

## HOW TO HANDLE DISCOURAGEMENT

*Meanwhile, the people in Judah said, "The strength of the laborers is giving out, and there is so much rubble that we cannot rebuild the wall." 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." Nehemiah 4:10-11*

### I. Understand the Causes of Discouragement

- \_\_\_\_\_ – In our enthusiasm, we overdo and wear out, causing burnout, both physical and emotional.
- \_\_\_\_\_ with the rubble and debris. The debris are obstacles that represent:
  - 1) **Past negative personal experiences** – our failures and defeats.
  - 2) **Minor activities in life** that eat up time and energy and divert us from the vision.
  - 3) **Negative vision factors** that must be done to accomplish the vision, but don't directly contribute to it.
  - 4) **Unfulfilled expectations** – We don't achieve what we had planned and hoped.
- \_\_\_\_\_
  - 1) of their enemies' threats and harm;
  - 2) of failure, not finishing the vision.
- \_\_\_\_\_ on the negative – Looking at the situation from a negative perspective, which is self-defeating and lacking faith.

*Therefore I stationed some of the people behind the lowest points of the wall at the exposed places, posting them by families, with their swords, spears and bows. 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 4:13-14*

### II. Practice the Cures For Discouragement

- \_\_\_\_\_ – Make necessary adjustments to the plan to give hope and insure success.
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  - 1) To face the threat effectively, giving confidence.
  - 2) By "families" – "teams" for mutual support and added motivation.
- \_\_\_\_\_ – the Lord! Faith in God to give you the strength and guidance to win. You're never alone, God is your partner.

*From that day on, half of my men did the work, while the other half were equipped with spears, shields, bows and armor. The officers posted themselves behind all the people of Judah. Nehemiah 4:16*

- \_\_\_\_\_ – Prepare to fight off the “Vision Killers” (our obstacles and enemies) with the arms and armor of God (Eph. 6:10-17).
- \_\_\_\_\_ – Pace yourself, share burdens, and give yourself variety.

### **III. Defeat the Curse of Discouragement By:**

*So we continued the work with half the men holding spears, from the first light of dawn till the stars came out. Nehemiah 4:21*

- **Keep on Keeping On** – Jesus continued to Jerusalem to the cross.
- \_\_\_\_\_ – On God’s revelation vision and mission, not your problems.  
*(Nehemiah said) “Wherever you hear the sound of the trumpet, join us there. Our God will fight for us!” Nehemiah 4:20*
- \_\_\_\_\_ – We never fight the battles of life alone. God has given us each other (we’re a team!) to rally to those in need.
- \_\_\_\_\_ – On God. He will give you victory! (See Neh. 6:15-16)

**Answers:** I. Fatigue; frustration; fear; focus. II. Re-evaluate; reorganize; remember; re-arm; rest. III. Refocus; rally; rely.

### **Inner Action – Applying These Truths Today: Handling Critics and Opposition**

1. In what particular area are you feeling most discouraged?
2. What is feeding that discouragement?  
! Fatigue ! Frustration over rubble and debris  
! Fear – of what? \_\_\_\_\_  
! Negativism \_\_\_\_\_ ! Loss of vision
3. How do you respond to discouragement?
4. Are you “armed” and “armored” by God? (Eph. 6:10-17) Which pieces do you need to put on?
5. What is it you can do – need to do – to nourish your faith and hope? For help, read Isaiah 40:28-31; Hebrews 12:1-3; Philippians 4:13; Psalm 40; and Ephesians 6:10-17.