

Remember Your Great and Awesome Lord

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[Sermon Audio](#)

When encountering opposition, difficulties, obstacles, this passage teaches us three faithful responses:

I. Turn to the Lord in Prayer

- When God's people do God's work, opposition will come. It is guaranteed!
- We have an enemy who does not want God's work, God's plans to come to pass, and he will work to destroy or confuse us. He wants to deflate us, discourage us, make us feel overwhelmed and unable to press on.
- He is a roaring lion, seeking some to devour (1 Peter 5:8).
- We see that personified in this passage – Sanballat, Tobiah and others railed and taunted the Jews. They taunted them in the presence of the army of Samaria. They used intimidation, threats, fear. They did not want the wall of Jerusalem rebuilt.
- When doing the Lord's work, we will experience that as well.
- When we hold forward that Word in faithfulness, opposition has and will continue to come. What do we do? We turn to the Lord in prayer.
- We see Nehemiah doing that in chapter one (verse 4, verse 9). This is a faithful response to obstacles and opposition.

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

“My flesh and my heart may fail, but God is the strength of my heart and my portion forever.” -- Psalm 73:26

- Prayer brings to our hearts the reality that God is in charge, that God is just, and that God promises to be with us.

II. Remember the Lord

- That's what prayer does for us – it helps us to remember the Lord!
- There was an initial joy and enthusiasm in the work, and v.6 tells us that “the people had a mind to work.” The wall was built halfway, and that was very significant progress.
- In v.10 we read the report that the peoples enthusiasm was failing

“In Judah it was said, ‘The strength of those who bear the burdens is failing. There is too much rubble. By ourselves we will not be able to rebuild the wall (verse 10).’”

- People had begun to get discouraged. The reality of the enormous task before them had begun to set in. There’s too much rubble! We’re getting really tired! We cannot do this!
- The taunts and threats of the enemy had their effect as well.
- With all these obstacles around them, the people’s strength and courage was failing. What does Nehemiah do? He stationed people by their clans, he arms them with swords, spears and bows. And he ultimately reminds them of Who had called them to this work

“And I looked and arose and said to the nobles and to the officials and to the rest of the people, ‘Do not be afraid of them. Remember the Lord, who is great and awesome (verse 14)’”

- How do we combat the fear we experience, the weariness we feel, the discouragement of the rubble in our lives? We remember the Lord!
- We remember His character – He is good. We remember His promises – He is faithful to them. We remember His ability – He can do all things.

III. Trust the Lord as we press on in God’s work

- The builders of the wall, led by Nehemiah, by grace didn’t cave to the threats, or to the discouragement, but entrusted themselves to the Lord as they pressed on in doing God’s work, They prayed to the Lord. They remembered the promises of the Lord. And then they pressed on in the work, knowing that the Lord would provide.
- After they had prayed, after they remembered the nature of their God, that they still appointed guards with spears, shields, bows. We pray, and then we participate with the Lord. We use wisdom as we press on in God’s work. The Lord hears our prayers, and answers our prayers, and wants us still to press on.
- Prayer is where the power is, but God calls us to action in the meanwhile.

Questions for Discussion/Application

- Having listened to the sermon, what stands out to you the most about chapter 4 of the book of Nehemiah?
- In chapter 4, how do we see God's people opposed in the rebuilding efforts
- Scripturally, the believer experiences opposition on three fronts - (1) The world (2) The flesh (3) The devil. Generally speaking, in what ways does the believer experience and feel this opposition?
- More specifically, in what ways are God's people opposed today as we seek by God's grace and in God's strength to do God's work and build God's kingdom? In answering this question it may be helpful to think through (A) In building godly marriages and families, how are we opposed? (B) In our own pursuit of sanctification and growth in holiness how are we opposed? (C) In building God's church, how are we opposed? (D) In seeking to evangelize the lost, how are we opposed?
- What role did prayer play in Nehemiah 4 in helping the people overcome opposition? What role should prayer play in our lives as we face opposition of various kinds?
- What about the character of God, about who God is encourages us to pray?
- What work has God called you to personally that you can at times find discouraging and you need God's grace and God's help in order to press on? In answering this question it might be helpful to think through the various roles, responsibilities and tasks God has given you.
- Consider taking time to pray, asking God by His Holy Spirit to help us when we encounter opposition of various kinds to (1) Turn to the Lord in prayer (2) Remember the Lord and (3) Trust the Lord as we press on in God's work.