

NEHEMIAH

The background of the image shows two stone towers or walls made of irregular, reddish-brown stones. The towers are partially ruined, with some missing stones and crumbling tops. The sky is a clear, light blue-grey color. The overall tone is historical and evocative of ancient architecture.

Rebuild + Restore

MAIN IDEA:

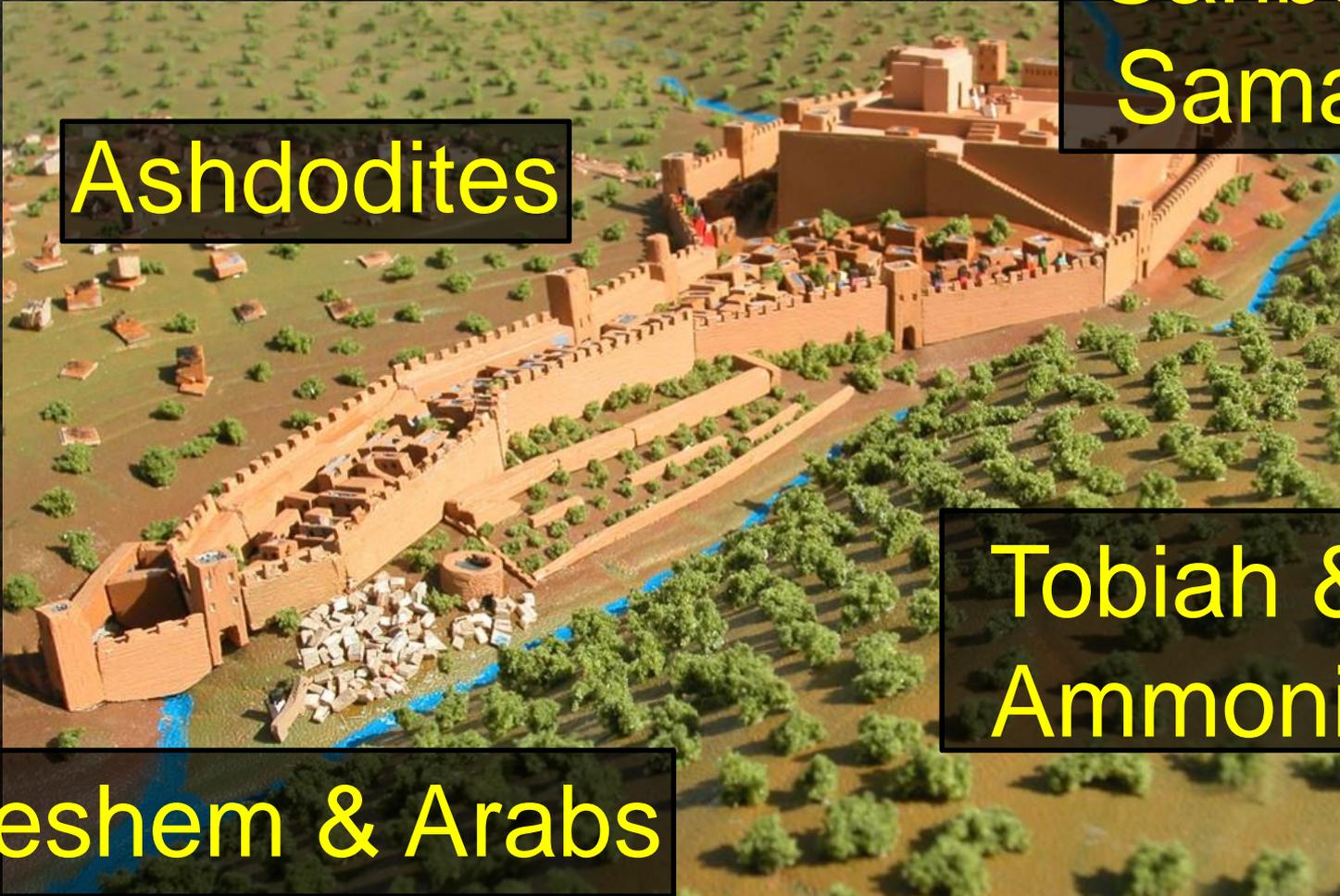
How we respond to ridicule
reveals who we trust.

Sanballat &
Samaritans

Ashdodites

Tobiah &
Ammonites

Geshem & Arabs



Nehemiah 4:1-21

When Sanballat heard that we were rebuilding the wall, he became angry and was greatly incensed. He ridiculed the Jews, 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?”

Nehemiah 4:1-21

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?”³ Tobiah the Ammonite, who was at his side, said, “What they are building—even a fox climbing up on it would break down their wall of stones!”

Nehemiah 4:1-21

⁴ Hear us, our God, for we are despised. Turn their insults back on their own heads. Give them over as plunder in a land of captivity. ⁵ Do not cover up their guilt or blot out their sins from your sight, for they have thrown insults in the face of the builders.

Nehemiah 4:1-21

⁶ So we rebuilt the wall till all of it reached half its height, for the people worked with all their heart. ⁷ But when Sanballat, Tobiah, the Arabs, the Ammonites and the people of Ashdod heard that the repairs to Jerusalem's walls had gone ahead and that the gaps were being closed, they were very angry.

Nehemiah 4:1-21

⁸ They all plotted together to come and fight against Jerusalem and stir up trouble against it. ⁹ But we prayed to our God and posted a guard day and night to meet this threat. ¹⁰ Meanwhile, the people in Judah said, “The strength of the laborers is giving out,

Nehemiah 4:1-21

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,

Nehemiah 4:1-21

“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,

Nehemiah 4:1-21

“Don’t be afraid of them. Remember the Lord, who is great and awesome, and fight for your families, 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 our own work.

Nehemiah 4:1-21

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.

Nehemiah 4:1-21

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.

Nehemiah 4:1-21

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...

MAIN IDEA:

How we respond to ridicule
reveals who we trust.

Nehemiah and the builders responded to ridicule by...

1) Handing the situation to God.

Hear us, our God, for we are despised. Turn their insults back on their own heads. – **Nehemiah 4:4**

Cast all your anxiety on him because he cares for you -1 **Peter 5:7**

Nehemiah and the builders responded to ridicule by...

2) Focusing on the task at hand.

So we rebuilt the wall till all of it reached half its height,
for the people worked with all their heart. – **Nehemiah 4:6**

Let us not become weary in doing good, for at the
proper time we will reap a harvest if we do not give up.

– **Galatians 6:9**

Nehemiah and the builders responded to ridicule by...

3) Preparing for further ridicule and threats.

But we prayed to our God and posted a guard day and night to meet this threat. - **Nehemiah 4:9**

Be alert and of sober mind. Your enemy the devil prowls around like a roaring lion looking for someone to devour.

– **1 Peter 5:8**

When things are going well, get ready for trouble, because the enemy doesn't want to see the work of the Lord make progress. As long as the people in Jerusalem were content with their sad lot, the enemy left them alone, but, when the Jews began to serve the Lord and bring glory to God's name, the enemy became active. - **Warren Wiersbe**

Nehemiah and the builders responded to ridicule by...

4) Resting in God's promises.

Remember the Lord, who is great and awesome...

Our God will fight for us! -**Nehemiah 4:14 & 20**

I always pray with joy because of your partnership in the gospel from the first day until now, being confident of this, that he who began a good work in you will carry it on to completion until the day of Christ Jesus.

– **Philippians 1:4-6**

Nehemiah was undismayed and undisturbed by opposition. His enemies mocked him from outside the walls and controversy arose within the walls, but Nehemiah committed the problems to God, took immediate action to rectify the situation, and the work continued uninterrupted.

-Dr. Norman L. Geisler, Bible Scholar

