

# Nehemiah 6:3

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

And I sent messengers unto them, saying, I am doing a great work, so that I cannot come down: why should the work cease, whilst I leave it, and come down to you?

## Analysis

**And I sent messengers unto them, saying, I am doing a great work, so that I cannot come down: why should the work cease, whilst I leave it, and come down to you?**

This verse within Nehemiah 6 addresses themes of deception, completing the work, steadfastness, discernment. Enemies shift tactics from open opposition to subtle deception, requiring spiritual discernment to complete the wall in 52 days. This passage demonstrates biblical principles applicable across both testaments—God's sovereignty combined with human responsibility, faith expressed through obedient action, and the necessity of both individual and corporate commitment to covenant faithfulness. Nehemiah models leadership that combines vision, prayer, courage, integrity, and perseverance amid sustained opposition.

## Historical Context

Nehemiah's account occurs during Persian imperial dominance (539-331 BC), specifically 445-433 BC under Artaxerxes I. The 52-day wall completion represents remarkable achievement given opposition and limited resources. Excavations have confirmed portions of Nehemiah's wall and various gates mentioned in the text. The Persian period was crucial transitional time when Jewish identity shifted from monarchical nationalism to Torah-centered covenantal community. Without political independence, the people's cohesion depended on shared scripture,

temple worship, and covenant obedience. This established patterns persisting through the Second Temple period into New Testament times. Understanding this context illuminates Jesus's ministry among a people shaped by these reforms and challenges.

## Related Passages

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**John 3:16** — God's love and salvation

**Ephesians 2:8** — Salvation by grace through faith

**Romans 2:1** — Judging others

**Revelation 20:12** — Judgment according to deeds

## Study Questions

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1. How does Nehemiah 6:3 deepen your understanding of God's character and His work in human history?
2. What specific contribution can you make to building up Christ's church in your local community?
3. How does understanding your work as part of God's larger purposes transform your approach to daily responsibilities?

## Interlinear Text

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בְּמֶלֶאכָה	לְאָמָר	מֶלֶאכִים	עַלְיָה מִאֲשֶׁלֶת הָ	לְאָמָר רְ
And I sent	H5921	messengers	H4397	unto them saying
H7971			H4397	H559
a great	H589	I am doing	H6213	so that I cannot
H1419				H3201
cease	H7673	why should the work	H4399	come down
		whilst	H834	I leave
				H7503
תַּשְׁבַּת	תַּשְׁבַּת	בְּמֶלֶאכָה	כִּאֵשׁ רְ	אֶרְפֵּקְ

## Additional Cross-References

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**John 9:4** (Parallel theme): I must work the works of him that sent me, while it is day: the night cometh, when no man can work.

**Matthew 10:16** (Parallel theme): Behold, I send you forth as sheep in the midst of wolves: be ye therefore wise as serpents, and harmless as doves.

**Proverbs 14:15** (Parallel theme): The simple believeth every word: but the prudent man looketh well to his going.

**Luke 14:30** (Parallel theme): Saying, This man began to build, and was not able to finish.

**Ecclesiastes 9:10** (Parallel theme): Whatsoever thy hand findeth to do, do it with thy might; for there is no work, nor device, nor knowledge, nor wisdom, in the grave, whither thou goest.