

Steadfast Heart

Nehemiah 4:1-14

Rev. Guna Raman

God called Nehemiah to rebuild the city that had been in ruins for 140 years.

How To Build Amid Ruins

1. Vision – the destination

We need a fresh vision from God of what could be to begin rebuilding and growing, even amidst this pandemic.

2. Prayer – the default

We need to develop new habits of prayer and make prayer our default.

3. Planning – the direction

Prayer would lead us to the planning and fulfilment of the vision God gives to us. Prayer needs to fuel our planning!

4. Perseverance – the determination

Nehemiah 4: Perseverance

#1 The Opposition

v1-3 – The successful rebuilding of Jerusalem would cause Sanballat and Tobiah to lose power and influence. To oppose the rebuilding, they jeered and discouraged Nehemiah's faith, the builders and God. When we rally together to build a vision and see progress, there will be opposition. The enemy targets those who keep going to do great exploits for the kingdom of God.

#2 The Posture of Prayer

v4-5 – Nehemiah's response to the opposition was prayer. He did not argue with his opponents, but instead brought his honest feelings of anger and frustration before God in prayer. Where it is that we should be carrying righteous anger towards, there it is that our spirit is often numb. Nehemiah recognised that the opposition was ultimately a sin and mocking against God (v5). He did not let the opposition stop or distract him; he let God deal with the opposition and continued to build (v6). Opposition should never stop us from continuing with what God has called us to do!

#3 More Opposition

v7-8 – After realising that more progress was made in the rebuilding, the opposition rallied together and surrounded the builders; they were threatening physical war. Nehemiah continued to respond in prayer, and he put a plan in place (v9). Prayer and planning go together! As we pray amidst the threats and opposition we face during this pandemic, we also need to seek God for a plan and work it out.

v10-11 – As the opposition grew against the builders, so did the fatigue, discouragement and doubt in their hearts. The Jews (their own people) also began warning them about the great opposition (v12).

#4 The Battle Posture

In response, Nehemiah does 3 things (v13):

1) He organised the people according to their families – Nehemiah reminded the people that they were not just fighting for themselves, but also their families. We will always fight harder if we have to protect our own family. Our awareness, passion and dependence upon God will grow.

2) He positioned the families at vulnerable locations at the wall – Being at a vulnerable position caused the people to constantly carry a vigilant posture and forced them to awake from their slumber and move into action.

3) He gave the families the right tools – He armed the families with weapons to defend themselves.

#5 The Right Focus

v14 – Nehemiah assured and reminded the people that it is God who will fight for them. The same God is fighting for us, so we need not fear! He covered our shame with grace and paid the penalty for our

sins to wipe away our guilt. Only fear can conquer fear. The greater fear that we need is the fear of the Lord. Remember the Lord, who is great and awesome, and fear Him!

Jesus Christ fought for us on the cross so that we can be saved from the crushing forces of the enemy for all of eternity. Do not let this pandemic cause you to lose your spiritual strength and vigor. Fight for the allegiances of your heart with the fear of the Lord and remember who He is!