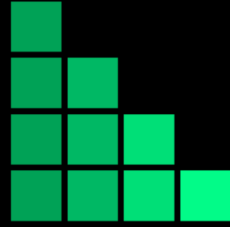


NEW LIFE ONE STUDIES



Series: “Nehemiah: Rise & Build
Week 4 Study Guide
Message: “Keep Building”

SCRIPTURE

<i>Main Text:</i>	<i>Other Text:</i>
<i>Nehemiah 4:1-14</i>	<i>1 Peter 5:8–9; John 10:10; Matthew 14:22–33; Ephesians 6:10–18; Philippians 1:6; Psalm 27:1; Galatians 6:2</i>

UNDERSTANDING THE STORY

*(This section focuses on understanding what the text means —
before jumping to what it means for us.)*

Read Nehemiah 4:1–23

Main Idea:

Opposition tests whether we'll keep building.

Commentary:

Nehemiah 4 continues the story of the rebuilding of Jerusalem's wall. The people have begun the work, but their progress draws opposition from several surrounding groups.

Sanballat, Tobiah, the Arabs, the Ammonites, and the people of Ashdod all become increasingly concerned about the rebuilding of Jerusalem. At first, their opposition comes through ridicule and insults. As the work continues, however, they begin making plans to attack the city.

The people are now facing opposition from several directions while also dealing with the physical demands of the work. They become tired and discouraged, and some begin to believe they will not be able to finish.

Nehemiah responds by praying, organizing the people, encouraging them to remember the Lord, and setting up defenses around the city. The people continue working while also preparing themselves to protect the city.

The chapter shows the tension between rebuilding and defending. The people don't stop the work because of the opposition, but they also don't ignore the danger. They pray, prepare, work together, and continue building.

Discussion Questions:

1. What different forms of opposition do you see throughout Nehemiah 4?
2. How does the opposition change as the chapter progresses?
3. How do the people respond to the threats?
4. What role does prayer play in the chapter?
5. What does Nehemiah mean when he tells the people to “remember the Lord”?

Takeaway:

The people faced opposition, but they continued the work God had given them to do.

Read Nehemiah 4:1–6

Main Idea:

The rebuilding begins with opposition and ridicule.

Commentary:

Sanballat becomes angry when he hears that the Jews are rebuilding the wall. He mocks their ability to complete the work and questions whether they can really restore the city.

Tobiah joins him by saying that even a fox walking on the wall would cause it to collapse.

Their words are intended to discourage the builders and make their work seem foolish or impossible.

Despite the opposition, verse 6 tells us that the people continued building. The wall was being rebuilt and the gaps were beginning to be closed.

At this point, the opposition is still primarily verbal. The people are being mocked, but they continue the work.

Discussion Questions:

1. What do Sanballat and Tobiah say about the people and their work?
2. What do you notice about the people's response to the insults?
3. Why do you think their enemies were so concerned about the rebuilding of Jerusalem?
4. What does verse 6 tell us about the progress of the work?

Takeaway:

The people's progress continued despite the opposition.

Read Nehemiah 4:7–12**Main Idea:**

The opposition becomes more serious as the work progresses.

Commentary:

As the repairs continue, the opposition grows. Sanballat, Tobiah, the Arabs, the Ammonites, and the people of Ashdod begin working together to attack Jerusalem and create confusion.

The threat is now coming from several directions. The people are surrounded by groups who want to stop the rebuilding.

At the same time, the workers are becoming exhausted. In verse 10, the people of Judah say that their strength is running out and that there is still too much rubble to clear.

Then they receive word that their enemies are planning to attack them. Some of the Jewish families living in surrounding areas are especially concerned because their families could be vulnerable to an attack.

The people are now dealing with several challenges at once: the amount of work, physical exhaustion, fear of attack, and concern for their families.

Discussion Questions:

1. How does the opposition change in verses 7–12?
2. What concerns are the people expressing in verse 10?
3. Why would the surrounding families have been especially concerned?
4. What factors were making the rebuilding increasingly difficult?

Takeaway:

The people were facing both the physical demands of rebuilding and the growing threat of their enemies.

Read Nehemiah 4:9**Main Idea:**

The people respond to the threat with prayer and preparation.

Commentary:

Verse 9 gives us a simple description of the people's response:

“But we prayed to our God and posted a guard day and night to meet this threat.”

Prayer comes first, followed by practical preparation.

Nehemiah doesn't respond to the threat by abandoning the work. Instead, the people bring the situation before God and then organize a defense.

This pattern continues throughout the chapter. The people trust God while also taking responsibility for protecting the city and one another.

Discussion Questions:

1. What two things did the people do in response to the threat?
2. Why is it significant that prayer is mentioned first?
3. What does their response tell us about how they viewed the situation?
4. How did prayer and preparation work together?

Takeaway:

The people responded to the threat through both prayer and preparation.

Read Nehemiah 4:13–14**Main Idea:**

Nehemiah reminds the people who they are fighting for and who is with them.

Commentary:

As the threat grows, Nehemiah organizes the people at the vulnerable and exposed sections of the wall. He places them by families and gives them weapons.

Then he tells them:

“Remember the Lord, who is great and awesome, and fight for your families...”

This is an important turning point in the chapter.

Nehemiah reminds the people that their focus shouldn't be only on the enemy. They need to remember the Lord and what He has already done.

He also reminds them of what is at stake: their families, homes, and community.

The people aren't simply rebuilding a wall. They are restoring the city where their families live and where their community is being reestablished.

Discussion Questions:

1. Where does Nehemiah position the people?
2. Why does he organize them by families?
3. What does Nehemiah tell them to remember?
4. What does he tell them to fight for?
5. Why do you think remembering the Lord was important at this moment?

Takeaway:

Nehemiah reminds the people to remember the Lord and stand together to protect what they were rebuilding.

Read Matthew 14:22–33

Main Idea:

Peter's experience shows the importance of keeping our focus on Jesus.

Commentary:

In Matthew 14, Peter sees Jesus walking on the water and asks Jesus to allow him to come to Him. Peter steps out of the boat and begins walking toward Jesus.

When Peter notices the strong wind and waves, however, he becomes afraid and begins to sink. He cries out to Jesus, who reaches out and saves him.

The story provides another picture of how fear can affect our response when circumstances become overwhelming.

Discussion Questions:

1. What changes for Peter once he focuses on the wind and waves?
2. What does Jesus do when Peter begins to sink?
3. How does this story connect with Nehemiah's instruction to "remember the Lord"?

Takeaway:

When circumstances become overwhelming, we are called to keep our focus on the One who is with us.

Read Nehemiah 4:15–23

Main Idea:

The people continue building while remaining prepared to defend the city.

Commentary:

Once the enemies realize that their plans have become known, the people return to the work.

From this point forward, the work and the defense happen at the same time.

Some people continue building while others stand guard. The builders work with their weapons nearby, and Nehemiah establishes a system where a trumpet can be sounded if help is needed at another location.

The people are spread throughout the work, but they remain connected and prepared to respond together.

Verse 20 gives another important statement from Nehemiah:

“Our God will fight for us!”

The chapter ends with the people continuing their work while maintaining their defenses.

They haven't removed the opposition. Instead, they have adapted their approach and continued the work.

Discussion Questions:

1. How did the people's approach to the work change after the threats?
2. Why did they continue working even though the threat remained?
3. How were the people organized to protect one another?
4. What does verse 20 tell us about their confidence in God?
5. What stands out to you about how the chapter ends?

Takeaway:

The people continued rebuilding while staying alert and prepared to protect the work.

MAKE IT PERSONAL

Every one of us has places in our lives that need rebuilding.

Maybe you're rebuilding a relationship. Maybe you're working through an old pattern, restoring trust, growing in your faith, or starting again after something has been broken.

Nehemiah 4 reminds us that opposition and difficulty don't necessarily mean we should stop.

The people became tired. They became afraid. They faced real threats and had plenty of reasons to wonder whether they could finish.

But Nehemiah reminded them:

“Remember the Lord, who is great and awesome.”

They prayed. They worked together. They protected what they were building. And they kept going.

Reflect:

1. Where am I tempted to quit because things have become difficult?
2. What area of my life currently feels like a pile of rubble?
3. What do I need to remember about God's faithfulness?
4. Where have I allowed fear or discouragement to become bigger?
5. What is God asking me to continue building?
6. What area of my life needs greater protection or accountability?
7. Who do I need to invite to stand with me?
8. What is one practical step I can take this week?

Key Truth:

Opposition will come, but we don't have to quit. Remember the Lord, protect what He is building, and keep building.

LIVING IT OUT

Remember the Lord

Write down a few specific ways God has been faithful to you. Keep them somewhere you can return to when you're discouraged.

Pray First

When opposition or discouragement comes this week, make prayer your first response.

Keep Building

Identify one area God has called you to rebuild and take one practical step forward.

Protect What God Is Building

Identify a vulnerable area of your life and consider what boundaries or safeguards could help protect the progress God is making.

Don't Fight Alone

Share one area of struggle with a trusted Christian friend, mentor, or LifeGroup member and invite them to pray with you.

Encourage Someone

Think of someone who may be tired or discouraged. Reach out and remind them of God's faithfulness.

For Lifegroups

ENCOURAGE EACH OTHER

Talk through these together:

1. Where do you currently feel like you're "building" something in your life?
2. What kinds of opposition can make us want to quit?
3. What stood out to you about the way the opposition increased throughout Nehemiah 4?
4. What does "But we prayed" teach us about responding to difficulty?
5. What does it mean to "Remember the Lord"?
6. What is something God has done in the past that you need to remember right now?
7. What does it look like to protect what God is building?
8. Why do we need other people to help us stand in the gap?
9. How can our LifeGroup help one another keep building?
10. What is one area where you want to keep building this week?

PRAY TOGETHER

Thank God for His faithfulness and for the ways He has carried us through difficult seasons, ask Him to help us to remember those things when opposition comes.

Ask God to reveal areas where discouragement, fear, or exhaustion have caused us to want to quit.

Pray for strength to continue rebuilding the places God has called us to rebuild.

Ask God to show us areas that need protection and accountability.

Pray that our LifeGroup would be a community where people can be honest about their struggles and stand together in difficult seasons.

Ask God to help us keep our eyes on Jesus, remember the Lord, and continue building even when the work becomes difficult.

Final Thoughts

Nehemiah 4 reminds us that rebuilding isn't always easy.

The people began with a clear mission, but opposition quickly followed. First came ridicule. Then came threats. The people became tired and discouraged, and they wondered if they had enough strength to finish.

But they didn't stop. They prayed. They remembered the Lord. They organized themselves. They protected one another. And they kept building.

The opposition didn't disappear, but the people learned how to continue the work in the middle of it.

There may be times when the work God has called us to feels overwhelming. There may be more rubble than we know what to do with, and we may not be able to see how everything will come together.

But we can remember what Nehemiah told the people:

“Remember the Lord, who is great and awesome.”

Whatever God has called you to rebuild, don't give up simply because it has become difficult.

Remember the Lord. Keep building.

