

## THE BOOK OF NEHEMIAH

### "Building the Walls"

Nehemiah 3:1-32

#### Introduction

1. Every word in the Bible is inspired of God. His Word stands as inerrant and infallible because the writers of Scripture were borne along (  $\phi\epsilon\rho\omicron\mu\epsilon\nu\omicron\iota$  FEROMENOMI ) by the Holy Spirit (2 Pet. 1:19-21). Furthermore, the Bible is God-breathed (  $\Theta\epsilon\omicron\tau\iota\nu\epsilon\nu\omicron\tau\omicron\varsigma$  THEOPINEUSTOS ), hence ultimately under the control of God Himself (2 Tim. 3:16, 17). This chapter, therefore, is totally and uncompromisingly the Word of God!

2. The building of the walls was a work of God which was earnestly prayed for (1:11). The hearts of the people were moved by the God of heaven to "rise and build" (2:17-20). What a gracious touch from the Lord to a people in "distress" (2:17).

3. The work was done on the walls by His help in just 52 days (6:15). It was accomplished with great unity as clearly stated in this chapter. Consider such verbs as "build, sanctify, set up, repair, lay beams, and fortify." Moreover, rulers helped (cf. vv. 9, 12, 14, 15, 17) and professionals (vv. 8, 32). Also there were men from famous cities who helped (vv. 2, 5, 7, 13). Blessed be God for what was accomplished!

4. There are details in this chapter which absolutely defy human origin (cf. vv. 20, 21). It is really wonderful and thrilling to read the total accuracy of the Word of God. If one starts at the Sheep Gate (3:1) this chapter traces a tour of the gates clockwise from west to north to east and back again south to the Sheep Gate (3:32).

5. Working through the chapter, there is a phrase which occurs four times. It is "... he repaired ... over against (  $\aleph \aleph \aleph$  NEGED ) his house." What an incredible spiritual lesson this is. Every real true effective work (building the walls) must begin with one's house (home). Let this be made clear – no church (assembly of believers) is any stronger than its homes. This is a maxim.

6. As one further examines these four phrases, it is apparent that the Scriptures record specific names of the builders. Frequently names of Bible characters provide descriptions of character or expectation (cf. Moses, Joshua, Jacob, Nehemiah). Consider the phrase and persons recorded.

#### 1. The House of RIGHTEOUSNESS vv. 28, 29

The priests worked on the walls (vv. 1, 28). Each one "repaired ... over against his house." He was responsible for that which was "in front of" (  $\aleph \aleph \aleph$  NEGED ) his own house. The noun for "every one" is the Hebrew "man" (  $\epsilon \kappa$  YSH ). One of the priests listed is "Zadok" (v. 29). Five men are given this name in the Bible (cf. 1 Chron. 24:3; 1 Chron. 6:12; 2 Kgs 15:33; Neh. 3:4; 3:29). Some believe this Zadok was the scribe mentioned later in the book (13:13).

The name "Zadok" is derived from the Hebrew verb meaning "to be just, righteous" (  $\aleph \aleph \aleph$  TSADAK ). This name marks a most important doctrinal truth of the Bible – righteousness. The doctrine is given explication in the book of Romans. Its imputation is given emphasis (Ro. 4, 5) while its impartation is explained in later chapters (6 – 8; 12 – 16). Imputed righteousness comes by grace through faith (Ro. 5:1) while imparted comes by yielding to the Holy Spirit (Ro. 8:1-4). Interestingly, this "Zadok" is the son of "Immer," a name derived from the Hebrew verb for "talk" (  $\aleph \aleph \aleph$  IMMER ). It is an appropriate suggestion that "righteous" persons will have acceptable "talk."

## 2. The House of HAPPINESS v. 23

Two men are mentioned in this verse. One is "Benjamin." His name means "son of my right hand." Scripture seems to suggest that the "right hand" is the place of dignity, happiness, prosperity, and exaltation (Ps 110:1, 5; Mt. 10:37, 40; Ro. 8:34; Heb. 1:3; 1 Pet. 3:22). What a name to give a son and what a message this man brings to us! The Bible affirms that the right hand is the place of pleasure forever (Ps 16:11). The man associated with Benjamin is "Hashub." His name is derived from the verb meaning to "think, meditate, purpose" ( חָשַׁב HSHAV ). It is possible to reckon this man as "thinking, intelligent." These men were quite a pair (cf. Joshua 1:8; Ps 1:3).

## 3. The House of PRAISE v. 10

The phrase under consideration is used in this verse of "Jedaiah." There are several in Scripture with this name (cf. 1 Chron. 4:37; 24:1, 6, 7; Neh. 12:6, 7, 21; Zech. 6:10, 14). This name has its root in the verb to "cast, confess, give thanks or praise" ( יָדָה YADAH ). The final "iah" of the name has reference to the Holy Name of God, the tetragrammaton ( יְיָ YHVH ). Surely this man's name is significant.

An amazing item about this man is he is the son of "Harumaph" which is sourced in two words: "snub or flat nosed" ( חָרַם HRAM ) and "nose" ( שִׁפְף SHAF ). Apparently Jedaiah's father had some congenital problem. What a consideration. God looks to His own to bring Him praise in everything (1 Thess. 5:18; Rev. 4:11).

## 4. The House (Chamber) of FRIENDSHIP v. 30

There is a dramatic change in the Hebrew here. Instead of "house" the word for "chamber" ( נִסְחָה NISCHAH ) is used. The same word refers to various compartments in the temple (1 Chron. 9:26). The man who repaired this smaller unit is named "Meshullam." He also worked elsewhere (v. 4). His name means "peace, friend" ( שָׁלַם SHALAM ). His father was "Berechiah" which means "whom God blessed." How precious. This is really the apex of all that precedes. We need a chamber with such a significance.

### Conclusion

The wall repairs were real and historical. The men who rebuilt the wall as outlined were genuine people. It appears their names are significant and instructive. Around the phrase "over against" the truths of righteousness, happiness, praise and friendship express our proper relationship with God through Christ. So be it to God's glory. Amen.