

Build the house

Part 1

Speaker	Allan Retallick
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Note: This text is a computer generated transcript of the sermon. In some cases it may contain errors.

[00:00:00] Ezra chapter 5 starting from verse 1 to verse 5 Then the prophets Haggai the prophet and Zechariah the son of Edo prophesied unto the Jews that were in Judah and Jerusalem in the name of the God of Israel even unto them then rose up the Rebbe Bel the son of Shealtiel and Jeshua the son of Josedach and began to build the house of God which is at Jerusalem and with them were the prophets of God helping them at the same time came to them Tatanei governor on this side the river and Shehadar Bosnei and their companions and said thus unto them who hath commanded you to build this house and to make up this wall then said we unto them after this manner [00:01:14] what are the names of the men that make this building but the eye of their God was upon the elders of the Jews that they could not cause them to cease till the matter came to the house and then they returned answer by letter concerning this matter now from chapter 6 chapter 6 reading from verse 14 to verse 22 chapter 6 verse 14 and the elders of the Jews builded and they prospered through the prophesying of Haggai the prophet [00:02:07] and Zechariah the son of Edo and they builded and finished it according to the commandment of the God of Israel and according to the commandment of Cyrus and Daraus and Artaxerxes king of Persia and this house was finished on the third day of the month Adar which was in the sixth year of the reign of Daraus the king the children of Israel the priests and the Levites and the rest of the children of the captivity kept the dedication of this house of God with joy and offered at the dedication of this house of God and 100 bullocks 200 rams 400 lambs and for a sin offering for all Israel 12 he goats according to the number of the tribes of Israel [00:03:09] and they said the priests in their divisions and the Levites in their courses for the service of God which is at Jerusalem as it is written in the book of Moses and the children of the captivity kept the Passover upon the 14th day of the first month for the priests and the Levites were purified together all of them were pure and killed the Passover for all the children of the captivity and for their brethren the priests and for themselves and the children of Israel which were come again out of captivity and all such as had separated themselves unto them from the filthiness of the heathen of the land [00:04:01] to seek the Lord God of Israel did eat and kept the feast of unleavened bread seven days seven days with joy for the Lord had made them joyful and turned the heart of the king of Assyria unto them to strengthen their hands in the work of the house of God the God of Israel may God bless his word to each one of us perhaps we may sum up one of the views perhaps of the work of the Lord Jesus in what he said to his disciples when Peter had made a wonderful confession that the Christ the son of the living God that Peter and upon this rock not upon Peter upon this rock of his confession will I build will I build my church I will build and so the consequent work of the Holy Spirit in this world [00:05:06] today as I said may be viewed in very many ways but I should like to view it in this way this afternoon it is building a house of God building the house of God and there are many ways in which Christians are shall we say wanted and desirable in the world today when they do philanthropic work when they build hospitals when they free the slaves when they're willing to step in and do dirty jobs no one else

will do Christians are popular but when they stand fearlessly for the truth and denounce that which is evil and denounce that which is evil they are disturbing neighbors to have and very often they are persecuted and perhaps lose their lives as a result of their faithfulness and nevertheless they are in this world with one purpose to witness to the Lord Jesus Christ [00:06:10] to carry on this work by the Holy Spirit of building his church there may be that each of us this afternoon has a different task in this world God has left us here for a purpose and to each of us there may come a challenge as there came a challenge to these people people who were bidden to go up and build the house the challenge was the same challenge that the Lord Jesus himself received as I say some of the things he did were really disturbing and so the pharisees and scribes came to him in the temple as he's taught and said by what authority doest thou these things and who gave thee this authority [00:07:04] and Lord Jesus turned the question back on themselves he said I'll ask you one question the baptism of John was it of God or of men they were not willing to answer that question because their consciences were pricked and Lord Jesus was unwilling to answer their question because if they acknowledge that John came from God they would have to acknowledge that his authority too came from God this is the first challenge that we find in this chapter that we read together in chapter five the question of by what authority do you do these things this is a question I would like to ask every one of us this afternoon what right have we to take a Sunday school class what right have we to give away tracts what right have we to feed the flock of God by what authority do we stand perhaps in the marketplace or in Hyde Park [00:08:06] Corner to proclaim the glad tidings concerning the Lord Jesus Christ by what authority do we do this can we say that we have authority divine authority these men had they had divine authority it was the word of God they said it was the house of God by the authority of God's word to which they were obedient they built their house you notice in the very beginning of this chapter he says the prophets Hagia and Zechariah especially prophesied unto the Jews in the name of the God of Israel this was the authority behind their building the authority of the name of the God of Israel and to everyone that does whatever task in the Church of God today does any task whatsoever for the Lord Jesus Christ in this world today [00:09:06] I'm glad to assure you that you do this by the authority of God himself and the Lord Jesus Christ who hath commanded you they said here who has commanded you to build this house and to make up this wall who has commanded you they said we'll search in the records and you'll find out it was the command of God Cyrus had acknowledged this and these people too had to acknowledge that this was by the authority of God this wonderful thing isn't it that we are building in this world by the authority of God we may only be laying one stone may only be polishing the top of that stone or the corners of it our task may be to speak to someone as a brother in Poland was telling us that happened to come and sit beside him on the seat because you're not allowed to preach in the [00:10:04] open air not allowed to give away tracts in Poland there's no one to stop you talking to a man that sits next to you on the seat and tell him about Christ what a wonderful privilege and this you may do my brother and sister by the authority of the Spirit of God we have this authority preach the word be instant in season and out of season sometimes our words are not wanted but God has given us this authority this command I would take you to the words of the Lord Jesus before he went back to the glory when he said to the disciples and to all that follow go ye into all the world and preach the gospel to every creature is that not sufficient authority to carry out the task that God has given to you it couldn't be a broader field could it it couldn't be a more wonderful message [00:11:05] preach the good news to every creature that's exactly what we do when we give away tracts when we speak to individuals when we speak to a multitude somebody said once their son was going to preach his first sermon give a good word for the Lord Jesus isn't that the best that we can do give a good word for the Lord Jesus he has left us in this world for that very purpose before being caught up into the glory he said he shall be witnesses unto me beginning from Jerusalem then to Judea into Samaria and to the uttermost parts of the earth there's the authority of your task and this question is not only who have commanded you but what are

the names of the men that do [00:12:04] this work some people complain about the bible as it's full of long lists of names what's the good of all these long lists of names the other day somebody was telling me about a Jewess who was converted simply through that long list of names she was convinced of the authority of this divine word that the Lord Jesus really came to be the Messiah of the house of David she believed the authority of this genealogy you have a look at the first nine chapters of chronicles you say what's it all for God has left on record the names of those that should carry out his work isn't it wonderful to see the names of many of them quite unknown to us unknown to historians but known to him in the new testament we read now the names of the 12 apostles were these and God gives the [00:13:03] names of those that should be his witnesses so as we turn to the word of God we're in no doubt that these witnesses had every right to put on record what they had seen and heard they were given divine authority and these are the names the Lord Jesus said to his disciples rejoice that your names are written in heaven even more important this is true of every one of us that loves the Lord Jesus every one of us that seeks to serve him in this world God knows your name he knows where you dwell he knows your limited sphere of service perhaps as you may measure it but he knows too that none but you can accomplish that task that's why he's left you just there to do just that what are the names of these men well they could look in the book [00:14:05] and see the record there of the names of those that build it are given to us many names are given here in these succeeding chapters whole verses and verses and verses of names what's the good of it all it just shows that none is forgotten before God every worker for him today is known and thank God somebody is praying for every one of them I believe perhaps only one or two perhaps thousands but there are those that know the servants of God but they're all known up there all registered in heaven isn't that an encouragement to do this task to build the house to build the house of God so we have authority so we have authority we have two adversaries as we find here those that [00:15:04] stood up to them and said we are going to stop this building we don't like this place being built and they tried every means in their power to stop the work of God don't be dismayed if you find the neighbors complain because you have a meeting in your house don't be disturbed if you find that the police wants to move you on when you start preaching the gospel you can say anything else but start preaching Christ and you'll find people wanting to stop you because this is an enemy's country there are adversaries remember those words of Paul a great door and effectual is opened unto me and there are many adversaries let me see them he says not that but and there are many adversaries I'm going to face them all he says a great door and effectual who's going to stop me all the hosts of hell may be against me but all the hosts of [00:16:03] heaven are on my side I have authority what do the adversaries count adversaries that were indeed I would name three kinds here in chapter four we find the heathens round about them who sought to stop the work heathens they sought to do in a very cunning way not to appear to stop the work but to appear to help on we'll we'll build with you so often people come along to us and say why don't you join with us you see we're doing God's work it's only if we if we all do it together it'll be much better much more effective don't be deceived by this they knew straight away it's rubble in chapter four verse three said you have nothing to do with us to build a house unto our God but we ourselves together will build unto the Lord God [00:17:04] of Israel how can people build with us if they're not even believers when we first moved to the village where we live I became friendly with the superintendent of the Sunday school there apparently a believer although he has some strange ideas but he was telling me he has all sorts of teenagers teaching in the Sunday school but I said they're not Christians are they all that doesn't matter he said they'll learn it as they go on I said how can they show others the way if they don't know the way themselves we can't work together with unbelievers the work of God must be done by God's people Nehemiah had the same sort of problem when they came and said well we're just as much worshippers of God as you what do you say you have no right no portion no memorial in Jerusalem [00:18:07] but we his servants will arise and build we his servants he's servants of God your master proclaim we sang in

our first hymn servants of God isn't that a wonderful privilege it is the privilege I repeat only of those that have been born again into God's family they are the servants of God God can employ all sorts of other people to carry out his task he used Nebuchadnezzar an ungodly man he used Cyrus a heathen king to fulfill his task but when it comes to building the house of God God uses his own people and only his own people there's no question of fellowship between light and darkness can two walk together except they be agreed let's not be deceived those that are outside the family [00:19:05] of God cannot do the work of God then we find in chapter 9 and I'm sorry in chapter 2 first of all we find the priests that were unable to prove their genealogy chapter 2 verse 62 these sought their register among those that were reckoned by genealogy but they were not found therefore were they as polluted put from the priesthood polluted priests they were not unable they were not able to say if they really were of the family of Aaron somewhere along the line there was a missing link what's the good of having the first few generations the last few generations if you have not a continuity what does this mean to us [00:20:05] I would not entrust with the work of God one who is not sure of his salvation I would not entrust the work of God in Sunday school or whatever it may be to one who is not willing to be obedient to the word of God just as the apostle said to the Corinthians in the second epistle there examine yourselves whether you be in the faith prove your own selves this I believe is very important for everyone that seeks to serve in whatever measure let us know just where we stand first let us be able to prove our genealogy let us know just where we stand first let us be able to prove our genealogy are you in Christ are you in the place where God wants you to be are you being obedient to God's revealed will to you [00:21:07] not just once for all but many times we need to be challenged in this way again and again God challenges us as he challenged Abraham of old to see just where we stand and he is so wonderfully merciful and kind it is he that restores our soul when we owned him we have gone astray that we were not in the pathway of obedience that we were listening to the enemy and allowing our doubts and fears to overcome us it is he that restores us wonderful grace then to there is a third company we find in the ninth and tenth chapters where there were those who had taken upon them an unequal yoke the holy seed was mingled it says chapter 9 verse 2 [00:22:05] they have taken of their daughters for themselves and for their sons so the holy seed have mingled themselves with the people of those lands yea the hand of the princes and rulers have been chief in this trespass in chapter 10 we find this dealt with very seriously they had to deal with this matter unequal yoke we're warned against it aren't we in the news new testament be not unequally yoked with unbelievers again we cannot walk together if we are going in different directions this is most important when it comes to marrying that it must be in the lord but not only in that important step of marriage there are partnerships ungodly partnerships that can be disastrous how can we go into [00:23:03] partnership with someone who is unprincipled someone who doesn't respect the word of god or the lord's day and there are many other partnerships that we can take up many other friendships that god desires to sever because they are preventing us from doing his work these are adversaries we have to face them recognize them and know that behind all these adversaries there is the adversary satan himself seeking to break down the work of god but as we are watchful as we are obedient as we are prayerful everyone should be overcome and we come to the final part of this building its accomplishment the authority we have looked at with all of the [00:24:07] adversaries by god's word has declared that the will of god shall be accomplished there are many people that pray glibly week by week thy kingdom come thy will be done in earth as it is in heaven i wonder how many of them have any idea what that would involve i wonder if we are willing indeed to see that fulfillment i trust that we are we sung about it in our hymns this afternoon then then the church completed god is going to finish this work the church completed people look at the church and they say it's in ruins it is they see a little company here and there they see weakness they see failure and they're [00:25:06] discouraged because they say the church is falling to pieces it's not going down it's going up it's going up it's growing the work of god shall be finished the temple of god is going to be completed and

every one of us that takes any part whatsoever in the service of god witnessing for him in this world is privileged to add stone by stone to that building isn't that a wonderful privilege until the day when the house shall be finished chapter 6 tells us about this we were reading from that verse where it says verse 15 this house was finished on the third day of the month ada which was in the sixth year of the reign of darius the king there came a day and it's recorded in history recorded in the word of [00:26:07] god the day when the house was finished there's going to be a day when this house of god is finished when the last stone is added the lord jesus will come and take his own to be with himself what a glorious day to the philippian saints paul could say he which hath begun a good work in you will perform it until the day of jesus christ he's begun it he's going to perform it he's going to accomplish that which he has begun the house was finished and in verse 16 the house was dedicated the children of israel the priests and the levites and the rest of the children of the captivity kept the dedication of this house of god with joy the dedication of the [00:27:02] house just see how they carried it out they carried it out in obedience to the revealed will of god in the law of moises the house was dedicated we're reading yesterday in our daily reading the last part of the second of ephesians and we were struck again although this is such a familiar scripture with those wonderful words at the end of chapter two now therefore you are no more strangers and foreigners but fellow citizens with the saints and of the household of god and are built upon the foundation of the apostles and prophets jesus christ himself being the chief cornerstone in whom all the building fitly framed together groweth unto an holy temple in the lord in whom ye also are builded together for inhabitation of god through the spirit [00:28:03] the dedication of the house of god you and i beloved brethren and sisters in the lord are members of the household of god more than that we are vital parts of this building that is growing together building together for an habitation of god through the spirit can you think of a higher privilege than this dedicated to the service of god as the temple was it was only a mere picture of this glorious house of god that is dedicated to the indwelling of the spirit of god god himself dwells in his church today that building are we what a privilege to have part in adding stones adding stones to this building and we were talking about how this is in fact because we [00:29:07] feel each of us so worthless so unimportant and yet we were saying how vital each one of us is to another during the week some people were sent just to visit someone whom they didn't know they visited a brother and sister and they said oh you must go and see the retalicks and they came they were intending us to come and pass on but they had to spend the evening with they had to spend the night with us we had to have a time of fellowship together we had to study the word of god together we had to be refreshed we were cheered they said we were cheered we didn't know it was going to be like this they pass on the work of god is being done just a little here a little there how vital each of us is that's why it's so important to be in the place where god intends us to be and to carry out the [00:30:05] task that he has for each of us however small and important it seems each of us built upon the foundation of the apostles and prophets oh yes we can understand that jesus christ himself being chief cornerstone oh yes we acknowledge that but ye also are built together each of us is vital to this building we are building for eternity then in chapter 8 this is one of my favorite sections of the scripture we find the house filled with all the holy things yes in chapter 8 verse 21 in view of this dangerous journey up to jerusalem ezra said i proclaimed a fast there the river of our harbour that we might afflict ourselves [00:31:04] before our god to seek of him a right way for us and for our little ones and for all our substance for i was ashamed to require the king a band of soldiers and horsemen to help us against the enemy in the way because we'd spoken unto the king saying the hand of our god is upon all them for good that seek him but his power and his wrath is against all them that forsake him so we fasted and besought our god for this and he was entreated of us yes and so we can do this each of us that have children we can pray indeed as these prayed for a right way for ourselves and for our little ones and for all our substance don't forget god holds us responsible not only for our families but for our possessions as well [00:32:02] we need to commit those to him just as much as we

do our little ones they fasted they besought our god because they had said that god was able to keep them now they were going to put it to the test it was a very difficult and dangerous journey and they were going to take with them a terrific amount of gold and silver and precious stones it's all weighed out in verse 26 they weighed unto their hands 650 talons of silver silver vessels and 100 talons of gold and 100 talons and so on weighed it all out but the wonderful thing is in verse 33 on the fourth day was the silver and the gold and the vessels weighed in the house of our god they got there and there wasn't anything missing they were not robbed of their treasures god had kept them god had brought them all safely through [00:33:01] with all their treasures and every one of them arrived safely verse 34 by number and by weight of every one and all the weight was written at that time it was all there is this a blessed thing that every one is going to reach the glory every member of the church of god is going to be present on that glorious day when lord jesus presented to himself a glorious church there are many that would rob us of this blessed hope today there are many that would say yes those are going to be there those are going to be there but those that have been unfaithful those are not watching those are sleeping will not enjoy that don't let the enemy rob you of this blessed hope in the 84th psalm that wonderful thing every one of them in zion appears before god every one those that are christ's at his coming those that are christ's [00:34:06] none excluded those that are christ's purchased by his precious blood are going to be there but lord jesus in his prayer he said of those that thou has given me have i lost none save the son of perdition that was fulfillment of the scripture but those that were his and truly his not one was lost not one can be lost every one as we were singing now him every one when the church is completed there'll be no more delay we should be caught up to be with him forever with the lord there's not a blessed hope the accomplishment this is sure each one of us serves in view of that day each one of us is called upon to redeem the time [00:35:04] to know just what god will have us do and do it don't care what the enemies say don't listen to the adversaries we have the authority of the word of god in spite of the adversaries god's work will be accomplished view the vast building see it rise the work how great the plan how wise