

# 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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## **The Sin of Unbelief And Infidelity** By Everett Hardin

The greatest cause of wickedness and general religious indifference is infidelity. Unbelief always keeps its possessors from God. *"Without faith it is impossible to please him: for he that cometh to God must believe that he is, and that he is a rewarder of them that diligently seek him"* (Heb. 11:6). Unbelief also leads God's people away from Him. *"Take heed, brethren, lest there be in any of you an evil heart of unbelief, in departing from the living God"* (Heb. 3:12). Atheism is as empty as darkness. The soul cries out for God, as a thirsty man in a desert for water. Earthly things cannot satisfy that part of our nature. God who planted in the wild geese their instinct to come south at the approach of winter in the north, placed within us a desire to live beyond the grave. God has never mocked any holy desire which He Himself has planted within us. Hunger and thirst has been matched with an abundance of food and water. The desire for rest at the end of the day has been matched with darkness and night in which to sleep. The need of our lungs for air has been matched with rich provisions. The desire to see beauties around us has been matched with eyes and light properly adapted to each other. The same God has matched our spiritual needs. We need someone in whom to put our trust, and upon whom we can rely. Our anchor must be tied to something stronger than nature (Heb. 6:12-19).

### **Called "Fools"**

The evidence of God's existence is so strong that the Bible says, *"The fool hath said in his heart, There is no God"* (Ps. 14:1). Atheists are the only creatures that deny their maker. They suppose that matter is self-existent and eternal, and that from it life came into existence by chance guided by no intelligence. They are **foolish** in thinking the universe had no builder, and that there is no design back of the designs seen in nature all around us. They are foolish for supposing there is an effect without an adequate cause. They think they have design without a designer, and laws of nature without a law giver.

They are foolish to think that the first thing to exist was dead, lifeless matter, and that spontaneous generation, without designer or maker, brought forth life.

### **A Million Fold More Reasonable**

It is a million fold more reasonable to believe that God was first, that He is an eternal personality, able to create the dead, lifeless matter and bring forth life as the Bible declares that He did. *“The Lord God formed man of the dust of the ground, and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life; and man became a living soul”* (Gen. 2:7). No life is now created from dead matter and there is no proof that such a thing ever happened. Lifeless matter could not design and make man, much less the harmonious universe about us. Man is foolish for exchanging God for such absurdities. The blind forces of nature, guided by no intelligence, would not have been capable of producing such results.

For every **effect**, there must be a **cause** and the cause must be equal to the task of producing just such an effect. All the life we know anything about has come down from antecedent life, life coming from life, all the way back **to God, the first**.

### **A Denial of Miracles**

The atheists and unbelievers deny the miracles of the Bible. They say such things could not have happened. But how do they know? Do they know everything when they say, “There is no God?” They are claiming to possess universal knowledge, for if there is one thing they do not know, that one thing might be that God exists and they do not know it. So, before their affirmation could be taken seriously, they would have to prove that they have all knowledge. And how do they know that there has never been a miracle? How do they know that God did not make man of the dust of the earth as the Bible affirms? They are foolish and the Bible says so. To say that dead matter is self-existent and eternal and created all things is foolish. Dead matter was not and could not be equal to such a gigantic task. It is reasonable, however, to say God, a Being of infinite power and wisdom, was self-existent and eternal and that He designed and formed all things, including man.

### **Every House Was Built**

The Hebrew writer says, *“every house is builded by some man; but he that built all things is God”* (Heb. 3:4). Just as the house proclaims and testifies to the existence of its designer and builder, all things in the universe were originally built by God (Gen. 1:1), and their very existence proclaims the existence, wisdom and power of their builder and maker. A cyclone never built a beautiful city. The very existence of a beautiful building proclaims the existence of the architect and builder. It says “some man has been here.” So, the universe and the existence of life, proclaims the fact that God has been on the scene. *“The heavens declare the glory of God: and the firmament sheweth his handy work. Day unto day uttereth speech and night unto night sheweth knowledge”* (Psa. 19:1-2). The human body, with its digestive system, its power of mind and thought, did not come into existence by chance. Neither was a camera, called the eye, a mere accident. The blood pump, called the heart, with all of the arteries and veins excels any water system in any city a million fold in design and wisdom. It is foolish to say that such came by chance, and that “there is no God.”

### **The fruit of Unbelief**

We cannot be too severe in our criticism of the sin of unbelief. Unbelief shuts us out from eternal life. *“He that believeth not in the Son shall not see life, but the wrath of God abideth in him”* (John 3:36). Unbelief is the cause of persecution against God’s people. *“The unbelieving Jews stirred up the Gentiles and made their minds evil affected against the brethren”* (Acts 14:2). It is the mother of envy and hardens the heart. (Acts 17:5; 19:9). It disregards God’s entreaty, *“But to Israel he saith, All day long I have stretched forth my hands unto a disobedient and gain-saying people”* (Rom. 10:21). These Jews not only disobeyed God but spake against God’s message to them.

Unbelief hinders God in His working. Christ could not accomplish much in His Own town and the reason is given, *“He did not many works there because of their unbelief”* (Matt. 13:58). Unbelief not only blights the soul of the sinner, but it binds the hands of the Savior. *“For unto us was the gospel preached, but the word preached did not profit them, not being mixed with faith in them that heard it”* (Heb. 4:2).

Unbelief shuts us out from the blessings of God. Israel was shut out of the land of promise because of their unbelief. *“So we see that they could not enter in because of unbelief”* (Heb. 3:19). They looked at things from man’s standpoint, as unbelief always does and everything was magnified as a consequence. *“Nevertheless the people be strong that dwell in the land, and the cities are walled, and very great, and moreover we saw the children of Anak there”* (Num. 13:28). Israel forgot how God had leveled the walls of Jericho, and overthrew the Egyptians in the Red Sea. Unbelief is always troubled with a short memory.

Unbelief keeps back blessings from others. The disciples could not cast the demon out of an afflicted man because of their unbelief (Matt. 27:20). Again and again the Lord blessed others for faith’s sake of those who came to Him on their behalf. The palsied man, was healed for the faith’s sake of the four men whom brought him to Jesus (Mark 2:5). Faith brings blessings, unbelief keeps them back.

Unbelief causes departure from the living God (Heb. 3:12). There is much bitterness which comes from departure from the living God. The prodigal suffered the bitterness of dissatisfaction in his departure from his father’s house (Luke 15:11-20). David found the bitterness of despair through the gratification of the flesh (Ps. 51). Israel found the bitterness of loss in being shut out of the promised land (Num.32:11). All these sorrows have their rise in an evil heart of unbelief! Man fell by believing the devil’s lie, and he will be saved only by believing and obeying the truth.

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