

Build the Wall

Disclaimer: this is an automatically generated machine transcription - there may be small errors or mistranscriptions. Please refer to the original audio if you are in any doubt.

Date: 25 October 2012

Preacher: Rev. James Maciver

[0 : 0 0] Amen. Will you turn with me please to the passage we read in Nehemiah chapter 2 and we can read again at verse 17.

Nehemiah chapter 2 at verse 17. Then I said unto them, You see the distress that we are in, how Jerusalem lieth waste, and the gates thereof are burnt 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.

They said, Let us rise up and build. So they strengthened their hands for this good work. We need to take these verses obviously in the context in which we find them.

Where we find Nehemiah as having been given this leave from his king in Artaxerxes to go back to Jerusalem to lead the work of rebuilding there.

[1 : 1 4] His companion Ezra having gone some time previous to that. And as you find the progression of Nehemiah's memoirs, which is really what this book is, it's so interesting that he gives us details that are not just applicable to times when the church needs to be built up, but when we're involved in building up what has become small or weak.

There are so many principles here, even for the strongest congregations, that are always valuable and applicable to our Christian lives.

And as you find his arrival in Jerusalem, mentioned here by Nehemiah, you'll find the four things in this passage from verse 9, especially through to the end of the chapter, that really come together to form this unit in the chapter that gave us the setting in which Nehemiah's appeal to the people here was based, and their response to it as well.

But you need to actually look also at how that was required by the circumstances they found themselves in. So there are four things really in the passage that we can look at briefly.

First of all, there's opposition to the work that he was about to engage in. The work that he had come to Jerusalem to do. There's opposition.

[2 : 4 3] Secondly, there's an inspection on his part in verses 11 to 16. He carries out a very particular and very detailed inspection of the walls and the gates of Jerusalem.

And there was a specific reason for that in the circumstances. It was part of his own response to the information that he had been given previously before he went back to Judah, to Jerusalem.

And now that he had come and faced this opposition and heard this opposition, this is his first response. Along with prayer, he goes out to inspect the walls. And that is quite deliberate.

So there's inspection and opposition. There's thirdly, exhortation. Because he comes in verses 17 and 18 to exhort the people, the leaders and the people, to actually rise up and build.

To get to action, to build up these walls. And he gives them two elements or two factors that are really designed to motivate them to do that work.

- [3 : 53] He talks about the derision in which they are held as a people. The state of Jerusalem. The way they've become a laughing stock and have been for many generations.
- And Nehemiah wants that to cease. And the only way it can cease successfully is for them to build by the help of God.
- To engage in rebuilding. The second thing he mentions as a motivating factor is the hand of the Lord as it was upon himself.
- Along with the permission the king had given him. But he mentioned especially, he told them of the hand of my God which was good upon me. In other words, Nehemiah was very concerned to set before the people that this wasn't his idea.
- He hadn't come up with this plan. This wasn't something that he had invented himself. This was from the Lord and therefore it was bound to succeed. He had been sent by him to head up the work.
- [4 : 56] So the opposition, inspection and exhortation. And then finally there's another confrontation. Because these enemies of what they were trying to do again confronted them.
- And we can see Nehemiah's response in the final verse of the chapter. I want to try and just apply these to ourselves. And to look at some of the elements that come across to us in that for our lives.
- Particularly in the world in which we live. In the circumstances in which we find ourselves today. But also hopefully that there will be elements there that will for yourselves be of significance.
- Of interest in preparing for remembering the Lord's death and the Lord's supper. And coming again to witness in that regard for him. Well look at the opposition first of all.
- He mentions in these details from verse 9. The two people that are mentioned there. And then the third person, Geshem, is mentioned later on in verse 19. But it's interesting that he gives us the names.
- [6 : 02] Sanballat the Horonite. Sanballat was a Babylonian name. And Nehemiah seems to be saying to us, here is somebody who didn't belong to Israel.
- Who had no concern for the good of Israel. Who had no concern for the good of Jerusalem. Who wasn't at all concerned to let these walls be built up. In fact he was against it along with the others.
- He came from an entirely different mindset to Nehemiah's and the people, the Jews themselves. And then you've got Tobiah.
- Whose name means literally, God is good. Isn't it interesting? Isn't it solemn? That somebody can carry about a name that means such a profound and precious thing.
- And yet be absolutely committed against God. Tobiah. God is good. And there he is along with the other two.
- [7 : 01] Doing his utmost to frustrate the work of Nehemiah. And those who are seeking to build up the walls of Jerusalem. That's how it often is. You don't necessarily come up against the worst opposition from outside of the church.
- Sometimes the most vehement is from inside. From people who carry a Christian name. Or a name that ought to mean something significant. Significant in their lives as people, as Christians.
- However, that's not how it always is. And Tobiah, despite his name, is absolutely committed against the ways of the Lord. And then you've got Geshem.
- The Arabian is mentioned later on. He wasn't a Jew at all, of course. But the three of them together, in these memoirs of Nehemiah, form this leadership of opposition.

And again and again, Nehemiah specifically mentions them. And mentions them together. And mentions them as a party that were working together. In a way that was determined, if they could, to do their utmost.

[8 : 08] To actually frustrate the work that Nehemiah had come to do. Now he tells us, in verse 10, what it was especially that made them indignant.

When Zambalat the Horonite and Tobiah the servant, the Ammonite, heard of it. It grieved them exceedingly that there was come a man to seek the welfare of the children of Israel.

That is especially what Nehemiah puts his finger on and tells us really rankled with them. That is what they were opposed to especially. That somebody would come and seek the good of these people, the children of Israel.

And you will find, as a Christian, and you will find in the opposition that meets us in the church of God. As we go about his service. As we go about seeking, as it were, to build up the walls of Jerusalem.

In our day, in a spiritual sense. You will find that the opposition that you meet. Actually homes in on that point. Or points very similar to it.

[9 : 13] That world out there that is hostile to the gospel. It is determined to actually stand against the children of Israel having their lives actually improved.

About somebody actually coming and taking it on themselves to seek the welfare of the children of Israel. When Jesus sent his disciples into the world.

One of the things he made very clear to them. Was that they would face this kind of opposition. And he didn't tell them that. So that they would be good off following him. It is actually the opposite way about.

The person who has actually come to know the grace of God working in their hearts. And changing their lives. And putting them into the body of people that are known as God's people.

That person will see opposition and meet opposition. But not in a way that puts them off following the Lord. It will make them like Nehemiah. All the more determined to rise and build.

[10 : 09] And contribute their part to the building up of the walls of Jerusalem. So the Bible doesn't set out the difficulties of the Christian way for us.

So that we will be put off. Coming to profess Christ. Coming to take us out of place at his table. At the Lord's Supper. Or coming out to the prayer meeting.

Or coming to do whatever it is we need to take. As steps that will actually be part of our witness form. It's giving us in the realism of the Bible.

The situation as it is in fact. In the experience of God's people. And as Jesus sent the disciples into the world. One of the things that he said to them was.

If they have kept my word. They will keep you also. All this they will do. For my name's sake. Because they know not.

[11 : 09] Him who sent me. Don't be surprised. He said marvel not. If the world hates you. Don't be surprised. Don't be surprised. Don't be surprised. Don't be surprised. When the opposition comes out.

Because this is what the opposition homes in on. That seeking the welfare of the children of Israel. Is something obnoxious to the world.

It is something opposite to the values. Of the world itself. And you mustn't be surprised. That this is the reaction. Of the world in its opposition to God. When the welfare of God's people.

Is actually sought. By the church. By the people of God. By those who serve the Lord. And seek to build up the walls of Jerusalem. And when we're praying.

For revival. As we're praying for revival. As we're praying for. Increase of spiritual energy. And blessing. This is one of the things we must be aware of.

[12 : 09] We're praying for something. Which will stir up this kind of opposition. We have to be ready. When that opposition shows itself. Because whenever God blesses his people.

It stirs up enmity. On the part of his opponents. And they especially. Take exception. That there was come a man.

To seek the wealth. To seek the wealth. Of the children of Israel. Well don't you be put off by that. Don't you think that it's. Something out of the ordinary.

To have this kind of opposition. To what you're seeking to do. As a Christian. As someone who is going to. Again remember the Lord. And his death. Or even if you're thinking of doing that.

For the first time. The Lord is saying. This is how it is. And this is how it is. For good reason. Because it shows up. How entirely different.

[13 : 11] The life of a Christian is to the world. And how different the values. Of the people of God are. To those that are found. Amongst his enemies. His opponents.

Owls. That's the opposition. And that's the reason. The opposition of Owls. Nehemiah is quite clear about it. He has. He has no hesitation in saying it.

And that carries into. The kind of circumstances. The kind of experiences. The kind of opposition. That you and I meet with still in the world. It's the same world. It's the same enmity.

It's the same opposition. As it was in the days of Nehemiah. But it's the same God. And the same promises. And the same power. And the same emphasis.

That he gives. To his own word of truth. Secondly. Nehemiah went. And made an inspection. I came to Jerusalem. I rose in the night. I and some few men with me.

[14 : 08] Neither told I any man. What my God had put in my heart. To do at Jerusalem. He went out by night. And he tells us there. How he went round. The gates. And the walls.

To inspect them. And it gives us the details. Of the different parts of it. Now you follow into. The next chapter. Which is really. In many ways. A series of names. You have to hold the two things together.

The two chapters together. In this respect as well. That the inspection. That Nehemiah carried out here. Was deliberately. Was to look at. Where it was.

The work needed to be done. Where did the walls. The walls have. The greatest. The greatest. Gaps in them. Where was the most.

Rubble. To be cleared away. Where were the walls. In need of. More strengthening. Than at other places. What exactly. Was the nature of the work.

[15 : 03] That needed to be done. How many people. Were required for it. What resources. Would be required. All of these things. And other factors. As well. Were part of.

Nehemiah's inspection. Very carefully. Preparing. Before. He actually. Began the action. And that's something. That the church.

Needs to be doing. All along. The way. We need to be. Constantly. Asking ourselves. Where are we. Most vulnerable. We need to be.

Constantly. Examining. Our own lives. Personally. As to where. We are most vulnerable. To the enemy's attack. Where we are. Where are we. In most need. Of building up. Where do we need.

The most support. We need to do the same. Congregationally. We need to do the same. Denominationally. We need to do the same. In terms of the church.

[15 : 57] That we belong to. In the world. The church. In the wider sense too. Where is the church. At its weakest. Where is the church. At its strongest. What are the weak points.

In our game. Where does the wall. Need shoring up. Where is it. Thinnest. Where is it. Strongest. And you carry that into.

All the activities. That we engage in. In our congregational life. As well as in our. Personal. Spiritual. Individual. Individual lives. Because.

As the next chapter. Shows. Everything. Must really come. In a. Unified. Way. To contribute. Towards. The building process.

Nehemiah. Nehemiah. Had gone out. To inspect the walls. And when he came. To organize. Who they were. That would build them. And help to build them. Well the next chapter. Tells us. That this is how he arranged it.

[16 : 56] There's not a gap. To be found. There's not a part. Of the wall. That is left. Unattended. As they begin. The building work. All the way around.

He takes us. In the next chapter. Beginning at. The. Beginning there. At the. The gate. Where. Where. Where.

They actually. Began the work. The. The. The high priest. And his brethren. The priest. They built a sheath gate. And when you go through the chapter. You arrive back at the sheath gate.

At the end of the chapter. He's taken us on a circuit of the whole wall. Just to tell us. That they attended. To the whole wall. And the needs of that whole wall. To be built up.

And everybody. Except. For the nobles of the Techoites. They all contributed to the work. And the nobles of the Techoites.

[17 : 53] They are singled out. They are singled out. By Nehemiah. Because they refused. To bend themselves. To the yoke.

Of service. It was beneath them. To involve themselves. Like the rest of the people. It was beneath them. And so they thought.

In verse 5. Next to them the Techoites repaired. But their nobles. Put not their necks. To the work. Of their lord. They were too important for this.

This was for ordinary people. They weren't actually going to dirt with their hands. Clearing rubble. Casting stones away. Building up walls.

Nehemiah in his memoirs. Mentions them. Disparagingly. Deliberately saying. They refused to bend their necks. To the yoke of God's service.

[18 : 54] But everybody else did their bit. The families side by side. As they mentioned. And the inspection of the walls. Went towards that. He was inspecting the walls.

So that he would arrange. How they were being built up. That's why we inspect ourselves. And inspect our own congregational life. And our personal lives. So that we can best then assess.

Where do we need. To have the contribution made. At this particular time. How are we actually providing. For our young people. For the Sunday school. For our teenagers. For the married couples.

For all the people. In our congregations. That need specific attention. In regard to their own. Particular circumstances. And Nehemiah chapter 3. And through this inspection.

Is saying. You've got to take account of it all. And put it all together. As best we can. And seek the Lord's blessing. That the whole thing. Will actually contribute.

- [19 : 49] Towards the building. Of the walls of Jerusalem. So we come to. Take stock of the situation. That's what. In some ways.
- That's what. Times of. Communion seasons are about. Yes. It's remembering the Lord's death. Yes. It's showing our appreciation. For him.
- It's particularly that. It's that. Because. That is what it's designed to be. That is what God. Actually meant by. Giving us the sacrament. But it's also a time.
- When people assess. Their own lives. Examine. Is the word. That's used in the Bible. In that passage. That we use. As our word. But let a man. Examine himself.
- And so let him. Examine himself. As. As. As. As. As. As. Nehemiah. Examined. And inspected. These walls. You examine the walls. Of your life. You examine the walls.
- [20 : 43] Of your profession. You examine the walls. Congregationally. As well. All of that. Is part of the. Exercise. Of. Contributing. To the building up.
- Of the walls. Thirdly. This exhortation. Verses 17. And 18. Then I said to them. You see. The distress. That we are in.
- How Jerusalem. Lies waste. And the gates. Thereof. Are burned with fire. Come. And let us build. The wall. Of Jerusalem. That we. Be no more. A reproach. You see.
- For Nehemiah. For the cause. Of God. To be a reproach. For Nehemiah. That was something. To weep about. He cried his eyes out.
- When he had the report. In chapter 1. As he tells us. Right near the beginning. Of his book. When he heard. The report. Of the wall. Of Jerusalem. Being broken down. And that the people.
- [21 : 39] There. Were in great affliction. And reproach. And the gates. Thereof. Were burned with fire. And it came to pass. When I heard. These words. That I sat down. And wept.
- And mourned. Certain days. And fasted. And prayed. Before the Lord. Of heaven. I have to put that. To myself. Tonight. And say. When I hear. Of the cause of God. In reproach.
- Wherever it is. And particularly. In my own land. Do I sit down. And weep over it. Do I cry. At the news.
- That the church. Of God. Is in distress. In dire straits. At times. Do I. Weep. When I hear. Of disobedience.
- To the word. Of God. On the part. Of those. Who should know better. Do I mourn. And fast. Over the situation. Well if I don't.
- [22 : 34] How do I expect. Others. To contribute. Towards the building. Of the walls. If I'm not preparing. But in that way. Myself. This is how he viewed it.
- This is how he saw it. This is what it was to him. A source of great distress. He was in anguish. Of soul. And you know. Sometimes. Not just sometimes.
- But sadly. Very often. I have to say to myself. Anyway. That we get so used. To a situation. That sometimes. We close out. The kind of.
- Response to it. That we ought to have. We get so used. To times. Of. Unfaithfulness. Times of.
- The gospel. Being adjusted. Times of evacuating. The message. Of the Bible. From things. Which are offensive. To human beings.
- [23 : 32] In their own understanding. We get used. To conditions. In the world. Of our day. We can never.
- Get used to. The church. Of God. Being in reproach. Without ourselves. Being. Unfaithful. In that. This is how he thought.

The derision. That they were in. The reproach. That they were in. They were made. A laughing stock. They were made. A reproach. Of course. The prophets. Had said. Jeremiah. Isaiah. Isaiah. Hosea.

All the prophets. That had gone. And spoken of the disaster. That was going to befall. The people. If they continued. In their disobedience. And idolatry. This was what was going to happen. God would make them.

A reproach. He would make them. A proverb. And a hissing. And a byword. Among the nations. Around them. And that's what happened. They didn't listen to God. They didn't listen to God's word.

[24 : 28] Through his servants. And I hope none of us. Ever say what they said. Because what they were saying. Basically was.

Well we hear you. But it will never come to that. It will never happen to us. It did. And they're now in distress.

Even though the work is beginning. Under Nehemiah. And Ezra has come back. Before him. And engaged in work of his own. Still they're in distress.

They're in dire straits. It's a pitiful sight. The gates are burnt with fire. The walls are on the ground. They've been like that for generations.

Nobody's lifted them up. And Nehemiah. Doesn't want that disgrace. That reproach to continue. So he comes.

[25 : 25] To mention that. In his exhortation to the people. What he's really saying is that. Whenever the cause of God. Is a reproach.

Of course. There is always going to be. In the opposition of the world. An element of reproach. But this is justifiable reproach. The gates ought not to have been left like that.

The walls ought not to have been abandoned and left. For all these generations. And the people who were before Jeremiah's governor. Ought not to have been lying in their own pockets.

At the expense of this work being carried out. Which is what you find in the following chapters. Had been the case. They are a reproach. Because they've blotted on themselves.

And so far. Not much has been done about it. Well friends. When the cause of God. Is a reproach.

[26 : 23] And when we know that. There are reasons for reproach. In our day. That's a reason. That should motivate you and I. To engage.

In rebuilding work for God. To contribute. Whatever we ourselves. Can contribute. To the building up again. Of the cause of God. That the reproach might cease.

That God will turn his face. As we've been singing in the sounds. And turn his countenance upon us. To shine upon us. That once again. We might be lifted up.

That once again. His name be glorified. Throughout our land. The second thing is. He mentioned. In the exhortation. Not only the removal of delusion.

But. The hand of the Lord. That was upon him. I told him of the hand of my God. Which was good upon me. He's mentioned. Tobiah. And his name being. God is good.

[27 : 24] Well now he's mentioning. That God is good. And the hand of God. Was good upon me. He's saying. And also the king's words. That he had spoken. And it's interesting.

How he actually puts the one. Ahead of the other. The king's word was important. He needed the king's permission. To go back to Jerusalem. To spend time there. To be.

A leader. In this work of rebuilding. Without the king's permission. It wouldn't have been possible. For Nehemiah. To do that. But the king's permission.

Was not the most important thing. The Lord's word was. The Lord's hand upon him. Was good. He had brought this about.

And. You can see. Actually. From the very beginning. Of. The book of Nehemiah. How much. That meant to Nehemiah. In terms of. His. Prayer.

[28 : 20] And the times. That he prayed. And the emphasis. That he gave. To prayer. When he's able to say here. The hand of my God. Was good upon me.

He's saying that. As an answer. To his prayers. He knows. The hand of God. Was good upon him. He prayed for it. And God answered it.

But he's really. Emphasizing that. This is not his own idea. This is not his own plan. This is not something. Although he's fully. Of course. Fully behind.

What. He himself. Is planning to do. And wants the people. To join him in. He's emphasizing. This is actually. From God's good hand. From God's hand.

Being good upon me. And therefore. If you join me. In this work. If you rise up. And build. With. We're guaranteed success. Because it's from the Lord.

[29 : 17] And that's how we have to look at it as well. We can. Do all the planning. As Nehemiah did. And it's important. That we do that. We've seen. How inspected the walls. How we ourselves. Need to think ahead.

And plan. And examine. But you can have all of that. And still lack. The hand of the Lord. Upon you. For good. And however far.

Our plans. Will get us. They won't really. Get us very far. Without the hand. Of the Lord. Being upon us. First. And being upon us.

Continually. And I know. That's what you pray for. Yourselves. That the hand. Of the Lord. Will be good. Upon you. As a people. And that.

That will be a great. Motivating. Factor. For others. To join you. In the work. Of the gospel. In the work. Of building up. The walls. Of Jerusalem. In this congregation.

[30 : 12] Itself. And in these districts. And. It's a frequent thing. In Nehemiah's response. This mention.

Of the hand. Of the Lord. Now. Maybe there's somebody. Tonight here. Who hasn't yet. Come. Fully. Openly. To commit. Themselves. To the Lord.

God. Or. Certainly. Publicly. And. You know. Sometimes. We. May think. That the argument. That the cause.

Of God. Is weak. Is not really. A valid argument. Or a valid. Enough. Argument. For us. Actually. To throw in. Our lot. With those. Who publicly. Profess the Lord.

Well. Nehemiah's telling us. That's not the case. When you see. The cause. Of God. In need of support. And know. That God. Has given you. Something. Whatever it is. That you love him.

[31 : 06] In your heart. That you want. To serve him. Then the fact. That his cause. Is low. Is itself. A very valid. Reason. Why you. Should actually.

Come. With the rest. And help them. To build up. The walls. Of Jerusalem. Are you still. Staying away. From that work. Because.

You see. Yourself. As somehow. Too insignificant. If everybody. In chapter 3. Had said that. Along with the nobles. Of Tekor. The walls. Of Jerusalem.

Would never. Have been rebuilt. They all. Did their own part. Some much smaller. Than others. But nevertheless.

Their own. Significant. Contribution. Every family. Every individual. And for everyone. To whom. The Lord. Has given. Life.

[32 : 00] He has given you. The advantage. The opportunity. The privilege. Of serving him. Publicly. And building up. His cause. Don't let the enemy.

Persuade you. As they then thought. As we come to the fourth point. The confrontation. Just very briefly. When. The people heard. The response to it. Of course.

Was very positive. Let us. Rise up. And build. Whenever you find. These words. Rise up. Like this. In the old testament. It really means.

Let's move to it. Let's get into action. Let us. Rise up. And build. And isn't that. What you're saying tonight. Isn't that.

What we're saying. Together. As believers. In the world. Let's rise up. And build. Let's put our hand. To this work. Let's do it. Because we know.

[32 : 55] It's strengthening. God's cause. It's for that good. It's for that. Particular. Good. Purpose. And. When the enemies. Heard that.

They came again. And laughed. Us to scorn. They despised us. And said. What is this thing. That you do. Well. You rebel. Against the king. Now. You notice. Things there.

Which are still. Very much. The strategy. Of the enemy. Ridicule. Mocking. Scorn. And then.

Along with that. The idea. That. Well. Really. The work. Is far. Too big. For you. There's too much. How are you people. So small in number. How are you going to manage.

To do. All that work. And not only that. But we. In the opposition. Are far too strong. For you. Are you going to take us on.

[33 : 50] Do you also. Think. That you can overcome. The kind of arguments. The kind of strength. That we can muster. Isn't that what the world. Tells you tonight. Isn't that what. Atheism says.

Isn't that what. The brazen. Faced opposition. That meets you. In the gospel. Meets you. As you go out. With the gospel. Isn't that what they say. They laugh.

You to scorn. They try and ridicule. Your points of view. They belittle them. They try and. Present them. As not worthy. Even to be believed in. They despise you.

And they'll say. What's this. That you're going to do. Surely you're not going to. Take on. The whole of the world. Surely you're not going to. Take on. Such great powers.

As exist. Against the gospel. Surely you're not going to do that. Surely you're not. Sufficient for that. And then. Will you rebel. Against the king. You see.

[34 : 43] They're attributing to them. Motives. Which really don't exist. They're really suggesting. That. Their.

Motive. Is rebellion. Against the king. When it is not. Don't be surprised. At. The misrepresentation. Of Christians.

That you find. In many ways. Presented to us today. It's all from this opposition. It's all part of the strategy.

Against building up the walls of Jerusalem. You've got to stand against that. And say. Yes. That's. That's what I expect. That's what the Lord actually says. I ought to expect.

That's what faithfulness to him. Is indeed going to meet with. But I have my part to do. In building up the walls of Jerusalem. And that opposition.

[35 : 41] Is not going to put me off doing it. And so he said. The God of heaven. He will prosper us. Therefore we as servants. Will arise and build.

But you have no portion. Nor right. Nor memorial. In Jerusalem. Two things briefly. He says. First of all. You have no portion. Nor right.

Nor memorial. In Jerusalem. It seems that. Perhaps these. Individuals. And Ballot. And Tobiah. And Geshem. If they were seeking from Nehemiah. That they would actually be given.

Something. To do themselves. In the work of building up. That they would be given. Some role. Themselves. Or some. Permission. To actually. Take part.

In some way. Even an official way. To approve. Some of the work. Or whatever. Nehemiah is quite adamant. You have absolutely. No portion of this. It's not your business.

[36 : 36] Now. We want to. See the world. Coming to the gospel. Coming to be changed. By the gospel. But we don't want to see the world.

As it were. Promoting the gospel. As the world. It is always disastrous. When you try and. Give work. To people. Who are not themselves. Committed to the Lord. A work. That only God's people. Can do. And here is.

A reminder. To us. That. When God. Gives his people. A work to do. He gives it to them. To do. He gives it to those. Who know him. To those who love him. To those who serve him.

And if others want to. Be part of that work. Well they've got to come. To be his people. They've got to have their lives. Changed first. And please don't misunderstand.

[37 : 34] What I'm saying. I'm not. In any way saying. This is suggesting. That we keep the world out. That we keep the world away. From the gospel. We want the world. To come under the gospel. But we want.

To see. The Lord's people. Involve themselves. And especially. In the leadership. Of the gospel. To be committed. To the gospel. To the values.

Of the gospel. To the principles. Of the gospel. To the God. Of the gospel. He says to them. You have no right. Nor memorial. Nor portion. In this. And.

Perhaps. He's also saying to them. That. It's reached the point. Where. There's no much. There's not much. Else to say. To these. Opponents.

But just to say to them. No. You keep out of this. You know. There are times. When we face. Opposition. So vehement. And so given.

[38 : 32] To blasphemy. And to outright. Disrespect. Of God. That there comes. A point. When you have to say. The more. I try.

And get through. To those people. The more. It's just going to increase. The volume. Of blasphemy. So I've got to call it. A day at that. I know that line. Is difficult.

To draw. But sometimes. It has to be drawn. And sometimes. The Lord. Makes it clear. As he did. To Nehemiah. You have no portion. No right. Nor memorial.

In Jerusalem. It's just going to add. To. This disrespect. This blasphemy. Of God's name. He didn't try.

To remember. At this stage. He just said. This is not for you. Now it is. For you tonight. To come. To. Confess.

[39 : 26] Your Lord. If you know him. To do. Your share. Of the building up. Of the walls. Of Jerusalem. It's not just. Your right. It's your duty.

And your privilege. And nothing. In this chapter. Ought to persuade. You otherwise. So tonight. If. You're somewhat.

Hesitant. Think of what. Nehemiah. Said to the people. The God. Of heaven. He will. Prosper us. He's big enough.

To look after. All the opposition. He knows. He knows. It's coming. Even before you. And he'll. Carry you through. And he'll. Make you.

As he's. Promised. To be. Lives. In the world. Come. Let us. Rise up. And build.

[40 : 24] The walls. Let's pray. Lord. I'll. Lord. O. Gracious God. We do. Thanks. for the strength that your grace provides.

You give your people a mandate to go forth in your name and to make disciples of all nations, commanding them and teaching them in respect to those things that you yourself command your people.

We bless you, O Lord, that as you give them the mandate, you also give them the ability and the strength and the will. We pray that for ourselves as we seek to be faithful to you and to the mandate you have given us.

O Lord, I would God help us to be dependent on your own strength always. We thank you that it is always sufficient for us. So go before us now, we pray, and accept us for Jesus' sake. Amen.