

Ministry & The Work of God: 8

Handling Problems and Dealing with Difficult Situations – Part 2

Nehemiah 4-6

THREAT OF PHYSICAL ATTACK – Nehemiah 4. 7-9

Sanballat & Tobiah plot to attack the city.

The purpose was to create confusion and cause them to 'go astray'.

- (NKJV) *confusion* means 'error, wandering, impiety, perversions, confusion, disturbance – to cause to stagger, wander, err, vacillate, to deceive'. Other translations use the words: to hinder; injure; stir up trouble.

This is a deliberate attempt to draw God's people away from the truth

- satans first line of attack in the Bible – he deceived Eve
- He has not changed his strategy – this is his number one weapon.
- He infiltrates the work of God to create confusion
- to shift the focus of the work onto other things.

(vs 9) Nehemiah sets a **WATCH** against them.

- A watchman had a very responsible position, he was a guard
- Our responsibility as ministers is to keep watch.

The Holy Spirit will guide us into the truth and keep us from error.

- He raises the standard against the enemy (Isaiah 59.19)
- The 'Discerning of Spirits' is given to protect the church.
- God will reveal to us the enemy's strategies and plans (see 2 Kings 6.8-12)

Lessons:

1. Watch and Pray.

LACK OF MOTIVATION & DISCOURAGEMENT – Nehemiah 4. 10-23

The people were still becoming discouraged (vs10-11)

- Some wanted to give up - the work was too much (vs10)
- Others were getting weary and tired from the hard work. (vs10)
- The materials they were using were not the best – rubbish (vs10) - see Nehemiah 4.2
- Some of the people were being influenced by the threats of the enemy (vs11)

- In fear that their lives were at risk (vs11)
- Some could not see how the work could continue in these circumstances (vs11)
- Certain Jews were urging them to retreat and go and look after their homes (vs12)
- It looked hopeless – attacked on every side

GODLY WISDOM led Nehemiah to strategically position men, armed with swords, spears and bows

Remember the Lord – Nehemiah encourages his leaders to trust God.

God brought the enemy's plans to nothing.

CHANGE IN STRATEGY -

- ½ the people did construction work; ½ the people defended
- construction workers held a trowel in one hand and a weapon in the other

Lessons:

1. In the face of discouragement:
 - Seek God's wisdom and His instruction
 - Remember the Lord and what He has done
2. Be prepared to make changes if necessary in order to avoid discouragement. Discourage has a root meaning '*to kill the spirit*'. Discouragement kills the spirit in the heart of God's people.