**NEHEMIAH – PART 4**

**WORK COMPLETE – VICTORY WON**

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In concluding this 4 part series on the study of Nehemiah, we have so far learned that every true work of God will be contested and fought by the devil, and often times misunderstood and hindered by carnal minded people. Not everyone has a vision and many do not know what it is to have a burden from the Lord for others who are in need and suffering. This true story took place in a real time with real people. It was a struggle and race from start to the finish. It was a matter of life and death to a remnant of God’s people (the Jews)! It was surely a fight from the very beginning. They knew that it was time to rise and build and not let up until the work was complete. It was either victory or defeat.

They had much to overcome in this great task. Many in the enemies crowd would be watching and criticizing. They would face threats and accusations and be belittled and mocked, not to mention they had to combat tiredness, weariness and discouragement. What makes this story so touching, you see the Unity in which they worked together and the love and care they had for each other made a bond the enemy could not break. Not only did individuals face the risk of losing out but whole families and little children could lose everything and be destroyed. (What about you, dear reader? Are you willing to stand in the Gap and make up the hedge for precious souls)? True, this great Work inspired by God made Headlines in Hell but it also made the Chronicles in Heaven and there is no doubt, even now as you read this, these blessed people of God are now rejoicing on the other side of a different Wall in Heaven. This one is made of Jasper and no enemy can ever approach it for all eternity. This grand Wall will never be broken down. Its inhabitants are forever safe with their Lord! Thank God there will be no burdens there, no heavy loads to carry. The labors will all be ended and the final battle won. There’ll be no pain, no suffering and no losses. No tears, no broken hearts, no children crying, no homes troubled anymore, no enemies to vex you, no more lies of the tempter, no unkind words will ever be spoken for their voices will be hushed forever. There in that Wonderful Homeland of the Soul, families will be Happy. Nothing will ever rob them of their peace

and their joys will never ever end! All God’s children will bask in the love of God in the city of their great King, a place not made by hands, eternal in the Heavens! This is VICTORY COMPLETE! But until then, we must continue in God’s Grace and not let up! We must hold to the vision and never let go of our burden.

Let’s now pick up in the story of Nehemiah: After being mocked at and threatened by the enemy, The man of God (Nehemiah) spoke to them saying, “The God of Heaven will prosper us; we His servants will arise and build.” The Bible says they rose up and Strengthened their hands for this Good Work. It’s interesting to note that as the builders worked, their enemies watched and observed every move, looking for a way to discourage, hinder and stop them. Just look what the Jews were up against! When Sanballat, Tobiah and the Arabians and the Ammonites and the Ashdodites heard that the Walls were made up and that the breaches (cracks and gaps) began to be stopped (sealed up) they were very wroth and conspired all of them together to come and to fight against Jerusalem and to hinder it! But Nehemiah said – “Nevertheless, we made our prayer unto our God and set a watch against them day and night.” Notice what the enemy said! They asked the question – “Will they” 4 different times: Will the Jews Fortify themselves? Will they Sacrifice? Will they finish in a day? Will they Revive the stones out of the heaps of rubbish which are burned? Don’t you think our enemies are looking at us saying – “Will they have Revival and Restore back the things in their life that have been broken? Will they still serve God and Worship?”

Listen dear reader, the Good things of God in life are not easy or free. They must be fought for! The effort and striving you put forth to accomplish and obtain something good must be maintained in order to keep! Never, never can you let down your guard. You see, in the game of life, the world is a stage and we all are on that stage. We are compassed with many observers with eyes watching. In this battle of the ages, it’s been a constant conflict from the start - Heaven and Hell are at war, Satan against God, the princes of darkness pitted against the forces of Light, evil withstanding Good, and it’s trickled down to our current time in this Church age when she is struggling in the final throes of battle. She is facing many foes and adversaries from without and within. You must remember, in every war, there is always a winner and there is a loser. If from God’s point of view you were able to look down on this world’s arena, you would see the battle of the ages taking place. It’s the end time and we’re in the final count down. Why do you think you are having such a rough time right now? Why are the trials harder than ever in your life? Jesus is getting ready to come for His Bride – the Church, so He’s getting us ready! There’s a song we sing – “Who’s on the Lord’s side? Who’s on the side of the Right?” Thank God, I read the last chapter of the Book (the Bible) and I know who wins!

Hallelujah, I’m glad I got in and started this race many years ago and I’m not about to get out now! I’ve already fought too many battles with the devil to let him know I’m not about to quit. I’m too near home. I’ve been knocked down, but not out! I’ve lost a few battles in my Christian life, but I cried out to God and He helped me. When I reached up to Him, thank God, He lifted me back up. He’s been there in my darkest times of trial, sailed with me through the storms, made ways for me when there wasn’t any and when it looked hopeless, my Jesus came and brought me out into the sunshine of His Love. Can I tell you the Church knows the urgency of the hour. There’s a stirring, a brand new feeling in the air. She senses the nearness of Christ’s return. It’s been a long night of struggle. She’s tired and battle scarred but determined. The day is getting ready to break and there’s new strength entering her. She is rising up like a mighty army, arising from the dust of discouragement, shaking off the weariness and slumber, buckling on her armor with renewed zeal. Her eyes are upon her Commander and Chief. Her vision is clear. By faith, she sees her enemies conquered and her foes are fallen. She hears the shouts of triumph from her Heavenly Nehemiah – Victory – Victory, We have overcome – We have Won!!

But listen! Before we ever get to this point of final victory, there is still much work to do. Back to Nehemiah. I don’t know how long into the 52 days it took the Jews to build back the broken down wall, but the Bible records in Neh. 4:10 that **Judah** said, “The Strength of the bearer of burdens is decayed, and there is much rubbish; so that we are not able to build the wall.” It’s interesting to note that every time the enemy spoke and threatened, the people got weak and discouraged, but when the man of God (Nehemiah) their anointed leader with a vision spoke, the people gained courage, took heart and kept fighting and worked on. Here is where Discouragement comes in. Who are we listening to? What are we looking at? Who is our eyes on? It was **Judah** who spoke up and said, “We just can’t do it! There’s too much rubbish, everything is a mess and we’re tired of the struggle!”

Do you know who Judah is in your Bible? It was one of the 12 tribes of Israel. The Bible speaks more about the tribe of Judah than any other single tribe of Israel. God said of Judah, “Judah is my Lawgiver. The Scepter shall not depart from Judah.” It was the great song writer, praiser and worshipper Psalmist David who came through the line of Judah and became Israel’s greatest O.T. king which only foreshadowed the coming of the greatest King to ever be born - Jesus Christ which also came from the tribe of Judah. John saw Him in a vision in Revelation as the Lion of the Tribe of Judah. The lion is Judah’s emblem, a symbol of strength. Judah in Hebrew means: to THANK and give PRAISE!

So, who was it that got discouraged in building the Wall? **Judah**! It has to be bad when the Praisers get discouraged. Can I say - Come on singers, come on worshippers, let’s take heart. Soon your last stone will be set. That last heavy load will be carried for the last time. Soon the labors will end and your tired weary hands will rest. Your work will be complete when the Master builder calls you home. Can I say to you – great will be your reward because you kept on working and didn’t give up. Only time and eternity will tell just how important your place was on the Wall. Because of you a life, a family was saved! Because you didn’t give up, it brought courage to the others! Hallelujah!

**A MESSAGE TO THOSE WHO ARE REBUILDING**

It is interesting to note in this story, there was much rubbish and the fact that the mighty Wall had been broken down, the stones were laying in piles scattered all across the ground. Each stone at one time had its unique place in the wall. Each stone was fitly joined to another and all of them together made a defense against the outside forces of the enemy that would not let him come in. This grand wall of stones joined and cemented together was God’s peoples’ security. Can I tell you most assuredly, if one stone ever drops from its place in God’s Church or a Christian home, the Wall protecting and blessing it will never be the same?! It is not complete! Just one stone missing will weaken the building. Your enemy would like nothing any better than to weaken your Wall, knock the Stones loose and dislodge them from their place. O dear friend, you will never be secure or safe with a stone missing in your life, leaving a hole in your wall. My heart is crying out inside to somebody, to everybody – get the Wall back up! Get the stones back in place now! Do it quick. Listen dear family, listen Church, we need to get and restore back every precious Stone that has fallen from its place.

In my mind’s eye, I can see some Jewish workers looking down at the large stones on the ground. Some had rolled farther – perhaps many feet than the others when they were knocked loose and fell out of the wall. One man says to the other as he looks down, “I just wonder where that stone goes?” They both turn and look at the wall and back at the stone, analyzing its size and shape. “You know”, said the other, “that stone has to go right there! That’s the only place it will fit”, pointing to the gap in the partially completed wall. “Nothing else will fit there and we can’t go any farther until that particular stone is put back!”

**A MESSAGE TO THOSE WHO HAVE DRIFTED, FALLEN AND FAILED!**

In studying this story, can I say to you, your wall will never be complete again and you will never have victory and be safe and saved until you put each stone back in your life that has fallen by the wayside? You know in your heart what is missing. You see the big gap and the hole left by your enemy.

Let’s you (the reader) and I go for just a moment and spiritually stand by the broken down Wall and look at the stones that have fallen to the ground! I would like to speak to your precious soul! What is it that is missing in your life? What is it that has allowed your enemy the devil to cause such hurt and defeat? He has stolen precious things out of your life and robbed you of God’s favor and blessings! Could it be the Stone of Commitment missing in your Wall? You walk down a few steps to where that large worn stone lies. You reach out and lay your hand on it. It’s strong, it’s rugged, it’s the Stone of Dedication! Your mind floods with memory as you think back how that once beautiful desired Stone so gracefully filled your wall and you had Joy! It weathered many storms of trial. It had deflected many arrows from the enemies bow. You wipe back the tears as you remember how you use to Pray, how you Read your Bible – God’s precious Word and how you were faithful to Church! You loved God’s House, His sanctuary of praise and loved being in the presence with your brothers and sisters. It was your haven, your security. You now fall to your knees and embrace that missing Stone and cry out – O God, would you restore this precious Stone back in my life again and make my life complete. Renew me O Lord!

The story in Nehemiah vividly portrays a sad picture in many lives today. So many people are confused, their lives are in disarray, they’re not happy and stable like they used to be. They have lost something. Nehemiah knew what he was up against when he called all the people together for the work of restoration. Not only was he concerned about the physical wall around Jerusalem, but it was that spiritual wall in the heart of each one of his people. They were his family, God’s children and he wasn’t about to stop. Four different times his arch enemies approached him through threats and appeals and tried to get him to come down from the wall, but his reply back to them was – “I am doing a great Work, so I cannot come down: why should the work cease, while I leave it and come down to you? Should such a man as I flee?” Nehemiah and his people endured the threats, the mocking and conspiring efforts to discourage them and make them afraid. At one point Nehemiah cried out to God – “Now therefore O God, strengthen my hands!”

How many of you reading this, are still willing to go on? Determined to continue working? Willing to keep fighting for your friends and loved ones? How important is your Church and Family to you? You must remember, the Wall around Jerusalem was 2.5 miles in length. Both the men and women worked and labored to restore it! Yes, their enemies threatened. Half of the people held weapons and shields and watched while the other half worked. Determination to have their blessed homeland, city and families restored and renewed? O yes! The committed workers on the Wall worked day and night with a tool in one hand and a weapon in the other. It was a matter of life or death, victory or forever defeat. The Wall was finished in 52 days!! These blessed people left a legacy behind! What will you leave your family and Church behind? May God richly bless my Brothers and Sisters in Christ!!!