

## Nehemiah 2:11-20

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[0:00] Good evening. Good evening. We missed you all this morning. Sometimes people see Nehemiah and the 13 chapters that make it up as a good way to rally the church into working in unity and preaching a message on that very thing.

And it is good for that. Don't get me wrong, but there's a whole lot of other stuff within those 13 chapters. But unfortunately, most of the sermons that I've heard preached from Nehemiah have been on that very subject matter.

The church being in unity with one another and needs to work together to achieve a common cause. And that's pretty much where people leave Nehemiah sitting.

There's a whole lot more to it. Nehemiah chapter 1, we'll be preaching from chapter 2 tonight. But Nehemiah chapter 1, we learn that Nehemiah learned from a man named Hanani that Jerusalem is in ruins.

It's actually Hanani and a small band of men that came with him. But they learn about the children that have gone back, the children of Israel that have gone back to Jerusalem, that they're in great distress.

[1:41] That, you know, there's issues with them. There's issues with the city itself. The walls are tore down. We learn about all these things. But we also learn in chapter 1 that Nehemiah is a praying man.

And we see that a few times within the 13 chapters that comprise the book of Nehemiah. We see a few different times that Nehemiah is a praying man. And folks, we need to be praying people.

If God has saved our soul, we have access to His throne to make our petitions and our supplications known unto Him. And unfortunately, prayer being the most powerful tool at our disposal, children of God, is also the most neglected tool.

Because we want to jump in and try and fix things on our own a lot of times. But we need to be praying people. And we learn in chapter 1 that Nehemiah is a praying man. But he not only prays to God, not only seeks after God, but he appeals to the covenantal side of God in that prayer.

Saying, you know, bringing up the covenant that God has made with His people. God has made with the Jewish people. And that's particularly what he appeals to.

[2:53] But he doesn't leave himself out in that prayer in chapter 1. He admits that we have sinned. The people, he includes himself in that. We've sinned.

We've gone against your commandments. We've rebelled against you. Which is what all of us are guilty of. All of us are guilty of rebellion against God. That's the whole reason Jesus Christ had to come into the world.

Was to redeem us. Back to God. To buy us back into the family of God. To graft us in. And I'm glad that he done so. But we learn in chapter 1 that Nehemiah is a praying man.

That he knows how to pray. He knows exactly how to appeal to God. And knows what to pray. And when. And then in the beginning part of chapter 2.

We see his petition granted. We see this man Artaxerxes. Who is king. Nehemiah was his cut bearer. And God uses a pagan king.

[3:51] Much the same way that he does in Ezra chapter 1. With Cyrus' decree. Another pagan king. He uses a pagan king to accomplish his will. And to accomplish his purpose.

Which shows me God can use whoever he wants to. Whenever he wants to. Whether they're in relationship with him. Or whether they're not. God can do this. God used Pharaoh. And Pharaoh

was never in relationship with him.

But God used Pharaoh to accomplish his purposes. And there's both Old Testament scripture to back that up. And there's New Testament scripture to back that up. As well. God can use who he wants.

When he wants. And doesn't need anyone's permission to do so. He is God. He is sovereign creator. And master of this universe which we live in. But we read in the first part.

First several verses. Of chapter 2 of Nehemiah. Where God has granted this petition. He's not only. Artaxerxes has not only. Given permission for Nehemiah to go to Jerusalem.

[4:52] But he's also given him. Basically security of passage to get there. And said that he would help with the reconstruction. Of the thing. Folks that could only be God.

That done that. Because no pagan king. Right or wrong mind. Is going to allow that. Other than God intervenes. Right. So we learn all this stuff in Nehemiah chapter 1.

Through chapter 2. We're going to pick up reading tonight. In verse 11. Of Nehemiah chapter 2.

And read through the end of the chapter. So Nehemiah chapter 2.

Beginning at verse 11. It says. So I came to Jerusalem. And was there three days. And I rose in the night. And I and some few men with me. Neither told I any man.

What my God had put in my heart to do. At Jerusalem. Neither was there any beast with me. Save the beast that I rode upon. And I went out by night. I'm sorry.

[5:48] I went out by night. By the gate of the valley. Even before the dragon well. And to the dung port. And viewed the walls of Jerusalem. Which were broken down. And the gates thereof. Were consumed with fire.

Then I went on to the gate. Of the fountain. And to the king's pool. And there was no place for the beast. That was under me to pass. Then went I up in the night.

By the brook. And viewed the wall. And turned back. And entered by the gate of the valley. And so returned. And the rulers knew not. Whether I went. Or what I did.

Neither had I as yet told it to the Jews. Nor to the priests. Nor to the nobles. Nor to the rulers. Nor to the rest. That did the work. Then said I unto them.

Ye see the distress that we are in. How Jerusalem lieth waste. And the gates thereof are burned with fire. Come and let us build up the wall of Jerusalem.

[6:43] That we be no more a reproach. Then I told them of the hand of my God. Which was good upon me. As also the king's words. That he had spoken unto me.

And they said. Let us rise up and build. So they strengthened their hands. For this good work. But when Sambalat the Horonite. And Tobiah the servant.

And the Ammonite. And Geshem the Arabian. Heard it. They laughed us to scorn. And despised us. And said. What is this thing that you do? Will you rebel against the king?

Then answered I them. And said unto them. The God of heaven. He will prosper us. Therefore we his servants. Will arise and build. But ye have no portion.

Nor right. Nor memorial. In Jerusalem. Back to verse 11. And verse 11 here. Is very important. This is. Unfortunately.

[7:40] Verse 11 can be seen as a throwaway verse. And many times. We are just skimming through. Scripture. That is exactly what we will do with it. Verse 11 simply says. So I came to Jerusalem. And was there.

Three days. And we will skim over that. And go on to verse 12. And on through the rest of the chapter. And on through the rest of the book. And not give the first. Bit of thought. To the fact.

That he was in Jerusalem. Three days. Before he ever done anything. But folks. This is very significant. This shows. That Nehemiah was not a man. That worked on impulse. He didn't get to Jerusalem.

And start waving a red communist flag. Started bossing people around. And saying. You're going to do this. And you're going to do that. And I'm going to sit back. And I'm going to supervise the whole project.

Nothing like that happened. He was there three days. Before anything ever happened. And folks.

The number three. In the scripture. Is significant. In several different ways. Of course we know. That number three.

[8:34] Is the number of resurrection. But the number three. Is also used. As a period of waiting. In a period of transition. For instance. You look at Joshua.

In Joshua chapter one. Joshua says. Within three days. You'll cross over this Jordan. When they got there. They didn't immediately. Try to go. They didn't immediately. Try and find their own way. But Joshua said.

Within three days. You'll cross over this Jordan. In the book of Esther. Esther. In chapter number seven. Esther called for a fast. She was. Esther chapter four. I'm sorry. She called for a fast. Amongst her people. Because she was going to go. Into King Ahasuerus. She was going to go in. And make a petition. Known to him. A man. That was not only her husband. But he also had the power.

And the authority. To have her killed. And she came in. Uninvited. But she said. I'm going to go in. You call for a fast. Amongst my people. Tell them to fast. And pray. And I and my maidens. Will be doing the same.

[9:28] Folks. She was waiting. For her time. She was bidding her time. But it was mingled. With fasting. It was mingled. With prayer. It was mingled. With seeking after God. And I have no doubt.

In my mind. Because of what I read. About Nehemiah. Not only in chapter one. But throughout the rest. Of the book of Nehemiah. That he spent these three days. Not only recuperating. From the journey.

To Jerusalem. But in fasting. And in prayer. Unto his God. That it commissioned him. To do the thing. That he was doing. Folks. We can learn well. From this. That we don't just act on impulse. In matters. We don't just jump. To conclusions. But we seek the Lord. Our God. In prayer. We seek him. We seek his will. For our life. We seek his purpose. For our life. We seek him.

Before we act. God help us. To do this. As your people. We need to do this. He waited three days. Three days. He waited. So I came to Jerusalem.

[10:22] Was there. Three days. That's all that verse says. But folks. We need to take that. In consideration. Because the very next verse. He says. I arose in the night. What night? Either the night. Of that third day.

Or the very next night. Either way. He was there for three days. And he arose in the night. And I. And some few men with me. Neither told I any man. What my God. Had put in my heart.

To do. At Jerusalem. Neither was there any beast. With me. Save. The beast. That I wrote upon. Folks. There are liberal. Supposed Bible scholars. Out there. That will tell you. That Nehemiah. Was acting very political. In what he was doing. Folks. That is not what he was doing here. At all. He was. He had been commissioned. By almighty God.

To go. To Jerusalem. And to build these walls. Back around. Back around the city. What was the significance. Of the walls. Anyway. Folks. In these times. In ancient times.

[11:16] A city without walls. Was open to invasion. Not only that. But it was also open to. Indignity. From the surrounding people. They would mock it.

They would make fun of it. They would bring a reproach. Upon themselves. The people that lived. Within a city. That had no walls. Right. But it was mainly. A security measure. Right. But it wasn't just.

For cosmetic purposes. And God. Had commissioned. And allowed. Nehemiah. To go back to Jerusalem. And to begin this work. Of building the walls. But he says. I rose in the night.

I and some few men with me. Neither told I. Any man. What my God. Had put in my heart. So he arises. With these few men. And folks. I don't blame him a bit. Some people will look down. On Nehemiah.

And say. Why didn't he just go out. By himself. Why did he have to take. Some people with him. Folks. The city was without walls. Any person. From any of the surrounding. Towns. Cities. Or nations. Could have been in there.

[12:09] They could have attacked. At any time. He was a wise man. For taking other people. With him. But note that the scripture says. He had not told them. What was in his heart to do.

All he did. Was he arose. He brought these men with him. And he went out. To scope out the town. He went out. To see exactly. What the destruction was. Exactly how desolate it was. He went to examine. The problem. And we could learn from him. In doing that. Examine the situation. Study the situation. Pray.

About the situation. God. Help us to do that. Help me to do that. Before I just jump. To a conclusion. Or before I just jump. Into action. I've seen many Christians. Get themselves in trouble. For doing that same thing.

I have gotten myself in trouble. For doing that very thing. For just jumping into action. Before I've actually prayed. About the situation. And it's. And it's. And things like that.

[13:05] If we're not careful. It will bring reproach. Upon the church. It'll drag the name of Jesus Christ. Through the dirt. It can do any number of things. Folks. We need to pray. About what we're doing.

And he hasn't told these men. What God has put in his heart to do. He wasn't out there. Gathering a congregation.

He wasn't out there. Looking for applause. He wasn't out there. Seeking. A following. And many liberal. Again. Supposed Bible scholars. Will have you to believe that. Yeah.

Don't you believe that garbage. When you read it. You throw that right in the garbage can. Where it belongs. If you read something like that. That is not what was going on. This shows the wisdom of Nehemiah.

It shows the discernment. Of Nehemiah. It shows. It shows. That he was not out there. Looking for followers. As. As. Sanballat.

[13:58] Accused him of. Later on. In the chapter. He said. Will you rebel against the king? No. That wasn't his intention at all. But we'll get to that part. When we get to that part. And I went out by night.

To the gate of the. By the gate of the valley. Even before the dragon well. And to the dung port. And viewed the walls of Jerusalem. Which were broken down. And the gates thereof. Were consumed with fire.

Then I went on to the gate of the fountain. And to the king's pool. But there was no place for the beast. That was under me to pass. Then I went up in the night. By the brook. And viewed the wall. And turned back. And entered by the gate. Of the valley. And so returned. Folks. This is. This is. Sad. What we're reading here. That Nehemiah witnessed here.

Says he went out by night. And he went to the different gates. We won't go to these different. Or go into what these different gates were. Or were. Or where they were located. Throughout the city. That's something.

[14:53] Honestly. Better reserved. For Sunday school time. But. He says that. That the gates were consumed. With fire. The walls were broken down. And folks. When I read this scripture.

I understand. That the context here. Is four to five hundred years. Before Christ. I understand. That. That Jerusalem. Had been raised at this point. I understand.

That the children. Had gone into captivity. In captivity. And they had been released. And they were starting to come back. A few. At a time. I understand. That context. But folks. If we read anything. In the Old Testament.

And cannot apply it. To the New Testament church. Chances are. Our interpretation. Of what we were reading. Is wrong. When I read this scripture here. I think about the church. And I think about the people.

In the church. And I think about how we have failed the church. On so many different levels. We have failed the church. We have forgotten about the holiness of God. We have neglected the word of God.

[15:47] We have neglected our prayer lives. And it's no wonder. That the walls around the church. Have fallen in. It's no wonder. That the gates of the church. Are charred by fire. It's no wonder. That the enemy has filtrated in.

When the church. Has compromised. With what the world does. Right. It's no wonder. That we see these things. God help us. To be like Nehemiah. Right. God help us.

To be like Nehemiah. And to take a stand. God help us. To seek God. For exactly. What he wants us to do. In his plan. In whatever purpose it is.

That he has. For our life. We have all got one ultimate purpose. Y'all have heard me say it. Time and time again. We all have the great commission. To go into all the world. And to preach the gospel. To every living creature.

We have all got that purpose. Right. But folks. We've got other purposes as well. Amen. We have got other purposes as well. I've said it before. God did not save you. To be a pew warmer.

[16:42] He saved you to work. He saved you to serve him. He saved you to act as a priest. Does the Bible not say. That all the New Testament church. We are all kings. And priests. What did priests do? They served God.

They served the tabernacle of God. They served the temple of God. And they served the people. Of God. But they served God ultimately. And that is our ultimate function.

Is to serve God. And to do what He would have us to do. Nehemiah goes out all around the city. And he sees all the walls that are down. And he sees the gates that have been burned with fire. He sees there's no protection. And he sees the reproach. And folks. The reproach was not only on the people. It was on God Himself. Jerusalem is the city that God had His very name attached to. And it brings a reproach upon God. When the people of God are not taking care of the things of God. It brings a reproach upon Him. And upon His house. And upon His things.

[17:41] And upon His work. Be careful Christians. I need to be careful as well. I'm not standing up here on a pedestal. Scolding you all. By any means. I'm encouraging you.

I'm doing my best to be an encouragement. And I help here. But He sees the gates. And He sees the walls. But in verse 14. We read something peculiar. That I went on to the gate of the fountain. And to the king's pool. But there was no place for the beast. That was under me to pass. He had to dismount. Off of the beast that He was on.

Assuming it was a donkey. More than likely. But either way. He had to dismount. Just to go through. Because the beast couldn't pass. And folks. I've already said it. When the church compromises with the world.

When the church allows the world in. It hinders the advancement of the gospel of Jesus Christ. And folks. I understand God is all powerful.

[18:41] And I believe that God is all powerful. And I also believe that God does not need us to advance the gospel. He doesn't need us for anything. But God expects us to advance the gospel.

And He commands us to do so. But when we allow the world in. When we allow the world into the church. When we allow the world into our heart. And into our mind. When we are influenced by the world.

It will hinder the advancement of the gospel of Jesus Christ. Just as this donkey here. Presumably a donkey. Just as this beast here. Was hindered from going and seeing the rubble.

Seeing the debris. There was so much debris there. That a donkey couldn't pass it. That's amazing to me. Yeah. That's amazing to me. But what's even more amazing. If we apply that to the New Testament church.

And what we allow in. What we allow in folks. I'm talking about. I'm not only talking about the world's tradition. Or the world's influence.

[19:41] But I'm also talking about church tradition. When I say that. Too many times. Tradition will outweigh what thus saith the word of God. And shame on us for being that way. Shame on us for letting man's tradition.

Tradition outweigh what thus saith the word of God. I've said it many times. Well grandma and grandpa said it was this way. Grandma and grandpa might have been wrong about it. What does thus saith the word of God?

What does the Bible say about it? And I ain't saying grandma and grandpa's in hell. That's not what I'm saying. But I'm saying that tradition many times gets within the churches. And when that happens.

Religion takes over. And the Holy Spirit of God takes flight when that happens. You read in the book of Amos sometimes. Where God says I despise your feast days. I despise your incense

burning.

Folks that's the religion. Folks I wasn't saved by religion. And I certainly wasn't saved by the law. Or by the keeping of the law. We've got to mortify the deeds of the flesh.

[20:42] We've got to crucify the deeds of the flesh. What are the deeds of the flesh? That's the world. That's the worldly influence that gets to us. That's the worldly influence that we had before we were children of God.

And we mortify those deeds. Folks we've got to keep the world out of our hearts. Out of the church. Out of the congregation. Out of our children. Out of our thoughts.

Keep your mind focused and fastened upon the word of God. I glory in nothing save the cross. Is what Paul said. We need the glory in that. There ain't nothing wrong with going to a ball game.

And cheering a grandson or a granddaughter wrong. Nothing wrong. And nothing in the world wrong with that. And I ain't preaching against that. What I'm saying is don't put those things before God.

Because that's what the world does. That is what the world does. Go ahead. Have ball games on Sunday evening. Have them Sunday afternoon. Have them Sunday morning. Have them Wednesday night.

[21:37] That's what the world does. We don't want to go to church anyway. That's what the world says. Right. And that just gives them that much more of an excuse. For neglecting the house of God.

Right. Amen. That was free. Thank you. Then went I up in the night by the brook. And viewed the wall. And turned back. And entered by the gate of the valley.

And so returned. The rulers knew not whither I went. Or what I did. Neither had I as yet told it to the Jews. Nor to the priests. Nor to the nobles. Nor to the rulers. Nor to the rest.

That did the work. He kept Nehemiah. Kept his mouth shut. To everyone. Why would he have done that? Well. In verse 12. We talked briefly about it.

He kept his mouth shut. To the few men that he took with him. He hadn't told them anything. But here we get into everybody. He hadn't told the Jews about it. He hadn't told the priests. He hadn't told the nobles. He had told no one.

[22:31] Why is that? There's a good reason. He didn't do that. Because if you expose. What your plans are. Prematurely.

Chances are. You're going to get premature opposition to it. That's why he would have done it this way. Now. What is the plan of God in your life?

Only you and God know that. Only you and God. People say all the time. I don't know what the will of God is for my life. Folks. Read your Bible. The will of God for your life is in there.

The will of God for your life and my life. Is within the pages of this book. It is to serve him. It is to do for him.

It is to tell the world about the gospel. It is to tell them. That they may be sinners. But God is a wonderful Savior. The will of God is all throughout the pages. Of this Bible.

[23:25] We have no excuse to say. I don't know what God's will is for me. When it is laid out in black and white. Before us. We know what the will of God is. The thing is.

We don't want to do the will of God many times. We fight against the will of God. And let me tell you something. Dear brothers and sisters. It does no good to fight against the will of God. If it is God's will.

He will bring it to pass. It will come to pass. And if you won't do it. He'll find somebody that will. If you won't do it. He'll take you out of the picture. He might take a gift from you.

That he has given you. He can do any number of things. But he'll find somebody to fulfill that will. I promise you that. He hasn't told anybody. Nobody.

And again. If you expose things prematurely. You'll get premature opposition to it. Which does in turn hinder. What you plan on doing.

[24:23] So again. This is showing the wisdom and discernment of Nehemiah. God help us to have wisdom and discernment. God help us to know the difference. As far as discernment goes.

Between what's right and what's almost right. Because folks. There's a lot of doctrine out there. And there's a lot of theology out there. That is almost right. But it's not.

To be almost right. Is to be completely wrong. This word. And doctrines that come directly from this word. That's what's right. And that's what we have to pay attention to.

Be dogmatic about what the scripture is dogmatic about. I'll never forget when my oldest boy told me. He felt like he was being called to preach. And I said praise God. Amen. Hallelujah to that. But I told him.

I said the only advice I can give you son. Is be dogmatic about what the Bible is dogmatic about. And if the Bible isn't dogmatic about it. Don't be. And what I was telling him in that.

[25:20] Was don't focus on tradition. You focus on thus saith the word of God. And that was the only advice I had for her. And folks.

That's what I try to do. Tradition will get us in trouble. Tradition is what got the Pharisees in trouble. Is it not? And the Pharisees. And the Sadducees. And the scribes. They were so wrapped up in tradition.

And not only tradition stemming from the Old Testament. But tradition that they had infused to what God had actually said. Their own tradition. That's why they come to Jesus.

And they said. Why are your disciples eating with unwashed hands? Well what has that got to do with Scripture? That was a tradition of their own. And Jesus set them right on that. He hadn't told anybody.

And I've given you all the reason for that. Verse 17. Then said I unto them. Ye see the distress that we are in. How Jerusalem lieth waste. And the gates thereof are burned with fire.

[26:17] Come and let us build up the wall of Jerusalem. That we be no more a reproof. So he hadn't told anybody about his intentions. About why he was even there.

As of yet in verse 16. Then we get to verse 17. He says. And I said unto them. Who is them? That's everybody that he listed there. In verse 16. The noble people. The priests.

The higher up. All these people. He says. He said unto them. Then I said unto them. Ye see the distress. Folks. Pay attention to this. Ye see the distress. That we are in.

He includes himself in that. Just like he did in his prayer. In chapter 1. He doesn't exclude himself. Again. He's not up on a rock. Throwing lashings down.

Upon the people. He's including himself. With them. He's not up on a pedestal. He is down there amongst the people. And he says. He sees the distress. That we are in.

[27:12] Church. We are in a distress right now. The church of almighty God. Is distressed right now. And it's because of the very things. That I've listed this season.

It's because of compromise. With the world. It's because of neglect. Of our prayer lives. It's because of neglect. Of the word of God. It's because worship of God. Has become a trivial thing.

In the house of God. And it shouldn't be. It should be guided. And helped along. By the holy spirit. Of almighty God. But it's become trivial.

Yeah. In the house of God. God help us. He says. You see the distress. That we are in. Nehemiah recognizes his distress. He recognizes the entire nation.

Of Israel's distress. But folks. What we've got to remember. Is what brought this distress. On them. What brought the walls coming down. What brought the gates being charged.

[28:09] It was because of their neglect. Of the commandments of God. It was their neglect. Of the law of God. It was their neglect. Of the word of God. Folks. The covenant. That almighty God made. Wasn't with Israel.

The covenant was with a man. Named Abraham. And Abraham had nothing to do. With that covenant. Abraham was asleep. When God made the covenant. Don't take my word for it.

Read Genesis 15. Yeah. Abraham was asleep. Yeah. And God is the one. That came down. God is the one. That walked through. The dismembered animals. He's the one. That came down.

Into the light. He is the one. That made the covenant. The covenant. Had nothing to do. With Abraham. But they had broken. The covenant. They had broken. Their side of it. And God was just making good.

On what he had promised. You stay true to my statutes. You stay true to my judgments. You walk with me. And I will walk with you. But if you neglect these things.

[29:04] If you break my laws. If you go against me. If you're not walking with me. If you are walking the other way. In other words. I will not be walking with you.

Folks. That was the promise laid down by God. In the Old Testament. Mainly in the book of Deuteronomy. The book of Deuteronomy. Is.

One. Great. Big. Sermon. Preached to the second generation of Israel. That came out of Egypt. It is an enormous sermon. But it brings up.

What the first generation did. Time. And time again. And God tells them. When you enter into this promised land. When you enter into Canaan. As I promised.

Don't you think it's because your numbers were so great. For you were the smallest among the nations. Don't you think it's because you deserved it. Because you didn't. Don't you think it's anything to do with you.

[30:01] It's because of my goodness. And it's because of my covenant. With your father Abraham. That I am doing this thing. Folks. We are not on our way to heaven. As the New Testament church.

Because of anything that we have done. Right. Is all because of what Christ has done. I am not on my way to heaven. Because I gave up anything. I am not on my way to heaven. Because I quit drinking.

I am not on my way to heaven. Because I quit cussing. I am not on my way to heaven. Because of this. And because of that. I am on my way to heaven. Because of the finished work. Of Jesus Christ. On a cross.

On a hill called Calvary. Hallelujah. Amen. And it's only because of that. Right. And the only reason I quit drinking and cussing. Is because God cleaned that stuff up on me.

Yeah. And that's just a couple of the things. That cleaned up on me. I ain't all for bragging about. What kind of sinner we was. I don't think we need to turn that into a contest. In the church house.

[30:55] And I've seen that happen before. Right. But. If you're cleaned up. It's because God cleaned you up. It's not because you did it. Amen. You didn't do it. You never wanted to do it. You never wanted to do it.

Then said I unto them. You see the distress. That we are in. How Jerusalem lie with waste. And the gates thereof are burned with fire. Come. He's inviting. The rest of Jerusalem. He's inviting the rest of the Israelites.

That are there. At this time. He says. Come. And let us build up the wall of Jerusalem. That we be no more. A reproach. He has told them here. He says. You see the distress.

That we are in. But he says. Come. And let us build these walls. That we be no more. A reproach. That the people of God. Are no more a reproach. That the name of God. Is no longer reproach. By the outside nations. That there is no reproach. Upon the city of God. Or the people of God. Hallelujah. And folks. We need to do the same thing. In the church house. We need to build the reputation.

[31:51] Of the church. Back up. Because the church has failed. In recent years. Really. In recent decades. It has failed. Miserably. Doing. What God.

Set it out. To do. But folks. It's not too late. It is not too late. To build it back up. It is not too late. And the invitation is given. Come. Come.

And folks. I charge you right now. Come. Let us build the walls. Back up. I'm not talking about. Building walls. Around Blessed Redeemer. Baptist Church. I'm talking about. Rebuilding.

The reputation. Of the church. So that the name of God. Is not reproached. By his own people. Or by the outside world. For that matter. Then I told them.

Of the hand of my God. Praise God. Then I told them. Of the hand of my God. Which was good upon me. As also the king's words. That he had spoken unto me. And they said.

[32:46] Let us rise up and build. So they strengthened. Their hands. For this good work. He says. Then I told them. Of the hand of my God. Which was good upon me. He brings up God first.

And who is the them? Again. Go back to verse 16. You'll read who the them was. It was all the Jewish people. It was everyone that was present. There. He's telling them. About the hand of God.

And that the hand of God. Was good upon him. He is reminding them. Of the word of God. He is reminding them. Of the covenant. Of Almighty God.  
He is reminding them. Of God. Period. And I remind you. Of God now. If God saved your soul. Folks. You can do. You can. You can. You have the power. To do anything.  
That God has set you out to do. We have the power. Through the Holy Spirit of God. To build walls. We have the power. By the Holy Spirit of God. To raise the gates back up.  
[33:40] We have the power. By the Holy Spirit. Of God. And by God's will. In general. To do anything. That he. Enlists us to do. All we got to do. Is do it.

All we got to do. Is do it. Don't back down. The invitation is there. In verse 17. Come. He says. Then I told them. After he gives the invitation. He reminds them of God.  
He reminds them of God. And then he tells them. That. He told them. Of the hand of my God. Which was good upon me. As also. The king's words. That he had spoken unto me. Folks.  
Remember. These were a bunch of Jewish people. That he was talking to. The king. That he was referring to. Artaxerxes. Was a pagan king. And these people. Would have known that.  
So not only. Is he reminding them. Of God. And the covenant. That God has. With those people. With the Jewish people. That he's reminding them. That God is sovereign. And God is all powerful.  
[34:36] And God. Has used a pagan king. To accomplish. His will. And how do the people. Respond to that. After they've. Been encouraged. By the word of God.

And by this reminding. Of whom God is. And about the covenant. That God. Has with them. How do they respond. And they said. Let us rise up. And build. So they strengthened their hands.  
For this good work. Let us rise up. And build. Folks. After they were encouraged. By what. Nehemiah. Had to say. About the hand of the Lord. Being upon him.  
After they were encouraged. By this thing. And encouraged. By what the king. Had allowed. Nehemiah. To do. They said. Let us do this. Let us rise up. And build.  
The invitation. Was given in the previous verse. Come. Let us build. Here they say. Let us rise. Up and build. And it says. So they strengthened their hands. For this good work. They prepared themselves.

[35:31] They prepared themselves. For it. Folks. How do we prepare ourselves. For the work. That God. That God. Has given us to do. We need to be preparing. With prayer. We need to be preparing.

With fasting. If we are physically able. To do so. We need to be preparing. With seeking. After God. To be sure. For one thing. That is what God. Wants us to do.

And. To. To ask so many things. Of God. God. I pray for wisdom. Book of James. Chapter one. Says. If any of you lack wisdom. Let him ask of God. Lord.

I lack wisdom. I lack discernment. I need you. To give me these things. I need strength. Now granted. Here. In this. In this. Scripture. It says. So they strengthened their hands.

For this good work. The folks. That shows preparation. They didn't just jump right to it. But they were anxious too. Why? Because they were encouraged. By the word.

[36:26] Of God. Coming from this man. Nehemiah. They were encouraged. By the word. Verse 19. But when Sambalat. The Horonite. And Tobiah. The servant. The Ammonite.

And Geshem. The Arabian. Arabian. Heard it. They laughed us to scorn. And despised us. And said. What is this thing. That you do? Will you rebel. Against the king.

And folks. This is ever. A tactic. Of the forces. Of darkness. What. Are you doing? Will you rebel. Against the king.

Using worldly authority. To try to instill fear. Into the church. And that is one reason. That the walls. Of the church. Have fallen. Because they are in fear.

Of worldly authority. Now folks. I ain't encouraging you. To go out there. And just pick a fight. With the local authorities. That would be stupid of me. It would be unbiblical of me. To encourage you to do that.

[37:19] But I preached it here. Not too awful long ago. When the world. And worldly authority. Tries to use their authority. To cause us to sin.

Right. We can fight against that. Right. And we have every biblical right. To do that. Whether we've got a constitutional right. Or not. That's beside the point. We have a biblical right.

And folks. Quite frankly. We have a biblical responsibility. To do that. Right. You read over in the book of Acts. That we'd rather obey God.

As to obey men. Folks. I would rather obey God. As to obey men. I would rather stand. Stand in the office of my boss. And tell them.

Why I prayed with somebody at my work. Or why I told somebody at my work. About the gospel. Or why I led somebody to Christ. I would rather stand there.

[38:16] And give an account of that. To the mayor. To the city manager. Or anybody else. As to stand before God one day. And explain to Him. Why I didn't do it. I would rather obey God.

As to obey men. And we need to have that attitude. We need to have that attitude. Here. Sambalat and Tobiah. And Geshem. Are trying to use.

Worldly authority. To instill fear. Into Nehemiah. And the rest of the Israelites. That's all in the world they're doing. When they say. Excuse me. When they say.

What is this thing that you do? Hope they knew what they were doing. It was obvious what they were doing. So what is this thing that you do? Will you rebel against the king?

He's not rebelling against the king. The king is the very one. That gave him permission to go down there. And said. I'm going to give you some of the supplies. That you need. To accomplish what you're trying to do. There was no rebellion planned.

[39:13] Right. But. They were trying to do exactly as I said. And still fear. But then verse 20. Then answered I them. And said unto them.

The God of heaven. He will prosper us. Folks. That's all we need to know. That's all we need to know is the church. When we. When we share the gospel.

People are going to hate us. The world will hate us. The world will despise us. The world is and always will be in opposition. To the gospel of Jesus Christ.

The gospel is an offensive thing to this world. It's very offensive. But folks. The world is not who we. We're in relationship with. Friendship with the world is enmity with God. According to James chapter 4. We're not friends of the world. And I'm not saying go out here and be mean to the lost folks.

[40:12] My goodness. What kind of testimony would that be for the church? But we are not to. To befriend them to the extent. That we go where they do. And we. They.

And we do what they do. No. That's exactly what I was talking about before. That is the world infiltrating us. The church. We can't allow that. But he says. Then I answered them.

And said unto them. The God of heaven. He will prosper. Ever. Folks. He's already told them. About the hand of God. Being on him. And that the hand of God was good. The same hand.

That formed the heavens. According to Psalm 19. The same hand. The same strong right hand. That delivered Israel. Through the Red Sea. Out of the bondage of Egypt.

Was now. Helping one. Single. Human being. Named Nehemiah. Simply because Nehemiah. Sopper is hell. Amen. The same hand. That done those amazing miracles.

[41:08] Those huge miracles. Was on one single man. Guiding him. In this thing. And the same hand. Can do the same for you. And it does the same.

For me. It doesn't take big miracles folks. I've seen plenty of small miracles. I've seen plenty of small miracles. The God of heaven.

He will prosper us. Therefore we as servants. Will arise and build. He will prosper us. And because. We have faith. That the God of heaven. Is going to be the one. That prospers us.

Therefore. We. His servants. We will rise. And we will do this thing. Folks. The world is not going to build. The walls back up. The world is not going to. Build the gates.

The world is not going to. Rebuild the temple. Or any of these other things. It takes the people of God. To do the things of God. Amen. And it took the people of God here. And the people of God.

[42:02] Especially Nehemiah. Had utmost faith. That the God of heaven. He says. The God of heaven. He will prosper us. Therefore we. His servants. Will arise. And build. Because he will prosper us.

We. Will arise. And build. Again. Nehemiah doesn't say I. He doesn't say me. Nothing along those lines. He says. We. He is including himself.

Amongst the. The other Jews here. But ye have no portion. Nor right. Nor memorial. In Jerusalem. Very simply put. Yeah.

You're either building for God. Or you're building against God. You're either running with God. Or you're running from God. You're either. Within the family of God.

Or you're outside the family of God. In this context. Yeah. If you put it. If you couple it with chapter one. You're either in a covenant relationship with God.

[43:00] Or you're outside the covenant. I'm in the covenant. But I'm in the new covenant. Amen. I'm in the new covenant. Amen. Which Jesus Christ is the mediator of the new covenant.

According to the book of Hebrews. Right. I'm in the new covenant. I've been bought. I've been paid for. By the blood of Jesus Christ. These folks here. Knew nothing of Jesus Christ.

They knew of a Messiah. But. He tells them. That ye have no portion. Nor right. Nor memorial. In Jerusalem. Folks. He's laying it out for them.

You're either for us. Or you're against us. You're either going to help us. Or you're going to. Or help. Help the work of God along. I should say. Or you're going to be against the word of God.

That's exactly what he's. Telling them here. And so we can end with this. Are you in the covenant?

Amen. Or are you outside the covenant? Like Sam Ballett and Tobiah and Geshem were here.

[43:56] I don't know anyone's heart. Inside and out. Only you and God know that. I have no reason to believe that anybody. Here tonight.

Is unsaved. But again. Only you and God know that. Are you in covenant with them? Or are you out of covenant with them? If you're out. You have no portion in the city of God.

You have no relationship with God. But you can have. Through faith in Jesus Christ. His only begotten son. And repenting of your sin. God bless y'all.

That's the message for this evening. I appreciate your attention. Amen. God bless you.