

DEALING WITH OPPOSITION – Nehemiah 5:1-19

Lesson 8

I. New Opposition – Opposition from within

“No test of leadership is more revealing than the test of opposition. Nowhere does his (Nehemiah) leadership shine more brilliantly than in his handling of opposition.”

John White

A. The 1st opposition was Israel’s enemies.

1. Nehemiah took it to God in **prayer**.
2. Nehemiah **kept** on **building**.

B. The 2nd opposition was within the “body”.

1. A threat from **within** can be even more **difficult**.
2. Successful attacks can be from **fellow “believers”**.

II. The nature of the problem – financial issues

A. Issues due to **physical** factors

B. Issues due to the wealthy **exploiting** the poor

III. How did Nehemiah deal with injustices?

A. Righteous anger

1. What is “**wrong**” anger?
2. What is “**right**” anger?

B. Reprimanding ring leaders

C. Public confrontation

1. He appealed to their **loyalty** to their people.
2. His rebuke was based on **Truth**.
3. He reminded them that they were **chosen** of God.
4. He reminded them that they **needed** to be **witnesses**.
5. He encouraged them to **fear** God.

“The remarkable thing about fearing God is that when you fear God, you fear nothing else, whereas if you do not fear God, you fear everything else.” Oswald Chambers

6. He pointed out his own **practices**.
7. He reminded them of the **judgment** of God.

D. Actions taken

1. Work is **stopped**.

“We need to get right within the walls before we build the walls higher.” James Montgomery Boice

2. A call to **repentance** is given.
 - a. Repent from **disobeying** God’s law

b. Repent from putting personal **gain** above another's **welfare**

IV. What was the outcome?

- A. Nehemiah succeeded.
- B. Nehemiah was an example.
 - 1. He **paid** for his own **expenses**.
 - 2. He was careful not to take **advantage** of his "brothers".
 - 3. He **participated** in the building.
 - 4. He **shared** with others.
- C. Nehemiah had the correct motive.
 - 1. He **feared** God.
 - 2. His motive was to **honor** God.

V. Practical applications for our lives

- A. Never be surprised by problems.
- B. Confront problems head on.
 - 1. **Honesty**
 - 2. **Graciousness**
- C. Self examination
- D. Be an example
- E. Every problem is an opportunity for God to work.

"Many times our life circumstances serve as vitamins for our growth and development. They don't taste good on the way down but they bless us by helping us grow our faith." Bob Barnes