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## A JOURNEY THROUGH THE BIBLE

Reading: Nehemiah 1:-11

### 17. THE BOOK OF NEHEMIAH

Many years ago in a certain kingdom there was a large boulder in the middle of the roadway. Traveller after traveller walked past the boulder, veering off to the side of the road to get around it. All the time they were shaking their head and muttering, “*can you believe that ? Someone should get that big thing out of the way. what an inconvenience.*” Finally, a man came along and seeing the boulder took a strong branch from a tree and prized the boulder enough to get it rolling, and it rolled off to the side of the road. Lying underneath the boulder he found a note and read it. It read as follows,

*Thank you for being a true servant of the kingdom. Many have passed this way and complained because of the state of the problem, but you have taken the responsibility upon yourself to serve the kingdom instead. You are the type of citizen we need more of in the kingdom. Please accept this bag of gold that traveller after traveller have walked by, because they did not care enough about the kingdom to serve.*

I wonder what “***bags of gold,***” we’re missing each day, simply because we don’t bother enough to get involved in

serving the King of Kings and Lord of Lords ? I mean does anyone really care about the state of the work of God ? Nehemiah, whose name means “*Jehovah comforts,*” was the kind of person who cared. He cared about the traditions of the past and the needs of the present. He cared about the hopes of the future. Nehemiah cared about his heritage, his ancestral city and the glory of his God. Although he had a highly responsible job, in a secure environment in a fine Persian city, noted for its opulence and prosperity, magnificent buildings, and spacious gardens, Nehemiah is not preoccupied with himself. *Rather he is concerned with the people of God, and the work of God at Jerusalem.* Nehemiah cared. *Do you care ?* Do you care that after 30 years of troubles the cause of God in this province is at a lower ebb, than ever before ? Do you care that souls are not being saved in the numbers they used to be ? Do you care about the walls that are broken down in the life of your local church and in your own life ? Now before we embark on an analysis of this book lets back up a moment to see where we are,

#### 1. Historically:

In 538 B.C. 50,000 Jews returned to the land of Israel under the leadership of Zerubbabel ( Ezra 2:2 ) Eventually after opposition from the Samaritans and great encouragement from the prophets Haggai and Zechariah the temple was completed in 515 B.C. In 458 B.C. Ezra travels to Jerusalem with a further group and now 13 years later in 445 B.C. Nehemiah comes to Jerusalem to rebuild the walls. That’s where we are historically.

## **2. Biblically:**

You see, after the Pentateuch the historical books of the Old Testament begin with Joshua and end with Nehemiah and Esther, and span a period of about one thousand years. Now both the Greek Septuagint and the Latin Vulgate originally named this book “*Second Ezra*.” Even though the two books of Ezra and Nehemiah are separate in most English Bibles, they may have once been joined together in one single unit as they are currently in the Hebrew texts. Now when we come to Nehemiah we come to the end of Old Testament history. With the exception of Malachi who was a contemporary of Nehemiah all the other books precede Nehemiah in terms of chronology. 400 years are now to pass in prophetic silence until the coming of the forerunner of the Lord Jesus, John the Baptist. You see, in the rebuilding of the walls Malachi was to Nehemiah what Haggai and Zechariah had been to Ezra. So do you see where we are 1, 2,

## **3. Spiritually:**

You see, in the twelve years between Ezra’s return to the Promised Land and the arrival of Nehemiah great changes have taken place. Ezra seems to be no longer governor; the people were in great affliction and under constant reproach. The Arab’s, Israel’s enemies then as now, had moved their hostile camps close to Jerusalem. Sanballat and his enemies seemed to be all powerful. Priests and people alike had gone back to their foreign wives. Some of the poorer Jews had been forced to mortgage themselves to their wealthier compatriots. The temple had

been rebuilt but already neglect of the Sabbath was a common thing. My .... one glimpse at the book of Malachi will tell that things were bad spiritually.

## **4. Biographically:**

For Nehemiah himself is a really a first rank character study. He stands out conspicuously as a man of prayer, a man of faith, a man of courage and a man of action. You know some people are so heavenly minded that they are no earthly use, but not this man. He didn’t mind putting his hand to cementing. He could organize well, he studied the gates and the walls and assessed the needs of the people. He wasn’t up in the clouds, he was a practical man. *Isn’t it wonderful when you get a combination of a practical man and a prayerful man ?*

The late Samuel Chadwick beloved by all sound Methodists once used the following words in a prayer at a service which he was conducting in Manchester. “*O Lord, make us intensely spiritual but keep us perfectly natural and thoroughly practical.*” My .... does old Nehemiah not illustrate those three expressions ? Intensely spiritual, perfectly natural and thoroughly practical. I mean there is such a balance in his character. Now this book falls into three parts. Notice the first section has to do with

### **(1) REBUILDING THEIR WALLS CH’S 1-6**

And right away we are introduced to Nehemiah. Now who was Nehemiah ? I mean Zerubbabel was a prince of the

house of Judah, Ezra was a priest of the family of Aaron and a scribe, but Nehemiah was a nobody that is his ancestry is unknown. All we know is that he was the son of Hachaliah and the brother of Hanani and we know also that he was the king's cupbearer. The king was Artaxerxes Longimanus who reigned over the Persian Empire for forty years. *How did Nehemiah a Jew become the king's cupbearer ?* Well, the fact that Esther was the king's stepmother may have had something to do with it. It was not an especially pleasant job to drink the wine, literally wondering if your next drink would be your last, but it was responsible. It made him a confidant of the king and he would share things in the relaxed atmosphere of that relationship. And it was while Nehemiah was doing his job that he learned about the sad condition of the people of God. Can you see,

### **(a) *THE BURDEN THAT NEHEMIAH CAUGHT:***

Probably Hanani had been sent up to the Persian capital by Ezra to bring information about the condition of the Jews in Jerusalem. Do you see ( 1:2-4 ) ? Do you see that Nehemiah was burdened enough,

### **1. To Ask:**

Here is man looking out in compassion at the needs of others. Did you notice that he asked about the People: “ *the Jews,* ” ( 1:2 ) and then he asked about the Place: “ *and concerning Jerusalem,* ” My .... can you sense the burden of his heart ? Nehemiah cared enough to ask. When missionaries come home from the field of service

do you ask how they are getting on ? What about evangelists ? What about pastors/teachers ? Do you ever lift the phone and say, “ *how are the meetings going ?* ”

### **2. To Weep:**

For on hearing of his people's needs Nehemiah, “ *sat down and wept, and mourned certain days and fasted.* ” Jerusalem's plight was a 1000 miles from Susa's palace, but because he loved them, the anguish of his people reduced everything else in his life to things of lesser importance. He wept. He was not the last person to weep over Jerusalem's troubles. During the last week of his earthly ministry, the Lord Jesus looked over the rebellious city and found it impossible to hold back the tears. “ *And when He was come near, He beheld the city and wept over it.* ” ( Lk 19:41 ) Nehemiah was called to build the wall, but first he had to weep over the ruins. He cared enough to weep. I wonder is my ministry marked by tears ? Not silly tears, shallow tears, crocodile tears, but sincere tears for the state of God's cause, and the salvation of men's souls.

Does Christless feet on the way to hell break your heart ? Do you know what it is to come before the Lord and mourn over your own coldness, indifference and apathy ? Samuel Hadley was a great soul-winner in New York city. One night he was overheard as he prayed, “ *O, God, the sin of this city is breaking my heart.* ” My .... have you ever thought about the sin and citizens of this community ? Have you a real burden for the work of God in this place ? Does that burden find expression at the throne of grace ?

### **3. To Pray:**

Do you see ( 1:4 ) ? Nehemiah's first act did not involve rushing off to the king and trading on his position as the king's cupbearer. That might have been the "*sensible*," thing to do but it was not the "*spiritual*," thing to do and Nehemiah did the spiritual thing. He had the ear of the king but more importantly he had the ear of God so he "fasted and prayed before the God of heaven." ( 1:4 ) My .... does your burden find expression at the throne of grace ? Like Nehemiah have you caught the burden ?

#### ***(b) THE BLESSING THAT NEHEMIAH SOUGHT:***

For Nehemiah was a man of prayer. Now there are twelve instances of prayer recorded in this book. ( 2:4 4:4, 9, 5:19 6:9, 14, 9:5 13:14, 22, 29, 31 ) The book of Nehemiah opens and closes with prayer. This man is never out of touch with God. My .... Nehemiah mastered the art of prolonged prayer, he also shot up to heaven the arrow of intercession when necessary. Nehemiah succeeded because he depended on God. Speaking about the church's ministry today the late Alan Redpath said, "*there is too much working before men and too little waiting before God.*" Now what was the blessing that Nehemiah sought ? Well, come to ( Chapter 2 ) You see, 4 months have now passed. Four months of fasting and prayer left their mark on Nehemiah's face. One day as he was in the presence of the king the king suddenly noticed, "*Nehemiah, what's the matter. You look sad.*" This was the opening for which Nehemiah had been praying and so he says, "*Let the king live forever why should not my countenance be sad when*

*the city the place of my father's sepulchres lieth waste and the gates thereof are consumed with fire. Then the king said unto me, for what dost thou make request ? So I prayed to the God of heaven.*" ( 2:3-4 ) This is what Guy King calls "*a sky telegram*," but remember the sky telegram was backed by four solid months of persistent prayer. It was like an arrow out of a bow. "*So I prayed to the God of heaven.*" ( 2:4 ) Hudson Taylor said "*its possible to move men through God by prayer alone.*" Nehemiah petitioned a heavenly throne and then he petitioned an earthly throne. You see, Nehemiah wanted to

#### **1. Be Sent: He wanted Royal Permission:**

Do you see the two words in ( 2:5 ) "*Send me.*" Nehemiah was answering his own prayer and putting his own life on the line. Is this not to be the dominating factor in all our service for God ? Not the needs of others, but the command of the Lord, His absolute sovereignty to send His people anywhere. My .... is this not the only think that will keep your hand to the plough when the going gets tough ? To know that you are sent by the Lord.

#### **2. Be Safe: He wanted Royal Protection:**

Do you see the two words in ( 2:7 ) ? "*Convey me.*" What a surprise Nehemiah must have got the day he left for Jerusalem for we read in ( 2:9 ) "*Now the king had sent captains of the army and horsemen with me.*" Does this not teach us that we must never embark on any service for the Lord alone ? Do you realise that you might be the means in God's hands for keeping some servant of

God safe spiritually because of your prayers.

### 3. Be Supplied: He wanted Royal Provision:

Do you see the two words in ( 2:8 ) “ *Give me.* ”  
Nehemiah wanted the materials to do the job. Was he asking too much ? Artaxerxes did not think so for we read, “ *And the king granted me according to the good hand of my God upon me.* ” ( 2:8 ) Isn't it interesting that Nehemiah was not just an agoniser but an organiser for there was,

#### **(c) THE BRILLIANCE THAT NEHEMIAH BROUGHT:**

For this book shows us how to plan our work and work our plan and at the same time rely on the Lord. Now Nehemiah was a capable organizer and he divided the wall into sections, each section running from one gate to the next. John Phillips says “ *There were forty two work parties and each worked on the section on the wall nearest to where he lived. This was good psychology and it worked.* ” Indeed a phrase that appears at least 4 times in the chapter is found in ( 4:10 ) “ *even over against his house.* ” ( 4:23, 28, 30 ) Is this not where every real work for God must begin ? We can complement and implement the work of God if we will do our homework. Have you begun at your Jerusalem ? “ *Over against his house.* ” ( Mk 5:19 Lk 8:39 ) Are you doing the work that lies nearest to your home ? Are you starting with your own family ?  
Now this book not a rebuke to those who tell us that any

kind of organization in God's work is wrong ? Spirituality plus organization plus hard work all played a part in Nehemiah's success. And successful he was. The work was finished in fifty two days. But not without a battle for consider,

#### **(d) THE BATTLE THAT NEHEMIAH FOUGHT:**

For it was inevitable that once the man of God said, “ Let us arise and build,” the enemy said, “ let us arise and stop him,” for the door of opportunity swings on the hinges of opposition. You see, there was

#### 1. Opposition from Without:

Sanballat was governor of Samaria, Tobiah of the region east of the Jordan and Geshem an Arab chief. Now this was the “ *3 A Society,* ” Apollyon's Aggravation Association. Do you see the tactics that they used ?

#### **SCORN: ( 4:1-6 )**

British author Thomas Carlyle called ridicule the “ *language of the devil.* ” Isn't it an amazing thing, that which is precious to God, His work, is an object of scorn for the Devil. “ *What do these feeble Jews ?* ” My .... when we say that the only hope for the world is the gospel of Christ, the world rises up and says “ *You with your feeble prayer meetings, your silly plans of getting folk saved, you have no intellect, no status and no resources.* ” How did Nehemiah meet the scorn of the enemy ? He just kept on praying and kept on building.

## **FORCE: (4:7-23 )**

Taunts became threats and sneers became plots. Things certainly looked pretty serious. The opposition had developed into a formidable alliance. ( 4:7 ) Isn't it amazing that mutual enemies become mutual friends to oppose the work of God. Do you recall that prior to the crucifixion that Pilate sent the Saviour to Herod ? We read, “ *And the same day Pilate and Herod were made friends together for before they were at enmity between themselves.* ” ( Lk 23:12 ) Is there not a word of encouragement for us here ? You see, whatever scorn, derision, threat has ever been directed against you has first of all been poured out upon your precious Lord and “ *the servant is not greater than His Lord.* ” ( Jn 15:20 ) Scorn, then force and now,

## **GUILE: ( 6:1-19 )**

They were secretly plotting. They said, “ *Come let us meet together in some one of the villages in the plain of Ono.* ” ( 6:2 ) “ *Nehemiah, come down let's talk, be friends don't be so extreme or narrow.* ” My .... have you heard that language ? Are these words familiar to your ears ? “ *Come down, compromise. Be a Christian if you like, but don't be so fanatic about it. Let go of your principles. Drop your standards.* ” Is that what Satan has been whispering in your ear ? “ *Come into the parlour said the spider to the fly,* ” “ *Come to the plains of Ono,* ” they say to Nehemiah. What do you think Nehemiah said ? “ *Ono.* ” Listen, if they had said to Nehemiah “ *Let's meet in the little town of Oyes,* ” Nehemiah would still have said

Ono. Do you see how Nehemiah responds ? With a mind to work ( 6:3 ) an eye to watch ( 4:9 ) and a heart to pray. ( 4:9 ) But Nehemiah had not only to battle with 1.

## **2. Hindrances from Within:**

### **There was Debris:**

“ *And Judah said the strength of the bearers of burdens is decayed and there is much rubbish so that we are not able to build the wall.* ” ( 4:10 ) The sheer massiveness of the task discouraged them. Does it trouble you ? When you think of the souls that have to be saved, the resources that have to be found, the decline that has to be halted, do you say “ *we can't.* ”

### **There was Fear:**

( 4:11-14 ) Jews from outlying districts brought repeated warning that a surprise attack was being planned by Nehemiah's enemies. This spread fear among the workers. My .... nothing is more paralysing than fear and how often it paralyses Christian service today. Do you what the antidote to fear is ? The Lord. I wonder do you need to get your eye of the circumstances and onto the Lord ? “ *Remember the Lord which is great and terrible,* ” ( 4:14 ) cries Nehemiah.

### **There was Greed:**

( 5:1-13 ) Jews the world over are known for their business acumen. I heard a lovely story about a Jewish

man in New York who bought a little shop that was squeezed in between two gigantic department stores. He wondered what to call his tiny shop and after much deliberation he decided to call it “ *Entrance*. ” But do you know what was happening here ? Some of the rich Jews were making profit at the expense of their poorer brethren by forcing them into slavery and acquiring their properties. My .... if Satan cannot ruin a work for Christ from without, he will seek to ruin it from within. And if he cannot do it by discouragement, by fear, he will try to do it through self seeking and other wrong motives between Christian and Christian.

Satan does not care what tactic is used as long as the work stops. But isn't it encouraging to read in ( 6:15 ) “ *So the wall was finished*. ” It was finished in less than two months. The cause of God was victorious. Martin Luther was told that he could not build a wall to withstand the pressures of the Roman Catholic hierarchy but he placed his great heart and mind into the Herculean task “ *so the wall was finished*. ” I am reminded of those words of Winston Churchill once delivered in the Harrow school. Churchill said, “ *Never give in, never, never, never, never, never, never, never give in*. ” (1)

## **(2) RENEWING THEIR FAITH CH's 7-10**

You see, a revival is only as strong, after all as the work it accomplishes in the hearts of men and women. We can do all the building we want, but if the heart is not right, then nothing will last. So Nehemiah joined forced forces with Ezra the scribe to ensure that a real work would be done

in the hearts of the people. Now how do you renew your faith ? How do you rekindle your love for the Lord ? Well it needs to be done,

### **(a) IN THE CONGREGATION OF SAINTS:**

You see, Nehemiah faced an anomaly. There was a city without citizens. So in order to repopulate the city Nehemiah needed to know how many really belonged to the community of God's people. So ( Ch 7 ) is Ezra ( Ch 2 ) all over again. It simply shows that the returning exiles were the legitimate descendants of the Jews who occupied Israel prior to their deportation to Babylon. Here the names of God's people are written into God's book. You see, God's chief concern is people. *Here were a people who were important to the Lord, a people who were precious to Him*. My .... do you realise that you may not be important in the eyes of the world, but you are precious in the eyes of God ? You see, we must never get so taken up with the program that we overlook the people. Faith needs to be renewed in the company of saints. (a)

### **(b) BY THE COMPREHENSION OF SCRIPTURE:**

Do you know what we have in ( Ch 8 ) ? A “ *Back to the Bible*, ” movement. You see, having finished *the work of reconstruction* ( Ch's 1-6 ) Nehemiah and Ezra begin the *work of reinstruction* ( Ch's 7-13 ) which meant instructing the people of God in the Word of God. Surely the test of any movement or mission that claims to be doing the work of God, is the place given to the Word of God. Any revival not solidly based on the Bible is suspect

from the start. My .... revival is usually an emotional time. Hearts are stirred, consciences are ripped open, sins are confessed, tears are shed, and wrongs are righted. There is a great deal of emotion, but emotionalism is no solid basis for a continuing work. Unless that work is undergirded by the Word of God, it will soon lead to unscriptural excess. So Nehemiah brought in the Bible teacher. Do you see ( 8:5 ) ? What a respect they had for the Word of God. But look at ( 8:8 ) There was,

1. The Reading of the Text of God's Word: “ *they read in the book in the law of God distinctly.* ” ( 8:8 )

2. The Revealing of the Truth of God's Word: “ *they gave the sense,* ”

3. The Relating of the Thrust of God's Word: “ *and caused them to understand the reading.* ”

Now is that not a pretty good definition or statement of expository preaching ? You see, exposition is the opening up of the scriptures so people can understand them, so they'll know what the book has to say. And so Ezra is a Bible expositor, he is expounding the Scriptures, he is explaining the Word of God. His ministry was Bible centred. Do you what was said of the Early Church ?

“ *They spake the Word of God with boldness,* ”

( Acts 4:31 ) “ *They .... went everywhere preaching the Word.* ” ( Acts 8:4 ) My .... is our ministry Bible centred ? What about your ministry in the Sunday School, among the youth, the seniors, on the doors, with your neighbours ? Its so easy to become entangled in politics and philosophies instead of the Word of God. When Charles Haddon Spurgeon came to London he found that

the people were “ *so starved that a morsel of the gospel was a treat to them.* ” A remarkable work for the Lord took place. People were saved week by week. Years later when Spurgeon died it was said that the people in his congregation knew more of their Bibles than the theologians. Why ? Because, he expounded the Word of God. Do you want your faith to be renewed ? Do you want your love for the Lord to be rekindled ? Then the cry of your heart will need to be “ *bring the book.* ”

For them it was the Pentateuch for us it's the complete canon of Scripture. “ *Bring the book,* ” Sir Walter Scott pleaded as he lay a dying. “ *What book,* ” said his servant. “ *There is only one book the Bible,* ” was his famous response. *I wonder is this the cry of your heart ? “ Bring the book,* ” do you have a hunger for the Word ? Do you feel like Job when he said, “ *I have esteemed the words of His mouth more than my necessary food.* ” ( Job 23:12 ) (a) (b) and,

### **(c) *UNTO THE CONFESSION OF SIN:***

Martin Luther said, “ *the Bible is alive it speaks to me, it has feet, it runs after me, it has hands, it lays hold on me.* ” One thing is sure when Ezra and the Levites read the Word and gave the sense the people were moved. The Spirit of God through the Word of God had touched the hearts of the people of God. In ( Ch 9 ) we have the longest prayer recorded in the Bible. A prayer that takes us from the *creation* of the universe ( 9:6 ) to the *condition* of God's people. ( 9:33 ) You see, as they reviewed God's goodness and their faithlessness, they were brought to the



place of confession before the Lord. Look at ( 9:33 ) So they pledge that from now on they would order their lives according to the demands and dictates of God's Word. First they dedicate themselves to God ( 9:38-12:26 ) and then they dedicate the newly constructed wall. ( 12:27-47 ) My .... is this not revival ? Revival is not thrills and chills and babbling and boasting. Revival is getting right with God.

**Back to the Bible the true living Word  
Sweetest old story that ever was heard  
Back to the giving of money and time  
Back to the life of contentment sublime  
Back to the beautiful path I once trod  
Back to the church and the people of God**

### **(3) REFORMING THEIR CONDUCT CH's 11-13**

In ( Ch 13:6 ) we are told that Nehemiah's leave of absence ran out and that he returned to the palace at Shushan about 433 B.C. We are not sure how long he stayed perhaps until 424 B.C. but in that interval conditions got worse. *Isn't it so true that we often go back to the same old sins that we have committed before ?* I mean when Nehemiah returned to Jerusalem,

#### **(a) THE SANCTUARY NEEDED TO BE RECLAIMED:**

Tobiah the very man who had been a thorn in Nehemiah's side had infiltrated and was now living in the house of God like a lord. ( 13:7 ) Do you see what Nehemiah did ?

Look if you will at ( 13:8-9 ) In this respect Nehemiah typifies the Lord Jesus who drove out of the temple "*those that sold oxen and sheep and doves and the changers of money ....*" ( Jn 2:14 ) You see, Nehemiah cleansed the temple. My ..... is that where we need to start ? Paul says "*What ? know ye not that your body is the temple of the Holy Ghost which is in you, which ye have of God, and ye are not your own.*" ( 1 Cor 6:19 ) Is your body, temple filled with sinful clutter, practice, or habit ? What is there in your life or home that needs to be put on the street ? (a)

#### **(b) THE SUPPORT NEEDED TO BE RENEWED:**

Do you see what Nehemiah says ? "*Why is the house of God forsaken ?*" ( 13:11 ) Because a foolish high priest had been taken in by a deceptive enemy and the Levites had been deprived of their proper support. ( 10:36-37 ) Isn't it tragic when we the people of God fail in our stewardship ? I wonder are there missionaries unable to continue due to lack of support ? Pastors who have had to moon-light because a church has starved them out ? Could it be that its time for us to renew our stewardship ? (a) (b)

#### **(c) THE SABBATH NEEDED TO BE RESTORED:**

Do you see ( 13:15 ) ? Nehemiah found Jews desecrating the Sabbath turning God's day of rest into another day of business and he put a speedy end to that. ( 13:18-22 ) Now I am fully aware that the Sabbath as a law is a distinctly Jewish institution ( Deut 5:12-15 ) Does that mean that there is no day of rest and worship for us as New

Testament believers ? ***Not at all.*** You see, God has set His seal on the first day of the week. “ *And upon the first day of the week when the disciples came together to break bread .....*,” ( Acts 20:7 ) “ *Upon the first day of the week let every one of you lay by him in store as God hath prospered him .....*,” ( 1 Cor 16:2 ) The church meets on the first day of the week, the Lord’s day and we meet on resurrection ground and set aside this day for worship and witness. My .... what are you doing with the Lord’s day ? Are you keeping Sunday special ? (a) (b) (c) and,

***(d) THE SOCIETY NEEDED TO BE REBUKED:***

For despite all that they had promised ( 10:30 ) they had once again contracted marriages with the ungodly and Nehemiah rebuked them. *You see, the difference between Ezra and Nehemiah is that Ezra pulled out his own hair* ( Ezra 9:3 ) *but Nehemiah pulled out other people’s.* ( 13:25 ) Do you see how this great book of Nehemiah ends ? “ *Remember me, O my God for good.*” ( 13:14, 22, 29 ) “ *Think upon me my God for good according to all that I have done for this people.*” ( 5:19 ) I wonder, could you make a similar appeal to God for recognition, for remembrance and reward ? Many years ago John Williams the missionary while speaking in Edinburgh held an audience spell bound with thrilling accounts of God’s work among the tribe’s folk of the New Hebrides Islands. His address was followed by a brief report from a missionary who had also been asked to tell of his work. In a low trembling voice he said, “ *I have no remarkable success to relate like Mr. Williams. I have laboured for Christ in far off land for many years and*

*have seen only small results but I have this comfort. When the Master comes to reckon with His servants, He will not say, “ Well, done good and successful servant,” but ‘ well done good and faithful servant,’* ( Matt 25:21 ) *and I have tried to be faithful.*

As I reflect on this classic book on Christian service, I see a man who was faithful to the very end. Are you such a person ? I wonder even now is the Devil tempting you to quit ? Will you say with Nehemiah “ *I am doing a great work .... I cannot come down.*” ( 6:3 )

