

Nehemiah 6

Read Nehemiah 6:1-9: Our lives are a series of victories and challenges. We can get past one challenge; and a completely-different challenge is lying behind it. We should never set our expectations for a completely-smooth road. The Jews somehow got the wall built; and now would face another form of threat from their local mixed-race enemies.

By now, the Jews had almost finished the wall. Their enemies tried to secretly meet them, under the guise of desiring to help them. We are to love our enemies; but not to trust their intentions. Nehemiah rejected the offer to meet five times. Their enemies sent a letter falsely claiming that the Jews intended to break away from the King of Persia; and appoint Nehemiah as their king. This is one reason that we need to live above reproach. Any unethical short cut that we take will be exposed and become a tool of the enemy. We will face false accusations as well. The enemy will amplify our intentions. Their resistance to our progress makes no sense to us. The more we go towards the tip of the sword (spiritually), the more our intentions will be second-guessed.

We put no stumbling block in anyone's path, so that our ministry will not be discredited. (2 Corinthians 6:3)

The Jews have been falsely-accused before. They were charged with being the fault with the bankrupt German economy after World War 1. They were, in fact the strongest part of that economy. They were of no harm to others. That is how the KKK operates. They look at their own inadequacies; and blame various races for causing it. People want to believe that someone else is to blame. President Trump's good actions are all re-cast as evil by his opponents.

Nehemiah responded that these accusations are false. He replied that this was an attempt to intimidate the workers; and get them to stop making progress. He prayed that God would strengthen him.

Read Nehemiah 6:10-14: Now the enemies of Judah hired a false prophet of the Jews in Jerusalem to share secrets in the temple regarding the plot with Nehemiah. In reality he was an informant for the enemy. Nehemiah declined his offer for advice; and said that he does not to go running around to these secret conferences. There have always been traitors in our mixed multitude. We are challenged by the enormity of the challenges before us. Satan will try to prevent us from doing our

spiritual best. If we get past that; he will work overtime on our confidence. Once we may succeed we face challenges of malevolence to the good work that we do. These unexplained enemies help separate us from things that we do not need to be involved in.

Read Nehemiah 6:15-19: It is frustrating to see people make the same mistakes over and over; without learning from history. Moses told the people before they entered the land of Canaan that if they mingled with the godless Canaanites they would lose everything. God sent the Babylonians to get the Jews out of his land for that very reason. They had a 70-year time out; and those who were inclined returned to rebuild their lives. Right off the bat; they were marrying into the local idolatrous people groups.

As a dog returns to its vomit, so fools repeat their folly. (Proverbs 26:11)

The book of Ezra describes the same time frame. Ezra had to rip apart all of these idiotic marriages in order to save his people from extinction. It is a very rare case of God honoring the separation of a man and his idolatrous wife; to protect the faith of his people.

Then Ezra the priest stood up and said to them, "You have been unfaithful; you have married foreign women, adding to Israel's guilt. ¹¹Now honor^[u] the LORD, the God of your ancestors, and do his will. Separate yourselves from the peoples around you and from your foreign wives." (Ezra 10:10-11)

We have been hearing about the opposition of Sanballat, Tobiah and Gershem. They were three area governors under the King of Persia. They did not want to see the Jews restored. Sanballat was an Assyrian. Tobiah was an Ammonite. The Jews had removed the Ammonites and Assyrians from the land of promise at different times (under David and others). They were essentially enemies of Israel. Unfortunately there were inappropriate alliances that had already been set up with the enemy. Tobiah was married to a Jewish daughter of Shechaniah. There were Jews who had ongoing communications and were friendly with the evil Governor Tobiah. That was an inappropriate association with a vowed enemy. People can be so desperate to gain in their socio-economic status that they would even let their daughters marry ungodly enemies of the people.