

The Devil's Devices¹

Nehemiah 6:1-16

PROPOSITION: The devil has devices he uses to destroy us. Nehemiah dealt with some of them in the rebuilding of the walls of Jerusalem.

INTRODUCTION:

1. The devil is no laughing matter.
2. Though he is a decisive force, he is a defeated foe (1 John 4:4).
3. Nehemiah 6 alerts us regarding the tricks of the devil.
4. We must not be ignorant of his strategies (2 Cor. 2:11; 1 Pet. 5:8), so let us see what he has done in the past.

DISCUSSION: Notice the devil's tactic of...

I. Distraction (vv. 1-4).

- A. The devil wants to start a "love-in."
- B. You cannot win by compromising, so the devil tries to distract us.
- C. If he cannot stop us by himself, he gets the help of the world.
- D. He would neutralize us by getting us involved in entangling alliances.
 1. Mothers are distracted by careers.
 2. Christians are sidetracked by worldly honors.
 3. Congregations get too involved in building programs and budgets.
- E. God's man said, "I am doing a great work and I cannot come down" (v. 3).

II. Defamation (vv. 5-7).

- A. The devil defamed the character and impugned the motives of Nehemiah.
- B. An unsealed letter was sent so everyone could read it.
- C. Nehemiah faced the lies with this reply: "No such things as you say have been done, for you are inventing them out of your own mind" (v. 8).
- D. He just kept on working.

III. Dismay (vv. 9, 10).

- A. The devil wanted Nehemiah to think the people were going to kill him so he would stop working and run away in fear.
- B. God said not to let His enemies unnerve you (Isa. 41:10).
- C. When you get afraid, the enemies of God get bold.
- D. Fear is powerful, but the Lord is more powerful (cf. Josh. 1:5; Heb. 13:5).
- E. God has not given us a spirit of fear but of power and love and self-control (2 Tim. 1:7).

¹ From "The Devices of the Devil" by Doug Parsons, *The Preacher's Periodical*, Vol. 6, No. 3, August 1985, pp. 22-24, 49, 50.

IV. Deception (vv. 11, 12).

- A. A false prophet told Nehemiah that the people were trying to kill him and urged him to run to the temple.
- B. Nehemiah knew only priests could go into the temple, so he was not deceived.
- C. We cannot believe every “spirit” (cf. 1 John 4:1; 2 Cor. 11:13-15).
- D. The devil often masquerades in clever costumes.
- E. How can we keep from being deceived by the devil?
 - 1. Know the word of God.
 - 2. Be close enough to the heart of God to know evil when you see it (cf. Heb. 5:14).

CONCLUSION:

- 1. You do not have to walk as far if you walk in the light. You do not have to be deceived (cf. Psa. 119:105).
- 2. The devil will come after you. Have your eyes open and your heart on the word of God.
- 3. Because of the grace of God, the dirty tricks of the devil will not prevail.