



CHAPTER SIX

Building From The Knees Up

“Now it came about that when Sanballat heard that we were rebuilding the wall, he became furious and very angry and mocked the Jews. He spoke in the presence of his brothers and the wealthy men of Samaria and said, ‘What are these feeble Jews doing? Are they going to restore it for themselves? Can they offer sacrifices? Can they finish in a day? Can they revive the stones from the dusty rubble even the burned ones?’ Now Tobiah the Ammonite was near him, and he said, ‘Even what they are building—if a fox should jump on it, he would break their stone wall down!’ Hear, O our God, how we are despised! Return their reproach on their own heads and give them up for plunder in a land of captivity. Do not forgive their iniquity and let not their sin be blotted out before You, for they have demoralized the builders. So we built the wall and the whole wall was joined together to half its height, for the people had a mind to work. Now when Sanballat, Tobiah, the Arabs, the Ammonites, and the Ashdodites heard that the repair of the walls of Jerusalem went on and that the breaches began to be closed, they were very angry. All of them conspired together to come and fight against Jerusalem and to cause a disturbance in it. But we prayed to our God, and because of them we set up a guard against them day and night.” (Nehemiah 4:1-9)

NEHEMIAH LESSON OVERVIEW

- Covenant Marriage equals covenant prayers.
- Believers who are desensitized to Satan lose every battle.
- Approaching Satan Biblically is the key to a victorious Christian life.
- True Spiritual warfare is eternal. It is not an earthly thing, but purely warring with principalities of the air, which we cannot see.
- The Sword of the Spirit is the Word of God from within us. It is not just a written book that is in front of us. When we receive Jesus Christ into our lives, we receive the Word of God, which is sharper than a two-edged sword through the very life of Jesus Christ Himself.
- Nehemiah’s “brick” is today’s work ethic.

As soon as Nehemiah began the work of rebuilding the walls of Jerusalem, the enemy attacked. Sanballat was not only a thorn in Jerusalem’s flesh but that of Nehemiah’s as well. Once Nehemiah began to observe the attacks at hand, Sanballat asked this: *“What are these feeble Jews doing? Are they going to restore it for themselves? Can they offer sacrifices? Can they finish in a day?”*

These workers were next to worthless when it came to rebuilding with excellence. Nehemiah certainly had a huge challenge on his hands. The evidence was in what Tobiah said: *“Even what they are building—if a fox should jump on it, he would break their stone wall down.”*

We can't understand the huge challenge that Nehemiah was up against. The Jews within Jerusalem at that time were lazy and irresponsible in taking care of their own. Due to Nehemiah’s evaluation, it was obvious to him that the local Jews were simply lackadaisical, sitting back and allowing the walls that were supposed to protect them to fall down around them. The odds of Nehemiah counting on quality workers were next to none.

Work ethic is a major issue within our church today. Following directions from authoritative leaders is next to impossible for modern-day workers. If they don't command themselves, simply put, they don't do the work. Overall, the body of Christ is sick, lazy, and stubborn. Each one defaults to putting the workload on the leader. What is a leader to do? Pray covenant prayers before the Living God. Only God can strike a match and put some heat under His own people. He has always been creative in finding ways to do that.

COVENANT MARRIAGE

The perfect description of Covenant Marriage is best described in the book of Revelation. But Nehemiah prayed covenant prayers, although it was through the Old Covenant. However, the meaning, purpose, and description are found in Genesis to Revelation's book. I believe the ordained reason for creation, Old Covenant (Old Testament), the New Covenant (New Testament), and the book of Revelation is given to us to secure a Bride for God the Father's Son, Jesus. God the Father was giving John the heartbeat of why He created the earth, allowed the fall of man, delivered a Redeemer, and offered Covenant Marriage to all those who received the indwelling life of Christ through Salvation through the filling of the Holy Spirit.

You must understand these two types of Covenant Marriages. The first is the New Covenant Marriage represented in Heaven, the only anointed marriage system God supports. The second is marriage certificates that were fabricated or established by the governing laws of nations. Proof of this is the modality of why we need a license from a state or nation along with a signature of an ordained church leader.

One of the misnomers of governed marriages is that God supports all marriages sealed by the governing state or nation. He does not. If He did it would erase the ordinances of New Covenant Marriage. Plus, all current legal marriages between dogs and their masters, adult/minor marriages, same-sex marriages, and other culturally friendly marriages, would be ordained or accepted by God. That would be heresy. God only sustains and supports Covenant Marriage—both in the Old and the New Testament.

DESENSITIZATION

Satan has successfully used the world and its influences to bring a light-hearted attitude and mindset regarding the kingdom of darkness, which was the exact case with the Jews Nehemiah was responsible for. As for today, just look at the enormous volumes of books, movies, video games, T-shirts, music, toys, television, advertisements, the internet, fashion, jewelry, and, of course, silly jesting—we are bombarded with whatever we desire! Today, all worldly influences are leading us to anti-authority, anti-work ethic, and anti-Jesus Christ. The results leave the masses with broken-down walls of country, Church, and individualized lives, which is exactly what Nehemiah was up against, with the Jews continuing to be influenced by the beliefs and practices of Old Babylon. Satan is all about desensitizing God's people to him and the influences and mandates that God puts before them.

The callous view that the world has about Satan and his role in man's sin is a subtle but tragic attack on God's divine creation—His blessed children. The enemy of this world sees that the world—his domain, laughs off his actions with indifference. Always remember this callousness is the most powerful tool the enemy has in defusing God's serious plan of redemption. Christians ought to never entertain crude jokes, purchase degrading media products, or lightheartedly support Satan in any way. Believers need to exercise care in not assigning all their wrongdoing as Satan's responsibility. We must, with Biblical insight, understand the limited power of Satan and his kingdom. Oppression and bondage are not a joking matter.

APPROACHING SATAN BIBLICALLY

The key in the believer's emphasis on spiritual warfare must be based on a biblical approach to the subject. Subjective feelings, emotional desires, and genuine sincerity are not sufficient weaponry against the enemy who laughs in the face of one's intents. He yields no ground to emotion or sincerity—no matter if you use Jesus's name in doing so. He retreats only from the authority and power that has been given to the Christian through their union with the Lord Jesus Christ and the absolute Truth of the Word of God.

An illustration worth remembering here is that if I were to give you a sharp two-edged sword and a butter knife, which would you use to fight an assailant? Dumb question, right? I don't think so. Your logical side would choose the sharp two-edged sword. However, when we do not use the Word of God to fight off the enemy, we are essentially using a butter knife to war against an enemy who slings a ball and chain.

Ephesians 6:17 tells us this: *"Take the sword of the Spirit, which is the Word of God."*

Satan hates the New Covenant, which is the fulfillment and release of the condemnation of the Old Covenant. Furthermore, he hates New Covenant prayers.

Here's a sample of a New Covenant Prayer: *"Dear Lord Jesus, I have sinned before You. I know that I am covered in the power and authority of Your holy name. While I admit that I have committed this sin, I simply ask You to cause me to accept the forgiveness that You provided for me many years ago."* In using the Old Testament style or the New Testament style with a mixture of the law, people will say this prayer in the form of begging God for His forgiveness when He has already provided it.

We have two basic offensive weapons to use against Satan; they are the Word of God, primarily the New Covenant, and the power of prayer, which is released via the Holy Spirit who lives within us. When we put these two together, we have the most intimidating weapon known to the enemy. He knows he has been had when a man or woman of God masters the art of using the Word of God and the power of the Holy Spirit through prayer.

Even though Nehemiah was bound to the Old Covenant, he used it to maximize his ability to combat Jerusalem's enemies, and it worked. Why? In the Old Testament, God used the law to fulfill His ordained mission with His people; while in New Testament, Jesus fulfilled the law to place the full responsibility upon Himself. Then He placed the Holy Spirit within authentic Christians to enact the same power to ward off the enemy of His Bride. I pray that you are beginning to see our critical need for the Word of God and the power of the Holy Spirit released through prayer.

The Word of the Spirit, God's Word, is living and active. And the sword that Nehemiah commanded his people to use is the Old Testament parallel of the New Testament Sword of the Spirit. In Nehemiah's story, the brick is the perfect symbol of the New Testament depiction of work ethic, which was the authentic Jews, and today's Christians greatest weakness and challenge. What I am imparting to you today are life-giving words from the mouth of the Living God. Use God's Word and we live; it is as simple as that. Use our own words and we die—minimally we fail.

Hebrews 4:12 says, *"For the word of God is living and active and sharper than any two-edged sword and piercing as far as the division of soul and spirit, of both joints and marrow, and able to judge the thoughts and intentions of the heart."* Don't tell me that the Word of God is not powerful and active with the ability to pierce the edges of darkness.

TRUE WARFARE IS ETERNAL

The Word is eternal, just as God Himself is eternal. Just as God is omnipotent (all-powerful), so does His Word have all the needed power to defeat the enemy and to accomplish His will. Just as God is immutable, the Word of God will never change. Just as our Lord is omnipresent, His Word is always there and ready to

be used in every situation. Just as God is holy, so His Word is holy. The bottom line is this: *“The word of God is living, active, and sharper than any two-edged sword.”* The enemy hates hearing it. Jesus used it to fight off temptation, so why shouldn’t we. We can’t survive without it.

As a sword, the Word has the power to penetrate the life of every being who hears it, and that includes the enemy. It is meant to do corrective surgery within the soul, spirit, thoughts, attitudes, and body of all those who hear it. This is the secret of its power against the enemy. As it is read or heard, the Word can penetrate, cleanse, and change the lives of those who embrace it as Truth. Therefore, it cuts away at the grip of the enemy. There is nothing more powerful, and there is certainly no other substitute that can accomplish such a mission of coming against the enemy. Even Jesus, the Son of God, used the written Word to fight off Satan in the wilderness. What worked for the Son of the Living God will certainly do no less for us.

PRIMARY PRINCIPLES OF OUR LESSON

1. **COVENANT:** Understanding the Covenant is the secret to power. If you use the law to try to come against the enemy, you will be powerless. But if you use the Spirit of the Living God, the Holy Spirit who lives within you, you will have success.
2. **THE WORD:** Using God’s Word (the sword) is our weapon of warfare.
3. **HOLY SPIRIT:** Releasing the Holy Spirit is the power within the weapon. Now just put that in your mind. You have a sword—the Word of Truth, and you have the Holy Spirit. If the Holy Spirit gets ahold of that sword, you can be certain there is going to be a success.
4. **DESENSITIZED:** Never underestimate the Devil. He is alive, active, and alert.

FINAL NOTE

Luke 4:1-4 says, *“Jesus, full of the Holy Spirit, returned from the Jordan and was led around by the Spirit in the wilderness for forty days, being tempted by the devil. And he ate nothing during those days, and when they had ended, He became hungry. And the devil said to Him, ‘If You are the Son of God, tell this stone to become bread.’ But Jesus answered him, ‘It is written, ‘MAN SHALL NOT LIVE ON BREAD ALONE.’”*

The importance of doctrinal Truth and doctrinal praying is given to us by God to use daily. Doctrine, God’s unchanging Truth, is mighty in defeating our enemies. As Christians, this Truth must go deep into our hearts, and this will only come about as we understand the Holy Word of God and then use that Word aggressively in our lives by releasing the Holy Spirit from within.

Nehemiah’s Old Testament model of praying was given to us to embrace New Covenant praying. Nehemiah was a man of prayer because he had the heart of a cupbearer. He was a perfect blend of prayer and action. As for me personally, he is the model that I operate from daily.

Prayer without action is impotent. All who lead or follow must place a high priority on New Covenant praying. Why is this so important? There are four reasons:

1. Prayer makes us wait.
2. Prayer converts our vision to the vision of Christ within us.
3. Prayer quiets our hearts.
4. Prayer activates authentic faith.

Jesus is a specialist when it comes to the leadership and following of God-given authorities. He delights in accomplishing what we cannot. It is His proof that we are authentically born-again. However, He awaits our

cry of dependence. When He sees a soul passionately reaching for “*not I, but Christ,*” He is quick to release Himself through the believer.

Like Nehemiah being quick to call for help—a kind of help that was far beyond his own understanding and certainly beyond humanity, we need to do the same thing today. But the difference is that Nehemiah did not have a Spirit from within to release, but true, authentic, born-again Christians today have that ability to release the True weapon against the enemy.