

NEHEMIAH

“Chapter 6: From Fear to Faith”

April 10, 2016

THREE FEARFUL PLOTS AGAINST NEHEMIAH (6:1-14)

PLOT #1

When word came to Sanballat, Tobiah, Geshem and the rest of our enemies that I had rebuilt the wall and not a gap was left in it - though up to that time I had not set the doors in the gates - Sanballat and Geshem sent me this message: “Come, let us meet together in one of the villages on the plain of Ono.” But they were scheming to harm me; so I sent messengers to them with this reply: “I am carrying on a great project and cannot go down. Why should the work stop while I leave it and go down to you?” Four times they sent me the same message, and each time I gave them the same answer. Nehemiah 6:1-4

PLOT #2

Then, the fifth time, Sanballat sent his aide to me with the same message, and in his hand was an unsealed letter in which was written: “It is reported among the nations - and Geshem says it is true - that you and the Jews are plotting to revolt, and therefore you are building the wall. Moreover, according to these reports you are about to become their king and have even appointed prophets to make this proclamation about you in Jerusalem. Now this report will get back to the king; so come, let us meet together.” I sent him this reply: “Nothing like what you are saying is happening; you are just making it up out of your head.” They were all trying to frighten us, thinking, “Their hands will get too weak for the work, and it will not be completed.” But I prayed, “Now strengthen my hands.” Nehemiah 6:5-9

PLOT #3

One day I went to the house of Shemaiah, who was shut in at his home. He said, “Let us meet in the house of God, inside the temple, and let us close the temple doors, because men are coming to kill you - by night they are coming to kill you.” But I said, “Should a man like me run away? Or should someone like me go into the temple to save his life? I will not go!” I realized that God had not sent him, but that he had prophesied against me because Tobiah and Sanballat had hired him. He had been hired to intimidate me so that I would commit a sin by doing this, and then they would give me a bad name to discredit me. Remember Tobiah and Sanballat, my God, because of what they have done; remember also the prophet Noadiah and how she and the rest of the prophets have been trying to intimidate me. Nehemiah 6:10-14

The opposition plots to _____ Nehemiah in stealth.

The opposition plots to _____ Nehemiah’s leadership before the King.

The opposition plots to _____ Nehemiah before the people.

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THREE FAITHFUL CHOICES OF NEHEMIAH (6:1-14)

Choice #1: Amidst threat of physical harm, Nehemiah's chooses to _____ in the vision – pushing forward in the work.

Now Jesus was going up to Jerusalem. On the way, he took the Twelve aside and said to them, "We are going up to Jerusalem, and the Son of Man will be delivered over to the chief priests and the teachers of the law. They will condemn him to death and will hand him over to the Gentiles to be mocked and flogged and crucified. On the third day he will be raised to life!" Matthew 20:17-19

Choice #2: Amidst threat of professional and personal slander, Nehemiah's chooses to _____ in God's sovereignty – leaving results, retaliation and retribution to God.

When they hurled their insults at him, he did not retaliate; when he suffered, he made no threats. Instead, he entrusted himself to him who judges justly. 1 Peter 2:23

Choice #3: Amidst threat of conspiracy, Nehemiah's chooses to _____ his holiness before God and man – refusing to transgress God's instructions.

After fasting forty days and forty nights, he was hungry. The tempter came to him and said, "If you are the Son of God, tell these stones to become bread." Jesus answered, "It is written: 'Man shall not live on bread alone, but on every word that comes from the mouth of God.'" Then the devil took him to the holy city and had him stand on the highest point of the temple. "If you are the Son of God," he said, "throw yourself down. For it is written: " 'He will command his angels concerning you, and they will lift you up in their hands, so that you will not strike your foot against a stone.'" Jesus answered him, "It is also written: 'Do not put the Lord your God to the test.'" Matthew 4:2-7

At the core of Nehemiah's specific choices was the general choice to move consistently from _____ to _____ in God's person, words, and works.

ONE FABULOUS FINISH (6:15-16)

So the wall was completed on the twenty-fifth of Elul, in fifty-two days. When all our enemies heard about this, all the surrounding nations were afraid and lost their self-confidence, because they realized that this work had been done with the help of our God. Nehemiah 6:15-16

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