

Satan's Strategies

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I. The man who mastered the strategies of Satan. (Nehemiah)

A. Douglas MacArthur's *Requisites for Military Success*.

1. Morale—the will to win.
2. Strength—adequate personal, equipment, strategy.
3. Source of supply—this is the lifeline.
4. Knowledge of the enemy.
 - a. “The greater the knowledge of the enemy, the greater the potential of victory.”
 - b. Case after case proves an army successful as it knows their enemy.
 - c. MacArthur sites “General” Joshua as an example.
 - d. We must be aware of Satan's methods. (2 Corinthians 2:11; Ephesians)

B. Historical backdrop.

1. The people of Israel had been taken into captivity for seventy years for disobedience to God.
2. Nehemiah.
 - a. Nehemiah was born during the captivity.
 - b. Nehemiah was launched into a position of prominence.
 - 1) He was a “cup bearer,” but this gives us an erroneous impression; he was second to the king.
 - 2) Although he lived in the palace, his heart was in Jerusalem.
 - c. Nehemiah appears in the presence of the king in a poor mood, which was dangerous to do
 - d. Nehemiah was not a hypocrite, however.
 - e. The King permits Nehemiah to return to Jerusalem and begins to work.
6. Principle: when Nehemiah begins to work for God, Satan countermoves.
7. No progress without progress.

C. How does Satan work?

1. How Satan works within the group.

a. The trick of mockery. (Nehemiah 2:19)

- 1) The building of the wall is mocked.
- 2) Sarcastic laughter is one of Satan's favorite tools.
- 3) Christians shrivel under sarcasm.
 - a) Personal example of leaving a band and catching his friends criticizing him.
 - b) Personal example of a person tearing up a Bible before the speaker.
- 4) Answer: God is the one being laughed at for your testimony, not you.

b. Persecution.

- 1) There has been more people who have died in the last century than the first three centuries combined.
- 2) There are many places in the world where it is not comfortable to be a Christian.
- 3) Answer: persecution brings a refining influence.

c. Compromise. (Nehemiah 6)

- 1) Nehemiah discerns that those wanting to work with him are bringing mischief.
- 2) Nehemiah had a big view concerning his calling.
- 3) The average person takes too small a view of the job he is called to do.
- 4) The enemy was persistent, but Nehemiah did not budge.
- 5) Answer: Nehemiah is extremely dependent upon prayer.

2. How Satan works outside the group.

a. Discouragement. (Nehemiah 4:10)

- 1) Judah has the "blues."
- 2) The most alarming thing in the modern church is a flabby defeatism.

3) The Christian life is not to be endured—it is to be enjoyed.

4) Discouragement comes after the greatest victory.

5) Paul says to rejoice always. (Philippians)

b. Internal criticism. (Nehemiah 5)

1) In its simplest form, it is self-pity.

2) A horse cannot pull and kick at the same time.

3) A good measure to see how you handle self-criticism. (2 Samuel 16:5)

a) A sin of David—his favoritism towards one of his sons.

b) His son turns against him in criticism.

c) David's servant responds against the criticism of the king.

d) David, however, just says to let him alone and said that maybe the Lord was even trying to speak through him.

e) David was too big a man to respond to every “yapping dog” along the sidelines.

c. False counsel. (Nehemiah 6)

1) Nehemiah perceives that the enemies had hired someone to give him false counsel.

2) Satan used someone in the group as he tried with Annanias and Saphira in Acts.

3) You and I are potential tools for Satan to use if we are out of fellowship with the Lord.

D. God does not share his glory.

a. Despite the adversity, Nehemiah got the job done.

b. God gets exclusive glory.

c. God will prove those wrong who do not think that he can get the job done.

c. You will only get something, if it comes from God.

Application Questions:

1. In your own words, why is knowledge of the enemy so important in the Christian life?

2. Which of Nehemiah's characteristics in dealing with the tactics of Satan stood out to you as the strongest? Explain.

3. Which of Satan's strategies stood out to you the most? How have you been affected by this? What will you do to plan against it?
