**Nehemiah 6**

**Saying Oh No, to Ono**

I. **Slide1 Announce:**
   A. **Slide2** Dinners start again next Wed night: chicken breast/gravy/mashed potatoes/green beans **$5.50/$3.50**
   B. **Slide3** Aspire Conf Fri Night:
   C. **Slide4** Dead Sea Scrolls Exhibit in LA

I. **Slide5 Intro:**
   A. *When God’s people are sinning against each other then this allows Satan to take a vacation.*
      1. Last chapter Nehemiah was able to convince the Jews **not to charge their brethren usury** (interest). So Satan has to go back to work.
      2. He then must choose to come back as a **serpent** that deceives, or a **lion** that devours, or an **angel of light** that lights the path of wickedness for any who will follow.
         a) *eg:* Once in awhile I’ll take a flashlight & shine it on the floor & watch our little black cocker Sully **go crazy chasing it**…It’s like he falls into a **trance**…& **you can lead him wherever you want him to go.**
            (1) Many people are like little Sully easily led around by a **false angel of light.**
   B. **Slide6 Title:** *Saying Oh No, to Ono*
      1. **Outline:** A 1/2 Dozen Calculated Strikes. A Dozen Counter Attacks.

II. **Slide7 A ½ DOZEN CALCULATED STRIKES**
   A. This sounds like the exact same attacks Satan throws at the church today: **Distractions; Nipping at the heals; Rumors; Fear; Death Threats; & Conspiracy.**
   B. (1) Great attacks after great victories.
      1. Frequent tactic of enemy: **Oppose** the work, **threaten** the workers, **attack** the leader.
   C. **Slide8a DISTRACTIONS (2)**
      1. **ONO – ohhh-nooo** was probably his 1st clue this was a bad area. **ha!**
      2. How about meeting us ½ way?
         a) It’s a town about 7m. S/E of Joppa, about 30 miles north-west of Jerusalem.
         b) So **Ono** was located ½ way in between Jerusalem & Samaria.
         c) **“Regarding the sins in which we would fear to tread...Satan seems to be kind enough to offer to meet us ½ way.”**
3. **Contrast** Eve’s folly in discussing the question raised by the serpent.
   
   *has God indeed said...Gen.3:1-5.*
   
   a) Do you ever **negotiate** questions that should never be allowed consideration?

4. **What things or people distract you** from doing the Lords work?

5. **How can you have a heads up** on these distractions?

D. **Slide8b ANKLE BITTERS** (4)
   
   1. The enemy’s motto: *If at 1st you don’t succeed...try, try, again.*
      
      a) They actually try to get him to meet 4 **times**, to try to harm him.
      b) Our enemy try’s to just get a **foot** in...or even a **toe**.

E. **Slide8c RUMORS** (6,7)
   
   1. (5) **An official letter** was rolled up & had on it an **official seal** from its bearer.
      
      a) But this **open letter** meant it either wasn’t official (seal was broken) or, they were spreading its contents **for all to see**.
   
   2. (6) Rumor Mill said you’re doing this, **that you may be their King** - He tries to drive a wedge between Nehemiah & Artaxerxes.
   
   3. (7) Then ends letter with the **childish tattletale technique of, I’m telling**.
      
      a) I don’t know how many times over the years that I heard, when someone didn’t like our church policies, some one say, **I’m telling Chuck**.

4. **Here is slander at its finest.**
   
   a) Immanuel Kant, *“Have patience awhile; slanders are not long-lived.*
      
      *Truth is the child of time; ere long she shall appear to vindicate thee.”*
   
   b) An old Hebrew proverb says, **Slander slays three persons:** the speaker, the spoken to, and the spoken of.

5. **So, what battle tactic do you use** against rumors against you?
   
   a) It is a **clear conscience** that keeps you from fear & stopping your work.
   
   b) This was Paul’s course, **so, I myself always strive to have a conscience without offense** toward God and men. Acts 24:16

F. **Slide8d FEAR** (9)
   
   1. Identify **fear** tactics.

G. **Slide8e DEATH THREATS** (10)
   
   1. **Shemaiah** - If you lived back in Nehemiah’s day you’d see posters around town, **Prophet for hire, w/Shemaiah’s picture on it.**
   
   2. **Watch for deceivers who invite you into their house for a cup of fake hospitality**
      
      a) Watch for **whisperers**. Watch for those who bring fears.
H. Slide8f CONSPIRACY (17-19)
1. Slide8g Someone has defined gossip as...“News you have to hurry & tell somebody else, before you find out it isn’t true!”
2. (19) Nehemiah was constantly compelled to listen to their stories concerning how great Tobiah was.
   a) Adolph Hitler wrote, “Mental confusion, contradiction of feeling, indecisiveness, panic; these are our weapons.”
I. What do we learn about the persistence of our enemy?
   1. Satan isn’t a quitter. He stays on the field even after he looses the battle.
   2. “Many a careless Christian has won the war but afterward lost the victory.”¹
      [His goal? He seeks to turn the victors into victims]
J. Why is it so hard to remember that behind our earthly conflicts is the reality of true spiritual warfare?
K. What type of opposition are you facing right now?
L. Let’s dig in to HOW Nehemiah responded to all of these attacks.
   1. The key: Detect the enemy’s strategy & Defeat it.
   2. Let’s learn How to respond to Opposition?

III. Slide9 A DOZEN COUNTER ATTACKS
A. Slide10a DON’T BE DISTRACTED (3)
   1. Beware when the enemy seeks to embrace you.
   2. Say no to invitations that compromise your witness.
   3. Leaders, you are called to be a guidepost not a weather vane. (ask meaning?)
   4. Nehemiah recognized he was doing a great work for the Lord.
      a) What great work does He have you doing?
         (1) You might think...“I’m not doing anything great”. But isn’t any work that He asks you to do a great work?
   5. Slide10b Phillips Brooks said, Do not pray for easy lives. Pray to be stronger men.
      Do not pray for tasks equal to your powers. Pray for powers equal to your tasks.
   6. We as God’s people often leave the great work God has for us...for lesser things. caution!
B. Slide10c DON’T BE DRAINED (4)

¹ Wiersbe pg.78
1. What if they keep coming at you...what do you do?
   a) The **right response** is always the **right response**.
2. But what if they just **continue**?
   a) Then you need to **tirelessly continue**. **Avoid** at all cost **conferences** with the enemy. *Give no place to the devil.*

C. Slide10d **DON’T REACT TO RUMORS** (6-8)
   1. You may deny the slander against you, **but** don’t stop **His work**.
   2. How do you normally react to rumors about yourself? friends? family?

D. Slide10e **DON’T RAMBLE** (8)
   1. **Either respond by not responding**...
      a) Mark 15:3,4 And the chief priests accused Him/Jesus of many things, but He **answered nothing**. Then Pilate asked Him again, saying, "Do You answer nothing? See how many things they testify against You!" But Jesus **still answered nothing**, so that Pilate marveled.
   2. **Or, when you respond to The enemy** or an enemy, **be short, simple, & to the point**...don’t ramble.

E. Slide10f **DON’T GO IT ALONE** (9b)
   1. Respond by...**Praying** (vs.9,14 – these are the 5**th** & 6**th** of Nehemiah’s quick Voxer prayers) Yet, **behind those quick prayers was a life of prayer**.
      a) Take your **rumors** to God.

F. Slide10g **DON’T FLEE** (11a)
   1. **Stand Firm. Stand strong. Be courageous.**
   2. When serving the Lord...**don’t leave your post.**
      a) I like the story of David being concerned about his small flock of sheep...
      b) **So David rose early in the morning, left the sheep with a keeper**, and took the things and went as Jesse had commanded him. 1 Sam.17:20
      c) Remember when the Pharisees tried to get Jesus to run, **On that very day some Pharisees came, saying to Him, Get out and depart from here, for Herod wants to kill You.** And He said to them, Go, tell that fox, Behold, I cast out demons and perform cures today & tomorrow, & the third day I shall be perfected. Nevertheless I must journey today, tomorrow, and the day following; for it cannot be that a prophet should perish outside of Jerusalem.
      d) **Flee sin, flee temptation, but never flee your place of duty.**
   3. How do we quote...**If God is for us, who can be against us**...& then flee?
4. How do we say, who shall separate us from the love of Christ? Shall tribulation, or distress, or persecution, or famine, or nakedness, or peril, or sword? & then allow ourselves to be separated from Him?

5. Here’s why we shouldn’t listen to all who dispense religious counsel.

G. Slide10h DON’T HIDE (11b)
   1. Always be suspect of the counsel which savors of self.
   2. No man can secure his own safety by hiding...even in the temple of God.

H. Slide10i DON’T WAIVER (11c)
   1. I will not go in – Stick to your guns.

I. Slide10j DON’T LACK DISCERNMENT (12)
   1. I perceived. (vs.2b,9a)

J. Slide10k DON’T FEAR (13a)
   1. Also in vs.9,14,& 19.

K. Slide10l DON’T REACT (13b)
   1. Never React to the enemy, always Act according to the Word.

L. Slide10m DON’T SIN (13c)
   1. Note: to have fear would have been to sin.

M. Slide10n (blank) (15) The work was done in a record 52 days.

N. (16) They perceived that this work was done by our God. What an incredible compliment
   1. Ever do something where even you knew it wasn’t you?
   2. When you complete a project, how do you communicate it?
      a) Nehemiah chooses to share it through the eyes of his enemies.
   3. God works through faithful people, but it is God who works.
      a) Work out your own salvation with fear and trembling; for it is God who works in you both to will and to do for His good pleasure. Phil.2:12,13

O. So how was this wall finished? 2 reasons:
   1. Divine - This work was done by our God (16)
      a) It was God initiated & God empowered.
      b) We don’t need to initiate programs...find out what God is doing & simply join Him in His work.
   2. Human - Total unreserved human cooperation (this whole chapter).

P. Notice how nehemiah’s singleness of purpose and loyalty to God were as a shield about him. What may we learn from this?