

W368_Nehemiah_3.mp3

[00:00:02] This is a recording made in the chapel of the opened book, and it is number three of the series of studies in the book of Nehemiah. It is our custom at this meeting to read a portion of scripture together. And those of you who are listening to this recording, if you care to join us, will you switch off a little while and read with us one Corinthians, Chapter 12? In our last study, we were very much taken up with the antagonism manifested by Sanballat and Tobiah and all that company. It's rather interesting to realize that when you come to our great epistle, to the Ephesians in the fourth chapter, we have in the very context when it speaks about verse 12, the building up of the Body of Christ. It says in verse 14 about the light of men and cunning craftiness whereby they lie in wait to deceive. There's two seem to go together. If the evil one is, as the Scriptures depict him, a mighty fallen spirit with tremendous power, we must expect, while within this present witness to find these antagonism is very real. But there is a danger. There's a danger of minimizing the satanic work to such an extent that we play into his hands because we don't bother. There's also a danger of magnifying unduly. So we turn from the antagonism of sand balance and tobiah to the grace of God and the little handful who would come back to get on with this work of building up the wall in Jerusalem.

[00:01:52] So we are considering this evening the testimony of Nehemiah. Chapter three. Nehemiah. Chapter three. I forgot to mention last time, but I'll make up for it now if I don't forget it again that the word Nehemiah is the same word that gives us the words of Isaiah when he says Comfort ye, comfort ye, saith the Lord. When their warfare was over, Jerusalem was restored and prophecy was fulfilled. The word Nahum and the word Nehemiah and the word Noah in the days of the flood are all words that mean comfort, a comfort that's resting upon something that God has done, something that he's doing, something that he's sustaining and helping against all odds. Now, we might have wondered why we read one Corinthians 12, because in this company we have no one here that speaks with unknown tongues or lays their hand on the sick and heals them or raises the dead or cleanses lepers or whatnot. But there is a there is a lesson in one Corinthians 12, whether you belong to a Pentecostal periods or not, and that is that although there may be diversities of gifts, there's one spirit that animates them all. And we shall see in Nehemiah that there was a great diversity among those

who were sharing in this work of building, but they were animated by one desire. And that is true of us all at all times.

[00:03:23] You see how the Apostle plays about with it? He says. The foot cannot say of the hand. I have no need of thee. Or if it was all an eye, where were the smelling be and so on. Well, if it was all pulpit and no nothing else, be a sorry place the Chapel of the Open book, wouldn't it? I was only thinking of that this evening coming along. If I couldn't get here. Or if I wasn't given sufficient food to keep body and soul together. If nobody had anything to do except the things to do with what we call the spirit, there'd be a lack. And so we've got now in this chapter three, a diversity of service. And yet all blessedly linked together with one object. There's also the fort in Nehemiah. If you just look at chapter 13, verse 14, I think it is. Chapter 13, verse 14. Remember me. Oh, my God. Concerning this. And why not out my good deeds that I have done for the house of my God and for the offices thereof. Remember me and blot not out of a book. The word is so don't look at this chapter three of Nehemiah and say, Oh, it's a long list of funny names. Why bother about that? Why occupy our time in 1960 with people whose name is Meremoth and Hassainia? And. And I don't know what, but friends, this is a book of remembrance written by God.

[00:05:00] And as long as the Bible is in circulation, the men with the funny names who, against all odds built the wall of Jerusalem, will be remembered as we get in the Prophet Malachi. The same thought in days of declension and darkness. Then they that feared the Lord spake often one to another, and the Lord hearkened and heard in a book of remembrance was written before him, or in the epistle to the Hebrews. God is not unrighteous to forget your work of faith and labor of love. So it's good to know that in spite of the sneer of Sam Barrett, what do these feeble Jews. Will they build it in a day? You know, poking fun. And then when they found the wall was built, they adopted other methods. Oh, why waste your time up there in that little tiny spot? Come down into the plain, the great broad plain, and have a conference. You see all the way just to stop the work that God has given you to do. So I think if we will let this Nehemiah three speak to us, we shall find that instead of it being just a list of peculiar names, it's going to just be a little word for each one of us to say how varied the work of God may be, how well it fits. The fact that not one of us are exactly like anybody else. I don't know whether you're glad about that or sorry, but you see, just as the very members of the body differ

and have all got their functions, and if they're only doing their part, each one doing his part, the body grows, increases and builds.

[00:06:36] It builds up itself in love. So here. So let's start Joey. Then chapter three, then Eliashib. The high priest rose up with his brethren, the priests, and they built into sheep gate. They sanctified it and set up the doors of it. Even unto the Tower of Meah. They sanctified it unto the Tower of Hananeel. Now, Eliashib was a high priest, and you wouldn't expect the high priest. To be building a wall. But of course, Prime Minister's Bill Walsh sometimes. And he was a reason. The sheep gate was associated with the temple and the sacrifice, the altar and the offering. And it looked as though it was the part of the work of the high priest and those with him, not merely to minister in a temple that was already erected, but to see to its erection. There seems to be here a touch of the holiness. This wall was no common wall. It was a wall that had to do with encircling and protecting that which had to do with the worship of God. And sometimes that is rather sniffed at as though, well, that's not so important as social reform and whatnot. But you remember the Ten Commandments. The Ten Commandments commence with that. Doesn't really touch upon social things like Thou shalt not bear false witness or thou shalt not covet.

[00:08:05] But it says, Thou shalt have no other gods before me. And by the time you sorted it out, you realize that if you're wrong with regard to your approach to God, it doesn't matter very much where you are or what you're doing afterwards, but it'll sure to go astray. So now we've got Eliakim starting the building of the wall, giving us sort of a sanction to the thought. This is no mere common piece of masonry. This is something which is going to be built so that as we read in the book, when they put up the gates were open, the box thereof and the bars thereof, they could protect their Sabbath. They could protect their temple and they could once more feel that they were back again in the city that bore the name Jerusalem that God said ultimately his name would be there. Well, we mustn't carry on like that, of course, with one verse, because there's quite a number of these people and I'd like to pursue this thought a little further. It is a mixed unto him builded the men of Jericho. And Jericho's got a bad name in Scripture. In fact, it was said that if anyone rebuilt Jericho after it had been once destroyed, he would build it in the death of his firstborn. So bad was Jericho in the estimate of God.

[00:09:18] But you've got to be careful about judging one another because of their antecedents or their connections. Here with an energética. They were coming to help build. And as they were believers or associates, they joined and next to them builded Zacher, the son of Imri. And we don't know anything about him except his name. But the fish gate Did the Sons of Hasina build, who also laid the beams thereof and set up the doors thereof and the locks thereof and the bars thereof? Now, here's a little note. These people did a bit extra. Up till now, they were building the wall, and perhaps that's all they could do. It doesn't follow that because you can build a wall, you can put up a gate, and if you do, it might not shut or it might not open. So don't all rush in for things to do everybody's work because we've read that these did a bit more. But it is fine to discover some. I always remember as a young man hearing Spurgeon son give a lecture that his father had prepared on a candle. We had all sorts of things about candles and he ended up with a great candelabra with all the little lights twinkling on it. And he said, this is the this is all the churches together, forming the great Christian community. And he picked up one. He says, this is a dip. And he put it in the top of the old art that was a Baptist.

[00:10:45] Well, I'm not going to teach you that. But at the same time, he said, Now here's a candle that's got an adapted base. It went down to a point. And this is, you know, the person you say to him, could you give us a hand in our Bible class this afternoon or I'm no good at Bible classes. Could you do anything with regard to Sunday school? Never spoke to a Sunday school in your life. Could you speak in the open air? Oh, I wouldn't like to do that to save your life. Would you come on the Sunday morning and light our stove for us or. I'm afraid I might blow through the roof. You see, that's one man. Then the other man you say to him and he fits a ginger beer bottle. He fits the candlestick, he fits them all. So we have a little company who are not merely built the wall, but they did the fish gate beams, doors, locks and bars, and next unto them repaired Meremoth are at that man's name, Samuel. And I think you will presently the son of Uriah. The son, of course. Now, what about this man, Meremoth? If you look at verse 21, you'll find he appears again. Well, there's a whole series still building. And after him repair Meremoth, the son of Uriah. The son, of course, another piece Meremoth was the man of another piece. He would and he would have appreciated the words in the Sermon on the Mount.

[00:12:10] If a man compel you to go with him one mile, go with him another piece. And I'll send you room frames in the work like this for Meremoth not only to do his own bit, but to do another piece. But of course, the pity of it is sometimes because there's somebody else who hasn't even done one bit. I don't know. I'm not speaking about anybody here. But don't you see it's beginning to take a little shape about a busy, active work that can, as it were, Adam Brayton foreshadow something of the Christian way in which we may all work together and do our bit. So we've got this merrymouth another piece that if you look at look at verse 21 again, I think we shall see another reason. After him repaired Meremoth the son of Uriah, the son of Cos. Another piece from the door of the house of Eliashib to the end of the house of Elijah. Oh, have you got it? Have you got what he did? Look, Eliashib is working away because he's the high priest on the sheep gate when he can't do his own bit. So Meremoth says, All right, I'll do your bit too. He did another piece, but his all helping, wasn't it? So although he wasn't allowed to build the sacred sheep gate because of its association with altar and sacrifice and priest, he could step in and do the bit that would have been left perhaps rather bad or not done at all, because Eliashib couldn't be in two places at once.

[00:13:42] I think there's a lesson for us. I don't want to try to interpret it. I hope that as you sit and listen, you will say to yourself, Now, don't say to yourself, Well, I'm glad so and so-and-so's here. That fits him or her. You see? Don't do that. Say, I'm glad I'm here for it. Fits me. You see? That's right. That's how the word of God ought to be considered. What would have me to do? And you know how the Lord rebuked Peter when he said to the Lord, Now what's John going to do? Says, What's that of Peter? You've got enough to do to look after yourself. You know that, don't you? Peter said, Yes, I do, Lord. I guess so. Here we have Mary Barton, and you will find that. He as a sort of an example, set verse 22 Why are we looking at him? Eliashiv even after him repaired the priests, the men of the plain. So the priests, the men of the plain, they were some who were living outside and some were living in. But they seem to have been moved a bit and thought, well, he's come forward to help. United, we will do our bit next to him. So there's an interchange, each one, as it were, stimulating the other.

[00:14:57] And then if you look at Ezra just a few pages back, Nehemiah and Ezra go together. If you remember the eighth chapter and verse 33. Okay. You read this? Ezra 8:33 Now on the fourth day was the silver and the gold and the vessels weighed in the house of our God by the hand of Meremoth. Son of Uriah, the priest, and with him was

in Eliza and so on. Meremoth Why is handing silver and gold now? Oh, yes, there are promotions in God's service. He that is faithful in that which is least is faithful in that which is much. He is the man who, first of all, takes on double duty with regard to very hard and difficult work. Building as they were in such circumstances, rough stone and mortar. And here we find him handing gold and silver. And so there's that sort of promotion. Well, we come back now then, and look at chapter three, verse five. And next unto them that tickets repaired. The Discolights, I think I'm not sure, may be mentioned in chapter 413. Let's look. No, I've got. I've got a note there that I thought may have been used and the next unto them repaired, but their nobles put not their necks to the work of the Lord. So these people, the ordinary people, were doing their bit. About the nobility. I stood aloof. I hope when I say the word nobility, you remember that that is connected with the brilliant attitude.

[00:16:59] The Lord said. The Bereans were more noble than the Thessalonians because they received the word with all readiness of mind and then searched the scriptures daily to see if it were so. And that word noble, is a word that gives us the word eugenics. They were highly born and were very, very healthy. They were noble. But these nobles, they seem to feel that it was not their work to do so. A high priest could labor in building, but the nobles, they felt it was beneath them. So should we have a look at chapter 317? And after him. Repaired the Levites Rehung, the son of Barney next unto him repaired. The ruler of half part of Kedar on his part. And. Wait a minute. That looks as though I haven't quite got that passage correct. Just let me test again. 327. 327. It slipped it up. Think even I can make a mistake for him. Sometimes you realize that, don't you? 327. And after them, the dacoits repaired another piece. There it is. I have a feeling that they were ashamed about their nobles. So they did a bit extra to all what a little human touch that is about these things when you begin to ponder it. How easy it would have been for us to have said, Well, don't waste time over Chapter three with all those funny names. Let's get on to the next bit. But it's speaking to us.

[00:18:41] I hope it's got a word. So we'll go on and have a look at a bit more. Well, now let's come down to. Uh, verse eight. Next unto him repaired as Heal the son of Ahijah of the goldsmiths. Goldsmiths. Well, you don't expect Goldsmiths. To be laboring with stone and cement. But you say not only that. Goldsmiths. Look at the next of them. Hananiah, the son of the apothecaries chemists. And they fortified Jerusalem and to the broad wall goldsmiths. Apothecaries. Something You're never quite sure just who is

going to step in to the breach. After that. We have in verses nine and 12. Another peculiar things that are emphasized and next unto them repaired. Rafael, the son of heard a ruler of the half part of Jerusalem. So there's the high priest. And as the ruler of the half of Jerusalem, he's taking part. And then I want to tape to read the next verse. But we have in verse 11 that some repaired the the other piece and the tower of the furnaces just before this. I missed out a little bit. Well, it said in verse nine they were dealing with the throne of the governor. Look at a variety of things that are being introduced. The sheepgate for the temple. The ordinary wall. The throne of the governor. And the services which have to do apparently with cleansing, like the DNA, the place where they put all the rubbish and got rid of it.

[00:20:43] And here's the next little bit. I'm not saying this is to do with the rubbish friends. It was only just accidental. And next unto him repaired Shallum, the son of a ish. The ruler of the half part of Jerusalem. Is the other half coming in? That's good. But he goes one better. And his daughters. So we've got the two rulers. The half part of Jerusalem in verse nine and the other man. The half part of Jerusalem. He and his daughters. Well, now, you wouldn't expect the daughters to be laboring in stone and lime. But one of the characteristics of the scripture is that when there's been a day of departure from the truth of God, you will find that women become prominent. There's jailed right back in the book of judges, and there's Deborah. And then we get Esther coming in. And Esther had a great part to play in building this wall, although she never wasn't there because she was the queen. Sitting next to the king when Nehemiah put his petition and said, All the city of my fathers sepulchres is all laying waste, the queen sitting by him. That's Esther. So Esther has a place, you see, and then you get Paul speaking as he does about Phoebe, who apparently carried in the folds of her mantle, the precious epistle to the Romans across country. And then how much he has to speak about Aquila and Priscilla, his wife.

[00:22:17] And he it's out there. It's no longer anything that anybody could find fault with. But he used to call Priscilla by a pet name. You'll find there's two ways of spelling the word Priscilla. And I think it was his little affection for her. That gives us that little hint. So we got the daughters coming in, the apothecaries, the goldsmiths, as well as the ordinary men who would expect to do the work. Now, in chapter three. 20. We have a little bit extra now after him. Beirut, the son of Zabbai, earnestly repaired the other piece from the turning of the wall unto the door of the house of Eliashib, the high priest. He did

it earnestly. Now he is associated with Meremoth. This man is in next to him is. After him comes Meremoth. And every month he's doing an extra bit. And this word earnestly comes in chapter four, verse one. But it came to pass that when sanballat that we that we builded the wall, he was wroth and took great indignation and mocked the Jews. That word wrath is the word earnestly. He was a bit moved. And in chapter five, verse six. And I was very angry when I heard their cry. And these words, That's the word, honestly. It's not ordinary word for earnestly. It means he was moved by being a bit indignant because of what they did. So he did a bit extra. So the human element of it is creeping on the sea as well as the spiritual side.

[00:24:01] We can't divorce the one from the other. Now in chapter three, ten and 28 and 29, we've got another little hint. Chapter three, ten and next unto them repaired a Jedaiah, the son of Aram RMF, even over against his house. Even over against his house. Notice that expression. When I will. We'll look at 28 and 29. And from above, the horse gate repaired the priests every one over the gate, his house. And in 29 and after them repaired Zadok, the son of IBA, over against his house. But what do we find in verse 30? And after him repaired Hananiah. I won't try to read all these names and after him repaired Meshullam over against his chamber. So there's each one, as it were, doing his best to. But it was his own own doorstep, his own piece that belonged to him. But there's a little hint in the change of word over against his house and over against his chamber, which you may not observe in the English quite so much. In other words, you could understand those who had a house. On the wall that they would build over against their house. It was helping them. You see, the stronger the wall, the better their own property. But he is a lodger. He is a lodger, but he's only living in a room. But he does his bit. So there's another nice little bit put down in God's remembrance.

[00:25:54] He distinguishes between the householder who, for more reasons than one, would be building the wall and the lodger who might have said, Well, it's nothing to do with me. I'm only a lodger. But nevertheless, he's recorded with approbation. Well, then you will notice that. In chapter 31. Says they sanctified it. Not only did they build, but they sanctified because it was here the. The sacrifice was to be observed. Now, in Chapter 13 of this same book of Nehemiah, we have in verse 22. And I commanded the Levites that they should cleanse themselves and that they should come and keep the gates to sanctify the Sabbath day, to sanctify it. So you see, first of all, we have the sheep gate sanctified, and then the sheep gate is used because now the gate is up and

the whole world, the whole world is built. They are able to remember the Sabbath day and keep it. If you read through this book, you see Nehemiah was up against a problem. He was very disturbed because the people of the land were coming in on the Sabbath day and selling wares to the people, and the people were buying them. And he could not forbid it really, because however much you forbid a thing, it's done underhanded. But it says when the locks were on, the bolts they're on and the gates they're on were there. Then he said, I'm not going to forbid it.

[00:27:36] I simply shut the gates. Now, I believe there's a lesson there for some of God's people who are very, very keen about what they call discipline in the Assembly. If you have an assembly on Christian lines, as in the Epistles, you can put into operation the discipline of those epistles. But if you're all sixes and sevens as we are today, if the church is in ruin instead of in rule, then don't forget until you've got the gates thereof and the bolts thereof and the bars thereof, you may be doing more harm than good over an excess of zeal. But that will be for those who have ears to hear and feel. There's some reason for it. Now as we come on again to chapter three, verse seven, there's another feature. Those who were. The men of Gibeah mentioned in verse seven. They come apparently from a distance and again in verse 13. The inhabitants of Zenoah. They built it. And once more in. I think the 18th, 19th, we'll find others that are outsiders travelling in. Let's look at 19. The ruler of Mr.. So we've got these who are not only inside and intimately connected with it, but those who are outside and travelling towards it. And in chapter 315, there's another little hint that might miss. You might miss. It says in 15 that the gate of the fountain repaired Shallum, the son of Col Jose, the ruler of part of Mizpah.

[00:29:24] He built it and covered it. Now wonder why it says he covered it. Because you discover that this has to do with the place where the where the sheep most likely would be brought in waiting to be taken for the priest use and to put a cover up. Was it a protection against sun and weather? So we got in this building, the Sheepgate. The house of the King, the armoury, the stairs, the gates, the beams, the locks, the bars, the governors throne. As a prison. They are the ovens or furnaces, furnaces and the pool. Now, I haven't read all those verses because I haven't read the whole chapter through. But you'll discover such a variety of work has been done by these people. Now, there's one important feature about this that there is a date connected with this building of this wall. I think we'll turn for a moment to the Prophet Daniel, the ninth chapter. This is not

merely a piece of masonry, and that's the end of it. It's the marking of a date which has a great bearing upon prophetic interpretation. Daniel, like Nehemiah, as you remember, was very, very concerned about the state of Jerusalem, that it was desolate. If you look at the ninth chapter. It says in verse two In the first year of his reign, I, Daniel understood by books the number of the years whereof the Word of the Lord came to Jeremiah the Prophet, that he would accomplish 70 years in the desolations of Jerusalem.

[00:31:25] Well, Wendy and I went back. Those 70 years were up, you see. And Daniel, he also realized that it was getting very, very near. So just as Nehemiah was concerned and prayed, you see, there are so many words in Nehemiah's prayer in chapter one that are almost echoed by Daniel in Chapter nine. He said, he said, I set my face unto the Lord God to seek by prayer and supplication with fasting and sackcloth and ashes and prayed. He was concerned about Jerusalem. About the fact that the walls were gone. The fact that Jerusalem was destroyed. And we'll pick up the story in verse 17 now, therefore, our God hear the prayer of thy servant and his applications and cause thy face to shine upon thy sanctuary that is desolate for the Lord's sake. And then it says in verse ten, I was I was speaking and praying and confessing my sin and the sin of my people, Israel and presenting my supplication before the Lord, my God for the holy mountain of my God. Yeah. Whiles I was speaking in prayer. Even the man, Gabriel the angel Gabriel came and spoke to him and told him at the beginning of his supplications a command had gone forth and I have come to tell you about the vision. Now, verse 24 is where we pick up the prophecy 70 weeks or better still, 70 sevens.

[00:33:03] And we find that they mean years when they mean weeks in our sense of the word. Chapter ten, verse two In those days I Daniel was mourning three full weeks. The margin tells you that's weeks of days. And I think three sevens are 21 and you will find that 21 days is mentioned in verse 13. But the Prince of the Kingdom of Persia withstood me one and 20 days. So back to Daniel, the ninth chapter 70 sevens are determined, marked off upon my people and upon thy holy city. And that was to finish transgression, make an end of sin, make reconciliation for iniquity, bring in everlasting righteousness, seal up the vision of prophecy and anoint the most holy. Now, therefore, and understand that from the going forth of the commandment to restore and build Jerusalem. That would be dealing with that in Nehemiah. Nehemiah. The second chapter tells you the date. That it was a certain month in the certain reign of a king. So

we've now got if we can only find that data and you will find it given you in the chronologies of your Bibles, you see it in the companion Bible. Know therefore and understand that from the going forth of the commandment to restore and to build Jerusalem unto the Messiah, the Prince. Now that's Christ. So the Bible is committed itself that from that time when that order went out to build Jerusalem unto the coming of Messiah, the Prince should be a certain period of time.

[00:34:45] It shall be seven weeks and threescore and two weeks. Well, I wonder why it says seven weeks and three score and two weeks. Why does it divide the two up? Well, the pity of it is some translators or interpreters have added them together. But God hasn't had added them together. Divided them. So he says now there will be one period which will cover seven weeks, and another period after that will be this remaining portion. And you will discover by going into the Old Testament story of the building of this wall that it occupied seven, seven times, seven, 49 years. So from the time of the commandment that Nehemiah started to the end of the building of the wall was 49 years. And then from that moment, you start computing the great prophecy that runs on to the time of the end. So you see Nehemiah's building of the wall is suddenly more than a piece of masonry. It's giving us a time, a time when we can start computing the coming of Christ, the setting up of His kingdom and all other things that belong to it. Let's read a bit further. I'll go back to verse, the beginning of verse 25. Know therefore, and understand that from the going forth of the commandment to restore and to build Jerusalem unto the Messiah, the Prince shall be seven sevens and threescore and two sevens. The street shall be built again, and the wall even in troublous times.

[00:36:16] Well, it was very evident. It was built in troublous times with all the opposition of Sanballat and Tobiah and all that crew. And after three score and two weeks. Shall Messiah be cut off? But not for himself or she'll have nothing. So here we have the crucifixion of Christ. From the time of the finishing of the war under Nehemiah until the Messiah was cut off and had nothing shall be these threescore and two seconds. And it works out that way. You discover there was a time you put down the date when the building of the wall was finished and the date of the crucifixion of Christ. And even if you say, well, none of us really know whether it was in this year or that. Well, it's so near, so near within a month or two that we only know that it's our inaccuracy, not the scriptures that are wrong. Then after that, we have to wait for the time of the end when the book of the revelation completes the whole story. And as he says. The abomination that Maketh

desolate is mentioned by Christ in Matthew 24, when he says about the second coming, his second Coming, when you shall see the abomination of desolation spoken of by Daniel the Prophet, stand in the Holy place, then know that the end is near. So now we've got two things with regard to our study in Nehemiah.

[00:37:50] We see the actual building. We see that it has a prophetic import. One further point, I think perhaps as we've got a moment or two, I would turn to the prophet Haggai. Now he comes up here near the end after Daniel. The Prophet Haggai is one of the prophets that had to do with the restoration, the people going back to restore and rebuild Jerusalem. And he has a word to say to them, as you will find. This also is dated in the second year of Darius the King. In the sixth month. In the first day of the month came the Word of the Lord by Haggai, the Prophet unto the rubber ball, the Son of Shealtiel, the Governor of Judah, and to Joshua, the son of Josedech, the high priest. So now we have the people with their wall and they've got their priest, and then the Lord speaks to them. Thus speaketh the Lord of hosts saying this People say the time is not come, the time that the Lord's House should be built. See they built a wall. An event on building their houses. But at the beginning to forget that they are. Ward and their houses were intimately connected with God's house. Then came the Word of the Lord by Haggai the prophet, saying, Is it time for you, o ye to dwell in your sealed houses and this house lie waste. So you see, the temple wasn't built first and the wall afterwards.

[00:39:31] That's a backhanded way to speak. Although Ezra comes first in the story. Ezra and Nehemiah together. Nehemiah built the wall and Ezra came back and rebuilt the temple. But there was an interval and God had to chide his people. He said, I brought you back and you built your wall and you brought your houses. You're living in your sealed houses. But this house lies waste. Now he says, I want you to consider you have so much. I bring in little You eat but you have not enough. You drink, but you're not filled with drink. You clothe you. But there is none warm. And he that earnest wages earneth wages to put it into a bag with holes. Why? That's up to date. And our friends in there. Look at the fabulous wages that some people are earning today in comparison with what, say, our fathers earned 6070 years ago. I remember my dad saying to me one day, he says, Boy, what's the difference between me and a millionaire? I knew something was coming because he had these funny ways. You'll see bits of it in that book and he had about tuppence in his pocket, I expect. Always said the difference between me and a millionaire is he started on his second million. See. And that is you

put your own wages, but you put it into a bag with holes. Don't you see this force estimate of prosperity? He said, you forgot me.

[00:41:07] And so in Malachi's is bring all the tithes into the storehouse and prove me. Now where is that the Lord? If I will not open the windows of heaven and pour out you such a blessing that you won't be able to contain it. That's what he said to these people. He may say to us, in other words, and along other lines. Thus, said the Lord of hosts, consider your ways. Go up to the mountain and bring wood and build the house and I will take pleasure in it. I will be glorified, saith the Lord. Ye looked for much and lo it came to little. And when ye brought it home, I did blow upon it. Why? Saith the Lord of hosts? Because of mine house. That is waste. And ye run every one, every man to his own house. Therefore the heaven over you is stayed from dew and the earth is stayed from her fruit. And I call for a drought upon the land and upon the mountains and upon the corn. And upon the new wine and upon the oil. And upon that which the ground bringeth forth. And upon men and upon cattle and upon all the labor of the hands. And then Zerubbabel, the son of Shealtiel, and Joshua, the son of Josedech, the high priest, with all the remnant of the people, obeyed the voice of the Lord, their God, and the words of Haggai, the Prophet as the Lord, their God had sent him.

[00:42:26] And the people did fear before the Lord. And then they started to work and they built the house. Well, there we have another feature in this book of Nehemiah, but I think it's been worth the time spent. We see the man's concern and his prayer. We see the preparation of God before ever. Nehemiah put up the prayer that Cyrus was the son of Esther. So he had a Jewish mother, although he was the king of Persia. Then we have the opposition of these men, like sandball and Tobiah. And then we have the determination of this man of God, Nehemiah, to build the wall, whatever they did. And you will find in the next installment that they had to build with sword and trowel. And he had a trumpeter beside him. And you might say, Well, what's the idea of a trumpet? Well, it wasn't a blow his own trumpet, although they said, Let us to the king and says Nehemiah's trying to make himself a king. He wasn't to blow his own trumpet. It was because of the danger at every point. And if the trumpet give an uncertain sound, who shall prepare himself for battle? So they built with sword and trowel, and the work was done. And as we remember reading that, it joined in two ends together. They made both ends meet friends in more senses than one. And the wall was complete.

[00:43:49] Well, now the next part of the story is that they used that enclosure for one very special thing. And that very much includes the title of this chapel. So it is all beginning to lead up to one thing in the Prophet in the book of Nehemiah. A pulpit was built. And the book was out. And if that's not the center of the whole witness, there's something very, very wrong. We can have our buildings. We are thankful for this building that we have here. But that's all it was. It wouldn't be worth a bottle. So we'll meet together. I trust, God willing, next time to see that the heart and soul of this witness is the opened book. And if you're curious as to why it says in Nehemiah that he went on horseback on a journey where he knew he couldn't possibly get through at night time, so he had to send the men back with his horse and he went alone on foot. You might begin to guess he was after something that he didn't want to say. I believe he went into the ruins of the temple and ransacked and found the roll of the law. He guessed it was there. He wasn't sure. And when he got it, then they went on with their work. And then the moment came to bring it out before the people and open it. But that's another story. And I trust that what we've had this evening has not been a bad preparation for letting the books speak and giving grace to all that hear.