



Overcoming Intimidation
Nehemiah 6
October 22, 2017

Takeaway:

“One of the greatest ways to control someone is to make them feel afraid.”

Merriam Webster - Intimidation means to make timid or fearful, *especially* to compel or deter by or as if by threats.

Chuck Swindoll:

“I have discovered that after a number of years in ministry, it’s obvious that you can commit yourself to a life of faith, you declare before God and man that you are going to serve Him regardless of what happens, and suddenly, it happens! The enemy turns every gun he can upon you to blast you out of the saddle, to make you finish your season in defeat, to have you think that it’s really not worth it after all.”

I. This attack was well timed.

Nehemiah 6:1 (NKJV) Now it happened (The attack) when Sanballat, Tobiah, Geshem the Arab, and the rest of our enemies heard that I had rebuilt the wall, and that there were no breaks left in it (though at that time I had not hung the doors in the gates)...

Takeaway:

It is not the person who has almost fallen who is vulnerable. It is the person who thinks he will never fall.

Adolph Hitler:

"Mental confusion, contradiction of feeling, indecisiveness, panic, and intimidation, these are our weapons."

II. This attack had a subtle strategy.

The enemy launched three subtle attacks:

1. A hellish request

Nehemiah 6:2 (NKJV) Sanballat and Geshem sent to me, saying, "Come, let us meet together among the villages in the plain of Ono". But they thought to do me harm.

Takeaway:

Discernment is a God-given quality that every leader must possess. Discernment allows you to read between the lines.

Nehemiah 6:3 (NKJV) So I sent messengers to them, saying, "I am doing a great work, so that I cannot come down. Why should the work cease while I leave it and go down to you?"

Leadership Principle:

Every leader must learn when it is time to say no. One of the marks of maturity is the ability to say no without explanation.

2. A hellish letter

Nehemiah 6:5-7 (NKJV) Then Sanballat sent his servant to me as before, the fifth time, with an open letter in his hand.

Nehemiah 6:6-7 (NKJV) In it was written: It is reported among the nations, and Geshem says, that you and the Jews plan to rebel; therefore, according to these rumors, you are rebuilding the wall, that you may be their king.⁷ And you have also appointed prophets to proclaim concerning you at Jerusalem, saying, "There is a king in Judah!" Now these matters will be reported to the king. So come, therefore, and let us consult together.

3. A hellish rumor

A. The source of this rumor is never declared.

B. This rumor is exaggerated and inaccurate.

Five questions to ask when you hear something negative:

1. Is it necessary for me to repeat this?
2. Is this confidential information?
3. Is the source of this information credible?
4. Will this information benefit the person whom I am telling?
5. Would I want this repeated if I were the subject of the conversation?

Proverbs 6:16-20 (NKJV) These six things the LORD hates, Yes, seven are an abomination to Him. ¹⁷A proud look, A lying tongue, Hands that shed innocent blood, ¹⁸A heart that devises wicked plans, Feet that are swift in running to evil, ¹⁹A false witness who speaks lies, And one who sows discord among brethren. ²⁰My son, keep your father's command, And do not forsake the law of your mother.

Proverbs 26:20 (NKJV) Where there is no wood, the fire goes out; And where there is no talebearer, strife ceases.

Proverbs 11:13 (NKJV) A talebearer reveals secrets, But he who is of a faithful spirit conceals a matter.

James 3:3-8 (NKJV) Indeed, we put bits in horses' mouths that they may obey us, and we turn their whole body. ⁴Look also at ships: although they are so large and are driven by fierce winds, they are turned by a very small rudder wherever the pilot desires. ⁵Even so the tongue is a little member and boasts great things. See how great a forest a little fire kindles! ⁶And the tongue is a fire, a world of iniquity. The tongue is so set among our members that it defiles the whole body, and sets on fire the course of nature; and it is set on fire by hell. ⁷For every kind of beast and bird, of reptile and creature of the sea, is tamed and has been tamed by mankind. ⁸But no man can tame the tongue. It is an unruly evil, full of deadly poison.

Takeaway:

It is impossible for a person not to be hurt by a rumor. If you are someone who is prone to sharing gossip and rumors, then you need to repent of this wicked sin and ask God to forgive you, or you may even possibly need to be saved. If God hates a gossip, then we should be turned away from one as well.

III. This attack ultimately accomplished the mission.

Nehemiah 6:15 (NKJV) So the wall was finished on the twenty-fifth day of Elul, in fifty-two days.

Winston Churchill:

"Never give in! Never, never, never, never. Never give in! If God's honor is at stake, and if you know you are in God's will, never, never give in."