

“Let Us Rise Up and Build”
Nehemiah 2: 1-20
Rev. Min J. Chung
(Lord’s Day Service, September 17th, 2017)

Passage: Nehemiah 2:1-20

¹ *In the month of Nisan, in the twentieth year of King Artaxerxes, when wine was before him, I took up the wine and gave it to the king. Now I had not been sad in his presence. ² And the king said to me, “Why is your face sad, seeing you are not sick? This is nothing but sadness of the heart.” Then I was very much afraid. ³ I said to the king, “Let the king live forever! Why should not my face be sad, when the city, the place of my fathers' graves, lies in ruins, and its gates have been destroyed by fire?” ⁴ Then the king said to me, “What are you requesting?” So I prayed to the God of heaven. ⁵ And I said to the king, “If it pleases the king, and if your servant has found favor in your sight, that you send me to Judah, to the city of my fathers' graves, that I may rebuild it.” ⁶ And the king said to me (the queen sitting beside him), “How long will you be gone, and when will you return?” So it pleased the king to send me when I had given him a time. ⁷ And I said to the king, “If it pleases the king, let letters be given me to the governors of the province Beyond the River, that they may let me pass through until I come to Judah, ⁸ and a letter to Asaph, the keeper of the king's forest, that he may give me timber to make beams for the gates of the fortress of the temple, and for the wall of the city, and for the house that I shall occupy.” And the king granted me what I asked, for the good hand of my God was upon me.*

⁹ *Then I came to the governors of the province Beyond the River and gave them the king's letters. Now the king had sent with me officers of the army and horsemen. ¹⁰ But when Sanballat the Horonite and Tobiah the Ammonite servant heard this, it displeased them greatly that someone had come to seek the welfare of the people of Israel.*

¹¹ *So I went to Jerusalem and was there three days. ¹² Then I arose in the night, I and a few men with me. And I told no one what my God had put into my heart to do for Jerusalem. There was no animal with me but the one on which I rode. ¹³ I went out by night by the Valley Gate to the Dragon Spring and to the Dung Gate, and I inspected the walls of Jerusalem that were broken down and its gates that had been destroyed by fire. ¹⁴ Then I went on to the Fountain Gate and to the King's Pool, but there was no room for the animal that was under me to pass. ¹⁵ Then I went up in the night by the valley and inspected the wall, and I turned back and entered by the Valley Gate, and so returned. ¹⁶ And the officials did not know where I had gone or what I was doing, and I had not yet told the Jews, the priests, the nobles, the officials, and the rest who were to do the work.*

¹⁷ *Then I said to them, “You see the trouble we are in, how Jerusalem lies in ruins with its gates burned. Come, let us build the wall of Jerusalem, that we may no longer suffer derision.” ¹⁸ And I told them of the hand of my God that had been upon me for good, and also of the words that the king had spoken to me. And they said, “Let us rise up and build.” So they strengthened their hands for the good work. ¹⁹ But when Sanballat the*

*Horonite and Tobiah the Ammonite servant and Geshem the Arab heard of it, they jeered at us and despised us and said, "What is this thing that you are doing? Are you rebelling against the king?"*²⁰*Then I replied to them, "The God of heaven will make us prosper, and we his servants will arise and build, but you have no portion or right or claim in Jerusalem."*

Introduction

Summary of Nehemiah 1: God calls Nehemiah, a second generation Jewish-Medo-Persian, to build the wall of Jerusalem or rebuild the nation. He was a cupbearer, almost like an advisor to the king. God is going to use him and Nehemiah is going to forsake his lucrative position and go to Jerusalem, which is in destruction. He is going to build a wall, a nation, a city.

This chapter, Nehemiah is going to get the permission from the king of Persia, probably the most powerful man at the time. Then he will go to Jerusalem and see the ruin and rubble. He is going to face opposition and start doing work. Some of you may feel your dreams crumbling down when everything around you is breaking down, but there is no need to worry because God is in the process of rebuilding it. If you are being faithful to your call, you are living in your dream. We will see how Nehemiah is going to do his work. He plans, does things, and trust in God's sovereignty.

There is an incredible balance between God's sovereignty and Nehemiah doing his responsibility. Some of you may be an atheist and may not believe the existence of God, so it may be really hard to explain the order that exists in this world. You do not see a watch and say, "Wow! An accident - it came together all on its own. You can see the design in it." If you are theist, you may not believe in the Christian God and you may have different gods of a different religion. But if you believe in God, any kind of god, you may struggle sometime in your life - is God sovereign, all powerful, in control? If that is so, do I have any real choice in my life? As we look into this passage, we can see two things - man's choice and God's sovereignty are at a crossroads. Many books and movies deal with this issue, like *The Matrix* and *Minority Report*. We may be in one camp or the other - if God is sovereign, why do we do anything? Do I have any choice? Or the others side, God must not be sovereign, so I have to do it. I have to do everything on my own.

But if we look into Scripture and truly understand God's sovereignty and our responsibility, we will understand that God is sovereign and in control, so we need to pray and do everything in confidence. That will be the application as we study this chapter. Over the past thirty years, these are the three conclusions I have made. This is necessary to talk about it so that it can be a foundation and basis for the whole Bible, as well as when we go through Nehemiah.

1. Man's choice: Our choices are real in such a way that we are responsible for our choices

Real in such a way that *I* am choosing it and *I* am going to be judged for it.

2. God's sovereignty: God is absolutely sovereign

Isn't that contradictory to number one? That is why we call it a *paradox* - a parallel truths that runs together, that exists together. In the Western world, we think it is either "this" or "that", but there are so many things we do not know in reality of life and eternity that both can exist together.

3. Paradox: Without violating our choices, God sovereignly works to accomplish redemptive history

God works in, through, around, under, before, above things

[There is a black and white picture displayed on the screen. The words "God is Sovereign" is at the top of the screen. There is a half-oval starting from the bottom of the screen and rounding off to the center of the screen, just below the words "God is Sovereign". Within the half-circle, there are the words "My choices".]

"My choices" and "God is sovereign" - we really divide these things. We think that God is sovereign in everything around and above our choices, but not in them.

[The picture displayed on the screen changes. The space where "God is Sovereign" gets colored in. But the half-oval with the words "My choices" remains in white.]

We distinguish that because we are living in a Western world where it is either "this" or "that". But as we look into Scripture, it can be this *and* that.

[Now the spaces of "God is Sovereign" and "My choices" are both colored in.]

The reality is that my choices are real in such a way that I am responsible for them and I will be judged by them. But God is somehow incredibly and unexplainably even within, around, above, under, before, and after my choices without violating my choices. This is hard to understand with our little brain, but we can try to understand this as much as possible. If we read every verse in the Bible from this perspective, I believe it should make sense. If you understand this principle, it will help you to see Nehemiah 2 and the whole Bible.

I believe Romans 8: 28-29 is talking about this. If God is sovereign and working in our lives, what direction and purpose is He working in? These two verses explains it.

Romans 8: 28-29 - And we know that for those who love God all things work together for good, for those who are called according to his purpose. For those whom he foreknew he also predestined to be conformed to the image of his Son, in order that he might be the firstborn among many brothers.

God is working for our good and growth, making us more like Jesus Christ. These lead to the glory of His name. He sovereignly works through all these things and through Nehemiah's life. The whole chapter is a matter of balance that needs to be maintained between the total sovereignty of God and Nehemiah's prayer and proper response in wise and thoughtful activity. In practicalities of the situation, Nehemiah appears unaware of

any clash - he does not see this as contradictory but complementary truth. Nehemiah needed to know the truth of both if he was to make any substantial progress. There is God's sovereignty and man's responsibility working together in the midst of everything we do in our lives. That is why we pray - trust in the sovereignty of God; and we plan - because we have responsibility. We trust Him and obey as our responsibility. Nehemiah does these four steps before he starts on his project, maybe we can do the same before we start our projects.

I. Waiting on God – Ask [1-8]

A. He asks the king – holy politic [1-8]

Nehemiah requests to be allowed to go to Jerusalem. Because Nehemiah was a cupbearer, he tasted the wine to make sure there was no poison. However, he was sad in the presence of the king. Personal problems did not matter as the king's servants were expected to keep their feelings to themselves and to display a cheerful disposition before him. So the king asked a question in verse two about Nehemiah's sad face. And then, Nehemiah became very afraid. This is because Persian kings were impossible and often cruel since their oppressive policies were acutely resented by their subjects. The kings were always in danger of an assassination or a revolt. They were usually suspicious of any wrong moves or apparent lack of loyalty by their subordinates. In addition to that, Nehemiah wanted to go to Jerusalem to rebuild the wall. This same king had, earlier in the Book of Ezra, stopped the rebuilding of the wall. He declared this as law and sometimes, kings cannot reverse what was made as law. Nehemiah's request meant he had to reverse the king's own policy. The king might take it as disloyalty, get upset, and order Nehemiah's execution.

Nehemiah showed his grief but not immediately. After a long time of prayer, he shows it. Now he wisely speaks and acts before the king. In verse three, he first shows loyalty - my sadness is not because of disloyalty or I put poison in your wine. I am loyal to you. And then he talks about Jerusalem but not by name because as soon as he would have, the king would be thinking politically. But he is not approaching it as a political issue but a personal one based on his personal relationship with the king. You can tell, through verses three to six, that the king had a personal relationship with Nehemiah and Nehemiah earned credibility through his probably excellence of his work ethic and character. You can tell that the king wants him there because he was such an excellent, trustworthy person and friend.

In verse seven, Nehemiah asks for two things - letters to show to the governor so that he can rebuild the wall and timber for the gates of the temple, the wall, and his own house because it will take him a few years to do the task and rebuild the city.

This is what I call holy politics at its best and finest. What is the difference between holy and unholy politics? Holy politics is ministry. Unholy politics is manipulation. The difference is the motive and the goal. Is the motive is out of self-love OR love for other people? And is the goal for others' benefit OR my benefit? Is it for the glory of God and others OR for the love of myself? If it is more myself and my own goal, it is

manipulation. But if you are wisely doing something so that it can be good for others, that is ministry - to elevate God and Christ. We have to learn how to do holy politics. Learn to build relationships with people. You want to be with good-hearted with good motive and with wise people that will help you to relate with others so there will be benefit for everyone.

There is what I call holy gossip. It is people saying positive things about one another and telling other people about those things. It is building people's relationships so they get closer. But often we do unholy gossip, which is making people's relationship worse rather than better. We have to learn to build relationships.

We have to learn to do holy politics like what Nehemiah is doing. Nehemiah's holy politics made King Artaxerxes contribute to the building of the wall. That is what we can do if we are wise and good-hearted in our lives.

B. He asks God – holy petition [1, 4, 8]

He sees the hand of God that leads to holy petition. We can see how he trusts in the sovereignty of God. In verse one, it mentions Nisan, the first month. Last chapter was during Chislev, which is the ninth month. There are twelve months in their calendar. It has been four months between the first chapter and second chapter. During this time, Nehemiah was so burdened by the news that he wept, mourned, fasted, and prayed for God to do something about the grievous situation in Jerusalem. He has been waiting four months for this moment to come along. We must know how to weep and pray but also how to wait and pray. Perhaps each morning Nehemiah prayed, "Lord, if today is the day I speak to the king about our plans, then open the way for me."

But in verse four, Nehemiah prayed. He did not ask the king to let him pray in the moment, to get down on his knees and cry out to God. He was probably silently praying - a bullet prayer. What I call in-between prayers. There was four-month prayer and there was four-second prayer. We need to mix that in our lives. There is preparation prayer and game-time prayers. In the morning, what I do is I go to morning prayer, praying for a long period of time for everything I will do throughout the day. Then in each moment, when I get to the situation, I do four-second prayers. Prayer is always powerful and it is always time well spent.

And we see how he trusts in the God's sovereignty in verse eight. Even though the human king's heart changes, he attributes it to the sovereignty of God. We can see verses throughout the Scripture where God can move the hearts of a king.

2 Chronicles 20:6 - "O Lord, God of our fathers, are you not God in heaven? You rule over all the kingdoms of the nations. In your hand are power and might, so that none is able to withstand you."

Proverbs 21:2 - "The king's heart is a stream of water in the hand of the Lord; he turns it wherever he will."

We can see from Scripture that we have to pray for leaders of the nations all around the world, including this nation. God can change the hearts of the leaders in this world. We can ask question, "How do we deal with superiors that seem impossible? How do we deal with difficult people?" Even the world leaders are only God's servants whether they know it or not. God can even use them, change their hearts, and change the course of their intention, motive, and the decisions that they make. The king's response and the evidence of sovereignty of God in the affairs of the nation. We expect God to work through a dedicated believer, like Nehemiah, but we forget that God can also work through unbelievers to accomplish His will, like King Artaxerxes. Often we think leadership means moving our followers, but a good leader can move the authority above them. Even though it is a right will of God, there will be the right timing of God as well. We need to pile up prayer and wait until God leads us and God gives us wisdom to do so. Time might be hard, but God's hands are still good.

I cannot help but to think of two thrones in this passage - throne of the human King Artaxerxes and the throne of God. Nehemiah had to wait for an invitation to go to the human throne but God always invites us in Jesus Christ. Throne of God is always open for His children. We can always play around the throne of our Heavenly Father. Human King Artaxerxes only saw the sorrow of Nehemiah's face but our God sees the sorrow of our hearts, feels, and understands us in our place. People approaching the throne of Persia had to be very careful just in case this human king gets angry. But our God, when His children approach Him to the throne of God in Jesus Christ, we are always welcome in the sight of God. Because we are children in Jesus Christ, He always invites us to come to His throne.

Sometimes when we pray to the Lord, we pray to get what we want. Sometimes we know that it is contradictory to the will of God. We know God's will and God's plans are better, but I still want this - we pray like that, knowing that the will of God is better. We still want things in our way in our lives. Sometimes we have dilemma, and we do not even want to pray because of that. If we pray, instead of getting things that we want, sometimes our hearts can change so that we want this instead of what we used to want.

When we pray, the object of our pleasure often changes and we can be happy receiving another thing. Whenever you want something, sometimes it is not the object that you want but the pleasure that object gives. Like steak, you pray, "God give me steak, that's what I want!" But let's say, God gives you a salad. What we want is to eat the juicy steak, the pleasure the steak gives. But let's say you have a cold salad. You eat it. Let's say it was twice more pleasurable. It's not the steak that you want but the pleasure it gives. Often we want something and we are afraid to pray for something, to submit our will to what God wants. But God can change our hearts in a way that when we receive the will of God, there is incredible pleasure. And often that is what God does when we pray.

When we pray, prayer might not lead you to receive what you want at times but changes the object of your pleasure. Pray that the object of your pleasure changes to what you already have, whom you already have - the One that you can never lose. He is the One who will never let you go. You already have Him. You can actually be really happy in

Jesus Christ. When you pray, you will have unexplainable pleasure, not comparable to anything else.

II. Weighing out things – Assess [9-16]

He assesses the walls, finding them in very poor condition. First he assesses the situation, his human responsibility. Then, he assesses his heart, trusting in the sovereignty of God.

A. He assess the situation [9-10, 13-16]

In verses nine to ten, he assesses the leaders. In verses thirteen to sixteen, he assesses the work itself.

First, in verses nine to ten, he assesses the leaders. He runs into these governors - Sanballat the Horonite and Tobiah the Ammonite - who oppose what he is going to do. We will cover these guys in the latter chapters. Basically, he gives the king's letter to them yet they do not like it. They are going to oppose his work. They are going to oppose through a political reason but actually they are hindering religious work. This is often true in different parts of the world, because of the political rulings in the world, it affects religious activity, meaning missions work. That is why the Bible tells us to pray for the leaders so that there will be a conducive atmosphere to spread the Gospel and work for the Lord. That is why we often need to pray for the leaders in this world and the laws that exist in the country. That is what is going to happen.

Then, in verses thirteen to sixteen, he assesses the work. He went out by night. He wants to keep it low because he knows opposition will be there - even to the Jews, so that he can examine everything first then talk to the Jews so that they can be motivated. Look at verse thirteen, it was a lot worse than he expected. In verse fourteen, it was so bad that he couldn't even pass through it. In verse thirteen, you can see his work ethic. The word "inspected" is to examine carefully. It is a medical word to probe a wound to see the extent of the damage. As he was inspecting the wall, he was examining the wounds of Jerusalem, so that he can be a healer for the nation. He is studying the city and the history. The ones who do not study history cannot make history.

Often when I counsel people, I need to know their history. Addiction has history. Sin has history. But so does godliness. We have to build a new kind of history, but unless you know their history, you will not be able to help them. Nehemiah studies the past so that he can open the future for the Israelites' relationship with God. He inspected. Without preparation, we cannot have accomplishment. God does not just use our performance but also our preparation because God does not need our accomplishment. But again, God is working for our good, our growth for His glory. We need to build our character.

B. He assess his heart [11-12]

In verses 11, what is he doing for three days? He is examining himself. In verse twelve it mentions for three days, he is examining his heart. Seeing, remembering, pounding in his heart how God had called him to this place - his convictions. Three days to confirm his call and the plan. He is reminding himself of the calling he received from God as he

examines his heart. We can see in this passage how Nehemiah plans but also prays and that balance.

A leader balances praying and plans. Anyone who is productive in the Lord both prays and plans. At the core of Nehemiah's planning was prayer. Four month preparation prayer and then he talks to the king when asked. Too often, leaders will dive into projects without seeking God and rely solely on the plans they have made. And then there is the other extreme that ignores planning altogether because you figure that God will make it all come together without planning. Both extremes are opposite of good leadership. Trust God, but also use resources, God has given to you. God has blessed us with intellect and the ability to plan ahead. Nehemiah reflects strong leadership as he made prayer the center of his plans.

Prayer is where planning starts. That is why when we plan, we brainstorm. Brainstorming and prayer-storming must go together. Sometimes brainstorming leads to prayer-storming. Sometimes prayer-storming leads to brainstorming. Brainstorm with a mind of God with a presence of God. As you pray - trusting in the sovereignty of God - and plan, you are responsible for your responsibility. Prayer leads the vision into reality lead by Spirit-saturated plans. When I prepare sermons, I take time to prepare, plan, study, and examine the Word. But in the midst of that, I have a lot of four-second prayers. Spirituality is no substitute for sweat. But sweat is nothing without prayer. The tears of prayer and sweat of preparation are wonderful allies. They must always go together.

III. Working with people – Assemble [17-18]

A. They assemble for their work [17]

After he examines and understands the situation and history, now he starts to speak and gathers the troops. He recruits. This was not a one-man project and Nehemiah knew that. He recruited the needed personnel to get the job done. Notice as he speaks to the people, he identifies himself with them. He motivates them through the trouble that they are in so that they are motivated to get better in their situation. They initially assemble for themselves in one way, but now he makes the gathering theocentric - God-centered.

B. They assemble for God [18]

Now people are motivated for God. The phrase “the hand of my God” is mentioned several times in this book and the Book of Ezra. The reoccurring expression recognized that God was orchestrating blessing for His people. But people had to see that their bad situation was not irreversible. They had to have hope. Their situation was not irreversible because God could change things. They became enthusiastic. The word “enthusiastic”, “theo” means “God is in this”. People became enthusiastic when they saw that God was in this. The hand of God always reverses the curse. The curse started when sin entered. Sin means everything is deteriorating and decaying, which is proven through the 2nd Law of Thermodynamics. But when God touches, it changes the course. Things that are being destructed will be constructed by the hand of God. He always rebuilds - hearts, lives, families, cities, nations - for the glory of God.

In verse seventeen, it says “us, us, us,” but notice in verse eighteen, it says “hand of my God...” He is speaking from his testimony, personal knowledge and experience that comes from his relationship with God. Leaders must have testimonies to lead and motivate other people. Often when you see the difficulties, it is not about the difficulty that is the problem but whether or not there is a man of God in that place. If there is, that man will bring God into that place and everything can change because of that person.

Faith paves the way for the power to enter in. Faith often sees what does not seem to be there. Faith brings God, His work, and His promises into that place. We might have sight but we might not have vision. Sight means seeing what is there. Vision means seeing what can happen. No one else sees the possibility of the wall being built in this passage except Nehemiah. Nehemiah was able to see it done. So many people had sight, but very few people had vision. Helen Keller who blind, deaf and mute, said, “The most pathetic person in the world is someone who has sight but no vision.” I hope that hurt you so that you can be healed.

There were two shoes company going into this island with no shoes. One manager said, “No shoes! Let’s leave because we won’t sell any shoes because no one wants shoes.” The other manager said, “Wow! Nobody has shoes, let’s bring the company so we can sell shoes to everyone on this island.” How do you see things? Do you only see what is there and not see what is not there? Or can you see something that can happen? Do you have vision?

God is still looking to raise up leaders to rebuild walls around the world. To restore a person, families, churches, cities, and nations to Himself. Godly visionaries with character who tackle God-sized tasks for the Lord. God is looking for those kinds of people. God is the Builder of broken walls, Healer of broken lives, Restorer of broken dreams. Faith will help you to see. Nehemiah was not focused on the problems but the possibilities. A great God can do great things. When He does great things, we need to be on the ride with Him. I pray that all of us be on the ride.

IV. Wrestling with problems – Arise [19-20]

A. They rise above problems [19]

Everything we do in our lives, there will be problems. Even if you get a dream job, there will be problems. Even if you dream person, you will have problems. Different difficulties will come in this life. Difficulty came to Nehemiah in Sanballat and Tobiah. But they will rise above problems. Why can we do that? Because the hand of God is above us.

B. They rise below the God of heaven [20]

There will be forces that are against us but there will be power that will be for us. Whatever we do, we must rise and build for the glory of God. There are problems and troubles. God already declared there will be problems in this world. There are forces and beings that are against God. There is good and evil in the world and in this passage.

We will examine some verses. In the English Bible you cannot see this, but if you look at the original language, it is amazing how there is correlation between good and evil.

Genesis 3:5 - "For God knows that when you eat of it your eyes will be opened, and you will be like God, knowing good and evil."

This is the beginning of when evil is shown. The word good is *tov* and evil is *ra`*. These are the themes that run throughout Scripture.

Why are these enemies so bitter against God's man, Nehemiah, building the wall? The author is very intentional about this. There is a battle is running throughout, thru the seed of the serpent and seed of Satan, battling throughout Scripture and human lives. Look at this:

In verse one, the base word for *sad* is *ra`*. Whenever there is a negative - *ra`* - evil is at work. In verse two, *sadness's* root word is *ra`*. Sadness is there because of the exile. Exile is because of the sin of Israelites, still related with evil. Evil in our hearts, in the nation, in the people.

In verse five, it says, "if it *pleases*". Anything positive is *tov*. *Favor* is also the word *tov*. In verse six and seven, *pleased* and *pleases* are *tov*. In verse eight, "the *good* hand of my God". This is the *tov* hand of my God.

In verse ten, *displeased* is *ra`*. In verse seventeen, *trouble's* base word is *ra`*.

In verse eighteen, we see *good* or *tov*. Why? Because hand of God is upon their work.

The author is very intentional about the cosmic battle between good and evil. There is sin that exists in this world that is against God. But God's hand is working out for the good, there is redemption. There is rubble - *ra`* - but there is a wall - *tov*. God is working in the midst of evil that exists in this world. Nehemiah, who had the good - *tov* - hand of God in him, he sees the rubble, *ra`*, evil that exists in the city. And how does he see it? He sees a broken city, broken wall, broken lives. But he does not see it as rubble or failures, but he is going to raise the people of God so that the city and the people in it can be faithful. How do you see failures? People who fail, struggle, have hardships? Evil people, city, nations in the world? Do you see the possibility of the rubble - these broken walls being built up in the kingdom of God?

Nehemiah saw the problems but he also saw the possibility. Nehemiah saw more at night than the residents saw in the daylight. He saw the potentials not just the problems. This is what makes a person who puts their faith in God. We have to have hope. No matter what the problem is, we have to have hope that God can redeem this and change this. Because the hand of God is upon us, whatever God changes, decomposition and destruction can be construction for the glory of God.

Conclusion

The cross of Jesus Christ is a wonderful example. By the standard of the first century, no experience could have been more loathsomely degrading than the death on the cross. The cross was almost an obscenity. In polite Roman society, the word *cross* was a word no one would say. That is why even in the Bible the word *cross* is not mentioned that many times. People do not even utter it in their conversation in the first century. But by the twenty-first century, the cross is venerated as a sacred symbol and an object of a believer's proudest boast. Even as you look at the cross, we have positive emotion when we think about the cross.

What caused this incomprehensible turning upside-down accepted values of the first century? What changed it? Simply because Jesus Christ died on the cross, Jesus touched the cross. All the *tov* goodness of God personified in Jesus Christ. There He takes all the *ra`*, the evil of this world, and He makes the cross good. And He makes the evil people who put their faith in Him, good. Anything Jesus touches, He transforms. Jesus touched the cross and the followers of the cross. The symbol of God's wrath (what the cross used to be) and the object of God's wrath (all of us as followers) are changed now. Now it is a symbol of blessing and now we are an object of God's blessing because the hand of God is upon us. We need to be touched so we can touch everything around us. Build everything for the kingdom of God. The sovereign hand of God is with us, therefore, let us rise and build for His glory.