

## Why Should the Work Cease? # 14

Nehemiah 6: 1-4

We have read a portion of Scripture that reveals great triumph amidst extreme difficulty. Israel had been in captivity for 70 years and had been allowed to return to Jerusalem. They returned to find the city in ruins, with much work to be done.

On the surface the work seemed overwhelming, maybe even impossible, but Nehemiah and the others decided to undertake the impossible and restore the city. They made great progress for the glory of God, but there was determined opposition on every hand.

I truly believe that we are experiencing an attack of the adversary as we've never known before. It is apparent that the very foundation and fundamentals of our faith are being challenged on every hand. It seems as if the church can make progress for a season, but if we aren't careful we often suffer setbacks to the enemy. We cannot live off of yesterday's blessings. It is good to enjoy what the Lord has done in our midst, but we must be vigilant and continue in our labor for Him.

I would like to consider the work that Nehemiah and the others did there in Jerusalem. As we do, may we think on Nehemiah's question: [Why should the work cease?](#) There is too much at stake to abandon our post. It is imperative that we remain on the wall and in the Lord's work!

**I. The Accomplishment of the Work** (1) – [Now it came to pass, when Sanballat, and Tobiah, and Geshem the Arabian, and the rest of our enemies, heard that I had builded the wall, and that there was no breach left therein; \(though at that time I had not set up the doors upon the gates;\)](#) Nehemiah and the others had almost completed the work of rebuilding the wall. This was a necessary part of Jerusalem being restored. The wall served many purposes for those who dwelt within the city. We need to understand that rebuilding the wall went much farther than erecting a wall of stone. The wall was much more than a physical presence.

- Much of the work that has been accomplished here is visible to see, but we can't see all that has been accomplished. There is much that has been done that we cannot see with our physical eye. As we look at what they accomplished, you'll see a parallel to what God is doing in His church.

**A. A Work of Hope** – We must keep in mind that the people had been in bondage for 70 years. Most, if not all of these, had never known life in Jerusalem. Can you imagine the joy that simply building a wall brought to the people's hearts? They were finally getting to restore the homeland. This is where they belonged; it was the land of promise.

- Much of what we accomplish can't be held within our hands. Much of what we accomplish is found within our hearts. Just as the wall brought a sense of hope to Israel, we too can be filled with hope in the Lord.

- The church ought to be happy in the Lord. We should be developing a closer relationship with Christ. The church engages in labor together and that labor becomes a work of hope. We cannot place a value on what the Lord has done within the hearts and lives of His people here! We are a people of abundant hope in the Lord.

**B. A Wall of Protection** – Nehemiah reveals that the work on the wall had progressed to the point that [there was no breach left therein](#). They had successfully rebuilt what the world had torn down. This gave the people a sense of security within the city.

- There is likely a need to repair some breaches that exist in the wall. The congregation must stand united in order to achieve a common goal. We must close the gaps of separation and overcome our differences. That is a great accomplishment for any church family. There are a lot of churches that don't enjoy what we have here!

- We need to maintain a wall that has no breaches. The enemy is seeking any and every opportunity to break through. We need our wall to stand strong; our children need to be protected from the attacks of this world. We need to ensure that the church continues to be a place of rest from the cares of this life. We need to ensure that we keep the enemy out and Jesus in, with Him the focus of all we do.

**C. A Word of Humility (1b)** – [though at that time I had not set up the doors upon the gates](#); Nehemiah had made great progress, but he was still mindful of areas that needed to be secured. He had not grown complacent or over confident in the work they had done. This is much different than the arrogant attitude of his fore fathers who assumed that they were invincible because they we Israelites.

- We have certainly been blessed, but we must keep our focus; we cannot let our guard down. We have come a long way, but much remains to be done! Our SS attendance is up, but there are enough right around us to fill this church and another one just like it. We have children who belong to us who have never been saved. I'm certain that the adversary has his eye on us. He would like to find a weakness to exploit. He would love to come in and tear down the gains we've made! If God reveals an area that needs attention, we must respond quickly.

## **I. The Accomplishment of the Work (1)**

**II. The Attack on the Work (2)** – *That Sanballat and Geshem sent unto me, saying, Come, let us meet together in some one of the villages in the plain of Ono. But they thought to do me mischief.* It didn't take long for the enemy to show up in an effort to hinder the work of Nehemiah. Satan will see to it that hindrances come our way. This is just a part of life while serving the Lord. Those attacks will come, but we can be victorious by knowing what to look for. Sanballat's tactics mirror those used by the devil. This was:

**A. An Act to Delay** – Sanballat wanted Nehemiah to come meet in a village in the plain of Ono. He desired to lead Nehemiah away from the work he was engaged in. Sanballat knew the determination of Nehemiah to finish the wall, but he hoped to delay his work.

- Satan would like nothing more than to lead us away from the work we are engaged in. He would have us to lay back or "slack off" in our labor for the Lord. We cannot put off until tomorrow what we need to do today. There are souls at stake who may not have many more tomorrows. Let's work while it is day for the Lord. Don't buy into Satan's lie that there is plenty of time and allow him to hinder.

**B. An Act to Deceive** – Sanballat wanted Nehemiah to believe that he wanted to meet for the good of Israel. He hoped to deceive Nehemiah into falling for his evil plot.

- Satan likes to use deception today. He would have us believe that society is too far gone, there is too much to do, and our efforts simply aren't worth it. If he can cause us to lose our focus on the Lord and go a different way, we have fallen for his deceptive ways. We must constantly be on guard against the deceit of the enemy. As with Eve, once we commit to his way, it's often too late.

**C. An Act to Defeat (2b)** – *But they thought to do me mischief.* Nehemiah wasn't about to fall for Sanballat's plan. He knew they only wanted to cause him harm and hinder the work of rebuilding the wall.

- Satan may come, painting a pretty picture, but he always seeks destruction. You can rest assured that he is not pleased with the work that we've accomplished. He doesn't seek to merely put a damper on things; he seeks to defeat us!

- He doesn't want to keep you from SS; he wants to keep you from church altogether. He would like you to focus on the problems that we all face and get discouraged in your Christian walk. He isn't just seeking to defeat the pastor and the deacons; he desires to defeat all of us. He would like nothing better than to cause division among us. We can overcome; Satan has already been defeated, but we must be wise to his tactics and resist his attacks that seek our defeat.

## **I. The Accomplishment of the Work (1)**

## **II. The Attack on the Work (2)**

**III. The Attitude Toward the Work (3-4)** – Sanballat tried to discourage Nehemiah, but he realized there was more at stake than the completion of the wall. He was determined to fulfill what God had called him to do. Our attitude toward our work will determine our accomplishments. We need to share the attitude that Nehemiah had. Notice:

**A. His Description** – [I am doing a great work](#). There may have been those who wouldn't have agreed, but he was doing the work of the Lord. He was faithful to the work that God had called him to do.

- We must always remember that whatever we do for the Lord is a great work. He has no meaningless or trivial tasks. If you sing in the choir, sing with all you have. If you greet people at the back door, do it as unto the Lord. If you teach a class, prepare yourself throughout the week and come ready to teach for the glory of God! There are no unimportant tasks in the work of God. [Col.3:23 – And whatsoever ye do, do it heartily, as to the Lord, and not unto men](#). The work of the Lord is the most important task that we will endeavor to accomplish all week.

**B. His Devotion** – When called upon to come down Nehemiah responded, "[I cannot come down](#)." The work that he was engaged in was not of his own choosing. He had received the call of God. There wasn't an option of whether to continue or not.

- We need that same kind of devotion. Whatever God has called you to do, you cannot come down. Teacher keep on teaching, singer keep on singing, witness keep on telling, preacher keep on preaching, worker keep on working! Let us be found faithful at the end! There is no retirement plan in the Lord's handbook. We must stand our post until the Lord calls us home!

**C. His Discernment** (3b) – [Why should the work cease, whilst I leave it, and come down to you?](#)

Nehemiah knew that if he abandoned his post, the work would cease. He had a job to do; the others needed his leadership.

- Have you considered what may happen if you chose to come down from the wall? I know that God isn't dependent on us to complete His will, but we have an obligation to remain on the wall. I don't want to be the reason that someone never received Christ or realized their full potential. If you abandon your post, who will be there to fill it? Why should the work cease so that we might enjoy a time of leisure?

**D. His Determination** (4) – [Yet they sent unto me four times after this sort; and I answered them after the same manner.](#)

Sanballat sent for Nehemiah 4 times, yet he was unmoved. He was determined to finish the task that God had called him to do. They did finish the wall in record time, [V.15](#). This likely wouldn't have happened if Nehemiah had come down from the wall.

- Are you determined to finish the task that God has asked you to fulfill? Why should the work cease just because we are unwilling to continue? The church needs those in our day who are determined, utterly sold out unto the Lord, to accomplish the work we have been given!

The Sanballat's of our day would like for us all to come down from the wall and the work of God to cease. I will ask, once again, "Why should the work cease?" Are you in your place working for the Lord? Have you abandoned your post? If so, you need to seek the Lord and His strength to find your place on the wall once again. There is too much at stake for the work to cease. If you need to come, please do so as the Lord leads.