

Faithful Unto Completion

One of the great qualities of God is His faithfulness (Lamentations 3:22-23). One of the great qualities of Jesus' disciples is faithfulness (1 Corinthians 4:2; Revelation 2:10). Nehemiah's enemies wanted to make some final efforts to defeat the completion of the building project in Jerusalem. They did not want the walls rebuilt because they feared the power the walls would bring to the Jews. Nehemiah and those who worked with him were faithful until the job was done. Nehemiah 6 outlines part of the attacks made on the work and how it was overcome.

The invitation was extended in vss. 1-4. Sanballat, Tobiah, Geshem and others tried to distract Nehemiah by trying to get him to leave the work and meet with them. Nehemiah realized that they meant to cause harm. His answer is classic and one we can give to those who would divert our attention from God's assigned tasks. He said, *"I am doing a great work, so that I cannot come down"* (vs. 3).

In vss. 5-9, slander was threatened. All these men were still trying to get Nehemiah to meet with them. They spoke of a rumor that would go to the king, and cause the king to think Nehemiah and Jerusalem were rebelling. They were trying to frighten the people, but Nehemiah relied on the Lord for strength. Matthew 12:36 says, *"But I say unto you, That every idle word that men shall speak, they shall give account thereof in the day of judgment."* Every Christian must always realize the gravity of the words we say and be cautious against slander. Slander can destroy a good work of God.

Fear was encouraged by the men in vss. 10-14. Shemaiah was hired to cause Nehemiah to hide himself in fear. Nehemiah stood firm, trusting God, and also perceived that God had not sent him. Still other prophets (probably false) tried to put Nehemiah in fear. Fear can have no place in the heart of a Christian. *"The fear of man bringeth a snare: but whoso putteth his trust in the Lord shall be safe"* (Proverbs 29:25).

In vss. 15-16, the mission was accomplished. Because of the faithfulness of Nehemiah and others, the walls were completed in record time. Nehemiah's enemies realized that God had helped the Israelites. God is never far. He is always there to encourage us if we are willing to do His will. We can go forward with full confidence that the Lord will help us finish our mission on this earth.

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