

# DEFEATING DISCOURAGEMENT!

Nehemiah 4:1-11

ILLUSTRATION: When Nehemiah and the people of Judah were half way completed with the rebuilding of the walls of Jerusalem discouragement set in: Nehemiah 4:10. As we look today at Nehemiah chapter four we will see three things the Holy Spirit would have us learn: 1. Discouragement is a reality of all of our lives. 2. There are discernable reasons for our discouragement. 3. We will learn to seek the Lord for the remedy for our discouragement and our hope for the future.

## I. DISCOURAGEMENT IS A REALITY IN ALL OUR LIVES!

Do you know that our God has specific tasks for each of his children to accomplish? Ephesians 2:8-10. Discouragement is a huge curse on the lives of God's children throughout the generations. In the book of Nehemiah the children of Judah became so discouraged they cried out "We're not able to finish the wall!" Discouragement brings us to the point of despair that we think victory is not possible for us. When that happens the devil has us right where he wants us. Judah was the strongest tribe of the children of Israel: Genesis 49:10. We all can become discouraged if we don't apply the spiritual principles we find in God's Word to keep us trusting our Lord to do exactly what He said He would do! YAC: "yards after contact" measures the yards a running back gains after an opposing player has made contact. Most of the great runners make more yards after contact than they do before contact. They score most of their touchdowns after initial contact also. We must learn this principle, after discouragement sets in we must keep going forward for our Lord! Regardless of what we are trying to accomplish for our Lord be sure to know we will become discouraged. We must learn not to give up but to look up!

## II. THERE ARE DISCERNABLE REASONS FOR OUR DISCOURAGEMENT!

There are always discernable reasons for our discouragement. We find the reasons for Judah's discouragement in Nehemiah 4:10-11. That discouragement came to the children of Judah for four reasons: 1.) Fatigue! The number one reason for discouragement was simple fatigue. When we are physically, emotionally and spiritually depleted it is easy to get discouraged. Even God's prophets can get fatigued: 1 Kings 19:3-4. Even Moses asked the Lord to take his life: Numbers 11:14-15. We need to remember that when we get totally discouraged it is not more of our strength we need but we need the strength of the Lord! There are times when we simply need to rest: Exodus 20:8-11. 2.) Frustration is the second reason the children of Judah were discouraged: Nehemiah 4:10. Rubble in our lives can keep us from accomplishing our goals as well: Luke 10:38-42. We can get so busy doing good things that we cannot do what is most important! 3.) Failure was the third reason the children of Judah wanted to give up. Our failure is often the very stuff our Lord uses to help us succeed. You are never a failure until you quit! 4.) Fear was the fourth reason for their discouragement. Nehemiah 4:11-12; Romans 8:31; Psalm 56:3-4.

## III. TURN TO THE LORD AS THE REMEDY FOR OUR DISCOURAGEMENT AND HOPE FOR OUR FUTURE!

Nehemiah turned to the Lord and found God's remedy for Judah's discouragement! Nehemiah equipped his people: Nehemiah 4:13. We need to put on the whole armour of God to defeat Satan's discouraging tactics. Ephesians 6:10-18. Nehemiah encouraged the people: Nehemiah 4:14. We need to keep our eyes on the Lord not on our enemies' power: Malachi 3:6; Hebrews 13:8. Many things are too hard for us to accomplish but not for our God: Jeremiah 32:27. We need to remember the promises of our God: 2 Peter 1:3-4. Our Lord had great plans for Judah and He has great plans for us: Jeremiah 29:11-13. Nehemiah exhorted his people: Nehemiah 4:14.

Their goal was not just to build walls but to build that next generation. He said: "We are in a fight for everything we hold dear! We are in that same battle today in our nation for the future of our children. This is not the time to give up but to push on for Christ's glory and our families good. Nehemiah engaged his people: Nehemiah 4:15-17. Nehemiah energized his people: Nehemiah 4:19-20. We do not fight for the Lord alone; we are part of a body; the Church and we stand strong as we stand together. Nehemiah re-enlisted his people: Nehemiah 4:21-23; Isaiah 40:31.