

How Do We Respond To Opposition?
Nehemiah 6:1-19
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*** Nehemiah not only prayed, but he also made himself available to the Lord to get the job done. He wanted to be used as an answer to prayer.

Nehemiah 2:19-20

So, we see from the very beginning Nehemiah is already encountering opposition. Despite opposition and later false accusations, He was going to press on to build this wall.

This reminds me of the church; I want you to know that there is a place of ministry for everyone. * Well, that is for all those who have a mind to work.

Chapter 3 - The Builders of the walls.

Priests - **v. 1**

Officials and rulers - **vv. 12-19**

Craftsmen - **v. 8**

Women - **v. 12**

Outsiders - **v. 2**

vv. 5, 7

"The above and beyond," - **v. 11**

vv. 19, 21

* Now, the Lord is building His church.
But let me ask you, are you participating?
Are you involved?
Are you serving?

Can you identify with some of these individuals that are building the wall?

*** I must say it is easy to be discouraged when others only show up and don't help. At the end of events, it's always the same people cleaning up, making themselves available to anything that needs to be done.

Yes, there are examples of those individuals here too.

v. 5

But we need to simply keep our eyes on the Lord and keep doing the work He has us doing so we don't get discouraged.

Constructionists - Those helping to get the work done.

Destructionists - Those who are busy tearing things down.

Obstructionists - Those who create problems for those that are doing the work.

Chapter 4. Nehemiah faces opposition; the enemy goes on the offensive and continues to use the same weapons today.

He uses mockery, threats, and fear.

But here in **chapter 6** is a change in tactics. The enemy now tries to stop Nehemiah, the leader.

So again, how do you respond to opposition?

In this chapter, we see that the enemy continues to come against Nehemiah, but it wasn't just the enemy outside the walls. The opposition came from within as well.

1. Opposition through Distraction vv. 1-4

2. Opposition through Slander vv. 5-9

3. Opposition through Betrayal vv. 10-14

4. Opposition through Disloyalty vv. 15-19

1. Opposition through Distraction vv. 1-4

vv. 1-2

They now decide to have peace talks; they invite Nehemiah to come and enter into a treaty with them, basically saying, "**Let's negotiate.**"

But what is it that Nehemiah could negotiate? He had nothing to negotiate about, nothing to come into agreement with them.

*** Now, we need to know and understand this; you can be sure that if you intend to do a work for the Lord, you will always find opposition standing in your way.

Mark 10:27 Looking at them, Jesus *said, "With people it is impossible, but not with God; for all things are possible with God."

vv. 3-4

*** Let us understand, the more serious you are about your calling and about accomplishing what God has called you to do, the bigger the distractions, and the bigger battles.

So, what is it that is distracting you?
What people are distracting you?

Or what things are being distractions?

2. Opposition through Slander vv. 5-9

v. 5

Nehemiah knew that Sanballat did not have his best interest at heart. Now the letter's content was false, slanderous charges, but the fact that the letter was open and that anyone could read it would bring trouble for Nehemiah.

vv. 6-7

What we have here is opposition through slander, lies, and rumors.

We don't have to defend ourselves. We have the Lord that will do that for us. We see that Nehemiah would not be deterred from what he knew the Lord had him doing.

vv. 8-9

Nehemiah responds to the slander in two ways:

1. He acknowledges that these slanderous accusations have not happened as you say; in fact, they are fabrications that you have invented in your own mind.
2. He then asks the Lord his God to help to "strengthen my hands" in order to keep focused, to be able to endure and finish the task at hand.

Nehemiah 2:4

Nehemiah 4:9

Nehemiah 5:19

This is the right way to respond to slander. Pray, pray, pray. Arrow prayers or telegraph prayers. But do pray rather than responding in the flesh.

3. Opposition through Betrayal vv. 10-14

vv. 10-13

Shemaiah was a son of a priest who claimed to have the gift of prophecy. He was possibly a priest, but he was definitely a false prophet.

Nehemiah would rather lose his life than violate God's Law.

v. 14

He consistently turns to the Lord to be his source of strength and comfort. But it also reveals to us that it just wasn't his friend who was sympathizing with the enemy, but there were other false prophets and prophetesses that were opposing him.

Who is behind this?

1 Peter 5:8

*** When you face opposition, heavy opposition is a good indicator that you are doing what God wants you to do. Satan doesn't oppose or hinder those that are out of God's will.

So even when attacked with opposition from betrayal, Nehemiah wasn't going to be frightened from accomplishing the work set before him.

4. Opposition through Disloyalty vv. 15-19

v. 15

The results of God's people co-laboring, that is working together, and it's incredible that in a brief period of 52 days the wall was completed. In **the month Elul**, September.

It's incredible what "men and women employed in the work of God can do." that is when we are willing to trust him and stand in unity.

*** Opposition will come when we are engaged in the work of the Lord. It isn't a question of "if," but "when" it will come. So be alert and prepared.

vv. 16-19

*** This disobedience reveals a total disregard for God's Word and His will. It demonstrates their determination to satisfy the flesh rather than a desire to satisfy God.

2 Timothy 3:12 Indeed, all who desire to live godly in Christ Jesus will be persecuted.

Application:

- 1.** If you are doing the Lord's work, expect opposition and prepare for it.
- 2.** Do not give in to opposition and be defeated. Look to our Lord for the strength to remain in the work.
- 3.** Prayer is the right response to opposition. Pray, and then we act. Remember that faith without works is dead.
- 4.** Remain steadfast; continue in the work that the Lord has called us to do!