

We will now begin the seventh lecture on the Book of Ezra and the Book of Nehemiah. / Today we will begin with Nehemiah chapter 3. / In verses 1-3, / the people constructed the Sheep Gate and its surroundings. / The people all began to construct the wall of Jerusalem after they were advised by Nehemiah to do so.

/The high priest and his fellow priests first began to work. /Next, the people divided the sections and began construction. /The wall was separated into 42 sections for construction.

/The people cooperated and united with one another to do their best in their field. /The Israelites did not delay after they resolved to rebuild the city. /They rose up and began to repair the city of Jerusalem.

/It is important to immediately get up and do God's work. /It is also important to work together. /In Matthew 21:28, /a man told his first son to go work in the vineyard, and the son said that he would, yet, he did not go.

/When we realize the Lord's will, we must decide to immediately obey. /In verse 1, it says that Eliashib the high priest and his fellow priests went to work and rebuilt the Sheep Gate. /Eliashib was the high priest.

/He was the nephew of Jeshua, who returned with Zerubbabel in the first return. /The Sheep Gate was located on the north side of Jerusalem. /The Sheep Gate was the gate next to the Tower of the Hundred. /Eliashib the high priest took the lead in the construction. /This was a commendable act.

/The high priest gave offerings to God. /It was appropriate that he construct the Sheep Gate, which was the place where sheep sacrifices were given to God. /Today, pastors must take the lead in doing God's work.

/Each individual must fulfill his duties at his given position. /All believers must do works that are given them. /The construction of God's kingdom will be incomplete if each person does not fulfill his given duties.

/Then enemies can invade. /It says, "as far as the Tower of the Hundred, which they dedicated, and as far as the Tower of Hananel." /These two towers stood at the corners of the city wall to the north of Jerusalem. /They stood between the Sheep Gate and the Fish Gate (verse 3).

/The towers were built just as Jeremiah prophesied. /Jeremiah 31:38.

/In the latter half of verse 1 it says, "They dedicated it." /The city of Jerusalem was constructed, /but the Sheep Gate and the Tower of the Hundred to the Tower of Hananel were specially dedicated to God, /because the high priest with the holy position had built it.

/In verses 3-5, /the people constructed the Fish Gate and its surroundings. /The Fish Gate was located northwest of the city of Jerusalem. /The Fish Gate was the gate by the Tower of Hananel. /The Fish Gate was given its name because it was located near a marketplace that sold fish.

/In verse 4, Meremoth son of Uriah and many others constructed the wall between the Fish Gate and the Jeshanah Gate, or the Old Gate. /“Made repairs” means that they fixed the things that were destroyed.

/Verse 5 says, “their nobles would not put their shoulders to the work under their supervisors.” /The men of Tekoa, the hometown of the prophet Amos, rose up to rebuild the city. /However, the nobles of the region did not participate in construction.

/They did not participate because they were arrogant. /The nobles did not work because they thought it was difficult and lowly work. /This was sin.

/This was deserving of rebuke from God. /The names of those who participate in constructing heaven will be recorded in heaven. /However, anyone who does not do God’s work in this world will receive judgment, /and he will not receive rewards in heaven.

/Therefore, we believers must actively participate in building the spiritual city of Zion. /To “construct the city of Jerusalem” means to protect the temple and people from the enemies, and make Israel strong.

/The spiritual meaning in this is that the truth makes the church, the kingdom of God, and denominations strong. /“Construction of the temple” also refers to believers’ spiritual growth.

/Therefore, it is important that we construct the spiritual temple, /protect it, and construct the church on the truth, so that we can keep the enemies away.

/In verses 6-12, /they repaired the Old Gate and its surroundings. /The “Old Gate” was a gate located between the “Fish Gate” and the “Broad Wall.” /It was possibly called the “Old Gate” because it was older than the “Broad Wall” that was newly restored.

/After they repaired the Old Gate, they put the bolts and bars in place. /In verse 7, men from Gibeon and Mizpah and others repaired places from the Old Wall to the Broad Wall. /In verse 8, Uzziel the goldsmith and Hananiah the perfume-maker participated as well.

/All people of high and low statuses from different regions cooperated with one another and participated in rebuilding God’s city. /The “Broad Wall” is the wall to the northwest of Jerusalem.

/King Hezekiah built what Joash tore down. /The Broad Wall was built in 721 BC, at the

time of the destruction of Samaria when the Israelite refugees entered into Jerusalem. /In verse 9, the Rephaiah, ruler of a half-district of Jerusalem, repaired the next section.

/It was commendable for officials and politicians of high statuses to participate in this work. /In verse 10, Jedaiah son of Harumaph made repairs opposite his house. /We too must do our best in the work that is given before us.

/We must build the cross that is given to us. /Those who do their best in the work given them are needed in God's kingdom. /We must build the wall that is before us so that the enemy devil cannot invade.

/In verse 11, the Tower of the Ovens was built to defend the west of the city of Jerusalem. /Malkijah was married to a foreign woman. /He repented and participated in rebuilding the city of Jerusalem. /Anyone who repents and returns after he sins, and participates in the construction of God's kingdom will receive blessings.

/In verse 12, the daughters of Shallum also helped repair the city. /Women too participated in God's work.

/In verses 13-14, /the people repaired the Valley Gate, the Dung Gate and its surroundings. /The Valley Gate was located in the northwestern part of Jerusalem. /This is also known as the Corner Gate. /The wall from the Valley Gate to the Dung Gate was the south wall of Jerusalem.

/It was about 1,000 cubits in length. /The Dung Gate was the gate on the southeast of Jerusalem. /"Zanoah" in verse 13 was a region located about 18 kilometers west of Jerusalem. /People traveled a long distance to help rebuild Jerusalem.

/The son of Recab in verse 14 was a very strong man. /People from Recab repaired the city and put its doors and bolts and bars in place. /The "Dung Gate" was possibly a place where feces were thrown out.

/In verses 15-25, /they repaired the Fountain Gate and its surroundings. /The Fountain Gate and its surroundings were repaired by Shallun, ruler of the district of Mizpah. /Rulers of other districts participated in helping rebuild the city. /The Fountain Gate was located southeast of the city of Jerusalem.

/The Fountain Gate was located between the Dung Gate and the Water Gate. /The Pool of Siloam was also known as Shelah. /Water from the Gihon Spring, which was located west of the Kidron Valley, through two aqueducts into the Pool of Siloam. /The King's Garden was located near there. /Shallun repaired the wall by the Pool of Siloam.

/In verses 16-19, /many people repaired the wall from the Pool of Siloam to the section facing the armory. /Nehemiah son of Azbuk is not Nehemiah the author of this book.

/There are many rulers who are mentioned throughout these verses. /They were high-

ranking officials of Judah who returned from captivity in Babylon. /They took the lead and participated in constructing God's kingdom.

/In verses 20-26, many people repaired the section from the armory to the point opposite of the Water Gate. /It is possible that they used their own money for these repairs.

/They used their materials, efforts, and strength to construct God's city. /Anything that we use for God will be stored in heaven. /God will remember our faith and repay us with rewards.

/In verses 26-27, /they repaired the Water Gate and its surroundings. /The temple servants living in Ophel repaired the section opposite the Water Gate to the great projecting tower. /The temple servants served in the temple. /They too participated.

/The Water Gate was a gate located in the east of the city of Jerusalem. /The Water Gate was the gate where water was supplied for Jerusalem. /The "projecting tower" was the tower in the east of the city of Jerusalem. /This tower was further up north than the Water Gate.

/The "wall of Ophel" referred to the city wall by Ophel. /Ophel was originally the name of the hill southeast of Jerusalem. /It was also a part of the capital city of David.

/In verses 28-32, /they repaired the Horse Gate and its surroundings. /Above the Horse Gate, the priests repaired their houses and sections opposite their houses. /The Horse Gate was a gate east of Jerusalem. /All horses entered and exited through this gate.

/In verse 32, the goldsmiths and merchants participated and made repairs from the room above the corner to the Sheep Gate. /As previously mentioned, the Sheep Gate was constructed by Eliashib the high priest and his fellow priests.

/Repairs began with the Sheep Gate and the entire city wall was repaired. /The people cooperated with one another and built the city wall, and the city wall became fortified because everyone did their best in the work they took charge of. /We too must build a spiritual city of Zion.

/In 4:1-3, /the enemies criticized the Israelites for rebuilding the city of Jerusalem. /Sanballat and Tobiah ridiculed Nehemiah and the people of Judah for reconstructing Jerusalem. /Sanballat was a Horonite (2:10).

/Sanballat was the governor of Samaria, appointed by the Persian government. /Sanballat was a religious syncretist. /He attacked the construction of the pure city of Jerusalem.

/Samaria was a territory of northern Israel. /However, Assyria conquered the land in 721 BC. /The king of Assyria then sent many Israelites to different regions.

/The king also sent other peoples to Israel. /Hence, the Samaritans and the Israelites lived

with each other. /They then became a mixed people.

/They became religiously mixed as well and served both God and foreign gods. /There was a chance that Sanballat would be threatened if Jerusalem was reconstructed and grew strong. /Thus, Sanballat interfered with and criticized the rebuilding of the city of Jerusalem.

/Verse 2 says, “Will they finish in a day?” /Sanballat said that Jerusalem would be a weak city. /Tobiah in verse 3 was an Ammonite.

/Tobiah served foreign gods and was against God. /Tobiah slandered and ridiculed the people. /“What they are building—if even a fox climbed up on it, he would break down their wall of stones!”

/The fallen religion interrupted the building of Jerusalem through Sanballat and Tobiah. / Fallen religions and worldly authorities come together to persecute believers.

/In verses 4-6, /Nehemiah prayed and gave his heart to God and built the city. /Nehemiah was not discouraged even when the enemies slandered and scorned them. /Nehemiah prayed to God for help, and he continued with the construction of the city.

/If believers stop God’s work because they are persecuted, they lose to the devil. /Today, we will face trials, hardships, and persecutions as we do God’s work. /We must not stop.

/We must pray to God. /We must rely on the power of God and continue to go forward. /In verse 6, the people rebuilt the wall. /This means that the reconstructed wall was fully connected.

/Today, we must do the same when we build the spiritual temple. /Believers must be connected with other believers. /Churches must be connected with other churches.

/It says, “the people worked with all their heart.” /The people of Judah did not become weak even as they were persecuted and ridiculed by their enemies. /They worked with all their hearts, and hence, the city wall was rebuilt and connected.

/The wall also reached half its height. /We too must work with all our hearts when we build God’s spiritual city.

/In verses 7-12, /there was external persecution and internal weakening. /The enemies decided to interfere when they saw that construction of Jerusalem was going well. /They became angry and stirred up trouble in Israel.

/Ashdod, in verse 7, was a Philistine city. /Servants of the devil always become angry when they see God’s works go well. /The enemies plot together to interrupt and destroy the church and the truth.

/It is important that believers pray when they are faced with the enemies' temptations and attacks. /They must defend themselves against the enemies' attacks. /No matter how sturdy the city wall may be, it will all come crashing down if believers do not defend themselves against the enemies' attacks.

/It is important that we build the city, but it is also important that we block the powers of the destroyers. /We must be active in building up the truth. /We must block off all destroyers that come to us like wolves in sheep's clothing.

/In verse 10, the people of Judah became tired from building the city wall for a long time. /The people were no longer able to build the city wall. /The people worked hard in the beginning, but their strength began to give out.

/In such times, we must not stop, but we must continue forward with all our strength, and then we will succeed. /God helps us when we pour out all our strength.

/In verse 11, the enemies threatened and deceived the people of Judah who lived near them. /The enemies interfered so that the people would not build the city wall. /Nehemiah and the people of Judah faced external and internal hardships.

/However, Nehemiah was not discouraged. /Nehemiah relied wholly on God and actively continued to do God's work. /In verse 12, it says, "Wherever you turn, they will attack us."

/The Jews who lived near the enemies came to the leaders of Judah and suggested that they compromise with them. /However, the leaders of Judah did not compromise. /We will fail in God's work if we compromise with lies.

/In verses 13-20, /the people of Judah began to fight among themselves. /They were separated according to their tribes. /The people armed themselves with swords, spears, and bows. /The people defended themselves against the enemies.

/In verse 14, Nehemiah spoke to the people. /"Remember the Lord, who is great and awesome, /and fight for your brothers, your sons and your daughters, your wives and your homes."

/Today, we must not be afraid of the devil's attacks when we do God's work. /God will give us victory when we courageously fight the good fight.

/In verse 15, the enemies found out that Nehemiah was aware of their plot. /The enemies then gave up on their plans. /God frustrated the plans of the enemies. /Hence, the people continued on with God's work.

/In verse 17, /the builders held a weapon with one hand. /They also did work with the other. /The people worked and fought at the same time.

/We too must do this as we build up God's kingdom. /Fighting the good fight is half of it. /Building is the other half. /We will fail if we only build and not fight.

/There will be nothing left if we fight but don't build. /If we do not fight but only feed the sheep, /the wolves in sheep's clothing will come and eat the sheep.

/If we do not feed the sheep but only fight, the sheep will starve to death. /In the church today, we must feed the sheep with spiritual bread of life.

/We must also fight against humanism, mysticism, and lies that enter the church. /We must also fight against new theologies, liberation theologies, and cults.

/In verse 18, /all the people wore their swords at their sides to fight if the enemies attacked. /At the same time, the people built the city wall. /The man who sounded the trumpet stayed with Nehemiah.

/Construction of the city was widespread. /The trumpet would sound if the enemies attacked, and the people would gather together to fight.

/In verses 21-23, /the people worked with a military mindset, day and night. /They did not cease to work from early morning to night, regarding construction and security. /In verse 21, half the men held spears from the first light of dawn until the stars came out.

/The people built the city wall, /and they also defended themselves. /The people worked and fought from early morning into the darkness of night. /In verse 23, the people did not take their clothes off even when they slept at night.

/The people took their weapons when they went to get water. /They did not let down their guard even as they slept, and they did not take off their clothes. /They did not let down their guard even for a moment, just like Gideon's 300 men. /Then they succeeded in building the city wall.

/Here we will conclude the seventh lecture on Ezra and Nehemiah. /Thank you.