

STANDING IN THE FACE OF OPPOSITION

NEHEMIAH 6

CHURCH GROUP SERMON DISCUSSION GUIDE - APRIL 7, 2024

SCRIPTURE READING

Nehemiah 6 ESV

Conspiracy Against Nehemiah

6 Now when Sanballat and Tobiah and Geshem the Arab and the rest of our enemies heard that I had built the wall and that there was no breach left in it (although up to that time I had not set up the doors in the gates), 2 Sanballat and Geshem sent to me, saying, "Come and let us meet together at Hakkephirim in the plain of Ono." But they intended to do me harm. 3 And I sent messengers to them, saying, "I am doing a great work and I cannot come down. Why should the work stop while I leave it and come down to you?" 4 And they sent to me four times in this way, and I answered them in the same manner. 5 In the same way Sanballat for the fifth time sent his servant to me with an open letter in his hand. 6 In it was written, "It is reported among the nations, and Geshem also says it, that you and the Jews intend to rebel; that is why you are building the wall. And according to these reports you wish to become their king. 7 And you have also set up prophets to proclaim concerning you in Jerusalem, 'There is a king in Judah.' And now the king will hear of these reports. So now come and let us take counsel together." 8 Then I sent to him, saying, "No such things as you say have been done, for you are inventing them out of your own mind." 9 For they all wanted to frighten us, thinking, "Their hands will drop from the work, and it will not be done." But now, O God, strengthen my hands.

10 Now when I went into the house of Shemaiah the son of Delaiah, son of Mehetabel, who was confined to his home, he said, "Let us meet together in the house of God, within the temple. Let us close the doors of the temple, for they are coming to kill you. They are coming to kill you by night." 11 But I said, "Should such a man as I run away? And what man such as I could go into the temple and live? I will not go in." 12 And I understood and saw that God had not sent him, but he had pronounced the prophecy against me because Tobiah and Sanballat had hired him. 13 For this purpose he was hired, that I should be afraid and act in this way and sin, and so they could give me a bad name in order to taunt me. 14 Remember Tobiah and Sanballat, O my God, according to these things that they did, and also the prophetess Noadiah and the rest of the prophets who wanted to make me afraid.

The Wall Is Finished

15 So the wall was finished on the twenty-fifth day of the month Elul, in fifty-two days. 16 And when all our enemies heard of it, all the nations around us were afraid and fell greatly in their own esteem, for they perceived that this work had been accomplished with the help of our God. 17 Moreover, in those days the nobles of Judah sent many letters to Tobiah, and Tobiah's letters came to them. 18 For many in Judah were bound by oath to him, because he was the son-in-law of Shecaniah the son of Arah: and his son Jehohanan had taken the daughter of Meshullam the son of Berechiah as his wife. 19 Also they spoke of his good deeds in my presence and reported my words to him. And Tobiah sent letters to make me afraid.

ICE BREAKER QUESTION

Have you ever suffered, according to God's will, while doing good (1 Peter 4:19)? In general terms, what were (or 'are') the circumstances, and how have you responded in them? How was (or 'is') God's hand at work in and through them?

SERMON RECAP

The community's effort to rebuild the wall around Jerusalem was challenged in multiple ways:

- **Distraction** - The challenger/s tried to distract them. (Nehemiah 6:2-4)
- **Deception** - The challenger/s tried to discredit them. (Nehemiah 6:6-8)
- **Temptation** - The challenger/s tempted Nehemiah to compromise his integrity and discredit his leadership. (Nehemiah 6:10-13)
- **Discouragement** - The challenger/s tried to frighten them. (Nehemiah 6:9, 19)

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

Observation: What does the passage say?

1. Read Nehemiah 6 aloud as a group. Before interpreting or applying the passage, share observations about it.
 - Who was involved in today's passage? (Nehemiah 6:1, 10)
 - What were the actions of those who opposed the work? (Nehemiah 6:2a, 5-7, 10)
 - What were the motives in the hearts? (Nehemiah 6:2b, 9, 12-13)
 - What was Nehemiah's response to the actions that issued from their hearts? (Nehemiah 6:3-4, 8-9, 11, 14)

- What was the ultimate outcome of the work? (Nehemiah 6:15-16)

Interpretation: What does the passage mean?

1. Based on your observations, what is the main point God is making through this passage?
2. What similarities do you observe between this passage and the temptation of Jesus in Matthew 4:1-11?

Application: How can we apply this passage to our lives?

1. How do you continuously discern and distinguish the Lord's 'voice' from all others (including your own)? How do you discern His calling on and will for your life?
2. What has God called you to focus on in this season of your life?
 - What might Satan be using to distract you from God's calling? What anchoring Biblical counsel returns your focus to the Lord and keeps your heart attuned to Him?
 - What deceptive or dishonest narratives (either from within yourself or through other sources) has Satan crafted to discredit you? What enduring Biblical Truth counters those deceptions?
 - What (or who) might Satan be using to tempt you to compromise your integrity? What Biblical guidance and guardrails preserve and protect your faith in the Lord and your commitment to yield to and follow Him?
 - What fears and doubts might Satan cultivate to keep you from faithfully following God's calling? How might you replace these fears and doubts with living, active faith in the One Who is Faithful and True?
3. Will you live for God's glory or will you live for people's approval? Will you do what God is calling you to do or will you allow people's opinions to hold you back?
4. Is the Lord calling you to –
 - Surrender your life to Jesus?
 - Be baptized?
 - Pursue God-given dreams or ideas?

If so, please talk with your Church Group leader, a pastor, or a trusted Christian mentor to request prayer and Godly counsel about this calling.

LEADER NOTES

SECRET CHUCH 24 | Gather your church group and join us at MBC Tysons on April 19 for Secret Church, a unique, one-night, intensive time in prayer and God's Word with one of our Lead Pastors, David Platt. He will walk us word-by-word through the book of Ruth, we will learn about needs among the unreached, and we will pray together for the persecuted church around the world. Register [HERE](#) today to save your seats!