



## NEHEMIAH WEEK 4: REBUILDING THE GATES

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Study Notes

### INTRODUCTION:

- Ch. 3 records the division of work among those who rebuilt the walls.
  1. It reads a lot like Chronicles
  2. It can come across as a simple list of workers, but there's more...
- The end of Ch. 2 is a springboard into this work, because there is always assessment before investment.
- Prayer precedes all else that Nehemiah does, including preparation and assessment.

### MAIN TEXT:

*"Then I said to them, "You see the bad situation we are in, that Jerusalem is desolate and its gates burned by fire. Come, let us rebuild the wall of Jerusalem so that we will no longer be a reproach." I told them how the hand of my God had been favorable to me and also about the king's words which he had spoken to me. Then they said, "Let us arise and build." So they put their hands to the good work." BUT when Sanballat the Horonite, Tobiah the Ammonite official, and Gresham the Arab heard of it, they laughed at us and despised us and said, "What is this thing that you are doing? Will you rebel against the king? So I answered them and said to them, "THE GOD OF HEAVEN HIMSELF WILL PROSPER US; therefore, we HIS SERVANTS will ARISE AND BUILD but you have no heritage or right or memorial in Jerusalem" (Nehemiah 2:17-20)*

### NEHEMIAH IS ABOUT TO SHIFT INTO ANOTHER PHASE OF REBUILDING THE WALLS.

- The end of Ch. 2 marks the shift from preliminary efforts to hard work.
- N completed the preparation, analysis, and planning with favor and wisdom.
- It was time to execute.

### THERE IS ALWAYS OPPOSITION TO THE WORK.

- When we're about to launch into God's work, there will be immediate opposition.
- Nehemiah endured ridicule and false accusations. He did not take it personally so that it distracted him. He didn't receive it either.
- Opposition is "crafted" to undermine our courage and determination
- When God sends us to redeem and restore, there will be a fight
- Against opposition there is: The "Hand of the Lord was on..."
  1. N was NOT a builder. "There wasn't a callous on his hand..."
  2. BUT, where there's a call, there is favor and strength to remain faithful in the face of opposition
- God draws us out of the mire and into His work...
- "But for God,..."
  1. ...we would be lost
  2. ...hopelessly alienated from God and one another

*"When Sanballat the Horonite and Tobiah the Ammonite official heard of it, they were deeply disturbed that a man had come to seek the well-being of the children of Israel." (Neh. 2:10)*

*BUT when Sanballat the Horonite, Tobiah the Ammonite official, and Gresham the Arab heard of it, they laughed at us and despised us and said, "What is this thing that you are doing? Will you rebel against the king? (Neh. 2:19)*

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Whenever you set out to seek the Lord, or to obey,  
or REBUILD, RESTORE, RECONCILE  
ATTACKS are inevitable  
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## UNCOMMON COMMITMENT, COOPERATION, AND COMMUNITY

- Chapter 3 can read like a simple list, but...
- There's an uncommon, Spirit-led quality to this work and the community that's put their hand to it.
- There's something this group is doing that is special, with the ripples of the work echoing throughout the history of God's redemptive history
- Ch. 3 is a powerful expression of "oneness" (Eph. 4:3)
  1. Unity is the work of the Spirit.
  2. We contend for it, to keep it in peace.
- All people in the community are included.
  1. Regardless of gender
  2. Regardless of background (perfum5ers, etc.)
- A cooperative Spirit-led environment = rebuilt walls in 52 days
- Jesus is coming back for one church. He commissioned one church.

## REPAIRING THE GATES SECURES THE CITY, AND SEALS ANY ACCESS POINTS.

- The most vulnerable part of the city's walls are the gates
- There are ten gates in need of repair named in Nehemiah Ch. 3.
- If you were a military strategist, you'd attack these gates as access points
- God's people are redeemed, their sin is nailed to the Cross
  1. But habits of the flesh, the wreckage of sin, need repair and restoration.
  2. Nehemiah's work is a metaphor for the work of the Spirit as He sanctifies the people of God.
- Where does the enemy have access points in our lives?
  1. The enemy, Satan, comes to steal, to kill, and destroy, and he looks for access points in our life to do his work.
  2. Pastor Keith offered "rejection and abandonment", as an example of access points in his life.
  3. These "access points" are issues in our lives that need repair.
    - 38 times "repair" or a derivation of it is used in Ch. 3
    - Repair = "fix brokenness and/or remove what hinders"
  5. Everyone is a work-in-progress, a life-long "project" of the Spirit. Everyone needs some "repairs."
    - We need one another as the Spirit does this work in us. Galatians 4:19
    - We "practice" walking by faith together in relationship with Jesus, by His Spirit, and others.
- The Lord would lead us to address any access points that allow the enemy to resist the work of the Spirit.
  1. Then we can work as He works, in faith, hope, and love.
  2. It's not a Heaven or Hell issue, it's an abundant life issue.
  3. If we give ourselves to pursuing what God, by His Spirit, is leading us into—both personally and collectively—then we become an attractive community.

## DEALING WITH ACCESS POINTS: G.A.T.E.

- **G**o to God with unconfessed sin (It's the #1 reason people withdraw from God and His people.)
- **A**ddress unresolved relational conflict (Seek out and offer forgiveness.)
- **T**reat unaddressed woundedness (Avoidance is not addressing the problem; Keith's friend said to him, "...what's in you is leaking out on the people you love." Anger is a secondary response. Story: You don't drink water from a river without knowing what's upstream. Are there dying things upstream in your life?)
- **E**liminate Areas of Specific Temptation (Heb. 12:1 "hinderances...besetting sins"... Areas in your life where the Enemy has been effective in the past.)

## DISCUSSION QUESTIONS:

1. What is the defining, passionate work of your life?
2. How has God been a part of that work? From your perspective, what's His role been? Guard? Provider? Rescuer? All of those and more?
3. How is your view of God's involvement transforming based on this message?
4. What stands in the way of you entering fully into God's work?
5. What are possible access points that hinder us all in God's work?

6. If you feel you can, share what some of your access point are. Or at least that you have them, know what they are, and want God to address them.
7. What keeps you stuck? What prevents you from opening your heart to the Spirit's work?
8. Read Psalm 139. How does this psalm inform the process for you?
9. How can your community, your group even, stand with you as the Holy Spirit repairs any gates of access?

