

How To Handle Insults and Ridicule

SERIES: Building a Future with Hope – Part 6

Nehemiah 4:1-23

5 Ways the Opposition Tried to Stop Nehemiah's Work

- They used RAGE. Neh. 4:1, 7
- They used RIDICULE. Neh. 4:1-5
- They used RACISM AND RESENTMENT. Neh. 4:1-2, 12
- They used RESISTANCE. Neh. 4:7-8, 10
- They used RUMORS. Neh. 4:12

HOW PEOPLE WILL TRY TO STOP YOU WITH RIDICULE

1. People will **ATTACK YOUR CHARACTER AND IDENTITY**

“When Sanballat heard we were rebuilding the wall, he became very angry. He flew into a rage and ridiculed the Jews. To his allies and the military of Samaria he said, ‘What does this pathetic bunch of feeble Jews think they’re doing?’” Nehemiah 4:1-2a

2. People will **ACCUSE YOU OF EVIL MOTIVES**

*“They said, ‘What are you doing? Are you rebelling against the king?’”
Nehemiah 2:19b (NCV)*

“Are they going to restore it for themselves?...” Nehemiah 4:2b (NAS)

3. People will **EXPLOIT PREJUDICES AGAINST YOU**

*“When Sanballat the Horonite, and Tobiah the Ammonite, and Geshem the Arab heard of our plan, they made fun of us and laughed at us.”
Nehemiah 2:19a (NCV)*

*“When Sanballat, Tobiah, the Arabs, the Ammonites, and the Ashdodites heard the repairs had started, they were very angry and plotted together...to stir up trouble against us.”
Nehemiah 4:7-8*

4. People will **MAKE UP LIES AND STORIES**

*“Those who want to hurt me plan trouble for me; All day long they think up lies... They repay me with evil for the good I’ve done, and they lie about me because I try to do good.”
Psalm 38:12, 20 (NCV)*

*“Do they think they’ll finish the wall in a day and then offer sacrifices to their god?”
Nehemiah 4:2c*

5. People will **PREDICT YOUR FAILURE**

“Do they think they can bring burned up stones back to life from those heaps of rubble and rubbish?” Nehemiah 4:2d

“Then Tobiah, who was standing close by, joined in: ‘Right! What they’re building is so weak, it will collapse if just a fox tries to walk on that wall!’” Nehemiah 4:3

HOW SHOULD I HANDLE RIDICULE AND INSULTS?

1. TELL GOD HOW IT UPSETS ME

“So I prayed: ‘God, you can hear how they are making fun of us. Let their insults just fall back on their own heads and may they themselves become captives in a foreign land! Don’t ignore their guilt, because they have thrown insults in the face of the builders.” Nehemiah 4:4-5

2. CONFIDENTLY STATE THAT MY TRUST IS IN GOD

“I answered them, ‘The God of heaven WILL give us success. We are his servants and we will start rebuilding!’” Nehemiah 2:20a (NIV)

“Arrogant people mock me cruelly, but I do not turn away from your teachings!” Psalm 119:51 (GW)

3. BE BETTER THAN THOSE WHO INSULT ME

“Dear friends, never avenge yourselves. Leave that to God. For it is written, ‘I’ll take vengeance and I’ll repay those who deserve it,’ says the Lord. Instead, do what the Scriptures say: ‘If your enemies are hungry, feed them. If they’re thirsty, give them something to drink, and they’ll be ashamed of what they’ve done to you.’ Do not be overcome by evil, but overcome evil with good.” Romans 12:19-21 (NLT/NIV)

“Don’t do something wrong to repay a wrong, and don’t insult back to repay an insult. Instead repay it with a blessing. You’re called to do this so that you’ll get a blessing!” 1 Peter 3:9 (NCV)

4. MAKE GOD MY DEFENDER BY TITHING

Give the first 10% of my income back to God and claim his promise!

God: “Bring the best of the FIRSTFRUIT of your harvest to the House of the Lord... If you do what I say, I’ll be an enemy to your enemies and I’ll oppose those who oppose you!” Exodus 23:19, 22 (NIV)

5. REMEMBER I’LL BE REWARDED FOREVER

“Blessed are you when people insult you, or persecute you and falsely say all kinds of evil against you because of me. Be glad because your reward will be great in heaven!” Matthew 5:11-12a (NIV)

“So, my dear brothers and sisters, be strong and steady, always enthusiastic about the Lord’s work, for you know that NOTHING you do in service for the Lord is ever worthless!” 1 Corinthians 15:58