



April 3, 2016

Nehemiah 4

Ever Changing, Never Changing Part 15

"Fight for Your Family"

Pastor Gary Hamrick

In today's study Pastor Gary highlights the words of Nehemiah who instructed the people to *"fight for your brothers, your sons and your daughters, your wives and your homes."*¹ The Jews were under assault from enemies who hated them and what they were doing in rebuilding their city. In a similar way, Christians are being persecuted physically, spiritually, and culturally today. We must stand our ground for what is right and defend our families in prayerful and practical ways.

Shammah - One Of David's Mighty Men

1. The Bible tells us that King David had 37 mighty men, who were the best and brightest in the army of Israel.
2. One of these noteworthy men was Shammah, of which little is known outside of a brief mention in the Bible.
 - a. **2 Samuel 23:11b-12** - *"When the Philistines banded together at a place where there was a field full of lentils [beans], Israel's troops fled from them. But Shammah took his stand in the middle of the field. He defended it and struck the Philistines down, and the Lord brought about a great victory."*
3. Shammah didn't conquer a city or slay a giant or rescue a maiden; his single claim to fame was that he defended a bean patch!
4. He stood his ground and defended what was important to him.

¹ **Nehemiah 4:14**

5. Pastor Gary said: “Our main responsibility, simply put, is [for each of us] to defend our bean patch. We [need to] take a stand for what is important and defend those things that are worth dying for. Your bean patch, if you will, is your family. It’s your family. It’s your faith. It’s your life. [There] are some things that are valuable enough, that are worth dying for, where you take your stand, and you say, ‘I’m not going to give up this ground. This is important, this is vital, and I’m willing to die defending it.’ ”

Nehemiah And The Enemies Of God

6. [Nehemiah 4:14](#) - “... *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.*”
7. Nehemiah didn't encourage the people to defend the city, which was obviously very important; he encouraged them to fight for their families.
8. The “trash-talking” enemies of God were Sanballat and Tobiah.
 - a. Sanballat was a Horonite, who was the governor of Samaria, which was north of Jerusalem in what is modern-day Syria.
 - b. Tobiah was an Ammonite, which was the nation east of Jerusalem, in what is modern-day Jordan.
9. [Nehemiah 4:1-3](#) - “*When Sanballat heard that we were rebuilding the wall, he became very angry and was greatly incensed. He ridiculed the Jews, and in the presence of his associates and the army of Samaria, he said, ‘What are those feeble Jews doing? Will they restore their wall? Will they offer sacrifices? Will they finish in a day? Can they bring stones back to life from those heaps of rubble - burned as they are?’ Tobiah the Ammonite, who was at his side, said, ‘What they are building - if even a fox climbed up on it, he would break down their wall of stones!’ ”*
10. The enemies of God were very angry with the Jews, and their anger was more than just idle chatter and the Jews knew it!
11. The war of words moved to a war of weapons.
12. [Nehemiah 4:6-9](#) - “*So we rebuilt the wall till all of it reached half its height, for the people worked with all their heart. But when Sanballat, Tobiah, the Arabs, the Ammonites and the men of Ashdod heard that the repairs to Jerusalem’s walls had gone ahead and that the gaps were being closed, they were very*

angry. They all plotted together to come and fight against Jerusalem and stir up trouble against it. **But we prayed to our God** and posted a guard day and night to meet this threat.” (Emphasis added)

13. Nehemiah’s response to their verbal assaults and the threat of military action was to pray!
 - a. **Nehemiah 4:4-5** - “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. 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.”
 - b. There are a number of psalms David wrote which have a “go get ‘em, God” theme.
14. The greatest weapon against attacks from our enemies is prayer, and we should never underestimate the power of prayer!
15. “We tend to use prayer as a last resort, but God wants it to be our first line of defense. We pray when there’s nothing else we can do, but God wants us to pray before we do anything at all. Most of us would prefer, however, to spend our time doing something that will get immediate results. We don’t want to wait for God to resolve matters in His good time because His idea of a ‘good time’ is seldom in sync with ours.” - Oswald Chambers ²

Prayerful And Practical

16. They prayed, but they also posted a “guard day and night.”
17. **Nehemiah 4:11-13** - “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.’ Then the Jews who lived near them came and told us ten times over, ‘Wherever you turn, they will attack us.’ 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.”
18. Prayer and weapons of defense are appropriate responses!
19. Meekness is not weakness, and peace is not always passive.

² <http://www.goodreads.com/quotes/166479-we-tend-to-use-prayer-as-a-last-resort-but>

20. **Nehemiah 4:14** - *“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.”*
21. **Nehemiah 4:15-18** - *“When our enemies heard that we were aware of their plot and that God had frustrated it, we all returned to the wall, each to his own work. 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 who were building the wall. Those who carried materials did their work with one hand and held a weapon in the other, and each of the builders wore his sword at his side as he worked. But the man who sounded the trumpet stayed with me.”*
22. Jesus told his followers to take up a sword.
- Luke 22:36** - *“He said to them, ‘But now if you have a purse, take it, and also a bag; and if you don’t have a sword, sell your cloak and buy one.’”*
 - Luke 22:38** - *“The disciples said, ‘See, Lord, here are two swords.’ ‘That is enough,’ he replied.”*
 - Jesus wasn’t recruiting an army, since there were just two swords among the twelve of them, he was telling them to be prepared to defend themselves.³
23. Pastor Gary said he believes **Nehemiah 4** and **Luke 22** are the Scriptural basis for Christians to defend themselves.⁴

Defend Your “Bean Patch”

24. We must fight to defend our families in prayerful and practical ways.
25. Christians and Christian families are under attack physically, spiritually, and culturally.
26. Christians around the world are suffering from physical persecution.
- Pastor Gary shared several recent examples, including:
 - An Islamic terrorist blew himself up and killed 72 people at an Easter Sunday gathering of Christians in Pakistan.

³ Judas had left and was no longer with Jesus and the other eleven disciples.

⁴ Use this link to download the Q&A services (2016 - January 2nd and January 3rd) are posted in the Teaching Library. http://cornerstonechapel.net/?page_id=21

- ii. Islamic terrorists in Yemen invaded a retirement home for the elderly, killing four nuns and kidnapping a Catholic priest, threatening to crucify him on Good Friday.⁵
- iii. Islamic terrorists killed four Bible translators working undercover for Wycliffe Bible Translators, after their office was located.
- iv. There have been a number of other incidents that have taken place in Syria, Iraq, North Korea, and other places.
- v. According to Open Doors Ministry, around the world, 322 Christians are killed for their faith in Jesus Christ; 214 churches and Christian properties are destroyed; and 772 forms of violence are committed against Christians, such as beatings, abductions, rapes, arrests, and forced marriages.⁶

27. Christians are under spiritual attack today, and Pastor Gary devoted to an entire message on spiritual warfare on March 5-6, 2016.⁷

28. Christians are under attack from our culture.

- a. Some of the areas Christians are dealing with today are so-called same-sex marriage, transgender issues, legalizing marijuana, abortion, school shootings, and the like.
- b. Pastor Gary encouraged us to have compassion for people who are dealing with gender identity issues.
- c. Pastor Gary said, "Unfortunately, common sense has been hijacked by political correctness."

Discussion Questions

1. Review the introduction to the study guide with your group to provide the appropriate background.
2. Read [Nehemiah 4:1-9](#) to provide the foundation for this study.
3. What has been your first line of defense from physical, spiritual, and cultural attack?
4. How has the Lord ministered to you when you, like Nehemiah, poured out your raw emotions to him?

⁵ It is not know whether or not they carried out their threat, because no one has seen or heard from the priest since he was kidnapped.

⁶ <https://www.opendoorsusa.org/christian-persecution/>

⁷ Use this link to download Pastor Gary's message on spiritual warfare from the Teaching Library. http://cornerstonechapel.net/?page_id=21

5. Are you both a prayerful and practical person?
6. What are some of the ways you are defending your “bean patch” and your family?
7. How has the Lord given you victory and answered prayer concerning physical, spiritual, and cultural attacks?
8. Close your time in prayer as the Holy Spirit leads.

* Unless noted, all Scriptures quoted are from the New International Version (NIV 1984).