

# Restoration and Renewal—The Book of Nehemiah

## Restoring Faith For the Fight *Chapter 4*



**Success Breeds Opposition**  
Opposition is almost always caused by success and not failure.

**Introduction:** In the fourth, fifth, and sixth chapters of Nehemiah, we see how he dealt successfully with several forms of opposition. Immediately after work began on the wall (*Chapter 3*) the opposition started.

### A. Opposition and Our Response *Neh 4:1-9*

The enemy would love to destroy our faith so that we give up and fail to build

on the victories that God has given us.

#### 1. The forms of opposition *Neh 4:1-3; 7*

- Indignation (*cause grief*)
- Mockery (*ridicule*)
- Anger (*control*)
- Plotting (*threats*)
- Confusion (*doubt*)

These attacks and threats played off their insecurities—and were designed to weaken and kill their faith!

#### 2. Response to the opposition *Neh 4:4-6; 9*

- Imprecatory prayer *Psalms 35; 109*
- Like mindedness
- Continued prayer
- Watch and pray

Nehemiah did not retaliate or defend himself.

### B. Positioned For the Battle *Neh 4:10-16*

When our strength fails—it's time for faith to arise. God gave Nehemiah a strategic plan to rally the people. God has given us a strategic plan so that we can be positioned against the enemy at all times. See *Eph 6:10-16*

#### 1. Reality check—where are we? *Neh 4:10-12*

- Failing strength
- Discernment and wisdom

#### 2. On the ready—are you ready? *4:13-18; Eph 6:10-16*

- Positioning of the defenses (*the whole armor of God*)
- Remember the Lord (*be strong in the Lord*)
- In one hand a saw—the other a weapon (*stand therefore*)

### C. Our God Will Fight for Us *Neh 4:19-23*

#### 1. The sound of the trumpet *Neh 4:19-20*

- Feast of Trumpets *Lev 23:23-25; Neh 8:1-12*
- The trumpet call—a call to the Word of God
- Rally there—rally around the truth of God's Word
- God is in the blowing of the shofar *Josh 6:20; Exo 19:19*

#### 2. Stay suited up *Neh 4:21-23*

- Continued in the work of rebuilding the wall
- Continued to be on watch for the enemy
- Everyone participated in some way (*building or watching*)
- Kept their clothes on—except for washing
- We should never let our guard down or take off the whole armor of God.

### Ephesians 6:10-18

**:10** Finally, my brethren, be strong in the Lord and in the power of His might.

**:11** Put on the whole armor of God, that you may be able **to stand** against the wiles of the devil.

**:12** For we do not wrestle against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this age, against spiritual *hosts* of wickedness in the heavenly places.

**:13** Therefore take up the whole armor of God, that you may be able to withstand in the evil day, and having done all, to stand.

**:14** Stand therefore, having girded your waist with **truth**, having put on the breastplate of **righteousness**,

**:15** and having shod your feet with the preparation of the **gospel** of peace;

**:16** above all, taking the shield of **faith** with which you will be able to quench all the fiery darts of the wicked one.

**:17** And take the helmet of **salvation**, and the sword of the Spirit, which is the **word of God**;

**:18** **praying always** with all prayer and supplication in the Spirit, being **watchful** to this end with all perseverance and supplication for all the saints—

## Nehemiah 4

### A. Opposition and our Response

**:1** But it so happened, when **Sanballat** heard that we were rebuilding the wall, that he was furious and very indignant, and mocked the Jews. **:2** And he spoke before his brethren and the army of Samaria, and said, "What are these feeble Jews doing? Will they fortify themselves? Will they offer sacrifices? Will they complete it in a day? Will they revive the stones from the heaps of rubbish—*stones* that are burned?" **:3** Now **Tobiah the Ammonite** *was* beside him, and he said, "Whatever they build, if even a fox goes up *on it*, he will break down their stone wall."

**:4** **Hear, O our God**, for we are despised; turn their reproach on their own heads, and give them as plunder to a land of captivity! **:5** Do not cover their iniquity, and do not let their sin be blotted out from before You; for they have provoked *You* to anger before the builders. **:6** **So we built the wall**, and the entire wall was joined together up to half its *height*, for the people had a mind to work.

**:7** Now it happened, when **Sanballat, Tobiah, the Arabs, the Ammonites, and the Ashdodites** heard that the walls of Jerusalem were being restored and the gaps were beginning to be closed, that they became very angry, **:8** and all of them conspired together to come *and* attack Jerusalem and create confusion.

**:9** **Nevertheless we made our prayer to our God**, and because of them we set a watch against them day and night.

### B. Positioned For the Battle

**:10** **Then Judah said**, "The strength of the laborers is failing, and there is so much rubbish that we are not able to build the wall." **:11** And our adversaries said, "They will neither know nor see anything, till we come into their midst and kill them and cause the work to cease." **:12** So it was, when the Jews who dwelt near them came, that they told us ten times, "From whatever place you turn, *they will be* upon us."

**:13** **Therefore I positioned men** behind the lower parts of the wall, at the openings; and I set the people according to their families, with their swords, their spears, and their bows. **:14** And I looked, and arose and said to the nobles, to the leaders, and to the rest of the people, "Do not be afraid of them. Remember the Lord, great and awesome, and fight for your brethren, your sons, your daughters, your wives, and your houses." **:15** And it happened, when our enemies heard that it was known to us, and *that* God had brought their plot to nothing, that all of us returned to the wall, everyone to his work. **:16** So it was, **from that time on**, *that* half of my servants worked at construction, while the other half held the spears, the shields, the bows, and *wore* armor; and the leaders *were* behind all the house of Judah. **:17** Those who built on the wall, and those who carried burdens, loaded themselves so that with one hand they worked at construction, and with the other held a weapon. **:18** **Every one of the builders had his sword girded at his side as he built**. And the one who sounded the trumpet *was* beside me.

### C. Our God Will Fight for Us

**:19** Then I said to the nobles, the rulers, and the rest of the people, "The work is great and extensive, and we are separated far from one another on the wall. **:20** Wherever you hear the **sound of the trumpet**, rally to us there. **Our God will fight for us.**" **:21** So we labored in the work, and half of *the men* held the spears from daybreak until the stars appeared. **:22** At the same time I also said to the people, "Let each man and his servant stay at night in Jerusalem, that they may be our guard by night and a working party by day." **:23** So neither I, my brethren, my servants, nor the men of the guard who followed me took off our clothes, except that everyone took them off for washing.