

Watchman Part 4

From the Book of Nehemiah

“17 Then said I unto them, Ye see the distress that we are in, how Jerusalem lieth waste, and the gates thereof are burned with fire: come, and let us build up the wall of Jerusalem, that we be no more a reproach. 18 Then I told them of the hand of my God which was good upon me; as also the king's words that he had spoken unto me. And they said, Let us rise up and build. So they strengthened their hands for this good work.” (Nehemiah 2:17-18 KJV)

Nehemiah was one of the watchmen that God had raised up to fulfill His purpose in the life of His church and His people. Nehemiah had the vision to rebuild the wall around Jerusalem in order to protect the city from thieves and from strangers who might come in and bring destructions. He motivated and mobilized the people and brought them back to God, and with his vision and leadership equipped them and made each and every one of them participate as active worker and key personnel in fulfilling the purpose of God.

From the book of Nehemiah we can learn more about the life of a watchman.

1. The watchman can see God's vision and plan beyond trouble and distress: “17 Then said I unto them, Ye see the distress that we are in, how Jerusalem lieth waste, and the gates thereof are burned with fire: come, and let us build up the wall of Jerusalem, that we be no more a reproach.” (Nehemiah 2:17 KJV) The key word here that indicates the watchman is the word “see”, “*You see the trouble we are in*”. The watchman with the vision that God gives to him can bring the hope back to the people. The watchman work it out that disgrace would be lifted out from the life of the people.

2. The watchman can see what God had provided for him and how he can share that with the people to bring relief in their lives: “18 Then I told them of the hand of my God which was good upon me; as also the king's words that he had spoken unto me. And they said, Let us rise up and build. So they strengthened their hands for this good work.” (Nehemiah 2:18 KJV)

When God will guide then He will provide. Nehemiah showed the people what are the resources that were available in their hands and that they will be able to accomplish the purpose and do the task. And that helped the people to be motivated and responded to the call of God and made them replied, “*Let us rise up and build.*”

3. The watchman is a man of discernment: The task was not an easy one but with the presence of the Lord the work was done inspite of all opposition and the persecution that the people of God faced from the enemies who were even infiltrated among their ranks. Nehemiah met the threat of the enemies, “*13 Therefore set I in the lower places behind the wall, and on the higher places, I even set the people after their families with their swords, their spears, and their bows.*” (Nehemiah 4:13 KJV) Nehemiah recognized and saw the lower points which were the weak points on the wall and there he put guards to watch and

protect. Being a watchman you should be a man of discernment who can see footholds and weak points and take measures to prevent the devil and the enemies from using to penetrate your lives. Even for your daily troubles or suffering there is still ways out and measures that can bring healing and remedy for your struggle.

4. The watchman can see the effectiveness of simple measures to deal with threats and correct problems: “14 And I looked, and rose up, and said unto the nobles, and to the rulers, and to the rest of the people, Be not ye afraid of them: remember the LORD, which is great and terrible, and fight for your brethren, your sons, and your daughters, your wives, and your houses.” (Nehemiah 4:14 KJV) The statement, “*I looked*”, is indicative of the presence of the watchman whom here can see clearly that simple measures can have great impact and dramatic changes. Trust God with the small and the simple instruction that the Word of God gives to you; discern that in obeying them there is relief and good result.

5. The watchman has a good leadership who chose faithful people to maintain and consolidate the ongoing correct system: “1 Now it came to pass, when the wall was built, and I had set up the doors, and the porters and the singers and the Levites were appointed, 2 That I gave my brother Hanani, and Hananiah the ruler of the palace, charge over Jerusalem: for he was a faithful man, and feared God above many. 3 And I said unto them, Let not the gates of Jerusalem be opened until the sun be hot; and while they stand by, let them shut the doors, and bar them: and appoint watches of the inhabitants of Jerusalem, every one in his watch, and every one to be over against his house.” (Nehemiah 7:1-3 KJV) Nehemiah appointed right people who are faithful and fear the Lord to keep and to maintain the system and the discipline to control the movements across the gates in order that no wrong people or dangers will come in and destroy the city. Faithful people should be searched for and appointed to carry on the work of God so the ministry will continue. Nehemiah gave them clear and precise instructions and needed of them to abide in them; they were well studied instructions for the benefit and wellbeing of everyone:

A. Only at certain precise time of the day the gates should be opened and not before that time: “*And I said unto them, Let not the gates of Jerusalem be opened until the sun be hot; and while they stand by, let them shut the doors, and bar them:*” (Nehemiah 7:3 KJV) Whatever instruction you receive from us that what you need o apply so that everyone will be protected.

B. Nehemiah instructed them to work with and appoint people who are faithful to help to watch and work as an alert in order to take early measure to combat the work of the enemy: “*and appoint watches of the inhabitants of Jerusalem, every one in his watch, and every one to be over against his house.*” (Nehemiah 7:3 KJV) The indication of the watchman here is the statement, “*appoint watches ... every one in his watch*”. And from the statement, “*and appoint watches of the inhabitants of Jerusalem, every one in his watch, and every one to be over against his house*”, we can conclude that the watchman ministry is linked in his house (your own family) and in Jerusalem (the church that God had placed us in). You can not be a watchman only for your family but neglecting the church and you can not be a watchman in the ministry of the church but neglecting your own family. Both should go together.

“36 Behold, we are servants this day, and for the land that thou gavest unto our fathers to eat the fruit thereof and the good thereof, behold, we are servants in it: 37 And it yieldeth much increase unto the kings whom thou hast set over us because of our sins: also they have dominion over our bodies, and over our cattle, at their pleasure, and we are in great distress. 38 And because of all this we make a sure covenant, and write it; and our princes, Levites, and priests, seal unto it.” (Nehemiah 9:36-38 KJV)

After they rebuild the walls around Jerusalem, the people gathered together, they fasted and confessed their sins to God. They prayed to the Lord and utter to Him their real situation and their suffering and they reached a fact that they were slave and ruled and oppressed by others in the land that God had given to them. They concluded that their sins were the reason for their abundant harvest had to go to others. * Are you realizing and able to see that your harvest and what God had ordained for you to have is going to others because of your sins. * The watchman can see clearly the cause and the effect of people suffering and why they are not able to enjoy the harvest of God; when the covenant with God is broken then blessings are far away. And the following they did to revive their covenant with God: *“38 And because of all this we make a sure covenant, and write it; and our princes, Levites, and priests, seal unto it.” (Nehemiah 9:38 KJV)*

All the people including Nehemiah and the rest of the leaders signed the covenant: *“28 And the rest of the people, the priests, the Levites, the porters, the singers, the Nethinims, and all they that had separated themselves from the people of the lands unto the law of God, their wives, their sons, and their daughters, every one having knowledge, and having understanding; 29 They clave to their brethren, their nobles, and entered into a curse, and into an oath, to walk in God's law, which was given by Moses the servant of God, and to observe and do all the commandments of the LORD our Lord, and his judgments and his statutes;” (Nehemiah 10:28-29)* The following was agreed upon:

6. Watch that no intermarriage with the non believers: *“30 And that we would not give our daughters unto the people of the land, not take their daughters for our sons:” (Nehemiah 10:30 KJV)* As a watchman you need to watch that you do not approve or support marriages that are not ordained of God.

7. Watch to observe the Sabbath: *“And if the people of the land bring ware or any victuals on the sabbath day to sell, that we would not buy it of them on the sabbath, or on the holy day:” (Nehemiah 10:31)* Watch that you and those under your care would observe on weekly bases the day of the church worship and the day of rest.

8. Watch the Holy Spirit when He will lead you and the Word of God that teaches you which time you need to cancel the debt of those who borrowed money from you: *“and that we would leave the seventh year, and the exaction of every debt.” (Nehemiah 10:31 KJV)* Those poor brethren who cannot afford, if they continued with us in the church, then we need to cancel their debts after seven years if their condition is not enabling them to pay.

9. Watch that tithing, various kinds of offerings and the first fruit is brought to God's church and that all the needs need to be met: *“32 Also we made ordinances for us, to charge ourselves yearly with the third part of a shekel for the service of the house of our God; 33 For the shewbread, and for the continual meat offering, and for the continual burnt offering, of the sabbaths, of the new moons, for the set feasts, and for the holy things, and for the sin offerings to make an atonement for Israel, and for all the work of the house of our God. 34 And we cast the lots among the priests, the Levites, and the people, for the wood offering, to bring it into the house of our God, after the houses of our fathers, at times appointed year by year, to burn upon the altar of the LORD our God, as it is written in the law: 35 And to bring the firstfruits of our ground, and the firstfruits of all fruit of all trees, year by year, unto the house of the LORD: 36 Also the firstborn of our sons, and of our cattle, as it is written in the law, and the firstlings of our herds and of our flocks, to bring to the house of our God, unto the priests that minister in the house of our God: 37 And that we should bring the firstfruits of our dough, and our offerings, and the fruit of all manner of trees, of wine and of oil, unto the priests, to the chambers of the house of our God; and the tithes of our ground unto the Levites, that the same Levites might have the tithes in all the cities of our tillage. 38 And the priest the son of Aaron shall be with the Levites, when the Levites take tithes: and the Levites shall bring up the tithe of the tithes unto the house of our God, to the chambers, into the treasure house. 39 For the children of Israel and the children of Levi shall bring the offering of the corn, of the new wine, and the oil, unto the chambers, where are the vessels of the sanctuary, and the priests that minister, and the porters, and the singers: and we will not forsake the house of our God.” (Nehemiah 10:32-39 KJV)* There are various kinds of collection to cover various needs. We can emphasize on the following points:-

A. The first fruit: That can be your first salary, or first income or the first increase of every increase, or the first salary or income of each year. The first fruit is to be given after the person had an amount of saving, and can manage to pay his firstfruit.

B. Various offerings: In addition to the tithes and the first fruit there are various offerings and contributions to meet the needful things for worship and for the place of worship and its maintenance.

C. Tithing is required from everyone: Even the priest and the Levites are required to tithe and to give their firstfruit. Even the pastor and the leader of the church should tithe his income and whatever he receives, *“and the Levites shall bring up the tithe of the tithes unto the house of our God, to the chambers, into the treasure house.” (Nehemiah 10:38 KJV)*

5. Watch that in no way that the house of God will be neglected: *“and we will not forsake the house of our God.” (Nehemiah 10:39 KJV)* God and His church should be put first and whatever required need to be met first. The people realized that their negligence to the house of God (the church and their ministries) was the reason for their suffering and for others to take away the blessings that God had ordained for them.

My dear and Beloved: All the above scriptures give us more details about the ministry of the watchman, therefore we need to go through the message and study to observe in our lives, in the life of our families and ministries to be blessed. ***“17 And they shall be mine, saith the LORD of hosts, in that day when I make up my jewels; and I will spare them, as a man spareth his own son that serveth him. 18 Then shall ye return, and discern between the righteous and the wicked, between him that serveth God and him that serveth him not.”*** (Malachi 3:17-18 KJV) Apply the message in your life and watch that you will do your best to support God’s service in His church and build His kingdom. Let us pray ...

My Prayer: Father God I come before you in the name of Jesus who died on the Cross for my sins and rose from the dead to give me eternal life. Lord thank you for your Word that open my eyes to see deep things in the Scripture. Lord thank you for all the resources you had placed in my hand and thank you for all the teaching, the encouragement, the hope and the correction that we received from you and your Word.

Now confess and renounce all your sins. Confess and renounce your discouragement and your lack of faith. Confess and renounce your lack of discernment. Confess and renounce your non willingness to share what God gave you with others. Confess and renounce your bad stewardship, wasting resources, and your mismanagement for finances. Confess your approval for marriages with non believers. Confess and renounce your disobedience to God and your non willingness to get involved in the good works that God that prepared for you to do. Confess your non willingness to face suffering and persecution for Christ’s sake. Confess and renounce your non willingness to give your tithes, offerings, your firstfruits and the rest of what is due for you to support the needs of the ministry. Confess and renounce your negligence to God’s church. Confess and renounce your lack of reading God’s Word, your lack of prayer, and non keeping the day for worship. Confess and renounce your negligence to your family and children. Lord forgive me, I repent of the following sins

Lord I commit myself to abide with your Word in doing your will and whatever you had planned for me. Lord I put in your service everything that you had given to me in order that your ministry and your church will go forward in reaching the loss. Lord I commit my life into your hand, take me and make me a faithful and fruitful watchman for your glory.

Lord thank you for my Brothers and Sisters who repented of their sins and are willing to follow your ways and your commands. Lord make them fruitful and use their lives to serve you and to be good testimony to others to follow you. Lord, reward them, relief them from their troubles, protect them and provide all their needs.

Lord, bless us as your church, and continue to lead us to execute your good plan that you have for your church. Lord thank you for all the watchmen and the watchwomen that you raised in our church to serve you. Lord give us more discernment and wisdom to handle situations. Lord lead us to new people and add to us more laborers to work with us to do your work and your will. Lord refill us with the Holy Spirit and lead us to go and evangelize, to make new disciples and training new workers to plant new Bible studies and

congregations for the church. Lord we pray for more people to be water baptized and to receive the Holy Spirit Baptism. Lord fulfill the vision of the church, ‘Multiplication in peace with implementing the whole will of God.’ Lord bless us, enlarge our territory, let your hand be with us and free us from harm so that we will not feel pain. May the grace of the Lord Jesus and the love of God and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit be with us all in Jesus name, Amen.

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