

Radiant Church, October 109, 2021
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Nehemiah 6-7 Completion and Conspiracy

Tanner's story

Opportunity for a permanent meeting space

4 guys in the elder pipeline

One guy moved out to help with the church plant 3 years ago

He and another guy are opposed to the new location

Faith in Jesus results in a dedication to God's Name, God's promises, and God's people

Nehemiah 6:3 "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?"

Putting rocks around a small town is not what makes Nehemiah's work great. Nehemiah's dedication to God's Name, God's promises, and God's people makes his work great.

When doing a great work, trusting God in purity and gratitude, there will always be enemies who will want to distract you from the work.

Distraction from the Outside

Nehemiah 6:1-8

A meeting suggested (20 miles away from Jerusalem)

A meeting the enemies intended Nehemiah never to return from

An "open letter" sent (to be heard by everybody)

Nehemiah's commentary

Nehemiah 6:9 *For they all wanted to frighten us, thinking, "Their hands will drop from the work, and it will not be done." But now, O God, strengthen my hands.*

Tanner's 2 guys are accusing him of being dictatorial, a bully, always wants his way
And writing emails to other people in the church saying so

Distraction from the Inside

Nehemiah 6:10-13

6:10 Nehemiah invited to do something totally wrong

6:11 Nehemiah knows he is not a priest, cannot enter the Temple

Nehemiah invited to run and hide (be distracted and drawn off the work)

Nehemiah's commentary

Nehemiah 6:12-13 *And I understood and saw that God had not sent him, but he had pronounced the prophecy against me because Tobiah and Sanballat had hired him.*

For this purpose he was hired, that I should be afraid and act in this way and sin, and so they could give me a bad name in order to taunt me.

Nehemiah's prayer (6:14) "Remember O Lord" the false prophets
Who tried to speak in Your Name
Who told lies
Who tried to stop the work You have called me to

Mark Sayers: "Today many of us want to influence, but not many of us wish to lead"

Nehemiah's commentary after the wall is completed
Nehemiah 6:15-16 *So the wall was finished on the twenty-fifth day of the month Elul, in fifty-two days. And when all our enemies heard of it, all the nations around us were afraid and fell greatly in their own esteem, for they perceived that this work had been accomplished with the help of our God.*

The wall being completed meant Sanballat, Tobiah and Geshem would have to lay siege against Jerusalem...which Artaxerxes back in Persia would not approve, since it would be subjects against subjects, and it would violate Artaxerxes mandate that Jerusalem be re-inhabited and worship of God reinstated

Distraction from Results of Intermarriage

Nehemiah 6:17-19

Insiders colluding with the enemy
Insiders obligated to support the enemy
Insiders trying to influence Nehemiah by proclaiming the virtues of the enemy

The Beginning of Who's In and Who's Out

Nehemiah 7:1-3 Guard the gates at night

Nehemiah 7:4 Not enough people living in Jerusalem to protect it

Nehemiah 7:5-60 a long genealogy

Those who could prove their ancestry

Nehemiah 7:61-62

Those who could not prove their ancestry
Not excluded, just noted

Nehemiah 7:63-65

Priests who could not prove their ancestry
Excluded, until when it could be determined later

About 50, 000 people total

Most (not all) of the people gave sacrificially to the work

The 2 guys opposing Tanner and the new building have not given anything since the beginning of the year

Not willing to agree unless they agree
Not willing to have any skin in the game

Most (not all) continued to live in their own towns (see verse 4)
Not mentioned as a positive

Often, we are convinced to stay where we are
Often, we are convinced to repeat our own church histories
Remain on the edges
Remain uncommitted, uninvolved
Remain critical of leadership or initiatives
Remain not invested

Faith in Jesus results in a dedication to God's Name, God's promises, and God's people

Faith in Jesus is more than believing the right things. It's living the right way because you believe the right things.

Hebrews 11:1-7 *Now faith is the assurance of things hoped for, the conviction of things not seen. For by it the people of old received their commendation. By faith we understand that the universe was created by the word of God, so that what is seen was not made out of things that are visible.*

By faith Abel offered to God a more acceptable sacrifice than Cain, through which he was commended as righteous, God commending him by accepting his gifts. And through his faith, though he died, he still speaks.

By faith Enoch was taken up so that he should not see death, and he was not found, because God had taken him. Now before he was taken he was commended as having pleased God. And without faith it is impossible to please him, for whoever would draw near to God must believe that he exists and that he rewards those who seek him.

By faith Noah, being warned by God concerning events as yet unseen, in reverent fear constructed an ark for the saving of his household. By this he condemned the world and became an heir of the righteousness that comes by faith.

True Biblical faith is something you live. True Biblical faith changes you

Abel was willing to see his worship of his heart be redirected and recaptured
Abel was devoted to God's Name

Enoch was willing to see his heart be redirected and recaptured to obedience
Enoch was devoted to God's promises

Noah was willing to see his heart be submitted to the calling of God on his life
Noah was devoted to God's people

Faith in Jesus results in a dedication to God's Name, God's promises, and God's people

Tanner is devoted to God's Name, God's promises, and God's people
And he is facing opposition that would distract him from that
Opposition, sadly, from the inside
But Nehemiah may say these 2 men are not really on the inside at all!

When doing a great work, trusting God in purity and gratitude, there will always be enemies who will want to distract you from the work.