

Overcoming Opposition (Nehemiah 4, p 400)

“In the place where you hear the sound of the trumpet, rally to us there. Our God will fight for us” – Nehemiah 4:20.

WHEN YOU'RE DOING GOD'S WORK...

I. **EXPECT OPPOSITION**

A. **From Others**

1. intense anger (1, 7)
2. ridicule (1-4)
3. group intimidation (2)
4. national rage and plots (7, 8)
5. death threats (11)

B. **From Yourself and the “Brothers”**

1. personal weariness and weakness (10)
2. disproportionate burden-bearing (10)
3. negative focus on the obstacles, not the goal or resources (10)
4. listening to a multiplying chorus of negativity (12)

II. **DEAL WITH OPPOSITION**

A. Don't be afraid but remember the battle is God's (14, 20)

B. Anticipate the threat and meet it together (9, 13-14, 19-20)

- C. Everyone: work smart and hard (14-16, 21-23)
- D. Pray that God deals with opponents (9a, 4, 5)
- E. Watch God bless our work, which is really His (15)

*When you're doing God's work,
expect opposition, deal with it, then watch God work*

Hearing & Doing Questions

1. Opposition is a part of life, whether on the sports field, in the classroom, at work or in our families. Describe a time when you experienced intense opposition. How did it affect you?
2. What are some ways we experience opposition as Christians today in our culture?
3. What is your default mode when you face opposition: Clam up? Cave in? Get depressed? Feel hurt and rejected? Lash out? Pretend it doesn't exist? Why do you think you respond this way?
4. Read chapter 4, listing as you do the various forms that opposition takes in the chapter. Which of these would be most effective in deterring you from completing something God has called you to? Why?
5. How do you understand the "imprecatory" prayer of verses 4-5 asking God to punish opponents of the Jews? Is this appropriate for them? For us? Why or why not?

6. The people work with all their heart and get half way (v6). What happens to the level of opposition when God's people are focused and determined (v7-8, 11)? What lessons might be here for us?

7. What message does he give the people in v 14, and why are these different points significant? How are these realities motivating?

8. What is one application you will make from studying this chapter?