

WHEN HEAVEN WATCHES OVER YOU

Ezra 5:2 Then Zerubbabel son of Shealtiel and Joshua son of Jozadak set to work to rebuild the house of God in Jerusalem. And the prophets of God were with them, supporting them.

Today we are doing part 21 of the series titled **FROM RUBBLE TO RADIANCE**. This morning I want to talk to you on the subject matter: **WHEN HEAVEN WATCHES OVER YOU**. Many times, we forget that we are under observation from above. Have you ever noticed that whenever you know you are on camera, you tend to behave differently?

- This morning, the Lord wants to remind us that we are under His watch. Something happens to an individual who is under God's watchmanship.
- God typically calls people to play the role of a watchman, but He is the greatest watchman, whose eyes are always on His people.
- In the same way that there are two aspects to God's presence, one that is active and one that is passive, there is also a passive look from God and there is an active look from God. In one respect, He looks and only observes, but in another, He watches over - He looks with the intention of guarding, caring for, supervising, or protecting.
- When God's children responded to God's appeal regarding the resumption of construction work on the temple, we see that attention was drawn from both heaven and the pits of hell.
- Just like before, the moment they decided to resume the construction, the enemy's head rose again with the intention to stop them.
- This time around, we are introduced to a dynamic that we all need to pay attention to. Look at what happened, the moment the enemy made his move:

Ezra 5: 3..." Who authorized you to rebuild this temple and to finish it?" 4 They also asked, "What are the names of those who are constructing this building?" 5 But the eye of their God was watching over the elders of the Jews, and they were not stopped until a report could go to Darius and his written reply be received.

- Through divine providence, God decided to step into the moment - the eyes of their God watched over them.
- Let me tell you something this morning: when you decide to serve God, you attract the attention of Heaven over your life.
- The affairs of this earth cannot overcome someone who is under the guardianship of heaven. In other words, you become immune to the systems of this world.
- What is the significance and meaning of this statement *"But the eye of their God was watching over the elders of the Jews"*?
- Whatever you do, you need to walk in life with aerial support; you need the eyes of Jehovah over your life.

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- Before we get to unpack that statement, let's look at the context of that statement. The context was that God came to mere human beings and asked them to build Him a temple.
- Whilst they were busy doing their own thing for 16 years, God came and interrupted them in the process.
- We have a great God who wants to work with frail human beings to further His kingdom.
- God will come to busy people; God will come to unlikely people; God will come to weak people to further His kingdom – He has been doing that, and He is not about to change.
- You are the right candidate for the expansion of God's kingdom in your generation. The Israelites had let God down again, but He still came back to them.
 - God called Moses, the 80-year-old fugitive, who could not talk properly, to deliver His firstborn son from Egypt.
 - God used Rahab, a woman with a decorated (prostitute) life, to protect the spies, and she later became part of the lineage that brought about the Messiah.
 - God called Gideon, the hiding man and least in his clan, to be a warrior who saved the Israelites from the Midianites.
 - God called Paul, a killer and persecutor of His church, to be the great missionary to the Gentiles.
- The list goes on and on; what is the point? The point is that God's call requires more than human ingenuity and ability; it requires God Himself to accomplish it.
- Now, let's go back to the statement:

Ezra 5: 5 But the eye of their God was watching over the elders of the Jews, and they were not stopped until a report could go to Darius and his written reply be received.

- This is a game changer for everyone who chooses to respond to God's call on their life.
- People refuse to serve God because they are afraid of messing up – yes, you need to be careful, but God is more interested in your success than you are.
- You accept the call, but God brings forth its success.
- This is my firm belief; God does not need us to build His kingdom, but He wants to involve us in the process.
- I feel like God wants to encourage someone here. You may be wondering whether you should say yes to God's call. Maybe you have been wondering whether it is worth serving God.
- God is calling some of you to be present and Godly parents, some to be kingdom financiers, some to be bringers of good news in your workplace, and some to be intercessors.

1. God cares about what you do for Him.

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- No matter how insignificant it might feel whilst you are doing it, there is divine interest in what you do in God's kingdom.
- When they started building God's house, the eye of their God was upon them. God's eye is upon you when you visit the sick, when you give someone a lift after church, when you call someone during the week.
- God highly regards what His church does in the kingdom.
- Though God is over all, yet He still wants the involvement of frail human beings. It took a teenage girl to birth the Messiah; Cornelius needed a Peter to preach the good news to him.

Mark 9:41 Indeed, if anyone gives you even a cup of water because you bear the name of Christ, truly I tell you, he will never lose his reward.

- Knowing that what you do matters changes the heart with which you do things – it changes your attitude.
- The story of the prodigal son tells us about the big brother who was serving his father with the wrong attitude because he didn't think that his father valued his effort – he terms it slaving for him, with no rewards.

Malachi 3:17 "On the day when I act," says the Lord Almighty, "they will be my treasured possession. I will spare them, just as a father has compassion and spares his son who serves him. 18 And you will again see the distinction between the righteous and the wicked, between those who serve God and those who do not

Acts 10: 3 One day at about the ninth hour, he had a clear vision of an angel of God who came to him and said, "Cornelius!" 4 Cornelius stared at him in fear and asked, "What is it, Lord?" The angel answered, "Your prayers and gifts to the poor have ascended as a memorial offering before God.

Hebrews 6: 10 For God is not unjust. He will not forget your work and the love you have shown for His name as you have ministered to the saints and continue to do so.

2. God protects what He initiates

- The devil has never been interested in God's kingdom. Anyone who decides to partner with God attracts the wrath of the enemy.
- We have an adversary who has been at work since His fall. But the beauty of it all is that God hedges what He calls.
- Another aspect of the statement is that God is not only interested in what He calls, but He looks with the intention of guarding and protecting.

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- Whilst God was watching over them, the work could not be stopped. In other words, the enemies' threats could not prevail against them.
- Whilst the governor of Trans-Euphrates was opposed to the building of the temple, the Lord worked in the heart of King Darius and ensured that the work was protected and unhindered.
Ezra 6:6 And Tatnai, governor of the province Beyond the River, Shethar-boznai, and your companions, the officials Beyond the River, keep away from there. 7 Let the work of this house of God alone. Let the governor of the Jews and the elders of the Jews build this house of God in its place.
- The king even made a decree that anyone who opposed the building of the temple would be killed.
- God places a hedge of protection around those who choose to walk with Him – because you have decided to honor God, your well-being becomes God's priority.
- God quenched the fires around Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego
- God shut the mouths of the lions when Daniel was thrown in the lion's den.
- God rescued Peter from the prison miraculously
- *Zechariah 2:4... 'Jerusalem will be a city without walls because of the multitude of men and livestock within it. 5For I will be a wall of fire around it, declares the LORD, and I will be the glory within it.'*...
- *Psalms 121: ...3He will not allow your foot to slip; your Protector will not slumber. 4Behold, the Protector of Israel will neither slumber nor sleep. 5The LORD is your keeper; the LORD is the shade on your right hand*

3. God sustains the calling and the calling bearers

- This is another aspect of that statement of *"But the eye of their God was watching over the elders of the Jews"*
- When God's eye is on you, it also means that He will sustain you – meaning God will support (provide), preserve, strengthen, keep you going, and will not collapse under the weight of the calling.
- Again, God used the pagan king to ensure that the work is sustained.

Ezra 6:8 Moreover, I hereby decree what you are to do for these elders of the Jews in the construction of this house of God: Their expenses are to be fully paid out of the royal treasury, from the revenues of Trans-Euphrates, so that the work will not stop. Whatever is needed— young bulls, rams, male lambs for burnt offerings to the God of heaven, and wheat, salt, wine and olive oil, as requested by the priests in Jerusalem—must be given them daily without fail,

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so that they may offer sacrifices pleasing to the God of heaven and pray for the well-being of the king and his sons.

- This is so good, people of God – God will provide for what He called you to do.
- The expenses of the builders were to be paid fully from the royal treasury. A lack of resources would not jeopardize the project.
- What you need to fulfill God's calling over your life will be supplied for – God will raise a Darius for you. God will provide for your children; God will provide for your studies; God will bring the support needed for the compassion ministry.

Isaiah 60:10 Foreigners shall build up your walls, and their kings shall minister to you; for in my wrath I struck you, but in my favor I have had mercy on you. 11 Your gates shall be open continually; day and night they shall not be shut, that people may bring to you the wealth of the nations, with their kings led in procession

- The provision of God is enough for both the calling and the calling bearer.
- David makes a beautiful proclamation after observing God's provision in his life and uttered the following words:

Psalms 37:24 Though he falls, he will not be overwhelmed, for the LORD is holding his hand. 25 I once was young and now am old, yet never have I seen the righteous abandoned or their children begging for bread.

- Yes, the calling bearer will fall, but God will sustain him; though he feels like giving up, the Lord will sustain him; though people run away from him, God remains with him.
- There is a supernatural provision that kicks into motion when you say yes to the Lord.
- God's provision for the calling bearer outlives him – his children will not beg for bread.
- No life insurance policy can match the assurance that comes from serving God.
- David made an observation, and that observation was that there is a common denominator among those who serve God: their children seem to be doing well even after they are no longer around.