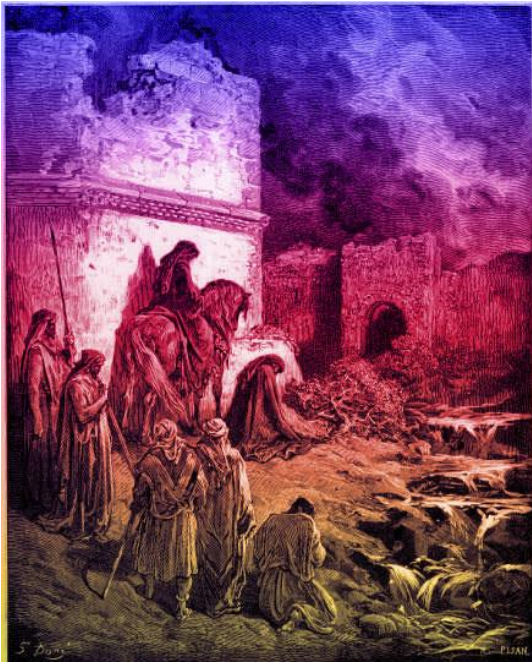


His Servants will Arise

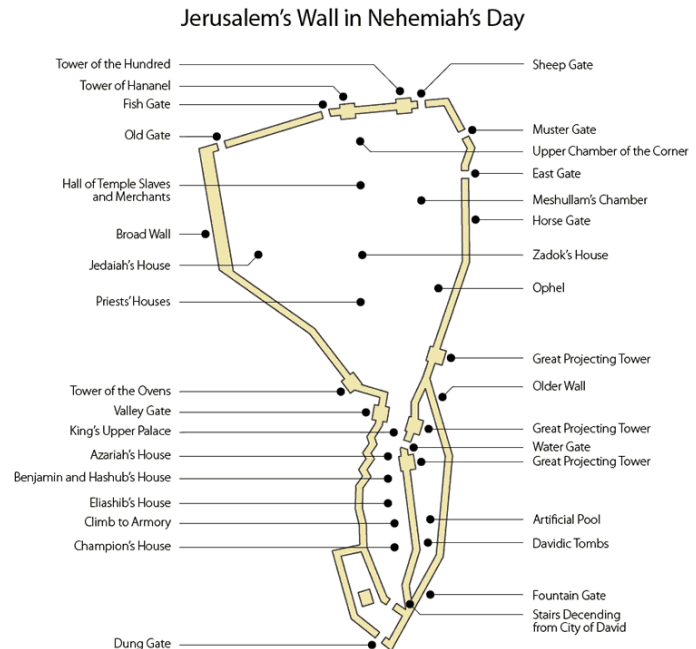
Then I said to them, “You see the distress that we are in, how Jerusalem lies waste, and its gates are burned with fire. Come let us build the wall of Jerusalem, that we may no longer be a reproach.” (Nehemiah 2:17)



These are the words that our leader Nehemiah said, encouraging our people to come and rebuild the wall around the holy city which had been largely destroyed during the Babylonian conquest. Israel was now back in the promised land after returning from seventy years of captivity, and the **city of God** was unprotected. Any invader was free to enter, pillage, rape, steal and kill.

“And I went out by night through the Valley Gate to the Serpent Well and the Refuse Gate, and viewed the walls of Jerusalem which were broken down and its gates which were burned with fire.” (Nehemiah 2:13)

Nehemiah's rebuilding process was not like we would guess. It was not an ordinary process. The method he chose for our people to regain our strong fortification, most would call novel. It turns out that each group of Jews living near a portion of the city wall would work on rebuilding that portion of wall and its gates. Each would build the area closest to home. Therefore, all across the sacred city ordinary families and even leaders and the wealthy worked on restoring the wall. To guard against killers. To guard against bandits. To guard against armies. Using Nehemiah's unusual plan, the citizens of Jerusalem finished the restoration in an amazing 52 days.



Just to give you a picture of what was going on, let's have a look at a few passages from the next chapter of Nehemiah: "Then Eliashib the high priest rose up with his brethren the priests and built the Sheep Gate; they consecrated it and hung its doors. They built as far as the tower of the hundred and consecrated it, then as far as the tower of Hananel. Next to Eliashib the men of Jericho built. And next to them Zaccur the son of Imri built....Next to them the Tekoites made repairs; but their nobles did not put their shoulders to the work of their Lord....Next to him Uzziel the son of Harhaiah, one of the goldsmiths, made repairs. Also next to him Hananiah, one of the perfumers made repairs; and they fortified Jerusalem as far as the broad wall. And next to them Rephaiah the son of Hur, leader of half the district, made repairs....After him, Nehemiah the son of Azbuk, leader of half the district of Beth Zur, made repairs....after him the Levites....the leader of half the district....the priests....**each in front of his own house...in front of his own house...in front of his dwelling.**



As you can see, I've highlighted a few elements that I think are important. Firstly, as I described previously, each of the workers and work groups are laboring "next to" one another, as they must have been working side by side as they encircled the city. Also, you can see the number of prominent men involved in the project, from the high priest, to the sons of leaders, to leaders, to a goldsmith, a perfumer. All sorts of people are intimately involved, although the text tells us that the "nobles" of the Tekoites refused to work. We will hear more about those nobles later. Finally, as I have strung together at the end, Nehemiah 3 tells us several groups were working right in front of their own houses. So that's how the project worked: You got up in front of your own house. You got the resources. You got the tools, And you worked. That's what you did. You worked.

Now by this point you might be wondering just what the author is going to compare Nehemiah's Wall to. I mean I wouldn't be the first person to compare it to this or that project. However, before I answer that question, let me first ask a few questions myself. Was this wall around Jerusalem a project of ordinary importance? Was it like, say, a road repair your own city might plan to do Or was it something much more important? Was it urgent? Or could it wait? Does a city full of people greatly outnumbered by enemies have an urgent need for protection or do they not? Do they face grave danger? Or do they not?



Also, I'd like to ask about all those people working on the wall and if they might have had something else they wanted to do. I mean, do you think that the goldsmith maybe really wanted to do goldsmithing? I think so, but he worked on the wall instead. Do you think the leaders and their officials wanted to do some, say, leading and officiating? I'm pretty sure they did, but they worked on the wall. Didn't those people want to do their chosen vocations? Didn't they want to relax? Didn't they want to spend some time and resources on luxuries? Didn't they have a secret lover somewhere that they wanted to see? Well....I really believe that they did, or at least many of them did. But you know what, they worked instead. Except for those nobles of the Tekoites we read about, and they must have been exposed to great shame. They did not work at all. The others, despite their very serious goals, their ordinary responsibilities, their pleasures and their sins, got up off their tuckuses and worked.

Now the urgent need that Nehemiah's Wall reminds me of in the present, is the urgent need we have to rebuild the family. In some respects, the community and the greater society. The damage done through the breakdown of the family, and through numerous societal ills, I do not have to relate here. They are immensely well documented, and you may have a more encyclopedic knowledge of them than I do. The family has collapsed. The consequences are many, including emotional trauma, poorer education, more exposure to violence, greater chance of criminality, greater likelihood of promiscuity, greater likelihood to have abortions. In New York city more black children are aborted than born. The collapse just goes on and on, and the evils compound each other. On top of that, society, our businesses, and the government have institutionalized godlessness, and institutionalized grave moral evil. This is an incredible hardening in our culture, and nearly outlaws the practical functioning of godly religion. It is to be kept within four walls and a roof. It is NOT to reach out into ordinary institutions and bring the light of God. The family and community, like the wall around the holy city in ancient times, have simply collapsed. It was knocked down. It was not repaired. And now it lies in ruins.



In a sense, that whole middle ground between the individual and the central government has been corroded. The networks of the extended family. Much of the functioning work of the Kahol (Church). This corrosion is an absolute dream for the modern socialist, who relies on the individual being prey to the central authority, on the individual being dependent upon it. A mere cell in a great machine. And how can the individual NOT be so dependent on it when our other means of God-given support have been demolished? Therefore, here I propose a rebuilding from the ground up; a rebuilding of family and the greater society by ordinary individuals following God. What that means is, to rebuild we've got to do like Jerusalem's residents at the time of Nehemiah did. Each get in front of our own house, get the resources, get the tools and rebuild. In more concrete terms (no pun intended) here are four rebuilding strategies any child of God can do:

Point number one: Get married, and have children. I realize many believers, while they still acknowledge that the family exists, and that there is something positive about it, simply do not see the godliness, importance, and even current urgency of those words. Let me repeat them.

Get married. Have children. If we are going to rebuild we will have to do some work, and



that will even mean marrying before some great length of time in life passes, and having children before some special period of financial security arrives. In fact, if we recognize the urgency of restoring our society, I propose the sooner the better. If the situation is important, if it is urgent, as it was at the times of Nehemiah, there is little

excuse for procrastinating. I mean, when you read in Nehemiah that some of the men around the collapsed wall **refused to work**, aren't you kind of sickened by it? Don't you think there was something wrong with them? Well if that is the case, then maybe there is something wrong with us if WE are not rebuilding the wall, and taking its work very seriously. If we want to restore these collapsed portions of society, let's get married and have children.

Here's point two: Let's actually accept the children God gives us, not plan to arrive just below or just above the replacement rate. Having large families is what godly men did for centuries, and using contraception through all this time was considered immoral. Furthermore, please consider, for every child you are receiving from God, you are welcoming one more member into your holy community. That's right, the holy community of your family. You might have thought only ancient Jerusalem could be called a holy place (and of course it wasn't really that holy at the time). You might have thought only monks get called a holy community. But that's wrong. YOU are a holy community if you are a family. You are the head of a holy community if you are a husband. You don't have to be a pastor. You just have to be a husband. So with each



child comes one more joyful member of your sacred family. Like arrows in the hand of a warrior, says Holy Scripture, *are* the children of one's youth. (Psalm 127:4)



And let me add, as I speak of reweaving our society, as Nehemiah and countless Jerusalem residents rebuilt the wall, there are always going to be some men who refuse to have more children. I wish that weren't so. But there are. Now to those holy communities which reject more children, under the claim that perhaps more children would be bad for the population, please listen to this idea. If a refusal to have children is not really a selfish, godless motive as it often appears, then show how selfless and godly you are by adopting, say, five more. There are countless broken families out there. Countless orphans waiting for homes. That's a **part of the broken wall** we speak about here. If you have had two kids, and then sterilized, and refuse to listen to advice against contraception, show your true heart and adopt. That doesn't just go for sterilized couples, it really goes for anyone. How dare we not work?

Now at this point certain readers will let out a great, big whine. The whine goes basically like this: But we've got stuff to do! But we've got really important stuff to do! As you may have guessed from earlier, I'm going to remind you that many of Jerusalem's residents had stuff to do too. They had stuff they also construed as "really important." The goldsmith wanted to goldsmith. The perfumer to make perfume. However, rebuilding the crumbling wall and protecting the sacred city was both important and urgent, and people dropped any number of other things they wanted to do to work on it instead. So that's the same logic I'm calling out for with the family. Don't put it off. Don't treat it as second. We are in a state of collapse. How dare we not work.



In a similar vein, some are going to cry out: But we've **got stuff to do** that is a calling from God! To answer briefly, that may be so. But then it may not. We have a sense of God's calling in our life, but we don't know it with the same confidence and even certainty of a prophet. In a sense, our idea of God's calling is more or less our own discernment. However, other forms of knowledge are much stronger than that personal discernment, at least in general. For example, the knowledge that **when people are in grave danger we should act to help them**. This is certain knowledge. This is even responsibility. It is knowledge from God. Or

also, the knowledge that when people need help, we should do our best to help them. This is also a form of knowledge stronger than our personal discernment, although the method of helping is often debatable. **This is knowledge from God**. One more, the family is both the norm and the good to aim for, unless we have a life of godly celibacy or if it's a real impossibility. This too is knowledge from God, and it is more confident than our discerned sense of God's calling. Finally, let me point out that in the time of Nehemiah, the Levites, the priests, even the high priest helped in rebuilding the collapsed wall. See even men with incredible callings to serve God worked hard on the project. So then...why should someone's sense of calling prevent them from marrying and having children? It seems in nearly all situations it should not.

Here's point three: Okay it's a subset of point one. At this time with so many broken homes and broken communities, the situation is dire enough that I am calling upon the elderly as well to marry to set an example. In scripture Sha'ul (Paul) advises marriage for the younger widows (1 Tim 5:11-16) because of the pull that a sensual lifestyle might have on them, and this is pertinent to us today for similar reasons and others. If you have lost your spouse tragically at a young age, it is best to follow teachings here and marry, especially as we seek to rebuild our society. However, I wish to stretch that teaching to the more elderly, even though I recognize that it is odd. Both children and young adults currently have few examples to learn from. Finding a family both together and serving God is a rarity. So while elderly widows remarrying may seem odd and even unnatural, I suggest it to you as a necessary measure in our restoration process. I believe it will be an aid in a time of destruction.

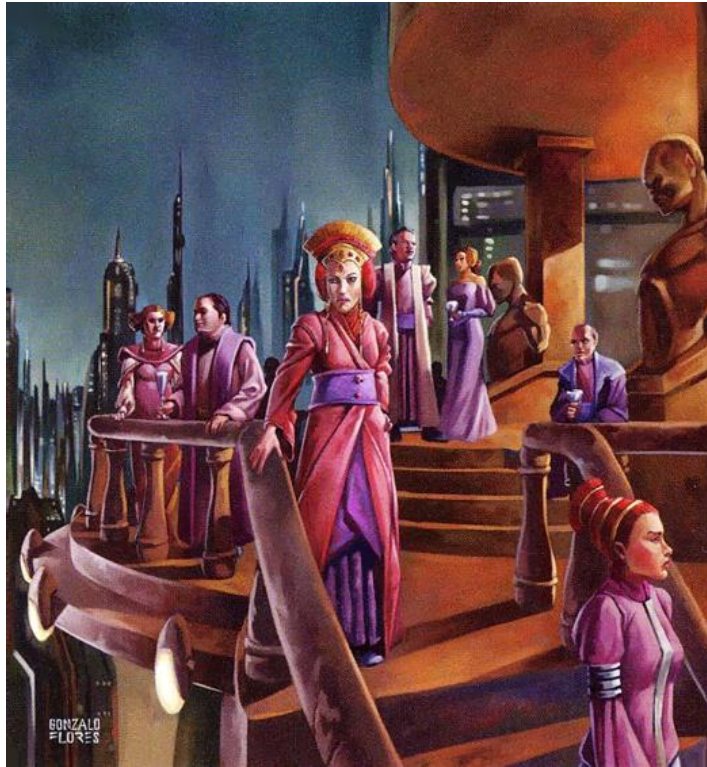
And point four: You know Nehemiah’s plan for the Jerusalem wall included something very novel. My plan for restoration is going to include something very novel as well. So please keep quiet, refrain from judgment for a bit, and drink in what I’m going to say. To reweave our torn apart communities, let us take an armament from our enemies, the armament of the “civil union”, and use it for good instead of evil. For our enemies who hate what is good, have used civil unions to create legal partnerships based on grave evil. They have furthermore used those civil unions as a stepping stone to create a mockery of marriage, homosexual marriage, this also based on evil.

However, a “civil union” is only a contract between people. It is not evil in itself. This then is a weapon we can use for the rebuilding of a godly society. More specifically, I ask faithful believers to form civil unions with adults, sort of an adult adoption, and civil unions with entire broken families, or one-parent families to care for them. You take them under your wing. You agree to certain responsibilities to them and they agree to certain responsibilities to you. You act as protector, and most importantly spiritual and moral leader. Bring them into YOUR sacred community to be fed. Bring them in by numbers.



You see, this is legitimately one way to repair the wall, to rejoin the bonds which have been destroyed. Yet I know there will be many objections. I don’t plan to deal with civil unions at length here, but I will answer only what I think will be the most immediate objection: that what I propose sounds remarkably like multiple marriages, or like ancient concubinage, which itself was similar to polygamy. And I understand why someone might think that, and I understand why someone would be concerned. Let me only explain that I do not propose those relationships at all. I only propose civil unions, and ones which would be by definition and by contract chaste. Parent and adult adoptee, for example. Lord and liege of a more contemporary

variety. Partner and partner, but not based on immorality as our current civil unions are. I put that out there as a brief sketch of what we could do through relationships, and we can fill in the details with time. What guilty hands have done for evil, let us do for good.



Now before I end, I want to bring up those nobles to you again. Those nobles of the Tekoites, who refused to work on the wall. There was an urgent problem. A true need. They just refused to help, even though they were closest to the problem to be solved. What would you say to them? What would you say to them if you'd been there and could speak with them about their refusal? That's a real question. Would you tell them about the great importance of the wall? **Would you explain the danger** that the city and nation faced without it? Would you call them a few names maybe, a few rich descriptive adjectives like "lazy" or "selfish" or even "cruel" or "callous"? This author hopes you would. I also wish to ask you that if you would speak that way to our nobles from Nehemiah's time, you should also speak that way to yourselves, if you refuse to work. For if you refuse you are doing much the same thing, not only ignoring the common good of the family, but also ignoring the call to help in grave danger and urgent necessity. So consider your own words to the nobles as the ones you must use to encourage and rebuke yourselves. **We must all get to work.**

Finally, imagine what the ordinary human soul will be fed throughout their life if they do not have the family support or the teachings of our Lord. At the minimum, a materialistic world view, or an aberrant spiritual one. Typically they will be fed a diet of serving themselves, justifying their own behavior, and pleasure-seeking to a sometimes absurd and destructive degree. They will also be fed a constant denial of any true right or wrong in this world. They will be fed lies and toxins and evils. They might live in a universe of criminality. They might live in a universe defined largely by television, video games and songs. Then think what you can do. Think what you can do in your sacred community, your holy Jerusalem, city of God, to introduce

them to the Savior and to the **truth of our Creator**. Love and concern. Faith. Direction. Strength. Protection. **Hunger for good**. Hatred of evil. Daily and weekly practices that keep us on the path. You can bring all these things to human souls, from your own children, to those you adopt to other adults in your holy community. We have the capacity to do this, faithful servant. Each one of us. We even have something Nehemiah and his workers did not have. We have the Son of the living God. The Light from all eternity is dwelling within us. Let us protect Jerusalem. Each in front of his own house.



They laughed at us and despised us and said, “What is this thing that you are doing? Will you rebel against the king?”

So I answered them, and said to them, “The God of heaven Himself will prosper us; therefore we His servants will arise and build, but you have no heritage or right or memorial in Jerusalem.” (Nehemiah 2:20)