

# IN THE WORLD



John 17:9-19

**LESSON 7**  
April 18, 2021

Connect timeless truths with today's news.

## **BUILDING ISRAEL'S DEFENSES TODAY**

Modern-day Israel is surrounded by hostile nations. One of its primary foes, Iran, is seeking nuclear weapons capability, a development that senior Israeli military officials believe could spark a nuclear arms race in the region. "The United States is [now] looking at other regions," IDF Brig. Gen. Tal Kalman said in an interview this month, "and doesn't want to invest as much in ours." Israel needs to develop new tools to better deal with Iran, even on Iran's own territory, he says. "When you're competing against an intelligent, strategic actor who plays long term, you need to act to influence his intentions. For that, you need to act also in other places and in other ways."

## **BUILDING ISRAEL'S DEFENSES CENTURIES AGO**

Israel after the Exile was surrounded by enemies, as well. When Nehemiah returned from Persia to rebuild the walls of Jerusalem, he understood that he would be doing so amidst great opposition. Sanballat the Horonite, Tobiah the Ammonite servant, and Geshem the Arab mocked the Jewish people who were rebuilding the city's defenses. In the face of their pressure and threats, Nehemiah urged his countrymen to rebuild the walls and gates so as to restore their strength and remove their disgrace.

1. What level of peace do you think is possible in relations between Israel and its enemies?
2. When have you tried to build something despite strong opposition?
3. In what ways does the Christian life stand in conflict with the surrounding culture?

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## **Additional Resources**

*These videos and materials are for your personal use. If you show videos in class, be sure to have the necessary rights to do so.*

Music Video, Traditional: ["Children, Go Where I Send Thee" by Tennessee Ernie Ford](#)

Music Video, Multicultural: ["Send the Rain" by William McDowell](#)

Music Video, Contemporary: ["God Is Love" by Nathan Jess](#)

[Constable's Commentary on Nehemiah 2](#)

[Pulpit Commentary on Nehemiah 2](#)

[Guzik's Commentary on Nehemiah 2](#)

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