

“REBUILDING BROKEN PLACES”
STUDIES IN THE BOOKS OF EZRA, NEHEMIAH, AND HAGGAI
Nehemiah 5 & 6
“ USING SPIRITUAL DISCERNMENT TO DEFEAT SATAN’S DEVICES”

INTRODUCTION: We have been given many warnings about the various ways the enemy of our souls will try to stop us from doing God’s work. (2nd Corinthians 2:11; Ephesians 6:11) As you reflect on your life and how you want to be remembered, do you really want to leave a legacy of being a “quitter” rather than finishing the work God gave you to do? (John 17:4) (2nd Timothy 4:7-8) We would not be studying the spiritual life lessons we learn from Nehemiah if he had allowed Satan’s tactics to stop him from leading God’s people to finish building the walls around Jerusalem.

BACKGROUND: At this point in our story, Nehemiah has made the long journey from his influential position in Persia to come back to Jerusalem. He challenged the people to honor the Lord by rebuilding the walls of the city to provide protection. He strategically assigned families to work in areas important to them, and they worked well together. They had the right attitude and kept themselves prepared for the obvious physical attacks from those who opposed God’s work and workers. We also learned about the physical significance of each city gate and how to make applications for areas of our lives.

I. WHEN DOING GOD’S WORK, ALWAYS BE ON GUARD AGAINST ATTACKS FROM THE OUTSIDE, AND OPPRESSIVE ATTACKS FROM THE INSIDE. (Nehemiah 5:1-19)

A. Hard times present an opportunity for ungodly people to take financial advantage of others. Make sure you are helping others do God’s work rather than making it more difficult for them. (Nehemiah 5:1-5)

1. During times of famine, the wealthy were taking advantage of the poor by making them pledge their land, work as slaves, or pay exorbitant interest for food. How sad to escape slavery in Babylon and Persia only to be taken captive by your own people because of greed! (Deut. 24:19-20) (Exodus 22:25-27) (Leviticus 25:35-46) (Deuteronomy 24:10-13)

B. Hard times present problems that are difficult to endure, yet we should view them as opportunities for the Lord to show off His amazing ability to bring solutions when we do not see any.

C. We should always be righteously indignant (angry) with obvious sin and injustice against others. Scripture tells us how to express anger without sinning against God and others. Stop and think before you do something you will regret for a long time to come! (Nehemiah 5:6-8) (Ephesians 4:26-27) (Psalm 4)

D. When people are genuinely repentant, they will take the right actions that honor God and bless others. These leaders stopped mistreating their fellow citizens and allowed them to regain their property. (Luke 19:1-10) It took courageous leadership by Nehemiah to speak up for the people to take the right actions. (Nehemiah 5:6-13)

E. If the Lord puts you in a position of influence and wealth, use it to bless others rather than to take advantage of them. Nehemiah denied himself the privileges of rank and wealth choosing to share with others what was rightfully his. The Lord can reward you better than anyone else. (Nehemiah 5:14-19)

II. WHEN YOU REALLY DESIRE TO DO GREAT THINGS FOR THE LORD, ALWAYS BE ON GUARD FOR THE SUBTLE ATTACKS OF THE ENEMY. WHAT LOOKS GOOD TO YOU MAY NOT BE GOOD FOR YOU! (Nehemiah 6: 1-14)

A. When Nehemiah’s enemies could not stop him by physical intimidation, they resorted to subtle attacks that appeared as opportunities to work together. Remember, the same Satan that can attack like a roaring lion, can also appear as an angel of light. The end result is still destruction!

You need Holy Spirit discernment to see ungodly agendas. Judas looked like a disciple to everyone except Jesus! Most churches need more members, yet “More P_____ can also mean More P_____!”

B. If you know what your God-given purpose is, whenever someone tries to get you off course, you should be able to say like Nehemiah, “I am doing a great work; why should I leave that to come down to you!” Please notice how persistent the enemy can be. He eventually wears many people down because he *keeps coming*. ((Nehemiah 6:3-4) Rely on God’s power in you, not your willpower! SAY, “OH, NO!” WHEN PEOPLE TRY TO LEAD YOU ASTRAY!

C. When Satan cannot talk to you, he may choose to discourage you by talking *about* you! Sanballat used a form of “social media” to openly share a letter that was full of lies that could have gotten Nehemiah killed for rebellion against the king. How do you fight against those attacks? Remember, your job is to take care of your C_____, and let the LORD take care of your R_____. (Nehemiah 6:6-10) Keep asking the Lord for strength as you sense your weaknesses. (2nd Corinthians 12:9-10)

D. Satan will use others to entice you to sin against God while making it sound like a spiritual opportunity. You must know Scripture well enough to not to be deceived into committing sins. (Nehemiah was not a priest. He knew he could not enter the Holy Place) Not every prophet/preacher speaks God’s words, and the enemy loves to make us fear him rather than fear (reverence) the LORD. (Nehemiah 6:10-14)

III. AS YOU CONTINUE TO FULFILL YOUR PURPOSE IN LIFE, KEEP REMINDING YOURSELF THAT YOU ARE WORKING FOR THE GLORY OF GOD. (Nehemiah 6:15-19)

A. A task that was left undone for decades was finished in 52 days because of a godly leader who motivated others to work for the glory of God. Do you realize you can influence others to get to work on what the LORD wants done. If not, do you need someone to “light a fire” under you? (Nehemiah 6:15-16)

B. Satan and his demons love to discourage believers from doing God’s work. Let’s discourage the enemy as we rise up and build together! (Nehemiah 6:15-16)

C.. The influential Jews were communicating with Tobiah in an effort to sabotage the work of Nehemiah. Perhaps they were upset that Nehemiah had challenged them about taking money and possessions from the other Jews. Tobiah the Ammonite had married a Jewish woman, and his son Jehonohan had done the same. *It is a sad testimony when the people who should be loyal to God are more loyal to their political leaders. This can cause problems for those striving to do God’s work.*

NEHEMIAH CONTINUED TO BE VICTORIOUS OVER THE SCHEMES OF THE DEVIL BECAUSE

HE WAS A MAN OF C_____ , C_____ , AND C_____ .

HE DID NOT STOP BECAUSE OF O_____ , BUT SAW THEM AS O_____ FOR GOD TO GET THE GLORY.

KEEP PRAYING, FIGHTING THE GOOD FIGHT OF FAITH, AND LETTING CHRIST WORK ON YOU, IN YOU, AND T_____ YOU FOR HIS GLORY AND YOUR GOOD.

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