

NEHEMIAH

Lesson 4 - Chapter 4

In Chapter 4 we can see that the work has progressed and the wall is well on its way, so the enemy is not happy. We will do well to observe the way Nehemiah responds to the enemy and to problems within the wall. His focus remains the same... keeping his eyes on the One who gave him this work to do.

There is much for us to learn and apply in this chapter, so pray for ears to hear what the Lord has to say this week and how you are to apply it to your life.

Memory Verse – This week’s memory verse is Isaiah 26:3

*“You will keep him in perfect peace, whose mind is stayed on You,
because he trusts in You.”*

Key Word(s)

Read through the entire chapter, looking for words or themes that are repeated. Make note of those words and their significance here.

Read Nehemiah 4:1- 5.

1. We first heard of Sanballat in Nehemiah 2:10, that he and Tobiah were “*greatly disturbed*” that a man had come to help the children of Israel. In Nehemiah 4:1 we hear from Sanballat again.

a. What provoked Sanballat’s anger this time?

b. Why would this make him so angry?

2. Sanballat spoke specific taunts after his question, “*What are these feeble Jews doing?*” Complete the four questions he spoke in verse 2 below.

a. Will they ...

b. Will they ...

c. Will they ...

d. Will they ...

3. Whenever we set out to do a work of God we will meet with opposition from the enemy, and often it will take one of the forms above. Think about this and write some taunts the enemy uses today.

4. In Nehemiah 4:3, what taunt did Tobiah add to the mockery of the work on the wall?

5. Read verses 4 and 5 to find Nehemiah's response.

a. Who did Nehemiah go to with this problem?

b. Why is this always the first place to go when we are attacked by the enemy?

c. What does Ephesians 6:12 tell us about our enemies?

Nehemiah is again an example of a man of prayer! He did not let the enemy turn his eyes away from the Lord, but turned to the Lord to deal with the enemy. Now this is not a prayer we should pray today, after all, Jesus calls us to turn the other cheek. Perhaps the best way to sum up Nehemiah's prayer is as an appeal for justice.

Read Nehemiah 4:6.

1. Nehemiah's example as a leader is evident in the response of the people in verse 6.

a. What did the people do after the opposition by Sanballat and Tobiah?

b. Complete the verse below to show why the people continued.

...for the people _____.

c. How would you describe what this means?

2. The mistake Sanballat and Tobiah made was that they failed to recognize Whose wall it was and Who called the people to repair it. What truth do you find in the following scriptures that can apply here?

a. Job 42:2

b. Psalm 127:1

c. Isaiah 14:27

d. Add any other scriptures you can think of to support this truth.

Read Nehemiah 4:7-9.

As the enemy saw that the work was not stopped by their mockery, but instead the wall was “*joined together up to half its height*”, they took further steps against the Jews.

1. In Nehemiah 4:7, what was the reaction of the enemy when they saw the gaps in the wall being closed?

2. What did they decide to do in verse 8?

3. Nehemiah 4:9 tells us what his response was to this new threat. Write what he did in the order he did it below.

a.

b.

c. Why is this order so important?

Read Nehemiah 4:10-12.

As the attack from the enemy continued, the workers got discouraged and their eyes turned from the Lord to the circumstances.

1. What fears were mentioned in the following verses?

a. Nehemiah 4:10

b. Nehemiah 4:12

2. Compare what Judah said in verse 10 with Sanballat’s last statement in Nehemiah 4:2. Who was Judah listening to?

3. In Nehemiah 4:10-12 we see the results of listening to the wrong voices. In order to avoid fear and discouragement in our lives, we must be listening to God daily. Read Psalm 119 and underline just a few verses that stand out to you and write one of those below. Spend time meditating on the importance of God's Word so that we are not deceived by the lies of the enemy.

4. What were the goals of the enemy as laid out in Nehemiah 4:11?

5. The enemy tries to cause fear, which is a powerful weapon. Fear destroys faith and paralyzes God's children, stopping any step forward in the work of God.

a. What does 2 Timothy 1:7 tell us about fear?

b. Think of a time when you were afraid. How did God's word help you to overcome that fear?

6. How is the enemy trying to accomplish these goals in the body of Christ today? Consider 1 Peter 5:8.

Read Nehemiah 4:13-23.

1. We can see Nehemiah encourage the people and defend against the enemy in several ways in the following verses.

a. Nehemiah 4:13 – with what action?

b. Nehemiah 4:14 – with what reminder?

c. Nehemiah 4:14 – with what motive?

2. Setting your eyes on the enemy and the threats of the enemy will cause fear, but the cure for fear is setting your eyes on the Lord. Write out verse 1 John 4:4 below and remember this truth whenever you are faced with fear.

3. The plot of the enemy failed! What answers for the following do you find in verse 15?
 - a. Who had “*brought their plot to nothing*”?
 - b. What did the people do?

4. Nehemiah could not accomplish the work of God alone. How do each of the following verses show how Nehemiah organized the people to defend and to work together for a common purpose?
 - a. Nehemiah 4:16

 - b. Nehemiah 4:17

 - c. Nehemiah 4:18

5. If the warning trumpet sounded, what important reminder did Nehemiah give in verse 20?

6. It is good for us to remember that we cannot accomplish the purposes God has for our lives alone. We need the Lord and we need each other. How do the following scriptures encourage us in this?
 - a. Joshua 1:9

 - b. Galatians 6:2

 - c. How can we “*bear one another’s burdens*”?

Consider Nehemiah 4:18.

Nehemiah set up a good practice for work and protection against the enemy. We also need to be aware of this practice found in verse 18:

“Every one of the builders had his sword girded at his side as he built.”

1. The builders in Nehemiah needed a physical sword to defend against a physical enemy. We need a spiritual sword to defend against a spiritual enemy. What does Ephesians 6:17 tell us of our spiritual sword?

This sword of the Spirit has a purpose – it is to be used against our enemies, striking down doubts and fears, temptations and error.

2. What more do the following scriptures tell us about this sword?

a. Hebrews 4:12

b. 2 Timothy 2:15

In closing...

1. How does Nehemiah's response to the enemy's attack set an example for you?

2. Has the enemy been at work in your life this week?

a. How can we overcome the discouragement we feel from the enemy's tactics?

b. What word of encouragement would you share with someone who is struggling?

Memory Verse

*"You will keep him in perfect peace, whose mind is stayed on You,
because he trusts in You."*

Isaiah 26:3