

LESSONS LEARNED FROM NEHEMIAH

Most remember that the children of Israel were carried into Babylonian captivity because of their lack of faith in the true and living God. In 605 B.C. Babylon conquered Israel. Among those deported into captivity were Daniel and his friends (2 Chron. 36:6-7; Dan. 1:1-3). In 598 B.C., Ezekiel and about 10,000 others were carried into captivity. In 586 B.C., the temple of Jerusalem was destroyed and the city burned, and all except the very poor were taken to Babylon (2 Kings 24:20-25:21; Jer. 39:1-10). When the time came where God saw fit to allow a remnant to return to Jerusalem, they managed to restore true worship, but did not rebuild the walls.

In 536 B.C., Zerubbabel led the first return from Babylonian captivity. In 457 B.C., Ezra leads the next return of God's people. In 444 B.C., Nehemiah leads the final return. While in captivity, Nehemiah learned about the conditions of his brethren and the temple. He prayed to God that he might be able to return to Jerusalem. His prayer was answered. Upon Nehemiah's arrival, he set about the task of repairing the walls and God's house. The Lord's church today can learn valuable lessons from Nehemiah's plan to rebuild the temple walls of Jerusalem.

Nehemiah **investigated** and saw the great need to restore the walls of the temple. The work was too important to ignore. God's house had been in disarray far too long. Thus, Nehemiah led the effort to begin the task.

We need brethren today who will take a serious look at the needs of the Lord's church. Some congregations carefully maintain the physical structure but are in

spiritual shambles. More people are needed who will insist that God's pattern for worship and Christian living be followed. We need brethren like Nehemiah who will take the lead in encouraging others to do God's will.

Nehemiah called for **volunteers**. No one was coerced to help. No bait was dangled before people to entice them to help. Nehemiah wanted people to help who truly loved God. He knew that one who willingly volunteers to do God's work will be a happy worker and devoted to the task at hand. It is no different today in the Lord's church. God's wants **willing** laborers in the kingdom who lovingly respond to His commands. Unless one is willing to "*deny himself, and take up his cross daily*" (Luke 9:23), he is not likely to volunteer to do much work in the Lord's vineyard.

The people were **united** in their efforts to repair the temple wall, or they would have not been successful. The brethren worked side by side, cooperating one with the other, and steadfastly remained dedicated to the task at hand. They refused to be distracted by worldly people and worldly matters.

Brethren today must understand the necessity of speaking the same thing and being "*perfected together in the same mind and in the same judgment*" (1 Cor. 1:10). Protection from false teachers is needed just as badly today as was protection from Nehemiah's enemies, "*Sanballat, and Tobiah and the Arabians, and the Ammonites, and the Ashdodites...*" (Neh. 4:7-8). Nehemiah says of his devoted workers that "*they all builded the wall and they that bare burdens laded themselves; every one with one of his hands wrought in the work, and with the other held his weapon*" (Neh. 4:17). In doing the Lord's work today one must not forget

to have in his hand the "*the sword of the Spirit*" (Eph. 6:17). May we always strive to "*give diligence to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace*" (Eph. 4:3)!

Nehemiah's volunteers **cooperated** in rebuilding the wall. All had a job to do, and each one did his individual task. Each member of the body of Christ today has a job to do as they contribute to the needs of the kingdom (cf. 1 Cor. 12:13-27).

Nehemiah did not allow his people to become **discouraged**. Enemies from within or without did not deter the workers from their task. The devil never wants God's work to succeed. A stumblingblock will always be provided courtesy of Satan.

Some today say that the work of the Lord's church cannot be accomplished in the way the Lord intended. Such is false thinking and far from the truth. Let us never become discouraged in building upon a solid foundation (cf. Acts 4:12; 1 Cor. 3:11; Matt. 27:24-27).

Nehemiah's volunteers had a **mind** to work. They did not show up for only two hours per week. They did not possess the attitude that someone else could and should do the task. They **prayed** to God that they could be used for His service and glory – and God did use them!

If we as members of the body of Christ possess the proper attitude and have a mind to work in His vineyard, the Lord will also use us to His service and glory. May we all have the spirit of Nehemiah!

Marvin L. Weir from Bonham St. Beacon

ANNIVERSARY

Gary and Lynda Cole, 02-14.

BIRTHDAY

Julia Thrasher, 02-17.

ILL

Sunday: Stan and Judith Anderson (PM); John Cody Carter; Mary Huffman; Brooke, Monica, and Taylor Nemechek; Millie Robertson (PM).

Wednesday: Caeden Cole; Millie Robertson.

Cleo Stone had a pacemaker placed at Olathe Medical Center last Monday. Mary Huffman is recuperating at home. Jim O'Connor was released from Centerpoint Hospital in Independence last week. Dave Parish's uncle, Tom Parish, is being treated for cancer.

Those battling cancer: Ledgia Campbell, David Cole, Shauna Heck, Betty James, Tom Parish and Cleo Stone. Please remember these in your prayers.

HOME BOUND

Kathleen Camp is in Room 101 at the Royal Terrace Nursing Home in Olathe. Barbara James' Aunt, Evelyn Marquardt is at Sharon Lane in Shawnee. Please remember these in your prayers and visitation.

OUT OF TOWN

Mrs. Leah Thrasher was visiting relatives in Owensville, MO last weekend.

MEN'S BUSINESS MEETING

Our monthly Men's Business Meeting will be held this Sunday, February 14, following our AM worship. All men of the congregation are encouraged to attend.

SATURDAY SEMINAR

"*What If...*" is the theme for the lessons at 39th Street on February 20. See the flyer in the foyer for details.

ATTENDANCE

Sunday AM, 37; Sunday PM, 28; Wednesday PM, 37.

Those To Serve

February 14, 2010

BUILDING AND COMMUNION..... Nelson

MORNING WORSHIP

ANNOUNCEMENTS..... George Thomas
SONG LEADER..... Stanley Anderson
OPENING PRAYER Joel Nelson
PRESIDE..... John Dodson
ASSIST..... Chris Edwards
ASSIST..... Steven Schleif
CLOSING PRAYER..... Trent Thrasher

EVENING WORSHIP

OPENING PRAYER Jared Nelson
CLOSING PRAYER..... Jeff Nemechek
LORD'S SUPPER..... John Dodson

WEDNESDAY 17th

SONG LEADER..... Jared Nelson
INVITATION John Cody Carter

WORSHIP SCHEDULE

Sunday

Bible Study 9:30 AM
Morning Worship 10:30 AM
Evening Worship 6:00 PM

Wednesday

Ladies Bible Study 10:00 AM
Bible Study 7:00 PM

Preacher: Ted J. Thrasher

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