

Finishing Well

Lesson #36 Towers Of Fortification Sept. 29, 2021

Jeremiah prophesied the rebuilding of Jerusalem and its walls.

Jer. 31:38 Behold, the days come, saith the LORD, that the city shall be built to the LORD from the tower of Hananeel unto the gate of the corner.

➤ Fulfilled ~150 years later, the walls of Jerusalem were built again under Nehemiah.

Nehemiah 3:1 Then Eliashib the high priest rose up with his brethren the priests, and they built the sheep gate; they sanctified it and set up the doors of it; even unto the tower of Meah [Tower of the hundred] they sanctified it, unto the tower of Hananeel.

Emerging from the Sheep Gate to begin our pilgrim journey in Christ, we travel in a counter-clockwise direction. Immediately, we notice 2 towers before gate #2. Why?

These towers were part of the city's defense system.

- Close to the citadel where the soldiers guarded the temple; God's dwelling place
- The north wall was the most vulnerable to enemy attack: extra protection needed
- Land was flat to the north; steep valleys surrounded the rest of the city
- The enemy of God's people came from the north, bringing destruction.

I Pet. 5:18 Be sober, be vigilant; because your adversary the devil, as a roaring lion, walketh about, seeking whom he may devour:

John 10:10a The thief cometh not, but for to steal, and to kill, and to destroy

Neh. 3:2 And next unto him builded the men of Jericho. And next to them builded Zaccur the son of Imri.

Tower: Hebrew word = megdal derived from the verb gadal which means TO GROW.

As you continue your journey in obedience "to grow", you come to:

- Tower of the Hundred
- The men of Jericho fragrance; walk by faith
- Zaccur mindful; remember promises
- son of Imri utter, speak, exalt represent the process of discipleship

The Tower of Hananeel = God is gracious; receiving God's favor

It was a significant tower. God had prophesied through the prophet in Jer. 31:38 that it would be erected again (prophesied over a century earlier). This was no ordinary construction site.

➤ This was an act of dedication to God. The Lord had ordained that it should be done.

God's plan for Redemption Absolute submission to the Father's will > He humbled Himself

God's plan for Sanctification Absolute submission to the Father's will > Humble myself

➤ You are to be obedient to the point of "death to self." Take up your cross

Rom. 12:1-2 I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that you present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable to God, which is your reasonable service.

² And do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind, that you may prove what is that good and acceptable and perfect will of God.

Note: Lev. 1:11 The burnt offering was to be sacrificed on the north side of the altar.

And he shall kill it on the side of the altar northward before the LORD:

Sanctification begins immediately after the Sheep Gate

Passover > Christ was the Passover Lamb - Died at 3:00 = It is finished. Nisan 14

Feast of Unleavened Bread > started at 6:00 [6:00 am for Jews] = Get the sin out > Nisan 15

The main emphasis with Passover was not merely the passing over of God's judgment when He saw the blood of the lamb on the doorposts of the house. The people of Israel also had to prepare and eat the flesh of the entire lamb with the unleavened bread and the bitter herbs so that they would be inwardly supplied to fulfill God's purpose.

The Eating Of The Lamb Was For Their Life Supply. Ready For Their Pilgrim Journey

1. The Lamb Must Not Be Sodden With Water. Exodus 12:9

Do Not Dilute The Gospel of Jesus Christ

- If you water down sin, you water down the sacrifice which paid for it.
- God's unchanging word mixed with man's ever-changing opinions = theological jello
- Water down the meaning of sin, you water down the sacrifice which paid for it

Mark 7:9, 13a And he said unto them, Full well ye reject the commandment of God, that ye may keep your own tradition.

Making the word of God of none effect through your tradition, which ye have delivered:

II Tim. 3:5 Having a form of godliness but denying the power thereof: from such turn away.

R. A. Torrey: "The Bible has been attacked by many people of great ability and power, using all the intellectual, scientific, philosophical, political, and physical forces they could command. Emperors tried to burn it. Scholars tried to discredit it. Critics tried to bury it.

The world has tried to ignore it. But it's still the best-selling book of all time. While human governments have fallen, while human philosophies have faltered, the Bible still stands.

2. Eat The Whole Lamb: Head, Legs & Inward Parts [Ex. 12:9]

- We must take Christ in His entirety: The Complete Word Of God

a. Head Of The Lamb

I Cor. 1:24 Christ the power of God, and the Wisdom Of God.

- Christians must feed on the mind of Jesus Christ.

Phil. 2:5 Let this mind be in you, which was also in Christ Jesus:

I Cor. 2:16 For who hath known the mind of the Lord, that he may instruct him? but we have the mind of Christ.

Rom. 12:2a And be not conformed to this world: but be ye transformed by the renewing of your mind, [Also see: Eph. 4:21-23; Heb. 8:10]

b. Legs Of The Lamb: Speak of Our Walk

Col. 2:6 As ye have therefore received Christ Jesus the Lord, so walk ye in him:

Rom. 6:4 Therefore we are buried with him by baptism into death: that like as Christ was raised up from the dead by the glory of the Father, even so we also should walk in newness of life.

II Pet. 3:18 But grow in grace, and in the knowledge of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ.

Rom. 8:1 There is therefore now no condemnation to them which are in Christ Jesus, who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit.

II Cor. 5:7 For we walk by faith, not by sight:

[Gal. 5:16; Eph. 2:10; 5:2, 8; Col. 1:10; Col. 4:5; I Thess. 4:1; I John 1:7; II John 1:6; III John 1:4]

Eph. 4:1 I therefore, the prisoner of the Lord, beseech you that ye walk worthy of the vocation wherewith ye are called, [walk worthy of your calling]

Joshua 3:3-4 And they commanded the people, saying, When ye see the ark of the covenant of the LORD your God, and the priests the Levites bearing it, then ye shall remove from your place, and go after it.⁴ Yet there shall be a space between you and it, about two thousand cubits by measure: come not near unto it, that ye may know the way by which ye must go: for ye have not passed this way heretofore.

R.A. Torrey: You may talk about power; but, if you neglect the one Book that God has given you as the one instrument through which He imparts and exercises His power, you will not have it. Unless you keep in constant and close association with the one Book, the Bible, you will not have power. And if you ever had power, you will not maintain it except by the daily, earnest, intense study of that Book. Ninety-nine Christians in every hundred are merely playing at Bible study; and therefore ninety-nine Christians in every hundred are mere weaklings, when they might be giants, both in their Christian life and in their service."

Feast on the whole Word of God. It is our Life Supply for God to fulfill His purpose in our lives.

- We must feed on Christ to have strength for our daily pilgrim journey.
As we worship, meditate on the Word, pray and surrender, we appropriate the spiritual nourishment of Jesus Christ and grow in grace and knowledge.

James 1:21 Wherefore lay apart all filthiness and superfluity of naughtiness, and receive with meekness the engrafted Word, which is able to save your souls.

Truth: Passover is not a camping ground. It is the BEGINNING of a journey as a pilgrim.

Ex. 12:11 "Now you shall eat it in this manner: with your loins girded, your sandals on your feet, and your staff in your hand; and you shall eat it in haste—it is the LORD's Passover"

- Like eating in an airport knowing your flight is almost ready for departure.

A. Eat The Passover Meal With Your Loins Girded. [1st Mention]

In Israel a person wore a long shirt of linen or wool that reached to the knees or ankles as the basic garment. Over this a mantle [like a poncho] might be worn, but the mantle was laid aside for work. The shirt was usually worn long, but for active service, such as work or war, it was tucked up into a belt at the waist to leave the legs free.

The runner would be in trouble if he allowed his garments to fall down and become entangled in his legs. If he allowed those loose ends to keep dangling, he would surely lose the race. Be ready to engage or work in battle: "Man up!" You are starting a new journey!

Running Our Race of Faith: *I Must Gird Up My Mind To Guard My Hope*

I Pet. 1:13 Therefore gird up the loins of your mind, be sober, and hope to the end for the grace that is to be brought unto you at the revelation of Jesus Christ;

"Therefore . . . fix your hope completely." "Therefore . . . hope fully." This word makes Peter's first command dependent on All The Grace he has exulted in for the 12 verses.

Note: The imperatives of Christian living always begin with "therefore." Peter does not begin to exhort Christian pilgrims until he has celebrated the wonders of God's salvation in Jesus Christ.

V. 1: Since God has chosen you

V. 3: Since God has caused you to be born again to a living hope

V. 4: Since God is keeping an inheritance for you imperishable, undefiled, and unfading

V. 5: Since God is protecting you through faith so that you won't lose that inheritance

V.6-7: Since God is refining your faith by fire so that it will receive praise and glory and honor

V. 8: Since you are swimming with the strokes of love and faith and joy in Christ

V.10-13: Since prophets and angels are on tiptoe to see all what God's grace is going to do in your life, THEREFORE, FIX YOUR HOPE FULLY IN THIS GRACE.

Running Our Race of Faith: *I Must Gird Up My Mind To Guard My Hope*

1. Diligent Mind: I Pet. 1:13a Therefore, gird up the loins of your mind, Remove anything that will impair your spiritual growth or progress; Prepare Your Minds For Action; roll up the sleeves of your mind; Mindset: Prepare to engage in a battle or race

2. Readiness For Action is seen in virtually every other instance of the expression.

a. I Kings 18:46 Elijah girded up his loins and outran Ahab to Jezreel.

b. II Kings 4:29 Gehazi was told by Elisha to gird up his loins, take Elisha's staff and hurry to the Shunammite's son who had died.

3. Girding the loins seems to include the dimension of Courage or Resolve.

The task he was called to do was not a pleasant one and could bring persecution.

a. Jer. 1:17 Jeremiah was commanded to gird up his loins and to prophesy:

"Now, gird up your loins, and arise, and speak to them all which I commanded you. Do not be dismayed before them, lest I dismay you before them."

4. Girding The Loins of Your Mind: Related to Mental Outlook; Not Physical Clothing

a. Job 38:3 God challenges Job to gird up his loins. Where were you when I laid the foundations of the earth? declare, if you have understanding. Who hath laid the measures thereof, if thou knowest? or who hath stretched the line upon it?

b. Job 40:7 "Now gird up your loins like a man; for I will demand of thee and answer thou me."

I Pet. 1:13 Wherefore gird up the loins of your mind, BE SOBER,

Sober Mind: Remove anything that would hinder your spiritual growth and obedience. -
cause you to trip up

Clear, focused mind on the task that is set before me; not numb with intoxicating influences

Luke 12:35-40 Let your loins be girded about, and your lights burning;

Be ye therefore ready also: for the Son of man cometh at an hour when ye think not.

Titus 2:13 Looking for that blessed hope, and the glorious appearing of the great God and our Savior Jesus Christ;

➤ Looking for His return = a great motivator for obedience

1. Girding up the loins of the mind corrects a too casual attitude toward the Lord's coming which will prevent us from being caught unaware and unprepared at His coming.
2. Our attitude determines our action. A Christian who is looking for the return of Jesus Christ has a greater motivation for present obedience than a Christian who ignores the Lord's return.

Peter's Command: Hope Fully in God's Grace!

Note: Girding up the loins of my mind and being sober are the means to the end - HOPE FULLY

1. What is the object of my hope? The Grace of God

"Fix your hope completely on the grace to be brought to you at the revelation of Jesus Christ."

Grace is on the way. Hope in it. Hope in it fully! Hope fully in God's grace.

B. Eat The Lamb With Shoes On Your Feet.

a. Speaks of our walk with God. Walk in the deliverance before you.

Watchman Nee: Prepare to take the journey: to take their sojourning way. Once the blood is applied and the flesh eaten, one becomes a sojourner, and he must leave Egypt.

Our life is the life of a sojourner; therefore, we must be ready to leave Egypt. Once we are born again and begin to feast on God's Word, He will not allow us to remain in Egypt anymore.

How The LORD Frees Us From Bondage: Put Your Shoes On

b. Acts 12:7-8 And, behold, the angel of the Lord came upon him, and a light shined in the prison: and he smote Peter on the side, and raised him up, saying, Arise up quickly.

And his Chains Fell Off From His Hands. And the angel said unto him,
Gird thyself and bind on thy sandals. And so he did.

And he saith unto him, Cast thy garment about thee, and follow me.

Peter was about to take a journey. To walk is to take up our sojourning.

c. Ephesians 6:15 "And your feet shod with the preparation [to face the enemy with the firm-footed stability, the promptness, and the readiness] of the gospel of peace,"

The term "shod" (Greek, u`podeomai, hupodeo) means to underbind, to bind under one's self, or to bind on. It is a call to action.

Our journey is a spiritual battle; we can't walk into battle unprepared and barefoot.

1. Apostle Paul thinks this peace is like the heavy hob-nailed boots that the legionaries wore, by which they could stand firm, whatever came against them.
2. The Gospel is a peace-bringing power in the warfare; causes us to stand firm.
3. The Gospel of peace in our hearts will prepare us for the journey.
4. Troubled hearts cannot focus on the task because much of their energy is taken up in steadying or quieting themselves or is dissipated in going after a hundred other things.
 - The steam engine is said to be a very imperfect machine which wastes more power than it utilizes.
 - True with many Christians: They possess the POWER, but do not rest in the peace and tranquility of God. They waste much of the power that is theirs.

5. A peaceful heart makes us ready for duty: Steadfast, unmovable

Col. 3:15a And let the peace of God rule in your hearts...

- Unless my footing is firm, I will be tumbled over by the onset of an unexpected circumstance or trial. The sudden assaults can work disastrously against us.
- "Gospel shoes" allow us to stand when we face the difficult circumstances.

Phil. 4:7 And the peace of God, which passes all understanding, shall keep your hearts and minds through Christ Jesus. [shall garrison and mount guard over your hearts and minds in Christ Jesus.]

- Command: Bind On The Shoes: Soaking our minds and hearts in the Gospel of Jesus Christ. Keep near Jesus Christ from whom all the fullness of the spiritual life flows. If my vessel is full of Him, I will realize the fulfillment of the promise: "He will not suffer thy foot to be moved." [Ps. 121:3]

C. Eat The Lamb With Your Staff In Your Hand.

The Importance of the Staff

1. God made Moses' staff the object of power and freedom for the people of Israel.
2. God used Moses' staff to provide the provision of water for the Israelites in the wilderness.
3. God used Moses' staff as the protector of the Israelites. Provided victory against enemy

Consider: When we raise our "staves" up to the Lord, He is our protector, our defender. He works on our behalf. We must continually offer ourselves to the Lord.

4. Satan Desires To Steal Your Staff

- Judah's son Er, a wicked man, was married to Tamar. God judged Er and killed him.
- Custom for the brother of the deceased to lie with the widow to insure the lineage would continue.
- Onan, the brother, did lie with Tamar, but spilled his seed on the ground.
- This angered the Lord; Onan lost his life.
- Tamar has no relative to carry on Er's seed.
- Judah, her father-in-law, failed to make any provision for Tamar through one of his grandsons. Judah tells Tamar to remain a widow which was devastating to her.
- Judah's wife died. After a period of mourning, he took a weekend trip to Timnah.

- Tamar learns of the trip and poses as a prostitute in the street.
 - He propositions Tamar, whose head is covered and cannot be recognized.
 - He thought payment for sex would be a young goat, but he did not have the goat with him.
 - He would bring it the next day. So Tamar asks for a pledge.
 - It was his staff which had his seal on it. It represented his rank and honor; great value.
 - Judah had to sign over what represented his very life to the woman who now had the goods on him.
 - Satan wants to steal my inheritance and destroy God's calling on my life.
5. Jacob had a long history of being a manipulator and controller. Before his dreaded meeting with Esau, he wrestled with the angel who overcomes him by removing his hip socket.
- Jacob's name is changed to Israel. He will now walk with a limp. His staff represents dependence on God and was now used to help him walk. His staff was still beside him at death.

Heb. 11:21 By faith Jacob, when he was dying, blessed each of Joseph's sons, and worshiped as he leaned on the top of his staff.

- Jacob's staff changed from a symbol of striving and manipulation to a symbol of brokenness.

6. We Can Misuse Our Staff

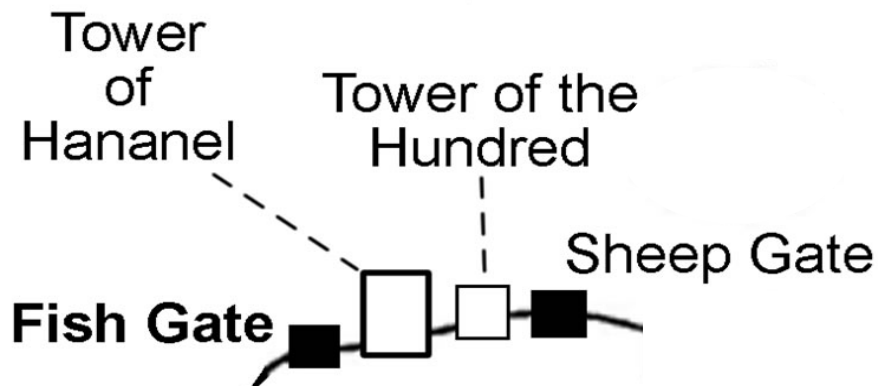
- Moses used his staff inappropriately. He was not allowed to enter the Promised Land.
- We must be in total submission to God's ways and instructions.

Consider: Moses' wrong use of the staff achieved what he wanted - water from the rock. But he was judged. If I use my "staff" in ways that God never designed for me, I will achieve only things of the flesh. Works that are born in the flesh will result in burned up works.

Oswald Chambers: When you and I depend upon our own strength, it becomes a splintered staff which creates a painful infliction. One little splinter has the ability to cripple you if it is not removed. So too, our staffs, when used through our own strength becomes a source of pain.

Jesus Christ is our Good Shepherd who equips us for ministry. Psalm 23 focuses on what He does for us "all the days of our lives." The message of Psalm 23 is for mature Christians who have fought battles and carried burdens in their pilgrim journey.

I shall not want	Jehovah-Jireh	The Lord will provide
Still waters	Jehovah-Shalom	The Lord our peace
Restores my soul	Jehovah-Rophe	The Lord who heals
Paths of righteousness	Jehovah-Tsidkenu	The Lord our righteousness
You are with me	Jehovah-Shammah	The Lord is there
Presence of mine enemies	Jehovah-Nissi	The Lord our banner
Anoint my head	Jehovah-M'Kaddesh	The Lord who sanctifies



Start my pilgrim journey after the Sheep Gate

- I've never gone this way before [enemy is ready and waiting]; keep my eyes on Jesus
- Need towers of fortification in the beginning of the journey
- Offer myself a living sacrifice [burnt offering on north side of altar]
- Feed on the Word of God > Eat the whole lamb
- Put on the armor of God
- Walk worthy of my calling to be conformed to the image of Jesus Christ
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Col. 1:9-14 Father, my desire is that I might be filled with the knowledge of Your will in all wisdom and spiritual understanding;

¹⁰ So that I might walk worthy of the Lord unto all pleasing, being fruitful in every good work, and increasing in the knowledge of God;

¹¹ That I would be strengthened with all might, according to His glorious power that works within me, unto all patience and longsuffering with joyfulness;

¹² Giving thanks unto the Father, which hath made me meet [fit, qualified] to be partakers of the inheritance of the saints in light:

¹³ Who hath delivered me from the power of darkness, and has translated me into the kingdom of Your dear Son:

¹⁴ In whom I have redemption through His blood, even the forgiveness of my sins: