

Nehemiah Chapter 6

- Thus far we've seen some of the different tactics of the enemy as he comes against us in our walk with the Lord.
 1. **Ridicule.**
 2. **Intimidation.**
 3. **Discouragement.**
 4. **Fear.**
 5. **Selfishness.**
- We see now that Satan renews his attacks, the internal attack doesn't work, so he renews the external attack. Satan never has a good day. He just keeps pounding and hounding those who undertake the work of faith.
- Satan's attacks failed to keep the people from working so now he focuses on their leader, Nehemiah. If they could eliminate him, or even discredit him then perhaps they could get the work stopped.
- In this chapter the enemy applies 4 strategies against Nehemiah. The first is "**compromise.**"

V: 1 At least in this instance Nehemiah knows who his enemies are, he's identified them and knows what to expect from them.

- There is also the acknowledgment that Israel's enemies knew their status, the status of the walls and gates, looking for a weakness to exploit.

1 Peter 5:8 "Be sober, be vigilant; because your adversary the devil, as a roaring lion, walketh about, seeking whom he may devour."

V: 2 Then Nehemiah's enemies sent him a letter saying let's meet at one of the villages - meaning a location outside the city walls - at an un protected place, but he recognized the ploy of the enemy.

- What is there to talk about anyway? God has given them direction so it's not like they're going to stop or go against God's will.

Map - Plains of Ono: Modern Kiryat Ono, near Tel Aviv - 2 days journey from Jerusalem.

- The safest place to be is in the center of God's will!

Proverbs 26:24-25 “²⁴He that hateth dissembleth / disguises it with his lips, and layeth up deceit within him; ²⁵When he speaketh fair, believe him not: for there are seven abominations in his heart.”

- Nehemiah recognized that Sanballat intended to do him “mischief”, meaning he meant to kill him.

Psalm 37:32 “The wicked watcheth the righteous, and seeketh to slay him.”

V:3 Nehemiah refused to be distracted, he refused to compromise and meet with the enemy - why should the work cease? He maintained his focus, unwilling to compromise, remembering what his mission was, the task at hand.

- So often the enemy wants to eat up our time in futile meetings or in endless discussions with people who have no intention of changing their minds - we need not waste our time with these things.
- Koga testimony: move from here to there - stop / press through.
- Nehemiah didn't stop, didn't allow the work to stop: he sent a messenger to inform Sanballat and company that they weren't going to allow the work to cease.

V: 4 Sanballat didn't take “no” for an answer.

Proverbs 1:10 “My son, if sinners entice thee, consent thou not.”

- The enemy is persistent, always trying to break us down, to wear us down. There are those times when we've been tempted and by the grace of God we've successfully gotten through it, we've been given the victory. That is when we have to guard ourselves the most! Because the enemy is persistent, he'll come at us again, and again
- Nehemiah didn't compromise:

1 Corinthians 10:12 “Wherefore let him that thinketh he standeth take heed lest he fall.”

V: 5-7 Here we see the 2nd tactic: **slander**

- After being rejected flat 4 times, Sanballat switches tactics: He sends an open letter with spurious charges, seeking to undermine Nehemiah's reputation and authority. This had the potential to cause division within the ranks of the Jews, and to provoke Artaxerxes to some form of reprisal.

- An open letter like in the news paper - asking the questions publicly, amongst the worldly peoples, making accusations, planting ideas, which people will often believe to be true unless you refute them.
1. You are only building this wall to rebel against the Persian king.
 2. You would declare yourself the king.
 3. You've appointed "prophets" to speak about yourself and promote yourself.
 4. It's going to be reported back to the king in just this way.
- These are serious charges - we need to talk. This is all gonna get back to the king and you'd better explain yourself. Trying to force Nehemiah to address these things.

V: 8-9 Nehemiah responds, but not on Sanballat's terms. He told him directly, knowing that all of these things originated with Sanballat and his co-conspirators.

- Nehemiah knew where this was all coming from and why; an attempt to make them afraid.
- Then Nehemiah prays: "*O God, strengthen my hands.*" - Strengthen me to get this job done!

Isaiah 35:3 "*Strengthen ye the weak hands, and confirm the feeble knees.*"

- It seems that with each attack, with each attempt to stop him, Nehemiah prays!

2 Corinthians 10:4 "*For the weapons of our warfare are not carnal, but mighty through God to the pulling down of strong holds;*"

- Nehemiah simply denied the reports, prayed to God, and got back to work.

V: 10 3rd tactic: **Threats!**

- Later Nehemiah came to the house of Shemaiah, different than the high priest of Ezra's day.
- Shemaiah was "shut up" in his house - hiding out much in the same way he was encouraging Nehemiah to do.
- Shemaiah was acting as a prophet kind of saying "thus saith the Lord" you'd better hide in the Temple, shut the doors and find security in the Temple - because they're going to come and kill you.

- Had Nehemiah succumbed to this threat and fled to the Temple for sanctuary it would have forever ruined his reputation, and God could protect him just as well in any place.

Psalm 23:4-5 “⁴Yea, though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil: for thou art with me; thy rod and thy staff they comfort me. ⁵Thou preparest a table before me in the presence of mine enemies: thou anointest my head with oil; my cup runneth over.”

- The attempt here is to strike fear into Nehemiah, fear is the opposite of faith - trying to get Nehemiah to be un-faithful.

We're all called to faith:

Hebrews 11:6 “... without faith it is impossible to please Him.”

1 John 4:18 “There is no fear in love; but perfect love casteth out fear: because fear hath torment. He that feareth is not made perfect in love.”

Hebrews 10:38-39 “³⁸Now the just shall live by faith: but if any man draw back, my soul shall have no pleasure in him. ³⁹But we are not of them who draw back unto perdition; but of them that believe to the saving of the soul.”

- The enemy would kill him physically if he could, but his real aim is to kill him spiritually - the same thing for us - we have to cling to the Lord. We have to keep our eyes on Him!

Deuteronomy 30:19-20 “¹⁹I call heaven and earth to record this day against you, that I have set before you life and death, blessing and cursing: therefore choose life, that both thou and thy seed may live: ²⁰That thou mayest love the Lord thy God, and that thou mayest obey His voice, and that thou mayest cleave unto Him: for He is thy life, and the length of thy days...”

V: 11 As Nehemiah responds he says “**should such a man as I...**” he’s not saying that this would be beneath him, being such a great man - should I sin against God in this? Not just in being afraid, but also in the fact that Nehemiah was not a Levite, or a priest.

- Going into the Temple to the part where you could close the doors was something reserved only for Levites at one place, then only to priests - he recognized that he couldn’t sin that way - wasn’t an option.

V: 12-13 God gave Nehemiah discernment that Shemaiah was not sent from God, but that he’d been sent by Tobiah and Sanballat.

1 John 4:1 “Beloved, believe not every spirit, but try the spirits whether they are of God: because many false prophets are gone out into the world.”

- One of the ways that we try the spirit, or try the prophecy is to compare it to God’s Word. God would never prophecy, or tell us to do anything that is contrary to His Word.

Isaiah 8:20 “To the law and to the testimony: if they speak not according to this word, it is because there is no light in them.”

- We also need to be careful not to bring reproach upon ourselves, and in the process upon our God.

Psalms 39:8 “Deliver me from all my transgressions: make me not the reproach of the foolish.”

Ephesians 5:15 “See then that ye walk circumspectly, not as fools, but as wise.”

V: 14 Again, Nehemiah’s response to the attack is consistent - he prays...

- Like the Apostle Paul, Nehemiah names names... Tobiah, Sanballat, and the false prophetess Noadiah.
- Nehemiah’s prayer was simple - “*My God, think thou upon them...*” Lord, you take care of them, Lord you deal with them.
- Nehemiah didn’t curse them, he simply commended them to God’s judgment knowing that God really would deal with them.

Hebrews 10:31 “It is a fearful thing to fall into the hands of the living God.”

In the last chapter of the Bible:

Revelation 22:12 “And, behold, I come quickly; and My reward is with Me, to give every man according as his work shall be.”

V: 15-16 The wall was finished and I assume the gates were hung in 52 days.

- Finished on the 25th of Elul: 6th month August / September.
- They were cast down in their own eyes: they wouldn’t look up, they were ashamed because they perceived that “... *this work was wrought of our God.*”
- This work was successful in two ways.

1. The job actually got finished, they accomplished what God commanded them to do.
2. God was glorified! He got credit for it.

Jesus said:

Matthew 5:16 “Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father which is in heaven.”

- The enemies of God were embarrassed, but that doesn't mean they were done.
- The next weapon brought to bare was: **Intrigue.**

V: 17-19 There were informants and spies within the ranks, those that were sworn or dedicated to the enemies of Israel - yet it didn't matter, God overcame all of that.

- These “nobles” even praised Tobiah to Nehemiah:

Proverbs 28:4 “They that forsake the law praise the wicked: but such as keep the law contend with them.”

- Satan is not a quitter, he often stays on the field after it appears that he's lost. Many a careless Christian has won the war, but afterward lost the victory.

Satan is always looking for an opportunity:

Luke 4:13 “And when the devil had ended all the temptation, he departed from him for a season.” “... until an opportune time.” NKJV

- Attacks from without, attacks from within.

Romans 8:31 “What shall we then say to these things? If God be for us, who can be against us?”

- Nehemiah's testimony is a fulfillment of **Psalm 1.**

Psalm 1:1-3 “¹Blessed is the man that walketh not in the counsel of the ungodly, nor standeth in the way of sinners, nor sitteth in the seat of the scornful. ²But his delight is in the law of the Lord; and in his law doth he meditate day and night. ³And he shall be like a tree planted by the rivers of water, that bringeth forth his fruit in his season; his leaf also shall not wither; and whatsoever he doeth shall prosper.”

- Nehemiah belonged to God, Nehemiah trusted in God - and God saw him through. What about you?