

“Dealing with Fake News”

Nehemiah 6:1-14

A NEW LEVEL OF ATTACK

1. **God’s people were ridiculed and mocked. Neh. 4:1-5**
2. **God’s people were threatened with violence. Neh. 4:6-23**
3. **God’s people were ensnared in their own sin. Neh. 5:1-19**
4. **In Nehemiah 6:1-14 the opposition rises to a new level of attack.**
 - God’s enemies actively spread lies about Nehemiah and attacked him personally.

ATTACK BY INTRIGUE. v.1-4

1. **The same enemies show up again. v.1 Ref. 2:10, 19-20; 4:1, 7**
 - They heard about the success of God’s work. v.1b Ref. Ezra 3:10-4:1
2. **They invited Nehemiah to a ‘special meeting’. v.2**
 - “Intrigue” – to engage in a secret plan to accomplish evil or unlawful ends
3. **Nehemiah’s response: Don’t be distracted from the mission by their suspicious games. v.3-4**
 - ‘My work is too important. Why should the work of God stop so that I can meet with you?’ v.3 Ref. 2 Tim 2:4
 - They had a demonstrated record of opposing God’s work, God’s people, and God’s leaders.
 - They sent to him 4 times—and he replied in the same manner every time. v.4

ATTACK BY GOSSIP. v.5-9

1. **The enemies started a rumor mill. v.6**
 - v.6: It is reported... ..and Geshem also says it... ..according to these reports...
2. **They shared the information publicly—intentionally. v.5**
 - It was delivered in an ‘open’ or ‘unsealed’ letter. It would have been read out loud many times.
3. **The specific rumor: Nehemiah and the Jews were planning to rebel against the king. v.6-7**
4. **Nehemiah’s response. v.8-9**
 - Refute the accusation clearly: ‘What you are saying fake news. v.8
 - Recognize their intent: They wanted to frighten them to stop the work. v.9a
 - Resolve to trust God: ‘But now, O God, strengthen my hands.’ v.9b

ATTACK BY INVITATION TO COMPROMISE. v.10-14

1. **A man named Shemaiah invited Nehemiah to join him in a plan ‘for his own protection.’ v.10**
 - He told them there was a plan to kill him.
 - The Hebrews wording suggests Shemaiah was telling him this as a ‘revelation from God.’
 - He proposed Nehemiah break God’s law by hiding the temple. Ref. Num 18:7; 2 Chron 26:16
2. **Nehemiah’s response. v.11-14**
 - It is arrogant of me to assume I can do what I want and go where I want when the LORD forbids it. v.11
 - He recognized the source of the temptation: Sanballat and Tobiah. v.12
 - He recognized their intent. v.13
 - He committed them to God’s judgment. v.14

Proverbs 16:3: Commit your work to the LORD, and your plans will be established.

Proverbs 16:27-28: A worthless man plots evil, and his speech is like a scorching fire. ²⁸ A dishonest man spreads strife, and a whisperer separates close friends.

Proverbs 6:16-19: There are six things that the Lord hates, seven that are an abomination to him: ¹⁷ haughty eyes, a lying tongue, and hands that shed innocent blood, ¹⁸ a heart that devises wicked plans, feet that make haste to run to evil, ¹⁹ a false witness who breathes out lies, and one who sows discord among brothers.

1 Corinthians 3:17: If anyone destroys God's temple, God will destroy him. For God's temple is holy, and you are that temple.

LIES we often believe about ourselves:

I am unloved.

I am unacceptable.

I am unworthy.

I am inadequate.

I am a failure.

I am fearful.

I am anxious.

I am weak.

I am not very smart or good enough.

I am in bondage.

I am unwanted and belong to no one.

I feel guilty.

There is nothing special about me.

I am hopeless.

I feel condemned.

I am alone.

I can't reach God.

I am afraid of Satan.

What is TRUE about me because of my relationship with Jesus Christ:

I am very loved.

John 15:9; Rom 8:35-39; Eph 2:4-6; 1 John 3:1; 4:10

I am accepted.

John 15:15-16; Eph 1:3-6

I am worthy.

Rom 8:31-34; 1 Cor 6:19-20; 2 Cor 5:21

I am adequate.

2 Cor 3:5-6; 12:9; Phil 4:13

I am victorious.

Rom 8:37; 2 Cor 2:14; 1 John 5:4

I am free from fear.

Psalm 4:8; 27:1; 32:7; 2 Tim 1:7; 1 John 4:18

I am content.

Psalm 37:5; 55:22; Phil 4:6-7, 11; Heb 13:5; 1 Pet 5:7

I am strong in Christ.

Acts 1:8; 2 Cor 12:9-10; Eph 1:19; 3:16; Phil 4:13

I have God's wisdom.

John 16:13-14; 1 Cor 1:30; James 1:5; 1 John 2:20

I am free.

John 8:32, 36; 2 Cor 3:17; Gal 5:1, 13a

I have been adopted by God and am His child.

Rom 8:16-17; Gal 4:5-7; 1 John 3:2

I am totally forgiven.

Eph 1:7; 2:13; Col 1:14

I have been chosen and set apart by God.

John 15:16; 1 Cor 1:30; 6:11; 1 Pet 2:9

I have hope.

Rom 8:20-25; 15:4, 13; Col 1:26-27; 1 Pet 1:3

I am blameless.

John 3:18; 5:24; Rom 8:1

I am never alone.

Rom 8:38-39; Heb 13:5; Psalm 139:7-12

I have access to God anytime.

Eph 2:18; Heb 4:14-16; 1 Pet 2:5, 9; 1 John 5:14-15

I am in Christ and He has authority over Satan.

1 John 4:4; Col 1:13; Rev 12:7-11