

尼希米記 4:1-23

修城的艱難

A. 他們面臨的危險

1. 外患 (1-3,7-8,11)

1 參巴拉聽見我們修造城牆就發怒、大大惱恨、嗤笑猶大人，
2 對他弟兄和撒瑪利亞的軍兵說、這些軟弱的猶大人作甚麼呢，要保護自己麼，要獻祭麼，要一日成功麼，要從土堆裡拿出火燒的石頭再立牆麼。
3 亞捫人多比雅站在旁邊、說、他們所修造的石牆、就是狐狸上去也必跣倒。
7 參巴拉、多比雅、亞拉伯人、亞捫人、亞實突人、聽見修造耶路撒冷城牆、著手進行、堵塞破裂的地方、就甚發怒，
8 大家同謀要來攻擊耶路撒冷、使城內擾亂。
11 我們的敵人且說、趁他們不知、不見、我們進入他們中間、殺他們、使工作止住。

1,7「發怒、大大惱恨、甚發怒」

參巴拉似乎對猶太人的憎惡已經到了一個入骨的地步。他為什麼會「發怒、大大惱恨」（7甚發怒）？照理說他和大祭司還有親家的關係（13:28），應該對猶太人有幾分感情才對，不料卻是如此的敵對。也許只能說是被魔鬼完全掌控了吧。（魔鬼最恨人歸向神，脫離他的掌握。）

2「軟弱的猶大人作甚麼呢？保護自己麼？獻祭麼？一日成功麼？再立牆麼？」

參巴拉用五個反問句來譏笑猶太人，認為他們根本是在執行一件不可能的任務。

3「就是狐狸上去也必跣倒」

多比雅藐視猶太人所修造的石牆連狐狸跳上去都承受不起。這些敵人的譏笑和藐視實在到了極點。很多時候仇敵對教會的譏諷也是如此。（教會裡面都是弱者，失敗的人，或是沒有知識的村夫愚婦）

8「攻擊 fight against，擾亂 stir up」

攻擊是從外面發動，擾亂卻是从內部引起，也許是要散佈謠言。今天魔鬼對教會的攻擊也是如此，特別是從內部分化擾亂信徒，引進各樣的異端。

11「不知、不見，殺他們」

這些猶太人的仇敵甚至打算使用暗殺的手段來阻擾修建城牆的工作。這和魔鬼的手段何其相似。彼前 5:8 務要謹守，警醒（就不至於不知、不見）。因為你們的仇敵魔鬼，如同吼叫的獅子，遍地遊行，尋找可吞吃的人。

2. 內憂 (10,12)

10 猶大人說、灰土尚多、扛抬的人力氣已經衰敗、所以我們不能建造城牆。

12 那靠近敵人居住的猶大人、十次從各處來見我們說、你們必要回到我們那裡。

10「灰土 rubble，衰敗 failing」

灰土即碎石瓦礫。他們顯然一邊清理坍塌的城牆，一邊修建，同時還派人看守、晝夜防備（10節）。因此這時有人已經覺得沒有力氣，無法繼續建造下去了。今天也許有人也會覺得服事太多，太忙，太累，就想要退出同工的團隊。魔鬼也常常將消極喪志的想法擺在我們心裡，以至於我們不想再繼續服事。這個時候就更該警惕，如同當時尼希米所做的（13-14節）。

12「十次」

很多次的意思，不見得剛好十次。參創 31:7，民 14:22。

「你們必要回到我們那裡」

本句話有許多不同的翻譯，因為原文意義不明確。有一種翻法是『他們將從各方上來攻擊我們』。他們需要尼希米派人幫助他們，因為仇敵的攻擊實在厲害。今天剛剛信主的基督徒也是一樣，他們的能力、恩賜都不足，需要成熟基督徒的幫助。

B. 尼希米與猶太人的反應

1. 禱告（4-5）

4 我們的神阿、求你垂聽、因為我們被藐視，求你使他們的毀謗歸於他們的頭上、使他們在擄到之地作為掠物，

5 不要遮掩他們的罪孽、不要使他們的罪惡從你面前塗抹，因為他們在修造的人眼前惹動你的怒氣。

4-5『我們的神阿、求你垂聽』

尼希米是一個禱告的人，再一次在此得到驗證。

『被藐視』就是 1-3 節敵人對他們的嗤笑。這裡尼希米向神求四件事臨到敵人身：被毀謗，被擄掠，罪孽不被遮掩，罪惡不被塗抹。原因呢？因為他們惹動神的怒氣。尼希米很確信他們修造城牆乃是神吩咐他們做的，因為一路走來都有神的帶領。現在敵人攔阻他們的工程，又嗤笑他們的作為，已經惹動了神的憤怒。所以尼希米在此求神懲罰他們。我們今天和世界妥協的事情已經太多了，神容忍等待已經好久了，我們對於神的憤怒有所警惕嗎？

2. 專心（6）

6 這樣、我們修造城牆、城牆就都連絡、高至一半、因為百姓專心作工。

6『專心作工 worked with all their heart』

他們將修造城牆看成是最重要的事，所以專心作工。不只是自己埋頭苦幹，同時也注意和鄰居之間的連接。要知道他們是分段同時進行修造的，如果不是時時注意相鄰的段落的話，最後交接的地方一定會出問題。今天很多公路在修建的時候也是分段進行，結果我們看到地面常常有凹凸不平的地方，就是接縫出了問題。今天有高科技的幫助尚且如此，何況是那個時代呢？我們今天做神的工也是如此：不可三心兩意，馬馬虎虎，敷衍了事（至少也得像在公司上班一樣專心）；同時我們的事奉也不是單打獨鬥，乃是要和弟兄姐妹一起配搭，建造神的家，因此『同心合意，專心作工』是我們必須要努力追求的目標。

3. 晝夜儆醒看守 (9,22-23)

9 然而我們禱告我們的神、又因他們的緣故、就派人看守、晝夜防備。

22 那時、我又對百姓說、各人和他的僕人當在耶路撒冷住宿、好在夜間保守我們、白晝作工。

23 這樣、我和弟兄僕人、並跟從我的護兵、都不脫衣服、出去打水也帶兵器。

9 『晝夜防備』

在第 10 節中提到敵人要趁著他們不知、不見的時候來破壞他們。顯然尼希米也知道他們的計謀，所以就派人看守、晝夜防備。正如我們前面所說的，魔鬼也是晝夜不休息，要到處尋找可吞吃的人。我們對他的防備也是一刻都不能鬆懈。

22 『夜間保守我們、白晝作工』

換句話說，他們乃是彼此扶持幫助，並非單打獨鬥。我們教會今年的主題是『團隊事奉』，查考尼希米記實在是太適合不過了。

23 『我和弟兄僕人...都不脫衣服、出去打水也帶兵器』

尼希米自己做了很好的榜樣。他不只是發號施令而已，乃是親自以身作則，晝夜謹守勞苦，才能帶領猶大人完成這個艱難的工作。今天教會裡面的領袖（牧師，長老，傳道，主席，老師等）也應如此，才能真的達到團隊事奉的目標。

4. 佩刀拿槍，專心抵禦 (13-14)

13 所以我使百姓各按宗族、拿刀、拿槍、拿弓站在城牆後邊低窪的空處。

14 我察看了、就起來對貴胄、官長、和其餘的人說、不要怕他們、當記念主是大而可畏的，你們要為弟兄、兒女、妻子、家產爭戰。

13-14 『百姓各按宗族、拿刀、拿槍、拿弓...不要怕他們』

他們不是手無縛雞之力的人。從這裡可以看到他們幾乎是全民皆兵，好像今天的以色列人一樣（遺傳？）我們今天要防備魔鬼的攻擊，但如何防備？我們的刀槍在哪裡？弗 6:17 並戴上救恩的頭盔，拿著聖靈的寶劍，就是神的道。我們的武器就是神的道，神的話語。面對魔鬼攻擊的時候，我們只有靠著神的話才能勝過他，離了神的話我們就什麼也不能做。當年主耶穌就是靠著神的話勝過魔鬼的試探，因此我們今天也是要在神的話上將根基紮好。只有基礎先穩固了，我們作工才會有長遠的果效。

5. 一半建造，一半看守 (15-16,21)

15 仇敵聽見我們知道他們的心意、見神也破壞他們的計謀、就不來了。我們都回到城牆那裡、各作各的工。

16 從那日起、我的僕人一半作工、一半拿槍、拿盾牌、拿弓、穿鎧甲，〔穿或作拿〕官長都站在猶大眾人的後邊。

21 於是我們作工、一半拿兵器、從天亮直到星宿出現的時候。

15 『各作各的工』

每個人都有自己的職責，都各作各的工。今天每一個基督徒也都有自己的恩賜（彼前 4:10 各人要照所得的恩賜彼此服事，作上帝百般恩賜的好管家。），所以也都該各盡其責，建立基督的身體，就是教會。

16,21『一半作工、一半拿槍、拿盾牌、拿弓、穿鎧甲...我們作工、一半拿兵器』有人作工，有人守衛，這是分工合作的一個很好的例子。就像有人在前方打仗，有人在後方守衛家園一樣。我們今天就算什麼都不會，至少可以為教會，為同工，為弟兄姐妹禱告。

6. 一手作工、一手拿兵器（17-18）

17 修造城牆的、扛抬材料的、都一手作工、一手拿兵器。

18 修造的人、都腰間佩刀修造、吹角的人在我旁邊。

17-18『一手作工、一手拿兵器...腰間佩刀』

他們比起一般的修造要加倍的辛苦，因為他們不但身上要額外增加兵器的重量，而且還要時時防備敵人的偷襲。聖經裡面提醒我們要警醒的經節多不勝舉，目的也就要我們隨時準備與魔鬼爭戰。可惜很多時候教會裡面反而是彼此爭戰，自己破壞城牆，使魔鬼不費吹灰之力就進入了教會，進行偷竊，殺害，毀壞的工作。（參約 10:10）

7. 彼此支援（19-20）

19 我對貴胄、官長、和其餘的人說、這工程浩大、我們在城牆上相離甚遠，

20 你們聽見角聲在那裡、就聚集到我們那裡去，我們的神必為我們爭戰。

20『你們聽見角聲在那裡、就聚集到我們那裡去』

他們修造的城牆大約有 700-800 米長，100-400 米寬，但是又沒有手機或傳呼器，因此使用吹角的方式通告眾人。那裡有需要，別處的人就過去幫助。今天教會、團契之間如果有需要的話，彼此也應該扶持幫助。我們如果能夠如此的彼此相愛的話，『我們的神必為我們爭戰』。

神作工常常是藉著人，這裡讓我們看到神如何藉著尼希米和猶大的男男女女修造城牆。本章提醒我們當我們盡力事奉神時，神的工就成就了。我們常常以「神自己會動工」為藉口，而沒有行動，反而忘記人也有責任。神更喜悅的是人與祂同工，一起建立基督的身體，就是教會。

和合本	環球新譯本
<p>參巴拉的惱恨與譏笑</p> <p>1 參巴拉聽見我們修造城牆就發怒、大大惱恨、嗤笑猶大人、</p> <p>2 對他弟兄和撒瑪利亞的軍兵說、這些軟弱的猶大人作甚麼呢、要保護自己麼、要獻祭麼、要一日成功麼、要從土堆裡拿出火燒的石頭再立牆麼。</p> <p>3 亞捫人多比雅站在旁邊、說、他們所修造的石牆、就是狐狸上去也必蹣跚。</p> <p>4 我們的神阿、求你垂聽、因為我們被藐視、求你使他們的毀謗歸於他們的頭上、使他們在被擄之地作為掠物、</p> <p>5 不要遮掩他們的罪孽、不要使他們的罪惡從你面前塗抹、因為他們在修造的人眼前惹動你的怒氣。</p> <p>6 這樣、我們修造城牆、城牆就都連絡、高至一半、因為百姓專心作工。</p> <p>敵人密謀攔阻與破壞</p> <p>7 參巴拉、多比雅、亞拉伯人、亞捫人、亞實突人、聽見修造耶路撒冷城牆、著手進行、堵塞破裂的地方、就甚發怒、</p> <p>8 大家同謀要來攻擊耶路撒冷、使城內擾亂。</p> <p>9 然而我們禱告我們的神、又因他們的緣故、就派人看守、晝夜防備。</p> <p>10 猶大人說、灰土尚多、扛抬的人力氣已經衰敗、所以我們不能建造城牆。</p> <p>11 我們的敵人且說、趁他們不知、不見、我們進入他們中間、殺他們、使工作止住。</p> <p>12 那靠近敵人居住的猶大人、十次從各處來見我們說、你們必要回到我們那裡。</p> <p>13 所以我使百姓各按宗族、拿刀、拿槍、拿弓站在城牆後邊低窪的空處。</p> <p>14 我察看了、就起來對貴胄、官長、和其餘的人說、不要怕他們、當記念主是大而可畏的、你們要為弟兄、兒女、妻子、家產爭戰。</p> <p>一面工作、一面防守</p> <p>15 仇敵聽見我們知道他們的心意、見神也破壞他們的計謀、就不來了。我們都回到城牆那裡、各作各的工。</p> <p>16 從那日起、我的僕人一半作工、一半拿槍、拿盾牌、拿弓、穿鎧甲、〔穿或作拿〕官長都站在猶大眾人的後邊。</p> <p>17 修造城牆的、扛抬材料的、都一手作工、一手拿兵器。</p> <p>18 修造的人、都腰間佩刀修造、吹角的人在我旁邊。</p> <p>19 我對貴胄、官長、和其餘的人說、這工程浩</p>	<p>參巴拉的惱恨與譏笑</p> <p>1 當參巴拉聽見我們正在重建城牆，就很忿怒，非常惱恨，並且譏諷猶大人。</p> <p>2 在他的兄弟和撒瑪利亞的軍隊面前，說：“這些軟弱的猶大人在作甚麼呢？想自己修築城牆嗎？想要獻祭嗎？想要在一天之內完成嗎？想要使廢土堆中被火燒過的石頭復活嗎？”</p> <p>3 亞捫人多比雅在參巴拉旁邊說：“這些人建造的，只要一隻狐狸走上去，石牆就崩塌。”</p> <p>4 “我們的神啊，求你垂聽，我們被藐視，求你使他們的毀謗歸到他們頭上，使他們在被擄之地成為掠物。</p> <p>5 不要遮蔽他們的罪孽，也不要從你面前塗抹他們的罪惡，因為他們在這些建造的人面前惹你發怒。”</p> <p>6 這樣，我們重建城牆，把全部城牆連接起來，城牆達到一半的高度，因為眾人都全心作工。（本章第 1~6 節在《馬索拉抄本》為 3:33~38）</p> <p>敵人密謀攔阻與破壞</p> <p>7 當參巴拉、多比雅、阿拉伯人、亞捫人、亞實突人聽見耶路撒冷城牆重修工程仍然進行，已經堵塞城牆的缺口，就非常忿怒。（本節在《馬索拉抄本》為 4:1）</p> <p>8 他們就一同計劃陰謀要來攻擊耶路撒冷，製造混亂。</p> <p>9 所以我們向我們的神禱告，又因他們的緣故，設立守衛，日夜防備他們。</p> <p>10 因為有些猶大人說：“搬運的人氣力已經衰弱，但瓦礫仍多，我們不能再建城牆了！”</p> <p>11 同時我們的敵人說：“趁著他們不知道，還未看見之前，我們就進入他們中間，殺死他們，使那工程停止。”</p> <p>12 住在他們附近的一些猶大人，也曾十次前來通知我們說：“他們將從各方上來攻擊你們。”（或譯：“他們十次從各方來對我們說：‘你們來到我們這裡吧！’”本節頗殘缺，意義難確定。）</p> <p>13 所以我分派眾人站崗，在低窪或高處，在城牆後隱蔽處或空曠的地方，叫他們按著家族，帶著刀、槍和弓。</p> <p>14 我巡視之後，就起來，對貴族、官長和其餘的人民說：“不要怕他們，要記得主是偉大可畏的，要為你們的兄弟、兒女、妻子和你們的家爭戰。”</p> <p>一面工作、一面防守</p> <p>15 我們的仇敵既然聽見我們知道了這陰謀，神也破壞了他們的計謀，就不敢來了。我們全都回到城牆那裡，各人回到原來的工作崗位。</p> <p>16 從那天起，我的僕人一半工作，一半緊握著槍、盾牌、弓和盔甲。眾領袖都站在猶大全家的後面。</p> <p>17 那些建造城牆，搬運重物的，都是一隻手作工，一隻手緊握兵器。</p> <p>18 建造的人，都腰間佩著刀來建造；吹號角的人在我旁邊。</p> <p>19 我對貴族、官長和其餘的人民說：“這工程浩大，範圍</p>

<p>大、我們在城牆上相離甚遠，</p> <p>20 你們聽見角聲在那裡、就聚集到我們那裡去，我們的神必為我們爭戰。</p> <p>21 於是我們作工、一半拿兵器、從天亮直到星宿出現的時候。</p> <p>22 那時、我又對百姓說、各人和他的僕人當在耶路撒冷住宿、好在夜間保守我們、白晝作工。</p> <p>23 這樣、我和弟兄僕人、並跟從我的護兵、都不脫衣服、出去打水也帶兵器。</p>	<p>廣闊；我們在城牆上彼此相隔很遠。</p> <p>20 所以你們無論在甚麼地方，一聽見號角聲，就要集合到我們那裡來。我們的神必為我們爭戰。”</p> <p>21 我們就這樣作工；一半人緊握著槍，從黎明直到星宿出現的時候。</p> <p>22 那時，我又對眾人說：“各人和他的僕人都要在耶路撒冷城中過夜，這樣他們可以在夜間作我們的守衛，日間工作。”</p> <p>23 這樣，我與我的兄弟、我的僕人和跟隨我的人，都不脫衣服，各人時常右手拿著自己的兵器（原文殘缺，傳統有譯作“各人只有在沐浴時才脫衣服”，或“各人打水的時候，都手裡拿著自己的兵器”）。</p>
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NIV	NASB	ESV
<p>Opposition to the Rebuilding</p> <p>¹ When Sanballat heard that we were rebuilding the wall, he became angry and was greatly incensed. He ridiculed the Jews,</p> <p>² 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 the stones back to life from those heaps of rubble—burned as they are?"</p> <p>³ 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!"</p> <p>⁴ 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.</p> <p>⁵ Do not cover up their guilt or blot out their sins from your sight, for they have thrown insults in the face of ^[a] the builders.</p> <p>⁶ So we rebuilt the wall till all of it reached half its height, for the people worked with all their heart.</p> <p>⁷ 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.</p> <p>⁸ They all plotted together to come and fight against Jerusalem and stir up trouble against it.</p> <p>⁹ But we prayed to our God and posted a guard day and night to meet this</p>	<p>Work Is Ridiculed</p> <p>¹ Now it came about that when Sanballat heard that we were rebuilding the wall, he became furious and very angry and mocked the Jews.</p> <p>² He spoke in the presence of his brothers and the wealthy men of Samaria and said, "What are these feeble Jews doing? Are they going to restore it for themselves? Can they offer sacrifices? Can they finish in a day? Can they revive the stones from the dusty rubble even the burned ones?"</p> <p>³ Now Tobiah the Ammonite was near him and he said, "Even what they are building--if a fox should jump on it, he would break their stone wall down!"</p> <p>⁴ Hear, O our God, how we are despised! Return their reproach on their own heads and give them up for plunder in a land of captivity.</p> <p>⁵ Do not forgive their iniquity and let not their sin be blotted out before You, for they have demoralized the builders.</p> <p>⁶ So we built the wall and the whole wall was joined together to half its height, for the people had a mind to work.</p> <p>⁷ Now when Sanballat, Tobiah, the Arabs, the Ammonites and the Ashdodites heard that the repair of the walls of Jerusalem went on, and that the breaches began to be closed, they were very angry.</p> <p>⁸ All of them conspired together to come and fight against Jerusalem</p>	<p>Opposition to the Work</p> <p>^{1[a]} Now when Sanballat heard that we were building the wall, he was angry and greatly enraged, and he jeered at the Jews. ² And he said in the presence of his brothers and of the army of Samaria, "What are these feeble Jews doing? Will they restore it for themselves?^[b] Will they sacrifice? Will they finish up in a day? Will they revive the stones out of the heaps of rubbish, and burned ones at that?" ³ Tobiah the Ammonite was beside him, and he said, "Yes, what they are building—if a fox goes up on it he will break down their stone wall!"</p> <p>⁴ Hear, O our God, for we are despised. Turn back their taunt on their own heads and give them up to be plundered in a land where they are captives.</p> <p>⁵ Do not cover their guilt, and let not their sin be blotted out from your sight, for they have provoked you to anger in the presence of the builders.</p> <p>⁶ So we built the wall. And all the wall was joined together to half its height, for the people had a mind to work.</p> <p>^{7[c]} But when Sanballat and Tobiah and the Arabs and the Ammonites and the Ashdodites heard that the repairing of the walls of Jerusalem was going forward and that the breaches were beginning to be closed, they were very angry.</p> <p>⁸ And they all plotted together to come and fight against Jerusalem and to cause confusion in it.</p> <p>⁹ And we prayed to our God and set a guard as a protection against them day and night.</p> <p>¹⁰ In Judah it was said,^[d] "The strength of</p>

threat.

¹⁰ 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."

¹¹ 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."

¹² Then the Jews who lived near them came and told us ten times over, "Wherever you turn, they will attack us."

¹³ 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.

¹⁴ 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."

¹⁵ 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.

¹⁶ 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

¹⁷ who were building the wall. Those who carried materials did their work with one hand and held a weapon in the other,

¹⁸ and each of the builders wore his sword at his side as he worked. But the man who sounded the trumpet stayed with me.

¹⁹ Then I said to the nobles, the officials and the rest of the people, "The work is extensive and spread out, and we are widely separated from each other along the wall.

²⁰ Wherever you hear the sound of the trumpet, join us there. Our God will fight for us!"

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

²² At that time I also said to the people,

and to cause a disturbance in it.

Discouragement Overcome
⁹But we prayed to our God, and because of them we set up a guard against them day and night.

¹⁰Thus in Judah it was said, "The strength of the burden bearers is failing, yet there is much rubbish; and we ourselves are unable to rebuild the wall."

¹¹Our enemies said, "They will not know or see until we come among them, kill them and put a stop to the work."

¹²When the Jews who lived near them came and told us ten times, "They will come up against us from every place where you may turn,"

¹³then I stationed men in the lowest parts of the space behind the wall, the exposed places, and I stationed the people in families with their swords, spears and bows.

¹⁴When I saw their fear, I rose and spoke to the nobles, the officials and the rest of the people: "Do not be afraid of them; remember the Lord who is great and awesome, and fight for your brothers, your sons, your daughters, your wives and your houses."

¹⁵When our enemies heard that it was known to us, and that God had frustrated their plan, then all of us returned to the wall, each one to his work.

¹⁶From that day on, half of my servants carried on the work while half of them held the spears, the shields, the bows and the breastplates; and the captains were behind the whole house of Judah.

¹⁷Those who were rebuilding the wall and those who carried burdens took their load with one hand doing the work and the other holding a weapon.

¹⁸As for the builders, each wore his sword girded at his side as he built, while the trumpeter stood near me.

¹⁹I said to the nobles, the officials and the rest of the people, "The work is great and extensive, and we are separated on the wall far from one another.

²⁰"At whatever place you hear the

those who bear the burdens is failing.

There is too much rubble. By ourselves we will not be able to rebuild the wall."

¹¹And our enemies said, "They will not know or see till we come among them and kill them and stop the work."

¹²At that time the Jews who lived near them came from all directions and said to us ten times, "You must return to us."^[e] ¹³So in the lowest parts of the space behind the wall, in open places, I stationed the people by their clans, with their swords, their spears, and their bows.

¹⁴And I looked and arose and said to the nobles and to the officials and to the rest of the people, "Do not be afraid of them. Remember the Lord, who is great and awesome, and fight for your brothers, your sons, your daughters, your wives, and your homes."

The Work Resumes

¹⁵When our enemies heard that it was known to us and that God had frustrated their plan, we all returned to the wall, each to his work.

¹⁶From that day on, half of my servants worked on construction, and half held the spears, shields, bows, and coats of mail. And the leaders stood behind the whole house of Judah,

¹⁷ who were building on the wall. Those who carried burdens were loaded in such a way that each labored on the work with one hand and held his weapon with the other.

¹⁸And each of the builders had his sword strapped at his side while he built. The man who sounded the trumpet was beside me.

¹⁹And I said to the nobles and to the officials and to the rest of the people, "The work is great and widely spread, and we are separated on the wall, far from one another.

²⁰In the place where you hear the sound of the trumpet, rally to us there. Our God will fight for us."

²¹So we labored at the work, and half of them held the spears from the break of dawn until the stars came out.

²²I also said to the people at that time, "Let every man and his servant pass the night within Jerusalem, that they may be a guard for us by night and may labor by day."

<p>"Have every man and his helper stay inside Jerusalem at night, so they can serve us as guards by night and workmen by day." ²³ Neither I nor my brothers nor my men nor the guards with me took off our clothes; each had his weapon, even when he went for water. ^[b]</p> <p>Footnotes: a. Nehemiah 4:5 Or <i>have provoked you to anger before</i> b. Nehemiah 4:23 The meaning of the Hebrew for this clause is uncertain.</p>	<p>sound of the trumpet, rally to us there. Our God will fight for us." ²¹So we carried on the work with half of them holding spears from dawn until the stars appeared. ²²At that time I also said to the people, "Let each man with his servant spend the night within Jerusalem so that they may be a guard for us by night and a laborer by day." ²³So neither I, my brothers, my servants, nor the men of the guard who followed me, none of us removed our clothes, each took his weapon even to the water.</p>	<p>²³So neither I nor my brothers nor my servants nor the men of the guard who followed me, none of us took off our clothes; each kept his weapon at his right hand. ^[f]</p> <p>Footnotes: a. Nehemiah 4:1 Ch 3:33 in Hebrew b. Nehemiah 4:2 Or <i>Will they commit themselves to God?</i> c. Nehemiah 4:7 Ch 4:1 in Hebrew d. Nehemiah 4:10 Hebrew <i>Judah said</i> e. Nehemiah 4:12 The meaning of the Hebrew is uncertain f. Nehemiah 4:23 Probable reading; Hebrew <i>each his weapon the water</i></p>
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