

Let Us Arise and Build Operation Intimidation #2 Meeting Satan's Attacks

Intro: In our lesson this morning, we looked at three powerful weapons Satan has in his arsenal in opposing the people of God.

He seeks to create self-doubt in us.

He seeks to intimidate us and make us fearful.

He seeks to cause us to become discouraged.

Satan used these weapons against Nehemiah and his fellow-Jews in trying to stop them from the good and God-glorifying work of rebuilding the walls of Jerusalem.

Let's see how Nehemiah met those challenges. God through Nehemiah provided five powerful counter-measures against Satan's attacks!

Nehemiah encouraged his brethren to...

Keep praying

When they were mocked Nehemiah prayed:

"Hear, O our God, how we are despised! Return their reproach on their own heads and give them up for plunder in a land of captivity. Do not forgive their iniquity and let not their sin be blotted out before Thee, for they have demoralized the builders." (Neh. 4:4-5)

Later when the enemies threatened to attack, Nehemiah prayed:

"But we prayed to our God, and because of them we set up a guard against them day and night." (Nehemiah 4:9)

Nehemiah pulled out the believer's "secret weapon" in spiritual warfare—prayer! He started praying; and he got the people praying! By praying they started believing and their doubts began to fade.

Nehemiah's prayer appealed to the care of God. *"Hear how we are despised" (v. 4)*

Nehemiah's prayer appealed to the justice of God. *"Return their iniquity... and do not let their sin be blotted out!" (v. 4-5).*

We will always be defeated when we get our minds on ourselves and not on God! Self-pity will move in where there was once self-confidence based on God's presence and help.

Keep remembering what's important

Nehemiah appealed to the best spiritual instincts of the people! He reminded them of the greatness of the God they served.

"When I saw their fear, I rose and spoke to the nobles, the officials, and the rest of the people: "Do not be afraid of them; remember the Lord who is great and awesome, and fight for your brothers, your sons, your daughters, your wives, and your houses." (Neh. 4:14)

He reminded them of who and what they needed to fight for.

“Fight for your brothers, your sons, your daughters, you wives and your houses” (Neh. 4:14)

Sometimes we need someone to remind us of what is really important and how that it is too precious to just stand by and watch it slip away! We need to think about our children and our grandchildren and ask ourselves, “Will there be a strong church for us and for them?”

Keep watching

Nehemiah made wise provisions in anticipation of attack. He provided for the defense of the people.

He put guards and soldiers in the breaks:

“then I stationed men in the lowest parts of the space behind the wall, the exposed places, and I stationed the people in families with their swords, spears, and bows.” (Neh. 4:13)

He equipped the people for warfare as well as building.

“And it came about from that day on, that half of my servants carried on the work while half of them held the spears, the shields, the bows, and the breastplates; and the captains were behind the whole house of Judah. Those who were rebuilding the wall and those who carried burdens took their load with one hand doing the work and the other holding a weapon. As for the builders, each wore his sword girded at his side as he built, while the trumpeter stood near me.” (Neh. 4:16–18)

Created an alarm system that rallied everyone to the point of conflict

“And I said to the nobles, the officials, and the rest of the people, “The work is great and extensive, and we are separated on the wall far from one another. “At whatever place you hear the sound of the trumpet, rally to us there. Our God will fight for us.”” (Neh. 4:19–20)

God’s people need to open their eyes up to the real enemies around them. We need to be prepared to defend ourselves from attack in whatever ways Satan seeks to work. And we need to watch out for one another. But we also need to remember that no army can win fighting a defensive war!

Keep working!

The easiest thing to do in times of doubt and fear and discouragement is to stop doing what we’ve been doing. Notice how Nehemiah kept the people working!

“So we built the wall and the whole wall was joined together to half its height, for the people had a mind to work.” (Neh. 4:6)

“And it happened when our enemies heard that it was known to us, and that God had frustrated their plan, then all of us returned to the wall, each one to his work.” (Neh. 4:15)

“Those who were rebuilding the wall and those who carried burdens took their load with one hand doing the work and the other holding a weapon.” (Neh. 4:17)

God's people must not ever let their doubts, fears, and discouragements lead them to quit doing God's work. To do so is to let the devil win!

Consider this quote by Teddy Roosevelt:

"It is not the critic who counts: not the man who points out how the strong man stumbled or where the doer of deed could have done them better. The credit belongs to the man who is actually in the arena; whose face is marred by dust and sweat and blood; who strives valiantly; who errs, and comes short again and again, because there is no effort without error and shortcoming; who does actually try to do the deed; who knows the great enthusiasm, the great devotion and spends himself in a worthy cause; who, at the worst, if he fails, at least fails while daring greatly. Far better it is to dare mighty things, to win glorious triumphs even though checkered by failure, than to rank with those poor spirits who neither enjoy nor suffer much because they live in the gray twilight that knows neither victory nor defeat."

Keep trusting in God's help!

"Our God will fight for us!" (Neh. 4:20)

It is clear that God was already providing victory for the Lord's people

"And it happened when our enemies heard that it was known to us, and that God had frustrated their plan, then all of us returned to the wall, each one to his work." (Neh. 4:15)

We have to keep believing that faithfulness will result in the successful accomplishment of God's work.

Conclusion: God's people can always overcome Satan's attacks! But we must use the weapons at our disposal and engage in spiritual warfare with him. It is interesting that Peter should practically duplicate every one of these exhortations in his encouraging letter to Christians in the face of opposition:

"Humble yourselves, therefore, under the mighty hand of God, that He may exalt you at the proper time, casting all your anxiety upon Him, because He cares for you. Be of sober spirit, be on the alert. Your adversary, the devil, prowls about like a roaring lion, seeking someone to devour. But resist him, firm in your faith, knowing that the same experiences of suffering are being accomplished by your brethren who are in the world. And after you have suffered for a little while, the God of all grace, who called you to His eternal glory in Christ, will Himself perfect, confirm, strengthen and establish you. To Him be dominion forever and ever. Amen." (1 Pet. 5:6-11)

Do you have doubts, fears, discouragement? Nehemiah has shown us the road to faith, courage, and encouragement again! Will we take the road?