

## Carey Baptist Church

Sunday the 23<sup>rd</sup> of Feb 2025

"Further Opposition & a Coming Together"- Nehemiah 6 & 8.

We stick to the title "*Further Opposition & a Coming Together*" what Colin suggested trusting that was the one The Lord has titled too. In chapter 6 we are looking at "*Further Opposition*" and in chapter 8 we would look at the power of "*Coming Together*"

Let us see what the Lord has in store for us this morning. Need to get the maximum as we got a lot to cover. Two chapters. Therefore, brace yourselves

News spread fast! That's not news for you, is it? No, because it is obvious. Sadly, the ones which spread fast are the ones which are bad news. That's why we need to be busy with the great project of spreading the good news.

Here, Nehemiah starts by stating the invite he received, many times by his enemies. Looking and scheming to harm him. Because they have received the **news** that he had rebuilt the wall of Jerusalem and not a gap was left in it. Perfect job.

Why such an importance and focus on Jerusalem. The only city that our Lord Jesus wept over.

And he says, "Sanballat and Geshem sent me this message: "Come, let us meet together in one of the villages on the plain of Ono". You want to have a meeting! In the midst of such an important project! Project of God.

Reminds me of the prolonged work meetings chatting and chatting where some of the attendees become busy typing away on their laptops. Hardly gets anything done, sometimes.

Nehemiah was busy with the great project. And he says "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?" Four times they sent me the same message, and each time I gave them

the same answer. Fifth invite had many false accusations about the work of Nehemiah and his plans.

Did he waste time? No. He sent a message saying, "Nothing like what you are saying is happening; you are just making it up out of your head." But Nehemiah knew that the invite was to get him surrounded and harm him. How did he know that? Verse 9 says that he prayed. You see the power of Prayer and what a lot of things God reveals to you during that amazing fellowship time with God.

At Carey, we have entered into a massive project of God from the start of the year 2025. Never take this light. It is God's work, and we have no time to waste. Why? Because the return of our Lord Jesus Christ, the glorious appearing is imminent.

The invites similar to what Nehemiah received could come from the enemy too. Only when you are in prayer that you could identify these. I like the way Nehemiah puts it. Showing that this is his top priority, and he had a goal and a task. Nothing should hamper that, and we should overcome all stumbling blocks by the power of the Spirit of God.

Do you remember the conversation between Jesus and Peter. Jesus had a target, a goal and the only goal, to sacrifice HIS precious life by shedding of HIS Precious blood to redeem the world and that was the last thing the evil one wanted. Hence Satan made every effort to stop it. Did the evil one succeed? No. Because our Lord defeated the evil one. That's why HE addressed Peter as Satan when Peter opposed to Jesus dying on the Cross. HE said, "Get behind me, Satan!" (*Matthew 16:23*). Jesus was not really talking to Peter, but HE was telling the unclean spirit who was using Peter to say what the evil one wanted. But see the beauty of the relationship of Peter and Jesus. Peter never questioned why Jesus called him Satan. You need to sometimes rebuke the spirit in the Name of Jesus. Because it's not your spouse or friend or the neighbour, who talks things to upset you but the unclean spirit who wants to upset you.

You are engaged in so many tasks in the Kingdom of God. But sometimes we are not that keen. Are we?

Back to the chapter. Now what happens next. Let alone the enemies, but the **hired hands** of the enemy say to Nehemiah "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."

How does Nehemiah react to that? He responds like a real man of God. Without any fear. He says "Should a man like me run away? Or should someone like me go into the temple to save his life? I will not go!" should we ever get scared of fearful? No, because the Lord tells us not to. And it was not a request but a commandment. Do not fear. How many times in the Bible it says not to fear? 366 times. Means every day we could quote one to be brave, even for a leap year. Isn't that wonderful.

Chapter 8 talks about the invaluable precious Word of God and how important for us to read and hear it too. First the people wept by listening to it as we realize how badly we let down God when we read the Word of God. The Holy Spirit convicts us and that's why the scripture says in Hebrews 4:12 "For the word of God is alive and active. Sharper than any double-edged sword, it penetrates even to dividing soul and spirit, joints and marrow; it judges the thoughts and attitudes of the heart." So, are we to read the Word of God and weep each time, thinking how sinful we are and how we have hurt God **or** are we to come to the Lord with repentance and read the Word with joyful minds rejoicing and celebrating the precious, invaluable gift of God, the forgiveness of our sins. The freedom!!!! Not a single religion offers a sinner forgiveness freely, and no other religion asks the people to come as they are. Jesus Christ is the only one who welcomes us as we are as HE is the only one who could make us good and prepare us to stand in front of God, because HE was the only one who gave HIS life on the cross for you and me.

Then why not rejoice. The scripture says it twice in repetition, "Rejoice in the Lord always: and again, I say, Rejoice."  
Philippians 4:4.

When Ezra the Priest read the Word of God, it did cut through into everyone's hearts because they listened with awe and fear of God. You heard the Word of God -

"And all the people gathered themselves together as one man into the street. (**coming together as a Church is so crucial**) And Ezra read from the **morning until midday**, before the men and the women.

And when Ezra opened the book, all the people stood up (see the awesome respect to God). And Ezra blessed the Lord, the great God. And all the people answered, Amen, Amen, with lifting their hands: and they bowed their heads and worshipped the Lord with their faces to the ground.

So, they read in the book in the law of God **distinctly**, and gave the sense, and caused them to understand the reading.

And Nehemiah said unto all the people, this day is holy unto the Lord your God; **mourn not, nor weep**. For all the people wept, when they heard the words of the law.

Then he said unto them, go your way, eat the fat, and drink the sweet, and send portions unto them for whom nothing is prepared: for this day is holy unto our Lord: neither be ye sorry; for the **joy of the Lord is your strength**.

You see, what joyful Sundays we could have if we stick to the Word of God, distinctively! Do we have that joy of the Lord **or** are we listening to the lies of the evil one thinking how miserable the day is and how difficult the life is. Can we be brave enough to handover the troubles to our Faithful God. Are we faithful enough to take that gamble. Are we trustworthy enough to give out of our poverty rather than throwing our extra coppers to the Lord's supper? Do we trust God, the great Jehovah Jireh to meet our needs and be the only provider, the source of everything? Who Promised us in HIS Word many times. And what should we do in this joy? Verse 15 says "**they**

***should proclaim this word and spread it throughout their towns and in Jerusalem***” are we doing that in Hemel?

There are more than 8000 promises of God in the Bible and I am going to close by reading few of them to encourage you this Sunday morning so that we all could at least change one thing that would please God and where HE gets the Glory.

*“So do not fear, for I am with you; do not be dismayed, for I am your God. I will strengthen you and help you; I will uphold you with my righteous right hand.*

*You will keep in perfect peace those whose minds are steadfast, because they trust in you.*

*The LORD himself goes before you and will be with you; he will never leave you nor forsake you. Do not be afraid; do not be discouraged.”*

*I have told you these things, so that in me you may have peace. In this world you will have trouble. But take heart! I have overcome the world.”*

*I will instruct you and teach you in the way you should go; I will counsel you with my loving eye on you.*

*The LORD makes firm the steps of the one who delights in him. though he may stumble, he will not fall, for the LORD upholds him with his hand.*

*“Come to me, all you who are weary and burdened, and I will give you rest.*

*“My grace is sufficient for you, for my power is made perfect in weakness.”*

*Those who hope in the LORD will renew their strength. They will soar on wings like eagles; they will run and not grow weary; they will walk and not be faint.*

*For I know the plans I have for you,” declares the LORD, “plans to prosper you and not to harm you, plans to give you hope and a future.*

*And the peace of God, which transcends all understanding, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus.*

*Surely, he will save you from the fowler's snare and from the deadly pestilence.*

*In all things God works for the good of those who love him, who have been called according to his purpose.*

*"Honor your father and your mother, so that you may live long in the land the LORD your God is giving you.*

*No weapon forged against you will prevail, and you will refute every tongue that accuses you.*

*For God so loved the world that he gave his one and only Son, that whoever believes in him shall not perish but have eternal life.*

*So if the Son sets you free, you will be free indeed.*

*Therefore, I tell you, whatever you ask for in prayer, believe that you have received it, and it will be yours.*

*Take delight in the LORD, and he will give you the desires of your heart."*

My friends, let's come together in the Lord and claim these promises as the Lord always blesses HIS children when they come together. Don't let it be limited just for Sundays but whenever, wherever possible. May God bless you richly.