

So That I Cannot Come Down +++

Nehemiah Chapter Six

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~ Nehemiah gave our Spiritual Safari a blistering rebuke in our last report; and if you read and understand that chapter, there is no doubt your heart has been convicted. If you read our last report, and were not convicted, then you need to examine your faith – because you likely are not in it. Nehemiah was unselfish. He didn't even accept a proper salary. He made a great sacrifice to lead the rebuilding of the walls in Jerusalem. We saw how the brethren had gone into the real estate business – and the short-term loan business – making money from the hardship and difficulties of their brethren; and that made Nehemiah angry. He encountered one set-back and challenge after another; and accepted them all. If you have not read our last report, I suggest you go back and do so now.

So, Nehemiah got the problems straightened out in our last report; and he did so by addressing them in a forthright manner. When we are dealing with those on the inside of our churches and in the Lord's work who are not being honest and truthful, we can't pussyfoot around with them! That won't work – not ever. Further, just because Nehemiah got the brethren straightened out doesn't mean all the problems are solved and life will now be a bed of roses. We need to recognize we have many enemies who call themselves our friends.

Mouthing pious platitudes and incessantly claiming spirituality doesn't reveal a love for the Lord God of Heaven. In fact, they are usually covering up some sin. I find it amusing — sad but amusing — how some church leaders handle the business of the church. They only do it for a profit; such as controlling the real estate or insurance in the church. Those people are also, generally, never really good at giving to the Lord's work; and it's no wonder – because they are almost always out to hurt the cause of Christ. Sometimes, they aren't even aware of it. That's true demon possession, by the way.

As we have also seen in previous reports, Nehemiah encountered just about every form of opposition imaginable while rebuilding the walls in the city of Jerusalem. Satan has almost emptied out his little bag of tricks in an attempt to cause Nehemiah to stumble, fall, and fail in this endeavor. The devil does the same thing with us today, too. The difference is: in our modern experience, the devil succeeds more times than not, and we typically fail miserably. God doesn't want us to fail; and He has made every provision required that we do not fail. Unfortunately, we still do — but not because God fails. No, because we fail Him. Can you thank God He is faithful to you even when you are not faithful to Him? Nehemiah, on the other hand, did not fail God; and at the time in which we are studying, the wall is near completion.

In this report, the question is: can we engage the enemy and come away unscathed? When you meet with people from other religions who have differing beliefs – or no belief – is it likely that you will win them over, or send them away angry? Do you suppose that if you constantly debate atheists, evolutionists or “new age” people, it will result in people turning to Christ or continuing to reject Him? These are some thoughtful questions to consider; and Nehemiah will give us some extremely insightful answers to them in this leg of our expedition....

¹ So, it came to pass, when Sanballat, and Tobiah, and Geshem the Arabian, and the rest of our enemies, heard that I had builded the wall, and that there was no breach left therein; (though at that time I had not set up the doors upon the gates)

² That Sanballat and Geshem sent unto me, saying, Come, let us meet together in some one of the villages in the plain of Ono. But they thought to do me mischief.

³ And I sent messengers unto them, saying, I am doing a great work, so that I cannot come down: why should the work cease, whilst I leave it, and come down to you?

~ Nehemiah is an honest man. There is no guile in him. So many people today are tricky, subtle and clever in their church work. They never seem to

give you the *whole* story or tell you *all* the facts. Reports are not complete from those people; they're always somehow slanted, filled in and built-up into a lop-sided mess. See, if you have cancer, you better find a doctor who will tell you the brutal and honest truth about your diagnosis. If you only have two months to live, but your doctor tells you everything is going to be okay, then you cannot trust him. We need a little more honesty in our dealings with each other; in business, social gatherings and, of course, in the church – but not in a crude or distasteful mannerism – in a Godly and matter of fact sort of way, naturally; done only after praying for the Holy Spirit to speak through us! That's one thing I love about this man Nehemiah.

When these small-minded little men - whom we have met several times before - heard that Nehemiah had been successful, and that rebuilding the wall was nearly complete, they thought that was the end of the work. They wanted to compromise at that point. Well, setting up the gates had not been done, and that was going to be a consummating event! Much work remained. Once again, the enemy had misguided information; so, they formed an incorrect conclusion. Nehemiah's honesty makes him as transparent as the noon day sun. He tells it like it is.

The enemy attempts to force a compromise in the church today with projections of bigoted and dogmatic speaking points. If we will not meet with these types of people, they call us closed-minded; and all that garbage. Well, I have reached the place where I only meet with those who can meet around the Person of the Lord Jesus Christ and His death, burial and resurrection – irrespective of their organizational affiliation, doctrine or denomination; and it is quite wonderful how God weeds out the poisonous people from my presence.

I had a semi-debate with an atheist not long ago; and he persevered as long as he could – but, eventually, he disappeared. Frankly, I still lost – because I'm never prepared to meet with an enemy such as the atheist and evolutionist. The conversation rarely goes or ends well; and, I'll admit, I come across as very severe and unlovely to those people with the things I say. I think any honest person who reads my "debates" with those people will see that no one can answer the Lord Jesus Christ according to the Word

of God; however, simply talking to them on their terms is *ALWAYS* a losing proposition – it’s always a mistake. We will *NEVER* win over the enemy by reasoning with them in truth and wisdom. Rejecting those two things is what they are all about! Maybe you don’t think so; and you have the right to be wrong. If you love Christ, then one day we’re going to meet in His presence and, my friend – you can just write this down: you’re going to agree with me at that time.

Alright, Nehemiah’s enemy has now realized he has failed and, as all intelligent enemies theorize, if you can’t beat them — you try to join them. That’s when they wanted to meet Nehemiah on neutral ground - in Ono; but Nehemiah said, “... *Oh, no!*” These men underestimated Nehemiah all the way around the wall – no pun intended. They said they wanted to meet and discuss their differences. The enemy will always resort to outright lies when he runs out of tricks. Nehemiah knew they would try to kill him, so he sent back the simple response from verse three. He simply tells these liars, “... *sorry – can’t waste my time with you down in Ono.*” ~

⁴ Yet they sent unto me four times after this sort; and I answered them after the same manner.

⁵ Then sent Sanballat his servant unto me in like manner the fifth time with an open letter in his hand;

⁶ Wherein was written, It is reported among the heathen, and Gashmu saith it, that thou and the Jews think to rebel: for which cause thou buildest the wall, that thou mayest be their king, according to these words.

⁷ And thou hast also appointed prophets to preach of thee at Jerusalem, saying, There is a king in Judah: and now shall it be reported to the king according to these words. Come now therefore, and let us take counsel together.

~ Sending to Nehemiah *five times* shows how persistent the enemy can be. That fifth “open letter” was a threat. Now, they revert to mean and vile language with Nehemiah – again. Gashmu is a new addition to the devils

children we are introduced to here; and he is the worst of them all. Sometimes, a man can gossip ten times more nefariously than any woman can. Gashmu devised an unholy lie to circulate back to the king about Nehemiah; and, remember, Nehemiah was a very important servant to Artaxerxes! They knew good and well that what they were saying wasn't true; and, naturally, their gossip would never have become factual – so, all these children of the devil are left with now is a pack of lies. See, when Satan says he wants to compromise, he is still not your friend. So, Nehemiah has no qualms about calling them out as the liars they were....

⁸ Then I sent unto him, saying, There are no such things done as thou sayest, but thou feignest them out of thine own heart.

⁹ For they all made us afraid, saying, Their hands shall be weakened from the work, that it be not done. Now therefore, O God, strengthen my hands.

~ Once again we find Nehemiah going back to the Lord God of Heaven praying and pleading his cause. This is the third time in six chapters we have seen him praying. Nehemiah doesn't waste time talking to the enemy – he talks to the Lord. As we read on, "friends" give Nehemiah the advice to cower down and run, hide, and lock the doors behind him. They pretend to have an interest in Nehemiah's life; but they don't really care about him at all. Nehemiah has a real spiritual discernment; and running and hiding isn't part of his plan....

¹⁰ Afterward I came unto the house of Shemaiah the son of Delaiah the son of Mehetabeel, who was shut up; and he said, Let us meet together in the house of God, within the temple, and let us shut the doors of the temple: for they will come to slay thee; yea, in the night will they come to slay thee.

¹¹ And I said, Should such a man as I flee? and who is there, that, being as I am, would go into the temple to save his life? I will not go in.

¹² And, lo, I perceived that God had not sent him; but that he pronounced this prophecy against me: for Tobiah and Sanballat had hired him.

~ Nehemiah is in the thick of plots that makes a soap-opera seem like a documentary about laundry detergent. The schemes to destroy him and stop the work of rebuilding the walls of Jerusalem never seem to end. Nehemiah can't trust his own friends and the enemy is dogging him at every turn now. He is in a very difficult place. I'm sure he had some real questions for the Lord at this time, too. So, question the Lord is exactly what he does as he turns to God yet again. Of course, God is going to deliver Nehemiah – again and again and again and again....

13 Therefore was he hired, that I should be afraid, and do so, and sin, and that they might have matter for an evil report, that they might reproach me.

14 My God, think thou upon Tobiah and Sanballat according to these their works, and on the prophetess Noadiah, and the rest of the prophets, that would have put me in fear.

15 So the wall was finished in the twenty and fifth day of the month Elul, in fifty and two days.

16 And it came to pass, that when all our enemies heard thereof, and all the heathen that were about us saw these things, they were much cast down in their own eyes: for they perceived that this work was wrought of our God.

17 Moreover in those days the nobles of Judah sent many letters unto Tobiah, and the letters of Tobiah came unto them.

18 For there were many in Judah sworn unto him, because he was the son in law of Shechaniah the son of Arah; and his son Johanan had taken the daughter of Meshullam the son of Berechiah.

19 Also they reported his good deeds before me, and uttered my words to him. And Tobiah sent letters to put me in fear.

~ So, our Spiritual Safari ends this leg of our expedition with the walls being finished. It has only been fifty-two Biblical days since we met him – but it seems like fifty-two years. Only God could have accomplished this by working through them. Well, the troubles aren't over, because the enemy is still corresponding with the nobles of Judah. See, Judah had, once again, intermarried with the enemies of God. Judah had, actually, been playing footsie with Satan all along. Judah tells the enemy that they know Nehemiah is one hard bird to get along with; but Judah tells Tobiah not to worry, because they are his real friends. What we have here is the brethren trying to put Nehemiah's hand in the hand of the enemy. Well, this type of false liaison is how the enemy is going to attempt to trick you, too, my dearly beloved readers – so, watch out very carefully; because Satan wants to devour you right now – even as you read.

Well, because Nehemiah utterly refused to compromise with the enemy, our next report will take us to one of the greatest revivals recorded in the Word of God. The walls are complete, and there are two prophets prophesying at this time – Haggai and Zechariah. In the next few chapters, we're going to see the Word of God brought out and read to the people. As we have more than adequately established in this safari, the only way revival can *EVER* happen is when the Word of God is returned to, taught properly, correctly and completely, and *OBEYED* ~

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