

Nehemiah 4:1-23 - Teddy Tash

Disclaimer: this is an automatically generated machine transcription - there may be small errors or mistranscriptions. Please refer to the original audio if you are in any doubt.

Date: 06 January 2019

Preacher: Ted Tash

[0:00] We welcome you to the media ministry of Bethel Community Church. Knowing Jesus, making Jesus known. Alright, good morning.

New year, new Bethel, I like it. As with any change, there will be some kinks to work out, that's for sure. If I'm playing music that Sunday, I'll need to get here a little bit earlier than normal. I don't want to walk in late and have to walk up here and tune my guitar in front of all you guys. So, a couple good changes, a couple on the fence changes, we'll see. But no, I think it's good. I think any organization, whether it's a church, a business, anything, if you're not willing to change and adapt, you can set yourself up for some failure and some heartache. So I think it's good to be willing to change and we'll see how it goes. So, under the old format, I could finish a little early.

[0:58] We'd just have a little longer break in a bread, we'd still get out right about noon. Under this format, if I finish early, we get to go home early. So we'll try and speed things up here. No, I'm kidding. Of course, I'm kidding.

But it is a little bit of a change. Today we're getting back into Nehemiah. Nehemiah, the last message we had on Nehemiah was chapter 3.

That came from Jeffrey. He tackled the tough chapter, Nehemiah 3. Lots of names in Nehemiah chapter 3. And I thought he did a real good job of that. He kind of related the work on the wall to the church.

We're going to do some of that again today. But he talked about how there's a whole bunch of people. And they all had some different roles on the wall.

And they came from all kinds of different backgrounds. But together they work towards a common purpose. And so we'll talk about that some more today. But then we had a two-week break. We had Christmas and then we had New Year's. And here we are, first Sunday of the new year.

[2:00] Kind of back to the routine, back to Nehemiah. So Nehemiah chapter 4 is a real good chapter. There's a lot of really, really good stuff in here. It's pretty short compared to the rest of the book.

It's only 23 verses. And so we'll break it into five or six sections. And just point out a few things along the way. And then we do close with a song now.

Is that right? Okay. So there will be a song after. But let's pray real quick and then we can get into it. Okay. So Father God, just thank you for the day. Thank you just for the saints here at Bethel.

Thanks that we have a new format to experiment with.

And Father, I pray that you're pleased with all of it. And Lord, we ultimately want to do it so that we can glorify you best. And Father, also to perhaps grow in number.

And so Lord, we just ask a blessing on your word as it goes forth. We pray this in his name. Amen. All right. So chapter four, just to kind of get up to speed as far as where we're at in the timeline.

[3:04] The Jews have been in captivity. This is in Babylon. This is where like the book of Daniel would have taken place with Shadrach, Meshach, Abednego, Daniel, Lion's Den.

And then you had Ezra that came back to Jerusalem and started rebuilding the temple. And then now Nehemiah, who was the cupbearer to the king, he said, hey, king, can I go down and rebuild the wall?

The king said, that's fine. And so Nehemiah and some other guys come back and they are rebuilding the wall around Jerusalem. And this isn't like a little retaining wall. This is a very, very, very big, very big wall, fortifying wall, kind of protects the city, gives the city its boundary.

And so that's where we're at. In chapter two, when Nehemiah first heads down to Jerusalem, he runs into a couple of guys that cause some trouble. Their names are Sambalat and Tobiah. And we're going to see them again pretty prominently in this chapter. But those two guys were really just opposition. They were opposed to Nehemiah.

[4:07] They were opposed to the wall getting built. And again, we're going to see that those guys creep up again here. So that's kind of where we're at. Nehemiah is there. There's some guys that are resisting him.

And the work has started. So here we go. Chapter four, verse one. It says that it so happened when Sambalat heard that we were rebuilding the wall, that he was furious, very indignant, and mocked the Jews.

And he spoke before his brethren in the army of Samaria and said, what are these feeble Jews doing? Will they fortify themselves? Will they offer sacrifices? Will they complete it in a day? Will they revive stones from the heaps of rubbish?

Stones that are burned? And Tobiah the Ammonite was beside him and said, whatever they build, even if a fox goes up on it, he will break down their wall. So these guys are poking fun of him. They're asking these rhetorical questions. What are these Jews doing? Are they going to build a wall? Are they going to offer sacrifices again? I like Tobias. I like Tobias. He said, you know, if a fox runs up there, he's going to knock the thing down. I like that.

[5:08] It's a good dig. You know, the idea is that, man, if the wind blows, it's going to knock this thing right over. And so there's this opposition kind of by ridicule, verbal ridicule. Now, I don't know how you guys would respond to that.

I know how I would respond to that. Maybe when you get made fun of or somebody's poking fun of a project you're working on, maybe you lash out at them. Maybe, you know, you fight fire with fire. I'm a very passive-aggressive approach to that thing. There's a phrase, don't get mad, but never forget. And I subscribe to that.

So I don't know how you would respond to that, but I know how Nehemiah does. And he goes right to the Lord. He takes it right to the Lord in prayer. I think that's one of the things that makes Nehemiah a great leader.

He does that a couple times throughout this chapter. We're going to see that. But he goes right to the Lord in prayer. And verses 4 and 5 are what is described by modern commentators as what's called an imprecatory prayer.

[6:07] And that type of prayer is one where the person who's giving the prayer is praying for harm to be done to someone. They're praying for the Lord to execute judgment upon someone.

And so when you read it kind of through the modern-day lens and kind of through, you know, our New Testament lens, if you will, of grace, this seems a little harsh.

But look at what he says, verses 4 and 5. It says, Hear, O our God, for we are despised. Turn their reproach on their own heads and give them as plunder to a land of captivity. Nehemiah is not messing around.

Verse 5 says this. Do not cover their iniquity and do not let their sin be blotted out from before you. For they have provoked you to anger before the builders. I mean, those are some big words. Don't let their sin be blotted out. What's important to realize here is that Nehemiah is not sinning by this prayer. He's not doing any wrong. He's simply turning to the Lord and asking the Lord to vindicate himself, for the Lord to be the one to execute judgment or to execute justice against these sins.

[7:19] And there's nothing wrong with that at all. It might seem, like I said, a little harsh to us. But the most important point is that he is letting the Lord be the avenger here. If you turn just real quick to Romans chapter 12, you'll see that this is the correct thing to do.

And I think for us as believers, when we are wronged, whether it's by unbelievers or believers, the appropriate way to handle that conflict is to do just that.

Turn it over to the Lord. Let him be the one to execute judgment for you. That's not something that we're to do in our own hands. And so Romans 12, we're going to read a couple of verses here, but we'll start in verse 17.

It says, Repay no one evil for evil. Have regard for good things in the sight of all men. If it's possible, as much as it depends on you, live peaceably or live at peace with all men.

Beloved, do not avenge yourselves, but rather give place to wrath, for it is written, Vengeance is mine, I will repay, says the Lord. Therefore, and he quotes the Proverbs here, if your enemy is hungry, feed him.

[8:30] If he's thirsty, give him a drink, for in doing so, you will heap coals of fire on his head. So repay no one evil for evil. Live at peace with all men. And so Nehemiah does that.

He turns this over to the Lord, says, hey, we're going to keep working on the wall, and he lets the Lord be the avenger here. He lets the Lord vindicate himself. I got a good story I want to tell about this kind of Romans passage here.

A couple of years ago, it's been actually a lot of years ago, at Turkey Hill. It was a teen camp, and I had kind of like the cool cabin of teen camp.

I was not cool. My campers were cool. And for anybody that's ever been to any kind of like teenage-centered camp, you know what I mean when I say the cool cabin. You've got five to six guys.

They're all good looking. All the girls have a crush on them. They can all like play guitar somehow. And like they, that's the cool cabin. And so like middle of the week, we go in, our cabin is just destroyed.

[9:28] I mean, our stuff is everywhere. There's like shaving cream in our beds, like all over our stuff. First week of camp, you know, if that happens like the very first week when you're not sick, when you're not tired, when you're not already frustrated with some other stuff, it's fine.

No big deal. Ha ha, it's a prank. By the time it's like the fifth or sixth week of camp, which it was, it's kind of, you're thinking of places where you could like hide their bodies. I mean, that's kind of what it comes to seriously. And so I'm mad, which is not good because then that rubs off on the campers. They're mad. And instantly, what do they want? They want justice. Hey, let's get them back. And so they were formulating a plot. I don't really know the details of it, but I could tell that there was things that were brewing, simmering, not good.

And so the director of the camp that week was Joe Hawkinson, who then was kind of a friend. Now he's a best friend. And for those of you that were at our wedding, he did our wedding. Really solid dude.

And so we took all the, and actually, incidentally, he had had that same group of guys the year prior. And so they all kind of knew him as well. So we all sat down together and said, Joe, you know, here's the situation.

[10:33] What should we do? And so he said, what do you guys think we should do? And they said, well, we should take their cabin and tear it up. We should throw their clothes in the lake. We should do all this stuff. And so he took us to this passage, he said, repay no one evil for evil.

Live at peace with all men. Do not avenge yourselves. Rather give place to wrath. Vengeance is mine. I'll repay. And so he said, what do you think we should do? And they didn't really have any good ideas. And so he took us to this last verse, verse 20.

And it says, if your enemy's hungry, feed him. If he's thirsty, give him a drink. And in doing so, you'll heap coals of fire on his head. And kind of the point of that is, kill him with kindness. If you respond in a loving way, in a kind way, to somebody that has wronged you, that does heap coals of fire on their head.

I mean, that, you will kill him with kindness. And so we came up with a plan. And what we did, just literally this. He had the cooks make a batch of cookies and a thing of lemonade. And he had the girls come clean our cabin, kind of put our stuff up, clean all the shaving cream off.

And while they did that, we gave them cookies and lemonade and served it to them. And it was good. We made peace that way. So I just wanted to share that little story with you. But back to Nehemiah. The next passage here, verses six through nine, we'll see that the construction continues and that the opposition continues as well.

[11:51] So verse six says, so we built the wall and the entire wall was joined together up to half its height for the people had a mind to work. Now it happened when Sambhala, Tobiah, the Arabs, the Ammonites, and Astrodites heard that the walls of Jerusalem were being restored and the gaps were beginning to be closed, that they became very angry and all of them conspired together to come and attack Jerusalem and create confusion.

And again, Nehemiah, nevertheless, we made our prayer to our God and because of them, we set a watch against them day and night. So two things from this passage.

First, again, Nehemiah goes right to the Lord. They're conspiring now to actually attack. The opposition is going from just a verbal ridicule to actual physical violence here.

And again, Nehemiah just takes it straight to the Lord in prayer, which I think is great. But the other part that I want to look at is there's a really cool play on words here. Verse six, it says that the Jews had joined together, that the wall was getting joined together.

And then verse eight, talking about the opposition, it says that all of them conspired together. Some of your versions might say plotted together. Same word in six and in eight.

[13:08] So you have the good guys and the wall is joining together, coming together. And you've got the bad guys, opposition. They're joining together, coming together. And it's kind of just ramping up.

And you can see, you know, good and evil, the Lord's people and the enemy, both are coming together. And it's kind of this build that's going on. And in verse 10, as the Israelites normally do when the going gets tough, they give up.

It says, Judah said, the strength of the laborers is failing. And there's so much rubbish that we are not able to build the wall. The laborers are failing.

There's so much, we're not able to build the wall. They give up. And verse 11 says, our adversaries say they will neither know nor see anything till we come into their midst and kill them and cause the work to cease.

And so it seems at this part of the passage, like the adversaries kind of got the upper hand. The laborers are failing, just like they have kind of their whole Jewish history.

[14:13] You know, you start with Adam and he sinned in the garden. Noah built an ark, saved mankind, but then got drunk and cursed his kid. Lot was rescued out of Sodom and got drunk and slept with his daughters.

You go on down the list, David with Bathsheba and Uriah, all the way to here. They're doing well. They're getting the wall built. And as soon as there's a little opposition, man, we're not able to build it.

So it seems like the adversaries have the upper hand. And this is probably my favorite verse coming up here, verse 13 and 14. This is Nehemiah.

He says, Therefore I positioned men behind the lower parts of the wall at the openings, and I set people according to their families with their swords, their spears, and their bows. And I looked and arose and said to the nobles, the leaders, and the rest of the people, Do not be afraid of them.

Remember the Lord, great and awesome, and fight for your brethren, your sons, your daughters, your wives, and your houses. Isn't that great? Fight for your brethren, your sons, daughters, wives, houses.

[15:15] I've never seen the movie Braveheart, but I'm familiar with it. And I just imagine Nehemiah wearing a kilt, you know, and he's got the face paint on and saying, don't be afraid, remember the Lord. Let's get out there and let's fight.

it's kind of at this point in the passage that I'd like to start likening this wall project to the church. I think it lends itself well to that application. And what I mean by that is the Jews here, they have the common goal of getting the wall built, restoring temple sacrifice, getting back to the Jewish system. And as a church, obviously we have common goals. You know, our goals here is to know Jesus, make Jesus known. Turkey Hill, some other places would say souls saved, souls disciplined, souls sent out.

Do I need to do anything with that, Brad? Or just let it... Okay. Sorry. And so as believers, as a church, we have common goals that we're working towards and there's always going to be

opposition to that.

[16:23] We know that the devil is our adversary and that he's alive and active and looking for those he can devour. And so there's going to be opposition. Thankfully, in this country, it's not so much physical violence as in other parts of the world.

thankfully here, it's more just verbal attacks, social policy.

You know, in this country, we have a lot of legislators that are against the Christian purpose, the Christian thought, the church's thought, not so much of physical violence.

But the idea is, are we going to stand and fight? Or are we just going to be passive about it?

Nehemiah says, hey, remember your brethren. Remember your families. Let's fight.

It reminds me, this is going to be two weeks in a row that I give a shameless plug for Power of the Heart by John Eldridge. But this book is about kind of masculinity, recapturing the masculine soul.

[17:37] And he talks about how in our culture, there's just not a willingness to fight for anything anymore. If you disagree with me, that's fine. You do your thing and I'm going to do my thing even if my thing's right and you're wrong.

I'm not going to, I don't want to stir the pot. I don't want to cause a scene. And that's not right. That's not how the Lord designed us. So I just wanted to read a quick passage from this.

Just talking about standing and fighting. As a church, that's something that we need to do. And this is what this book has to say a little bit about masculinity. It says, Christianity, as it currently exists, has done damage to masculinity.

When all is said and done, I think most men in the church believe that God put them on the earth to be a good boy. The problem with men, we are told, is that they don't know how to keep their promises, be spiritual leaders, talk to their wives, or raise their children.

But if they try real hard, they can reach the lofty summit of becoming a nice guy. That's what we hold up as models of Christian maturity. Really nice guys. Really now, do I overstate my case?

[18:39] Walk into most churches in America, have a look around, and ask yourself this question. What is a Christian man? Don't listen to what is said. Look at what you find. There's no doubt about it.

You'd have to admit that a Christian man is bored. I think that's a good passage to remind you of this just because you see it, that there's a lot of just passive Christians, myself included, and it is a fight.

And if you're not fighting against the enemy, then the enemy's taking ground. So I like this here.

When the going gets tough and the Jews are saying, hey, let's just give up, you know, these walls are only halfway built.

Tobiah was right. If a fox ran up there, it'd probably knock the thing down anyway. Nehemiah says, no, stand your ground. Remember the Lord great and awesome. The next passage here also reminds me of the church.

This is 15 through 20. It says, and it happened when our enemies heard that it was known to us and that God had brought their plot to nothing, that all of us returned to the wall, everyone to his work.

[19:44] So it was from that time on, half my servants worked at construction while the other half held the spears, the shields, the bows and wore armor. And the leaders were behind all the house of Judah.

Those who built on the wall and those who carried burdens loaded themselves so that with one hand they worked at construction and with the other held a weapon. Every one of the builders had his sword girded at his side as he built.

I'd stop here and say that this is where the Lord is for concealed carry, but I don't conceal carry.

And the one who sounded the trumpet was beside me. Verse 19, Then I said to the nobles, the rulers, and the rest of the people, the work is great and extensive and we're separated far from one another on the wall.

Wherever you hear the sound of the trumpet, rally to us there and our God will fight for us. This passage, these five verses here, six verses, I think are really neat.

Again, it touches on what Jeffrey touched on in his message that there's a variety of ways to help the construction. We see here that half the people were playing security and half the people were building.

[20:55] It said that half of them had shields, half of them had bows and spears, and the other half had the construction tools. And the reason that reminds me of the church is that there was different roles but common goals.

And so there's different ways of getting the work done, but the ultimate idea was to get the work done, was to build the wall. Just for time's sake, we won't look too in-depth at it, but as believers, we have a variety of gifts.

The Lord gives each of us a spiritual gift. And there's kind of four points I want to make about spiritual gifts, and they come from Corinthians 12, Romans 12, and Ephesians 4. But the first point is that if you're a believer, you have a spiritual gift.

Every single believer has one. It's something that when you're saved, the Holy Spirit comes and dwells in you, and the Lord himself gives you a spiritual gift.

So that's the first point. If you're a believer, you have a spiritual gift. The second point is that the gift is God-given. Again, the Lord is the one that gives it to you. The third thing is that there's a wide variety of roles.

[22:04] The Scripture says that there's a variety or it's a diversity of gifts. It's one spirit who gives it, but there's many different types. And so, for instance, your gift might be teaching, your gift might be discipling, hospitality.

There's a great long list of them, specifically in Corinthians 12, but Romans 12 and Ephesians 4 have some lists as well. But my challenge to you would be if you don't know what your spiritual gift is, take a month or so.

You know, we're right at the beginning of the new year, time to make resolutions, maybe make a little change in your life. Find out what it is because you have one. If you're a Christian, you have one. The Lord gave it to you, so it's important.

So find out what it is. Maybe go read through those lists, pray over it for a month or so. I know one thing when I was younger that helped was asking maybe somebody that was a close friend, hey, what do you think my spiritual gift is?

Or asking an older person that knew me well, what do you think my spiritual gift is? And a lot of times someone else will have some good insight for you. Maybe something that you didn't even realize you were capable of or something that you were good at.

[23:12] You know, something you didn't perceive yourself as good at. Somebody else might see that. So take the next month or so and figure that out if you don't know what it is. And if you do know what it is, use it. That'd be the challenge I'd have.

So there's, everyone has a gift. The gift is given to them by the Lord. And there's a wide variety of gifts. There's an example that Paul gives of the human body.

He says that we're all a body, the body of Christ, and each member of the body has a different function, but every function is important. You know, he gives the example of an eye.

He says if we were all an eye, that wouldn't be too good. There'd be no sense of smell, no sense of taste, no sense of hearing. We could see really good, but we couldn't do anything else.

He says the parts that seem like they're unnecessary are some of the most important ones. And so if you get into it and you start looking at your gift and you think, well, that's not a real cool one or a real important one.

[24:11] He says, no, those are the ones we need to put more honor on. Those are the most important ones. Wide variety. You know, if you think of a task like cooking a steak or something like that, let's use that in his example.

You have to have a refrigerator which keeps it cold, preserves it. And you have to have a stove or a heat source of some kind to heat it up. They have totally opposite functions, but both of them will keep you from getting sick, right?

I mean, one has to keep it from spoiling. One has to cook it hot enough so that it's not dangerous anymore. Totally opposite roles, but the common goal of getting a meal out of it.

The last part of that, the fourth point, is that if you're not using your gift, you're hurting the body of Christ. The purpose of the gifts, and this is right out of Corinthians 12, 7, it says that the purpose of

the gift is for the profit of all.

And he's talking about the body of Christ, talking about the church. The purpose of your gift is to profit everyone else. Ephesians 4, verses 11 and 15.

[25:17] Steve St. Clair, a couple years ago, had this on his Christmas card. And I think it's just because he's at the school there and he's a teacher there. But this is kind of paraphrasing, and this is Steve's paraphrase.

It says that he himself, speaking of Christ, he himself gave some in the body to be apostles, teachers, and pastors, so that the body would grow in all things into him who is the head, that is Christ.

So he gave some to be apostles, teachers, pastors, so that the body would grow. That's the purpose of a spiritual gift. That's the reason that he gives one to each one of us, is for the growth of all.

And the implication of that is that if everyone's not using their gift, that's harming everyone else's growth. So if I don't use my gift, that harms you guys. If you're not using yours, it harms everyone else.

And so as a body, if that's our goal, is to know Jesus, make him known, we need to know and we need to use our gifts. Same thing here in Nehemiah.

[26:20] If the workers were just working without the security force there, the enemy could have come and attacked them and the wall wouldn't have gotten built. And if everybody was standing around with a sword, the wall would have never gotten built because there would have been no one working.

So a wide variety of gifts, different roles for common goals. Verse 18, I do want to go back.

I do want to go back to verse 18 real quick.

It says that everybody had a sword at their side. So it seems like there were some that were servants specifically for security, specifically for kind of a defense, a guard. But it sounds like everybody had a weapon on them just in case.

And it said that if there would be an attack, they'd blow the trumpet and everybody would come together and fight together. But everybody was armed. And it's important to note that this was a physical weapon, a physical sword against a physical threat.

[27:31] But we know in today's world, our fight is not against flesh and blood, right? It's not against Sambalat or Sambalat and Tobiah. It's against evil forces, right?

That's what Paul tells us. And so for us to fight and for us to be ready to be on defense, we need a spiritual sword. We don't need a physical sword.

That's why I make the joke about concealed carry. He is for concealed carry as long as it's a spiritual weapon, right? And so the sword that we have is the word of God. It comes right out of the armor of God in Ephesians 6.

That's the sword of the spirit, the word of God. 1 Timothy 4, verse 2 says, to preach the word, be ready in season and out of season.

You never know when the enemy is going to attack. And more than likely, it's going to be when you're not ready. And so you need to be ready at all the times, in season and out of season. So how do you carry the sword with you?

[28:29] Well, it's not just having Blue Letter Bible on your phone, although I guess that works. But you need to commit it to memory. You need to be familiar with it. Know where passages are. Know your doctrine.

And the only way to do it is by studying this book. The last three verses here just talks about the work continuing on. In verse 21, it says that, We labored in the work, and half the men held spears from daybreak until the stars appeared.

At the same time, I also said to the people, Let each man and his servants stay at night in Jerusalem, that they may be our guard by night and a working party by day. So neither I, my brethren, my servants, nor the men of the guard who followed me took off our clothes except that everyone took them off for washing.

If your boss came to you and said, Hey, I want you to work from the time the sun comes up until the time the stars go out. And by the way, I want you to stay here at night too, just to stand watch, make sure nobody breaks in. And the only time you can change is if you're going to take a bath.

I think I would put my two weeks in. I think I put it in about two weeks ago, actually, if my boss were to tell me that. But that's what Nehemiah says. He says, Hey, this work is so important.

[29:42] We're going to work from daybreak until the sun goes down, from dawn until dusk. And at night, we're going to stand guard over this and not let the enemy come in and ruin it. And that's what it says they did.

They were committed heavily to the work. They were committed to the fight. I want to share a quick story on that just as the musicians come back up here.

Some of you guys might be familiar with Scott DeGroff and Mike Atwood. They're two, I don't know, kind of assembly, if you will, preachers.

They're both really, really awesome guys. They've had some health problems here, which is unfortunate. But they were on a trip to Africa a couple years ago. And they both will tell this story. And they were in Africa and they were doing these gospel meetings by day and then by night they were preaching in a church that was already established.

They were preaching to believers. So it was evangelism during the day and then preaching to believers at night. Which is, anyone that's ever had to prepare a message, I'm sure that's tough to do, especially if you're overseas in a country where you got jet lag and usually you're pretty sick if you're in another country, especially Africa.

[30:55] You got some kind of tummy issue going on. So it was a fight. And while they were there, they got into it with this local witch doctor, if you will, and he put this curse on them, which for us in America, kind of Western mindset, we think, okay, that's silly, whatever.

But over there, that's a big deal. And it took their sleep from them. They were unable to sleep. And so they're just working like dogs, just doing message after message and meeting after meeting and trying to get the most out of the trip.

And then just no sleep was coming to them. And so they would pray together at night. And when they would pray, they'd feel this sense of peace. And then when they would stop, they would feel just this anxiety and this attack almost on them.

And so they realized they were in the midst of spiritual warfare. And so what they decided to do, and I don't know who decided to do it, but they said, well, one of us will take a shift, a guard shift, and stay up and pray while the other one tries to sleep.

And they tried it, and instantly, the guy was able to fall asleep. And so they'd pray for an hour or two, and then wake the guy up, and he would start praying, and the other guy could sleep. If they both tried to sleep, they couldn't do it.

[32:04] But if one was praying and the other was sleeping, it worked. And so that's what they did for the rest of the trip. I think that's an awesome, just modern-day example of the Lord still working and just Christian men standing up and fighting for one another and just for the purpose of the gospel.

So we're back in Nehemiah 4. We'll see that just because Nehemiah has gotten rid of the opposition, the external opposition, the battle's not won yet.

You see the Jews start to fight with each other a little bit. In chapter 5, they do that a lot, but we'll leave that for next week. So Father God, thank you for the day. Thank you for your word.

Thank you for examples of leadership like Nehemiah. God, that when he was in trouble, he cried out to you repeatedly. And God, when a fight was on his hands, that he stood his ground and fought back.

Lord, we thank you that he was willing to work all day long and all night long, Lord, focused on your purpose and your goals. And so we pray that we would do the same.

[33:10] Father, I pray for Bethel here that we would recognize our gifts and use them. And Lord, that you would give us grace to do the same. Father, we would just ask all this in Jesus' name.

And hulk%. All right. Lord, that was in focus and there is a place to be here. Amen. Amen. Amen.