

Overcoming Opposition and Discouragement



READ: Nehemiah 4:1-22

When Sanballat, the governor of Samaria, heard that we were rebuilding the walls of Jerusalem, he became angry and started insulting our people. ² In front of his friends and the Samaritan army he said, "What is this feeble bunch of Jews trying to do? Are they going to rebuild the wall and offer sacrifices all in one day? Do they think they can make something out of this pile of scorched stones?"

³ Tobiah from Ammon was standing beside Sanballat and said, "Look at the wall they are building! Why, even a fox could knock over this pile of stones."

⁴ But I prayed, "Our God, these people hate us and have wished horrible things for us. Please answer our prayers and make their insults fall on them! Let them be the ones to be dragged away as prisoners of war. ⁵ Don't forgive the mean and evil way they have insulted the builders."

⁶ The people worked hard, and we built the walls of Jerusalem halfway up again. ⁷ But Sanballat, Tobiah, the Arabs, the Ammonites, and the people from the city of Ashdod saw the walls going up and the holes being repaired. So they became angry ⁸ and decided to stir up trouble, and to fight against the people of Jerusalem. ⁹ But we kept on praying to our God, and we also stationed guards day and night.

¹⁰ Meanwhile, the people of Judah were singing a sorrowful song:
"So much rubble for us to haul!
Worn out and weary,
will we ever finish this wall?"

¹¹ Our enemies were saying, "Before those Jews know what has happened, we will sneak up and kill them and put an end to their work."

¹² On at least ten different occasions, the Jews living near our enemies warned us against attacks from every side, ¹³ and so I sent people to guard the wall at its lowest places and where there were still holes in it. I placed them according to families, and they stood guard with swords and spears and with bows and arrows. ¹

⁴ Then I looked things over and told the leaders, the officials, and the rest of the people, "Don't be afraid of your enemies! The Lord is great and fearsome. So think of him and fight for your relatives and children, your wives and homes!"

¹⁵ Our enemies found out that we knew about their plot against us, but God kept them from doing what they had planned. So we went back to work on the wall.

¹⁶ From then on, I let half of the young men work while the other half stood guard. They wore armor and had spears and shields, as well as bows and arrows. The leaders helped the workers ¹⁷ who were rebuilding the wall. Everyone who hauled building materials kept one hand free to carry a weapon. ¹⁸ Even the workers who were rebuilding the wall strapped on a sword. The worker who was to blow the signal trumpet stayed with me.

¹⁹ I told the people and their officials and leaders, "Our work is so spread out, that we are a long way from one another. ²⁰ If you hear the sound of the trumpet, come quickly and gather around me. Our God will help us fight."

²¹ Every day from dawn to dark, half of the workers rebuilt the walls, while the rest stood guard with their spears.

²² I asked the men in charge and their workers to stay inside Jerusalem and stand guard at night. So they guarded the city at night and worked during the day. ²³ I even slept in my work clothes at night; my relatives, the workers, and the guards slept in theirs as well. And we always kept our weapons close by.

REFLECT: What are your greatest fears?



What can we learn from Shoichi Yokoi's experience?

What are the two kinds of fears we face?

To overcome opposition and discouragement...

1. ENTER into a _____

(note Nehemiah 4:4-5)

Q: How do you release the anger and frustration of being hurt into God's hands? Pray through Psalm 109

2. ENGAGE in the work _____

(Note Nehemiah 4:6,12-15)

3. Learn to EXPECT _____

¹² Dear friends, don't be surprised at the fiery trials you are going through, as if something strange were happening to you. ¹³ Instead, be very glad—for these trials make you partners with Christ in his suffering, so that you will have the wonderful joy of seeing his glory when it is revealed to all the world. 1 Peter 4:12-13

Respond & Apply: Individual & Small Group Discussion Guide

What are some of the fears God is giving courage to help you face?

Where is God asking you to trust him right now in your life?

Reflect on the quote below. How has praying helped you?

We can't pray that God make our lives free of problems; this won't happen, and it is probably just as well... But people who pray for courage, for strength to bear the unbearable, for the grace to remember what they have left instead of they have lost, very often find their prayer answered. They discover that they have more strength, more courage than they ever knew themselves to have. Where did they get it? I would like to think that their prayers helped them find that strength. Their prayers helped them tap reserves of faith and courage which were not available to them before."

Harold S. Kushner, When Bad Things Happen to Good People

Revive, Rebuild, Restore: Moving Forward with God's Vision

- January 8, 2023 – More Than Just A Name (Neh. 2:18; 3:1-32)
- January 15 – Overcoming Opposition & Discouragement (Neh. 4)
- January 22 – Restoring Right Relationships (Neh. 5)
- January 29 – Dealing with Distractions (Neh. 6)
- February 5 – Where Do I Fit In? (Neh. 7)

NewDay Envisioning Our Ministry Values

- 1. We are a community that has a passion to serve others.**
- 2. We are a community that longs for deeper life relationships With God and others.**
- 3. We are passionate about investing in children, youth, and families.**
- 4. We are a people who have a desire to be led by and experience the power of the Holy Spirit in everyday life.**

FIND OUT MORE... [newdaycov.org](http://www.newdaycov.org)
(Online giving: <http://www.newdaycov.org/give>)

