

BOOK OF NEHEMIAH
(Neh. 6:15-7:73)

Introduction

A tough job is always a joy to finish. How thrilling it must have been for Nehemiah and his people to see the walls of Jerusalem completed in the remarkable time of fifty-two days (6:15). As we have studied about the building of the walls of Jerusalem, we have tried to learn how to have complete triumph over the tactics of Satan. Nehemiah's total triumph over the enemy can be ours too if we pray to God and persevere in His work, while fully believing in His great power and provision to defeat the devil.

The wall has been completed (6:15), but the work of God must go on, and the warfare with Satan will go on. In Nehemiah 6:15-7:73 there are several principles presented which can enable us not only to complete one job for the Lord but also to continue doing God's work and defeating Satan.

Outline and Comments

I. Be used of God(6:15-19)

a. To attain victory in God's work(v.15).

- (1) God commences a work by laying it upon a servant's heart (cf. 2:12).

Each believer should be willing for God to burden his heart with the work God intends for him. God found such a person in Nehemiah(cf. 1-4; 2:12).

Other great servants of God willing to work were Isaiah(Isa. 6:8) and Paul(Acts 22:10).

- (2) God continues a work in spite of Satanic conflict (cf. 5:16 with Phil. 1:6:2:13, II Cor. 9:8).

- (3) God completes a work which He has begun. (cf. Phil. 1:6).

God is not a quitter. He finishes what He starts. When the work was done and victory won, these people realized that their work was not in vain, for it was of the Lord and done in the Lord.(cf. I Cor. 15:58).

- b. To continue in victory in God's work (vv. 16-19).

The completion of the wall was a great monument to the victory of God's people over their enemies (v. 16). It was also a great testimony to the outside unbelievers, for even "they perceived that this work was wrought by our God" (v. 16b). This incident is an excellent illustration of Ps. 76:10 and Matt. 5:16. Outsiders do take note of God's work in our individual lives and through Grace Bible Church.

One great victory had been won, but a new battle had begun. Satan's work wasn't done. Sometimes the greatest Satanic attacks come after our greatest victories. Satan does not want to see a spiritual mountain top experience continue. The higher we get spiritually, the harder we can fall (cf. I Cor. 10:12).

The alliance of some of the people with Satan's tool, Tobiah, (vv. 17-18) gave Satan a "foot in the door," which created exceedingly difficult problems for Nehemiah and the other people. There are two basic reasons why these people allied to Tobiah got entangled with Satan. First, they were disobedient to God in marrying unbelievers (v. 18 cf. II Cor. 6:14-18). Secondly, they lacked spiritual discernment because they called the works of Satan (through his tool, Tobiah) "good deeds" (v. 19 cf. Matt. 7:23). Carnal Christians often confuse the works of the flesh with the fruit of the Spirit (Gal. 5:19-23).

2. Be faithful to God (7:2).

Faithfulness is not an option but an obligation before God ("required," I Cor. 4:2). Simple but total faithfulness is a rare virtue (Prov. 20:6). It is the virtue that enables the believer to stick with God's work until the job is done, and to continue in the battle against Satan until the victory is won ("be thou faithful unto death," Rev. 2:10).

Great is God's faithfulness to us (Lam. 3:23). Can we individually and honestly say before the Lord, "Lord, whatever you want me to be or to do, You can

count on me."

3. Be reverent ("feared God") before God (7:2). People do not really get smart until they learn to fear God (Prov. 1:7). Such "fear of God" means a holy and healthy respect for God because of His person (who He is and what He is like) and His power (what He is able to do). True fear of God produces two wonderful results in the believer's life. First, we don't have to fear men when we fear God (Prov. 29:25). Secondly, we can depart from evil when we fear God (Prov. 16:6).
4. Be sensitive to God (7:5). God could work through Nehemiah because Nehemiah was sensitive to God's will. Nehemiah could discern exactly what God wanted him to do, even in routine matters such as taking a register of the people. To accomplish something for God we have to be able to detect the direction in which God is moving and to move along with Him (cf. Gen. 24:27; Ps. 32:8).

Challenge to believers.

We can be used of God, if like Nehemiah we are available for God to use us (Isa. 6:8; Acts 22:10). God will lay His will and work upon our hearts. Then we must let God continue and complete His work through us in spite of conflict with Satan (Phil. 1:6). God's work through us will abound and overflow if we are also faithful to God, reverent before God, and super-sensitive to the will of God. Isn't it exciting to realize what God is going to accomplish through us in the days to come if we put these principles into operation.

Invitation to Salvation

You must let God do something for you before He does something through you. God wants to give you a new start in life. He does this by cancelling out your sins through the blood of Christ (Eph. 1:7), and by giving you His eternal life (John 10:27-28). Only people who get a new start from Christ in this life end up with Christ in the next life (John 5:24).