



Stay Focused on Your Goals: A Nehemiah 4 Life Hack

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Transcript

What do you want to achieve? Are you often distracted? Then learn from Nehemiah.

Jerusalem's walls had lain in ruin for over 100 years, but Nehemiah came to rebuild. God had put it on his heart. He'd asked King Artaxerxes for letters of authority, resources and time, and he got it all [Nehemiah 2:1-9]. He was ready to build.

He went to Jerusalem and asked the remaining Jews to join him. They agreed. Priests, goldsmiths, perfumers, men, women and children all came together to rebuild Jerusalem's walls. They worked as one [Nehemiah 3:1-12].

But, they had powerful enemies. Officials named Sanballat and Tobiah despised the Jews and wanted to stop the work at all costs.

First they tried to demoralize the builders:

"What are those feeble Jews doing? Can they bring the stones back to life from those heaps of rubble" [Nehemiah 4:2]

When that didn't work, they plotted to kill the Jews [Nehemiah 4:11].

How did Nehemiah respond? Did he allow himself to become distracted from the main work of building the wall? No, he didn't.

But, he could have. Remember, he had letters from the king, so he could have gone into a legal battle. He didn't. In fact there's no evidence in chapter 4 that he even replied to the public insults.

HOW DID HE STAY SO FOCUSED?

Here's what he did:

First:

He asked God to fight for them. He prayed:

"Do not cover up their guilt or blot out their sins from Your sight, for they have thrown insults in the face of the builders [4:5].

Wow! He asked God *not* to forgive them. Why so harsh? Because God commanded them to rebuild, so their enemies were opposing God.

Application:

In a similar way, we Christians are commissioned by God to share the gospel. What should we do when people oppose us? Like Nehemiah, pray, and ask God to deal with them.

Second:

Nehemiah prepared defences without stopping the work. How?

4:17 The builders carried weapons.

4:20 Lookouts with trumpets were posted.

4:21 They worked by day, and posted guards at night.

Application:

Prepare against threats, but don't get distracted from your main mission.

Third:

He reminded the people why they were building:

"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" [4:14b].

He reminded them why they were building: for God and their families.

Application:

A good motivation is to remind yourself and others WHY your work is important

As a result Jerusalem's walls, that had lain in ruin for over 100 years, were rebuilt in 52 days! [6:15]

So, what is your main work?

You know it's the gospel, whether you're a gold-smith, perfumer, doctor, or programmer.

But, God has also given you other life responsibilities.

Don't be distracted.

Pray and focused like Nehemiah.

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