**Facing Opposition**

*Nehemiah 4:1-23*

**3** obstacles to overcome when facing opposition

**I. Disdain (Mockery)**

**Nehemiah 2:10**—*When Sanballat the Horonite and Tobiah the Ammonite official heard of it, they were deeply disturbed that a man had come to seek the well-being of the children of Israel.*

**Nehemiah 2:19**—*But when Sanballat the Horonite, Tobiah the Ammonite official, and Geshem the Arab heard of it, they laughed at us and despised us, and said, “What is this thing that you are doing? Will you rebel against the king?”*

A. Not all opposition is bad

1. He who heeds counsel is wise

**Proverbs 12:15**—*The way of a fool is right in his own eyes, but he who heeds counsel is wise.*

2. Be discerning on constructive criticism vs attacks

a. Evaluate your goal biblically

b. Seek Godly counsel

B. Some opposition is bad

1. The example here

**Nehemiah 4:2-3**—*He [Sanballat] spoke in the presence of his brothers and the wealthy men of Samaria and said, “What are these feeble Jews doing? Are they going to restore it for themselves? Can they offer sacrifices? Can they finish in a day? Can they revive the stones from the dusty rubble even the burned ones?”* ***3****Now Tobiah the Ammonite was near him and he said, “Even what they are building—if a fox should jump on it, he would break their stone wall down!”*

2. Other biblical examples

a. David and Goliath

**1 Samuel 17:43**—*So the Philistine said to David, “Am I a dog, that you come to me with sticks?” And the Philistine cursed David by his gods.*

b. Jesus and Roman guards

**Luke 22:63-65**—*Now the men who held Jesus mocked Him and beat Him. And having blindfolded Him, they struck Him on the face and asked Him, saying, “Prophesy! Who is the one who struck You?” And many other things they blasphemously spoke against Him.*

C. Sometimes there are elements of truth contained therein

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D. Learn how to handle it well

1. What not to do

2. What to do

**2 Peter 3:18**—*but grow in the grace and knowledge of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. To Him be the glory, both now and to the day of eternity. Amen.*

**Nehemiah 4:6**—*So we built the wall and the whole wall was joined together to half its height, for the people had a mind to work.*

**Nehemiah 4:7-8**—*Now when Sanballat, Tobiah, the Arabs, the Ammonites and the Ashdodites heard that the repair of the walls of Jerusalem went on, and that the breaches began to be closed, they were very angry. All of them conspired together to come and fight against Jerusalem and to cause a disturbance in it.*

**II. Discouragement**

**Nehemiah 4:9-10**—*But we prayed to our God, and because of them we set up a guard against them day and night.* ***10****Thus in Judah it was said, “The strength of the burden bearers is failing, Yet there is much rubbish; And we ourselves are unable To rebuild the wall.”*

A. Where it comes from

1. Failing strength

**v. 10b**—*the strength of the burden bearers is failing*

2. Failing determination

**v. 10c**—*Yet there is so much rubbish*

3. Failing confidence

**v. 10d**—*We ourselves are unable to rebuild the wall.*

B. What to do when it comes

**v. 14**—*When I saw their fear, I rose and spoke to the nobles, the officials and the rest of the people: “Do not be afraid of them; remember the Lord who is great and awesome, and fight for your brothers, your sons, your daughters, your wives and your houses.”*

**Isaiah 26:3**—*You will keep him in perfect peace, whose mind is stayed on You, because he trusts in You.*

**Philippians 4:6-7**—*Be anxious for nothing, but in everything by prayer and supplication, with thanksgiving, let your requests be made known to God; and the peace of God, which surpasses all understanding, will guard your hearts and minds through Christ Jesus.*

**Hebrews 12:2**—*looking unto Jesus, the author and finisher of our faith, who for the joy that was set before Him endured the cross, despising the shame, and has sat down at the right hand of the throne of God.*

**III. Difficulties**

**Nehemiah 4:15**—*When our enemies heard that it was known to us, and that God had frustrated their plan, then all of us returned to the wall, each one to his work.*

A. Address the real issues not imagined or made up ones

**“I've had a lot of worries in my life, most of which never happened.”** (Mark Twain)

B. Don’t run from the battle, but do not solely battle

**Nehemiah 4:16-18**—*From that day on, half of my servants carried on the work while half of them held the spears, the shields, the bows and the breastplates; and the captains were behind the whole house of Judah. Those who were rebuilding the wall and those who carried burdens took their load with one hand doing the work and the other holding a weapon. As for the builders, each wore his sword girded at his side as he built, while the trumpeter stood near me.*