

IT'S GREAT WORK THAT WE ARE DOING

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Nehemiah 6:3

"So I sent messengers to them, saying, 'I am doing a great work, and I cannot come down. Why should the work stop while I leave it and come down to you?'"

The sixth chapter of Nehemiah is a pivotal section in that book. The building of the wall is finished. It took just fifty-two days. Amazing. Today, with an army of engineers, modern equipment, and tons of finances, it takes several years to build a bridge or an overpass in our community. Fifty-two days and the wall was finished.

At the front end of this chapter, the evil duo, Sanballat and Tobiah, are up to no good again. Like a pesky mosquito, they won't leave Nehemiah and the people of God alone. Once again, the enemies send a message. Let's meet on the plains of Ono to talk. Persistent, the enemy sends messages four times. The fifth time, it came in an open letter where anyone could read it. Lies and stories are made up. Rumors spread. Again, by the seventh verse, "Come now, let us take counsel together."

Here are some things we learn:

First, Nehemiah recognized that the enemy was up to no good. He says, "they are planning to harm me." Sometimes the enemy can sound sweet and kind, even kinder than the people of God. But Nehemiah knew. They were up to no good. Far too many are ready to rush to Ono and naively listen to what the enemy has to offer. There is nothing good that comes from the enemy.

Sometimes we fail to realize that there are enemies of God's people today. Satan hates the kingdom. He hates everything about the kingdom. He'll use people, culture, and even one of us, to get us to stop what we are doing. Not Nehemiah. He recognized and saw through the false things of the enemy.

Second, Nehemiah understood that what he was doing was a great work. It was more than just a work. It was more than something that ought to be done. In his words, "it was a great work." Do we see that about the work that we do in the kingdom? It's more than just mailing out things, inviting people, having Bible studies, it's a great work that we are doing. It's a great work because it is God's work. It is a great work because it changes lives for eternity. I love a preacher who is a work-a-holic. He understands that there is so much to do and so many people to help. It's a great work that is being done.

Third, Nehemiah wasn't about to stop this work. He was needed there. For him to leave and meet the enemy at Ono, meant that some of the work may not get done. He understood what was important. He understood where he was needed. He understood what was best. The work of saving souls, leading sheep, and encouraging brethren can become sidetracked because we are at Ono talking to people who are not interested in God's work. All they want to do is talk. All they are interested in is getting us to not do what we ought to be doing.

Fourth, Nehemiah did not let the lies, rumors and gossip change what he was doing. He knew. He knew the truth. Rather than spending time answering all those charges, his words were, "you are inventing them in your mind." That was the message he sent in return. He didn't have to go through the details. He didn't have to answer every argument. You made this stuff up and I know that. I'm staying at my post and doing the work that I need to be doing.

Sidetracked. Bugged down. Chasing things that do not matter. That can become our lives. Nehemiah didn't let it. The enemy said, "Let's meet at Ono." Nehemiah said, Oh-No. I'm not going to Ono.

Let's get back to our mission and our purpose as we labor for the Lord. It's great work that we are doing.