



OHBC MEMORY VERSE – WEEK #16

THIS WEEK'S MEMORY VERSE: NEHEMIAH 4:17b

"... every one with one of his hands wrought in the work, and with the other hand held a weapon."

Why Nehemiah 4:17b?

Because it perfectly describes the "M-O" (Mode of Operation) every child of God has been called to employ in the church age. We are to be BUILDING with one hand, and BATTLING with the other!

As the spiritually resurrected children of God, we have been called to be "stedfast, unmoveable, always abounding IN THE WORK of the Lord" (I Cor. 12:58). That "work," is the work the Lord did when He was on the earth working. Namely, it is the work of "making disciples." The goal of our church, just as this week's memory verse states, is that "EVERY ONE" in our entire church family will involve themselves in this "WORK." As we say so often, "Discipleship begins with evangelism." A person cannot be made a disciple of Jesus Christ without first begin won to Him. We must ALL, ALWAYS be ABOUNDING in this work! Again, it's not optional equipment! It is what Jesus specifically commanded as our mission (i.e. our "work")! (See Matt. 28:18-20)

But, while we carry out this work, we find ourselves in the midst of a raging battle against an extremely powerful prince (Eph. 2:2), and his entire network of demons (Eph. 6:12). Ephesians 6:10-18 specifically tells us how to do battle in this spiritual warfare. We must "put on the whole armor of God," and then "STAND" (Eph. 6:11 – "stand"; Eph. 6:13 – "withstand," "stand"; Eph. 6:14 – "stand") in the victory Christ has already won.

As Paul provides us with a list of the "whole armor of God" in Ephesians 6, it is interesting to note that there is only one offensive weapon in the entire list: "The sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God" (Eph. 6:17). It is the only offensive weapon we have, because it is the only one we need!

As we are BUILDING and BATTLING, we hold the same instrument in one hand as we do the other: The Word of God! It is a sharp two-edged sword (Heb. 4:12; Rev. 1:16)! One side of the sword is a surgeon's scalpel to bring spiritual healing to man's terminal bout with the disease of sin. The Word of God is the tool God uses in our hand to BUILD His family. The other side of the sword is a deadly weapon the Lord uses in our hand to defeat the Devil in the midst of our BATTLE with him (II Thess. 2:8).

Get that "sharp sword" in both of your hands, and BUILD and BATTLE until Jesus comes!

## DAY 76

TODAY'S READING: I KINGS 4-6

### OVERVIEW:

Solomon's key men; the kings of the earth come to hear Solomon; the preparation for building the Temple; the specifics in building the Temple.

### HIGHLIGHTS & INSIGHTS:

Solomon is reigning over all Israel and chapter 4 and verse 25 lets us know it is a time of peace. God confirms His granting of wisdom and understanding to Solomon, and by the end of chapter four, the kings of the earth are coming to listen to Solomon. This is a great picture of the millennial reign of Christ as He sits on the throne of David in Jerusalem during a time of great peace as the kings of the earth come and worship before Him. However, we also see a crack in Solomon's character as king. Chapter 4 and verse 26 states the vast number of horses Solomon has acquired. It doesn't seem like that big of a deal, does it? The key is found in Deut. 17:16 where God specifically tells the future kings of Israel not to multiply horses to themselves. Horses represent power and strength in an army, something to trust other than God (Psalm 20:7). In good times, we, too, must watch for the small things that begin to bring us down.

Solomon does understand the opportunity before him. Because of the victories by his father (David), he has the opportunity to live in peace and build the temple of God. We, too, have an opportunity before us because of the victory won by our Father. I Cor. 6:19 tells us that each one of us as a believer in Christ is

the temple of God. The question is, how are we doing building God's temple? Do we prepare with the same passion Solomon did, or do we simply take it for granted? Will we be remembered for the temple (our lives) we built unto the Lord?

At times it can seem monotonous reading through the specific details of the temple. Always remember, God had a plan for that building. It wasn't Solomon's responsibility to figure it all out, but rather to simply follow God's plan. The same is true in our lives. I Corinthians 3 tells us the kind of materials God wants us to use to build the temple of our lives and work.

#### **CHRIST IS REVEALED:**

Through SOLOMON as the kings during the millennial kingdom of the earth come before Him to seek His wisdom. – I Kings 4:34 (Phil. 2:9-11 – Christ will one day rule the world as Israel's king in His millennial reign, and every knee will bow before Him.)

#### **DAY 77**

TODAY'S READING: I KINGS 7-8

#### **OVERVIEW:**

Building Solomon's house; the temple is furnished; the dedication of the temple.

#### **HIGHLIGHTS & INSIGHTS:**

The temple was an unbelievably magnificent structure. The details that God provides in chapters 5-7 help us understand how incredible it must have been. However, there is another crack in the character of Solomon revealed in 7:1. Notice how God grabs our attention with the very first word – "But". While Solomon did oversee an awesome work for God, and he loves the Lord, he also built himself quite a nice place. In fact, it took almost twice as long to build his own house as God's house! We think, "Why would Solomon do such a thing?" don't we? We must remember we offer our service to God, and even want to do great things for Him, yet in the midst of it all, we still make sure to take care of ourselves. May the Lord help us examine ourselves daily – especially when things are going well.

Chapter 8 is one of the most glorious chapters in the Bible. It is hard for us to imagine the spectacle of that day. The nation is at peace, their king is sought by world leaders because of his wisdom, and now the house of the Lord is finished. Then to witness the glory of the Lord filling the temple so that even the priests could not minister – it would have been awe inspiring. As we read Solomon's prayer to the Lord we can understand Jesus' passion in Matthew 21:12-13. Here were His people under the control of a foreign power, and instead of being broken and seeking God in the temple, as I Kings 8:33-34 states they should, they are using the temple for personal gain. The question we should ask ourselves living in Laodicea is, "Are we broken before God, or do we have a form of godliness with no power from God?" The good news is, God does respond to a broken and contrite heart, and just as He filled Solomon's temple, He can fill our lives on a daily basis. The choice is ours.

#### **CHRIST IS REVEALED:**

As THE GLORY OF GOD filling His temple. – I Kings 8:10-11 (John 1:14; Isa. 40:5; Matt. 16:27-7:2)

#### **DAY 78**

TODAY'S READING: I KINGS 9-11

#### **OVERVIEW:**

God speaks to Solomon; the Queen of Sheba comes to Solomon; Solomon's kingdom increases in wealth; Solomon's heart is turned away; God's judgment upon Solomon.

#### **HIGHLIGHTS & INSIGHTS:**

Chapter 9 begins with God speaking to Solomon a second time. It has now been 20 years since God first spoke to Solomon, and God reestablishes the path of blessing and the path of defeat. God emphasizes in verse 4 walking in integrity of heart and uprightness, and keeping His statutes and judgments. God does not expect perfection (David certainly wasn't), but He is always seeking a true heart. As a believer, we all have the same choice as Solomon. Galatians 5 describes it as either walking in the Spirit or walking in the flesh. The Spirit produces true spiritual fruit, while the flesh produces vanity. If it wasn't so difficult, it would seem like an easy choice.

Chapter 10 begins with the Queen of Sheba coming to prove Solomon with hard questions. She has heard of his fame, but can't believe it can be true. She quizzes him on the things most important to her heart, and she is blown away by his wisdom and his kingdom. Doctrinally, this pictures the Lord Jesus Christ reigning in Jerusalem as the people of the earth come unto Him. Devotionally, isn't it good to know that God is not afraid of hard questions? Also, in 10:4-5 she is amazed at his wisdom, the house of the Lord, and everything about his kingdom. We, too, can have the wisdom of God (the Bible) put on display in our life, and as it changes us, it should have an impact on those around us. Once again, though in the midst of greatness, another crack is shown. Chapter 10 and verse 14 states the weight of gold to come to Solomon in one year is six hundred threescore and six talents (666)! Remember Deut. 17:17 – the kings of Israel are not to greatly multiply gold unto themselves. Deut. 17:16 commands them not to multiply horses or go to Egypt to get horses. Chapter 10, verses 26 and 28 shows the slippery slope Solomon was on.

We have seen the flaws in Solomon and now they will come full bore. The three things God specifically mentions in Deut. 17:16-17 are the very things to which Solomon yields. In the midst of the most blessed time in Israel's history and with their most glorious king on the throne, Solomon allows his heart to be turned away. Remember when it was just horses and gold? No big deal, right? Now it's a thousand women and building altars to false gods. Proverbs 4:23 says we must guard our heart, but not just from the "big" stuff, but the little things as well. This also should remind us that we cannot sit back and rest on our past victories, but everyday engage in the spiritual battle by dying to ourselves. Sadly, there doesn't seem to be a Nathan that was willing to confront Solomon. Do you have a Nathan in your life? Someone that is a friend but will also challenge your life. Are YOU that kind of friend?

Because of Solomon's disobedience, God raises up men to be his adversaries. One of these men will eventually lead ten of the tribes in rebellion against Solomon's son.

#### CHRIST IS REVEALED:

Through SOLOMON ruling in Jerusalem as the leaders of the world seek Him and His wisdom. – I Kings 10:1-6 (Phil. 2:9:11).

### DAY 79

TODAY'S READING: I KINGS 12-15

#### OVERVIEW:

Rehoboam becomes king; the kingdom is divided; Jeroboam is made king of Israel and institutes false worship; the prophet of God rebukes Jeroboam; God judges Jeroboam's house; the temple looted under Rehoboam's reign; the reigns of Abijam and Asa in Judah; the reign of Nadab and Baasha in Israel.

#### HIGHLIGHTS & INSIGHTS:

Rehoboam, Solomon's son, takes the throne after Solomon's death. He has the opportunity to unify the people, but instead chooses foolish counsel over wise counsel. Ten tribes rebel and become known as Israel. The tribes of Judah and Benjamin stay loyal to Rehoboam, and they are called Judah. Jeroboam is made king of Israel (the ten tribes). In 11:38, God promised to bless Jeroboam if he walked after God. However, instead of trusting God, Jeroboam trusts his own heart. He establishes a false system of worship and actually brings back the golden calf.

God sends a prophet to rebuke Jeroboam for this idolatry. In one of the more bizarre stories in the Bible, the prophet, on his way home, is deceived by an older prophet and has supper in the old prophet's home. God chastises the young prophet for not obeying His Word, and takes the life of the young prophet. As we have seen throughout our study, God says what He means, and means what He says!

God also judges Jeroboam and takes the life of his child. Isn't it interesting though, how he first tries to use God's prophet in the midst of crisis, but nothing ever really changes in Jeroboam's heart. Rehoboam, reigning in Judah, is no better. He builds the false gods and the false places of worship. The price is still being paid for Solomon's departure from the Word of God. Our sin does not just affect us. It can have an impact far into the future and to other generations. This is also seen in the life of Jeroboam and his other son, Nadab. Nadab is killed by Baasha, so Baasha can become king. Baasha also killed all the house of Jeroboam. The price of sin is high.

Abijam is Rehoboam's son and he is evil like his father. Asa, Abijam's son, does what is right in the eyes of God. We must not forget that sin is an individual choice. In spite of my past, my circumstances, my family – I can choose to follow God. There is never an excuse.

#### CHRIST IS REVEALED:

In the PROPHECY OF JOSIAH. Another child shall come that shall judge the false gods and false worship of this world. – I Kings 13:2 (II Thess. 1:7-10; Rev. 18:1-2, 10, 21).

#### DAY 80

TODAY'S READING: I KINGS 16-19

OVERVIEW: The corruption of the early kings of Israel; Elijah prophesies the drought; Elijah is fed miraculously; The widow obeys God's Word; The widow's son is raised from the dead; Elijah confronts Ahab; Elijah takes on the prophets of Baal; The Lord reveals Himself as the Lord; Elijah flees Jezebel; Elijah hears the still small voice of God; Elijah puts his mantle on Elisha.

#### HIGHLIGHTS & INSIGHTS:

The pattern for the kings of Israel was one of apostasy. Each one turned from God's way and the Lord brought judgment on each. Although it was a steady line of sinful kings, the crescendo was reached with Ahab. Ahab takes as his wife the infamous Jezebel and begins a reign that somehow is more wicked than all the kings before him (16:33). That is an amazing statement considering the statements made about the other kings in 16:7,13,19,25-26! In the midst of Ahab's wicked reign God raises up a prophet named Elijah. Elijah prophesies to Ahab that it will not rain until Elijah calls for it. God then provides food and drink for His prophet in two ways. First, by using ravens to bring bread and flesh to Elijah while he drank from the brook Cherith. Second, from a poor widow and her son.

The story of the widow preparing Elijah's food before she prepared, her own is one of the favorite stories pulled out of context by money-hungry televangelist. They say, you, too, must give to God's man first (i.e. them), and then God will bless you. They twist the scripture and abuse it for their own profit. The key is not what she did, but why she did it. Notice in their conversation in 17:10-16, the key is verse 14 when Elijah states this is the Word of God – "for thus saith the Lord God of Israel". The lesson is she obeyed God's word despite her circumstances. What we often do is disobey God's Word and use our circumstances as an excuse. We may not treat our spouse the way in which God tells us, but that is somehow our spouses fault (their actions) rather than ours. We can justify murmuring because we don't like or agree with something that is happening at the church. We walk in the flesh because we're just so busy! The widow obeyed despite her circumstances, and so should we! Then things get worse – her son dies! God reveals she is not a super-saint – she questions God's prophet – but in her honesty with God, He meets her need. What we many times fail to do is get honest with God. We want to take our frustrations to people who have no business hearing them. God says, "Bring them to Me and I will meet your need!"

In the third year of the drought Elijah goes to confront Ahab. The meeting is set up by one of Ahab's governors, Obadiah. God's testimony about Obadiah is he fears the Lord greatly. We would probably assume it impossible to fear God and be one of Ahab's governors but that is what God said. As Ahab and Elijah meet, Ahab tries to lay the blame on Elijah. Isn't it amazing how the world, and believers who are walking in the flesh, want to blame people who are simply obeying God for their problems? It's not new. What is about to follow is the classic showdown between Elijah, calling upon the name of the Lord, and the prophets of Baal. Most of us know the story of how God honors Elijah's offering and reveals He is the Lord and Baal is nothing. However, before that great victory and revival could take place Elijah had to confront Ahab. We must be ready to deal with the things God wants us to deal with before He will move with revival in our lives.

From the mountain top experience to fleeing for his life, Elijah is being put through a myriad of emotions. Jezebel wants to kill him for killing her prophets. Elijah flees and starts to feel a little sorry for himself (19:4). The good news is, he's talking to God about it. God reveals He still has a plan for Elijah and shows him the key is not the "big stuff" – 19:11 – but rather in hearing God's voice and obeying -19:12. God also reminds Elijah that there are 7,000 in Israel that are true to Him. Isn't that just like us? We get thinking we're the only ones doing right and obeying God and God has to remind just like us? We get thinking we're the only ones doing right and obeying God, and God has to remind us, we're not alone!

#### CHRIST IS REVEALED:

As THE FIRE OF GOD consuming the sacrifice. – I Kings 18:38 (Heb. 12:29).