

Going Deeper

Your weekly guide to understanding God with others

Nehemiah - Part 2 Obedience or Opposition

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Introduction

Nehemiah 1 and 2 tell of Nehemiah's response after hearing that the wall of Jerusalem had been broken down. He sat and wept, knelt, prayed, fasted, and then stood up to take action. Although he formulated a plan, opposition arose even before the first stone was laid and we see Sanballat, Tobiah and Geshem mocking and ridiculing the rebuilders. Throughout Chapter 4, despite the litany of opposition, we also see Nehemiah's obedience and confidence in God, as well as his influence on the Israelites. Nehemiah and the Israelites were stronger together.

Read Nehemiah 4:1-23

Discuss

1. When have you personally experienced strength through unity? Did you encounter any opposition?
2. In Chapter 4, Nehemiah and the Israelites faced anger (v. 1-2), sarcasm (v. 3), confusion (v. 8), fear (v. 8, 12) and tiredness (v. 10). Which of these do you believe is the most common form of opposition when you are about to take a step of obedience? How do you overcome it?
3. Pastor Mark suggests that opposition may arise even before we step into God's plan. Can you identify instances of opposition encountered in your Life Group or our broader church community?
4. Nehemiah had confidence that God was with him and the Israelites. He repurposed the rubble (v. 2), prayed (v. 4-5), worked diligently (v. 6), and guarded the city day and night (v. 9, 13). Nehemiah also affirmed the vision to the Israelites (v. 14) and was highly strategic (v. 16, 19-20). How can we apply some of these strategies to overcome our opposition today?

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5. One of Crossway's values is "Dare to Dream". We encourage people to dream big and give them the freedom to fail and try again. Are there any areas in your life where fear has been holding you back from taking a step forward in faith and obedience?
6. How can we inspire and support each other to continue dreaming and stepping into obedience despite opposition we may face along the way?

Respond

We learn from Nehemiah that opposition can come from various angles. We also learn that we are stronger together, especially when we take steps of obedience in response to God's call. This week, commit to taking that step. It might be as simple as starting to pray for something that's been on your mind for a while. For some, it might be time to start formulating a plan. Maybe it's time to step up and serve. Regardless of where you are in your faith journey, God has a plan for you and our community. Taking that step of obedience will make us stronger together.