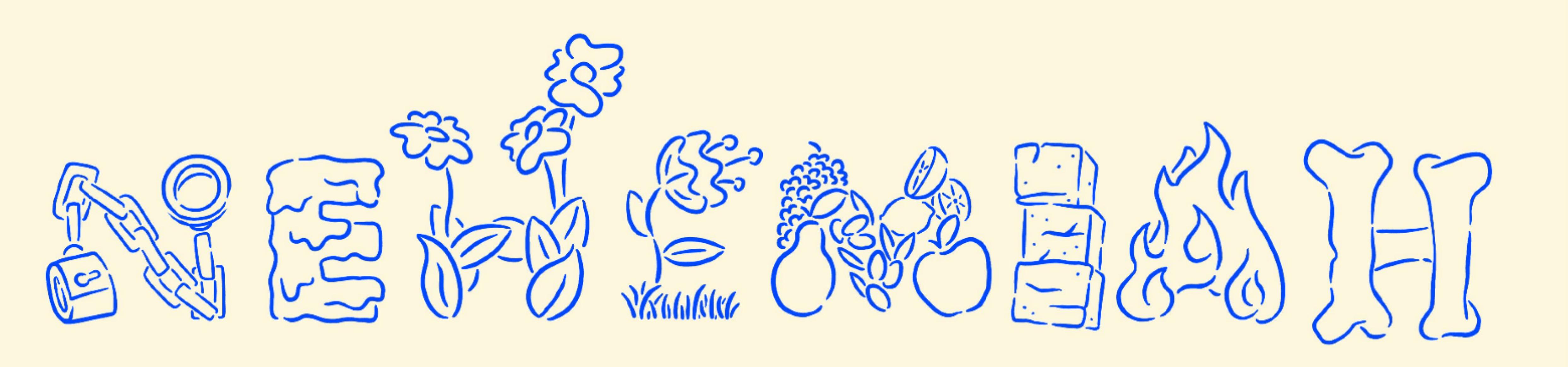


CHAPTER 6 VERSES 1-19 CHAPTER 7 VERSES 1-2 PAGES 686-687



FLOURISHING IN THE MIDST OF OPPOSITION

"If I have integrity, people will love me for it."



Maybein

- 1. Integrity usually has holes.
- 2. They feel threatened.
- 3. You symbolize what they hate.



"You're going to have to be shrewd as serpents, and innocent as doves."

Jesus(Matthew 10:16)



A life pursuing integrity that tries to build is going to face numerous slanders and intrigues. Therefore...

Be Shrewd. Don't be Naive.

this is not a "minor" teaching (N)



Love beats evil with wisdom.

(Not just force)



Many intrigues...

- 1. Co-opting
- 2. Badgering
- 3. Rumor milling
- 4. Wormtongue
- 5. Infiltration
- 6. Intimidation



Understand the GOAL of intrigues.

Nehemiah 6:9 "for they all wanted to frighten us thinking, "their hands will drop from the work, and it will not be done."



Be Shrewd.

2 Don'ts 2 Do's



1. Don't hand yourself over to people you can't trust



Proverbs 2:11-15

"Discretion will protect you, and understanding will guard you. Wisdom will save you from the ways of wicked men, from men whose words are perverse, who leave the straight paths to walk in dark ways, who delight in doing wrong and *rejoice* in the perverseness of evil, whose paths are crooked and who are devious in their ways."

3 people in Proverbs

The Wise – learn from everything

The Fool – learn from nothing

The Wicked - want to destroy you



John 2:23 - 3:1

"Now while he was in Jerusalem at the Passover Feast, many people saw the miraculous signs he was doing and believed in his name. But Jesus would not entrust himself to them, for he knew all men. He did not need man's testimony about man, for he knew what was in a man."

2. Don't get drawn into defending yourself

"You can't answer a sneer."
- R.J. Neuhaus



Acts 8:32 - 35

The eunuch was reading this passage of Scripture: "He was led like a sheep to the slaughter, and as a lamb before the shearer is silent, so he did not open his mouth. In his humiliation he was deprived of justice. Who can speak of his descendants?... Then Philip began with that very passage of Scripture and told him the good news about Jesus.

3. Make the fear of God your greatest fear.



Nehemiah 6:11 - 12

But I said, "Should a man like me run away? Or should one like me go into the temple to save his life? I will not go!" I realized that God had not sent him, but that he had prophesied against me because Tobiah and Sanballat had hired him.

4. Grow in the wisdom of discernment



Nehemiah 7:1 – 2

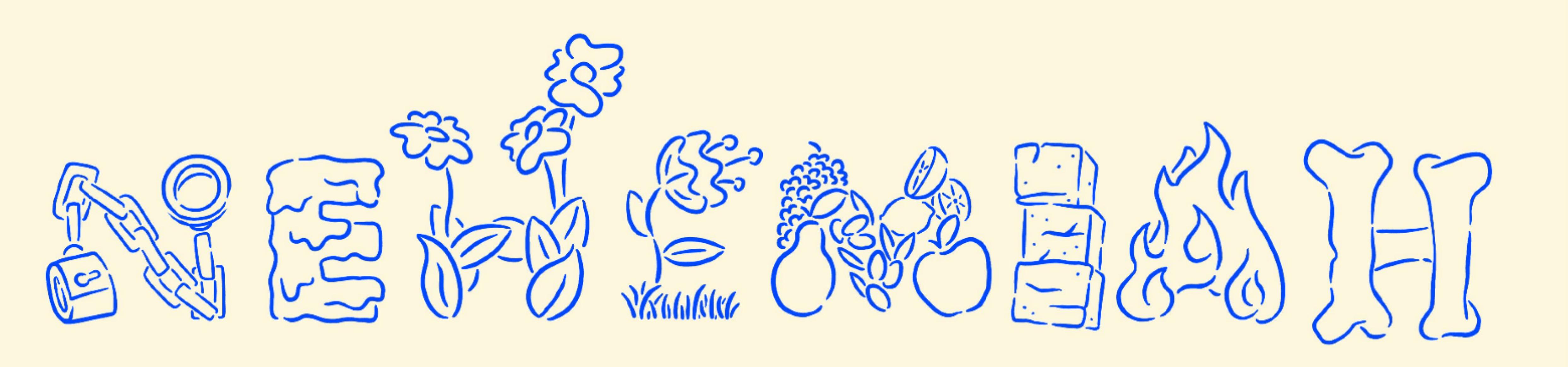
After the wall had been rebuilt and I had set the doors in place, the gatekeepers and the singers and the Levites were appointed. I put in charge of Jerusalem my brother Hanani, along with Hananiah the commander of the citadel, because he was a man of integrity and feared God more than most men do.

John 10:17 – 18

"The reason my Father loves me is that I lay down my life-only to take it up again. No one takes it from me, but I lay it down of my own accord. I have authority to lay it down and authority to take it up again. This command I received from my Father."

Not just more innocent. He's shrewder too.





FLOURISHING IN THE MIDST OF OPPOSITION