



Pamphlet Box H3

SERMON

DELIVERED BY

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"When thou buildest a new house then thou shalt make a battlement for thy roof, that thou bring not blood upon thine house, if any man fall from thence."—DEUT. xxii. 8.

"It is good neither to eat flesh nor to drink wine, nor anything whereby thy brother stumbleth, or is offended, or is made weak."—ROM. xiv. 21.

A battlement? What is that? For thy roof? Why for the roof? Old Testament houses were built very differently from what ours are. Instead of being as ours are, there was an open square or court in the centre, open to the sun and rain of heaven, and around this court the house was built. It was generally rather narrow, and was built of stone, brick or mud, one storey high. The better class had a room for strangers, built on the top of the house at one corner, and was called the "prophet's chamber on the wall." The roof was flat, and was covered with cement or bitumen to make it shed the rain. During the heat of the day the people sat in the open court in the shade of the wall, with an awning overhead. But in the cool of the day they spent most of the time on the roof. Travellers tell us that even at the present day the people sleep on the roof with an awning over them for protection. As a matter of safety we have the direction of the text "to build a battlement for thy roof," which, according to Jewish law, was to be three feet and a half high. The meaning of this battlement or railing is now clear. It was for *safety*, to prevent accidents. No one could fall from the roof of the house, unless they did it on purpose.

Our text is of wide application. "When thou buildest a new house," etc. When founding a new home surround it with such