

Recap of 12/2/18 (Nehemiah 2:10-18):

1. Nehemiah met immediate and significant opposition from those in power in Judea and its surrounding areas. Three are mentioned in chapter two: Sanballat the Horonite, governor of Samaria to the North; Tobiah the Ammonite, possible governor of Ammon, to the East; and Geshom the Arab, to the southeast. Their political power was threatened by Nehemiah's arrival and they did not want to see the Israelites succeed. So they did all they could to thwart them. Sanballat is mentioned in the Elephantine Papyrus; a 407 B.C. document discovered in 1903 and evidence from archaeology mentions Tobiah's family as being prominent in Ammon.
2. Nehemiah is undaunted by the opposition and he carries out his purpose in going to Jerusalem; the restoration of the city's prominence and the rebuilding of the wall. He surveys the wall at night so as not to arouse suspicion and to see for himself what needed to be done. Secrecy was needed because some of the Jews had joined with Tobiah (6:17-19).
3. His survey of the extent of the work to be done completed, he formulates a plan and reveals it to the Jews. He first recounts their disgraceful situation, then shares with them his testimony to God's hand upon his mission. They needed someone to remind them of God's purpose and His involvement in their lives. He kept the focus on God, not on his talents, abilities or plan. The key to impossible tasks and situations in our own lives is to keep our eyes upon God.
4. -"Lord, admitting my accomplishments are Your gift is a bittersweet thing to do. It stings at first because it humbles. But then it is so very sweet and brings such peace." (Timothy and Kathy Keller)
5. When you make a decision to do something for God—expect opposition in your life, but also expect God's power to endure or to overcome.