

City of God Part 22 - **The Wall is Finished** (9-27-26)

Introduction: Nehemiah 6:15-19. The wall is completed! The enemy shifts his plan of attack.

Nehemiah 6:15-19 (ESV)

[15] So the wall was finished on the twenty-fifth day of the month Elul, in fifty-two days. [16] 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. [17] Moreover, in those days the nobles of Judah sent many letters to Tobiah, and Tobiah's letters came to them. [18] For many in Judah were bound by oath to him, because he was the son-in-law of Shecaniah the son of Arah: and his son Jehohanan had taken the daughter of Meshullam the son of Berechiah as his wife. [19] Also they spoke of his good deeds in my presence and reported my words to him. And Tobiah sent letters to make me afraid.

Note: The wall is complete, seemingly in lightening speed. The enemy is in awe of this and sees God's hand in it. But this only makes him adjust his tactics, not stop his attacks.

- **Tobiah** and his son **Jehohanan** have married the daughters of Israel.
- Their In-laws (Shecaniah and Meshullam) are listed in Nehemiah 3 as ones helping to repair the breach.
- **Tobiah** is the mouth piece of the enemy. And even has people trying to infiltrate at the highest level top win over Nehemiah, while also spying on him and bringing back all the gossip.

The enemy - tried to keep the work from starting, then intensified attacks as it got closer to completion. Now, we discover he has already has sown the seeds of what he'll do upon completion - intertwining and undermining by forming familial alliance with the people of God.

But, what God has done cannot be denied: The enemy recognizes God's hand in this project, by the speed it gets done, despite all of their intense efforts to stop it! What began 52 days ago, has roots that go back many years prior . . .

Haggai 1:12-15 (ESV)

[12] Then Zerubbabel the son of Shealtiel, and Joshua the son of Jehozadak, the high priest, with all the remnant of the people, obeyed the voice of the LORD their God, and the words of Haggai the prophet, as the LORD their God had sent him. And the people feared the LORD. [13] Then Haggai, the messenger of the LORD, spoke to the people with the LORD's message, "I am with you, declares the LORD." [14] And the LORD stirred up the spirit of Zerubbabel the son of Shealtiel, governor of Judah, and the spirit of Joshua the son of Jehozadak, the high priest, and the spirit of all the remnant of the people. And they came and worked on the house of the LORD of hosts, their God, [15] on the **twenty-fourth day of the month, in the sixth month**, in the second year of Darius the king.

Note: Wall completion is 75 years in the making . . . almost to the day!

- **2nd year of Darius I:** 520 B.C. (when Haggai delivered his prophecy to rebuild the temple).
- **20th year of Artaxerxes I:** 445 B.C. (when Nehemiah received permission to rebuild Jerusalem's walls).

A long obedience leads to the suddenly of the Lord. As the Lord supports, secures, and completes the work, His people are established and protected. And the enemy sees this!

Application: Three things we are to be aware of . . .

1) The Stranger

John 10:1-5 (ESV)

[1] “Truly, truly, I say to you, he who does not enter the sheepfold by the door but climbs in by another way, that man is a thief and a robber. [2] But he who enters by the door is the shepherd of the sheep. [3] To him the gatekeeper opens. The sheep hear his voice, and he calls his own sheep by name and leads them out. [4] When he has brought out all his own, he goes before them, and the sheep follow him, for they know his voice. [5] A stranger they will not follow, but they will flee from him, for they do not know the voice of strangers.”

Note: The Stranger - a thief and a robber

Thief - (con-man): abuses the confidence they gain with people for their own benefit at the expense of others.

- **embezzle/pilfer** - to secretly take and use money or property entrusted to your care. to steal things of low value or to take small amounts of something, usually over a period of time

Robber - one depriving another of his property openly who steals by violence. A bandit, marauder, a pirate.

2) The Gate

John 10:9-10 (ESV)

[9] I am the door. If anyone enters by me, he will be saved and will go in and out and find pasture. [10] The thief comes only to steal and kill and destroy. I came that they may have life and have it abundantly.

Note: There is a Gate - He leads us in the way of abundance, within and outside the city, there is pasture!

Robert Ainslie Redford (The OG Robert Redford) - English theologian and bible scholar from the 1800s . . .
 “The best preparation of the true Church against discouragements, both from without and from within, is to know that its walls are built up, and its gates are in their places.”

3) The Good Shepherd

John 10:14-15 (ESV)

[14] I am the good shepherd. I know my own and my own know me, [15] just as the Father knows me and I know the Father; and I lay down my life for the sheep.

Note: We can be within the city with people of God, but whose voice do we know?

- The Stranger would love to have your eyes and ears. He is trying to intermingle with us all the time.
- There is great value in being with and among the people of God. But no one can cultivate your relationship with the Good Shepherd for you.
- Do you know the voice of the Good Shepherd? He has laid down His life, so you can know and belong to Him, so you can follow His familiar voice into the abundant green pasture found only in His Kingdom.

Conclusion: Stand and read with me . . .

Psalms 23:1-6 (ESV)

The LORD is my shepherd; I shall not want.
 He makes me lie down in green pastures.
 He leads me beside still waters. He restores my soul.
 He leads me in paths of righteousness for his name's sake.
 Even though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death,
 I will fear no evil, for you are with me;
 your rod and your staff, they comfort me.
 You prepare a table before me in the presence of my enemies;
 you anoint my head with oil; my cup overflows.
 Surely goodness and mercy shall follow me all the days of my life,
 and I shall dwell in the house of the LORD forever.