

Jack Murray, Nehemiah: Message 3

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Bible evangelism presents once again expository preaching by Dr. Jack Murray designed to exalt the savior and bless you the listener. Here now is Dr. Jack Murray:

Review

I'll only spend just a few minutes in review of the book we're studying. I will do this very quickly. I'm going to do it in a little different way today. I am delighted with the preaching and the teaching of an old timer. You don't hear him very often anymore, but God has used him through the years and his name is Maxwell. Many of you have heard of the man who is the founder and the great head of the school up at Three Hills Alberta. However, he is not only the managing editor of his little paper and a man by the name of T.S. Rendell is the Canadian editor of the paper. I subscribe to it for all my staff members. Sometime ago he had a very valuable series on Nehemiah. It's hard to get them now. But I've just taken his summary statements today for a review of the first four chapters. We're going to do a little more than this, this morning in review but one of the great laws of teaching is review, review and review.

All right, lets run through those 4 chapters real fast. Point number one: "Determine the need." Chapter 1, verses 1-4. Nehemiah looking over the situation and finding out that the people of God were in great affliction and reproach, the walls were broken down, the gates were burned with fire that led him to prayer. Then the second part of the first chapter is entitled, "Seek God's Face." Chapter One verses 5-11.

Beginning in the second great section of the book, "Valiant for the truth" and "Valiant in fight." We have in Chapter Three, "Get involved," followed by, "Face the facts," his survey looking over what is there. And then finally, "Enlist

others," verses 17 and 18 of that chapter. Then the expression in his language of the second element of conflict, "Withstand your enemies." Chapter Three is "Distribute the load." The great picture of the building of the wall and chapter Four is building the wall in spite of opposition. Now this gives you another little viewpoint on it.

Now let's get back to our own teaching today. Now our own review of the outline as we gave it to you the first division of the book: "Vision and prayer," Chapter One. We've already touched down upon that. The second division: "Valiant for the truth" and "Valiant in fight" all the way from chapter 2 through chapter 7. The positive aspects of the first four chapters that we've covered, "Answered Prayer," "Capable Leadership," "Building the wall" and "Withstanding the enemy."

Four Elements of Conflict

Also in these four chapters we have four elements of conflict. Chapter 2 verse 10, "they were exceedingly grieved that there would come a man to seek the welfare of the children of Israel." Chapter 2 verses 19 and 20, "they despised the faithful workers and laughed at them." Chapter 4 verses 1 through 3, all of this is old material, "they were very angry that the wall was being built." In chapter 4 verses 7 and 8, "the actual threat of bodily harm." This is review material now. We summarized those events of these chapters and we gave you a threefold statement and that was: "A heart to pray," "An eye to watch," and "A mind to work." I can't over emphasize the practicality of those three statements. In my ministry which is quite widespread in this country and other countries I'm finding an amazing, amazing lack of prayer lives.

A Heart to Pray

I am finding an amazing lack of husbands and wives praying together. I go into preacher's homes where the preacher and his wife very rarely, ever get together, just the two of them for prayer. I couldn't possibly understand that. The

girl that I love is the girl I pray with. We have tremendous times of prayer together. And then the prayer of the family. Family prayer we call it. We used to have it after dinner when all the kids were home. The kids used to say we have prayers for dessert. I kind of like that.

The eye to watch

Then the second place, "the eye to watch." Where the devil has tripped you up, have a reconnaissance of where your weaknesses are and be ready. "There hath no temptation taken you but such is as common to man. God is faithful who will with the temptation also provide a way of escape that ye may be able to bear." Learn the ways of escape. Learn where the devil operates. Whether it's in your thought life, in your words, in your actions or whatever it may be. "An Eye to the watch."

Keep building

Then all the time this is going on, never "Stop building for God." Don't let the devil ever let you lay down that trowel. Keep building, in spite of all opposition get your hands full of fistful of tracks, witness to somebody, get the work done. Build for God, have a spiritual mind to work.

Chapter 5 Introduction: Outside/Inside

All right, we're into the new material now, Chapter Five. This bears just a little bit of explanation. Chapter 5 is quite different in the book of Nehemiah, because up until this time in these last three chapters, we have been dealing with the opposition on the outside -- Sanballat, Tobiah Geshem. The Ashodites, the Samaritans, the Arabians the Amononites, the increased enemies of God. We wound up yesterday with the great vertical cry "Remember the Lord" and we found great victory for Nehemiah. But now, this is an inside job, we're not dealing with these outward enemies, now we're not dealing with outside the wall, we're dealing with inside the wall. In this chapter this morning I'm reading because it is

a little clearer from the new American Standard version let me read the first few verses of the fifth chapter.

"Now there was a great outcry of the people and of their wives against their Jewish brothers (now, remember that word "brethren" or brothers) for there were those who said we and our sons and our daughters are many therefore let us get grain that we may eat and live and there were others who said we are mortgaging our fields, our vineyards and our houses that we might get grain because of the famine and there were those who said we have borrowed money for the King's tax on our fields and our vineyards and now our flesh is like the flesh of our brothers, our children like their children. Yet behold we are forcing our sons and our daughters to be slaves some of our daughters are forced into bondage already and we are helpless because our fields and vineyards belong to others" (Neh. 5:1-5). Everybody look up for a moment. Now, this could be one of many situations inside of any group of believers. We're talking about the brethren now. In this particular case, it was that there were certain people who had and certain people who had not. There were certain people who have money that they could use and loan and get interest and progressively bring in to bondage their brethren. Their philosophy was get all you can and can all you get.

And now all this was going on evidently without the knowledge of Nehemiah. Sometimes you know, a great spiritual leader will be so intent upon the great things of doing God's work, that he may miss, he will even fail to realize that something is cooking underneath that is very disastrous. But Paul in the 20th chapter in the book of Acts tells us that the enemies of the soul not only come from the outside, the ravenous wolves coming in to destroy the flock, but men shall arise within to do the same thing. And so it is that right inside all something has happened which has caused a terrible condition. And it comes to the knowledge of Nehemiah.

Now, let's see Nehemiah and his reaction. "Then I was very angry when I

heard their outcry and these words and then I will continue with these words and I consulted with myself" (Neh. 5:7). It's a good thing to do when you get mad. Now we will call this righteous indignation, it was. Nehemiah who was a very wealthy man, and we are come to that in a few minutes today, couldn't conceive of people with money taking advantage of people who didn't have it. He couldn't imagine that believer against believer would happen in this common cause. These were not like the great Barnabas who sold his fields and lay it at the apostles' feet. Who, in the early part of the chapters of Acts, were giving liberally to the things of God because people needed it. The Bible tells us in Acts that no man had need as a result of this.

May I put in a little plug for Bermuda? You know, I've been in many of the homes of Bermuda and I'm blessed, because when somebody is in trouble next door or somebody's in trouble in the family and there's sickness, they don't ask whether they can help and you Bermudians can back me up. They just move in and help. We take care of our people. I wish I could see that more in America. But isn't it too bad that it's Believer against Believer? That's what's happening.

Well, what are we going to do? This is quite a problem? This has nothing to do with the enemy outside. Let's sweep it under the rug shall we? Let's say, it'll go away. Let's just sleep on it for a few days, it'll go away. Sin is far worse than cancer. Sin is not benign it is malignant. Sin left unconfessed means sin left more in control. If you have unconfessed sin in your life today it won't be the same tomorrow, it'll be a little more intense.

Handling the situation: 6 words

Just as soon as Nehemiah (this is another trait of his great leadership) saw a situation he met it. First he had a little private meeting with himself (that's a good idea!) It's pretty dangerous to blow your top even in the right cause. "I consulted with myself." I sat down and decided what I was going to do. And how I am going to give you six words, which I hope will be helpful to you. The first word

is, "I explained what was wrong." I made it very clear that people understood. That it was anti-scriptural and against the common interest of the body. Then, after explaining it, "I exposed it" for what it was. And then "I expelled it." That's what he does. Now to take three more words and say the same thing "I revealed it," I took the wraps off. That's the best thing to do. Get it out in the open where you can deal with it. And then after that "rebuke it" if it's wrong. And then, "restore that which was destroyed." That's exactly what you have in this chapter.

This is one of the great revival chapters. May I say this? If Nehemiah hadn't dealt with this problem inside at this point the rest of the Bible in it's study of Nehemiah would be without any question of no value. He had to meet this problem now. If it had not been met now the victory would not have been obtained in the next chapter, so he meets it. And, evidently he had to meet it pretty much alone because he was contending with the nobles he was contending with the rulers but he knew he was absolutely right.

Now how did he know he was absolutely right? Well three lines of argument in this chapter. He said, "You are exacting usury or interest each from his brother. Therefore, I held a great assembly against them. I said to them we according to our ability have redeemed our Jewish brothers who were sold to the nations. Now, would you even sell your brothers that they may be sold to us. Then they were silent and could not find a word to say" (Neh. 5:7-8).

It's a tremendous argument. If you're a believer this morning you're part of the same body, the body of Christ and what ever you do affects me. What ever I do affects you. Just as every part of your body affects every other part of your body. You can't say what I do is my own business and is not the business of anybody else in this realm of doing wrong. Oh no, he said, we're brethren. We belong to the same body. We need to love one another. That's a fantastic argument isn't it?

The second thing, "Likewise I said, my brothers and servants are lending them grain, please let off this usury." Verse 9. "The thing, which ye are doing, is not good. Should you not walk in the fear of our God because of the reproach of the nations our enemies?" (Neh. 5:9) What does it do as far as a testimony is concerned? Do you remember what Nathan told David after his great Sin? He said, "You have given the heathen, the gentiles, an occasion to blaspheme God!" And every believer does that you just hand it too. How many of you have dealt with somebody and somebody comes back and they say yeah? I know this person in your church and that person in your church and I know things and things about them that are rotten as hell. What kind of answer do you have for that? Not very much. I know that's no excuse for them coming to the Lord but it's an awful tragedy when the enemies of the soul can point to the inconsistencies and sins within the camp and turn you off because of it. That's exactly what he is saying here. You've destroyed the testimony of this body by doing what you're doing.

Now what's the third argument? The third argument is rather self-evident. All the time they were doing this, there was no wall building. Right? Everything came to a what? A grinding stop. Not because of Tobiah. Not because of Sanballat. Not because of the Enemies but, because of the believers. No enemy of the soul outward can ever destroy the work of God. But I'll tell you a believer with unconfessed sin in his life can bring it to a halt.

This is revival truth. Now you may not like this revival truth. But you started with me on the theme, Nehemiah is the man who prayed for revival and got it. It costs something to have a revival. You have to pay the price of revival. Nehemiah could have at this point just turned his back on it and said somehow it will come out alright or it will go away. No, no let's look to his words now. "Please give back to them this very day they're fields, their vineyards and they're olive groves, houses, also a hundred part of the money with the grain and the new wine that you are exacting from them. Then they said, 'we will get it back and will

require nothing from them. We will do exactly as you say.' So I called the priest and took an oath from them that they would do according to this promise. I also shook out the front of my garment and said 'thus may God shake out every man from his house and from the possessions who does not fulfill this promise even thus must he be shaken up and emptied'" (Neh. 5:9-13)

He got a very favorable response didn't he? Now what happened? And all the assembly said amen. And then they returned to what? And they praised the Lord. Then the people did according to this promise. He met the problem, he solved the problem. Now we can go on.

Autobiography

But before he goes on, here's a little bit of autobiography. You know one of the great studies of the book of Philippians is the three great sections of autobiography of Paul. You learn a great many intimate things about Paul from Philippians, where he turns and talks about himself instead of the Philippians. Now, Nehemiah is going to talk about himself a little bit. It's a very amusing verse so we'll go through it quickly. Verse 14. "Moreover from the day that I was appointed to be their governor in the land of Judah, from the 20th year to the 32nd year, of King Artaxerxes." (Neh. 5:14) Somebody came up to me after the lecture yesterday and said, "how do you know 12 years?" There you got it right there. That's the confirmation of it. Twelve years. "Neither I nor my kinsman have eaten the governor's food allowance." In other words, I had a right to claim funds for my maintenance, but I did not take a dime. He would be what you call now a days, a brilliant man who served for so called a dollar a year. And Nehemiah said, "But the former governors who were before me, laid burdens on the people and took from them bread and wine besides 40 shekels of silver even their servants domineered the people but I did not so because of the fear of God." I did not so because of the fear of God. And, I put in the notes, Nehemiah's splendid example.

If you are going to be a leader you're going to have to be an example.

Nehemiah can stand up to people who were less rich than he was and tell them of his actions and they were above reproach. It would have been a sad thing here if Nehemiah had been doing the same thing, but he wasn't. "And I also applied myself to the work on this wall. We did not buy any land and all my servants were gathered there for the work" (Neh. 5:16). What is he saying? I got my hands dirty. I've been building this wall, I haven't told people to do what I am not willing to do. I don't tell my people to go out on visitation and I am not willing to go out on visitation. I practice what I preach.

Not only that, I haven't had self-interest in my mind, I haven't taken my money to multiply, and I've commanded every servant in my household, and he must have had quite a retinue of them, to get going to in building this wall. "Moreover, there were at my table, 150 Jews and officials beside those who came to us from the nations that were around us." (Neh. 5:17). Hey, that's quite a crowd to feed every day huh? More than 150 at his table. How would you like to feed 150 people at food prices of today?

Well, he told us what he served them. What'd he say? "There was prepared each day was one ox and six choice sheep also birds were prepared for me and once in ten days all sorts of wine were furnished in abundance, yet for all this, I did not demand the governor's food allowance because the servitude was heavy upon this people" (Neh. 5:18) Now that's my argument for the fact that Nehemiah must have had a little cash somewhere. Are you going to argue with me? No, I think he had quite a resource and he was putting it at God's disposal. Not only his time, not only his talents, and he had brilliant talents, but his treasure! They go together. Time. Talent. Treasure. All at God's disposal.

Then he says a little prayer to wind it up. "Remember, oh my God for good according to all that I have done for this people" (Neh. 5:19) What a piece of leadership, beautiful isn't it?

All right now, this one's solved, class, and we're going to have to go back to the nitty-gritty of the battle again, but you have to solve the problems and then move on. All right, let's get another situation here. Turn to chapter 6 with me please and in chapter 6 we're going to see some very, very interesting things today, and I may lose some friends, I don't know. But chapter 6 of Nehemiah and I am going to ask you to open your Bibles and ah, look at this 6th chapter because this is one of the most important things we will be dealing with in the book of Nehemiah.

I'll begin reading in the first verse of chapter 6. Here it is. "Now, it came about when it was reported to Sanballat to Tobiah, and to Geshem the Arabian, and to the rest of our enemies, that I had rebuilt the wall, and that no breach remained in it (although at that time I had not set up the doors and the gates)." Now the walls are completed practically. He never stopped building. "That Sanballat and Geshem sent a message to me saying, come let us meet together in one of the villages in the plains of Ono. But they were planning to harm me or to do evil to me" (Neh. 6:1-3).

Victim of the Ecumenical Movement

Now look up a moment. You mean this is the same crowd? Are these the people that were exceedingly grieved? Are these the people who were laughing and ridiculing? Are these the people who were mad, they were angry? Are these the people that said "We will pick up swords and fight you, if you keep building that wall." Now they're saying sweetly, lovely, why don't we sit down and talk this thing over? This is another insidious approach of the devil. Many a fine man of God has withstood all the enemies of the soul... are you fastening your seatbelts? ... And has become a victim of the Ecumenical movement. Many a man has built a great work for God. Then suddenly when the unbeliever has said, "lets sit down. There are things in common, even though there are things we disagree with. And lets talk this over. Surely, we can come to some common ground.

Surely, fellowship is more important than truth." Don't you ever believe it. These are the same enemies of the soul but they are coming out as wolves in sheep's clothing. Paul said they were angels of light, even ministers in pulpits. Disguised as God's sheep, but all the time, ravenous wolves.

Nehemiah tells you, they sought to do evil. Now, this Hebrew text here, is a little ambiguous. It may have meant to separate him from the workers, the old strategy of divide and conquer. If they can ever get Nehemiah away from this crowd they probably could stop the work. I'm going to prove that's true too, or it may have been more severe. The words to harm to do evil may even be read to do murder. They thought they might have been able to get him away from the people and then get rid of him. Let us meet in one of the villages of the plains of Ono and Nehemiah said, "oh no." Oh no. Then some people have misunderstood that next verse. But I don't misunderstand it because what Nehemiah says "so I sent messengers to them saying I'm doing a great work and I cannot come down. Why should the works stop while I leave it and come you to you?" (Neh. 6:3)

Now you might say well that was a little, little bit of a prick there, you know, no. Any man who doesn't believe that what he's doing for God if he's doing God's will, is the greatest work on earth, then something's wrong. It is the greatest job. You in God's place, you are doing the thing that is the greatest. Amen. And he said, "why should I lay down my trowel for an ecumenical conference? Why should I enter into dialogue with you? And the work cease. I can't waste my time." Now wait a minute, just wait a minute, some of you are getting red up in your...By the same token, Abraham Kuyper said, "what should not be together, according to the Scriptures, should separate." But, he also said something else, he said, "what should be together ought to unite." By the same truth, that which should not be together, is one thing, but people who love the Lord, should have their hearts together.

That is true ecumenicity. You say, “what’s that word?” True dialogue, yes. Believers with believers, oh, we stand together in the great essentials! The verbal and plainer inspiration of the scripture. The virgin birth, the vicarious atonement, the bodily resurrection of Christ, the veracity of miracles, the verities of the faith! Ah, we may disagree, on the order of church government, whether it is an independency or a presbyterial or an episcopacy. We may disagree on church order. Your service may be a little more formal than mine, or mine may be a little more formal than yours. I used to have people leave my church on Sunday morning because it was too formal and leave on Sunday night because it was too informal. But these are distinctives that separate us as local bodies. But they should not separate us on the verities of the faith! A true ecumenicity. I’m not talking about people who disagree on these other things. I am talking about the great truths of the Scriptures and belief belongs together and unbelief belongs in another place. Nehemiah knew it.

Sixth Element of Conflict: Lies

All right, let's move around to the next one now. Here we go. Here's the sixth element of conflict. Well, they weren't successful were they? "They sent messengers to me four times in this manner and I answered them in the same way" and they got tired of it. "Then Sanballat sent his servant to me in the same manner and the fifth time with an open letter in his hands." Now notice the contents of this open letter. "It is reported among the nations and Gashmu, which is Geshem, says, that you and the Jews are planning to rebel. Therefore, you are rebuilding the wall. You are to be their King according to these reports and you have also appointed prophets to proclaim in Jerusalem concerning you. A King is in Judah. And now it will be reported to the King according to these reports, so come now and let us take counsel together." (Neh. 6:5-7)

Talk about false report. Nothing in it but lies. What does it say? It says, we know you have an ulterior motive. You know it's amazing how some people

can read other people's minds! It's amazing how people can intone motives. You hear someone say, "You know why they did that don't you"? They're always looking for the insidious ulterior motive. Now, Nehemiah, you have posed yourself as a layman and a governor. You have acted under Artaxerxes in the rebuilding of this city but all the time, you know very well what you are after. You want to be the big shot. You want to be the King and you have brainwashed prophets and you are getting them all ready. And just as soon as that wall is completed, there's going to be a united shout and it will be, "there is a King in Judah, King Nehemiah and then you are going to rebel against Artaxerxes. Turn rotten lies.

How many of you like to be lied about? I got a letter one day, I looked at it, could hardly believe it. I was a college president, I was a successful pastor of a great church, I blinked, I took it to my lawyer. He looked at it. He read it. He said, "Do you want \$50,000.00? I said, "John what do you mean, I always want \$50,000.00! No, he said, "That letter is so libelous and so erroneous, that if you want to take it to court, you could easily pick up \$50,000.00." I laughed at him, I said "I don't want \$50,000.00 that way!" But at the same time, that letter cut, but it was a lie! An absolute lie! This was an absolute lie!

Now Nehemiah might have reacted this way, "OOOHHH Somebody's got the wrong idea. I better go down and talk with him after all. I better sit down with this sanhedrin....No I mean, Samaritans. I better sit down with this ministerial association, no I mean Samaritan. I better go and really declare myself as to what I really am. Everybody should know my pure motive." He didn't waste his time. Why? This is what he said, "Then I sent a message to him saying such things as you are saying have not been done, but you are inventing them in your own mind." (Neh. 6:8) Now that's putting it on the line. Not only are they lies, but you have made it up. Well, that's the way to answer it. Yes sir. Nothing but a pack of lies and that sets it.

Well, this enemy has withstood. Things are getting a little rough aren't they? They sure are. So, Nehemiah is doing a little more praying. You found him praying at the end of Chapter 5, you find him praying again now. "For all them were trying to frighten us thinking they will become discouraged with the work for it will not be done." Anything to get us in fear, anything to get us discouraged, anything to get us to stop building the wall! Then one of those brief prayers of Nehemiah again but now "Oh God! Strengthen my hand!" I tell you he was seeing some scars by this time but Paul said, "I buried my body in the marks of the Lord Jesus!" He's standing now in the blood, and sweat and the tears of the conflict of building God's work. It's not an easy road. No, no.

Seventh Element of Conflict: Success

Now, our hearts get a little bit sad as we turn to this next portion. Let me explain what is happening. Seventh element of conflict, "Successful." What? Yes, and on Friday morning I am going to prove to you it was successful and we'll touch upon it and then on Friday morning we'll pick it up. "When I entered the house of Shemaiah the son of Delilah, son of Mehetabel, who was confined at home and he said, 'let us meet together in the house of God within the temple, let us close the doors of the temple, for they are coming to kill you and they are coming to kill you at night.'" Now wait a minute, let's get the scene. Here's Shemaiah. Shemaiah is not Sanballat, not Tobiah, not anyone outside. He's one of the brethren. One of the insiders. Got some information on Nehemiah, what? "Got some information. It's a group that is pledged to kill you – and one of these nights, it may be tonight, they're coming in – and there is one place where you can be safe. I know that you as a layman have no right to enter into the sacred precincts of the temple. It's kind of worth it to save you life I would think. So, why don't you flee into the inner precincts of the temple as a layman – even though it's not right -- and save your hide." Now, if he heard that from Tobiah it probably wouldn't mean anything but sometimes you hear it from some of the

people you trust the most. Now we've come to the position of sympathizers within. People who are sympathetic with Tobiah and Sanballat will get you. The sin of sympathy with unbelief. The sin of sympathy with unbelief. Shemaiah is one of these.

Well, let's get back to our hero, shall we? What'd he do, take off for the temple? No, I like what he said, "Should a man like me flee?" What have I got to run from? "And could one such as I, a layman go into the temple even to save his life? I will not go in. Then I perceived that surely God had not sent him but he uttered his prophecy against me because Tobiah and Sanballat had" what? Hey, here's a guy that's a prophet! A false prophet. We're living in a day when "Gashmus" are all around. I've had a vision! That vision says this. My answer is, does that vision square with the word of God? If it doesn't, it's not from God. This book is not only eternal and verbally inspired, it is complete. God's not adding to his word in the 20th century nor is he contradicting it.

He uttered his prophecy! The devil's got prophets. The devil's got healers. All healing is not divine. If God gave Satan permission to make Job sick, he could presumably Satan permission to make him well. That follows doesn't it? I said, "all healing is not divine." There is a healing which is demonic which is the doorway to deeper and deeper tragedies such as physical healing could never bring upon a person. All right, Nehemiah now has all kind of people right along side of him, I'll tell you this is rough but our Lord had the same thing. He had a Judas sitting at the table. He had a fifth column; he had a beachhead of the enemy right inside. This part of the book is kind of sad. Now Nehemiah enlarges upon that a little bit. "He was hired for this reason that I might become frightened and act according in sin so that he might has an evil report in order that they could reproach me." (Neh. 6:13) I'll tell you if Nehemiah had run into that temple, nobody had been coming, all over the city the next day, "Some leader you've got!" He ran, nobody was after him. Scared of his hide and do you know what he did?

He went into the innermost of the temple, they had that evil report but they didn't have that evil report because Nehemiah didn't do it. Got to watch your life!

Now he begins to pray again, "Remember oh my God, Tobiah and Sanballat according to these words of theirs and also Noabiah the prophetess." What? Getting a woman in on this too! There's a prophetess, a woman prophet, who is lined up on the wrong side! "And the rest of the prophets who were trying to frighten me. . ." (Neh. 6:14) Got a lot of the clergy involved in this opposition. I was preaching from Nehemiah down in the Bahamas one time and everyday, they had one of the national preachers preach in the hour after me. And this dear brother from the island of Abaco had been listening to me all week. And on the morning that I came to this verse, the Noabiah the prophetess, I was never expecting to hear what was coming next. So I came into his hour and he got up and he said, "Lord" he said, "I knew there couldn't be that much trouble around without a woman somehow. He said, there had to be a Jezebel there somewhere!" You could just tell he was having women trouble in his home, or women trouble in his church! He really enjoyed Nehemiah after that! But she's there anyway, she's there.

Fighting the Grey Inside

All right, just skip with me for a moment and look down at verses 17 through 19 because this is part of the same truth. "Moreover in those days the nobles of Judah sent many letters unto Tobiah, and the letters of Tobiah came unto them (some of these nobles were selling out). For there were many in Judah sworn unto him, because he was the son-in-law of Shechaniah the son of Arah; and his son Johaanah had married the daughters of Meshullam the son of Berechiah." There had been intermarriage of belief and unbelief, which was absolutely prohibited. "Moreover they were speaking about his good deeds in my presence and reporting my words to him then Tobias sent letters to frighten me."

Now, Nehemiah has something on his hands doesn't he? It's one thing to fight the black outside the wall. It's another thing to fight the gray inside.

Now this is a very, very significant word for the Friday morning lecture now, I am going to be lecturing tomorrow but tomorrow we have revival, tremendous revival. But now we just want to wind up on a positive note. Look back now at verses 15 and 16. "So the wall was completed on the 25th of the month of Elul in fifty-two days." Job is done. Now look what the reaction was to the unbelieving world. "And it came about that when all our enemies heard of it and all the nations surrounding us saw it. They lost their confidence for they recognized that this work had been accomplished with the help of our God" (Neh. 6:15-16) Isn't that good? Isn't that good? And the job is done, the wall is done that is. The enclosure is done, not which you set out to do has been accomplished.

Then in Chapter 7 is a great chapter of the census. It names all the 50,000 who were there with Nehemiah and it also tells about again, of the brother of Nehemiah whose given a responsible position and other people who were given responsible positions. And beginning at verse one of Chapter 8 tomorrow morning we're going to deal with one of the great scenes of all the Bible, the scenes of revival.

Summary

Now, as we close the lecture today, I am going to summarize it in Mr. Rendell's words again. Chapter 5: 1-13. Deal with strife, don't ignore it, don't minimize it, meet it, settle it. Then as an individual, set the example. Set the example. You'll find that in verses 14 through 19. Then as we've said, watch the snares, the snares of unscriptural cooperation. The snare of an over reaction to the lies of the enemy. The snare of over sympathizers within. And then the last part of Chapter 6. Finish the work, get the job done and finally Chapter 7 is a great chapter concerning delegating authority and getting ready for the greatest thing of the book of Nehemiah.

I want you to pray that we may somehow in a very unusual way, enter into the heart of what the Bible teaches about revival because we are going to be exposed to a true scene of spiritual awakening. You may have many preconceived ideas of what a revival is, but you are going to have to square them tomorrow with what the Bible says a revival is and I want you to be a little more in prayer in preparation of heart. Let's come to the service tomorrow prepared in heart for revival in our own hearts.