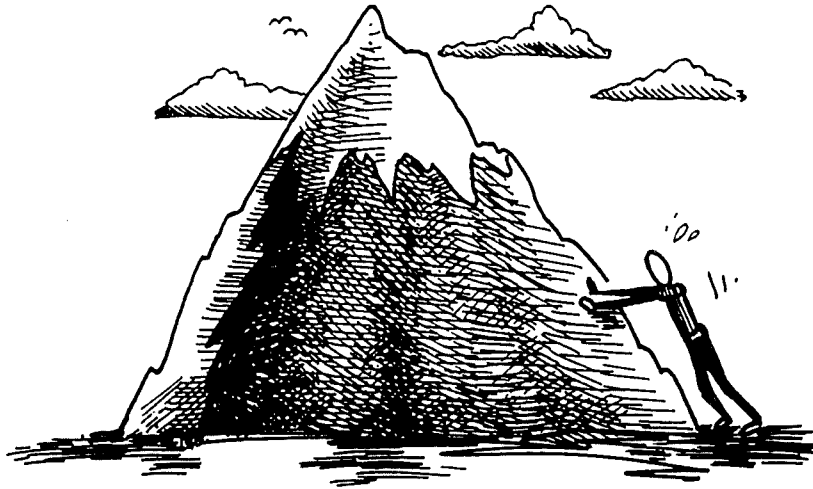


OVERCOMING ALL ODDS

(Living As An Overcomer Like Nehemiah)



NEHEMIAH OVERCOMES

- *Rejection
- *Opposition
- *Frustration
- *Deception

“So the wall was finished, and all the enemies were much cast down, for they perceived that this work was wrought of our God.” (Nehemiah 6:15,16)

Bill Kirk

“NEHEMIAH”

Text: Nehemiah 4:1-8

Subject: “So the wall was finished, and all the enemies were much cast down, for they perceived that this work was wrought of our God” (Nehemiah 6:15, 16)

Introduction

1. Nehemiah came along after the United Kingdom had been divided into the Northern and Southern Kingdom. (This division took place over taxation in 931 B.C.)
 - A. Israel was the Northern Kingdom (10 Tribes), Samaria was the capital.
 - B. Judah was the Southern Kingdom (2 Tribes), Jerusalem was the capital.
2. In 586 B.C., the Babylonians invaded Jerusalem, destroyed the city walls and took many people captive into exile. (II Kings 25:1-21)
3. The Persian kings permitted the Jews to return and rebuild their temple and city.
 - ◆ 536 B.C. (The first group of 50,000 Jews return).
 - ◆ 457 B.C. (The second group returns).
 - ◆ 444 B.C. (The third group returns).
4. The Gentiles hindered the Jews in their work and the temple was not completed for twenty years. (Ezra 1-6)
 - ◆ The gates and walls were never repaired and the city remained vulnerable to enemy attack.
5. Then, in 444 B.C., Nehemiah meets Hanani who had just returned from Jerusalem. (1:2).

Nehemiah’s Inquisition

“I asked them concerning the Jews that had escaped, which were left of the captivity, and concerning Jerusalem”. (1:2)

Nehemiah’s News Received

- #1. “There is only a remnant of Jews living there” (1:3)
- #2. “The people are in great affliction and reproach” (1:3)
- #3. “The wall of Jerusalem is still broken down” (1:3)
- #4. “The gates are burned with fire” (1:3)

Nehemiah’s Response To The Sad News

- #1. He weeps, mourns, prays, and fasts. (1:4)
- #2. He asks for “Time off” to go to Judah to build. (2:5)
- #3. He leaves Persia with letters of permission. (2:6-9)
- #4. He arrives at Jerusalem and surveys the walls. (2:11-16)

Nehemiah’s Battle Cry **As He Sounds The Alarm To Rise**

“You see the distress that we are in, come, and let us build up the wall or Jerusalem that we be no more a reproach” (2:17)

Fact: Nehemiah had a good beginning and a good ending.

Fact: In the beginning (God gave him the burden, 1:4).

Fact: In the end (God got all the glory for a job well done, (6:15)

Fact: But in between the call and the completion, the enemy tried to sift, sideline, discourage and defeat the Lord's servant. (But Nehemiah prevailed).

(Tactics The Enemy Still Uses Today)

I. Unexpected Rejection

"It grieved them exceedingly that there was come a man to seek the welfare of the children of Israel. (2:10)

Fact: Nehemiah received no red carpet treatment.

Fact: Nehemiah wasn't given the keys to the city.

Fact: Nehemiah experienced some cold shoulders.

(Remember:)

1. Jeremiah (was put in a mud hole).
2. David (was rejected by his brothers).
3. Paul (was stoned in Lystra).
4. Jesus (came unto His own but they received Him not).

Question: Why is rejection to be expected?

Answer: Because no one appreciates the one who attempts to reform them!

- ◆ So expect, (and don't be shocked or thrown for a loop) when you encounter resistance to the gospel you live and proclaim.
- ◆ After all, you are moving into enemy territory.

II. Unwarranted Opposition

"They laughed us to scorn and despised us" (2:19)

"Sanballat mocked the Jews when building". (4:1)

"They were very wroth" (4:7)

"All of them conspired to fight and hinder it' (4:8)

Fact: Expect opposition if you are growing in God.

Fact: Expect the devil to fight you in the process.

Fact: Expect heated warfare before your great victories.

Fact: Expect fiery darts and intense struggle before great victories.

Question: Why must we be sensitive and aware of hindering spirits?

Question: Why must we be "Prayed up" before public ministry?

III. Unfair Condemnation

"Will they revive the stones out of the heaps of the rubbish which are burned?" (4:2)

Fact: The walls had laid in ruins for over 100 years.

Fact: The enemy is shrewd in his tactics. (He says)

- ◆ "Look at the mess of your past"
- ◆ "Focus on the rubbish of yesteryear"
- ◆ "Look back on the rubbish of your sins"
- ◆ "Remember all the mistakes you have made"
- ◆ "Look back and get discouraged"

Question: Why does the enemy of your soul want you to live in the past?

Answer: So he can keep you from your glorious future.

Question: Why does the enemy want your focus on time that's behind you?

Answer: To rob you of faith for what God can do in the present.

Fact: Some of you believe that things cannot change.

Fact: Some of you are frustrated with where you are.

Fact: Some of you are looking back, (instead of forward).

IV. Unwanted Intimidation

"Even that which they build, if a fox go up, he shall even break down their stone wall". (4:3)

Fact: The enemy said, "Your work won't endure".

Fact: The enemy said, "You won't stand the test".

Fact: The enemy said, "Your life will fall under pressure".

(But Jesus Said:)

A. "You are more than a conqueror"

B. "You will overcome the world"

C. "You will experience great victory"

Question: Why does the enemy intimidate God's people?

Answer: Because fear paralyzes growth, Because fear produces nothing good.
Because fear polarizes our faith, Because fear presumes God is small.

V. Undesirable Stretching

"There was a great cry of the people against their brethren the Jews. (5:1)

Fact: A personal crisis arose because of financial pressure to pay taxes.

Fact: Jew was exploiting Jew out of greed.

Fact: Nehemiah called a public trial, appealed to the government officials and saw God solve the crisis.

Question: Why does God allow us to be stretched (instead of sheltered) in difficulty?

Answer: A. God is growing our character!
B. God is building our faith!
C. God is proving His faithfulness!
D. God is producing more fruit!
E. God is fulfilling His plan!

VI. Unsolicited Deception

"Sanballat and Geshem said, Come, let us meet together in Ono. But they thought to do me mischief" (6:2)

Fact: Five times the enemy tried to get Nehemiah off the job.

Fact: Five times the enemy tried to get Nehemiah to quit.

Fact: Five times the enemy tried to get Nehemiah to minimize his work.

Question: What must you remember about the work that God is doing in you?

Answer: (V. 3), That it is God's work! That it is eternal work! That it is a great work!

(So Never minimize What God Is Doing In You)

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VII. Unfounded Insinuation

“Their hands will weaken from the work that it be not done” (6:9)

Fact: The enemy said, “God won’t complete the work He began in you”.

Fact: The enemy said, “You are wasting your time”.

Fact: The enemy said, “Your hands will weaken and you will quit”.

(But He Lied (And Lies Now))

Fact: Expect some seasons of patient waiting.

Fact: Expect more seasons of weariness and fatigue.

Fact: Expect some seasons of holding on in prayer.

Fact: Expect some seasons of frustrations.

How Did Nehemiah Overcome?

#1. **Fasting and Prayer** (1:4)

“I sat down and wept, and fasted and prayed” (1:4)

- A. This changes us first (then it changes things).
- B. Our battles are spiritual (not carnal, fleshly, horizontal or in the natural).
- C. If we prostrate ourselves before the Lord, we will never be prostrated before the enemy.
- D. Prayer made in secret will see an open reward.

#2. **Personal Cleansing** (1:6)

“I confess the sins which we have sinned against Thee” (1:6)

- A. Nehemiah was full of repentance and humility.
- B. He wanted his motives and methods to be pure.
- C. He desired no credit for what God was doing.
- D. He shows us that repentance precedes revival.

#3. **Faithfulness Daily** (2:1)

“And it came to pass that I took up the wine and gave it unto the king” (2:1)

- A. Nehemiah went to his job as a cupbearer after prayer.
- B. Nehemiah believed that God would make a way to help.
- C. He knew his present field was limited, but he was not limited by his field.

#4. **The Strength Of God** (6:9)

“O God, strengthen my hands” (6:9)

- A. Nehemiah needed to be strengthened by God.
- B. In prayer, he exchanged his weakness for God’s strengthening grace.
- C. And God granted him this earnest request.

(Did He Overcome All Odds?)

“So the wall finished... and they perceived that this work was wrought of our God” (6:15, 16)

Conclusion **Remember Beloved**

- #1. God will finish what He starts in you!
- #2. God will grant victory over every enemy stronghold!
- #3. God will see to it that His Name is glorified!
- #4. God will prove Himself to be faithful!
- #5. God will overcome everyone of your obstacles

AMEN!

Bill Kirk, Pastor

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