

# Rise Up And Build

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*"So They said, 'Let us rise up and build,' Then they set their hands to do this good work," Neh. 2:18*

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## Charging God Foolishly

Job, a man that "*feared God, and eschewed evil,*" was the father of "*seven sons and three daughters,*" and the possessor of great wealth; in fact, "*this man was the greatest of all the men of the east*" (Job 1:1-3). Satan, the great adversary of truth, right, and righteous men, sought to cast reflection upon Job, suggested that his uprightness was based not upon inward consecration, but rather because God had "*blessed the work of his hands*" (Job 1:10). God, therefore, allowed Satan to oppress Job that his faith might be tried, as well as to prove that his apparent uprightness was real instead of circumstantial. Job was then severely oppressed; his men and donkeys were slain by the Sabeans, fire from heaven "*burned up the sheep,*" his camels were carried away, his servants were slain "*with the edge of the sword,*" and his children lost their lives (all on the same day!). In addition, Satan "*smote Job with sore boils from the sole of his feet unto his crown,*" and even his own wife urged him to "*curse God and die*" (Job 2:7)! Notwithstanding all this, the record says that "*Job sinned not, nor charged God foolishly*" (Job 1:22).

How unlike so many today! I once heard a man curse the Lord because his car wouldn't start! Many blame every war on God, as if the Lord were the Cause of such carnage among nations. Others, in sickness, openly ask "why does **God** bring these illnesses upon us?" A plane crashes, many lose their lives, and grieving loved ones ask "why did **God** let this happen?" Calamities occur, people suffer, and many ask "why does **God** do these things?" A child dies and a distraught father then proclaims "I guess this is **God's** way of punishing me for the many sins I have committed." How often have we been guilty of charging "*God foolishly?*"

Let's get a few things straight! God is not to be blamed for every tragedy, every illness, or every case of poverty or "bad luck." **The devil** (not God!) was responsible for Job's woes. **The devil** (not God!) is our "*adversary*" (I Pet. 5:8). Wars come, not because God wants men slain, wives made widows, and children rendered fatherless, but because of the greedy lust of men who "*kill and desire to have*" (cf. James 4:2).

Furthermore, it is well to remember that from the beginning God placed certain immutable laws into existence, and when these laws are violated people suffer. If a man

falls from a high building and is killed, God is not “picking on” him. Rather the force of gravity pulls him down, but consider this: where would we be were it not for the gravitational pull that hold us to the earth? In other words, laws which were designed for the **good** of men en masses cause those who violate them (either deliberately or accidentally) to suffer. It is also a fact that when my resistance gets too low and I come into contact with certain germs, illness will result. Can I then blame God because the immutable law of sowing and reaping has now adversely affected me (Gal. 6:7)? Certainly not! One should no more blame **God** for every bad thing that happens to him, than he should credit **the devil** for every good thing he enjoys!

Many are shaken in their faith when they compare their earthly state with that of the wicked. To some, it seems inconceivable that the sun would rise on both “*the evil and on the good*” (Matt. 5:45). Even Job asked “*Wherefore do the wicked live, become old, yea, are mighty in power*” (Job. 21:7)? Further, he commented upon the fact that of many wicked people, “*their houses are safe,*” and “*they spend their days in wealth*” (Job 21:9,13). However, Job further spoke of “*the candle of the wicked*” being “*put out,*” declaring that “*they are as stubble before the wind, and as chaff that the storm carrieth away*” (Job 21:17,18). You see, Job realized that the wicked only receive their “*good things*” in **this** life, and he doubt- lessly knew the same truth that the Psalmist later learned; namely, that the **wicked** are set “*in slippery places*” and will be cast “*down into destruction*” (Ps. 73:18).

Let us never “*fret*” ourselves “*because of evildoers,*” nor be “*envious against the workers of iniquity*” (Ps. 37:1). Let us not view every misfortune as God-caused and heaven-sent. If per chance we are chastened and think that such chastening is of the Lord, then rejoice! Know ye not that “*whom the Lord loveth, He chasteneth,*” knowing that chastening, which momentarily seems “*grievous,*” afterwards “*yieldeth the peaceable fruits of righteousness unto those which are exercised thereby*” (Heb. 12:6,11). Even Jesus learned “*obedience by the things which He suffered*” (Heb. 5:8).

Blindness produced a Milton. A stutterer became a Churchill. Poverty produced an Abraham Lincoln. And who has not heard of Helen Keller? And what about Jesus Christ? “He was born in poverty and reared in obscurity,” but He provided the means of salvation for all who will obey Him. We are so hedged about by the present and by our immediate feelings that we are hardly in a position to always instantly assess a given situation as being “good” or “bad.”

There will be times when we ask “**why**,” and we will be unable to know why. In such situations we need to “cheer up,” knowing that “farther along, we’ll understand why.” But by all means, let us not be a people who broadcast weak faith by charging “*God foolishly!*” Instead, it is much better to “*trust in the Lord with all your heart, and lean not on your own understanding*” (Prov. 3:5).  
—Bobby Witherington

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