

Lesson 5, NEHEMIAH 4 – 6

“It’s a battle out there!” Once we come to faith in Jesus Christ, we put a target on our backs. The prince of this world, Satan (John 12:31), will not stop until he thwarts the will of God. Being a Christian means we have aligned ourselves in God’s camp, and our enemy will use all kinds of strategies to keep us from achieving all God wants for each of us.

Nehemiah and his group of faithful followers are on the road to achieving their goal to surround Jerusalem with a defensive wall, but when things seem to be going well, Satan rears his ugly head in the guise of Sanballat and Tobiah. Sanballat was a pagan from Samaria, and Tobiah was a marginalized Jew from the descendants of Lot.

1. What was the first strategy of the men against Nehemiah in Nehemiah 4:1-3? Have you ever experienced ridicule for your faith? What was Nehemiah’s response in 4:4-6?

2. Read Nehemiah 4:4-23. What was their next strategy? What was Nehemiah’s response? What does this tell you about how we should react to persecution?

These attacks were from outside the fellowship of Jews. The next ones are attacks from within the community of faith

3. Read Nehemiah 5:1-5. What is happening? What is the result? In the time of Nehemiah and in our church today, unity is critical for the accomplishment of God’s will. What does Psalm 133:1, Ephesians 4:3,13, and Colossians 3:13,14 say about this? How do we as a church keep the unity of spirit we are charged to keep?.

4. What was Nehemiah’s response in verses 6-18? What does Exodus 22:25 say about charging fellow Jews for the lending of money?

5. After reading Nehemiah 5, how does Nehemiah model righteous behavior? What does this tell you about spiritual leadership?

6. In Nehemiah 6, Sanballat and Tobiah seem to be switching tactics. What are they? How does Nehemiah respond? See Nehemiah 6:3,4, 8,9,13.

7. What was the result of Nehemiah's faithfulness, prayers, and strategies? See Nehemiah 6:15,16.

Application: Satan is adept at using slander, fear, disunity and scheming to keep us from God's best. When have you been a recipient of any of these tactics? Share how you overcame these difficult times?

Prayer: God of all wonder and power, you are faithful, and nothing can touch those who are committed to you that does not first fall through your fingertips. Help us to put on the armor of God to protect us from the attacks of the Enemy. Keep us and our loved ones in the palm of your hand and give us strategies to combat those who are against us. We pray this in the name of your Son, Jesus who is King of kings and Lord of lords. Amen.