

BEWARE! :: BUILDINGS, COMMUNITIES AND
INDIVIDUALS UNDER CONSTRUCTION

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Under Construction: How to meet a threat (Neh 4.7-15)

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Introduction

Nehemiah mentions, "...my God had put something in my heart to do for Jerusalem." (Nehemiah 2.12)

If we do what our God has put on our hearts to do for His church, we will also experience opposition, just like Nehemiah. Nehemiah's enemies escalate their opposition from ridicule (Neh 4.1) to threats (Neh 4.7-15).

Nehemiah 4.7-15 (NIV)

⁷But 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. ⁸They all plotted together to come and fight against Jerusalem and stir up trouble against it. ⁹But we prayed to our God and posted a guard day and night to meet this threat.

Nehemiah 4.7-15 (NIV)

¹⁰Meanwhile, 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.” ¹¹Also 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.” ¹²Then the Jews who lived near them came and told us ten times over, “Wherever you turn, they will attack us.”

¹³Therefore I stationed some of the people behind the lowest points of the wall at the exposed places, posting them by families, with their swords, spears and bows.

Nehemiah 4.7-15 (NIV)

¹⁴After 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.”

¹⁵When 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.

Pray to God and post a guard

Nehemiah 4.10-14

“Judah said” (4.10),

“our enemies said” (4.11),

“the Jews who lived near them said” (4.12),

but “I said” (4.14) what God said (Deut 7.21)

Pray to God and post a guard

- See prayer in Nehemiah 1 followed by action in Nehemiah 2.
- Nehemiah 2:4–5 (NIV): ⁴Then I prayed to the God of heaven, ⁵and I answered the king...
- Nehemiah 4:4–6 (NIV): ⁴Hear us, our God, for we are despised... ⁶So we rebuilt the wall...
- Nehemiah 4:9 (NIV): But we prayed to our God and posted a guard...
- Nehemiah 4:14 (NIV): Remember the Lord, who is great and awesome, and fight for your families...
- Note that each time the same two elements appear in the same order: 1) trusting prayer to God followed by 2) responsible action by His people.

The relationship between what God does and what we do...

Proverbs 16.1: The plans of the heart belong to man, but the answer of the tongue is from the Lord.

Proverbs 16.3: Commit your work to the Lord, and your plans will be established.

Proverbs 16.9: The heart of man plans his way, but the Lord establishes his steps.

Philippians 2.12-13: ...work out your own salvation with fear and trembling, for it is God who works in you, both to will and to work for his good pleasure.

Nehemiah used Scripture

Nehemiah 4.14 (NIV) ¹⁴After 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.”

Deuteronomy 7:21 (NIV): Do not be terrified by them, for the Lord your God, who is among you, is a great and awesome God.

Nehemiah 4.2 (NIV)

A: What are those feeble Jews doing?

B: Will they restore their wall?

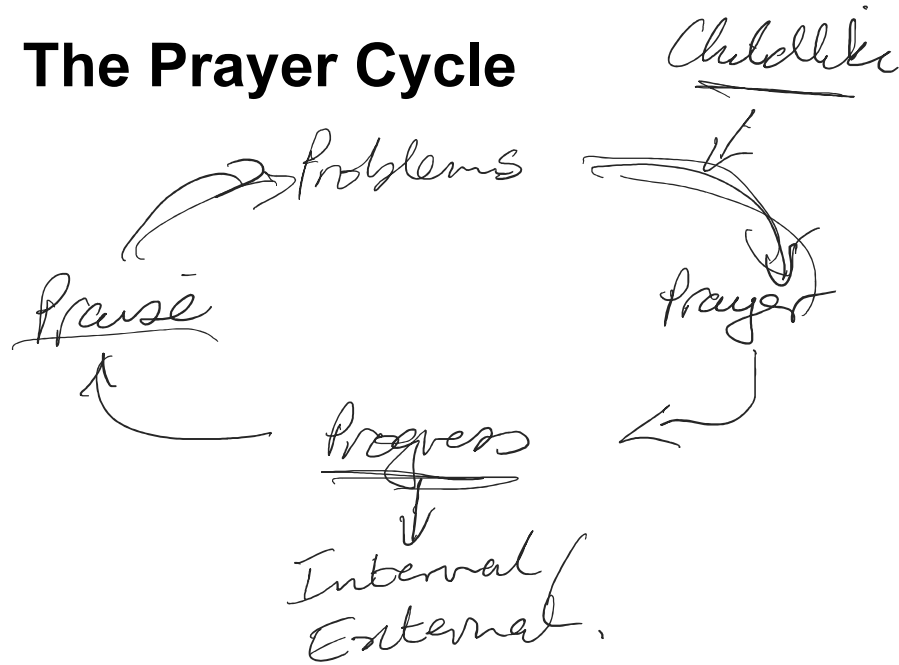
C: Will they offer sacrifices?

B’: Will they finish in a day?

A’: Can they bring the stones back to life..?

and **1 Peter 2.4-5:** ⁴As you come to him, the living Stone—rejected by humans but chosen by God and precious to him—⁵you also, like living stones, are being built into a spiritual house...

The Prayer Cycle



Conclusion

So how is a threat best met?

1. Listen to warnings and negative feedback.
2. Pray to God and post a guard.
3. Continue building as soon as possible.