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Oaks Early Risers Bible Class

The Oaks
Baptist Church
Grand Prairie, Texas

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Restoration
A Study in Nehemiah

Date	Lesson	Text
03/03	Introduction to Nehemiah	
03/10	Cried About a Wall	1:1-11
03/17	Serving God	2:1-20
03/24	We Won!	3:1-32
03/31	The Lord Lives	Luke 24:13-35
04/07	Bro Cisneros Special Lesson	
04/14	Opposition	4:1-23
04/21	Conflicts Within	5:1-19
04/28	Resisting Satan	6:1-19
05/05	Counting for God	7:1-73
05/12	Spiritual Renewal	8:1-18
05/19	Joy and Strength	8:8-12
05/26	Repentance	9:1-38
06/02	Truth into Practice	10:1-39
06/09	Ministry	11 & 12
06/16	Permissiveness	13:1-31
06/23	Review and Summary	

Food for Thought

Temptations

How tragic to squander God's promises by yielding to a temptation that God has empowered us to resist. The best way to escape temptation is to run to God.

No temptation has overtaken you but such as is common to man; and God is faithful, who will not allow you to be tempted beyond what you are able
(1 Cor 10:13 NASB)

From "Our Daily Bread", Oct 05, 2012)

RESISTING SATAN'S SCHEMES

Nehemiah 6:1-19

In his goal of rebuilding the walls of Jerusalem, Nehemiah had to stand up to the violent threats of the enemy (chapter 4). He had to deal with internal conflict between the wealthy and poor Jews (chapter 5). He is almost done now. The breaches in the wall have been repaired, and the wall is complete except for the doors in the gates. But the enemy has not given up. In chapter 6, Satan hits again with four schemes: intrigue (6:1-4); innuendo (6:5-9); intimidation (6:10-14); and, infiltration (6:15-19). In the first three schemes, Satan moved first and Nehemiah had to respond. In the last situation, Nehemiah won the victory of the completed wall, but Satan responded with his scheme of infiltration. Every Christian leader has that target on his chest. If Satan can bring down the leader, he will cause extensive damage to the flock. But whether you're a leader or not, the enemy uses the same schemes to try to sabotage your walk with God. Note two things: (1) Satan uses subtle deception and plausible sounding appeals, but his intent is to destroy us. (2) Satan is relentlessly persistent in his schemes. They sent messengers to Nehemiah four times with the same invitation. Four times he sent back the same answer, "I am doing a great work and I cannot come down. **Just because you resist the devil once, don't think that he is going to give up and leave you alone!** He will hit you again and again with the same temptation, to wear you down.

Nehemiah resisted Satan's intrigues by standing firm in his priorities. As believers, our chief priority is to glorify God by knowing Jesus Christ and by being conformed to His character beginning at the heart level. Anything that pulls you away from that priority, even if it is a ministry, is a ploy of the devil. After four frustrated attempts to lure Nehemiah into an ambush, the enemy shifted tactics. He sent an open letter to Nehemiah that contained a rumor accusing him of plotting to rebel and become the king. Satan spreads slanderous false rumors against godly leaders. Normally letters between officials were sealed and private. Sanballat knew that the servant who delivered this letter would read it, and so would countless other people along the way. The nice thing about a rumor is, you only have to launch it with one gossip, and it will spread like a virus from person to person, growing more malicious as it travels. **Nehemiah resisted Satan's innuendoes with the truth and with prayer.** Leaders must pray for God's wisdom as to whether to remain silent or to reply to false accusations. But however we respond, prayer and keeping on with the work that God has given us to do are always right.

Satan uses religious people to scare us into wrong behavior that would ruin our reputation. Here the enemy combines deception with intimidation and fear. Be careful when someone claiming to be a Christian invites you to do something that you know is wrong. He may use scare tactics to get you to go along with whatever it is. **Nehemiah resisted Satan's intimidation with fearless obedience and prayer.** Nehemiah's persistent resistance gained the victory for the Lord. When the enemies and surrounding nations saw that the wall was completed, they lost their confidence. They had to admit that this work had been accomplished because of God (6:15). Satan lost the battle, but he didn't give up. He infiltrated the ranks. Satan often uses such espionage. He infiltrates the ranks of the church with secret agents that profess to be believers. But their hearts are in the world, and they oppose godly men like Nehemiah who expose their spiritual indifference and sin. This section gives us three practical lessons: (1) Do not expect perfection in Christian work. (2) We must never put confidence in our work, but only in the God who enables us to work. When God's people compromise with the world, it hinders God's work.

(Adapted from Sermon series on Nehemiah by Steven J. Cole)

NOTES AND CROSS-REFERENCES

Satan's scheme: Intrigue. Nehemiah's response: Firm in his priorities (6:1-4)

Satan especially targets leaders with his schemes of intrigue (Matt 4:1-3)

When Jesus was led up by the Spirit into the wilderness to be tempted by the devil. 2 And when He had fasted forty days and forty nights, afterward He was hungry. 3 Now when the tempter came to Him, he said, "If You are the Son of God, command that these stones become bread."

Nehemiah resisted Satan's intrigues by standing firm in his priorities (1 Peter 5:9)

9 Resist him, standing firm in the faith, because you know that your brothers throughout the world are undergoing the same kind of sufferings.

Satan's scheme: Innuendo. Nehemiah's response: Fortright rebuttal coupled with prayer (6:5-9)

Satan spreads slanderous false rumors against godly leaders (Acts 21:27-28)

27 When the seven days were nearly over, some Jews from the province of Asia saw Paul at the temple. They stirred up the whole crowd and seized him, 28 shouting, "Men of Israel, help us! This is the man who teaches all men everywhere against our people and our law and this place. And besides, he has brought Greeks into the temple area and defiled this holy place."

Nehemiah resisted Satan's innuendoes with the truth and with prayer (Acts 4:23-24)

23 On their release, Peter and John went back to their own people and reported all that the chief priests and elders had said to them. 24 When they heard this, they raised their voices together in prayer to God.

Satan's scheme: Intimidation. Nehemiah's response: Fearlessly obey God (6:10-14)

Satan uses religious people to scare us into wrong behavior that would ruin our reputation (Gal 2:11-12)

11 When Peter came to Antioch, I opposed him to his face, because he was clearly in the wrong. 12 Before certain men came from James, he used to eat with the Gentiles. But when they arrived, he began to draw back and separate himself from the Gentiles because he was afraid of those who belonged to the circumcision group.

Nehemiah resisted Satan's intimidation with fearless obedience and prayer (Dan 6:7-10)

7 The royal administrators, prefects, satraps, advisers and governors have all agreed that the king should issue an edict and enforce the decree that anyone who prays to any god or man during the next thirty days, except to you, O king, shall be thrown into the lions' den. 8 Now, O king, issue the decree and put it in writing so that it cannot be altered — in accordance with the laws of the Medes and Persians, which cannot be repealed." 9 So King Darius put the decree in writing. 10 Now when Daniel learned that the decree had been published, he went home to his upstairs room where the windows opened toward Jerusalem. Three times a day he got down on his knees and prayed, giving thanks to his God, just as he had done before.

Nehemiah's victory: The finished wall. Satan's scheme: Infiltration (6:15-19)

Nehemiah's persistent resistance gained the victory for the Lord (Dan 3:26-29)

26 Nebuchadnezzar then approached the opening of the blazing furnace and shouted, "Shadrach, Meshach and Abednego, servants of the Most High God, come out! Come here!" So Shadrach, Meshach and Abednego came out of the fire, 27 and the satraps, prefects, governors and royal advisers crowded around them. They saw that the fire had not harmed their bodies, nor was a hair of their heads singed; their robes were not scorched, and there was no smell of fire on them. 28 Then Nebuchadnezzar said, "Praise be to the God of Shadrach, Meshach and Abednego, who has sent his angel and rescued his servants! They trusted in him and defied the king's command and were willing to give up their lives rather than serve or worship any god except their own God.

Satan lost the battle, but he didn't give up. He infiltrated the ranks (2 Peter 2:1-3)

1 But there were also false prophets among the people, just as there will be false teachers among you. They will secretly introduce destructive heresies, even denying the sovereign Lord who bought them — bringing swift destruction on themselves. 2 Many will follow their shameful ways and will bring the way of truth into disrepute. 3 In their greed these teachers will exploit you with stories they have made up. Their condemnation has long been hanging over them, and their destruction has not been sleeping.