

## Study Guide

### Nehemiah Chapters 4

#### 1st Round of Opposition

##### Nehemiah 2:18-20

1. British theologian, Hugh Williamson, Hebrew nerd and expert on Ezra/Nehemiah says we lose something in translation. The original language uses a metaphor for restoring the walls that is derived from *the healing of a wound*.
  - a. How is the condition of the Jerusalem walls emblematic of a broken people?
  - b. How is the act of repairing walls supposed to make the people whole again?
  - c. Why is it uncomfortable to apply the wall project to our lives?
  - d. How is God greater than you think? (1st Nehemiah billboard)

#### 2nd Round of Opposition

##### Nehemiah 4:1-6

2. How is this more than ancient trash-talking? Which insults are ironically true?
3. In what way is Nehemiah wholly spiritual with the unashamedly hard-headed? Which do you need to be more of right now?
4. The 2nd Nehemiah billboard mentioned: "God will wreck the enemy, keep repairing your wall." How is that a truth we need to hear?

#### Slide:

#### 3rd Round of Opposition

##### Nehemiah 4:7-15

5. How has the enemy strategy changed?
6. What is the evidence that the strategy is working?
7. Nehemiah's response in v.14 is: "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." Compare to Joshua's exhortation in Joshua 1:9. What are both men trying to drive home? What would both men have to say to us right now?
8. To be opposed is to be like Jesus. How?
9. Because Jesus was opposed we are accepted. How?
10. In what way do you need to experience victory in opposition?

Pray for one another.

## Message Slides

Slide (keep poetic formatting)

**Genesis 12:2-3:**

“I will make you into a great nation,  
and I will bless you;

I will make your name great,  
and **you will be a blessing**

“I will bless those who bless you,  
and whoever curses you I will curse;  
and **all peoples on earth**  
**will be blessed through you.**”

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**1st Round of Opposition**

**Nehemiah 2:18-20**

So they began this good work.

But when Sanballat the Horonite, Tobiah the Ammonite official and Geshem the Arab heard about it, they mocked and ridiculed us. “What is this you are doing?” they asked. “Are you rebelling against the king?”

I answered them by saying, “The God of heaven will give us success. We his servants will start rebuilding, but as for you, you have no share in Jerusalem or any claim or historic right to it.”

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**1st Round of Opposition**

Pic: Nehemiah's Enemies

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Luke 6:45

“The good man brings good things out of the good treasure of his heart, and the evil man brings evil things out of the evil treasure of his heart. For out of the overflow of the heart, the mouth speaks.”

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Pic: Billboard 1

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**2nd Round of Opposition**

Nehemiah 4:1-3

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!”

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Pic: Elephantine Papyrus

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**2nd Round of Opposition**

Nehemiah 4:4-6

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.

So we rebuilt the wall till all of it reached half its height, for the people worked with all their heart.

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Pic: Billboard 2

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### **3rd Round of Opposition**

Nehemiah 4:7-12

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. But we prayed to our God and posted a guard day and night to meet this threat.

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."

Then the Jews who lived near them came and told us ten times over, "Wherever you turn, they will attack us."

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### **3rd Round of Opposition**

Nehemiah 4:14

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.**"

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Pic: Billboard 3

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Nehemiah 4:15

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.

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To be opposed is to be like Jesus.