

Nehemiah 3-4 – Thursday, August 24th, 2017

Nehemiah 3 -- 1 Then Eliashib the high priest rose up with his brethren the priests and built the Sheep Gate; they consecrated it and hung its doors. They built as far as the Tower of the Hundred, and consecrated it, then as far as the Tower of Hananel. 2 Next to Eliashib the men of Jericho built. And next to them Zaccur the son of Imri built. 3 Also the sons of Hassenaah built the Fish Gate; they laid its beams and hung its doors with its bolts and bars. 4 And next to them Meremoth the son of Urijah, the son of Koz, made repairs. Next to them Meshullam the son of Berechiah, the son of Meshezabel, made repairs. Next to them Zadok the son of Baana made repairs. 5 Next to them the Tekoites made repairs; but their nobles did not put their shoulders to the work of their Lord.

- So the chapter begins by telling us who did the work and where the work began as Nehemiah is starts the rebuilding of the wall.
- Interesting that God would deem fit to record the names of those who did the work and also those who refused to work as well.
- This speaks to the importance of God's people rolling up their arm sleeves, so-to-speak, and putting their hands to the plow.

Colossians 3:17 (NKJV) — 17 And whatever you do in word or deed, do all in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God the Father through Him.

Colossians 3:23 (NKJV) — 23 And whatever you do, do it heartily, as to the Lord and not to men,

Ecclesiastes 9:10 (NKJV) — 10 Whatever your hand finds to do, do it with your might; for there is no work or device or knowledge or wisdom in the grave where you are going.

6 Moreover Jehoiada the son of Paseah and Meshullam the son of Besodeiah repaired the Old Gate; they laid its beams and hung its doors, with its bolts and bars. 7 And next to them Melatiah the Gibeonite, Jadon the Meronothite, the men of Gibeon and Mizpah, repaired the residence of the governor of the region beyond the River. 8 Next to him Uzziel the son of Harhaiah, one of the goldsmiths, made repairs. Also next to him Hananiah, one of the perfumers, made repairs; and they fortified Jerusalem as far as the Broad Wall. 9 And next to them Rephaiah the son of Hur, leader of half the district of Jerusalem, made repairs. 10 Next to them Jedaiah the son of Harumaph made repairs in front of his house. And next to him Hattush the son of Hashabniah made repairs. 11 Malchijah the son of Harim and Hashub the son of Pahath-Moab repaired another section, as well as the Tower of the Ovens. 12 And next to him was Shallum the son of Hallohesh, leader of half the district of Jerusalem; he and his daughters made repairs.

- Here we're told that even the women were serving and doing the work, which again speaks to the importance of their roles.
- One of the greatest blessings to me personally as a pastor is to see the women in the church who are serving in the church.
- Actually, there are instances in which the men abdicate their leadership role and faithful women step in to serve instead.

13 Hanun and the inhabitants of Zanoah repaired the Valley Gate. They built it, hung its doors with its bolts and bars, and repaired a thousand cubits of the wall as far as the Refuse Gate. 14 Malchijah the son of Rechab, leader of the district of Beth Haccerem, repaired the Refuse Gate; he built it and hung its doors with its bolts and bars. 15 Shallun the son of Col-Hozeh, leader of the district of Mizpah, repaired the Fountain Gate; he built it, covered it, hung its doors with its bolts and bars, and repaired the wall of the Pool of Shelah by the King's Garden, as far as the stairs that go down from the City of David. 16 After him Nehemiah the son of Azbuk, leader of half the district of Beth Zur, made repairs as far as the place in front of the tombs of David, to the man-made pool, and as far as the House of the Mighty. 17 After him the Levites, under Rehum the son of Bani, made repairs. Next to him Hashabiah, leader of half the district of Keilah, made repairs for his district. 18 After him their brethren, under Bavai the son of Henadad, leader of the other half of the district of Keilah, made repairs. 19 And next to him Ezer the son of Jeshua, the leader of Mizpah, repaired another section in front of the Ascent to the Armory at the buttress. 20 After him Baruch the son of Zabbai carefully repaired the other section, from the buttress to the door of the house of Eliashib the high priest. 21 After him Meremoth the son of Urijah, the son of Koz, repaired another section, from the door of the house of Eliashib to the end of the house of Eliashib. 22 And after him the priests, the men of the plain, made repairs. 23 After him Benjamin and Hasshub made repairs opposite their house. After them Azariah the son of Maaseiah, the son of Ananiah, made repairs by his house. 24 After him Binnui the son of Henadad repaired another section, from the house of Azariah to the buttress, even as far as the corner. 25 Palal the son of Uzai made repairs opposite the buttress, and on the tower which projects from the king's upper house that was by the court of the prison. After him Pedaiah the son of Parosh made repairs. 26 Moreover the Nethinim who dwelt in Ophel made repairs as far as the place in front of the Water Gate toward the east, and on the projecting tower. 27 After them the Tekoites repaired another section, next to the great projecting tower, and as far as the wall of Ophel. 28 Beyond the Horse Gate the priests made repairs, each in front of his own house. 29 After them Zadok the son of Immer made repairs in front of his own house. After him Shemaiah the son of Shechaniah, the keeper of the East Gate, made repairs. 30 After him Hananiah the son of Shelemiah, and Hanun, the sixth son of Zalaph, repaired another section. After him Meshullam the son of Berechiah made repairs in front of his dwelling. 31 After him Malchijah, one of the goldsmiths, made repairs as far as the house of the Nethinim and of the merchants, in front of the Miphkad Gate, and as far as the upper room at the corner. 32 And between the upper room at the corner, as far as the Sheep Gate, the goldsmiths and the merchants made repairs.

- This is one of those places in the Word of God where we find the typology of Jesus Christ woven into the fabric of this narrative.

| GATE | JESUS | SCRIPTURE |
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| Sheep Gate | Jesus is the only gate for the sheep | John 5:2, 10:7-18 |
| Fish Gate | Jesus makes us fishers of men | Matthew 4:19, 13:47 Mark 16:15 John 21:8-11 |
| Old Gate | Jesus makes us new the old man is passed away | 2 Corinthians 5:17 |
| Valley Gate | Jesus delivers us from the valley of the shadow of death | Psalm 23, 2 Corinthians 1:10 |
| Dung Gate | Jesus makes everything rubbish when compared to Him | Philippians 3:8 |
| Fountain Gate | Jesus leaves so the Holy Spirit can come to fill us | John 14:16-17, 7:37-39 |
| Water Gate | Jesus is the Word that cleanses us as water | John 1 Ephesians 5:25-26 Revelation 19:6-8 |
| Horse Gate | Jesus will ride a white horse in the final battle | Revelation 19:14 |
| East Gate | Jesus will enter Jerusalem through the East Gate | Zechariah 14:4 |
| Miphkad Gate | Jesus will sit in judgment at the Beama Seat | 2 Corinthians 5:10 |

Nehemiah 4 -- 1 But it so happened, when Sanballat heard that we were rebuilding the wall, that he was furious and very indignant, and mocked the Jews. 2 And he spoke before his brethren and the army of Samaria, and said, "What are these feeble Jews doing? Will they fortify themselves? Will they offer sacrifices? Will they complete it in a day? Will they revive the stones from the heaps of rubbish—stones that are burned?" 3 Now Tobiah the Ammonite was beside him, and he said, "Whatever they build, if even a fox goes up on it, he will break down their stone wall."

- The chapter begins by telling us that Sanballat was furious and mocked the Jews upon hearing they were rebuilding the wall.
- This is one of the most powerful devices of the devil in the life of a Christian in that he uses ridicule in order to discourage us.

4 Hear, O our God, for we are despised; turn their reproach on their own heads, and give them as plunder to a land of captivity! 5 Do not cover their iniquity, and do not let their sin be blotted out from before You; for they have provoked You to anger before the builders.

- What Nehemiah does here is that which we should always do when the enemy attacks us, which is that of immediately praying.
- Notice that conspicuously absent from the narrative is any mention of Nehemiah ever even responding to their mocking attack.

6 So we built the wall, and the entire wall was joined together up to half its height, for the people had a mind to work.

- What Nehemiah does here is that which we should always do after we pray and that is to get back up and get back to work.

7 Now it happened, when Sanballat, Tobiah, the Arabs, the Ammonites, and the Ashdodites heard that the walls of Jerusalem were being restored and the gaps were beginning to be closed, that they became very angry, 8 and all of them conspired together to come and attack Jerusalem and create confusion.

- What we have here is yet another attack of the enemy in the life of a Christian, which is that of conspiring to create confusion.
- Not only are they conspiring to create confusion they are also threatening them with physical harm by actually attacking them.

9 Nevertheless we made our prayer to our God, and because of them we set a watch against them day and night.

- Here again we see Nehemiah's first response, which is that of praying, then he follows it up with prudently getting back to work.

10 Then Judah said, "The strength of the laborers is failing, and there is so much rubbish that we are not able to build the wall." 11 And our adversaries said, "They will neither know nor see anything, till we come into their midst and kill them and cause the work to cease."

- It's interesting to note that the enemy will always attack when we're the most vulnerable, which is in those times of weariness.

12 So it was, when the Jews who dwelt near them came, that they told us ten times, "From whatever place you turn, they will be upon us." 13 Therefore I positioned men behind the lower parts of the wall, at the openings; and I set the people according to their families, with their swords, their spears, and their bows.

- Here it seems that the Jews who lived close in proximity to Jerusalem happened upon this information concerning the enemy.
- To me this speaks to how it is that often times, God will forewarn us ahead of time so as to prepare us for the attack against us.

14 And I looked, and arose and said to the nobles, to the leaders, and to the rest of the people, "Do not be afraid of them. Remember the Lord, great and awesome, and fight for your brethren, your sons, your daughters, your wives, and your houses."

- If you were to ask me what I thought was one of the most crippling and paralyzing attacks of the enemy it has to be that of fear.
- I love Nehemiah and his strong leadership as evidenced by how he handles this spirit of fear that the people had succumbed to.
- Notice he brings into his exhortation their families and their houses, this because any real man will fight to his death for them.

15 And it happened, when our enemies heard that it was known to us, and that God had brought their plot to nothing, that all of us returned to the wall, everyone to his work. 16 So it was, from that time on, that half of my servants worked at construction, while the other half held the spears, the shields, the bows, and wore armor; and the leaders were behind all the house of Judah. 17 Those who built on the wall, and those who carried burdens, loaded themselves so that with one hand they worked at construction, and with the other held a weapon.

- Notice the imagery here of having the sword in one hand and the tool in the other. What a tremendous picture of our service.

18 Every one of the builders had his sword girded at his side as he built. And the one who sounded the trumpet was beside me. 19 Then I said to the nobles, the rulers, and the rest of the people, "The work is great and extensive, and we are separated far from one another on the wall. 20 Wherever you hear the sound of the trumpet, rally to us there. Our God will fight for us." 21 So we labored in the work, and half of the men held the spears from daybreak until the stars appeared. 22 At the same time I also said to the people, "Let each man and his servant stay at night in Jerusalem, that they may be our guard by night and a working party by day." 23 So neither I, my brethren, my servants, nor the men of the guard who followed me took off our clothes, except that everyone took them off for washing.

- The chapter ends with a description of how inconvenient and uncomfortable the work of God can be in furthering His kingdom.