

## Veracity for Truth (or Trickery)

The enemy tried everything to keep Nehemiah from rebuilding the walls of Jerusalem. He tried physical intimidation, he tried using threats & psychological intimidation, and finally he tried using deception (he tried to fake prophesying as if it was coming from the Lord).

I can't even begin to tell you how many times well-intentioned people fall for this kind of thing, thinking they are listening to the word of the Lord when they are really being deceived all over the place. It's happened to me many times, and it's happened to you too I'm sure.

The good news is that if we are willing and diligent with our Bible studies, the chances of it happening to us dwindle, and dwindle significantly. We develop the ability to spot the lies and the deceptions just like we develop the ability to spot legal issues after much study of jurisprudence. Without the study, however, as you can probably imagine, there's not much hope of our being able to discern too much of anything.

### Nehemiah 6 (NIV)

#### Further Opposition to the Rebuilding

When word came to Sanballat, Tobiah, Geshem the Arab and the rest of our enemies that I had rebuilt the wall and not a gap was left in it—though up to that time I had not set the doors in the gates—<sup>2</sup> Sanballat and Geshem sent me this message: “Come, let us meet together in one of the villages on the plain of Ono.”

But they were scheming to harm me; <sup>3</sup>so I sent messengers to them with this reply: “I am carrying on a great project and cannot go down. Why should the work stop while I leave it and go down to you?” <sup>4</sup>Four times they sent me the same message, and each time I gave them the same answer.

<sup>5</sup>Then, the fifth time, Sanballat sent his aide to me with the same message, and in his hand was an unsealed letter <sup>6</sup>in which was written:

“It is reported among the nations—and Geshem says it is true—that you and the Jews are plotting to revolt, and therefore you are building the wall. Moreover, according to these reports you are about to become their king <sup>7</sup>and have even appointed prophets to make this proclamation about you in Jerusalem: ‘There is a king in Judah!’ Now this report will get back to the king; so come, let us meet together.”

<sup>8</sup>I sent him this reply: “Nothing like what you are saying is happening; you are just making it up out of your head.”

<sup>9</sup>They were all trying to frighten us, thinking, “Their hands will get too weak for the work, and it will not be completed.”

But I prayed, “Now strengthen my hands.”

<sup>10</sup>One day I went to the house of Shemaiah son of Delaiah, the son of Mehetabel, who was shut in at his home. He said, “Let us meet in the house of God, inside the temple, and let us close the temple doors, because men are coming to kill you—by night they are coming to kill you.”

<sup>11</sup> But I said, "Should a man like me run away? Or should someone like me go into the temple to save his life? I will not go!" <sup>12</sup> I realized that God had not sent him, but that he had prophesied against me because Tobiah and Sanballat had hired him. <sup>13</sup> He had been hired to intimidate me so that I would commit a sin by doing this, and then they would give me a bad name to discredit me.

<sup>14</sup> Remember Tobiah and Sanballat, my God, because of what they have done; remember also the prophet Noadiah and how she and the rest of the prophets have been trying to intimidate me. <sup>15</sup> So the wall was completed on the twenty-fifth of Elul, in fifty-two days.

### **Opposition to the Completed Wall**

<sup>16</sup> When all our enemies heard about this, all the surrounding nations were afraid and lost their self-confidence, because they realized that this work had been done with the help of our God.

<sup>17</sup> Also, in those days the nobles of Judah were sending many letters to Tobiah, and replies from Tobiah kept coming to them. <sup>18</sup> For many in Judah were under oath to him, since he was son-in-law to Shekariah son of Arah, and his son Jehohanan had married the daughter of Meshullam son of Berekiah. <sup>19</sup> Moreover, they kept reporting to me his good deeds and then telling him what I said. And Tobiah sent letters to intimidate me.

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Nehemiah may have only been a "Cupbearer" in life, but Spiritually he was no amateur. He knew the Lord's word, and he knew the Lord's will for his life, so he could not be fooled or persuaded to do otherwise, not for a second.

In the 1984 movie titled: "Oh God, You Devil", actor/ comedian (the late) George Burns, playing the dual-role of God and the Devil, told an innocent listening young person: "The devil likes to look like me". I think that's one of the most profound movie lines I have ever heard, and I know it's true. It's one of his chief means of deception.

So study-up and stay prayed-up! It's the only way to avoid a multitude of deceptions, especially the ones that appear to be truths, but in reality they're trickery.

I hope you have an amazing day!!

- Jack