

“COMEBACK – God’s Providence In Motion” Series
Lesson Three: “Just When Everything Was Going So Well!”

Ezra chapter 4

Conquerors Sunday School Class – Sunday, May 9, 2021

Our Lesson’s Theme Verse is found in these passages of Scripture...

***“Be sober, be vigilant; because your adversary the devil,
as a roaring lion, walketh about, seeking whom he may devour:”***

I Peter 5:8

Today’s Lesson Thought can be summed up in this one Question...

“Is It Well With Your Soul Today Concerning God’s Plan For Your Life?”

Lesson: “Just When Everything Was Going So Well!”

The Apostle Paul wrote in I Corinthians 16:9, ***“For a great door and effectual is opened unto me, and there are many adversaries.”***

But for every opportunity God gave unto the Apostle Paul to serve Him and to see folks saved, the devil had a plan to disrupt those opportunities with many adversarial attacks against him and his work for the Lord!

Boy, have we not seen that in our own church family and in the many ministry opportunities God has so abundantly bestowed upon us in our day as well?

You and I today need to understand *ahead of time* that there are indeed going to be both expected, as well as unexpected, oppositions, attacks, persecutions, heartaches, and problems that will arise and come face to face with all those who love the Lord and who commit themselves to faithful service unto the Lord!

In our lesson this morning, we will see how that this fact was true with the children of Israel as they had now determined to re-build the walls and the city of their beloved Jerusalem, and it will be the same with you and with me today as we work to win our lost world to a saving knowledge of the Lord Jesus Christ and then help those who get saved to re-build the walls in their lives that Satan has knocked down and so tragically destroyed!

Satan’s ultimate plan to rob, and to steal, and to kill and to destroy has never changed nor will those plans ever change in his work against God and against the children of God!

And in our lesson today, we will see how that Satan used Israel’s adversaries to launch three weapons against them that are still often used against you and me in our work for the Lord today as well.

Those weapons begin first of all with...

I : Deception

A: Deception was a weapon that was used and practiced by many of Israel’s Enemies

o Ezra 4:1-2, II Kings 17:20-41

B: Their Deception was Perceived by Israel’s Leaders

o Ezra 4:3, II Corinthians 11:13-15

II : Discouragement

- What is *'discouragement'* folks, and what does it actually mean to *'discourage'* someone?
 - o Webster's dictionary describes *'discouragement'* as *'the act of discouraging, or depriving one of courage or confidence, to dishearten, to hinder by disfavoring, to dissuade or attempt to dissuade from doing something'*.
- And because the enemies of God's people did not like the answer they were given when their deception was perceived, they now attacked the people of God through *'discouragement'*.
- And I want you to see in these verses how that their attack was...

A: Well Planned...

- o Ezra 4:4-5a

B: Persistent...

- o Ezra 4:5,
 - The devil and his crowd are, if nothing else in this life, persistent!
 - That word *'persistent'* means *'always continuing to do something or to try to do something even though it may be difficult or whether other people would want you to stop'*.
 - It means *'to go the extra mile, to continue beyond the normal stopping point, to never stop or go away'*.

III : Dishonesty among the people around them

- Satan did this through...

A: Trumped Up Charges against the people of God

- o Ezra 4:6-16

B: Tragic Consequences

- o Ezra 4:17-24

Conclusion:

Folks, I guess the moral of this story is twofold...One, *'be sure your sin will find you out'*, and two, *'sin always leaves scars'*!

But praise be unto God because we also learn in this story that God is still in control of things, and if we will simply trust Him and obey Him, He will indeed see us through those difficult times of deception, and discouragement, and even dishonesty which are displayed toward us by those who remember only our past!

Folks, aren't you glad God puts our past behind His back, and casts our sins in the depths of the seas, removing them from His view as far as the east is from the west even as we read last week?!?

Folks, we may never be able to remove the scars that sin always leaves in our lives before we are saved, but we can certainly keep them from being seen by living for the Lord and letting folks around us know that there is indeed, forgiveness with God when we truly repent of our sin and humbly seek God's wisdom and guidance for our present and future days!

Oh, what a blessing to know, that even when the devil seems to fight the most in our lives, God still has a plan to finish the work that He has begun within our lives!