

"I chased Him from me."

Text: (Neh 4:1-6).

- 1- In 586 BC King Nebuchadnezzar destroyed Jerusalem/carried the Hebrews into captivity because of sin. II Kings 25 records the siege of Jerusalem and the destruction of the temple.
 - a- 11 years earlier the temple had been looted and the cream of the crop taken into Babylonian captivity.
 - b- They burned down the temple, palace and good houses and tore down the city walls.
- 2- 50 years later, **Zerubbabel** returns to rebuild temple. This was completed in 516BC.
 - a- **In 444 BC Nehemiah** came to rebuild the wall. (Neh 2)
 - b- It took 52 days for, as scripture says, "**The people had a mind to work.**" (Neh 4:6).
- 3- In Chapter 13 Sanballat and Tobiah were the leaders of the Samaritans; they succeeded in undoing the reforms of **Ezra**. (The feasts were ignored, they broke the Sabbath and other things). Eliashib even desecrated the temple. (Neh 13:4-7).
- 4- But then in (Neh 13:23-27) Nehemiah went to put these things right but the grandson of the high priest tried to fight this move, (Neh 13:28), "Therefore I chased him from me."

Transition:

Nehemiah's attitude to sin was very hard. This man, son of Eliashib, wanted to be High Priest while violating the spirit of **Numbers 25:13**. The reason Nehemiah took action against the man was that the un-holy could not serve God in the temple; such would affect the prophet's reforms. He took strong action against sin in the congregation of the people. **We, also, must chase sin far from us; drive it far away if we would continue to be a holy people, special possession of God.**

Discussion:

- I- **We begin with our first observation:** We can chase two kinds of things: **Good- Evil**.
 - A- In (Deut 27-28) the people were to know the blessings and curses offered to them by God. If they obeyed blessings received, if disobey or did evil curses.
 - 1- This is the way that Joshua saw it in Josh 24:15: Joshua gives them the choice here, like Moses did in the past in (Deut 30:15) **life and death, good and evil**, are solemnly set before the people for their own choice; and an earnest exhortation to **choose the better part**.
 - 2- But, judges 2:17 states that even though God raised up Judges, they still did not choose the right thing. They played the harlot, turned from obedience to choose evil.
 - 3- The message of judges is all about, "doing what is right in their own eyes."
 - B- Amos wrote in (**Amos 5:14-15**)
 - 1- Time and again Gods spokes- men pleaded "*Stand in the ways and see, and ask for the old paths, where the good way is, and walk in it;* Then you will find rest for your souls." **But they said, 'We will not walk in it.'**
 - 2- In Isaiah the people said, who says to the seers, "Do not see," And to the prophets, "Do not prophesy to us right things; Speak to us smooth things, prophesy deceits" (Is 30:6).

- 3- When people, even today, have no love for the truth; want the sweet words in their ears and the smooth tongue of the preacher, or prefer a lie it proves that they love the life of sin rather than a life of righteousness. How you doing so far?
- 4- **What ever choice we chase away** we make room for the other! We are always faced with the challenge of right versus wrong. What choices are you making?

II- **My second point is that we CAN overcome evil** just as Nehemiah did.

A- We are never forced to sin. Yes temptations can be strong and, if we allow them, they can overtake us.

- 1- Have you ever heard the phrase that some repeat, **“The devil made me do it?”**
- 2- But God says : (I Cor 10:13) **“No (*‘pi-ras-mos’*) temptation has overtaken you except such as is common to man; but God is faithful, who will not allow you to be tempted beyond what you are able, but with the temptation will also make the way of escape, that you may be able to bear it.”**

3- The design of the apostle is to show these folks that, if they are faithful, they have nothing to fear from any such forms of temptation, but that God was able to bring them through all. **The sentiment in the verse is a very important one, since the general principle here stated is as applicable to Christians now as it was to the Corinthians.**

4- “...the Lord knows how to deliver the godly out of temptations and to reserve the unjust under punishment for the Day of Judgment, **“(2nd Peter 2:9).** We can overcome temptation, sin in our lives. **HOW?** By subjecting ourselves to God, resisting the devil then watch him flee. **(Jas 4:7).**

- a- **Eph 4, “do not give place to the devil.” Put on the full armour of God and you will be protected and let there be no chinks in the armour,(Eph 6:10-17).**
- b- **When we chase away the devil we truly open ourselves to God and the doing of His will more completely.**

III- **Thirdly , let me give you three keys that I have found helpful in fighting temptation!**

A- **Fight the little things.** **(James 1:12).**

- 1- Jesus said: **“He who is faithful in what is least is faithful also in much; and he who is unjust in what is least is unjust also in much.” (Luke 16/unjust steward).**
- 2- If you and I build our strength on overcoming the little things, we will be strong in overcoming the big things.

B- **Second key is to know when to run!**

- 1- Paul to Timothy: (2nd Tim 2:22). Flee!!!! **[fyoo'-go]**
 - a- **Apparently a primary verb; to run away (literally or figuratively);**
 - b- **By implication to shun; by analogy to vanish: - escape, flee (away).**
- 2- Remember Joseph in (Gen 39:12). He left His garments and fled, why? Because Pharaohs wife tried to seduce him. **He chased sin and temptation far from him, he drove it away by fleeing from its very presence.** That was and is an open door God has provided.

C- **The final Key is simple too; avoid occasions of temptation.**

- 1- Remember (1Cor 13:33-34).
 - a- **Be not deceived** **[plan-ah'-o]:**to (properly *cause* to) roam from safety, truth, or virtue): - go astray, deceive, err, seduce, wander, be out of the way.

- b- Solomon wrote that it is a, *“sport to the fool to do wickedness.”* (Prov 10:23). But in Hebrew’s, talking of (Hebrews 11:24-26), the faith of Moses, the writer stated that Moses would rather suffer affliction with the people of God than enjoy the **passing pleasures of sin**. Let me ask; is not that how we should be?
- c- One preacher stated that, *“If you run with goats you will smell like one.”* I am reminded of the **Psalms 1** right here which talks of the progression of sin. (Walk –stand- sit). Let’s not get into that situation. Let’s just **chase or drive sin away as far as possible for even arms length is to close.**

Conclusion:

- 1- As Nehemiah *“chased away”* a wicked man, so we must always be on the alert and chase away the sin that so easily besets us.
- 2- [John McArthur statement]Sin rebels against the God we serve. And it denies that God even exists. Sin is practical atheism, and Christians are anything but atheists. Sin is totally inconsistent with the Christian’s life. If we claim to be Christians, yet habitually sin, we aren’t true believers.
- 3- You and I are Gods people, and as Gods people we are to be a holy people, (**1Peter 1:15-16**). You cannot meet this high goal by living as knowing neighbours to sin!
- 4- (**1Peter2:9**), *“But you are a chosen nation, royal priesthood...”*
- 5- Folks the only way you and I can be pure and pleasing to God is to chase, drive away sin, cut off the devil and **“CLEAVE to the SON.”**

Invitation: Let me put this to you.

Has the world ensnared you , are you living to close to sin for comfort, is there sin ,secret or otherwise, clogging up your life, keeping you from real success in the Kingdom?

The Word has an answer for the:

Christian: 1st John 1:9-10. Confession-repentance and then forgiveness knowing that the blood of Jesus continually cleans us from sin.

Non-Christian: Rom 5:8, Plan of salvation. H-B-R-C-B Live faithfully.

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