

DEALING WITH DISCOURAGEMENT – NEH. 4:1-14

Series: RESILIENCY IN THE LIFE OF THE BELIEVER

¹ God in his mercy has given us this work to do, and so we do not become discouraged. ² We put aside all secret and shameful deeds; we do not act with deceit, nor do we falsify the word of God. In the full light of truth we live in God's sight and try to commend ourselves to everyone's good conscience.

2 Corinthians 4:1-2 (TEV)

DISCOURAGED: To deprive of courage, hope or confidence; dishearten; dispirit. In Greek = 'ekkakeo' = to be weak, faint in heart; to be weary.

➤ NEHEMIAH HANDLED THE JEW'S DISCOURAGEMENT BY:

1. RECOGNIZING DISCOURAGEMENT

A. Factor One: Fatigue

¹⁰ Thus in Judah it was said, "The strength of the burden bearers is failing, *Nehemiah 4:10a (NASB)*

B. Factor Two: Frustration

¹⁰ Thus in Judah it was said, "The strength of the burden bearers is failing, Yet there is much rubbish; And we ourselves are unable To rebuild the wall." *Nehemiah 4:10 (NASB)*

BURNOUT: fatigue, frustration or apathy resulting from prolonged stress, overwork, or intense activity. Burnout is a reaction to prolonged or chronic job stress and is characterized by three main dimensions: exhaustion, cynicism (less identification with the job), and feelings of reduced professional ability.

C. Factor Three: Failure

¹⁰ Then Judah said, "The strength of the laborers is failing, (fatigue) and *there is* so much rubbish (frustration) that we are not able to build the wall." (failure) *Nehemiah 4:10 (NKJV)*

D. Factor Four: Fear

¹¹ Also 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." ¹² Then the Jews who lived near them came and told us ten times over, "Wherever you turn, they will attack us." *Nehemiah 4:11-12 (NIV)*

2. RESPONDING TO DISCOURAGEMENT

A. Cry Out To God

⁴ Hear us, O our God, for we are despised. Turn their insults back on their own heads. Give them over as plunder in a land of captivity. ⁵ 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. ... ⁹ But we prayed to our God and posted a guard day and night to meet this threat. *Nehemiah 4:4-5, 9 (NIV)*

B. Continue the Work God Has Given You To Do

⁶ So we rebuilt the wall till all of it reached half its height, for the people worked with all their heart. *Nehemiah 4:6 (NIV)*

² Sanballat and Geshem sent to me, saying, "Come and let us meet together at Hakkephirim in the plain of Ono." But they intended to do me harm. ³ And I sent messengers to them, saying, "I am doing a great work and I cannot come down. Why should the work stop while I leave it and come down to you?" ⁴ And they sent to me four times in this way, and I answered them in the same manner. *Nehemiah 6:2-4 (ESV)*

C. Concentrate on the Big Picture

¹³ So in the lowest parts of the space behind the wall, in open places, I stationed the people by their clans, with their swords, their spears, and their bows. ¹⁴ And I looked and arose and said to the nobles and to the officials and to the rest of the people, "Do not be afraid of them. Remember the Lord, who is great and awesome, and fight for your brothers, your sons, your daughters, your wives, and your homes." *Nehemiah 4:13-14 (ESV)*

D. Claim the Encouragement of God's Promises

¹⁴ After 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 brothers, your sons and your daughters, your wives and your homes." *Nehemiah 4:14 (NIV)*