Nehemiah, part 5:
"Sword and Trowel"
Nehemiah 4

Building the church will always involve facing and dealing with continual opposition.

1. The Reality of Opposition

(1) Enemies mocking and reproaching the builders!   **vv. 1-6**

- **The human agents: Sanballat the Samaritan governor, Tobiah the Ammonite governor**

- **Satan's goal:** *to discourage* **the work**

- **The church's first recourse: Prayer!** (4-5)   *"Hear, O our God, for we are despised…"*

  - The appeal   "You deal with these enemies, Lord!"

  - The Lord answers – the work prospers! (6)

(2) Enemies conspiring to attack the builders!   **vv. 7ff**

- **The human agents: Sanballat (Samaria), Tobiah, the Arabs, the Ammonites, the Ashdodites**

- **Satan's goal:** *to put an end* **to the work**

- **The church's first recourse: Prayer!** (9)   *"Nevertheless we made our prayer to God…"*

2. The Measures Necessary to Successfully Face such Opposition

(1) The Need for Constant Prayer

As noted above! vv. 4-5, 9

(2) The Need to Understand and Anticipate the Schemes of the Enemy   **v. 9**

- Watching for the first movements of the enemy   *"we set a watch against them day and night."*

(3) The Need to Protect and Defend the Most Vulnerable Parts   **v. 13**

"I positioned men behind the lower parts of the wall, at the openings…"

(4) The Need for the Leader to Rally the Soldiers   **v. 14**

- **A clear word!**   *"Do not be afraid of them. Remember the Lord, great and awesome,*
and fight for your brethren, your sons, your daughters,
  - The greatness of God   *your wives, and your houses."*
  - What is at stake

(5) The Need to Keep Weapons at Hand at All Times   **vv. 16-18**

"So it was, from that time on,
that half of my servants worked at construction,
while the other half held the spears,
the shields, the bows, and wore armor…"

(6) The Need to Rally to that Particular Point that may Come under Attack
vv. 19-20

"Wherever you hear the sound of the trumpet,
rally to us there. Our God will fight for us."

(7) The Need for a Continual Watch   **vv. 21-23**

- Guards by night and a working party by day!

Further Application: