

## THRU THE BIBLE EXPOSITION

### **Nehemiah: Pattern For Solutions In Spiritually Hard Times**

#### **I. Overcoming Deceptive Manipulation**

(Nehemiah 6:10-14)

Introduction: (To show the need . . . )

We believers at Nepaug Church are facing deceptive, manipulative pressures to change our belief on creation:

The John Templeton Foundation that is backed by millions of dollars in assets, in accord with a series of its grants in September 2012-August 2015, made this statement of purpose on "Evolution and Christian Faith": "According to a 2012 Barna poll, only 26% of American clergy accepted the idea that God used evolution to create," so "(t)he goal of this project is to . . . award grants . . . to scholars, church leaders, and parachurch organizations" to "produce . . . videos, articles, books, lectures, workshops and websites, greatly increasing the visibility of the evolutionary point of view. Many more students, pastors and laypeople will become aware that biblical faith does not require the rejection of evolutionary science." ([templeton.org/grant/evolution-and-christian-faith](http://templeton.org/grant/evolution-and-christian-faith))

Since then, the foundation has spent millions of dollars to influence many evangelical institutions, including Calvin College, Westmont College, the Evangelical Free Church's Trinity Evangelical Divinity School and even Multnomah Biblical Seminary that is associated with the institution where I earned my bachelor's degree. (Melissa Skinner, "Funding Darwin in the Church," Answers, May-June, 2017, p. 74-75)

This effort has been very successful, too: last Friday, David Crary's story, "Goodall Honored For Science, Spirituality" in the Republican-American, May 21, 2021, p. 3B, told how last year, Dr. Francis Collins who heads Biologos, won the Templeton Prize for fusing science and spirituality, meaning that Dr. Collins' efforts of funneling millions of dollars of Templeton Foundation money that was directed his way into evangelical institutions to promote evolution has proven to be very effective. (Ibid., Skinner, p. 73, 76) Also, Robert V. McCabe and Tim Chaffey ("What's Wrong with the Framework Hypothesis?" June 21, 2011; [answersingenesis.org](http://answersingenesis.org)) claimed that one of my past seminary professors, "Bruce Waltke," is now "(a)nother Framework advocate," a view that holds "the plain words of Genesis 1 should be reclassified as something other than straightforward historical narrative" to allow for evolution.

So, if I as your pastor graduated from a school that is now influenced by the lucrative reach of the John Templeton Foundation to get evangelicals to accept belief that God used evolutionary processes to create, and if one of my former seminary professors now holds to a view that allows room for God to have used evolution to create, how can you as a congregation be sure that you are getting the truth in my ministry on the origin of the universe?

For that matter, we may all be wondering how do I myself know that I am currently holding to the truth when every Sunday morning I say in my introduction that God created the universe without any evolutionary processes!

**Need:** *So, we ask, "How does God want us to handle deceptive, manipulative pressures to alter our views or acts?"*

- I. Nehemiah faced deceptive manipulation meant to get him to cease building Jerusalem's wall, Neh. 6:10:**
  - A. One day, Shemaiah asked Nehemiah to visit him since he was shut up in his home, Neh. 6:10a. Shemaiah's restriction conveyed the idea that he was a prophet who "purposely locked himself in his house supposedly from some debility or ritual defilement, and sent word for Nehemiah to visit him," B. K. C., O. T., p. 686.
  - B. Nehemiah trusted Shemaiah, seen in his decision to visit him, and Nehemiah initially did not know that Nehemiah's foes had "hired Shemaiah, a man 'on the inside,'" to harm his effort to rebuild the city wall, Ibid.
- II. When Nehemiah arrived, Shemaiah urged him to meet with him in the temple behind closed doors, claiming that Nehemiah's life was threatened by men who wanted to slay him at night, Nehemiah 6:10b.**
- III. By using God's precedents and Scripture, Nehemiah discerned and rejected the deceptive manipulation:**
  - A. First, Nehemiah recalled several divine precedents that directed him to do the opposite of Shemaiah's advice:
    1. God had answered four months of his prayers by moving Persia's king to let him go to Jerusalem to rebuild the city wall, Nehemiah 1:11 and 2:4-8. (Ryrie Study Bible, KJV, 1978, fn. to Nehemiah 2:1)
    2. Nehemiah had then publicly given fellow Hebrews his testimony of God's help in directing him to this rebuilding effort at Jerusalem, what led other Hebrews to join him in rebuilding the wall, Nehemiah 2:18.
    3. Thus, Nehemiah knew that to flee from his work on the wall was to counter God's precedents, Neh. 6:11a!
  - B. Second, Numbers 3:10 and 18:7 prohibited anyone but the priests from entering the temple! (Nehemiah 6:11b)
  - C. Nehemiah thus knew that God did *not* condone Shemaiah's advice, that Israel's enemies had hired him to get Nehemiah to discredit himself in entering the temple and so hurt his leadership and work on the wall, v. 12-13.
  - D. Nehemiah thus told Shemaiah that he would not enter the temple to meet with him, Nehemiah 6:11c.

E. Nehemiah also asked God to deal with Tobiah, Sanballat, false prophetess Noadiah and other false prophets who had wanted to get him to stop work on the wall by trying to make him afraid to do the work, Neh. 6:14.

***Lesson:*** *Nehemiah discerned deceptive manipulation by relying on Scripture and God's precedents, and he overcame the pressure to conform to this manipulation by praying about the problem.*

***Application:*** *(1) May we trust in Christ Who died as our Atoning Sacrifice for sin that we might receive God's gift of eternal life, John 3:16; 1 Cor. 15:1-11. (2) May we heed Scripture and God's precedents to discern deceptively manipulative efforts by others to get us to turn from God's truth and calling, and may we pray for God's help.*

**Conclusion:** (To illustrate the message . . . )

We apply this message to the deceptive manipulation that we face as noted in our introduction (as follows):

(1) Scripture opposes any evolution in creation: (a) The "days" in Genesis 1 and 2 are each composed of an "evening" and a "morning," not allowing for the word "day" to be understood figuratively as an "age" of millions of years to allow for evolution. (Ibid., Ryrie, ftn. to Genesis 1:5) (b) Also, opposite the Framework theory, the view that Genesis 1-2 is not a straightforward historical narrative, Dr. George Buchanan Gray of Oxford in The Forms of Hebrew Poetry, 1915, reprint 1972, p. 52, claimed that the Hebrew text by use of the "waw converse" [what we now call the "waw consecutive," cf. J. Weingreen, A Pract. Gram. For Class. Heb., 1969, p. 90-91] indicates "the narrative runs on in a single continuous line" from verse 3 "down to verse 26." The days of creation in Genesis 1:3-26 are thus six **consecutive solar** days, so the writer meant to convey that God's work in creating the entire universe occurred in a solar week, what is impossible by evolution! (c) Jesus at Matthew 19:4-6 said that God made man as male and female "at the beginning," not as the culmination of evolutionary development after millions of years, and He cited Genesis 2:24 to show that just as Adam and Eve were made from one flesh, so God would view marriage as indissoluble. Since Eve was made from Adam's rib in the context of Genesis 2:24, neither the man nor the woman evolved from lower life forms, countering belief in evolutionary processes. (d) Romans 5:12 and 1 Corinthians 15:21-22 teach that death entered creation by Adam's sin, that it was not a part of the natural creative order before that event, and since evolutionary processes require death for the evolutionary principle of the survival of the fittest to work, there was no evolutionary process before Adam sinned, so God's creation did not involve evolutionary processes. (e) 1 Corinthians 15:51-57 teaches that believers in Christ will be translated or raised into immortal bodies since Christ gave us victory over sin that causes death through His work on the cross. However, if, as evolution teaches, death was a part of the initial creative order so that man evolved through processes that involved death, then Christ's death on the cross provides no solution to death for us believers, and we cannot be raptured since death would have always been a part of God's creative order! Thankfully, the opposite is true: "The sting of death is sin; and the strength of sin is the law. But thanks be to God, which giveth us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ." (1 Corinthians 15:56-57)

(2) As for God's precedents that give evidence the truth about evolution and the Christian faith, (a) in 1967 six years after the Whitcomb and Morris book, The Genesis Flood was first printed, I was assigned to read it in Bible School and noted its Figure 10 photo of the footprints of a dinosaur and a human being that were made in the same Cretaceous strata found at the Paluxy River Bed in Glen Rose, Texas. Evolutionists claim the dinosaurs were extinct around 70 million years before man (Ibid., 1961, reprint 1978, p. 174), but here was evidence that evolution is false! (b) The Figure 11 photo on the next page presented giant left and right human footprints found in the same river bed that each measured 15 inches long, and for comparison, a modern man's left bare foot was seen touching the top of the left human fossilized footprint, evidence of the "giants in the earth in those days" before the Genesis Flood, Genesis 6:4, Ibid., p. 175. The caption added, "Similar giant human footprints have been found in Arizona, near Mt. Whitney in California, near the White Sands in New Mexico, and in other places," Ibid. (c) On pages 175-176, Whitcomb and Morris cited a report by Otto Stutzer in Geology of Coal, 1940, p. 271 where he wrote, "In the coal collection in the Mining Academy in Freiberg [Stutzer was Professor of Geology and Mineralogy in the School of Mines at Freiberg, in Saxony], there is a puzzling human skull composed of brown coal and manganiferous and phosphatic limonite, but its source is not known. This skull was described by Karsten and Dechen in 1842." Evolutionists claim coal was formed in the Tertiary age, long before man allegedly evolved (Ibid., p. 175-176), but this human fossilized skull is evidence again of the truth of pure creationism and the Genesis Flood opposite the evolutionary theory of origins!

(3) Based on Scripture and these [and many other] precedents, I hold to pure creationism. I hope you do too!

**May we trust in Christ Who died as our Atoning Sacrifice for sin that we might receive God's gift of eternal life. May we heed Scripture and God's precedents to discern deceptively manipulative efforts by others to change our views and actions from continuing to follow God. May we then pray for God's help in the issue.**