

NEHEMIAH CHAPTERS 5 & 6 – “Nehemiah Deals With Opposition; The Generosity of Nehemiah; Conspiracy Against

Nehemiah; The Wall Completed”!

OBSERVATION

Monday 7:00pm, H 105 (1st floor, High School--foot of stairs, behind the gym, by the vending machine area), Tuesday 7:00am, Family, Room, CCCM – Phil Twente, cell #714 425 9221; email – ptwente@gmail.com For past studies, audio plus notes, go to: www.ptwente.com Click on “Bible Studies” on the left column. References include commentaries by numerous pastor/teachers.

INTERPRETATION

APPLICATION

INTRODUCTION: These chapters, 4-6, are great chapters, some of the best in the Bible of describing how Satan attacks us in our service to the Lord and all of his devices to pull us away from what God has called us to do!

Mocking, ridicule, threat of force, and now in chapter 5 we have problems from within, which almost derail the whole building project. Problems of within, fighting one another – Christian against Christian. Then Satan can take a vacation!

CHAPTER 5 - THEME: Nehemiah's response to opposition from within.

While engaged in this important project of rebuilding the walls of Jerusalem, Nehemiah has been met by opposition in many forms. First the enemy **laughed** at the Jews. Then the enemy **ridiculed** them. Finally there was **open opposition**. It was so intense that Nehemiah had his builders put a trowel in one hand and a sword in the other hand while they worked on the wall. Nehemiah and his associates worked so hard that they did not take their clothes off except to bathe.

Now we see opposition coming from within. This is where the Devil strikes his greatest blow. The Devil had already caused discouragement among the Jews, and now he goes to work from the inside

This is a sad chapter, for in it we see the Jews selfishly preying upon one another. No building is recorded in this chapter.

There were great economic burdens upon the Jews, not only because of the famine, but also because of the taxes and tributes.

The Jews were being robbed by their own people through mortgages and servitude. How did Nehemiah act in this crisis? First, he was angry, because his people were so spiritually backslidden as to rob one another. He saw it not as an economic problem, but as a spiritual problem. He consulted with his own heart (*Neh_5:7*) and certainly prayed to God for wisdom. Then he rebuked the people, them of God's goodness to their nation. He appealed to the OT Law as he commanded them to restore their ill-gotten profits (*Exo_22:25*). Note that Nehemiah also appealed to his own good example as a leader. The people vowed to obey the Word — and they did!

CHAPTER 6 - THEME: The Wall is Finished in Spirit of Crafty Opposition

We have seen that Nehemiah encountered just about every form of opposition imaginable in rebuilding the walls of Jerusalem. Satan has thrown in his pathway many things from his bag of tricks to cause him to stumble and fall and fail in his endeavor. But Nehemiah did not fail. In this chapter we find that the wall is about finished.

Guile (*Neh_6:1-4*) - The people went back to work, and so did the enemy. This time Sanballat and his men aimed their attacks on Nehemiah the leader. Sanballat invited Nehemiah to a friendly meeting on the Plain of Ono, and Nehemiah refused.

Slander (*Neh_6:5-9*) - The fifth time the messenger came, he brought an “open letter” filled with slanderous **accusations** against Nehemiah and his people. Nehemiah again prayed for God to overrule (*Neh_6:9*). Servants of God cannot help what people say about them, but they can help what kind of character and testimony they have. If Nehemiah had stopped the work to defend his reputation, the walls would never have been built.

Threats (*Neh_6:10-14*) - Shemaiah had shut himself up in his house, apparently afraid of the enemy, but in reality he was working with the enemy. It pays to be cautious around so-called Christians who always have advice but never seem to get any work done for Christ themselves. Shemaiah lied to Nehemiah and tried to frighten him into going out to the enemy for safety. But Nehemiah saw through the scheme and openly refuted Shemaiah's lies. Again, he prayed for God's help and then went right back to work.

The walls were completed in fifty-two days. And the people worked during the hottest part of the year. God was glorified, the enemy was embarrassed (*Neh_6:16*), but the compromising Jews were still at work trying to get Nehemiah to accept Tobiah. What a burden these nobles of Judah must have been to godly, courageous Nehemiah. The work was completed. To God be the glory!

These are the devices that we will encounter when doing His work: **Laughing, mocking and ridicule, the threat of force, internal strife – Christian against Christian for selfishness, distraction, false accusation and slander, fear in order to harm our testimony.** Very, very valuable passage in the Bible!

TIME LINE – BOOKS OF EZRA – (“Bible Hub” online)

537 BC	The Proclamation of Cyrus	Ezra 1
537 BC	The Exiles Return	Ezra 2
535 BC	Temple Work Begins (70 yrs. from 605BC)	Ezra 3
534 BC	Adversaries Hinder Temple Work	Ezra 4
534 BC	Artaxerxes Orders Work Stopped	Ezra 4:17
520 BC	Tattenai's Letter to Darius	Ezra 5
520 BC	Temple Work Resumed by Darius' Decree	Ezra 6
(Books of Haggai & Zechariah occur here)		
515 BC	Completion and Dedication of the Temple	Ezra 6:16
(Book of Esther occurs here)		

BOOK OF ESTHER (about 60 yrs. from 1st return)

483 BC	Queen Vashti Deposed	Esther 1
478 BC	Esther Becomes Queen	Esther 2
478 BC	Mordecai Thwarts a Conspiracy	Esther 2:21
474 BC	Haman Seeks Revenge on the Jews	Esther 3
473 BC	Mordecai Informs Esther of Haman's Plot	Esther 4
473 BC	Esther Prepares a Banquet	Esther 5
473 BC	The King Honors Mordecai	Esther 6
473 BC	Haman Is Hanged	Esther 7
473 BC	Xerxes' Edict on Behalf of Esther & Jews	Esther 8
472 BC	Purim Instituted	Esther 9
472 BC	Xerxes' Tribute to Mordecai	Esther 10
458 BC	Ezra to Jerusalem (147 years from 605; 79 years from 1 st return; 57 years from last verse of chapter 6!)	Ezra 7
458 BC	Ezra Commissioned by Artaxerxes	Ezra 7:11
457 BC	Families Return to Jerusalem with Ezra	Ezra 8
457 BC	Ezra's reforms (80 yrs. from 1 st return)	Ezra 9
456 BC	Ezra's Prayer About Inter-marriage	Ezra 10

BOOK OF NEHEMIAH (about 100 years from 1st return)

445 BC	Nehemiah's Prayer for the Exiles	Nehemiah 1
444 BC	Artaxerxes Sends Nehemiah to Jerusalem	Nehemiah 2
444 BC	Builders of the Walls Named	Nehemiah 3
444 BC	Builders Overcome Ridicule	Nehemiah 4
444 BC	Nehemiah Abolishes Debt and Bondage	Nehemiah 5
444 BC	Sanballat's Plot	Nehemiah 6
444 BC	Completion of the Wall	Nehemiah 6:15
444 BC	Census of Returned Exiles	Nehemiah 7
444 BC	Ezra Reads the Law	Nehemiah 8
444 BC	Israelites Fast and Repent	Nehemiah 9
444 BC	Israelites Seal the Covenant	Nehemiah 10
444 BC	People Settle in Jerusalem	Neh. 11, 12
432 BC	Nehemiah Restores Laws	Nehemiah 13

Kings of Persia in Ezra-Nehemiah:

Cyrus (539-530-9yrs); Darius I (522-486-36yrs); Xerxes (Ahasueres 485-464-21yrs); Artaxerxes I (464-423-41yrs)

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INTERPRETATION

APPLICATION

NEHEMIAH CHAPTER 5 – “Nehemiah Deals With Opposition;

Nehemiah Stops Oppression of the Poor

Neh 5:1 And there was a great outcry of the people and their wives against their Jewish brethren.

Neh 5:2 For there were those who said, "We, our sons, and our daughters are many; therefore let us get grain, that we may eat and live."

Neh 5:3 There were also some who said, "We have mortgaged our lands and vineyards and houses, that we might buy grain because of the famine."

Neh 5:4 There were also those who said, "We have borrowed money for the king's tax on our lands and vineyards.

Neh 5:5 Yet now our flesh is as the flesh of our brethren, our children as their children; and indeed we are forcing our sons and our daughters to be slaves, and some of our daughters have been brought into slavery. It is not in our power to redeem them, for other men have our lands and vineyards."

Neh 5:6 And I became very angry when I heard their outcry and these words.

Neh 5:7 After serious thought (emotions), I rebuked the nobles and rulers, and said to them, "Each of you is exacting usury from his brother." So I called a great assembly (dealing with it publicly) against them.

Neh 5:8 And I said to them, "According to our ability we have redeemed our Jewish brethren who were sold to the nations. Now indeed, will you even sell your brethren? Or should they be sold to us?" Then they were silenced and found nothing to say.

v. 1 A great outcry of the people stops the work of rebuilding the wall The work stopped because of strife among God's people. The enemy could not stop the work of God by direct attack, but the work stopped when God's people weren't unified and working together.

v. 2 The reason here for strife among God's people, was money problems, which harmed the unity among the people of God. It's not a problem about having enough money to complete the building of the walls, but the lack of personal funds for some of the Jewish people.

v. 3 ...famine: People had money problems because there was a famine, which was not the fault of anyone. Yet there was fault in how the problems were addressed.

v. 4 ...king's tax: People had money problems because the government kept taxing them. These taxes were not the fault of those who were hurt by them. Neither Nehemiah nor the people acted as if these taxes were unfair, yet they were still a hardship.

v. 5 ...borrowed money . . . forcing our sons and our daughters to be slaves: Because of the loans they had taken to live cost interest, and some were in default, they had to give their children as servants to their lenders to pay off the debt. If Jerusalem is to be place of the powerful overtaking the powerless and the poor – like when we were in Egypt, why should we even build a wall!

v. 6 Nehemiah's immediate reaction was righteous anger. He was angry because it was because of the greed of those who profiting from others' money troubles, something Moses' law clearly said was wrong. Amazing that they could stand so strong against an enemy, but fall so quickly to these kinds of problems from within.

v. 7 This was a serious widespread problem, which needed to be dealt with publicly. Showing great leadership, Nehemiah was passionate enough to get angry; but wise enough to not act until he had considered the matter carefully. Calling a great assembly, he confronted them. He told the truth. He is confronting them that there is an absence of the fear of God, and there is the presence of greed. Ex 22:25; Dt 23:19-20 - No interest to be charged to "My people."

v. 8 We have redeemed our Jewish brethren: Nehemiah noted that when Judah was conquered, many Jews were sold as slaves to foreigners and many of them had been bought out of slavery by other Jews. Because of this, it was very wrong to have Jews being sold into slavery to other Jews because they couldn't pay off high-interest loans.

v. 1 Fighting within among God's people. The problems that were lying under the surface, now comes to light. There was no Sanballat, Tobiah or Geshem. Also there was no work! When they fight one another they are neither fighting the real enemy nor getting God's work done.

v. 2 As is in much of the world today, the main concern was to have enough money just to feed their families – that we may eat and live! Consider this as we pray, "Give us this day our daily bread!"

v. 3 Can you imagine mortgaging your own home, just to buy food to survive?

vs. 4-5 Although back from Babylon, they seemed have learned and are now practicing the things of the world! If Nehemiah and his people did not find a Godly solution for their money problems, the work of God would be stopped - without a single arrow being fired by the enemies of God. Consider having such huge financial problems, with no way out, that parents would have to sell their children into slavery, just to survive!

v. 6 These money problems led to a lack of unity among the people of God. This unity that was more precious than any amount of money. Do you see Nehemiah's righteous (non selfish) anger against the injustice of the profiteering Jews, as something good?

vs. 7-8 These are God's people and these problems cannot be tolerated. Do you think that He kept the Israelites alive for 70 years in Babylon, bringing them back so they could take advantage of one another? Do we consider the extent of our own anger with whether or not we lose the ability of self consultation? Would our dealings, if brought out publicly, look good?

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INTERPRETATION

APPLICATION

Neh 5:9 Then I said, "What you are doing is not good. Should you not walk in the fear of our God because of the reproach of the nations, our enemies?"

Neh 5:10 I also, with my brethren and my servants, am lending them money and grain. Please, let us stop this usury!

Neh 5:11 Restore now to them, even this day, their lands, their vineyards, their olive groves, and their houses, also a hundredth of the money and the grain, the new wine and the oil, that you have charged them."

Neh 5:12 So they said, "We will restore it, and will require nothing from them; we will do as you say." Then I called the priests, and required an oath from them that they would do according to this promise.

Neh 5:13 Then I shook out the fold of my garment and said, "So may God shake out each man from his house, and from his property, who does not perform this promise. Even thus may he be shaken out (losing everything) and emptied." And all the assembly said, "Amen!" and praised the LORD. Then the people did according to this promise.

The Generosity of Nehemiah:

Neh 5:14 Moreover, from the time that I was appointed to be their governor in the land of Judah, from the twentieth year until the thirty-second year of King Artaxerxes, twelve years, neither I nor my brothers ate the governor's provisions.

Neh 5:15 But the former governors who were before me laid burdens on the people, and took from them bread and wine, besides forty shekels of silver. Yes, even their servants bore rule over the people, but I did not do so, because of the fear of God.

Neh 5:16 Indeed, I also continued the work on this wall, and we did not buy any land. All my servants were gathered there for the work.

v. 9 ...fear of our God. This is where many business deals go wrong before God, because there is no regard for God’s will or wisdom. The only concern is if a deal can be made, and if money will come from it; not if it is right or wrong. You’re giving our enemies an opportunity to bring a reproach against us. It’s not right, even in the pagan world.

vs. 10-11 ...a hundredth, the rich were taking advantage of the crisis to make money off the poor, charging 12% interest a year.

Restore now to them, even this day: Nehemiah was not asking the nobles and the rulers to just feel bad, or to just stop what they were doing, but they had to set the wrong they had done right! If money had been charged unfairly or collateral was taken unfairly, it had to be set right.

vs. 12-13 The response of the rulers and nobles who had done wrong. ...*will restore it:* This was good. Nehemiah wisely told the truth in love, confronting these brothers. They received the rebuke, admitting they had been wrong. ...*God shake out.... who does not perform.* Nehemiah wisely knew words were not enough. Their actions had to be followed through with real action with accountability - and it was! *the people did according to this promise.*

v. 14 Nehemiah did not tax the people. ...*nor my brothers ate the governor’s provisions:* Nehemiah was a great example of putting the work of God ahead of his own personal interest. He certainly had the right to tax the people for his support (others had done it before him), but he didn’t take that right because it wouldn’t help the work of God.

v. 15 Because of the fear of God: Nehemiah didn’t compromise! He could be very bold! He did what was right before God, not what was “right” for his own cares and concerns - because he knew he would have to answer to God. Nehemiah could say this because it didn’t matter to him what others did, how the crowd acted, what the rest of the world thought. He lived by another standard.

v. 16 Nehemiah gave his full and constant attendance to direct and encourage the workmen, and see that they kept to their work, and did it well. He didn’t take advantage of buying the land being offered at desperation prices. ...*all my servants were gathered...* All the workers were employed in it, taking no wages for their work, being maintained at his expense. **If we have sin in our lives, then in those areas, we will always be soft on the areas of personal compromise. Ones’ testimony is always destroyed by living in compromise.**

***vs. 9-11* How important it is for us to pray for others, including kings and those in authority, to have and to walk in the fear of our God! What an example we have here of correcting an internal problem among His people! To not only stop doing what was wrong! “Please, let us stop this usury!” but to set right, the wrong that has been done! Restore what you have charged them, including interest.**

***vs. 12-13* Perhaps accountability is a missing step in dealing with an area where we are having a hard time doing what is right. We see the situation is resolved!**

***v. 14* Is it usual for us, or does it seem strange, to put the Lord’s work ahead of our own personal interest, as Nehemiah did?**

***vs. 15-16* We should have even better standard than Nehemiah did, and we should say, when confronted by the sin this world takes for granted, **I did not do so, because of the love of Jesus.** Nehemiah’s personal conduct did not destroy his witness and allowed him to be extremely bold. Integrity is easily lost, but, once lost is most difficult to regain! Like Christ, good leaders always take more blame and sacrificially takes less credit than is due. Ramification of known sin are very significant!**

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INTERPRETATION

APPLICATION

Neh 5:17 And at my table were one hundred and fifty Jews and rulers, besides those who came to us from the nations around us.

Neh 5:18 Now that which was prepared daily was one ox and six choice sheep. Also fowl were prepared for me, and once every ten days an abundance of all kinds of wine. Yet in spite of this I did not demand the governor's provisions, because the bondage was heavy on this people.

Neh 5:19 Remember me, my God, for good, according to all that I have done for this people.

NEHEMIAH CHAPTER 6 – Conspiracy Against Nehemiah;

Neh 6:1 Now it happened when Sanballat, Tobiah, Geshem the Arab, and the rest of our enemies heard that I had rebuilt the wall, and that there were no breaks left in it (though at that time I had not hung the doors in the gates),

Neh 6:2 that Sanballat and Geshem sent to me, saying, "Come, let us meet together among the villages in the plain of Ono." But they thought to do me harm.

Neh 6:3 So I sent messengers to them, saying, "I am doing a great work, so that I cannot come down. Why should the work cease while I leave it and go down to you?"

Neh 6:4 But they sent me this message four times, and I answered them in the same manner.

Neh 6:5 Then Sanballat sent his servant to me as before, the fifth time, with an open letter in his hand.

Neh 6:6 In it was written: It is reported among the nations, and Geshem says, that you and the Jews plan to rebel; therefore, according to these rumors, you are rebuilding the wall, that you may be their king.

Neh 6:7 And you have also appointed prophets to proclaim concerning you at Jerusalem, saying, "There is a king in Judah!" Now these matters will be reported to the king. So come, therefore, and let us consult together.

vs. 17-18 Nehemiah's godly example of generosity. *And ...at my table...* Nehemiah not only did not take when he could have; he also gave when he didn't have to. He received a lot of food from the king's provisions, which he could have sold for his own profit. Instead, he gave them away, feeding as many as 150 people regularly.

v. 19 Nehemiah's prayer, asking God to remember his good deeds. **Remember me, my God, for good:** In his prayer, Nehemiah did not look for praise from man - but from God. In fact, Nehemiah probably originally intended that no one else see this book, because it was written as a diary. It's wonderful that God took this personal diary of Nehemiah and gave it to us. It shows us that a leader must first lead by example, and that

v. 1 Nehemiah is attacked in three phases...*had rebuilt...* The wall was almost finished. It was "now or never" for the enemies of Nehemiah and the work of God. If they didn't do something immediately to stop the work, the walls will be completely finished.

v. 2 ...meet together... Sanballat and Geshem tried to arrange a meeting with Nehemiah. They suggested a friendly meeting, like a reconciliation or a vacation. ... **do me harm:** Nehemiah's discernment saw through the outward appearance and knew what Sanballat's friendly offer was all about.

v. 3 ...work cease... Nehemiah, using discernment will not only escape their trap; he won't even be distracted from his work. He was persistent.

v. 4 The request came four times, and each time Nehemiah stood fast and didn't fall for it.

v. 5 ...reported....Geshem says... Sanballat's slander began the way many verbal attacks do, as a report of what others have reportedly said.

vs. 6-7 ...to rebel . . . be their king . . . appointed prophets to proclaim: These lies probably outraged Nehemiah. He had worked hard and trusted God greatly so this work would be done with the blessing of the king; and he had embraced great personal sacrifice to demonstrate that he was not in this for himself. He is being accused of the very things he has worked so hard to not fall into! ...**matters will be reported...** Sanballat made a plain threat. Nehemiah wouldn't be deceived into coming to this meeting, so now he tried slander against Nehemiah. Thus were his words softer than oil, and yet war was in his heart, and he hoped, like Judas, to kiss and kill.

vs. 17-18 In his personal life, Nehemiah lived the way he told the nobles and rulers to live; not to take personal advantage of another's need. **He did what every godly leader must do: he never expected more of his followers than he expected of himself. Are we doing that?**

v. 19 In our own private time with the LORD, it is entirely appropriate to say, "**Remember all the good Jesus did for me, on my behalf, my God, for good!**"! **How does my personal walk with the Lord look to my believing brothers and sisters, that I am working with?** Nehemiah could tell other to do what was right here because his own walk was right. His public words and private actions said the same thing. He led in resolving this situation that came close to stopping the entire work of God.

v. 1 When the **work is almost done, we must be on guard** as the enemy, now in a now or never effort, will pull out all the stops at last min derailing or sabotaging the effort.

v. 2 **We must be aware at all times of friendly overtures by the enemy.** Notice the location of Ono, an area hostile to the Jews, is a dead give away for the real reason for the invitation, which was to do Nehemiah harm.

v. 3 **All the work done for the Lord is "a great work"!** Do you consider what you're doing for the Lord as being "a great work"? We see the wonderful and proper priority in Nehemiah's life - **Why should the work cease while I leave it?**

v. 4 It is so easy to become distracted from doing the Lord's work. It's not any wonder that Satan so often uses this tactic **If it is the Lord's will for our answer to distraction to be "no", the first time, that answer should remain "no", even if asked four times by the enemy!**

v. 5 Anyone representing the name of Jesus will suffer rejection, persecution and possibly death. They also will be lied about. Open letters of vague lies can easily give the wrong impression. **Watch out for this, an enemy tactic, which is difficult to respond to.**

v. 6 The devil knows our hot buttons. He knows those lies, those accusations, which really get to you - and he knows how to throw them in your face. **We can't stop it, so we have to learn how to deal with it!**

v. 7 Satan's devices often accuse of the very things we work hard not to fall into. Such was the case with this Nehemiah. **Even if wrongfully accused we need to conduct ourselves as Nehemiah did – aiming all the way to please the Lord!**

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INTERPRETATION

APPLICATION

Neh 6:8 Then I sent to him, saying, "No such things as you say are being done, but you invent them in your own heart."

Neh 6:9 For they all were trying to make us afraid, saying, "Their hands will be weakened in the work, and it will not be done." Now therefore, O God, strengthen my hands.

Neh 6:10 Afterward I came to the house of Shemaiah the son of Delaiah, the son of Mehetabel, who was a secret informer; and he said, "Let us meet together in the house of God, within the temple, and let us close the doors of the temple, for they are coming to kill you; indeed, at night they will come to kill you."

Neh 6:11 And I said, "Should such a man as I flee? And who is there such as I who would go into the temple to save his life? I will not go in!"

Neh 6:12 Then I perceived that God had not sent him at all, but that he pronounced this prophecy against me because Tobiah and Sanballat had hired him.

Neh 6:13 For this reason he was hired, that I should be afraid and act that way and sin, so that they might have cause for an evil report, that they might reproach me.

Neh 6:14 My God, remember Tobiah and Sanballat, according to these their works, and the prophetess Noadiah and the rest of the prophets who would have made me afraid.

v. 8 You invent them... Nehemiah replied by calmly and straightforwardly telling Sanballat that he was a liar, and by carrying on with the work.

v. 9 strengthen my hands: We, too must pray for God's strength, His power in our lives.. It will be said, not by might, nor by power, but by the Spirit of God. ...*make us afraid:* Nehemiah had the discernment to see the slander strategy was all about fear, and he wouldn't give into it.

v. 10 Shemaiah was said to be a prophet, but he was not. He offered Nehemiah a safe haven in the temple. The idea was that though Nehemiah was said to be threatened, he could find refuge in the temple.

v. 11 Knowing the heart of God as revealed in the whole counsel of God's Word, Nehemiah had discernment. Shemaiah tried to create fear in Nehemiah, and tried to get him to disobey God based on this fear. It was a trap.

v. 12 The Jews' enemies leave no stone unturned, no way untried, to take Nehemiah off from building the wall about Jerusalem. Now they try to drive him into the temple for his own safety. Keep him away from his work. Observing him to be a cautious man, they will endeavor to gain their point by making him cowardly.

v. 13 and sin, By distrusting the power and providence of God to protect him, and by going into such a part of the temple, which he, being no priest, had no right to go into. ...*for an evil report, that they might reproach me;* as a rebel and traitor against the king, which had been reported of him, and which would be strengthened by such a step.

v. 14 My God, remember Tobiah and Sanballat: Instead of lashing out against Shemaiah and his fellow false-religionists, he simply committed these wicked men - and the situation - to God. If God could take good care of Nehemiah, then He could take also take care of Shemaiah according to divine wisdom.

v. 8 You don't satisfy men like Sanballat with facts, explanations, and evidence. You satisfy them by giving in to their demands, and Nehemiah would not! **No enemy can make us afraid; all they can do is try to make us choose fear - but it is up to us to choose it.**

v. 9 We cannot overcome the slander and fear of our enemies in our own strength. It will be said, **not by might, nor by power, but by the Spirit of God.**

v. 10 We need to be cautious around so-called Christians who always have advice but never seem to get any work done for Christ themselves. **Nehemiah needed discernment now more than ever.**

v. 11 Notice, with discernment and awareness of God's calling and blessing Nehemiah on this mission, that he would ask the question regarding himself, "**Should such a man as I flee? And who is there such as I who would go into the temple to save his life? I will not go in!**" This should be the same reaction that we have when tempted to flee when in fear, "Should such a man, a child of God, as I flee?"

v. 12 How resistant are we to Satan's devices in keeping us from His work and becoming cowardly in so doing?

v. 13 We see that Nehemiah's trusting in the Lord and not agreeing to the enemy's trap, **there was a good testimony from this rather than an reproach, which the enemy was seeking.**

v. 14 Nehemiah's response to the three-fold attack of **pretended friendship, slander, and false religion** makes us admire him as a leader. But we can love and admire Jesus far more. "**Come down to the plain of Ono,**" they said to Nehemiah. But they said to Jesus, "**come down from the cross.**" But Jesus was doing a great work - **the greatest work - on the cross,** and would not be stopped.

NEHEMIAH CHAPTERS 5 & 6 – “Nehemiah Deals With Opposition; The Generosity of Nehemiah; Conspiracy Against

Nehemiah; The Wall Completed”!

OBSERVATION

Monday 7:00pm, H 105 (1st floor, High School--foot of stairs, behind the gym, by the vending machine area), Tuesday 7:00am, Family, Room, CCCM – Phil Twente, cell #714 425 9221; email – ptwente@gmail.com For past studies, audio plus notes, go to: www.ptwente.com Click on “Bible Studies” on the left column. References include commentaries by numerous pastor/teachers.

INTERPRETATION

APPLICATION

The Wall Completed”!

Neh 6:15 So the wall was finished on the twenty-fifth day of Elul, in fifty-two days.

Neh 6:16 And it happened, when all our enemies heard of it, and all the nations around us saw these things, that they were very disheartened in their own eyes; for they perceived that this work was done by our God.

Neh 6:17 Also in those days the nobles of Judah sent many letters to Tobiah, and the letters of Tobiah came to them.

Neh 6:18 For many in Judah were pledged to him, because he was the son-in-law of Shechaniah the son of Arah, and his son Jehohanan had married the daughter of Meshullam the son of Berechiah.

Neh 6:19 Also they reported his good deeds before me, and reported my words to him. Tobiah sent letters to frighten me.

HE IS ABLE! - Ferguson, Noland; Sung - Maranatha Singers

He is able more than able to accomplish what concerns me today. He is able more than able To handle anything that comes my way. He is able more than able to do much more than I could ever dream. He is able more than able to make me what He wants me to be.

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v. 15 The amount of time it took to finish the job was remarkably short. The walls were in ruins for more than 100 years, and then they were set right in a period of only 52 days. Nehemiah worked longer in prayer than they needed to work to do the job. This shows the spiritual battle was actually greater than the material battle. We are often told this, but it can be hard to believe!

v. 16 When the wall was finished, their enemies were very disheartened. It is a glorious thing to dishearten the enemies of God’s people and to let them be discouraged for a while. ...done by our God: Their enemies were disheartened especially because it was evident that God did the work. When something has the fingerprints of God on it, all our enemies notice it also. know what has been done by man and what has been done by God.

v. 17 Tobiah was the man who had opposed the rebuilding work with Sanballat. In Neh 2:10 he was disturbed that Nehemiah came to rebuild the walls. In Neh 2:19; Neh 4:3 he mocked Nehemiah’s work. In Neh 4:7 he was angry that the work was being done. In Neh 6:1 he was one of the men who tried to get Nehemiah to stop the work, and come to the plain of Ono where he could be attacked.

v.18 Because he had family ties to many in the tribe of Judah, they tried to recommend him to Nehemiah. These Jewish brothers of Nehemiah could not see what was so plain to Nehemiah. In the case of these nobles, there was self-interest at work. They had financial dealings with Tobiah they wanted to protect.

v. 19 reported his good deeds before me, and reported my words to him: Undoubtedly, they saw Nehemiah as the bad guy. They figured Tobiah’s deeds were good, and Nehemiah spoke some strong words against Tobiah (in Neh 4:4, Nehemiah prays the evil Tobiah planned be turned back upon him, and that he be captured and carried away). **Tobiah sent letters to frighten me:** Nehemiah wrote no more about this situation. He wasn’t going to demand the nobles change their minds about Tobiah; but he wasn’t going to deny what he knew to be true about Tobiah either. He seems willing to let it go and let God take care of it. They were so false as to betray Nehemiah’s counsels to him; they uttered Nehemiah’s words to him, perverting them, no doubt, and putting false constructions upon them, which furnished Tobiah with matter for letters to put him in fear and so drive him from his work and discourage him in it. **Thus were all their thoughts against him for evil, yet God thought upon him for good.**

v. 15 Oh what an impact from a man who did more than wish Jerusalem had walls; he grieved, he ached, he prayed, he planned, he asked boldly, he went, he fought, he encouraged, he stood strong, he saw the job through to completion. **May we, be like this man who had such a heart for Jerusalem and for the will of the Lord to be done!**

v. 16 A strong, secure people of Jerusalem were a witness to surrounding nations. Many of us live Christian lives that no one takes notice of, because our walls are broken down. **Let the LORD do a building work, and others will notice.**

v. 17 We see in these and the following verses the difficulties which Nehemiah had to encounter. He had enemies without and false friends within. **We need to be watchful against these devices of the enemy who uses our friends and foes alike.**

v.18 ...son-in-law of Shechaniah - We find again the heathen and Jewish nobles interlinked. The latter were so far infected with the spirit of idolatry, that they forgot God, His service, their brethren, and their own souls. **We must be observant in such areas.**

v. 19. Nehemiah had a work to do, and that work was not really going out to attack people like Tobiah. He could leave the Tobiahs alone, as long as they weren’t attacking the work of God.

These are the devices that we will encounter when doing His work: **Laughing, mocking and ridicule, the threat of force, internal strife – Christian against Christian for selfishness, distraction, false accusation and slander, fear in order to harm our testimony. Very, very valuable passage in the Bible!**