

What Hath God Wrought!

“Surely there is no enchantment against Jacob, neither is there any divination against Israel: according to this time it shall be said of Jacob and of Israel, **What hath God wrought!**”
Numbers 23:23

Introduction:

1. Today we celebrate our church’s 38th anniversary – God has done great things with us, in us, for us.
2. We do not celebrate our history by pictures of buildings, pastors, and weddings or by statistical history.
3. A church is a group of believers tied together by God’s grace, the Spirit’s work, and Christ’s headship.
4. A church is compared to stones in a temple and to body parts of a body under Christ and in the Spirit.
5. Three years ago we celebrated our 35th anniversary by a detailed history of doctrinal changes by grace.
6. But a church is not a body of doctrine – it is a group of people with one Head and one Spirit directing.
7. We have 111 members (all 18 and over) by the marvelous grace and providence of God adding to us.
8. God has done great things calling each of us out of the world to love His Son and uniting us as one.
9. Love of Christ and love of others is the measure, not doctrine (Rev 2:1-5; I Cor 13:1-3; Jn 13:34-35).
10. Doctrine is tapestries that decorate the temple and books in the library for faith, worship, and growth.
11. Christianity and a local church are team sports with no place for individual isolation or withdrawal.
12. It is Catholic monasticism to think you can attend, listen to a homily, take communion, and go home.
13. We began with Psalm 126:1-3 which describes this day of celebration, testimonies, and a mirth feast.
14. A brother this morning by God’s kind providence alone chose Psalm 40 to prepare us for the sermon.
15. We will use the next service to testify of God’s individual grace (Gal 1:24; Mark 5:19-20; Ps 34:1-3).

Opening Text

- A. Balaam’s prophecies, intended by Balak and Balaam to be curses, are inspired blessings.
- B. For a simple introduction to Balaam by slides ... <http://www.letgodbetruer.com/pdf/balaam.pdf>.
- C. Detailed analysis of his prophecies ... <http://www.letgodbetruer.com/pdf/balaam-and-his-prophecies.pdf>.
- D. Balaam’s second set of blessings (out of four) contains our chosen text (Nu 23:18-24).
 1. When God promises or speaks, no alteration of circumstances affects Him (23:19).
 2. We studied this by His oath to make Messiah a priest like Melchisedec (Ps 110:4).
 3. God’s prophets and apostles declared irreversible blessings for His church (23:20).
 4. God views us differently than other men in and under Christ’s righteousness (23:21).
 5. And there is indeed a shout among us of a great king – Jesus Christ the Lord (23:21).
 6. God saved Israel out of Egypt, but His strength saved us from worse things (23:22).
 7. There is no power in hell or the prince of darkness to hinder our final victory (23:23).
 8. When the gospel word went to the Gentiles, it turned the world upside down (23:23).
 9. He saved each of us and united us together; we must say, *What hath God wrought!*

Goal of Sermon

- A. A church is a group or congregation of individuals tied together by the Spirit of God.
 1. Consider our local church as *God’s temple* formed by stones He prepared and set.
 2. We also consider our church as *Christ’s body* formed by parts He ordained and set.
- B. Rather than doctrine and history as at other times, we want to see His individual work.
 1. What has He done in our individual lives to save us, form us, and put us together.
 2. We will share personal testimonies of His gracious work (Gal 1:24; Mark 5:19-20).

- C. *What hath God wrought!* is not a question, but exclamatory praise for His workmanship!
1. **Wrought.** Work into shape; create, construct, fashion, form, make, mould, or shape.
 2. We are His *workmanship*, *created* in Christ Jesus unto good works (Ephesians 2:10).
 3. We are together in this church by His will and for His work (I Cor 12:18; Acts 2:47).

Our Church Is a Temple

- A. It is God's house; *temple* is the right word for His presence and worship (I Tim 3:15).
- B. Starting with Jacob pouring oil on *stones* (Bethel), we have the best *temple* – our church.
1. The apostles said so (I Cor 3:16-17; II Cor 6:16; Eph 2:21; II Thes 2:4; Rev 11:1-2).
 2. Solomon and others used masons and stones (I Kgs 5:15-18; II Kgs 12:11-12; 22:6).
 3. Peter and Paul described its stones and work carefully (I Peter 2:4-6; Eph 2:19-22).
 4. It is all about Him as the precious chief cornerstone for our confidence (I Pet 2:4-6).
 5. The apostles provide the rest of the foundation by their inspired epistles (Eph 2:20).
- C. The apostles admired the stones of Herod's temple, but ours is much better (Luke 21:5).
- D. A collection of men fit together well is a powerful thing – think of David's mighty men.

Our Temple Is Made of Individual Stones

- A. God inhabits our temple/church; Jesus is the chief cornerstone; apostles the foundation.
- B. We are the edifice – lively stones by quickening for edifying (I Peter 2:5; Ep 4:15-16).
1. God carefully chose, crafted, shaped, placed each in a wall (I Cor 12:18; Acts 2:47).
 2. He elects, justifies, regenerates, and converts to have loving children for His temple.
 3. The long chain of related events (often called dots) is marvelous for us to consider.
 4. A temple made of lively stones is an organism – not a dead, manmade organization.
 5. Every body part is necessary for our church as much as body parts are for an athlete.
 6. Body parts vary in function and appearance, but they are all needed (I Co 12:14-22).
 7. Weaker members, not foolish ones, get extra attention and honor (I Cor 12:23-26).
- C. The Bible has fabulous examples of God choosing individual stones for His temple: *Moses, Samson, Samuel, David the youngest son of Jesse, the Ethiopian eunuch, Saul of Tarsus, Lydia, a jailor, Phebe, Timothy, Stephanas, Caesar's household, Gaius, etc.*
- D. Each soul that God brings to our church by whatever means should light up your heart.
1. Thus, every contact we meet by whatever means, including our website, is important.
 2. Thus, our evangelistic mantra is one soul at a time, because of the Bible emphasis.
 3. *One Soul at a Time* ... <http://www.letgodbettrue.com/pdf/evangelism-one-at-a-time.pdf>.
 4. *For Love of a Soul* ... <http://www.letgodbettrue.com/pdf/love-of-a-soul.pdf>.

God's Stonework is Marvelous

- A. He chose and prepared a precious Cornerstone (Is 28:16; Ps 118:22-23; Matt 21:42-45).
- B. The Jews killed this Stone, but God raised Him from the dead (Ac 4:11-12; I Pe 2:6-8).
- C. He prepares pastors with new hearts and teaches them to fight (I Sa 10:6; Ps 144:1-2).
- D. He ordained ministerial offices and the men (Ep 4:8-15; Gal 1:15-16; I Tim 4:14; 6:12).
- E. His ministers are severely warned about the stones they add to the Stone (I Co 3:11-17).
- F. A Gadarene was chosen and changed greatly by God's power for marvel (Mk 5:19-20).

- G. He saved and converted Cornelius and others – check later (Acts 10; 21:8,16; history).
- H. He opened the heart of Lydia, who then immediately served the apostles (Ac 16:14-15).
- I. The dots (events) of each member’s life are perfectly coordinated by God’s providence.
- J. He replaces *stony* hearts by hearts of flesh (Eze 11:19; 36:26; Ac 2:37; 7:54; II Co 3:3).
- K. We pray, work, and exclude for daughters as polished, palace *cornerstones* (Ps 144:12).

We Also Have Stone Work

- A. Each stone is to do its best and help each other stone do its best (He 10:24-25; 3:12-13).
- B. We are to edify each other – or build up (Rom 14:19; 15:2; I Cor 10:23; I Thess 5:11).
- C. Jesus Christ has called ministers and members to edify the church (Eph 4:12,16,29).
- D. You cannot join this church without being taught these things and committing to them.
- E. God has shown and stressed to us *one another* duties throughout the New Testament.
- F. Love is the greatest many ways, but it is the bond of unity (Eph 4:1-3,16; Col 3:12-15).
- G. There at about twelve ministries of the Spirit in Ephesians for us to pursue and obtain.
- H. Mere membership accomplishes little, we want to greatly grow in grace (II Peter 3:18).
- I. For more of *One Another Duties* ... <http://www.letgodbetruer.com/bible/church/one-another/sermon.php>.
- J. For more of *Love Is the Greatest* ... <http://www.letgodbetruer.com/pdf/love-is-the-greatest-2.pdf>.
- K. For the *Holy Spirit in Ephesians* ... <http://www.letgodbetruer.com/pdf/holy-spirit-in-ephesians.pdf>.

Replacing Stones is God and our Joint Work

- A. He arranges heresies to expose strange children that don’t belong (I Cor 11:19; Ps 144).
- B. We obey by rejecting them (I Cor 5:11-13), and He causes repentance or replacement.
- C. The improvement in beauty and quality is phenomenal by doing things His way quickly.
- D. Our examples of exchanging belly worshippers for spiritual zealots is fabulous. Glory!
- E. The Bible has fabulous examples of God removing one and providing another better:
David for Saul; Zadok for Abiathar; Benaiah for Joab; Matthias or Paul for Judas; Silas for Barnabas; Timothy for Demas; etc.

In Our Temple Its ALL ABOUT HIM

- A. God does not care about silver or gold or a fancy building even in the O.T. (Hag 2:6-9).
- B. What gives His temple the ultimate glory is the preeminence of His Son (Col 1:14-20).
- C. The bond that holds all stones together is Jesus our Lord dying for us (I Cor 10:16-17).
- D. Our worship is in the spirit of the inner man and mind, not an outward temple (Jn 4:24).
- E. We are blood brothers and sisters without regard to other factors (Gal 3:28; Col 3:11).

We Have Obeyed; He Has Fulfilled

- A. He told us to reject darkness and error; we have; He kept His promises (II Cor 6:14-18).
- B. If we love and obey Him as a church, as in John 14:15-24, there is no limit of fellowship.
- C. If we love Him and are hot for Him, He will come and fellowship with us (Rev 3:20).
- D. We have not yet seen what God can do perfecting our church by perfecting its stones.

Conclusion:

1. The patriarchs' house of God (Bethel) was a mysterious blessing in this pagan, sinful, wicked world.
2. But we have God's presence and power with us to far greater degrees by His great blessings in Christ.
3. What we have in spiritual blessings and natural, national, marital blessings and others is mind blowing.
4. We must say, ***What hath God wrought!*** for it is all of Him, by Him, through Him, and to Him. Glory!
5. What is our future? If we will love and obey Him more, unknown blessing, ***What hath God wrought!***

For Further Study:

1. Balaam the Prophet (PowerPoint slides) ... <http://www.letgodbetruerue.com/pdf/balaam.pdf>.
2. Balaam's Prophecies (Word document) ... <http://www.letgodbetruerue.com/pdf/balaam-and-his-prophecies.pdf>.
3. What Is a Church? (PowerPoint slides) ... <http://www.letgodbetruerue.com/bible/church/what-is-a-church-av/what-is-a-church-av.pdf>.
4. What Is a Great Church? (PowerPoint slides) ... <http://www.letgodbetruerue.com/pdf/what-is-a-great-church.pdf>.
5. Higher Ground: the Goal for Churches ... <http://www.letgodbetruerue.com/pdf/higher-ground.pdf>.
6. One Another Duties ... <http://www.letgodbetruerue.com/bible/church/one-another/sermon.php>.
7. A Cause for Mirth ... <http://www.letgodbetruerue.com/pdf/cause-for-mirth.pdf>.
8. A Time for Mirth ... <http://www.letgodbetruerue.com/pdf/thanksgiving-2013.pdf>.