

Victoria Fellowship Church
International & Interdenominational
Bible Study Worksheet – May 24, 2020

Theme: Nehemiah: A Vessel of Restoration Topic: Remain Focused on the Task

Main Text: Nehemiah 6–7:1-3.

Key verse: Nehemiah 6:9 ‘For they all were trying to make us afraid, saying, “Their hands will be weakened in the work, and it will not be done.” Now therefore, O God, strengthen my hands.’
(NKJV)

INTRODUCTION: In the short time since Nehemiah arrived in Jerusalem, his mission to restore God’s glory in Jerusalem has weathered several assaults from the enemies of God. It has met with scorn and threats of violence from the enemy neighbors (Nehemiah 4). Internally, there was the outcry from the poor Jews against their wealthier brethren (Nehemiah 5). Nevertheless, the work was progressing at a fast pace: The breaches in the wall have been repaired, and the wall is complete except for the doors in the gates. But the enemy has not given up. This time, the enemy decides to specifically target the leader (Nehemiah). The first of this new wave of attacks came in the form of repeated invitations to a ‘peace confab’ ‘... *come let us meet together among the villages in the plain of Ono.*’, perhaps with the offer of fostering mutual understanding (Nehemiah 6:2, 4-5). But God helped Nehemiah to recognize the proposed meeting as a scam.

- 1. (a). Let participants examine the strategy in this new wave of attack from the enemies of Jerusalem. See Nehemiah 6:1, 9; Mark 14:27b (b) What can we learn from Nehemiah’s response in Nehemiah 6:3, 9b? (c). Discuss the possibility of a Christian being free from attacks by opponents of God.**

On the surface, fostering mutual understanding with our ‘unfriendly’ neighbors may sound nice. But Nehemiah’s response “*My work is too important to stop now and go there. I can’t afford to slow down the work just to visit with you.*” (Nehemiah 6:3b CEB) is instructive – he prioritized the work, so he is not distracted, and he discerned the evil motive of the invitation. When Nehemiah showed no appetite for any meeting, they resorted to blackmails, rumor mongering, character assassinations, etc. ‘*It is reported among the nations, and Geshem says, that you and the Jews plan to rebel...Now these matters will be reported to the King...*’ (Nehemiah 6:6-7). And when that trick failed, they bribed Shemaiah to pose as one with a special word from God; suggesting to Nehemiah to run and hide in the temple. Their aim was to lure Nehemiah into violating the rules of the temple, and so damage his reputation. Shemaiah became an agent of the enemy posing as a prophet to trick Nehemiah into error.

- 2. (a) If Nehemiah had gone to hide in the Temple, how would that have affected him; or the morale of the people and the work he was doing? See also Numbers 18:22 (b). What should be the right attitude, especially towards our spiritual leaders now that we know that Satan will even use ‘prophets’ to lure believers into a trap? See Nehemiah 6:11-14; 1 Timothy 2:1-2**

Amid challenging environment, Nehemiah and the people had worked hard to get the project completed. But surprisingly, not even their enemies attributed the success to their hard work (Nehemiah 6:16). Their opponents could not help but stand in awe of God, considering how all their threats and schemes had fallen flat. In fact, they were disheartened to see that the project not only got completed but was completed in 52 days! And they had to admit that this work had been accomplished because of God.

- 3. (a). What possible lesson is there for us when we consider the response of the opponents to the restoration of Jerusalem in Nehemiah 6:16? See also 1 Peter 2:11-12 (b). Though Nehemiah and his people worked hard to complete the work, their enemies attributed the success to God. What does that teach us about our own successes in our own endeavors?**

Prayer: *Father God, help me to continually focus on you and not allow the antics of Satan and his cohorts to distract me from the task Your grace has given me. In Jesus Name, amen.*