

'Building Blocks of Faith Series' Sermons in the Book of Nehemiah

Message 9 - 'Diligence and Discernment' Nehemiah 6: 1 - 14



Nehemiah emerged from the specific attacks of his enemies to see the wall completed. They had targeted him as an individual to end his effective leadership, even with plans of murder. Yet Nehemiah had remained steadfast, he had discerned the danger, and been diligent in the work that the Lord had given him to do. This was a testimony to his faith in a sovereign God who he knew had control of all things. However, you can see some of the directed threats of the enemy. They were:

1. The Threat of Compromise – Nehemiah's enemies opposed everything that was being done, yet all of a sudden, they wanted to cooperate. There needs to be great care in situations such as this, as once the enemy gains a foothold in a church, he can weaken from within. Cooperation in the Lord's work is a very noble thing, yet, there needs to be great care to make sure that those cooperated with are the right people, at the right time, and for the right purposes. Otherwise, the enemy can easily slip in. At the heart of the enemies appeal for compromise and cooperation was an evil plot to murder Nehemiah.

2. The Threat of Slander – The enemy wrote an open letter that accused Nehemiah of having designs on becoming king. This was untrue, yet plausible, the enemies lies are always plausible. Any other type would be dismissed. Nehemiah had to face these threats in the strength of the Lord. This would give him a heavenly resolve, and the gracious granting of wisdom and discernment. Nehemiah didn't spend too much time dwelling on the accusations, he simply denied the reports, prayed to God for strength, and went back to work. He knew that his character was such that no honest person would believe such false reports. As one preacher says, 'If we take care of our character, we can trust God to take care of our reputation'.

3. The Threat of Deception - Nehemiah is urged to seek asylum in the temple in the light of very serious threats against his life. To enter and shut himself in the Holy Place would have been a desecration of the House of God. Such actions would have caused many people to doubt his sincerity, and all the things he has led them in and through, claiming the Lord, but then, to do such a thing, would have destroyed his standing, and his witness. This temptation to sin was present and would have been easily followed. As one commentator says, 'When we are tempted to sin we should remember who and what we are, that we may not do anything unbecoming us, and the profession we make.' When we face difficulty, when we face hardship, we must rest in the Lord, and in dealing with these threats, Nehemiah finds his courage in the great God of heaven.



Penzance Baptist Church
'Upholding the Ordinary Means of Grace'

Pastor Jonathan Stobbs