

# Temple First

## Message Notes

**Nehemiah 2:17–18 (NASB95)** — 17 Then I said to them, “You see the bad situation we are in, that Jerusalem is desolate and its gates burned by fire. Come, let us rebuild the wall of Jerusalem so that we will no longer be a reproach.” 18 I told them how the hand of my God had been favorable to me and also about the king’s words which he had spoken to me. Then they said, “**Let us arise and build.**” So they put their hands to the good work.

### The process of devastation and rebuilding

- Building sand castles with kids
- When it’s your life - Flood of 2016; Houston flood, twice in two years
- When it’s your personal life - marriage, kids, losing a loved one -

### YOU MUST FIND IT WITHIN YOURSELF TO RISE AND REBUILD

- You can sit there in the dust of what happened forever
- You can leave and try to escape it
- OR you can rebuild

### The Jewish nation

- It had been 800 years since Moses gave the law, and 450 years since David ruled
- The people got kicked out of the land
- Jeremiah had prophesied they would be gone for 70 years - Three major players in the rebuilding of Jerusalem - Nehemiah, Ezra, and Zerubbabel

### Zerubbabel

- He was the first one appointed by Cyrus to go back and rebuild the temple.
- He had a gift of leadership on him.
- His name means seed of Babylon, one who is out of babylon.

### They decided to build the temple first!

Haggai 1:5–6 (NLT) — 5 This is what the LORD of Heaven’s Armies says: Look at what’s happening to you! 6 You have planted much but harvest little. You eat but are not satisfied. You drink but are still thirsty. You put on clothes but cannot keep warm. Your wages disappear as though you were putting them in

pockets filled with holes! 7 “This is what the LORD of Heaven’s Armies says: Look at what’s happening to you! **(WHEN YOU DON’T REBUILD THE TEMPLE FIRST, YOU FEEL UNSATISFIED)** 8 Now go up into the hills, bring down timber, and rebuild my house. Then I will take pleasure in it and be honored, says the LORD. 9 You hoped for rich harvests, but they were poor. And when you brought your harvest home, I blew it away. Why? Because my house lies in ruins, says the LORD of Heaven’s Armies, while all of you are busy building your own fine houses. **(WHEN YOU DON’T REBUILD THE TEMPLE FIRST, YOUR HOPES ARE DEFERRED)** 10 It’s because of you that the heavens withhold the dew and the earth produces no crops. 11 I have called for a drought on your fields and hills—a drought to wither the grain and grapes and olive trees and all your other crops, a drought to starve you and your livestock and to ruin everything you have worked so hard to get.” **(WHEN YOU DON’T REBUILD THE TEMPLE FIRST, YOU MOVE INTO GOD’S DISCIPLINE)** - The Blessing of God exists only when you put Him first!

### **What does it mean to rebuild the temple?**

- It means to focus on the INNER PERSON
- It means to focus on the place where YOU AND GOD MEET - It means to focus on prayer - MY HOUSE SHALL BE CALLED A HOUSE OF PRAYER
- You can do a lot of things right now, I challenge you to rebuild the temple first!

### **They built the temple in a specific order**

#### **1. Rebuild the ALTAR of PRAYER**

1. Ezra 3:1–2 (NLT) — 1 In early autumn, when the Israelites had settled in their towns, all the people assembled in Jerusalem with a **unified purpose**. 2 Then Jeshua son of Jehozadak joined his fellow priests and Zerubbabel son of Shealtiel with his family in rebuilding the altar of the God of Israel. They wanted to sacrifice burnt offerings on it, as instructed in the Law of Moses, the man of God.
2. Big BBQ grill - Lots of smells, sights, and activity
  1. Blood
  2. Priests
  3. Animals
3. It happens **daily**
4. It happens **daily**
5. It is a worship to God - The priests would lift their hands and worship, the people would worship
6. It is a surrender - We are the sacrifice on the altar

#### **2. Rebuild the FOUNDATION on CHRIST**

1. Ezra 3:10 (NLT) — 10 When the builders completed the foundation of the LORD’s Temple, the priests put on their robes and took their places to blow their trumpets. And the Levites, descendants of Asaph, clashed their cymbals to praise the LORD, just as King David had prescribed.
2. Making your Christianity Christocentric
3. Paul spoke a lot about the foundation of Christ. He was concerned about people choosing another foundation for their Christianity.

4. Building on the foundation of Christ

1. 1 Corinthians 3:10–11 (NLT) — 10 Because of God's grace to me, I have laid the foundation like an expert builder. Now others are building on it. But whoever is building on this foundation must be very careful. 11 For no one can lay any foundation other than the one we already have—Jesus Christ.

5. Building on the found of His teaching

1. Matthew 7:24 (NLT) — 24 "Anyone who listens to my teaching and follows it is wise, like a person who builds a house on solid rock.

3. **Rebuild the TEMPLE of the SPIRIT**

1. The Bible calls us the temple of the Holy Spirit - 1 Corinthians 6
2. The purpose of rebuilding the temple is so that the Holy Spirit can dwell within you!
3. Zechariah 4:6–10 (NASB95) — 6 Then he said to me, "This is the word of the LORD to Zerubbabel saying, '**Not by might nor by power, but by My Spirit,**' says the LORD of hosts. 7 'What are you, O great mountain? Before Zerubbabel you will become a plain; and he will bring forth the top stone with shouts of "Grace, grace to it!" ' " 8 Also the word of the LORD came to me, saying, 9 "The hands of Zerubbabel have laid the foundation of this house, and his hands will finish it. Then you will know that the LORD of hosts has sent me to you. 10 "For who has despised the day of small things? But these seven will be glad when they see the plumb line in the hand of Zerubbabel—these are the eyes of the LORD which range to and fro throughout the earth."