Babylonians defeated the Egyptian armies at Carchemish, thus positioning itself as the sole world empire.
- f. Babylon turned its attention to the kingdom of Judah. Assyrian had attacked Judah but had failed to subdue it. Now, Babylon would succeed where Assyria had failed. Jeremiah had foretold of a period 70 year period of captivity.
 1. In 606 B.C. Some captives, including Daniel, are taken to Babylon.
 2. In 597 B.C., more captives, including Ezekiel, are removed to Babylon.
 3. In 586 B.C, Jerusalem is destroyed by fire.
- g. The Babylonian Empire fell to the Medes and the Persians in 539 B.C..
 1. Reckoned from the rebellion against Assyria in 626 B.C. — 87 years
 2. Reckoned from the overthrow of Nineveh in 612 B.C. — 73 years
 3. Reckoned from the defeat of the Egyptians at Carchemish in 605 B.C. — 66 years
- h. Just as there had been three deportations of the Jews by the Babylonians from Jerusalem to Babylon, there would also be three returns from Babylon to Jerusalem.
 1. 536 B.C. — Led by Zerubbabel (The temple was rebuilt)

2. 456 B.C. — Led by Ezra (The law was restored)
3. 444 B.C. — Led by Nehemiah (The walls of Jerusalem were rebuilt)

i. Our lesson text takes place during the third return.

2. Three statements in two-verse text captures my attention.
 1. The challenge of Nehemiah: “Come and let us build the wall of Jerusalem.”
 2. The response of the people: “Let us rise up and build.”
 3. The determination: Then they set their hands to this good work.”
3. A great result is seen in **Nehemiah 6:15-16** — So the wall was finished on the twenty-fifth day of Elul, in fifty-two days.

And it happened, when all our enemies heard of it, and all the nations around us saw these things, that they were very disheartened in their own eyes; for they perceived that this work was done by our God.

B. The Bible mentions the building of many things.

- | | |
|-----------------------------|--------------------------------|
| 1. Cities. Genesis 4:17 | 6. Temple. 1 Kings 6 |
| 2. Houses. Genesis 33:17 | 7. Fortifications. Ezekiel 4:2 |
| 3. Walls. Nehemiah 6:15 | 8. Sheepfolds. Number 32:16 |
| 4. Altars. Deuteronomy 27:7 | 9. Tombs. Luke 7:2-5 |
| 5. Tabernacle. Exodus 40 | 10. Synagogues Luke 7:2-5 |

C. **Ecclesiastes 3:3** — “. . . A time to break down, And a time to build up.”

D. **Congregations face times to “Rise up and build.”** We are facing that time now.

E. There is another sense in which the word “build” is used in the Bible. It is used with reference to obeying Christ. Jesus said in **Matthew 7:24-27** — “Therefore whoever hears these sayings of Mine, and does them, I will liken him to a wise man who built his house on the rock:

And the rain descended, the floods came, and the winds blew and beat on that house; and it did not fall, for it was founded on the rock.

Now everyone who hears these sayings of Mine, and does not do them, will be like a foolish man who built his house on the sand:

And the rain descended, the floods came, and the winds blew and beat on that house; and it fell. And great was its fall.”

F. As we join with our Father in building this new church building, let us not neglect some other areas in which construction is always underway and should never cease or be interrupted. Progress, or lack thereof, should always be monitored.

LET US CONTINUE TO BUILD OUR FAITH

- A. Without faith we cannot please God. **Hebrews 11:6** — “But without faith it is impossible to please Him, for he who comes to God must believe that He is, and that He is a rewarder of those who diligently seek Him.”
1. “Faith” here is singular and not plural. Not “faiths.”
 2. **Ephesians 4:5** — “One faith”
 3. **Romans 10:17** — “So then faith comes by hearing, and hearing by the word of God.”
- B. Faith plays such a great role in the Christian life.
1. We live by faith. **Romans 1:17**
 2. We walk by faith. **Romans 4:12**
 3. We pray by faith. **Matthew 21:22**
 4. We resist evil by faith. **Ephesians 6:16**
 5. We overcome the world by faith. **1 John 2:13-17**
 6. We fight the good fight of faith. **1 Timothy 6:12**
 7. We die in faith. **Hebrews 11:13** (Some die to faith)
- C. During the building process, let us:
1. Stand fast in faith. **1 Corinthians 16:13**
 2. Continue in faith. **Acts 14:22**
 3. Be strong in the faith. **Romans 4:20-24**
 4. Abound in the faith. **2 Corinthians 8:7**
 5. Hold fast our faith. **1 Timothy 1:19**
 6. Pray for an increase of faith. **Luke 17:5**
 7. Have assurance of faith. **2 Timothy 1:12**
- D. Utilize every proper and right avenue to build up your faith.

LET US CONTINUE TO BUILD GOOD WORKS

- A. The works of our congregation should not be interrupted in order to build a new building.
- B. Works are important to our serving God. The Bible says:
1. We are rewarded for our works. **1 Corinthians 3:13-15**
 2. Created for good works. **Ephesians 2:10**
 3. We are prepared for works. **2 Timothy 2:21**
 4. We are equipped for works. **2 Timothy 3:17**
- C. **John 9:4** — “I must work the works of Him who sent Me while it is day; the night is coming when no one can work.”

LET US CONTINUE TO BUILD OUR BROTHERLY LOVE

- A. **Hebrews 13:1** — “Let brotherly love continue.”

- B. Brotherly love is an important part of the family of God.
1. In **John 13:34-35** we are told to love one another.
 2. In **Romans 12:10** we are told to love with brotherly love.
 3. **Galatians 5:13** tells us that by love we serve one another.
 4. **1 Corinthians 8:1** tells us that love will build us up and edify us.
- C. While the building may be important, don't forget your brethren.

LET US CONTINUE TO BUILD OUR UNITY.

- A. **Psalm 133:1** — "Behold, how good and how pleasant it is For brethren to dwell together in unity! "
- B. Unity is precious in the family of God.
1. We are to be of the same mind. **Romans 12:16**
 2. We are to speak the same things and have no divisions among us. **1 Corinthians 1:10**
 3. We are to be of one mind and live in peace. **2 Corinthians 3:11**
- C. Don't let this massive building project interrupt our unity.

LET US CONTINUE TO BUILD FAITHFUL ATTENDANCE

- A. **Hebrews 10:24-25** — "And let us consider one another in order to stir up love and good works,
Not forsaking the assembling of ourselves together, as is the manner of some, but exhorting one another, and so much the more as you see the Day approaching. "
- B. "When the new building is ready, I will attend more often."
1. Do not attend for the building.
 2. Attend because of your love for, and faithfulness to, Christ.
- C. You need to Attend:
1. So as to worship God in Spirit and in truth. **John 4:24**
 2. To become stronger and to grow. **1 Peter 2:2-3**
 3. In order to increase in knowledge. **2 Peter 1:5**
 4. So as to guard against falling away from the faith. **2 Peter 2:20-22**
 5. Because it is wrong not to. **Hebrews 10:25-26**

LET US CONTINUE TO TEACH OTHERS AND SAVE SOULS

- A. **Mark 16:15-16** — "And He said to them, "Go into all the world and preach the gospel to every creature. He who believes and is baptized will be saved; but he who does not believe will be condemned. "
- B. Evangelism must not stop while we build a building.

- a. Every ten seconds twenty-six people die. Most of them are lost and without Christ.
- b. Millions will die without during the time it takes to build the new building.
- c. Every day that we are under construction, the local paper will carry a current obituary column.
- d. While we build the new building, we must keep teaching the gospel of Christ to a lost world now.

CONCLUSION:

- A. Waiting to get into the new building should never become an excuse to work faithfully and diligently now.
- B. During the building phase:
 1. Let us continue to build our **FAITH**.
 2. Let us continue to build our **WORKS**.
 3. Let us continue to build our **BROTHERLY LOVE**.
 4. Let us continue to build our **UNITY**.
 5. Let us continue to build **FAITHFUL ATTENDANCE**.
 6. Let us continue to **TEACH OTHERS AND SAVE SOULS**.
- C. The Lord has wrought a great blessing upon us to receive and use such a pleasant edifice that will be built over a nine to ten month period.
 1. May it ever be used for His glory.
 2. May it never become an excuse for not doing more than we are doing now.
 3. May it never become divisive in anyway.
 4. Truly, may we "Rise up and build."
 5. And when it is finished, may it be known and "perceived that this work was done by our God."
- D. **God's Plan for Man's Salvation**