

## Bible Class Notes – Studies in The Old Testament – Lesson 165

### Character Studies from Daniel and Nehemiah

**This week** – How a believer or seeker, facing opposition, is protected and blessed by the Lord.

**The wall was finished ... our enemies saw...and they perceived that it was ... of God.**

*Nehemiah 6 v 15-16*

#### Bible Readings for this week:

(Choose a regular time each day to read the Bible and pray whether it be when you first wake up or just before you go to sleep)

Day	Bible Reading	Tick When Read
Sunday	Nehemiah 2v17-20, 4v1-6, Psalm 120 (Ridiculed)	
Monday	Nehemiah 4v7-23 (Attacked to stop the work)	
Tuesday	Nehemiah 5v1-19 (Poverty created by greed)	
Wednesday	Nehemiah 6v1-14 (Craftiness, threats and foul play)	
Thursday	Nehemiah 6v15-19, Psalm 127 (The wall completed)	
Friday	Psalm 121, 122, 123 (Praise for God the Deliverer)	
Saturday	Psalm 124, 125, 129, 130 (Always trust in the Lord)	

#### Important Thought for us Today: Why does trouble happen to us when we seek God?

The Devil wants the power and worship that God deserves all for himself. Jerusalem's destruction made people doubt and forget God - leaving people in the Devil's hands, to his great pleasure. Trouble and opposition only began when Jerusalem's rebuilding started; stirring Satan into action to keep people in his power and prevent any worship of God; using any tactic possible - from enemies without and from enemies within.

Satan wants the same of us today; to live without God. The same tactics are used to prevent us from being saved, or to hinder God's work. Do not be surprised if you start to seek God and opposition comes; such an act makes the Devil furious. He may make our friends laugh at us, suggesting that Christians are weak and naïve; He may attack us with doubts such as "no-one as sinful as you could ever be saved"; He may make sin very attractive so that in weakness we disobey the Lord; He may put obstacles in the way of coming to Church or reading the Bible; He may make ideas that doubt God's existence seem more realistic and valid. Take comfort as the Lord has promised that, if we **"resist the Devil, He will flee from us"**, and **"if we draw near to God, He will draw near to us."**

**Be like Nehemiah; the Lord will protect you from the Devil if you trust and pray for help.**

**Hymn 129, based on Psalm 129 teaching Christ's protection from all enemies.**

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|-----------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------|
| 1. Many times since days of youth<br>(May believers say), | 2. Yet they never can prevail<br>God defends us still; | 4. For His own the Lord doth fight<br>So on Him depend.    |
| Foes devoid of love and truth<br>Hurt us day by day.      | Jesus' power can never fail,<br>Saving from all ill.   | Christ shall keep us day & night<br>Till our troubles end. |

EDT Bible/College Class Take Home Sheet

*This sheet is given to remind you of the lesson and to encourage you to read your Bible.*

## Determination and Courage - Despite Opposition

### • An impossible Task?

- Nehemiah was given 3 months to complete the rebuilding of Jerusalem by King Artaxerxes. How was he to achieve this? The walls had large gaps, its' gates broken; its' terrain, straddling 7 hills, was difficult to work; no machinery - just the hands of an untrained workforce comprising of jewellers, priests and rulers!

### • The Lord gave the people a heart to work and was with them. (Nehemiah 4 v 17-18)

- Nehemiah's encouragement to the people: **"Come, let us build up the wall of Jerusalem, that we be no more a reproach... see the hand of my God which is good upon me... hear the support of the King."** (Nehemiah 2 v 17-18)

- **The people's joyful response: "Let us rise up and build."**  
So, they strengthened their hands for this good work.

### • Opposition from Without Jerusalem to stop the work:

- **Ridicule (4.1-5):** Sanballat the Horonite, Tobiah the Ammonite, and Geshem the Arabian openly laughed at their lack of skill; **'surely a fox will knock the wall down!'** **Nehemiah prayed; God gave the people a mind to work; ignoring the enemy's scorn.**

- **Attack (4.6-15):** Angered, the enemy attacked; thinking that they could kill them.

**Nehemiah prayed; telling the people not to be afraid, but remember the Lord and fight.**

So, from the rising of the morning till the stars appeared the people worked with a sword (defence) in one hand and a trowel (building) in the other. Ready to work or to defend!

- **Craft (6.1-4):** In deceit the enemy acted as friends, inviting Nehemiah for a talk.

**Nehemiah refused; O No! Why should I stop God's work to come and speak with you?**

- **Fearful threats (6.5-9):** Pretended that King Artaxerxes was angry with Nehemiah.

**Nehemiah prayed; God strengthened him to disbelieve the report and continue working.**

- **Foul play (6.10-14):** Bribed a trusted man to prophecy that Nehemiah should hide.

**Nehemiah prayed; He saw that God had not sent him and it would be a sin to be afraid.**

### • Threat from Within Jerusalem to stop the work:

- **Greed of those in power (5.1-12):** The workers were being over-charged by their own rulers for food and land causing much poverty, pain and delay to the work.

**Nehemiah rebuked the rulers; ordering them to give land and food; forgetting any debt.**

### • The wall was rebuilt in Record Time - 52 days! How?

- It was the Lord's reward to Nehemiah and the people for their faith in Him. They refused to be frightened, tricked or flattered; always responding by praying for help, trusting in God's power and rejecting any temptation to doubt or disobey their God.

**The enemy of our souls, the Devil, is out to use all tactics to keep us in his power.**

**He hates us and wants us in Hell. Only by trusting in the Lord, Who loves us and wants us to be forever with Him in Heaven, can we be rescued and protected from this enemy.**

**Will we, like Nehemiah, follow God's way as laid out in the Gospel in the Bible?**

**'God resisteth the proud, but giveth grace unto the humble. Submit yourselves therefore to God. Resist the devil, and he will flee from you. Draw nigh (near) unto God, and He will draw nigh to you .... Humble yourselves in the sight of the Lord, and He shall lift you up.'** James 4 v 6-10