



Week Four – Nehemiah: 52 Days

CONNECT

- What's one of your greatest accomplishments? How did you accomplish your goal and what did you learn from your experience?

WORD

Nehemiah 6:1-16 (NIV)

When word came to Sanballat, Tobiah, Geshem the Arab and the rest of our enemies that I had rebuilt the wall and not a gap was left in it—though up to that time I had not set the doors in the gates—² Sanballat and Geshem sent me this message: “Come, let us meet together in one of the villages^[a] on the plain of Ono.” But they were scheming to harm me;³ so I sent messengers to them with this reply: “I am carrying on a great project and cannot go down. Why should the work stop while I leave it and go down to you?”⁴ Four times they sent me the same message, and each time I gave them the same answer.⁵ Then, the fifth time, Sanballat sent his aide to me with the same message, and in his hand was an unsealed letter⁶ in which was written: “It is reported among the nations—and Geshem^[b] says it is true—that you and the Jews are plotting to revolt, and therefore you are building the wall. Moreover, according to these reports you are about to become their king⁷ and have even appointed prophets to make this proclamation about you in Jerusalem: ‘There is a king in Judah!’ Now this report will get back to the king; so come, let us meet together.”⁸ I sent him this reply: “Nothing like what you are saying is happening; you are just making it up out of your head.”⁹ They were all trying to frighten us, thinking, “Their hands will get too weak for the work, and it will not be completed.” But I prayed, “Now strengthen my hands.”¹⁰ One day I went to the house of Shemaiah son of Delaiah, the son of Mehetabel, who was shut in at his home. He said, “Let us meet in the house of God, inside the temple, and let us close the temple doors, because men are coming to kill you—by night they are coming to kill you.”¹¹ But I said, “Should a man like me run away? Or should someone like me go into the temple to save his life? I will not go!”¹² I realized that God had not sent him, but that he had prophesied against me because Tobiah and Sanballat had hired him.¹³ He had been hired to intimidate me so that I would commit a sin by doing this, and then they would give me a bad name to discredit me.¹⁴ Remember Tobiah and Sanballat, my God, because of what they have done; remember also the prophet Noadiah and how she and the rest of the prophets have been trying to intimidate me.¹⁵ So the wall was completed on the twenty-fifth of Elul, in fifty-two days.¹⁶ When all our enemies heard about this, all the surrounding nations were afraid and lost their self-confidence, because they realized that this work had been done with the help of our God.

THOUGHT

When the job, task or goal is almost met, it seems that everything that can go wrong will. For Nehemiah, rebuilding God's city had been no easy task in his goal of rebuilding the walls of Jerusalem; Nehemiah has had to stand up to the violent threats of the enemy. He had to deal with internal conflict between the wealthy and poor Jews. He is almost done now. The breaches in the wall have been repaired, and the wall is complete except for the doors in the gates. As followers of Jesus, we will not only face the natural opposition of people, but also that of the principalities of darkness in our world (Eph. 6:12). Our hope comes from knowing that God has called us and will strengthen us to complete what lies ahead.

DISCUSSION

1. What could distract you from doing the most important thing God wants you to do?

2. What steps can you take that will help prepare yourself to handle distractions when they come at you?

3. How is the enemy trying to tempt you in order to discredit your integrity?

4. Describe a time when you gave into temptation and compromised your integrity. How did that experience impact you?

5. Where in life do you feel like you want to give up right now? What steps with Jesus can you take to ensure that you succeed?

6. What have you learned most from this series that you can use to help you in changing your world? What are you going to do about it?

PERSONAL APPLICATION

- Thank God for all the things you've learned during this series. Ask Him to guide your steps as you move forward in carrying out your task.
- Share with someone the ways the enemy is trying to discredit your integrity. Pray with them, asking God to give you strength as you press forward.

PRAYER

- Ask God to help you finish strong in everything you do.
- Ask God to remove all the distractions that could keep you from completing your task and distract you from Him.
- Ask God to help you keep a strong focus on everything you do for Him.