

Overcoming Opposition to Vision

“Don’t be afraid of them. Remember the great and awe-inspiring Lord, and fight for your countrymen, your sons and daughters, your wives and home.” Nehemiah. 4:14

Text: Nehemiah 4	South Orlando Baptist Church
Topics: Fighting the Enemy, Handling Hardship	September 21, 2014
Supplemental Texts: See below	Bro. David Crowe

Fighting for the Vision will require that you...

- 1) **Battle the opposition through Prayer (4:1-5, 7-9)**
 - A. Nehemiah faced opposition to the vision both externally (vs. 7-8) and internally (vs.10).
 - B. Nehemiah’s prayer is similar to certain prayers in the book of Psalms (Psalm 74, 79).
 - C. Nehemiah’s motive “is not mere revenge but rather the honor of God, who is the real object of the enemies’ insults and whose purposes they do not understand.” (ESV Study Bible)

- 2) **Build on! (6-16)**
 - A. Nehemiah establishes prayer and sets up a plan for battle. His actions call the people to continue the fight for their brothers, sons, daughters, wives and homes (vs. 14).
 - B. We also fight against a great enemy, and our battle is no different. Despite the pressures internally and externally, we too must continue the work.

- 3) **Brandish your weapon (16-23)**
 - A. The people of Judah setup a line of defense, with their weapons at the ready.
 - B. God has not left us weaponless in our battle. Against prayer and His Word, the enemy is powerless. (2 Corinthians 10:4; Hebrews 4:12; Ephesians 6:17; Matthew 16:18)

Questions for Application

- 1) What did Sanballat and Tobiah do to discourage the Jews from rebuilding the city walls? (4:1-3)
- 2) What role did Nehemiah play in these events? (4:1-23)
- 3) How did Nehemiah respond to the taunts of his enemies? (4:4-5)
- 4) According to Nehemiah, why were the Jews so successful in their work? (4:6)
- 5) In what specific ways did Nehemiah and the Israelites show commitment to this project? (4:6-23)
- 6) What did Israel's enemies do when they heard of Israel's success in rebuilding Jerusalem's walls? (4:7-8)
- 7) How did Nehemiah and the Jews respond to the evil plotting of their enemies? (4:9)
- 8) What did Nehemiah do to encourage the Israelites and protect them from their enemies? (4:10-14)
- 9) How were the Jews able to return to their work of rebuilding the city walls? (4:15)
- 10) Who frustrated the plotting of Israel's enemies? (4:15)
- 11) What sacrifices did the people have to make because of the threats of their enemies? (4:16-18)
- 12) What do you admire about the Israelites in this incident?
- 13) To what area of life today do Nehemiah's words speak?
- 14) What kinds of events, opposition, or setbacks most discourage you?
- 15) How does God want us to deal with discouragement?
- 16) How should we respond to negative events or criticism from others?
- 17) When have you ever felt opposition from other people when you have done what you thought was morally right?
- 18) What practical steps could you take the next time you feel opposition from others for doing what is right?
- 19) How does God respond to the diligence of His people?
- 20) To what project or work do you need to renew your commitment?
- 21) How have you seen the Lord fight for you?