

Time to Rebuild
Part 9: Plots
March 5, 2017

I **SLIDE** Plots

A) **Nehemiah 4:7-8 (NIV).** ⁸ They all plotted together to come and fight against Jerusalem and stir up trouble against it.

1) Definitions

- a) Angry - burn, to be kindled - the Jews rebuilding the temple has caused their anger to burn until it is out of control
- b) Plot - to conspire, to bind up, to control
- c) Fight - to do battle, to wage war, to close quarters to engage in battle
- d) Hinder or Stir up trouble - to obstruct

B) **SLIDE** Open opposition

- 1) The opposition started with the enemy stating that they wanted to help rebuild the temple
- 2) Now, they have turned to open opposition where battle lines have been drawn, NOT by us but by those who oppose the kingdom
- 3) The opposition will use the law, coercion, plots, taunts, riots, accusations to openly confront those who desire to build the spiritual temple of God and advance the kingdom

C) Melania Trump

- 1) She recited the Lord's Prayer at a campaign rally last Tuesday
- 2) We have seen opposition when public figures have prayed, but nothing like this
- 3) Tweets
 - a) **SLIDE** "Melania starts the dictatorship rally with the Lord's Prayer? NOT EVERY AMERICAN IS CHRISTIAN!!!! Country over party,"
 - b) **SLIDE** "Melania prays (reads) the Our Father. Makes Jesus turn in his grave. Oh wait..."

- c) **SLIDE** "At least this time Melania plagiarized [sic] the Lord's Prayer from the Bible instead of Michelle Obama.
- d) **SLIDE** "With an hour's practice I could probably say the Lord's Prayer better in Slovene than Melania Trump does it in English,"
- e) **SLIDE** "I could recite the Our Father backwards, drugged with a gun to my head. If you need to read this prayer, you're not Christian
- f) **SLIDE** "God Bless her, but listening to Melania do 'The Lord's Prayer' sounds like someone getting cursed to become a 'Dracula,
- g) **SLIDE** "...plus Melania read the 'our father' like a whore in confession after a night of escorting,"
- h) **SLIDE** "Trump is still there, so Melania's prayer didn't work,"
- D) **SLIDE** Louisiana Town Hall
 - 1) Republican Sen. Bill Cassidy held a town hall meeting to discuss various political issues.
 - 2) Cassidy asked a pastor to open with prayer.
 - 3) When the pastor asked the crowd to please pray with him, the crowd erupted in yelling, taunting, and vulgar comments so that the prayer could not be heard
 - 4) The pastor continued and when He mentioned Jesus' name, the crowd erupted again, drowning out the pastor
 - 5) Next, a Vietnam Veteran asked the people to stand and join him in the Pledge of Allegiance
 - 6) The crowd treated him the same way
- E) **SLIDE** Solution
 - 1) **Nehemiah 4:17 (NIV)** ¹⁷ Those who carried materials did their work with one hand and held a weapon in the other,
 - 2) Nehemiah's first step was to pray
 - 3) We get into trouble when we act and speak without praying
 - 4) **Nehemiah knew that they had to be on God's side instead of expecting God to be on their side**

- 5) It is becoming more common for people to pick a fight or make a stand and then claim God is on their side
- 6) They use God's name to justify their actions
- 7) **SLIDE** This did not work for Job or for Joshua
- 8) God does not and will not ever join us or our causes
- 9) Instead, we are to join God under His conditions, not ours
- 10) Then, they put watchmen on the walls to sound the alarm against such attacks
- 11) Finally, with their eyes fixed firmly on the LORD, they built with one hand and held a sword in the other
- 12) No matter what opposition came at them, Ezra, Nehemiah, and the people never stopped building the temple of the LORD

F) **SLIDE** Caution!

- 1) Notice, the Israelites never initiated any of these attacks
- 2) They responded to the attacks only after seeking God
- 3) Nehemiah and the Israelites did not go after those enemies
- 4) They kept to the task at hand.
- 5) For us, this is not a call to arms so that we physically or verbally get into fights with those who oppose God's word
- 6) When opposition arises because we are obeying God's word, then we are on God's side
- 7) If the opposition arises because of our arrogance, self-righteousness, legalism, or spite, God will not recognize us
- 8) **SLIDE** Our sword is the word of God, and it is never to leave us
- 9) **Ephesians 6:17 (NIV)** ¹⁷ Take the helmet of salvation and the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God.
- 10) **Hebrews 4:12-13 (NIV)** ¹² For the word of God is living and active. Sharper than any double-edged sword, it penetrates even to dividing soul and spirit, joints and marrow; it judges the thoughts and attitudes of the heart. ¹³ Nothing in all creation is hidden from God's sight. Everything is uncovered and laid bare before the eyes of him to whom we must give account.

- 11) **SLIDE** The word of God is sharper than a double-edged sword that strikes both ways
 - 12) We are to use it to fight the lies and deception and false ideas, but, at the same time, it will penetrate our hearts and souls
 - 13) It alone will judge our thoughts and attitudes on all sides
 - 14) When we use God's word to confront an attack, when we use God's word to engage others, His word will rightly discern what is in our hearts, minds, and souls.
 - 15) Nothing is hidden from God's sight
 - 16) No thing or no person can escape the word of God
 - 17) **SLIDE** We are not to use the Bible to beat others into submission, but neither do we abandon it to pacify the opposition
 - 18) We do not use the Bible to win an argument but to repeal the attacks of the enemy
 - 19) We do not use the Bible to justify our cause but to follow Jesus
 - 20) **Ephesians 6:12 (NIV)** ¹² For our struggle is not against flesh and blood, but against the rulers, against the authorities, against the powers of this dark world and against the spiritual forces of evil in the heavenly realms.
- G) **SLIDE** Fight the good fight of faith
- 1) The attacks now become personal and threatening
 - 2) However, we must not turn away from the good fight of FAITH
 - 3) If we find ourselves at such a town hall and begin yelling at others or even yelling, "Jesus," then we are not fighting the good fight of faith
 - 4) If we respond to the attacks with attacks of our own, then we are fighting the wrong fight
 - 5) If we pick up anger instead of the word or if we put more faith in a movement than in God, we are fighting the wrong fight
 - 6) Nehemiah never went after the enemy; instead, he prepared, but he never stopped building
 - 7) We are not to stop doing what God wants in order to respond to these taunts and attacks

- 8) From Beowulf: So the young build The future, wisely open-handed in peace, Protected in war;

H) **SLIDE** All about Truth!

- 1) We demolish the powers and lies of darkness with the Truth
- 2) From that moment in the Garden of Eden, the enemy has been trying to obscure THE TRUTH
- 3) Our battle is to make sure that does not happen
- 4) Therefore, we need to reestablish that foundation and stand firm
- 5) Human power and resolve cannot reveal the truth
- 6) **SLIDE** Truth does not require the intelligent to uncover it
- 7) Truth does not require experts to explain it.
- 8) Truth is not dependent upon majority rule.
- 9) Truth comes to those who are led by the Spirit of Truth and who come in humility like children.
- 10) Truth does not seek to make us comfortable.
- 11) Truth seeks to save us!