

Nehemiah 6

Verses 1- 9

Now when it was reported to Sanballat, Tobiah, Geshem the Arab, and to the rest of our enemies that I had rebuilt the wall, and *that* no breach was left in it, although at that time I had not installed the doors in the gates, ² Sanballat and Geshem sent *a message* to me, saying, “Come, let’s meet together at Chephirim in the plain of Ono.” But they were plotting to harm me. ³ So I sent messengers to them, saying, “I am doing a great work and am unable to come down. Why should the work stop while I leave it and come down to you?” ⁴ Then they sent *messages* to me four times worded in this way, and I answered them with the same wording. ⁵ Then Sanballat sent his servant to me in the same way a fifth time with an open letter in his hand. ⁶ In it was written: “It is reported among the nations, and Gashmu says, that you and the Jews intend to rebel; for that reason you are rebuilding the wall. And you are to be their king, according to these reports. ⁷ You have also appointed prophets to proclaim in Jerusalem concerning you, ‘A king is in Judah!’ And now it will be reported to the king according to these reports. So come now, let’s consult together.” ⁸ Then I sent *a message* to him saying, “*Nothing* like these things that you are saying has been done, but you are inventing them in your own mind.” ⁹ For all of them were *trying* to frighten us, thinking, “They will become discouraged with the work and it will not be done.” But now, *God*, strengthen my hands.

Now when it was reported to Sanballat, Tobiah, Geshem the Arab, and to the rest of our enemies that I had rebuilt the wall, and *that* no breach was left in it, although at that time I had not installed the doors in the gates, ² Sanballat and Geshem sent *a message* to me, saying, “Come, let’s meet together at Chephirim in the plain of Ono.” But they were plotting to harm me.

The enemies of Israel had tried a number of different ways to stop the building of the wall and none of them had succeeded so they came up with a new plan to kidnap and/or kill Nehemiah. Nehemiah knew what they were planning and sent a message back to them saying he was too busy to meet with them.

They asked Nehemiah to meet them at Chephirim in the plain of Ono.

See map 605



⁴ Then they sent *messages* to me four times worded in this way, and I answered them with the same wording.

One has to assume these guys were slow learners. 😊

⁵ Then Sanballat sent his servant to me in the same way a fifth time with an open letter in his hand.

When someone in the government is not happy about some policy that a representative has implemented and they want the public to know what's going on he/she leaks it to the press knowing it will be published and there will be some backlash. In this case Sanballat leaked his own letter by not sealing it because he wanted this news to get out to the common people hoping it would gain some momentum in the public discourse. However, Nehemiah was holding the only card that was important because he was a favored employee of the King.

⁶ In it was written: “It is reported among the nations, and Gashmu says, that you and the Jews intend to rebel; for that reason you are rebuilding the wall. And you are to be their king, according to these reports. ⁷ You have also appointed prophets to proclaim in Jerusalem concerning you, ‘A king is in Judah!’ And now it will be reported to the king according to these reports. So come now, let’s consult together.”

This was a threat that if Nehemiah did not meet with his enemies they would make sure that the King would hear about these rumors.

⁸ Then I sent a *message* to him saying, “*Nothing* like these things that you are saying has been done, but you are inventing them in your own mind.”

If Nehemiah had not been a loyal employee to the king this kind of ploy may have worked.

Verses 10 - 14

¹⁰ When I entered the house of Shemaiah the son of Delaiah, son of Mehetabel, who was confined *at home*, he said, “Let’s meet together in the house of God, within the temple, and let’s close the doors of the temple, for they are coming to kill you, and they are coming to kill you at night.” ¹¹ But I said, “Should a man like me flee? And who is there like me who would go into the temple to save his own life? I will not go in.” ¹² Then I realized that God certainly had not sent him, but he uttered *his* prophecy against me because Tobiah and Sanballat had hired him. ¹³ He was hired for this reason, that I would become frightened and act accordingly and sin, so that they might have an evil report in order that they could taunt me. ¹⁴ Remember, my God, Tobiah and Sanballat in accordance with these works of theirs, and also Noadiah the prophetess and the rest of the prophets, who were *trying* to frighten me.

¹⁰ When I entered the house of Shemaiah, he said, let’s meet together in the house of God, within the temple, and let’s close the doors of the temple, for they are coming to kill you at night.

Shemaiah, a hired traitor, pretended to be Nehemiah’s friend and told him of a plot to kill him that very night and suggested that he hide in the temple.

¹² Then I realized that God certainly had not sent him, but he uttered *his* prophecy against me because Tobiah and Sanballat had hired him.

The suggestion to enter the temple exposed Shemaiah to be a liar because only a priest could enter the temple. God would not tell Nehemiah to do something that was contrary to the Law.

¹³ He was hired for this reason, that I would become frightened and act accordingly and sin, so that they might have an evil report in order that they could taunt me.

Access to the Tabernacle was strictly regulated and only priests could enter the Holy Place according to the Law. So If Nehemiah had entered the temple and it became known it was likely that he would have been put to death by the Jews.

¹⁴ Remember, my God, Tobiah and Sanballat in accordance with these works of theirs, and also Noadiah the prophetess and the rest of the prophets, who were trying to frighten me.

Apparently there were a number of prophets who were working for the enemy.

Verses 15 - 20

¹⁵ So the wall was completed on the twenty-fifth of *the month* Elul, in fifty-two days. ¹⁶ When all our enemies heard *about it*, and all the nations surrounding us saw *it*, they lost their confidence; for they realized that this work had been accomplished with the help of our God. ¹⁷ Also in those days many letters went from the nobles of Judah to Tobiah, and Tobiah's letters came to them. ¹⁸ For many in Judah were bound by oath to him because he was the son-in-law of Shecaniah the son of Arah, and his son Jehohanan had married the daughter of Meshullam the son of Berechiah. ¹⁹ Moreover, they were speaking about his good deeds in my presence, and were reporting my words to him. Then Tobiah sent letters to frighten me.

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

This was an amazing accomplishment.

This means the work on the wall started on the 4th of Ab (a month with 30 days) and ended on the 25 day of Elul (a month with 29 days).

See pic 610

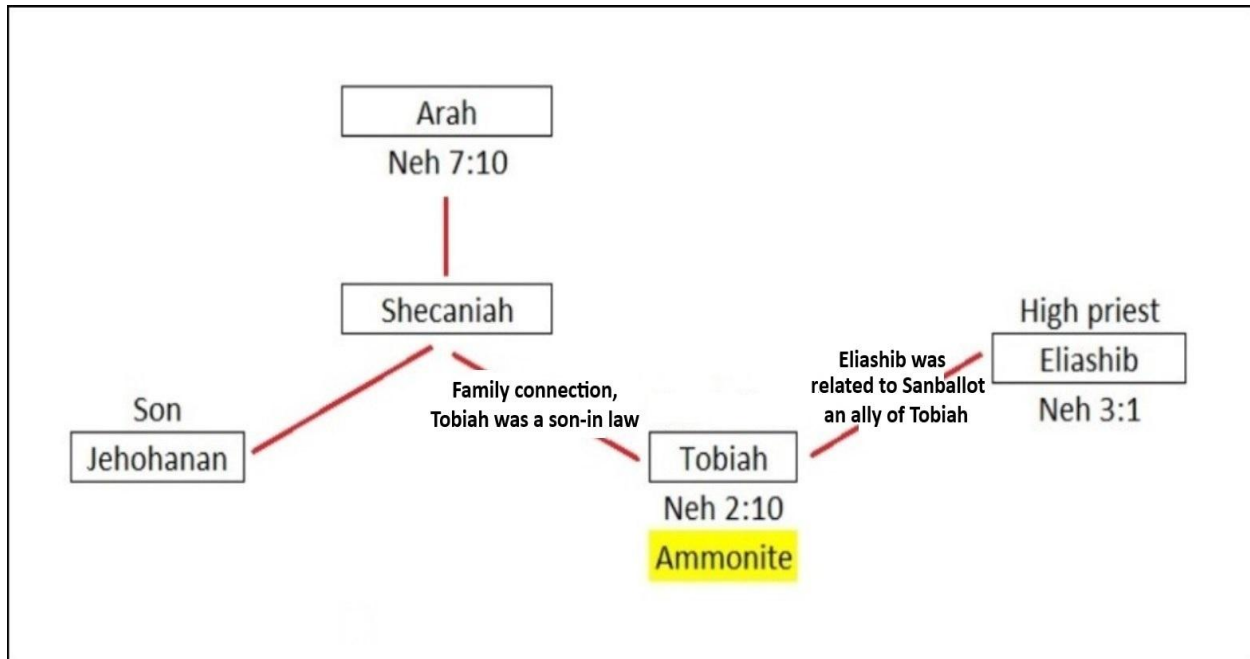
The Jewish Calendar			
The Jews used two types of calendars			
The Civil: Used for kings, births, contracts & The Sacred: Used for festivals			
Month Name	Corresponds to	Civil Year	Sacred Year
Tishri	Sep-Oct	1st	7th
Heshvan	Oct-Nov	2nd	8th
Chislev	Nov-Dec	3rd	9th
Tebeth	Dec-Jan	4th	10th
Shebat	Jan-Feb	5th	11th
Adar	Feb-Mar	6th	12th
Nisan	Mar-Apr	7th	1st
Iyar	Apr-May	8th	2nd
Sivan	May-Jun	9th	3rd
Tammuz	Jun-Jul	10th	4th
Ab	Jul-Aug	11th	5th
Elul	Aug-Sep	12th	6th

¹⁶ **When all our enemies heard *about it*, and all the nations surrounding us saw it, they lost their confidence; for they realized that this work had been accomplished with the help of our God.**

The surrounding countries were not happy about the walls of Jerusalem being built because this showed that the God of Heaven was no longer angry with Israel for their disobedience and Israel would no longer be at their mercy.

¹⁷ Also in those days many letters went from the nobles of Judah to Tobiah, and Tobiah's letters came to them. ¹⁸ For many in Judah were bound by oath to him because he was the son-in-law of Shecaniah the son of Arah, and his son Jehohanan had married the daughter of Meshullam the son of Berechiah. ¹⁹ Moreover, they were speaking about his good deeds in my presence, and were reporting my words to him. Then Tobiah sent letters to frighten me.

See chart 615



Nehemiah faced not only open opposition from enemies like Tobiah but also covert betrayal from within his own community. Some of the leaders of Judah were influenced by Tobiah (a prominent Ammonite official) because of his family connection with an important Jewish family (Shecaniah).

In addition the grandson of Eliashib (the High Priest of Israel) had married the daughter of Sanballat (a Samaritan official), who was an ally of Tobiah. Could this be where the idea of a friend & family discount came from? 😊

See Nehemiah 13:6-7

⁶ But during all this *time* I was not in Jerusalem, for in the thirty-second year of Artaxerxes king of Babylon I had come to the king. After some time, however, I requested a leave of absence from the king, ⁷ and I came to Jerusalem and learned about the evil that Eliashib had committed for Tobiah, by preparing a room for him in the courtyards of the house of God.

Nehemiah had numerous enemies.

1. Foreign enemies on every side.
2. Some of the nobles.
3. Some of the prophets.
4. The High Priest