

Where's Your Chair?

Nehemiah 4 1-14



When I was in trouble I called to the Lord;
I called to the Lord and he answered me.
Psalm 120:1

Praising:

Put all your trust in God;
in duty's path go on;
walk in his strength with faith and
hope,
so shall your work be done.
No profit can you gain
by self-consuming care;
to him commend your cause; his
ear
attends the softest prayer.

Reading:

Nehemiah 4:1-14
The builders fear attack

Nehemiah mentioned earlier objections from Sanballat and Tobiah in chapter 2. Their scornful personal attacks are now renewed: the Jews are "pathetic" and so are their practical efforts to rebuild Jerusalem. In an emotional prayer to God,

Nehemiah turns the mockery and derision back on Sanballat and Tobiah. By this stage however it's not just insults. The Arabs, Ammonites and Ashdodites resolve to undo the reconstruction programme violently. Nehemiah and his people respond with prayer and a 24 hour site-watch. But as the threat level rises, the effort expended on the building and surveillance take its toll. There is now a real fear among the Jews that they will be taken unawares. All Nehemiah can do is position the people strategically, arm them and issue a rallying call: the Lord is on their side, not that of their assailants.

Listening:

Praying:

Lord we pray for those who count us as enemies

- may we try to understand what's behind their animosity and examine our own motives
- may we respond calmly, wisely and lovingly when they are openly hostile to us
- may we find it in our hearts to forgive them and to pray for their health, joy and blessing

Father: life won't always go my way and I shouldn't expect it to, but confirm the plans I must follow through for Christ, and thwart what is less than his holy will and perfect pleasure. Amen

Doing:

Tuesday, 13 September 2016