

Wall Dedication

I. Announce:

- A. Right now at 7:30pm our city is holding a procession for the **Marine** that was killed in the *humanitarian operation in Nepal*. He was from Murrieta, **Sgt Eric Seaman**. The 6 Marines and 2 Nepalese soldiers were aboard the U.S. military's UH-1 *Huey* helicopter that went down May 12. The Marines were part of the **Marine Light Attack Helicopter Squadron 469 of the 3rd Marine Aircraft Wing**.
1. A public memorial service is planned for on **Friday, at 10am at** Storm Stadium.
- B. **Israel Informational Mtg** - right after 3rd service Sunday.

I. Intro:

- A. In ch.11 we have the **settlement** of the city of Jerusalem.
1. This is the last piece of Israel's **history** that the OT contains.
 - a) The prophets add a little of some later conditions of the people.
 2. After this is a lapse of 4 centuries & then Israel's history resumes in the NT.
 - a) Inter-Testamental period, or the 400 Silent Years.

II. INHABITING JERUSALEM (Ch.11)

- A. **WHO WILL DWELL IN JERUSALEM?** (1,2)
1. **Why was it a big deal who dwelt in the city?**
 - a) **Ask:** What are the Pro's & Con's of living in this old run down city?
 - (1) It was the center of danger & of possible attacks. A lot of work to do. It's up-rooting your family to **start over**. Change our way of life.
 2. Some were **drafted**, **others** volunteered who were honored by all the people.
 3. **Why build a city if no one was going to live there?**
 4. God needed people, live bodies to inhabit Jerusalem.
 - a) Never underestimate the importance of simply being **physically present** in the place **where God wants you**.
 - b) God may not always have you doing some **dramatic ministry** but might want you to just **be there** to be a show of support, or an encouragement.
- B. **INSIDE JERUSALEM** (3-24)
1. Nehemiah **tithed** the people into Jerusalem.

2. I would love to tithe 10% of our congregation *to leave* :) I mean to *be sent out, relocate* to be a light to our world.
 3. I think Nehemiah loved lists because in...
 - a) **Ch.3** covered *who worked on the wall*. **Ch.7** covered *who returned w/Zerubbabel*. **Ch.8** covered *who was at the bible conference*. **Ch.10** covered *84 men who set their seals to the dedication covenant*. & now in **Ch.11** covered *those who dwelt in Jer.*
 - b) *Maybe this is a reminder to us...God keeps track* [when *others* don't recognize or appreciate our ministry or sacrifice...*God keeps track*]
 - (1) Even better *God keeps track of Individuals*. They're not just people, *but individuals*. God is like a proud parent. The *individuals* are glad to hear their *name announced* on the loud speaker [track meet]. You don't name your kids #1,#2,#3...*but* you give them *a name*.
 - (2) These individuals are *men of valor...doing what?...soldiers?* no, *Moving*...with incredible sacrifice.
 4. **Nethinim** - These set apart. *Levites who did the menial work*.
 - a) Alastair begg, speaking of these people in Neh.11, recorded for us here, *not* because a *dramatic commitment to the spectacular*, *but* on account of their *devoted consistency* to the basics.
 - b) *We think we have to go & do something extraordinary*. 99.9% of our life is *ordinary events*. *Thus we think life is meaningless*. *But* here God celebrates those who live out their lives playing second fiddle. *It needs more skill than I can tell To play the second fiddle well*. Spurgeon
- C. **OUTSIDE JERUSALEM** (25-36)
1. **Pro's & Con's of living in a village?**

III. **PRIESTS & LEVITES (12:1-26)**

- A. *Read* only vs.1 & 24.
- B. Registering & organizing *the priests*.

IV. **THE WALLS DEDICATED (27-43)**

- A. *Read* all.
- B. *The great dedication of the city walls*.
- C. The celebration is marked by choirs, musicians, & giving of thanks.

1. There were **Workers** on the wall & then **Watchers** on the wall, now **Worshippers** *filling* the wall.
 2. **Singing** is mentioned 8 times. **Thanksgiving** 6 times. **Rejoicing** 7 times. **Musical Instruments** 3 times.
 3. **Singing** – Swindoll says, **Don't stop singing! Sing this afternoon. Sing on your way home from work! One of the most exuberant expressions of a happy heart is a singing mouth...People are starved for happiness. When it is expressed in any authentic manner, they are greatly encouraged.**
- D. **Ezra** (vs.31-37) & **Nehemiah** (vs.38-42) each led one of the 2 choirs as they sang their way around the city walls & met at the Temple area.
1. **Up on the wall** (31) – We have done this in Israel when we've gone.
 2. **Looking at a clock they both started at 8 o'clock (west side).** **Ezra** led his choir clockwise up to 1 o'clock (north side); & **Nehemiah** led his team counterclockwise to 1 o'clock.
 - a) Ps.125:1,2 **Those who trust in the LORD Are like Mount Zion, Which cannot be moved, but abides forever. As the mountains surround Jerusalem, So the LORD surrounds His people From this time forth and forever.** (stability & security)
 3. The sound of their joy **was heard afar off** (43).
 4. **One thing I noticed driving through Germany.** In every little village the one building that stood out the most was what? The church building.
 - a) Oh that our church would stand out in our community. Our **building** does, **but** does **our church/the people?**
 - b) Neighborhood by Neighborhood, street by street, is how we are going to be heard *afar off*.
- E. **Why walk the walls?** That's what they were dedicating.
1. It showed that the walls weren't like Tobiah said, **Whatever they build, if even a fox goes up on it, he will break down their stone wall.** (4:3) **but** here we have people **marching ON** the walls.
- F. **Why the need to *dedicate* the wall before the Lord?**
1. Any work that **we do** for God succeeds only because of **His working in us.**
 2. Therefore our work must be **dedicated** to Him, for His glory.
 - a) Otherwise we may become **proud**. Or, it may become an **idol** to us.
 - b) **Read Deut.8:11-20.**

- We also need to make sure that whatever we dedicate to the Lord is a **milestone** but never a **millstone**. That it only **begins** a greater work, & isn't the **end** of a finished work.

G. (30) What value is a dedicated **wall** w/o a dedicated **people**?

- 2 Cor.7:1 **Therefore, having these promises, beloved, let us cleanse ourselves** from all filthiness of the **flesh** and **spirit**, **perfecting holiness** in the fear of God.

a) **Body/flesh & spirit** refers to *the whole person* in his **external** & **internal** aspects.

- What hypocrisy for a **business man** to dedicate his business to the Lord, **but not** his **business practices**. [A fish on the business card, **but not** the Lord in his heart]
- What hypocrisy for a family to dedicate their **home** to the Lord, **but not** their **family practices**. [A formal house dedication, **but not** the heart dedication]
- What hypocrisy for a **ministry leader** to dedicate his ministry to the Lord, but not **himself**. [An **open house** ceremony, **but not** an open heart]

H. (43) The work was finished, the enemy was humiliated, & the Lord was glorified...**so why not rejoice?**

- How is Joy inseparable from God?** Ps.16:11 **In Your presence is fullness of joy.**

I. (43) **They offered great sacrifices.**

- J. Hudson Taylor, *When **God's work** is done in **God's way** for **God's glory**, it will not lack **God's support**.*
- The order is**, that we 1st give **ourselves**, **then** our **sacrifices**.
- 2 Cor.8:5 **they first gave themselves** to the Lord, **and then to us** by the will of God.

V. **TEMPLE RESPONSIBILITIES (44-47)**

A. A **permanent staff** for the Temple is appointed & tithes are collected.

B. **Continual services** will be held there now, as the Law required.

C. Note in vs.44 that the people were pleased (**they rejoiced over**) the priests that were placed over this business.

- NLT **For all the people of Judah took joy** in the priests and Levites and their **work**. They performed the service of their **God** and the service of **purification**.

a) They were exemplary in their **purity** & in their **obedience** to God.

D. **Why is David** mentioned 5 times in this chapter? (vs.24,36,37,45,46)

1. David had been dead for over 500 years & yet had set up & established much in regards to worship for Israel.
2. He organized the Priests & Levites. He wrote many songs for the Temple choirs. He devised musical instruments for use in worship. David captured the city of Jerusalem from the Jebusites. He also provided the blueprints for the Temple, along w/much of the wealth for its construction.
 - a) Maybe we understand better what John was saying in 1 Jn.2:17 **He who does the will of God abides forever.**