



BIBLE RADIO PRODUCTIONS

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BIBLE ADVENTURES SCRIPT:

A1586 ~ Nehemiah, a Man with a Purpose.

Welcome to Bible Adventures. Help for today. Hope for tomorrow. Jesus is Lord of all.

At the end of 1987, a Soviet astronaut returned to the earth after 326 days in orbit around our planet. He was in good health, which wasn't always the case in those days of record-breaking voyages.

Five years earlier, two astronauts had touched down after 211 days in space. They were suffering from a variety of unhealthy symptoms caused by a lengthy period of weightlessness in space. They didn't recover their fitness quickly, despite intensive treatment. To counter these problems, the Soviets arranged a vigorous exercise program for future astronauts. An exercise suit with elastic bands resisting the wearer's every move was invented and the men wore these to develop and maintain their muscle strength. And to this day, it seems to have worked!

We often long dreamily for days without difficulty, but God knows better. The easier our life, the weaker our spiritual fibre, for strength of any kind grows only by exertion.

Nehemiah was led by God to build again the walls of Jerusalem but he didn't have an easy time of it. The people in the countries around Judah didn't like to see the walls of the city taking shape. So by a variety of means, Israel's enemies set out to try to stop the work. They had successfully done this in the past but they soon discovered that Nehemiah was a man of purpose and with a plan. And God was on his side!

Whenever good work is being done, it doesn't take long before Satan sends someone to make trouble and try to stop it. In the same way Satan did this to God's people in times long-past.

Soon after work started on the rebuilding of the walls of Jerusalem, the neighbouring nations heard about it. And through Israel's history, neighbouring nations have kept watch on the prosperity and power of nearby countries to see if it is likely they could be invaded.

One group of opposition was led by Sanballat, the governor of Samaria. He feared that once Jerusalem's walls were finished and building project for the houses inside completed, an army would rise up to conquer them. They were thinking of their own long-term security and thought it was important that Jerusalem remained as weak as it had been in the last three hundred years.

Sanballat tried a number of ways to stop progress on Jerusalem's walls. We should remember that when Satan finds a successful method, he'll use it over and over again. Satan is known throughout the Bible as the accuser of godly people.

Nehemiah too, was also accused of plotting a rebellion against the king of Babylon and planning to make himself king.

Satan will accuse all those who love God with an undivided heart. To overcome Satan's lies we are to remain busy doing God's work and resisting Satan's temptations.

In John's Gospel, Chapter 8, the Lord Jesus told the Pharisees that Satan was: "... a murderer from the beginning, and does not stand in the truth, because there is no truth in him." The opponents of the rebuilding project told a variety of lies to try to discourage this work. They tried to frighten the workers with stories of an army coming to attack the city. They ridiculed their efforts and said the walls of the city were too weak to keep out anything. When such happens to us we need to pray for discernment to make sure we follow only God's truth.

Another way Satan will try to deceive us is by making sinful things appear to be desirable and good. In doing this, he tries to make good look evil. Often temptation begins in seemingly harmless pleasure but it soon gets out of control and becomes sin.

Sanballat's group tried to get Nehemiah to become puffed up with pride so he would attend a regional meeting of the national leaders for peace talks. Nehemiah had to judge if the peace talks were more important than the great work that he was doing right where he was. By deciding to remain at the work site, Nehemiah protected himself from being captured by his enemies.

Satan knows us better than we humans know ourselves. He knows all our weak spots and the Apostle Paul warns us that we need to protect every part of ourselves by wearing the whole armour of God.

God has power over Satan and it's the Lord Jesus who has defeated him time and time again. Jesus fully defeated Satan by dying on the cross and coming back to life again. Satan had entered into Jesus' disciple, Judas Iscariot, to go to the chief priests with an offer to betray Jesus. If Satan thought the death of Jesus was his own final victory over God Himself, Satan was very mistaken.

No one before the time of Jesus' resurrection had ever risen from the grave and stayed alive permanently. When God called Jesus up from the grave, Satan was completely defeated. And in time, he'll be prevented from tempting God's loved ones any further.

There's an English expression which says: LOVE IS WHAT LOVE DOES. God loved us people so much that He sent His only Son, Jesus Christ, to die as an acceptable sacrifice to God for the sins of His enemies. God proved His love freely for us. Are we willing to have Him become the Lord of our lives? If we humbly ask Him to, He will come and change our nature inside. But are we willing to completely surrender our wills and our plans for the future to Him so that He can do this? Jesus does not keep knocking on the doors of the half-hearted; but delights in those who dedicate themselves entirely to Him and His ways. Praise the Lord for His mighty and saving works today!

The drama is from The Bible In Living Sound.

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