



Surprised By Conflict and Resistance

February 9, 2020

Surprises... A Way of Life!

Scene 1

Nehemiah 2:10

¹⁰ *When Sanballat the Horonite and Tobiah the Ammonite official heard about this, they were very much disturbed that someone had come to promote the welfare of the Israelites.*

Scene 1- Nehemiah prepares to travel to Jerusalem

- The Context of the Conflict
- The Nature of the Conflict
- Nehemiah's Response: ***He pressed on (aware, but ignoring)***

Lesson 1 from Nehemiah:

When facing [conflict](#), sometimes the right response is to [ignore](#) it and keep [pressing](#) on!

Scene 2

Nehemiah 2:19-20

¹⁹ *But when Sanballat the Horonite, Tobiah the Ammonite official and Geshem the Arab heard about it, they mocked and ridiculed us. "What is this you are doing?" they asked. "Are you rebelling against the king?"*

²⁰ *I answered them by saying, "The God of heaven will give us success. We his servants will start rebuilding, but as for you, you have no share in Jerusalem or any claim or historic right to it."*

Scene 2- Nehemiah arrives in Jerusalem and lays the groundwork

- The Context of the Conflict
- The Nature of the Conflict
- Nehemiah's Response: ***Nehemiah spoke the truth with clarity and conviction***

Lesson 2 from Nehemiah:

When it is time to [speak](#), be [bold](#) and [honest](#)

Scene 3

Nehemiah 4:1-5

¹ When Sanballat heard that we were rebuilding the wall, he became angry and was greatly incensed. He ridiculed the Jews, ² and in the presence of his associates and the army of Samaria, he said, "What are those feeble Jews doing? Will they restore their wall? Will they offer sacrifices? Will they finish in a day? Can they bring the stones back to life from those heaps of rubble—burned as they are?"

³ Tobiah the Ammonite, who was at his side, said, "What they are building—even a fox climbing up on it would break down their wall of stones!"

⁴ Hear us, our God, for we are despised. Turn their insults back on their own heads. Give them over as plunder in a land of captivity. ⁵ Do not cover up their guilt or blot out their sins from your sight, for they have thrown insults in the face of the builders.

Scene 3- Work on the wall is going along well...progress can be seen

- The Context of the Conflict
- The Nature of the Conflict
- Nehemiah's Response: ***Nehemiah prays against them and for God's people***

Lesson 3 from Nehemiah:

There is great [power](#) in [prayer](#)

Scene 4

Nehemiah 4:6-9

⁶ So we rebuilt the wall till all of it reached half its height, for the people worked with all their heart.

⁷ But when Sanballat, Tobiah, the Arabs, the Ammonites and the people of Ashdod heard that the repairs to Jerusalem's walls had gone ahead and that the gaps were being closed, they were very angry. ⁸ They all plotted together to come and fight against Jerusalem and stir up trouble against it. ⁹ But we prayed to our God and posted a guard day and night to meet this threat.

Scene 4- The wall is at half height!

- The Context of the Conflict
- The Nature of the Conflict
- Nehemiah's Response: ***Nehemiah prayed and posted a guard***

Lesson 4 from Nehemiah:

A healthy balance of [prayer](#) and [action](#)!

Scene 5

Nehemiah 4:10-15

¹⁰ Meanwhile, the people in Judah said, "The strength of the laborers is giving out, and there is so much rubble that we cannot rebuild the wall."

¹¹ Also our enemies said, "Before they know it or see us, we will be right there among them and will kill them and put an end to the work."

¹² Then the Jews who lived near them came and told us ten times over, "Wherever you turn, they will attack us."

¹³ Therefore I stationed some of the people behind the lowest points of the wall at the exposed places, posting them by families, with their swords, spears and bows. ¹⁴ After I looked things over, I stood up and said to the nobles, the officials and the rest of the people, "Don't be afraid of them. Remember the Lord, who is great and awesome, and fight for your families, your sons and your daughters, your wives and your homes."

¹⁵ When our enemies heard that we were aware of their plot and that God had frustrated it, we all returned to the wall, each to our own work.

Scene 5- Conditions are difficult and the workers are weary!

- The Context of the Conflict
- The Nature of the Conflict
- Nehemiah's Response: ***Nehemiah gets strategic and inspirational***

Lesson 5 from Nehemiah:

Thoughtful [strategy honors](#) God

Scene 6

Nehemiah 6:1-4

¹ 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— ² 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; ³ 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?” ⁴ Four times they sent me the same message, and each time I gave them the same answer.

Scene 6- The job is almost complete...you can see the finish line!

- The Context of Conflict
- The Nature of Conflict
- Nehemiah's Response: ***What I am doing is way too important to stop!***

Lesson 6 from Nehemiah:

I am [too busy](#) and [committed](#) x 4!

Scene 7

Nehemiah 6:5-9

⁵ Then, the fifth time, Sanballat sent his aide to me with the same message, and in his hand was an unsealed letter ⁶ 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 ⁷ 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.”

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

⁹ 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."

Scene 7- The resisters push one more time

- The Context of the Conflict
- The Nature of the Conflict
- Nehemiah's Response: **A formal, written reply declaring the truth...and prayer!**

Lesson 7 from Nehemiah:

Put it in [writing!](#)

Scene 8

Nehemiah 6:10-15

¹⁰ 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."

¹¹ 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!" ¹² I realized that God had not sent him, but that he had prophesied against me because Tobiah and Sanballat had hired him. ¹³ 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.

¹⁴ 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. ¹⁵ So the wall was completed on the twenty-fifth of Elul, in fifty-two days.

Scene 8- During the final touches on the wall

- The Context of the Conflict
- The Nature of the Conflict
- Nehemiah's Response: **No! That is not who I am! And, some prayer**

Lesson 8 from Nehemiah:

Hold to your [character](#) and who you [are](#) in [Jesus](#)!

Scene 9

Nehemiah 13:4-9

⁴ Before this, Eliashib the priest had been put in charge of the storerooms of the house of our God. He was closely associated with Tobiah, ⁵ and he had provided him with a large room formerly used to store the grain offerings and incense and temple articles, and also the tithes of grain, new wine and olive oil prescribed for the Levites, musicians and gatekeepers, as well as the contributions for the priests.

⁶ But while all this was going on, I was not in Jerusalem, for in the thirty-second year of Artaxerxes king of Babylon I had returned to the king. Some time later I asked his permission ⁷ and came back to Jerusalem. Here I learned about the evil thing Eliashib had done in providing Tobiah a room in the courts of the house of God. ⁸ I was greatly displeased and threw all Tobiah's household goods out of the room. ⁹ I gave orders to purify the rooms, and then I put back into them the equipment of the house of God, with the grain offerings and the incense.

Scene 9- The battle after the battle

- The Context of the Conflict
- The Nature of the Conflict
- Nehemiah's Response: **Clean house**

Lesson 9 from Nehemiah:

Do all you can to [clean house](#) and make [things right](#) before [God](#) and for people!