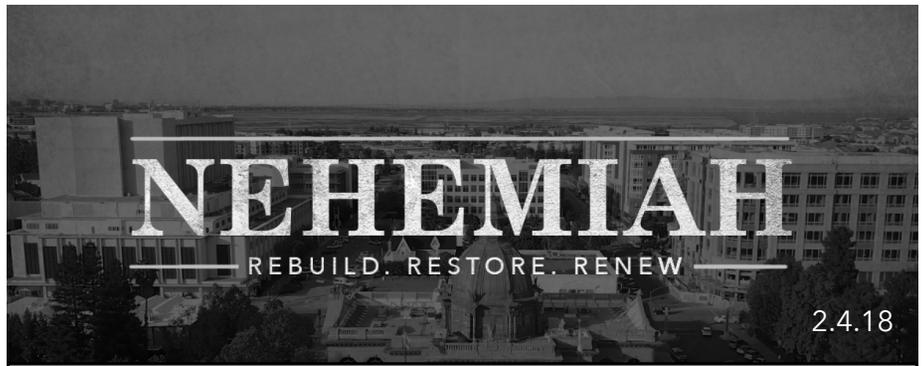


Beyond Sunday

For groups, friends, families, couples, or individuals to reflect on the message you heard this Sunday, 2/4.

1. Read Nehemiah 4:1-15. Describe the escalation in the opposition that happens over the course of these verses. What was Nehemiah's response spiritually? What was his response in terms of other steps he took?
2. One of the takeaways from this week's message is that efforts to rebuild, renew, and restore things are *always* opposed. Why do you think this is? What form does it take? Have you ever experienced it?
3. Whenever Nehemiah came upon challenges and opposition, his first response was to go to God in prayer. How do you think this helped him overcome? How do you think it changed his outlook? Do you see evidence in the book of Nehemiah that God heard and responded to Nehemiah's prayers? How quick or slow are you to take things to prayer when you face challenges in life?
4. In addition to praying, Nehemiah took wise steps of action to respond the threats against God's people. What were some of these steps? How do you think Nehemiah's habit of prayer AND his good leadership related to each other?
5. Nehemiah is a beautiful example of how **faith & prayer** work in a partnership with **action and work** to achieve God's purposes. They almost function like the two wings of an airplane; together they give "lift" to God's agenda in the world. Which "wing of the airplane" (the prayer "wing" or the action "wing") is more natural to you? Which do you think God would have you grow in? Why?
6. Read verses 4:19-20. This is a beautiful analogy to how God's people rally to one another and to points of need in the world when people are in distress. Do you know anyone in your relational network who is "sounding the trumpet of distress" that God might be calling you to help this week?

<p>Message Notes available on YouVersion New to PCC: text "guest" to 650-332-4438 to get more info Give to PCC: use your Pushpay app</p>	<p>Budget to Date: \$2,202,154 Giving to Date: \$2,196,970 (deficit) (\$5,184)</p>
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Battle Ready

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." Nehemiah 4:14

The Opposition Nehemiah Faced 4:1-8

1. **Ridicule**
When Sanballat heard that we were rebuilding the wall, he became angry and was greatly incensed. He **ridiculed** the Jews, 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?" Tobiah the Ammonite, who was at his side, said, "What they are building—**even a fox climbing up on it would break down their wall of stones!**" Nehemiah 4:1-3

Ground Zero of the Attack: Identity

Then Jesus was led by the Spirit into the wilderness to be tempted by the devil. After fasting forty days and forty nights, he was hungry. The tempter came to him and said, **"If you are the Son of God, tell these stones to become bread."** Matthew 4:1-3

2. Resistance

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. **They all plotted together to come and fight** against Jerusalem and stir up trouble against it. Nehemiah 4:7-8

The Effect of Opposition

4:10-11

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." 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." Nehemiah 4:10-11

- a. Fatigue: "...strength...giving out..."
- b. Frustration: "...so much rubble..."
- c. Failure: "...we cannot rebuild..."
- d. Fear: "...we...will kill them..."

Nehemiah's Strategy

4:1-14

a. Release it to God

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. 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. Nehemiah 4:4-5

b. Reinforce your weaknesses

But we **prayed to our God and posted a guard** day and night to meet this threat. Nehemiah 4:9

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. Nehemiah 4:13

Those who carried materials did their work with one hand and held a weapon in the other, and **each of the builders wore his sword at his side as he worked**. Nehemiah 4:17-18

c. Renew your mind

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." When our enemies heard that we were aware of their plot and that God had frustrated it, **we all returned to the wall**, each to our own work. Nehemiah 4:14-15

▶ **Remember God's power**

...remember the Lord who is great and awesome... Nehemiah 4:14a

▶ **Realize what's at stake**

...fight for your brothers, your sons and your daughters, your wives and your homes. Nehemiah 4:14c

▶ **Refuse to quit**

When our enemies heard that we were aware of their plot and that God had frustrated it, we all returned to the wall, each to his own work. Nehemiah 4:15