



ISSUE

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Faithful Sayings

BULLETIN OF
THE OL-
SEN PARK
CHURCH OF
CHRIST

Services

Sunday: 9:00 AM

10:00 AM

11:00 AM

Wednesday: 7:00 PM

Elders:

Pat Ledbetter

Brady McAlister

Jeff Nunn

Deacons:

Ben Hight

Blake McAlister

Walker McAnear

Sam Nunn

Lance Purcell

Justin Smiley

Kevin Wise

Trevor Yontz

Evangelist:

Kyle Pope

A Study of Nehemiah 2:18

By Jarrod Jacobs

Reading the book of Nehemiah will “fire up” and excite you. Reading this book will encourage us to stand up and do what is right in our community just as Nehemiah did for his people. Nehemiah is one of, if not the most courageous Bible character, and his example will encourage us in our daily lives. His courage is apparent when we consider all the problems he had to overcome in his effort to lead the people to rebuild the walls of Jerusalem. He did not “drive the people” into obedience, but patiently led them by word and example. His concern for the destroyed walls of Jerusalem motivated him to leave the courts of Artaxerxes and face enemies and other challenges in order to accomplish his goal. He truly is a godly example for us (Rom. 15:4). In the early part of the book of Nehemiah, we see him leaving his station as “the king’s cupbearer” (Neh. 1:11) and entering into Jerusalem to encourage the people and lead them in rebuilding Jerusalem’s wall. Bear in mind, that Nehemiah is no general, or holder of political power. He is just a man who, when he saw something needed to be done, “strengthened his hands” (a phrase repeated often in this book) to do the work and went to it. In taking action, we find him in prayer often, and also being active in convincing the people that this project could be done. When starting this work, Nehemiah told the rulers of the city, “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, 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” (Neh. 2:17-18).

I'd like to examine a phrase from verse 18 that ought to encourage and motivate us to greater service in the Lord. This phrase is, **“Let us rise up and build.”** Let us study this phrase together.

“Let Us”

Please note that this phrase was stated by the rulers of the city to Nehemiah. In stating, **“Let us rise up and build,”** they were declaring that a united people would rebuild the wall of Jerusalem. It took a great man like Nehemiah to lead the people and motivate them, but Nehemiah could not rebuild the wall on his own! It took the combined efforts of

each one doing the work necessary. Later on, we see that because of their efforts (Neh. 3-6) Jerusalem's wall was finished in fifty-two days (6:15)!

In like manner, when the Lord's work is to be done today, we need to be a united people. It does Christians in a local church no good to speak in terms of “them” and “their.” When it is concerning the local body of saints to which we are affiliated, we need to think and speak in terms of “we” and “our,” for “we” are all involved in the work! **“Let us”** then be active and united in spreading God's word, growing spiritually and numerically, and in helping each other go to heaven. This need for unity is made clear in the first letter to the Corinthians. There, we read, **“Now I beseech you, brethren, by the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, that ye all speak the same thing, and that there be no divisions among you; but that ye be perfectly joined together in the same mind and in the same judgment”** (1 Cor. 1:10). Unity was not only needed among the Corinthians, but also among the Philippians (1:27; 2:2; etc.), and others. How much more is it needed today in the local church, when we, like those first century Christians, come from various backgrounds, and are different ages from one another? Yet, like those in Nehemiah's time, we can say, **“Let us. . .”!**

“Rise Up”

“Rise” is a verb which calls for action. The statement made by the rulers shows us that they were motivated and were ready to take action in order to rebuild Jerusalem's wall. The degree of their commitment to this work is seen as the people worked and finished the wall in fifty-two days. Their commitment is also seen when we



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read Nehemiah 2-6, and see them overcome enemies from without (2:19-20; 4:1-6, 11; 6:1-14), the fighting from within (ch. 5), as well as the actual toil and effort required in building (ch. 3; 4:10, 15-23, etc.), to accomplish the goal. The commitment to **“rise up and build”** resulted in a completed wall after years of it sitting in ruins (1:3).

In like manner, let us as Christians recognize that we need to **“rise up”** and put our hands to **“the work of the Lord”** (1 Cor. 15:58)! The Christian has much to do in service to God, but nothing will get done if we refuse to **“rise.”** No, we have no physical walls to build, but we do have a spiritual work to accomplish in building the house of God! In 1 Corinthians 15:58, we read, **“Therefore, my beloved brethren, be ye steadfast, unmovable, always abounding in the work of the Lord, forasmuch as ye know that your labor is not in vain in the Lord.”** If this was the only passage we had, we would already be aware of the fact that a Christian has much to do in service to God! It is not enough for one simply to obey the Lord’s plan of salvation of believing on Him, repenting of sins, confessing Christ, and being baptized (John 8:24; Acts 17:30; Rom. 10:10; Mark 16:16). One must also **“continue in my word”** (John 8:31), being **“faithful unto death”** (Rev. 2:10). We, like Paul, must fight the good fight, finish the race, and keep the faith (2 Tim. 4:6-8); and this demands our **“rising”** to the occasion and being active in service to God.

Too often, we see Christians who wish for others to do their work. If the Jews had been like this, they would have not finished the walls. In like manner, when we look to others to do our work, then we will not accomplish what God wants done! In the first century, the apostles recognized the need for staying focused and doing the Lord’s will (Acts 6:2; 1 Cor. 9:16b; etc.). We need to recognize this same truth and be active. **“Let us rise up . . .”!**

“And Build”

As **“let us”** shows their unity, and **“rise up”** shows their action; the phase **“and build”** shows us what they

were going to do! Notice please that the Jews were not rising up to tear down even more! They were not rising up to kick Nehemiah out of town! They were going to **“rise up”** so that they could build! Building is a special work. I am reminded of the old poem about a young man who saw a crew tearing down a building. When he asked the foreman if they would also build, he said **“No”** for he had another crew to do that. His point was that anyone can tear something down, but it takes someone special to be able to build. In like manner, the Babylonian army tore down the wall of Jerusalem, burned the gates, the temple, and the palaces with fire (2 Chron. 36:19; Neh. 1:3, 2:17). These men, skilled with the ability to kill people and break things, were able to destroy much. Yet, when it came time to rebuild, the Babylonian army, Persian army, and others were not asked to help. Rather, it took this special group of people, under the leadership of Nehemiah, to rebuild the wall, the temple, and the city. (Read: Ezra and Nehemiah for complete accounts of this.)



Can we see the parallel today when it comes to the spiritual work of God? We have a great and grave work ahead of us, and we need to be about it! Christ (our leader) needs folks who are committed to His work and are ready to use skilled and strong hands in the work!

In studying the New Testament, we see that this “building up” takes place in a number of ways. For example, we need to be building one another up when we speak to them. This is evident when we read Ephesians 4:29. Paul

wrote, **“Let no corrupt communication proceed out of your mouth, but that which is good to the use of edifying, that it may minister grace unto the hearers.”** To “edify” in this text, means to build up! There is an expectation that we build our brethren up as we speak with them. To the Thessalonians, it is stated, **“Wherefore comfort yourselves together, and edify one another, even as also ye do”** (1 Thess. 5:11). Thus, we see that we have the responsibility of building or edifying one another as we live from day to day. Anyone can tear down! It takes someone special, like a child of God, to build up! **“Let us rise up and build!”**

Conclusion

Think about it: If folks like Zerubbabel, Ezra, and Nehemiah had not been interested in rebuilding Jerusalem, who would have taken the lead? If the Israelites didn’t build up the city, the wall and the temple, who would have done it? Sure, someone may have built a city over Jerusalem, but no one would have rebuilt Jerusalem if the Lord’s people weren’t interested!

In like manner, if Christians (the spiritual Israel) do not build up the Lord’s church, who will? **“Let us rise up and build!”**

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