

Nehemiah: *Building the Church One Person at a time*

(Nehemiah 6:1-19; Romans 5:2-5)

“God’s Leaders Persevere”

-Satan hates godly success (in your life, in your marriage, in your children, in your job,

-Satan hates God’s glory

-Look at the length to which the evil one will go to discourage from completing your God-given task

(**satan only has one play book**) – he’s not very creative:

Threats of attack from **Without** –Threats of success; threats of intimidation, threats of attacks (never came) =just words

Threats of **Disunity** from within – Jews were selfish, attacking each other, using each other for their own survival

Threats to destroy God’s **Leader** – If they cannot distract God’s plan from without, or disunify from w/in =**terminate lead**

READ Nehemiah 6:1-19

Now when it was reported to Sanballat, Tobiah, Geshem the Arab, and to the rest of our enemies that I had rebuilt the wall, and *that* no breach was left in it, although at that time I had not installed the doors in the gates,² Sanballat and Geshem sent *a message* to me, saying, “Come, let’s meet together ^[a]at Chephirim in the plain of Ono.” But they were plotting to ^[b]harm me. Satan goal take out God’s leader: **A. Discredit** him; **B. Disqualify** him or

C. Destroy him/kill John 10:10 “Steal, kill, and destroy”

-Matthew 12:29 “how can anyone enter the strong man’s house and carry off his property, unless he first ties up the strong *man*? And then he will plunder his house.” Disqualify/decapitate the leader = **the flock is easy prey**

-1 Tim. 4:16 Dads/men/leaders “Watch your life (pay close attention to your life) and your doctrine closely (what you teach). Persevere in them, because if you do, you will save both yourself and your hearers.”

³ So I sent messengers to them, saying, “I am doing a great work and am unable to come down. Why should the work stop while I leave it and come down to you?” ⁴ Then they sent *messages to me four times* worded in this way, and I answered them with the same wording. Satan nags, harasses, badgers, relentless =wear us down/**temptation**

⁵ Then Sanballat sent his servant to me in the same way a fifth time with an open letter in his hand.⁶ In it was written: “It is reported among the nations, and ^[c]Gashmu says, that you and the Jews intend to rebel; for that reason you are rebuilding the wall. And you are to be their king, according to these reports. ⁷ You have also appointed prophets to proclaim in Jerusalem concerning ^[d]you, ‘A king is in Judah!’ And now it will be reported to the king according to these reports. So come now, let’s consult together.” =Lies, threats, extortion, intimidation

Nehemiah discerns the plan of attack from the enemy: he is not distracted w/ lies & threats, or **FEAR**

-Even when someone is lying about you (to your boss, parents, leaders), you do not need to fear IF you have done nothing wrong. – Remember, the enemy wins when we give into unfounded fear, fear of unknown/anxiety/worry

⁸ Then I sent *a message* to him saying, “*Nothing* like these things that you are saying has been done, but you are inventing them ^[e]in your own mind.” ⁹ For all of them were trying to frighten us. ^[f]thinking. ^[g]They will become discouraged with the work and it will not be done.” PRAYER: “But now, *God*, strengthen my hands.”

¹⁰ When I entered the house of Shemaiah the son of Delaiah, son of Mehetabel, who was confined *at home*, he said, “Let’s meet together in the house of God, within the temple, and let’s close the doors of the temple, for *they are coming to kill you*, and they are coming to kill you at night.” Close friend/adviser/counselor (fell into trap) **“only as strong as your weakest link”** – the enemy got to his friend in order to take Nehemiah out (was it for a promise of advancement, was it jealousy, greed? = sell out. That wound hurts worse (one of your own) = The threat was “save yourself” – an attack is coming just for you. Hide, “save your skin”, the others can fend for

¹¹ But I said, “Should a man like me flee? And who is there like me who would go into the temple ^[h]to save his own life? I will not go in.” ¹² Then I realized ^[i]that God certainly had not sent him, but he uttered *his* prophecy against me because Tobiah and Sanballat had hired him. ¹³ He was hired for this reason, that I would become frightened and act accordingly and sin, so that they might have an evil report in order that they could taunt me. ¹⁴ Remember, my God, Tobiah and Sanballat in accordance with these works of theirs, and also Noadiah the prophetess and the rest of the prophets, who were trying to frighten me. Even trying to convince Neh. That God had abandoned him; using religion (false prophets) to dissuade him from what he clearly heard from God himself; Vision of God.

So here was the evil one's game plan:

- A. They threatened the leader with fear and intimidation using lies and **extortion**;
- B. They found his **weakest** link, bribed & bought his trusted adviser to tell him to abandon the rest, save own life
- C. They used religion, **false** prophets, falsifying and twisting God's Word in order to bring Neh. down;
= All this to try to disqualify his leadership, bring shame upon the work of God; and stop God's purposes from being accomplished. **How did that work out for them, for God's enemies?**

¹⁵ So the wall was completed on the twenty-fifth of the month Elul, in fifty-two days. = WHAT??

The Wall Is Finished; God intervened; the work continued; godly leadership prevailed; Nehemiah persevered through hardship = **God's leaders persevere.** They press on in God's strength and Truth!

READ Romans 5:2-5 "And we^(a) boast in the hope of the glory of God. ³ Not only so, but we^(a) also glory in our sufferings, because we know that suffering produces perseverance; ⁴ perseverance, character; and character, hope.⁵ And hope does not put us to shame, because God's love has been poured out into our hearts through the Holy Spirit, who has been given to us."

¹⁶ When all our enemies heard about it, and all the nations surrounding us saw it, they lost their confidence; for they realized that this work had been accomplished with the help of our God. When we can bow low and get out of the way so that God gets all the glory, watch what God will do to accomplish His purpose & bless His people - **Why did God love David?** (youngest son of the least tribe of Judah). Why did God use David to defeat Goliath; to become King & rule Israel? b/c David loved God, & His glory. David fought for the Name & Renown of God alone - 1 Sam. 17:45 "You come against me with sword and spear and javelin, but I come against you in the name of the Lord Almighty, the God of the armies of Israel, whom you have defied. ⁴⁶ This day the Lord will deliver you into my hands."

When you are pursuing the Will of the Lord in your life, look at the length to which the evil one will discourage U:

1. He will **Distract** you with lies, intimidation, and fear
2. He will try and **Deny** God's power - or make you self-sufficient (don't need God) = No desperation
3. He will **Devalue** God's work & try to devour God's Leader

APPLICATION:

What is the truth about God, His calling; His Vision for your life? What is true for those seeking Him?

1. He will never leave you nor forsake; God never gives up on His children (Hebrews 13:5)
2. He is faithful even when we are not (2 Timothy 2:13) "He is faithful when we are faithless"
3. He is always working around us - God is not scared; not intimidated from threats or lies (John 5:17)
4. He is a God of completion - He completes what He starts (Phil. 1:6; 1 Cor. 1:8)
5. He supplies His own power to accomplish His purposes in us and through us; not us = His Spirit (Zech. 4:6)
6. Even in hardship, God is always working to conform us to His Son's likeness (our benefit) (Rom. 8:29)
7. God will always be glorified; all things work toward His glory and our joy (in Him) = our truest satisfaction

Community Group Discussion Questions

1. Can you recall a time when you were attacked for doing something good? i.e. "*no good deed goes unpunished*"
2. How do you think that you are most vulnerable to spiritual attacks? What is your weak link in your life?
3. As a man, how does Matthew 12:29 hit you? What are the areas you might be under attack to distract you from your responsibility to lead your family? Ladies, what is the greatest thing you can do for your husbands?
4. Why do you think satan always comes after the leaders? How can you pray specifically for the elders, staff, ministry leaders at the Well in this regard?
5. Of the 7 truths within the Application section of this sermon, which truth is most needed in your life right now? Which one did you need to be reminded of? Go through and read those corresponding scriptures.