

## The Wall is Finished

3.21.10

“Now when Sanballat and Tobiah and Geshem the Arab and the rest of our enemies heard that I had built the wall and that there was no breach left in it (although up to that time I had not set up the doors in the gates) The wall was almost finished. One final attempt.

Sanballat and Geshem sent to me, saying, “Come and let us meet together at Hakkephirim in the plain of Ono.” On the surface, this looked like a great opportunity to make nice.

But they intended to do me harm. But Nehemiah knew better.

### **P: Good leaders have good discernment.**

#### How Do We Get This?

1. Immersing ourselves in the Scriptures.
2. Walking closely with Jesus in prayer.
3. Walking with wise people (Prov. 13:20).

*How is your discernment today? What needs to change to improve it?*

*And 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?”*

### **P: Good leaders have a good handle on their priorities.**

#### How Do We Do This?

1. Figure out what our priorities are according to Scripture.
  - a. Jesus. Spouse (if applicable). Children (if applicable). Ministry/Vocation.
  - b. When these get out of order, things always go wrong. Disordered priorities always eventually lead to destruction.
2. Learn your limits and learn to say “no.”
  - a. We all have different sized plates. Different sizes in different seasons.
  - b. “*The secret to effectiveness is elimination.*” - Howard Hendricks.
  - c. If you have trouble saying no, get to the bottom of what is driving it. Is it a fear of man? Misplaced identity? Pride?
3. Live in community - not just attend a community group.

*How are you doing with your priorities today? What needs to change to bring improvement?*

*And they sent to me four times in this way, and I answered them in the same manner.*

### **P: When our enemies are persistent, we have to be even more persistent to succeed.**

*Am I leaning on Jesus and His people to answer His call to persistence?*

*In the same way Sanballat for the fifth time sent his servant to me with an open letter in his hand. Letters were carefully sealed at this time. It was meant to spread rumors.*

*In it was written, “It is reported among the nations, and Geshem also says it, that you and the Jews intend to rebel; that is why you are building the wall. And according to these reports you wish to become their king. And you have also set up prophets to proclaim concerning you in Jerusalem. There is a king in Judah.’ And now the king will hear of these reports. So now come and let us take counsel together.”* There were multiple lies here intended to force Nehemiah to meet with them. Each of them could have brought serious consequences.

### **P: God’s enemies will use intimidation and lies to try to derail God’s work.**

*Are you aware of how the Enemy is using these in your life? How are you thwarting his attempts?*

*Then I sent to him, saying, “No such things as you say have been done, for you are inventing them out of your own mind.” 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.” Nehemiah didn’t answer all the threats, but he did these. He knew these were serious threats at a pivotal point in the work. Again, we see his consistent commitment to prayer.*

### **P: Good leaders have the wisdom they need to know when and how to respond to their enemies.**

*Are you walking in this wisdom? What needs to change in this area?*

*Now when I went into the house of Shemaiah the son of Delaiah, son of Mehetabel, who was confined to his home, he said, “Let us meet together in the house of God, within the temple. Let us close the doors of the temple, for they are coming to kill you. They are coming to kill you by night.” But I said, “Should such a man as I run away? And what man such as I could go into the temple and live? I will not go in.”* He was likely a family friend. Possibly a shut-in. To go into the temple would have been a clear violation of the Law and seriously undermined Nehemiah’s ability to lead effectively.

*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. Remember Tobiah and Sanballat, O my God, according to these things that they did, and also the prophetess Noadiah and the rest of the prophets who wanted to make me afraid. As before, he prays for justice to be done.*

### **P: Good leaders lead with integrity and courage even at the risk of their own safety.**

*Are these qualities evidenced in your leadership? If not, what needs to change?*

*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 work is done.*

*Moreover, in those days the nobles of Judah sent many letters to Tobiah, and Tobiah's letters came to them. For many in Judah were bound by oath to him, because he was the son-in-law of Shecaniah the son of Arab; and his son Jehobanan had taken the daughter of Meshullam the son of Berechiah as his wife. Also they spoke of his good deeds in my presence and reported my words to him. And Tobiah sent letters to make me afraid. An evil alliance from within.*

### **P: Even though the war is over, the battle continues. The same is true for us.**

*Am doing my part to ‘stand firm’ in the battle?*

**We can stand firm in our battle because Jesus stood firm in His battle and now stands with us.**