

# PRAYER & PLANNING IN THE MIDST OF OPPOSITION

**"Now when Sanballat heard that we were building the wall, he was angry and greatly enraged, and he jeered at the Jews. And he said in the presence of his brothers and of the army of Samaria, "What are these feeble Jews doing? Will they restore it for themselves? Will they sacrifice? Will they finish up in a day? Will they revive the stones out of the heaps of rubbish, and burned ones at that?" Tobiah the Ammonite was beside him, and he said, "Yes, what they are building—if a fox goes up on it he will break down their stone wall!" Nehemiah 4:1-3**

**Week 4**  
**January 21st - 27th**

**CONSECRATION**  
**2019**  
*Finish Strong*

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The faithless ridicule while the faithful pray. The faithless demean while the faithful plan. The faithless threaten while the faithful are encouraged by their godly leaders.

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Just as the Pharisees were angered when Jesus did a good deed, so Sanballat and Tobiah derided God's people for rebuilding Jerusalem. Sanballat's rage was exposed in words of ridicule. His heart was revealed as he questioned: "Will they restore? Will they sacrifice? Will they finish up? Will they revive?" Nehemiah 4 reveals great contrasts. The questions asked by Sanballat really had underlying motives. They were asked implying that whatever the Jews were trying was just not going to work. The answer to the series of questions in the minds of some was NO. The prospect of the Jews restoring the walls by sacrificing for the Lord was unfathomable, unimaginable, and most certainly unbelievable to many. Sanballat's faithless heart and corrupt mind saw only heaps of burned rubbish. By contrast, Nehemiah's

faithful heart and visionary mind saw a rebuilt city long before it was a fact. Even when much of the reconstruction was completed, Tobiah ridiculed the finished product and suggested that a small, insignificant in size, fox could bring down their stone wall. When someone talks down about something that we are doing for the Lord, one might be tempted to retaliate through harsh words and actions. Instead, Nehemiah appealed to his God, the One who hears and answers prayer.



God is instructing us here. Prayer is a critical element when faced with opposition. And as I have said “opposition will come”. In prayer, Nehemiah asked God to fight the battle for him. He did not deny his feelings, but admitted that he felt despised. Nehemiah correctly judged that the enemy’s sin was not against him but against God.

As the faithful united for good, the faithless united for evil. In Nehemiah 2:10, the opposition consisted of Sanballat and Tobiah alone. In chapter 2:19 they were joined by Geshem, the Arab. Now, in Chapter 4:7, the opposition has grown to include Arabs, Ammonites, and Ashdodites. This verse focuses on the fact that opposition came from all sides. Sanballat was from the north, the Arabs were from the south, the Ammonites were from the east, and the Ashdodites were from the west. The anger in their hearts was directly proportional to what their eyes saw, namely the repairing of the walls and the closing of the breaches. This was not the first, or the last time, in history when the faithless became angered by something good. The religious leaders of the day were upset a number of times when Jesus healed the sick or when people sang his praises (Mark 3:2-6; Luke 19:37-39). **While the faithful under the leadership of Nehemiah planned, worked and prayed, the faithless plotted to “fight against Jerusalem and to cause confusion in it.”**

We’ve been given a promise in the Word of God that when the enemy comes in like a flood, which means quickly and without warning, the Spirit of the Lord will lift up a standard against him (Is 59:19).



### Our Guide To Praying

This week I am asking you to decide what you are going to give up for God.

For some, it may be Facebook; for some it may be television; for some it may be meat all together. Whatever you decide to do, if it means nothing to you, then it means nothing to God either. It would be greatly appreciated if you would meet us in prayer on Monday night at 7:00 pm and Friday night at 7:30 pm. We’ve come this far by faith, let’s Finish Strong!

**Corporate Prayer is on Mondays at 7PM and Fridays at 7:30 PM.**