

20230205 HOW TO OVERCOME FEAR FOR SPIRITUAL GROWTH

Rebuilding series Part 4
(Nehemiah 4:7-14)

⁷ But when Sanballat, Tobiah, the Arabs, the Ammonites and the people of Ashdod heard that the repairs to Jerusalem's walls had gone ahead and that the gaps were being closed, they were very angry.

⁸ They all plotted together to come and fight against Jerusalem and stir up trouble against it.

⁹ But we prayed to our God and posted a guard day and night to meet this threat.

¹⁰ Meanwhile, the people in Judah said, "The strength of the laborers is giving out, and there is so much rubble that we cannot rebuild the wall."

¹¹ Also our enemies said, "Before they know it or see us, we will be right there among them and will kill them and put an end to the work."

¹² Then the Jews who lived near them came and told us ten times over, "Wherever you turn, they will attack us."

¹³ Therefore I stationed some of the people behind the lowest points of the wall at the exposed places, posting them by families, with their swords, spears and bows.

¹⁴ After I looked things over, I stood up and said to the nobles, the officials and the rest of the people, "Don't be afraid of them. Remember the Lord, who is great and awesome, and fight for your families, your sons and your daughters, your wives and your homes."

I. SPIRITUAL REALITY

When we want to grow spiritually,

There are always challenges and obstacles from our enemy in our spiritual journey

II. ENEMY'S THREE REACTIONS TO OUR SPIRITUAL GROWTH

1. Anger

Nehemiah 4:1a, 7

1 When Sanballat heard that we were rebuilding the wall, he became angry and was greatly incensed...

7 But when Sanballat, Tobiah, the Arabs, the Ammonites and the people of Ashdod heard that the repairs to Jerusalem's walls had gone ahead and that the gaps were being closed, they were very angry.

2. Mocking (Ridicules)

Nehemiah 4:1b-2

1 ...He ridiculed the Jews.

2 and in the presence of his associates and the army of Samaria, he said, "What are those feeble Jews doing? Will they restore their wall? Will they offer sacrifices? Will they finish in a day? Can they bring the stones back to life from those heaps of rubble—burned as they are?"

3. Plotting to cause trouble

8 They all plotted together to come and fight against Jerusalem and stir up trouble against it.

III. THREE SOURCES OF DISCOURAGEMENT

1. From inside (self)

Nehemiah 4:10

10 Meanwhile, **the people in Judah** said, "The strength of the laborers is giving out, and there is so much rubble that we cannot rebuild the wall."

2. From outside (the enemy)

Nehemiah 4:11

11 Also our enemies said, "Before they know it or see us, we will be right there among them and will kill them and put an end to the work."

3. Carnal believers (those neglecting spiritual growth)

Nehemiah 4:12

12 Then the Jews who lived near them came and told us ten times over, "Wherever you turn, they will attack us."

IV. OUR PROPER RESPONSES

1. Prayer (Seeking justice, not revenge)

Nehemiah 4:4-5

4 Hear us, our God, for we are despised. Turn their insults back on their own heads. Give them over as plunder in a land of captivity.

5 Do not cover up their guilt or blot out their sins from your sight, for they have thrown insults in the face of the builders.

2. Continue to grow spiritually with strategic planning

Nehemiah 4:6, 9

6 So we rebuilt the wall till all of it reached half its height, for the people worked with all their heart.

9 But we prayed to our God and posted a guard day and night to meet this threat.

APPLICATION

Our attitude #1:

Never giving up as being ready to battle always

Nehemiah 4:16

16 From that day on, half of my men did the work, while the other half were equipped with spears, shields, bows and armor. The officers posted themselves behind all the people of Judah who were building the wall.

Our attitude #2:

Be a part of the growth (Everyone is needed).

Nehemiah 4:17

17 (...**all the people of Judah who were building the wall**).

Those who carried materials did their work with one hand and held a weapon in the other.

V. LEADERSHIP'S THREE CRITICAL ROLES IN THE SPIRITUAL GROWTH OF THE CHURCH

1. Strategic planning and implementation

Nehemiah 4:13

13 Therefore I stationed some of the people behind the lowest points of the wall at the exposed places, posting them by families, with their swords, spears and bows.

2. Continuous encouragement

Nehemiah 4:14

14 After I looked things over, I stood up and said to the nobles, the officials and the rest of the people, "Don't be afraid of them. Remember the Lord, who is great and awesome, and fight for your families, your sons and your daughters, your wives and your homes."

3. Clear and swift communication 19-20

Nehemiah 4:19-20a

19 Then I said to the nobles, the officials and the rest of the people, "The work is extensive and spread out, and we are widely separated from each other along the wall.

20 Wherever you hear the sound of the trumpet, join us there..."

VI. THE CORE MESSAGE OF THE COMMUNICATION AMONG GOD'S PEOPLE.

Our God will fight for us!

Nehemiah 4:20b

20 ... **Our God will fight for us!**"