

BETHANY BIBLE STUDY & DISCUSSION



NEHEMIAH CHAPTER 4 PART-4

KJV

8.06.2025

DEFEATING OPPOSITION THROUGH PRAYER

OPPOSITION THROUGH MOCKERY (1-6): Who opposed the work? When did the opposition begin? How did they mock? How do we respond to mockery? How does Nehemiah respond? How is his prayer answered?

OPPOSITION THROUGH CONSPIRACY OF VIOLENCE (7-9): How does Nehemiah respond?

INTERNAL FATIGUE & THREAT OF VIOLENCE (10-23): How do Jews respond to physical weakness? How did they prepare for the threat of violence?

REFLECTION

QUICK REVIEW: ONE MAN'S OBEDIENCE TO GODLY VISION CAN ACHIEVE MUCH





NEHEMIAH

Chapter 4, Part-4

August 6, 2025

OPPOSITION THROUGH MOCKERY (1-3)

But it came to pass, that when Sanballat heard that we builded the wall, he was wroth, and took great indignation, and mocked the Jews.

² And he spake before his brethren and the army of Samaria, and said, What do these feeble Jews? will they fortify themselves? will they sacrifice? will they make an end in a day? will they revive the stones out of the heaps of the rubbish which are burned?

³ Now Tobiah the Ammonite was by him, and he said, Even that which they build, if a fox go up, he shall even break down their stone wall.

OPPOSITION BY SANBALLAT & TOBIAH CONTINUES

Sanballat – Samaritan Governor

Tobiah – Ammonite official

Earlier opposed in 2:10, 2:19

Both despised Nehemiah and his work

They saw stronger Jerusalem as a threat to their influence in the region

REACTION TO PROGRESSING WORK: Wrath (4:1, 4:7)

OPPOSITION BY SANBALLAT & TOBIAH CONTINUES

THE WEAPON USED FOR OPPOSITION: Mockery

Ridiculed as being feeble jews

Ridiculed for their intent to fortify themselves

Ridiculed for their faith

Ridiculed for taking on the challenge of reusing burnt materials

Ridiculed for durability of finished work

Enemy uses Mockery to discourage us & destroy our self-confidence

HOW DO WE REACT TO MOCKERY?

Do we get discouraged, lose confidence, and go into silent mode?

Do we retaliate and mock back at the enemy?

Instead, we must

TAKE IT TO THE LORD IN PRAYER

NEHEMIAH'S PRAYER (4-6)

⁴ Hear, O our God; for we are despised: and turn their reproach upon their own head, and give them for a prey in the land of captivity:

⁵ And cover not their iniquity, and let not their sin be blotted out from before thee: for they have provoked thee to anger before the builders.

⁶ So built we the wall; and all the wall was joined together unto the half thereof: for the people had a mind to work.

NEHEMIAH'S PRAYER

Plea to God ... Hear, O our God

Our present condition ... despised

In opposing jews, they have despised God

Requests Justice and revenge

PRAYER ANSWERED IN AN UNUSUAL WAY ⁶ SO BUILT WE
THE WALL; AND ALL THE WALL WAS JOINED TOGETHER UNTO THE HALF THEREOF:
FOR THE PEOPLE HAD A MIND TO WORK.

“PEOPLE HAD MIND TO WORK”

Despite the mockery, people not discouraged or distracted

Work continues, Walls completed to $\frac{1}{2}$ its original height.

Nehemiah prayed for revenge (on enemies) but God focused on His work (and workers).



NEW TESTAMENT PERSPECTIVE ON ENEMIES & REVENGE

Mathew 5:44 But I say unto you, **Love your enemies**, bless them that curse you, do good to them that hate you, and pray for them which despitefully use you, and persecute you;

Romans 12:19 Dearly beloved, avenge not yourselves, but rather give place unto wrath: for it is written, Vengeance is mine; I will repay, saith the Lord.



HOW DO WE RESPOND TO INJUSTICE?

*Do we seek Revenge or
Do we leave it to the Lord?*

Take it to the Lord in prayer, like
Nehemiah did!



OPPOSITION THROUGH CONSPIRACY

7-9

OPPOSITION THROUGH CONSPIRACY

⁷ But it came to pass, that when Sanballat, and Tobiah, and the Arabians, and the Ammonites, and the Ashdodites, heard that the walls of Jerusalem were made up, and that the breaches began to be stopped, then they were very wroth,

⁸ And conspired all of them together to come and to fight against Jerusalem, and to hinder it. ⁹ Nevertheless we made our prayer unto our God, and set a watch against them day and night, because of them.

OPPOSITION COLLUDES

Again, same reaction to progress: very angry (7)

Opposition unites against the Jewish workers and surrounds them for all sides

Sanballat (Samaritans) | Tobiah (Amonites)

Arabs | Ashdodites (Philistines)

Conspiracy to **attack and disrupt** work of Jews

OPPOSITION MET WITH PRAYER

⁹ NEVERTHELESS WE MADE
OUR PRAYER UNTO OUR
GOD, AND SET A WATCH
AGAINST THEM DAY AND
NIGHT, BECAUSE OF THEM.

Intensity of opposition should not change our game plan ...
PRAY

PRAYERS + ACTION (watch day & night)

Jehoshaphat's prayer: II Chronicles 20:¹² O our God, wilt thou not judge them? for we have no might against this great company that cometh against us; neither know we what to do: but our eyes are upon thee.



OPPOSITION CONTINUES ... (BUT) REBUILDING CONTINUES

10-23

OPPOSITION ON BOTH FRONTS

INTERNAL opposition from physical exertion

¹⁰ And Judah said, The strength of the bearers of burdens is decayed, and there is much rubbish; so that we are not able to build the wall.

EXTERNAL opposition from angry enemies

¹¹ And our adversaries said, They shall not know, neither see, till we come in the midst among them, and slay them, and cause the work to cease

What is harder to overcome, internal or external? How can we overcome?

OVERCOMING OPPOSITION ON BOTH FRONTS THROUGH PRAYER

How can we overcome external threats and physical exhaustion?: PRAY

ISAIAH 40:31 But they that wait upon the Lord shall renew their strength; they shall mount up with wings as eagles; they shall run, and not be weary; and they shall walk, and not faint.

ROMANS 8:35 Who shall separate us from the love of Christ? shall tribulation, or distress, or persecution, or famine, or nakedness, or peril, or sword? ...³⁷ Nay, in all these things **we are more than conquerors** through him that loved us

NEHEMIAH'S EQUIPS AND ENCOURAGES WORKERS

¹² And it came to pass, that when the Jews which dwelt by them came, they said unto us ten times, From all places whence ye shall return unto us they will be upon you.

¹³ Therefore set I in the lower places behind the wall, and on the higher places, I even set the people after their families with their swords, their spears, and their bows.

¹⁴ And I looked, and rose up, and said unto the nobles, and to the rulers, and to the rest of the people, Be not ye afraid of them: remember the Lord, which is great and terrible, and fight for your brethren, your sons, and your daughters, your wives, and your houses.

¹⁵ And it came to pass, when our enemies heard that it was known unto us, and God had brought their counsel to nought, that we returned all of us to the wall, every one unto his work.

ENCOURAGING + EQUIPPING

Jews living outside warned Nehemiah of conspiracy to attack (12). Nehemiah Responds to the threat immediately

ENCOURAGES THEM

do not be afraid. God is great and He will fight for us

EQUIPS THEM

swords, spears, and bows

RESULT ... Enemy withdraws

Their counsel brought to nought (15)

NEHEMIAH'S DEFENSE PLAN

¹⁶ And it came to pass from that time forth, that the half of my servants wrought in the work, and the other half of them held both the spears, the shields, and the bows, and the habergeons; and the rulers were behind all the house of Judah. ¹⁷ They which builded on the wall, and they that bare burdens, with those that laded, every one with one of his hands wrought in the work, and with the other hand held a weapon.

¹⁸ For the builders, every one had his sword girded by his side, and so builded. And he that sounded the trumpet was by me. ¹⁹ And I said unto the nobles, and to the rulers, and to the rest of the people, The work is great and large, and we are separated upon the wall, one far from another.

²⁰ In what place therefore ye hear the sound of the trumpet, resort ye thither unto us: our God shall fight for us.

²¹ So we laboured in the work: and half of them held the spears from the rising of the morning till the stars appeared. ²² Likewise at the same time said I unto the people, Let every one with his servant lodge within Jerusalem, that in the night they may be a guard to us, and labour on the day.

²³ So neither I, nor my brethren, nor my servants, nor the men of the guard which followed me, none of us put off our clothes, saving that every one put them off for washing.

NEHEMIAH'S DEFENSE PLAN

2 groups: ½ guarding and other ½ worked (16)

All workers were armed even if they were working (17-18)

Trumpeters to warn of danger, and people to gather in unity (19-20)

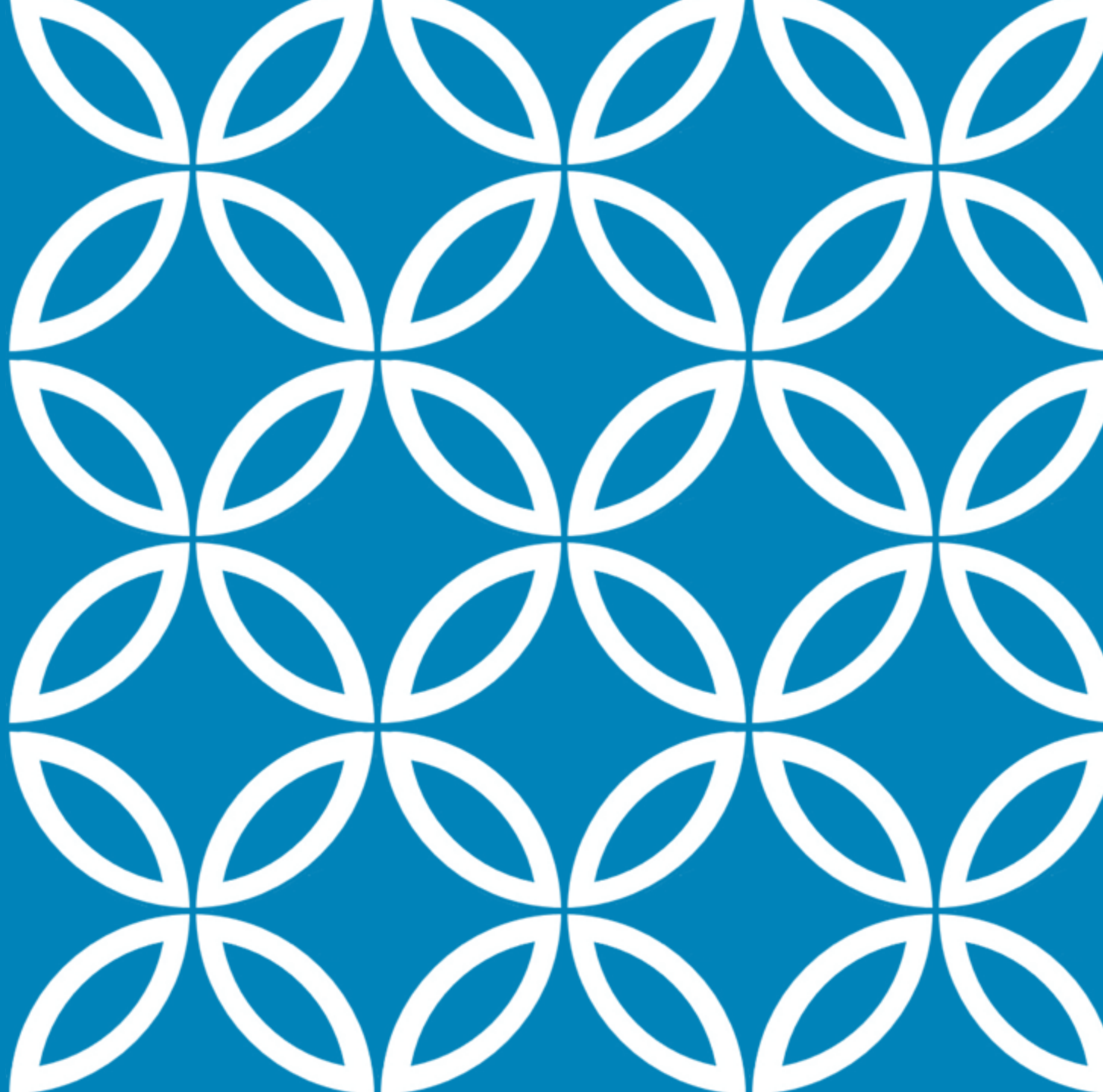
Confidence that God will fight (20)

Long hours of work, from daybreak to night (21)

Outsiders told to encamp in Jerusalem for safety and offer support (22)

Always ready, none put off clothes (23)

REFLECTION





#1 PROGRESS IN GOD'S WORK WILL INVITE OPPOSERS & MOCKERS

Passive Christians do not generally face persecution. Opposition is sign of spiritual vitality.

We should not be discouraged by opposing forces, but remain focused on our God given vision



#2 WE CAN OVERCOME “ALL THINGS” THROUGH PRAYER

MOCKERY | DISCOURAGEMENTS | CONSPIRACIES |
LARGE ARMY | VIOLENCE | FEARS | THREATS |



POWER OF PRAYER

Prayer — one of the most powerful weapons for a believer.

Prayer — shows our dependence and faith in the power of God and counsel of God

All battles can be won through prayers offered in faith with a pure heart.



#3 GOD'S PLANS VARY

1. Sometimes just pray... stand still and see the salvation of God
2. Sometimes pray + take action... Nehemiah prayed and also prepared his people to defend themselves

It takes prayer to discern whether we should go with 1 or 2



#4 A BELIEVER MUST BE ON KNEES BUT ALSO WATCHFUL (FAITH + ACTION)

Mathew 26:41 Watch and pray, that ye enter not into temptation: the spirit indeed *is* willing, but the flesh *is* weak.

I PETER 5:8 Be sober, be vigilant; because your adversary the devil, as a roaring lion, walketh about, seeking whom he may devour:

ITHESSALONIANS 5:6 Therefore let us not sleep, as do others; but let us watch and be sober.

COLLOSSIANS 4:2 Continue in prayer, and watch in the same with thanksgiving;



#5 BE ALERT TO HEAR THE TRUMPET CALL

GOD SPEAKS and GOD WARNS

... ARE WE LISTENING AND OBEYING?

THE LAST TRUMPET CALL

I CORINTHIANS 15:51 Behold, I shew you a mystery; We shall not all sleep, but we shall all be changed, ⁵² In a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, **at the last trump**: for the trumpet shall sound, and the dead shall be raised incorruptible, and we shall be changed.

⁵³ For this corruptible must put on incorruption, and this mortal must put on immortality. ⁵⁴ So when this corruptible shall have put on incorruption, and this mortal shall have put on immortality, then shall be brought to pass the saying that is written, Death is swallowed up in victory. ⁵⁵ **O death, where is thy sting? O grave, where is thy victory?**