WEAVER BOOKS

BIBLICAL STUDIES

"Thy word is a lamp unto my feet,
and a light unto my path."

PSALM 119:105

Biblical Mandates for Defense



JOHN WEAVER

WEAVER BIBLE COLLEGE





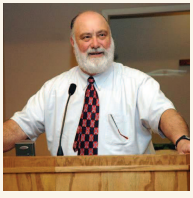
Nevertheless we made our prayer unto our God.

NEHEMIAH 4:9, EXCERPT

Prayer and practical responsibility belong together. John Weaver draws on the rebuilding and defense of Jerusalem to consider courage, readiness, opposition, and the protection of one's household. These messages address tested preparation and faithful action, asking how dependence on God should strengthen rather than replace the responsibilities entrusted to His people.

"Not only must we do what is right, we must also trust in the Lord Jesus Christ to make what we do prevail, for without him, we can do absolutely nothing."

JOHN WEAVER



John Weaver

John Weaver's sermons form the teaching collection presented by Weaver Bible College. This volume gathers his teaching from that collection.

WEAVER BIBLE COLLEGE

weaverbiblecollege.com

WEAVER BOOKS

Biblical Mandates for Defense

Old Testament Studies

John Weaver

Weaver Bible College

LIBRARY BOOK 109

Biblical Mandates for Defense

John Weaver

Weaver Books
Weaver Bible College

Edited from the sermon corpus of John Weaver.

Contents

Chapter 1: Biblical Mandates for Defense - Part One 5

Introduction to Nehemiah's Context 5

The Nature of Opposition to God's Work 7

The Enemies' First Question: 'Will They Fortify Themselves?' 10

The Enemies' Second Question: 'Will They Sacrifice?' 13

The Enemies' Third Question: 'Will They Make an End in a Day?' 16

The Enemies' Fourth Question: 'Will They Revive the Stones?' 17

Tobiah's Mockery and the Quality of Work 18

Nehemiah's Response: Imprecatory Prayer 19

Applications: Ignoring Ridicule and Taking Responsibility 20

Chapter 2: Biblical Mandates for Defense - Part Two 23

Review of Previous Principles 23

First Defensive Mandate: Prayer 24

Second Defensive Mandate: Situational Awareness 27

Alert to a Surprise Attack 28

Third Defensive Mandate: Alertness to Surprise Attack 28

Fourth Defensive Mandate: Awareness of Those Who Fraternize with the Enemy

The Fifth Defensive Mandate 31

Fifth Defensive Mandate: Preparedness to Fight and Encouragement in the Lord

Sixth Defensive Mandate: Err on the Side of Caution When Enemies Are Routed

Seventh Defensive Mandate: Have a Rallying Point 35

Application: Do Whatever Needs to Be Done 37

Concluding Exhortation and Prayer 39

Warren Luke: Prove All Things, Hold Fast That Which Is Good 40

Topical Index 47

Scripture Index 49

Study Guide Link 51

CHAPTER 1

Biblical Mandates for Defense

Part One

Introduction to Nehemiah's Context

In Nehemiah chapter four, we read the first five verses. The Bible says:

"But it came to pass that when Sanballat heard that we built the wall, he was wroth and took great indignation and mocked the Jews. And he spake before his brethren in the army of Samaria and said, 'What do these feeble Jews? Will they fortify themselves? Will they sacrifice? Will they make an end in a day? Will they revive the stones out of the heaps of the rubbish which are burned?' Now Tobiah the Ammonite was by him, and he said, 'Even that which they build, if a fox go up, he shall even break down their stone wall.' Hear, O our God, for we are despised, and turn their reproach upon their own head, and give them for a prey into the hand of the land of captivity."

The remnant had returned from Babylon and from the Babylonian captivity, and they were now endeavoring to rebuild in Jerusalem, to build the temple and to build the wall. They were trying themselves, basically, to what you and I would call get on with their lives. The books of Ezra and Nehemiah give us a glimpse into the problems that existed during this particular time—not only their problems, but their sins and their struggles as well that built upon the remnant. There were personal sins as well as societal sins that had to be dealt with and resolved.

Seemingly, many of these sins stem from what you and I would call personal corruption and greed because they were refusing to abide by the law of God. Obedience would have headed off much of this sin and much of this suffering. But unhappily, the depraved nature always wishes to benefit at the expense of others.

Ezra, the Bible tells us, was a ready scribe in the law of Moses, and he was concerned more with building the temple and with the worship of God. Nehemiah was the Tirshatha. The word Tirshatha simply means the governor. So Nehemiah, the Tirshatha, or the governor, was more concerned with the safety and the building of the wall round about Jerusalem. However, both of these men, Ezra and Nehemiah, were concerned with the law of God and with teaching the law of God.

The Bible says in Nehemiah chapter 8 and verse 9, "And Nehemiah, which is the Tirshatha, or the governor, and Ezra the priest, the scribe, and the Levites that taught the people, said unto all the people, 'This day is holy unto the Lord your God. Mourn not, nor weep.' For all the people wept when they heard the words of the law."

Ezra was the priest and the scribe, and Nehemiah the governor, but both were concerned with teaching the law of God, that is for sure. The interesting thing is that, as you read through the book of Ezra and the book of Nehemiah, both of these men had to hesitate in their work and pause in their work just to deal with the sins of the people.

The prophets Haggai and Zechariah encouraged, motivated, and preached to the remnant, encouraging them to build. Of course, they

taught the word of God and rebuked their sins as well. Ezra chapter 5 and verse 1 says, "Then the prophets, Haggai the prophet and Zechariah the son of Iddo, prophesied unto the Jews that were in Judah and Jerusalem in the name of the God of Israel, even unto them."

We have Haggai and Zechariah preaching during this particular time as well. Ezra and Nehemiah were doing the work of God and doing that which God had ordained for them to do, according to the will of God that had been revealed to them. To me, it is absolutely astounding when you read through the book of Ezra and the book of Nehemiah at the number of enemies that an individual can accrue just by doing that which is biblical and right.

The Nature of Opposition to God's Work

Anyone that serves the flesh, the world and the devil will automatically be against anyone who is doing that which is right and holy and just. And, of course, you're going to find out as you read through Ezra and Nehemiah that these enemies not only mocked, but they threatened and ridiculed and even offered to sue those who were doing the work of God.

The Bible says, "But it came to pass that when Sanballat and Tobiah and the Arabians and the Ammonites and the Ashdodites heard that the walls of Jerusalem were made up and that the breaches began to be stopped, then they were very wroth and conspired all of them together to come in to fight against Jerusalem and to hinder it."

Notice that these men did not want the work of God to go on. They were conspiring to try to stop this work. It was not just Sanballat and Tobiah, but now it was the Arabians, the Ammonites, and the Ashdodites—anyone who was allied with them. Now, look in the book of Nehemiah, chapter 6, at verses 1 through 9. Notice how those who are doing the work of God are always called names. They're ridiculed. They're mocked.

For instance, today, I hope you read or heard how that the government now has been tracking anyone who recently has bought a Bible. That's a fact. It was on the news. I heard it last night. I heard

it today. They're not only tracking anyone who bought a Bible, but they're also tracking anyone who happened to give an offering to Trump. And they're also tracking anyone who bought anything online through Bass Pro. You know why? Because if you believe the Bible, now you're classified as a white supremacist or domestic terrorist. You know, that's exactly what they're doing.

So here's what I want to show you from the book of Nehemiah. Look at it, if you would: chapter 6, beginning there, verse 1.

Now, it came to pass when Sanballat and Tobiah and Geshem the Arabian and the rest of our enemies heard that I had built the wall and that there was no breach left therein, though at that time I had not set up the doors upon the gates, that Sanballat and Geshem sent unto me, saying, "Come, let us meet together in some one of the villages in the plain of Ono." But they thought to do me mischief. And I sent messengers unto them, saying, "I am doing a great work, so that I cannot come down. Why should the work cease while I leave it and come down to you?" Yet they sent unto me four times after this sort, and I answered them after the same manner. Then sent Sanballat his servant unto me in like manner the fifth time with an open letter in his hand.

Wherein was written, "It is reported among the heathen, and Gashmu saith it, that thou and the Jews think to rebel, for which cause thou buildest the wall, that thou mayest be their king according to these words. And thou hast also appointed prophets to preach unto thee in Jerusalem, saying, 'There is a king in Judah.' Now shalt thou be reported to the king according to these words."

"Come now, therefore, and let us take counsel together." Then I sent unto him, saying, "There are no such things done as thou sayest, but thou feignest them out of thine own heart." For they all made us afraid, saying, "Their hands shall be weakened from the work that it be not done." Now therefore, O God, strengthen my hands.

We need to learn a very pointed lesson at this point. The world, the unsaved, and the humanists will never love, appreciate, or help anyone that's really truly doing the work of God. They will never appreciate the men, their character, their courage, or their consistency. In fact, they will lie about them and slander them.

It was just as they said to Nehemiah: "You're planning to rebel. You want to proclaim yourself king. We're going to report this to the king." Remember that Nehemiah was the cupbearer to Artaxerxes, who happened to be the king. It was Artaxerxes who gave him leave to come to Jerusalem and do this work. Yet they were saying, "We're going to report you. You are a rebel. You are a seditionist. You are an insurrectionist. You're planning on doing this just for yourself, and you're going to take over."

Please understand this: when you're doing the work of God, you are going to be called all kinds of names. You will be called anything and everything; you will be mocked and ridiculed as well. You remember what our Lord said in John 15?

He said, "If the world hate you, you know that it hated me before it hated you. If you were of the world, the world would love his own. But because you're not of the world, because I've chosen you out of the world, therefore the world hateth you." And then he went on to say this: "The word that I said unto you, the servant is not greater than the master. If they've persecuted me, they will also persecute you. If they've kept my saying, they will also keep your saying. But all these things will they do unto you for my name's sake. Listen, because they know not him that sent me."

If you understand this truth, you're not going to get bent out of shape just because somebody criticizes you. You're not going to get bent out of shape just because someone speaks ill of you. You've got to understand that is par for the course.

Now, my name is Ben Slander. All you have to do to read about me is go to the Southern Poverty Law Center's website, and you can find out all about me. The only thing true that they say—and it's really not true—is that I am a neo-confederate. I tell them, I'm not a neo-confederate. I'm an old confederate. I believe the same things my forefathers believed. I believe in states' rights. I believe in liberty. I believe in freedom. I believe in the right of self-defense. That's an old confederate, brother. That's not a new confederate.

I'm simply saying, these people were absolutely insane. But if you do anything for Jesus Christ, if you stand for truth, you are going to be hated and ridiculed. That's all there is to it.

There are several biblical principles that I want to bring out, and they're from Nehemiah chapter 4. The second message is actually going to be based upon this as well. But I want you to look once again at verses one through five, because the first part of the truth is actually going to come from the enemies of the Judahites themselves. Look at verse one: "But it came to pass that when Sanballat heard that we built the wall, he was wroth and took great indignation and mocked the Jews or the Judahites. And he spake unto his brethren in the army of Samaria." Note that he has an army. Sanballat has an army. He spoke before his brethren in the army of Samaria and said, "What do these feeble Judahites? Will they fortify themselves? Will they sacrifice?"

The Enemies' First Question: 'Will They Fortify Themselves?'

“Will they make an end in a day? Will they revive the stones out of the heaps of the rubbish which are burned?”

Now Tobiah the Ammonite was by him and said, “Even that which they build, if a fox go up on it, he shall break down their stone wall.”

Sanballat referred to Nehemiah and those with him as these feeble Jews, or Judahites. His statement indicates that he believed they were weak, feeble, and worthless. Yet Nehemiah was trying to build a wall around Jerusalem so that Jerusalem would be safe. In other words, they would have the opportunity to defend themselves if they were attacked.

The work of defense is not for weaklings or for those who are not determined. That is why he said, “What do these feeble Judahites?” They were weak and worthless in his estimation. It takes strength and determination to do a task and to fulfill and finalize that task.

The wall of Jerusalem was so broken down that it was literally in rubble. Much of it had to be cleared out of the way before Nehemiah could even begin his work. Nehemiah 2 says, "So I came to Jerusalem, was there three days. And I rose in the night, and I and some few men with me, neither told I any man what God had put upon my heart to do at Jerusalem, neither was there any beast with me save the beast that I rode upon. I went out by night by the gate of

the valley, even before the dragon well, and to the dung port, and viewed the wall of Jerusalem which was broken down, and the gates thereof were consumed with fire. Then I went on to the gate of the fountain and to the king's pool." But there was no place for the beast that was under him to pass.

When you and I begin to look at the task of defense, it is seemingly a great task, one that is very difficult to undertake. How in the world does one begin? How did Nehemiah begin? He had to begin by removing the rubble. You have to remember that these Judahites had been in Babylon for seventy years. For seventy years, the wall had been broken down.

There were stones that were crumbling, and everything had been burned. You cannot begin to work until you remove the rubble and trash that are in your way. You have to remove the rubble and trash from your life before you can actually begin to build. You have to remove anything that will impede, hinder, thwart, or stop you from building a defense in your life and for your family as well.

The truth of the matter is that there is an awful lot of rubble to move and an awful lot of work to be done. It may be a sin issue, a character issue, or a determination issue. It may be an unbiblical work ethic, a lack of understanding, or even a lack of knowledge.

All of these things have to be cleared up and cleared out before you can begin. David said in Psalm 66 and verse 18, "If I regard iniquity in my heart, the Lord's not going to hear me." So if there's a sin issue and you don't deal with it, you're not going anywhere. If it's a work ethic, and you're not willing to work, you're not going to go anywhere either. If it's a lack of determination or, like I preached earlier, a lack of a biblical mindset, you're never ever going to accomplish it anyhow. All of this trash, all of this rubble, has to be cleared out of the way before you can begin to build.

Everyone who always criticizes you and condemns you for trying to do that which is right is never going to like you, help you, or appreciate you. So you might as well forget them. You can't please them, placate them, or satisfy them. Just live your life and get on with it.

I've said it so many times, but here are the two hardest lessons I've ever had to learn in 59 years of preaching. Number one, you can't help everybody. Number two, which is even harder, sometimes those you can't help are your own family and your friends. That's the truth. The only thing you can do is clear the rubble out of your life, get on with your life, and do what needs to be done. Forget the rest of them. Don't listen to their criticism or condemnation. You just do what needs to be done.

Here's the second thing. In Nehemiah chapter four, he not only referred to them as feeble Judahites, he asked this question: "What do these feeble Judahites? Will they fortify themselves?"

Interestingly, the Hebrew word for fortify is the word 'azab, and it is only translated as fortify two times in our Bibles. All the other times, this same word is translated as forsake, leave, leave off, fail, abandon, desert, or be destitute. So the word could refer to whether they would fortify or build the wall. Moreover, it could also refer to the fact that he called them these feeble Judahites.

He is saying that they do not have the character, determination, grit, or mindset to build this wall and defend themselves. They will quit, desert, and be destitute. They will not accomplish it. It could be that he is continuing an assassination upon their character as well.

Our Lord spoke about this very concept: individuals who begin and then quit. In Luke 14:28, He says, “For which of you, intending to build a tower, sitteth not down first, and counteth the cost, whether he hath sufficient to finish it?” Have you ever built a house without knowing how much everything would cost, or whether you had enough money to pay everybody and buy all the material? He continues: “For which of you, intending to build a tower, sitteth not down first, and counteth the cost, whether he have sufficient to finish it? Lest haply, after he hath laid the foundation, and is not able to finish it, all that behold it begin to mock him, saying, ‘This man began to build, and was not able to finish.’”

Then He asks, “Or what king, going to make war against another king, sitteth not down first, and consulteth whether he be able with ten thousand to meet him that cometh against him with twenty thousand? Or else, while the other is yet a great way off, he sendeth

an ambassage, and desireth conditions of peace." You had better make sure that you count the cost. You had better make sure that you have the determination and mindset to finish exactly what you start. You are not going to be mocked or ridiculed. The truth is that it takes character to see a project all the way through.

I suppose everyone has started a project, only to find that it was harder and more expensive than expected, and then decided, "Maybe I should quit." No. Alice and I have often passed the beginning of a castle up the road. Part of it is still standing, but it was never finished. I have seen buildings like that left unfinished. In fact, there is one on the road where we live. It was moved there and was never finished.

I do not know who owns the building. I have no idea. But our Lord is talking about this, and He says, look, you need to finish what you begin, because it takes, once again, a mindset and determination as well.

Now, go back to Nehemiah chapter four, verse two. I am showing you that these principles are coming from the enemies, from those who hate God's people. He says, "And he spake before his brethren and the army of Samaria and said, 'What do these feeble Judahites? Will they fortify themselves?'" What is his next question? "Will they sacrifice?" I want to tell you something: this is the most important question when it comes to defense, and I am talking about biblical defense. Will they sacrifice? Here is what he is saying.

The Enemies' Second Question: 'Will They Sacrifice?'

Are you willing to give up your pleasures, your conveniences, and whatever it takes in order for you to build the wall? In other words, how much does the defense of your life, your family, and your neighbors matter to you? What are you willing to sacrifice? What are you willing to give up? Are you willing to give up a newer automobile? A vacation? That expensive cup of coffee you have every day?

I had a good friend years ago. I was out preaching for him, and he said, "Do you drink coffee?" I said, "Yes, sometimes." I did not drink it that much back then. He said, "Well, come on, I'll buy you a cup of

coffee." This was probably in the seventies or eighties. He pulled up to a coffee shop and ordered two coffees. They were five bucks each. This was back then. Was it good? Yes, it was good. Then he looked at me and said, "I get a cup of this every day." I said, "Do you realize that's 150 bucks a month just for a cup of coffee?" Wow.

When you stop and think about your pleasures and the things that you enjoy, and yet the things that you actually need, so many people let their pleasures get in their way. They are not willing to sacrifice for their families, their neighbors, or even themselves. Are you willing to give up the television? Are you willing to give up the coffee? One of the main objects for preparations.

One of the main objections to preparation is money. Someone says, “I just don’t have the money to put up a year’s worth of food. I don’t have the money to buy 2,000 rounds of ammunition. I don’t have the money to buy my medical supplies. I don’t have the money to do this and that.” The truth of the matter is that you only have what you have. Once you prioritize your time, you also have to prioritize what you buy.

When it comes to money, you can do only two things: make more or cut your expenses. Those who cannot make more can only cut their expenses. That means learning to do without and learning to sacrifice. If you are not willing to sacrifice, you are never going to build up anything.

Let me tell you a story. Alice and I just celebrated our sixty-first wedding anniversary. When we married, I started working at a job and was paid sixty-five dollars a week. You say, “That’s not much money.” It was back then. Jack Roper, a motorcycle cop and a friend of mine, had been with the city for ten years and was making only sixty dollars a week. I started out as an eighteen-year-old at sixty-five dollars a week, and then I received a five-dollar-a-week raise every quarter.

We had more money than many people, so Alice and I bought what we wanted. If I did not have the money, I charged it because I had money coming in. One day it dawned on me that all the money I was receiving was going to pay for the credit purchases I had charged, and we had nothing left to live on.

I thought I knew what to do. I would go to the bank, borrow money, consolidate all those debts, and have one payment that would be much lower. Then I would have money left over. I did exactly that. Since we were young, and since we had money left over, Alice and I went out and bought and charged other things. The next thing I knew, I owed the bank and everybody else, and we did not have enough to live on. Alice asked me, “Are you going to go to the bank and borrow some more money?”

I said, “No, I am not. We are absolutely, insanely stupid. What we are going to do is tighten our belts. We are going to do without, pay our way out of debt, and stay out of debt. From henceforth, whatever we want, we will save enough money and pay cash for it. If we do not have the cash, we will do without.”

That is exactly how we have lived the rest of our lives. I simply pointed out that, when it comes to your family and your lives, you have to organize and must have priorities. Here is the question concerning money: Will these people sacrifice? Defensive weaponry costs money. Food supply costs money. Medical supplies cost money. There is no way in the world to have everything you need without sacrificing.

I just saw a wonderful sale price on some tourniquets. I love the CAT tourniquet, and everybody ought to have two or three tourniquets everywhere you turn. But you usually cannot buy a good tourniquet for under thirty dollars. If you have six, that is 180 dollars right there. Think about your suture kits and any medical supplies. I am pointing out the fact that you had better think about sacrificing.

If you do not have a year's worth of food stored up, you should have it. If you do not have medical supplies laid up, you should have them. If you do not have plenty of ammunition laid up, you should have it. In fact, we have gotten word that prices are going to rise again this year. Why? Not only is the powder low, but all the ammunition and everything is being sent over to Ukraine and to Jerusalem, and they are fighting all these wars. Yes, it is going to go up.

It can't have to go up. So the point I am trying to make is that you have got to understand whether or not you are going to sacrifice. You

cannot get the necessary equipment or materials you need to survive as a family without sacrificing. That is all there is to it.

Proverbs 6:6 says, “Go to the ant, thou sluggard, consider her ways and be wise, which having no guide, overseer or ruler provided their meat in the summer and gather their food in the harvest. How long will thou sleep, O sluggard? When will thou rise out of thy sleep? Yet a little sleep, a little slumber, a little folding of the hands of sleep, so shall thy poverty come as one that traveleth, and thy want as an armed man.” A naughty person, a wicked man, walketh with a froward mouth. Note that he said, “Go to the ant, thou sluggard, consider her ways and be wise.” What does that ant do? That ant puts up in the summer so she can have everything during the winter.

God sends us to the insects to learn how to sacrifice, prepare, and put back. So Sanballat asks, “Will they sacrifice?” That is a good question to ask you: Are you willing to sacrifice? Are you willing to do whatever is necessary to acquire what you need to survive? It is just that simple. Here, if you would notice the fourth thing, look in verse two. Nehemiah, chapter four, verse two.

Sanballat “spake before his brethren and the army of Samaria” and said, “What do these feeble Judahites? Will they fortify themselves? Will they sacrifice?” Then he asked, “Will they make an end in a day?”

The Enemies' Third Question: 'Will They Make an End in a Day?'

In one sense, this statement was Sanballat’s assessment of what he believed was Nehemiah’s and the people’s inability to build and finish the wall. Involved in that assessment was also an implied threat. When he asked, “Will they make an end in a day?” he was saying that the work had to be done quickly if they were going to keep the feast of dedication. Sanballat knew that the work could not be completed in a day or finished in a timely manner. The threat was implied: If they did not get it done quickly, and thought Sanballat and his people would sit around and allow them to build the wall, they were mistaken.

Remember, he was speaking to the army of Samaria. In other words, they would stop it. They were not going to sit by and watch the Jews do that. Have you ever stopped and thought about this? Why was all that weaponry left in Afghanistan not brought home and given to the Americans? I have seen pictures, not only of the weaponry, but also of stacks and stacks and stacks of $100 bills in bundles that would have filled this room from floor to ceiling, left there for the Taliban. I am simply saying that Sanballat was declaring, “If you think for one minute, we are going to let you finish this, you are mistaken. If you do not do it quickly, we will intervene. We will do everything we can to stop this work.”

Look at it again in verse two: “What do these feeble Judahites? Will they fortify themselves? Will they sacrifice? Will they make an end in a day?” Then, “Will they revive the stones of the heaps of the rubble and the rubbish which are burned?” Remember, the Judahites had been in Babylonian captivity for seventy years. For seventy years the wall had been a mess. Think of all the animals under the stones, all the grass, trees, roots, and everything else in the way. Moreover, everything had been burned.

The Enemies' Fourth Question: 'Will They Revive the Stones?'

Here is what Sanballat is asking: Will they revive the rubbish? Will they revive the heaps of stone? Will they find some type of glue with which they can put these stones back together? Where in the world do they think they are going to get the stones to finish this wall? Clearly, Sanballat and his cronies were not going to help them or furnish anything for them.

If you think your government is going to furnish anything for you, you are mistaken. If you really want your government to furnish something for you, the only way I know to do it is to leave the country, cross the river illegally, come back in, and receive a $5,000 gift card, a plane ticket to wherever you want to go, and all the free medical care and education you want. Other than that, they do not give a flip about you.

When you think that these illegal immigrants in New York are getting rent-free, brand-new apartments for two years while our

homeless veterans are sleeping on the streets, and that the governor of Massachusetts has asked the citizens of Massachusetts to take these people into their homes, really? Especially when Venezuela is opening the prison doors and letting all its prisoners out so they can come to America? I do not think so. I am simply pointing out that you are not going to get help from anyone outside of the Lord and His people.

Sanballat was persuading himself and his cohorts that these Judahites faced an impossible task. It could not be done by these feeble, weak, and despised men. They could not put the stones back together or make the wall. But he overlooked one thing: the sovereign providence of God. With God, everything is possible.

Tobiah's Mockery and the Quality of Work

Tobiah the Ammonite was with him and said, “Even that which they build, if a fox go up, he shall even break down their stone wall.” Even if a fox went up—such a light-footed creature—the wall would fall down. Tobiah mocked and impugned the quality of the work being accomplished by Nehemiah.

So, the question is this: What kind of work are we going to build for our families, our friends, and our neighbors? Is it going to be a shoddy piece of work?

Years ago, when I was much younger, I started helping a man who was skilled in masonry. He was just a neighbor and a friend, and I helped him. I wasn't really getting paid. I mixed all kinds of mud for him and watched him build. One day I decided I was going to build myself a barbecue pit. I had a stone wall around it and all this kind of stuff. I mixed the mud, laid the stone, and thought I had done a pretty good job. I called my friend, and Glenn came over. He put his hand on his chin and looked at my wall. Then he took his foot, kicked it, and it all tumbled down. Then he said, "I'll build it."

What I did was the best I could do, but the best I could do was not right. The truth of the matter is this: If we do shoddy work when it comes to defending ourselves—if we buy shoddy weaponry, shoddy tourniquets, shoddy medicine, or shoddy whatever—we are going to be the ones who suffer. We are going to be the ones who fail.

Even if a fox goes up, they didn't think much of the work of Nehemiah. By the way, if you read through the book of Nehemiah, you'll find that the wall was built. When it was completed, all the people of Jerusalem walked on top of that wall, singing praises to God and thanking Him. It did not crumble, tumble, or fall.

But here's the seventh thing. I want you to watch this and think about Nehemiah's response to all this ridicule. When he was ridiculed, he did something very profound, something most of us never think about doing. If you look in Nehemiah chapter 4 and verse 4, after they ridicule and mock the people and the work, this is what Nehemiah does when he hears it. He prays: "Hear, O our God, for we are despised, and turn their reproach upon their own head, and give them for a prey in the land of captivity."

Nehemiah's Response: Imprecatory Prayer

In other words, he prays an imprecatory prayer. He asks God to return all this cursing, mockery, and ridicule upon their own heads and let them be a prey in the land of captivity. Now, I want you to turn in your Bibles over, if you would, to Psalm 9.

I could show you this in so many of the Psalms. It is so wonderful and beautiful. In Psalm 9, beginning with verse 11, we read: “Sing praises to the Lord, which dwelleth in Zion. Declare among the people his doings.” Now watch: “When he maketh inquisition for blood, he remembereth them. He forgetteth not the cry of the humble.”

Remember what Nehemiah is praying: “Have mercy upon me, O Lord. Consider my trouble, which I suffer of them that hate me. Thou that liftest me up from the gates of death, that I may show forth all thy praise in the gates of the daughter of Zion, I will rejoice in thy salvation.” Now look at this: “The heathen are sunk down in the pit which they made, in the net which they hid is their own foot taken. The Lord is known by the judgment which he executeth. The wicked is snared in the work of his own hands.” Wow. This is exactly what Nehemiah is praying. Nehemiah is saying, “Lord, let it go back on their heads. Let it come back upon them.”

So he does not get bent out of shape. He simply looks to the Lord and says, “Lord, you handle it. You take care of it.”

Let me make a couple of applications. The first thing you and I should notice and actually learn is the power of ridicule. Ridicule is mockery, derision, and taunting. Hatefulness is what it amounts to. It is malicious belittling, contemptuous scorning, jeering, and a provocative insult. Sanballat spoke of these weak and feeble people, saying they could do nothing. Then Tobiah joined in and said, “Even if a fox goes up, he’ll tear it down.”

Applications: Ignoring Ridicule and Taking Responsibility

You know what we do not understand, even with our children? It is peer pressure. Someone comes along and says to your child, “Don’t be a chicken. Do this. Everybody else is doing it.” Adults do the same things. We laugh, mock, and make fun if someone does not act exactly as somebody else does. We have never really understood the power of ridicule. When Sanballat began to ridicule and say everything he did, the next thing you know, Tobiah joined in and made it even worse. When one person starts ridiculing and mocking, it encourages someone else to ridicule and mock as well. No one wishes to be different, but we should be different.

So the truth is, ridicule always displays animosity and hatred toward those with whom they disagree. Ridicule and mockery are means of manipulation and control: if I can manipulate you, I can control you. In order to survive and live a holy and useful life, we must learn to ignore ridicule and do what is right before God and for our family.

You are responsible for your life and your family, and you must do whatever is necessary to protect them. You must make the preparations. You must learn from the ant; you must learn to work and to sacrifice and to lay up, and you must have the character to finish what you start. If you do not finish what you start, not only is it a source of mockery, but your family will suffer in the end. Not only must we do what is right, we must also trust in the Lord Jesus Christ to make what we do prevail, for without Him we can do absolutely nothing.

We are responsible to respond to any potential threat or situation in a biblical manner, making sure that we honor the Lord in it, trusting in Him and in Him alone. Here is the first biblical mandate: We are to ignore all the ridicule and mockery. We need to do what needs to be done and trust in the Lord. Think and plan ahead by the grace of God.

Father, in the name of Jesus Christ, we bow to Thee. We ask, Father, for Thy grace, mercy, goodness, and kindness in our lives. We pray, Lord, that Thou would indeed build us up in the most holy faith. Give us, Lord, the character and courage we need to do that which is right in Thy sight. Help us now, Father, and give us Thy mercy. In Christ's name we pray, Amen.

CHAPTER 2

Biblical Mandates for Defense

Part Two

Review of Previous Principles

In Nehemiah chapter 4, particularly the first six verses, we review the first lesson we learned: defense was not for weaklings, because Sanballat accused them of being weaklings.

Secondly, self-defense and biblical defense mandate character and courage to see the work through. We discussed this in Luke chapter 14 from our Lord. I want to point something out in light of that. I never mentioned it earlier, but when I say that it requires character and courage, I am reminded of an old saying Dr. Bob Jones, Sr., used to repeat: "You can borrow brains, but you can't borrow character."

When I was in the university, you saw that saying everywhere. You saw it every day that you went around. You can borrow brains, but you can't borrow character. You can borrow brains, but you can't

borrow character. So that means this: I may not know a lot of medical knowledge, but if I can get in Tony's mind and have him teach me some things, as long as I have the character to put them into application and bring them through, then I have it made. But if I do not have the character to apply knowledge, no amount of knowledge will do me any good whatsoever. You can borrow brains, but you can't borrow character.

The third principle is that defense requires sacrifice; you have to be willing to sacrifice. The fourth principle is that it requires dedication and determination. The fifth principle is that we cannot give in to ridicule. We cannot give in to mockery. We must do what needs to be done.

First Defensive Mandate: Prayer

Now look, if you would please, in verse 9 of Nehemiah chapter 4, because I want to give you seven defensive mandates. This may surprise you, but the very first defensive mandate is prayer. Look in verse 9. Nehemiah said, "Nevertheless we made our prayer unto God and set a watch against them day and night because of them." Why in the world would prayer be our first defensive mandate?

The answer is simple: if the Lord does not protect us, then we are not protected. Psalm 66:9 says that it is God who holds our soul and life. In Psalm 31:15, David said, "My times are in thy hands." Certainly, our times are in God's hands, and He does hold our soul and life. David said again in Psalm 127:1, "Except the Lord build the house, they labor in vain that build it: except the Lord keep the city, the watchman waketh but in vain." So, if you read through the book of Psalms, take note of how many times David says, "The Lord is my defense," "The Lord is my fortress," "The Lord is my rock," or "The Lord is my high place."

All these terms refer to the very defensiveness of God for His people, that is for sure. Our ultimate protection is not in our weaponry, preparations, or abilities. Our ultimate protection is in God Himself. I will not get to preach another message today that I really wanted to, but let me put it to you like this, to show you that I can be as prepared as I could possibly ever be.

Suppose I have a weapon in every corner of my bedroom, a weapon lying on my nightstand, and a weapon under my pillow. Guess what? If someone breaks into my house with the intent of murdering me and my wife, but God does not awaken me in time, all those weapons are useless. Or if I do wake up and am unable to shoot straight, they are still useless. You follow me? Our protection ultimately has to be of God and God alone.

That is why the Bible says in Proverbs 21:31, "The horse is prepared for the day of battle, but safety is of the Lord." The horse is prepared for the day of battle, but safety is of the Lord. Prayer for safety and deliverance means relying upon God, trusting in God, and recognizing His sovereignty and His providence. Just as I went and preached yesterday in Milan, two to three hours away, I asked the Lord for safe travels there and safe travels back. I realized He must protect, and certainly that is true.

David prayed many prayers, and you will find a lot of them in the book of Psalms. In Psalm 34:4, he said, "I sought the Lord and He heard me and delivered me from all of my fears." In Psalm 66:19, he said, "But verily God hath heard me; He hath attended to the voice of my prayers."

Now, I want to show you how this works together. Hold Nehemiah chapter 4, but turn back in your Bibles to 2 Chronicles chapter 13. In this chapter, there was a war between Israel and Judah. It is amazing how the northern kingdom often fought against the southern kingdom as well. Israel had fallen into idolatry, worshiping the golden calves that Jeroboam had built. Jeroboam, the king of Israel, came against Abijah, who was the king of Judah.

In 2 Chronicles 13:3, we read: "And Abijah set the battle in array with an army of valiant men of war, even 400,000 chosen men." So Judah had 400,000 men. "Jeroboam also set the battle in array against him with 800,000 men, chosen men, being mighty men of valor." Thus Judah was outnumbered two to one, facing an army twice its size and composed of mighty men of valor.

Just stop and think about this. Seemingly, Judah was going to be overrun. They were going to be devastated. But although Judah was outnumbered two to one, yet the Bible tells us that Judah prevailed

and won the battle. It was a very decisive battle because they literally slaughtered the Israelites. In verse 17, we read: “And Abijah and his people slew them with a great slaughter.” So there fell down slain of Israel 500,000 chosen men.

Can you imagine going out to battle with 800,000 men and having 500,000 of them slain? Here is the question: Why did Judah prevail? Verse 18 says: “Thus the children of Israel were brought under at that time, and the children of Judah prevailed.” Why? “Because they relied upon the Lord God of their fathers.” In other words, they had prayed, and they relied upon God. Trusting in the Lord and relying upon Him means that He is your protection. Their victory was not explained by their numbers, but by their reliance upon the Lord God of their fathers.

And by the way, trusting in the Lord and relying upon Him does not mean that you do not have to fight. They had to fight. At the same time, they were trusting Him and looking to Him for victory. You are not trusting in your flesh or in your abilities; you are trusting in Him. Let me give you a quote by Adam Clarke. He said this:

“The strongest confidence in the protection and favor of God does not preclude the use of all or any of the means of self-preservation and defense, which His providence has put in our power. While God works in us to will and to do, we should proceed to willing through the power He has given us to will, and we should proceed to action through the power He has given us to act. We cannot will but through God’s power; we cannot act but through God’s strength. The power and the use of it are two distinct things. We may have the power to will and not will, when they have the power to do and not act; therefore, says the apostle, seeing God has wrought in you these powers, you work out your own salvation with fear and trembling.” He is not saying that you have to save yourself, but that you have to do what God has put in you. If God puts it in you, then you should bring it out.

Prayer, then, is absolutely mandatory in defense. If I am in trouble, I am going to be praying, and I will certainly be praying if somebody is shooting at me or trying to attack my family. The very first biblical mandate for self-defense is prayer. The second biblical mandate for defense is situational awareness.

Second Defensive Mandate: Situational Awareness

Look back in Nehemiah chapter four. “Nevertheless, we made our prayer to God,” verse nine, “and set a watch against them.” That is situational awareness. They had not only prayed; they actually acted. They set a watch.

Although they trusted in God for deliverance, that did not mean they did not have to pay attention or be aware of their surroundings. Our Lord told His disciples in Matthew chapter 26 and verse 41, “Watch and pray that ye enter not into temptation. The spirit indeed is willing, but the flesh is weak.” You not only pray, but you also act. Notice again in verse nine: “Nevertheless, we made our prayer unto our God and set a watch against them day and night because of them.”

In other words, they said, “We’re not going to be caught by surprise. We’re going to have sentries on duty day and night. We’re going to be aware of our situation.” I am much afraid today that most people are easily caught off guard and surprised because most of us do not have situational awareness. How many times do we pull up to a convenience store, park, and just walk in?

We never look around in the parking lot or inside the store before we go in. We do not do that with banks, motels, or anything else because we are not aware of our surroundings. I watched a woman walking by, working on her phone, step into an open manhole. How in the world do people not kill themselves?

Hardly anyone is paying any attention whatsoever. I mentioned earlier cognitive dissonance. Cognitive dissonance occurs when a person holds two contradictory beliefs at the same time. You could say, “Brother Weaver, I believe everything you have taught today. You have showed me scripture after scripture after scripture. I know what you are telling me is true. I know it is biblical, but we are never going to be in a situation where we are going to need it. It has never happened here before, so therefore I conclude it is probably never, ever going to happen again.” Let us be honest: we have cognitive dissonance.

Another example is when we see all these people illegally coming into our country, all young military-age men, and say, “Oh, they are

just refugees. They are just looking for a new life." Really? That is cognitive dissonance. When we have been threatened over and over and over, that is cognitive dissonance. It is when we say, "We have got the best politicians that money can buy, and they are never going to betray us. They are not going to do anything to harm us." Really? Everything they have done is to harm us. Just look at COVID—not just the vaccinations, but the very fact that it was developed in our own country before it was ever sent to China. Now also the CIA and the FBI have already been linked to all of this stuff. David Martin has all kinds of lawsuits against these people because of it. I am simply pointing out that when we think nothing like this is ever going to happen, most people are so programmed by their TVs, they have been brainwashed, and they think that nothing will ever, ever happen.

Alert to a Surprise Attack

The truth is that most Christians do not even watch and pray. We will pray some, but we do not really watch or pay attention. There is no situational awareness in our lives, not only for our safety and defense, but even spiritually speaking. We are not looking out for where we will be attacked. I am simply pointing out that here in the world, the world gets the best of us because we are not aware of what the world can do and will do. We think we will never have to be in a position where we must fight and defend our lives or the lives of our family. If you think that, you are just mistaken.

You are indeed washed thoroughly with cognitive dissonance. Now, here is the third aspect of a biblical defense mandate: to be alert to a surprise attack. Look at verse 11: "And our adversaries said, They shall not know, neither see till we come in the midst of them and slay them and cause the work to cease." We are talking about a surprise attack. Surprise is a very strong element in war. If one can surprise his enemy, he catches his enemy off guard.

Third Defensive Mandate: Alertness to Surprise Attack

An excellent illustration of this is when General George Washington defeated the Hessians in the Battle of Trenton, New Jersey. He knew

that the Hessians, who were Germans hired by George III to fight against the colonists, would be drinking themselves drunk in celebration of Christmas. Washington crossed the Delaware River on the night of December 25, 1776, and attacked the Hessians early on the morning of December 26. After a brief battle, two-thirds of the Hessians were captured. They were totally surprised and caught off guard, and they lost the battle while the Americans won.

Of course, that stimulated the war for independence as well. There is another excellent book, The Art of War, written by Sun Tzu, a Chinese warrior. It is filled with good military information. One of his sayings was this: “In conflict, direct confrontation will lead to engagement, and surprise will lead to victory.” Understand this: when somebody is surprised, usually you have one of two responses. You either fear, or you freeze.

Have you ever had someone jump out at you when you were not expecting it? I made the mistake one time of slipping up behind Alice. I was not expecting her response. Sometimes she does not freeze. People either become frightened and run, or they simply freeze in place. When one freezes, it is because of unbelief. You are standing there: “I can’t believe this is happening. And I certainly can’t believe this is happening to me.” But it is happening.

When you do not have situational awareness and are caught off guard by the element of surprise, you are absolutely astounded; you either freeze or, in fear, run.

There is a verse in Jeremiah, chapter 48, verse 4: “Kerioth is taken.” By the way, Kerioth is the town associated with Judas Iscariot. The word “Iscariot” means “man of Kerioth.” So we are talking about the town of Judas. Listen to this: “Kerioth is taken.”

“Now the strongholds are surprised.” Jeremiah goes on to say, “And the mighty men's hearts in Moab at that day shall be as the heart of a woman in her pains.” What can a woman delivering a child in agony and pain do to fight? Absolutely nothing. When God surprises His enemies, that is how they will be. Oftentimes, our enemies use the element of surprise against us. Especially the communists, they always like to surprise you when you are in church, at home, or asleep—when you are in your own environment.

They try to create as much terror in you as possible, because these are the places where you are the safest, or at least believe you are safest. That is why they usually attack in churches as well.

Fourth Defensive Mandate: Awareness of Those Who Fraternize with the Enemy

Here is the fourth biblical mandate for defense: we must be aware of those who fraternize with the enemy. In verse 12, it says, “And it came to pass that when the Jews which dwelt by them”—Sanballat, Tobiah, the Arabians, and all these other people—“they came, they said unto us ten times, From all places which you shall return unto us, they will be upon you.” Ten times they warned, “They will be upon you.”

A few scholars take this verse positively, saying these Jews were only bringing intelligence to Nehemiah and the men working with him. However, most scholars understand it negatively: these Jews living close to Sanballat, Tobiah, and the others were trying to dissuade their brethren from the work by repeating the enemies’ threats. They were fearful, even more fearful than those with Nehemiah, because they lived close to the enemy.

The enemies had already threatened to come in and slay them. These people living close to Sanballat and the armies of Samaria kept saying, “You can’t get away, you can’t escape; they’re going to kill every one of you.”

Albert Barnes says, "The Jews who dwelt by the Samaritan border came to Jerusalem and tried to withdraw their contingents of workmen from the work, representing to them the impending danger and saying, 'You must return to your homes and so escape.'" John Gill said, "From all places which you shall return unto us, they will be upon you. Come which way you will, so that you are in the utmost danger from all places where you are repairing and rebuilding. Return to us, that you may enjoy peace and prosperity with us under Sanballat, and escape the wrath and fury you are now exposed to. And from all places we come that you may return to us." So these Jews, though they pretended to be friends to their brethren, seemed to be in friendship with their enemies. They sought to

discourage them, weaken their minds, and cause them to cease building.

And, Lord, you have to be aware of these people who are frightful, afraid, and fraternizing with the enemy. There will always be fearful individuals willing to compromise for their own safety and security, and they could care less about you or anyone else.

They are only interested in themselves. They are not interested in the work, truth, righteousness, peace, or principle. The only thing they are interested in is themselves. Ignorance and a lack of character are only conducive to fear. In light of this, understand that there will always be traitors. There will be men who will sell their souls for their own monetary advantage, power, prominence, or prestige.

You do not believe that? Just look at Washington, D.C. Look at Atlanta. Look in any state capitol that you want to. You probably could not find enough congressmen to number on one hand who really care about the Constitution, liberty, and freedom. You know the scandals that the Biden family has been through, and the scandals that all these congressmen have been through. I want to ask you a question: How is it that you can go to Congress and make $80,000 to $100,000 a year, and in four or five years become a multimillionaire? How is that possible, especially when you are spending millions just to get there, just to win an election? I read the other day that, if Nancy Pelosi died, she would leave her daughter five different mansions, a jet, and I forget how many millions.

The Fifth Defensive Mandate

Look around, because there are people who will fraternize with the enemy for their own benefit. There will be people who will be absolute traitors just for their own benefit as well. Here is the fifth defensive mandate: We need to be prepared to fight and to be encouraged in the Lord. Look at what Nehemiah said in verses 13 and 14:

Fifth Defensive Mandate: Preparedness to Fight and Encouragement in the Lord

"Therefore said I in the higher places behind the wall, I even set the people after their families with their swords, with their spears and with their bows. And I looked and I rose up and said unto the nobles and to the rulers and to the rest of the people, Be not you afraid of them. Remember the Lord, which is great and terrible, and fight for your brethren, your sons and your daughters, your wives and your houses."

Let me make some obvious deductions from these verses. First, in order to fight, you must have weapons to fight with. You must also be trained in the use of those weapons. Weapons are useless if they do not work, if you do not know how to operate them, or if you cannot quickly, easily, and efficiently clear malfunctions so they will work. If you cannot get your weapon out in a timely manner, you are not prepared to use it. If you cannot shoot straight and accurately most of the time, you are not prepared to use your weapon. That is all there is to it.

Note something else in this passage. The wall gave them a defensive position; therefore, Nehemiah set the people behind the wall for their safety and protection. Defensive positions should be planned and built. Think about your home and your land. If your family were attacked by ten or fifteen men, you could not simply hide in the house. Most modern houses will not stop a bullet, unless it happens to hit a stud.

If it is a .50 cal, the stud will be blown to pieces and the bullet will keep going. Most houses are not designed to be spared by fire. I am simply pointing out the fact that Nehemiah put the people behind the wall because it was already prepared and was a defensive position.

Look at verse 13 again. Here is the third observation: "Therefore, said I in the lower places behind the wall and on the higher places, I even set the people after their families." The whole family could fight.

Men, does your wife know how to shoot? Does your wife know how to use your weapons? Do your children know how to shoot? Do

your children know how to use your weapons? You say, “But I can use them.” Suppose you become incapacitated or are killed. It was the families that fought together.

I wish I had time to tell you about some of the women in the American Revolution and some of the women in the War of Northern Aggression. You would be absolutely astounded when you read some of their lives, and how one woman held about 10 or 15 English soldiers captive until her husband got home. These were families.

Now note verse 14: “And I looked up and rose and said unto the nobles and to the rulers and to the rest of the people, Be not ye afraid of them. Remember the Lord, which is great and terrible, and fight for your brethren, your sons and your daughters, your wives, and your houses.” The very first command is, Do not be afraid of them. Fear paralyzes.

Go through the Bible and underline every time God says, “Fear not.” Proverbs 29:25 says, “The fear of man bringeth a snare, but whoso putteth his trust in the Lord shall be saved.” David said, “I will not fear what man can do unto me.” If you truly believe in the Lord Jesus Christ, the worst that man could do to you is send you into the presence of the Lord Jesus Christ. That is the worst. The fear of man brings a snare.

This passage includes a second command: remember the Lord. That means not only trusting in and relying upon Him, but remembering what He is capable of. What did He do to the Egyptians? What did He do to the Hittites, the Philistines, and the Jebusites? When you remember the Lord, you remember His power, His grace, His mercy, and everything that He has done in times past.

The third command is this: “And fight for your brethren, your sons and your daughters and your wives, and your houses.” God gave Canaan to Israel, but Israel had to fight. God gave David victory after victory, but David had to fight. There are some things that cannot be achieved without fighting. I like what Tim Larkin said: “Violence is not always the answer. But when it is, the answer is the only answer.”

Did you know that God is a man of war? The Bible says in Exodus chapter 15 in verse three, “The Lord is a man of war. The Lord is His name.” Isaiah 42 in verse 13 says, “The Lord shall go forth as a mighty man. He shall stir up jealousy like a man of war. He shall cry. Yea, He shall roar.”

"He shall prevail against His enemies." The Lord is a man of war.

Now, here's a truth that has to be grasped. Once you understand that God has commanded you to fight, you must know how to fight, be determined to fight, and know when to fight and when not to fight. When you are prepared to fight, know how to fight, and are willing to fight, most of the time you do not have to fight. Verse 15 says, "And it came to pass when our enemies heard that it was known unto us, and God had brought their counsel to naught, that we returned all of us to the wall, everyone to his own work."

Nehemiah had the people ready and in a defensive position. He had said, We will fight. When the enemy discovered that these people would not roll over, bow down, give up, or give in, they turned around and went back. Here is the sixth defensive mandate: always err on the side of caution when your enemies are routed.

Sixth Defensive Mandate: Err on the Side of Caution When Enemies Are Routed

Look at verses 16 and 17: "And it came to pass after that time forth that half of my servants wrought in the work and the other half of them held both the spears and the shields and the bows and the habergeons; and the rulers were behind all the house of Judah. They which builded on the wall and they that bare burdens with those that laded it, everyone with one of his hands wrought in the work and with the other hand held a weapon."

Always err on the side of caution. The enemy had supposedly given up and left, but Nehemiah would not trust them. They would stay prepared and alert, and if they needed to fight, they would fight. They kept their weapons with them and on them. They would not be caught off guard or surprised. Now, I'm going to tell you something.

Since we are in Georgia, according to law, you have a constitutional right to carry your weapon wherever you go. There are

some exceptions, I understand, such as federal courthouses and courthouses generally. There had also been a prohibition against carrying in the post office. However, one judge just this past week ruled that weapons could not be banned from the post office, because that was unconstitutional. We will see where that goes. The truth of the matter is, you have a constitutional right to carry. You ought to carry. You ought always to be carrying. I am simply pointing out that it is your right. It is a constitutional right. It is a biblical right.

And so you have to ask yourself, do you care? And you should. I will never forget preaching in South Carolina. There was a banquet first, and I was to preach afterward. One lady was there with a son who had an affliction. While we were eating, the young man had an episode; he was having some type of seizure.

I jumped up and ran back to him along with some others. I helped pick him up from the floor. Someone else had already called for an ambulance, and we were getting him to the door. The mother said, "My purse, my purse." I said, "I'll get it for you." It was one of those long, heavy purses, wide, with just two handles. When I picked it up, I looked inside and saw a pistol right on top. I said, "Yes, ma'am, here it is." I made sure she got that purse. The truth of the matter is, it is a constitutional right and a biblical right. We have a right to carry.

Seventh Defensive Mandate: Have a Rallying Point

Now, listen carefully to this one. Look at verses 18 and 20, because here is the seventh defensive mandate: we must have a rallying point. In verse 18, he says, "For the builders, every one had his sword girded by his side, and so builded." Then he says, "And he that sounded the trumpet was by me. And I said unto the nobles, and to the rulers, and to the rest of the people, The work is great and large, and we are separated upon the wall, one far from another. In what place therefore ye hear the sound of the trumpet, resort ye thither unto us: our God shall fight for us." They were separated, but they had a trumpet. Whenever they heard its sound, they were to come there.

Now, we don't have trumpets, but we do have handheld radios. Right now, we do have the use of cell phones. But the point I'm trying to make is there was a rallying point. Now, a rallying point could mean several things. A rallying point, first of all, could refer to a point where a breach is about to be made. In other words, those who are defending that particular point are insufficient to hold that point. And a rallying point, a rallying cry could come, and that means the others who are not fighting as fiercely or have such a heavy force against them, they can come and help the point where it is about to be breached. So that could be a rallying point. Lord, they come and help stem the tide and clear up those who are fighting fiercely at that particular point. Now, let me point out the fact that you must understand that this is one of the rallying points. Now, another rallying point is this.

That would be where you have to move to a secondary position. So, if we're defending, say, at the gate, and we get overwhelmed, or the force is too great, we might meet back at the tree line. That would be a rallying point. In other words, it's a secondary position. It's a secondary position to fight from. So, therefore, you're talking about your own property. You need to look at primary positions, secondary positions, sometimes even tertiary or third positions, that is for sure. But also a rallying point could also be a point where you gather together to initiate an attack or a counterattack upon the enemy.

So, notice if you would, as you read through Nehemiah chapter 4, you have all of these biblical mandates for defense. And this is exactly what Nehemiah did. I'm going to make this statement. I'll probably make it tomorrow while I'm preaching, because I'm not going to be able to finish this series. But I will tell you this: According to the Scripture, weaponry may be used to defend the church of God and the people of God, but it cannot be used to extend the church of God or the kingdom of God. We're not conquistadors. We're not going around with a sword and saying you either bow or else. No, no. But God oftentimes uses physical means when the church is attacked. So let me make some scripture and some applications for this. So according to our text, this last principle should be well understood. Everything that can be done should be done to secure defense and safety.

Application: Do Whatever Needs to Be Done

Look at verses 21 and 23 again. He said, “So we labored in the work, and half of them held the spears from the rising of the morning till the stars appeared. Likewise, at the same time said I unto the people, Let everyone with his servant lodge within Jerusalem, that in the night they may be a guard to us and labor on the day.” He continued, “So neither I, nor my brethren, nor my servants, nor the men of the guard which followed me, none of us put off our clothes, saving that everyone put them off for the washing.”

What is he saying? He is saying that they learned to look out for and guard one another. They gave up luxury, banded together, and slept in the same area for their defense. They did not even take off their clothes except for washing.

In other words, you have to do whatever needs to be done to protect yourself and your family. If you have to sleep with your brogans on, sleep with your brogans on. There is nothing wrong with that; you can put on a clean sheet. If you have to sleep hugging that AR-15, sleep hugging that AR-15. Do what needs to be done.

I will tell this story about my grandson, my baby grandson. When he was a young boy, he was very squeamish. If he saw someone vomit, he vomited. If he saw blood, it threw him. I had a cow that was down, bloated, and full of gas. If you do not do something, they die. I had a needle about this long, so I told him, “Tripp, you have to help me with this cow. I am going to have to put this needle through her ribs, into her stomach, to let this gas out.”

He said, “Papa, I cannot do that.” I looked at him and said, “Yes, you can, and you will do it. You have to learn. You have to do what needs to be done, period.” He helped me hold that cow. I put the needle in, let the gas out, and the cow survived. Most of you know that Tripp became a nurse before he became a logger and ended up marrying a nurse.

And so now he tells me what I need and what I do not need in some of the medical areas. I am just saying, folks, listen: you have to do what needs to be done. That is all there is to it.

Years ago, I was plowing, and my family had all gone to dinner while I was trying to finish. I had a sweep on the back, and the sweeps were worn until they came to a very, very sharp point. While I was trying to hurry and clean them off, I stepped right into the rear of one of those sweeps. It gouged into my leg and took a hunk of flesh out. Blood was going everywhere.

So I called Alice and said, "Tell your mother, who was an RN, a nurse, an LPN, to come over here, and tell my sister, who was a registered nurse and head nurse in the operating room, to come over here. I need them."

They came over, and I showed them my leg. They said, "Oh, you need to go to the emergency room." I said, "No, I do not need to go to the emergency room. I have the lidocaine right here, the suture material right here, and the Betadine to wash it out with. You sew it up. You take care of it." They said, "Well, we do not want to do that."

So I said, "Let me tell you something. Either you are going to do it or I am going to do it. I cannot do it as well bending down as you can do it. So do it!" And they did. Guess what? I do not even have a scar. No scar there.

I am just saying, you have to learn to do what you need to do. It is that simple. You have to say, "I am going to do it. I will look out for my husband. I will look out for my wife. I will look out for my children, my brother, and my sister. I will do whatever needs to be done." You have to understand these biblical mandates, this biblical mindset. God gives us principles and precepts that we are to live by, die by, and fight by.

Do you really believe that the Bible is the inspired Word of God and that it is profitable? Second Timothy chapter three, verses 15 and 17, says, "All Scripture is given by inspiration of God and is profitable for doctrine, for correction, for reproof, for instruction in righteousness. Why? That the man of God may be perfect, thoroughly furnished unto every good work." Do you really believe that everything you need, that you might live a holy, righteous, godly life, is found there? That means this: you must have a biblical mindset and understand these mandates. You must be determined,

and you must have the character, consistency, and courage to do whatever needs to be done. It is just that simple.

The more you study and apply the Word of God, the more determined and courageous you will be, and the more character you will have. You will understand that God is a God of truth, justice, and righteousness. The righteous Lord loveth righteousness, the Bible says, and judgment and justice are the habitation of His throne.

Concluding Exhortation and Prayer

We are facing some very serious times. We had better understand these mandates and prepare our hearts, our lives, our families, and our children. If we want to survive, we must learn to help each other, band together, and do whatever needs to be done. Everyone has a different opinion about some things. Wonderful. Have all the opinions you want, but do not try to force them on everyone else.

If there's a Bible principle, fine. We'll all bow to the Word of God. But we're not going to fight each other. There are too many enemies to fight. And the truth of the matter is, if you understand the biblical doctrine of illumination, I could teach all day long and all night long, but if God doesn't open your eyes, you're never going to see it or understand it anyhow. So what I need to do is keep teaching and praying that God will open your eyes. What you would need to do is keep teaching and praying till God opened my eyes. We're not going to fight over little things. We've got too many enemies.

We can't take the attitude, "Well, I don't like this attitude, this so and so." That's all right. Deal with that attitude later, but do what needs to be done, biblically and scripturally, for God's honor and glory and for our good.

Let's pray. Father, in the name of Jesus Christ, we ask for your help. We ask for your grace. We ask for your mercy. Teach us, O Lord. Build us up in the most holy faith. And Lord, help us to prepare according to your word. In the name of Jesus Christ, we pray. Amen.

Turn back to 1 Samuel 17. I'd like to remind you of 1 Thessalonians 5:21, which says, "Prove all things, hold fast that which is good." Clearly, a passage once again speaking of spiritual

things. In 1 Samuel 17, we go to the familiar passage of David and Goliath. Notice verse 38: "...and Saul armed David with his armor, and he put a helmet of brass upon his head. Also he armed him with a coat of mail." And David girded his sword upon his armor, and he assayed to go.

Warren Luke: Prove All Things, Hold Fast That Which Is Good

That is, he attempted to go. He tried to go, for he had not proved it. He had not tested this armor; he had not tested whether he could do it. David said unto Saul, "I cannot go with these, for I have not proved them." That is, he had not tested them. And David put them off him. David attempted to go to fight, but he had not tested that equipment.

“Prove all things, hold fast that which is good.” Was the armor deficient? Was the weaponry of poor quality? No, this was the king’s armor and the king’s weapon, the best money could buy. But David had not practiced with them, trained with them, tested them, or proved them. He put them away and rather went with his sling. David had practiced with and tested his sling, which was, we might say, an inferior weapon, but he had proved it. “Prove all things, hold fast that which is good.” David held fast to that sling with which he was accurate, and truly he won the day.

As a little show-and-tell, consider this Kel-Tec Sub 2000. It is an actual weapon, so I will be careful with it. The bolt is locked back, and it is in fact clear. This is simply a 9mm, and it is a fine gun. I paid $300 for it about 20 years ago, and I have had it ever since.

What can this weapon do? If I have proved this weapon, I can rely on it. You might ask, “What if I went against an Abrams tank with this little peashooter?” As long as the Abrams tank has a dead battery and cannot function, I will take this trusty old peashooter and take out the tank, one by one, if it has failed in its course, if it has mechanically failed.

Let us not despise inferior weapons merely because something grander or more glorious is available if it does not work. Saul’s armor did not work for David; the sling won the day. Therefore, we

must prove these things. The Kel-Tec Sub 2000 is only one example. We all have many different weapons, and there are a thousand examples we could consider. Notice this: my Kel-Tec Sub 2000 is a 9mm, and I own 9mm handguns. That is my handgun round. I do not have .40s or .45s.

The Kel-Tec takes a Glock 17 magazine, and my only handguns are Glock 17s. Therefore, any and all of my Glocks take the same magazine. I can have a chest full of magazines in my pouches and use them either with my Glock 17 handgun or with my Kel-Tec Sub 2000. The question is this: it is kind of a rifle, with a longer barrel. How accurate is it?

I need to ask all these questions. It is kind of made out of plastic, and it has a weird situation for closing the bolt, opening it, and bringing it on a catch. Is this reliable in battle? How can I know? I need to test it and prove it. I need to take it to the range, put some ammunition through it, and find out what it is like.

Twenty years ago, when I bought it, I did shoot it. I can tell you this: it is an iron pipe built in the construction. In order to shoot it, I want to bring some cheek meat up against it to get on the sights, but if I do that, I cannot actually see through the sights. I have to put it against my bone to get my eyes low enough. When you shoot it, even with the 9mm, this pipe hits your bone. This is a painful gun to shoot. You would not know that unless you tested it and proved it. This does not really work for me. It is mine; I paid for it. But what do I do with it? Maybe this is a fine weapon for a younger man. Maybe I can give it to one of my sons, whose smaller face can get on it. I can teach him the reloads and the malfunctions and get him on this weapon. I need to know what it can do and what it cannot do. There is no offense to the Kel-Tec Sub 2000: you need to know its abilities as well as its weaknesses. It is simply a firearm.

If you notice, it even folds in half. You can put it in a backpack. It is kind of cool. Is this a toy, or is it actually a real weapon of war? These questions ought to be answered. I need to prove it. I need to prove what is good and hold fast to it. I will give you one more example. This is a CFP 90. These were all the rage back in the early 2000s. A CFP 90 on eBay: one hundred bucks. This is the best backpack money could buy. There was a separate compartment at

the bottom so you could put your sleeping bag there. If anyone has packed a backpack, you know that if your sleeping bag goes in the bottom of the main part, pulling it out disrupts all your other packing. In order to put a tactical backpack together, you need to know how to layer it.

What items are you going to get to first? These are all things you have to practice. Prove your system and your layering. Test it, practice it, and hold fast when you get a good program. I am not telling you how to layer it; I am saying you need to practice it.

I bought this twenty-five years ago off eBay. I spent my hard-earned money and put it in storage. Recently, I pulled it out. I knew I had a CFP 90, the finest backpack money could buy, which had been in storage for twenty-five years. Would you know it, it had actually broken the plastic here in storage; it had rotted out. I am going to need to repair this. I would not know that unless I got it out, looked at it, tested it, and improved it. It can be repaired, and I will repair it, but I needed to know that if I had gone after this in the day of battle, I would have found it broken. This is not the time to find that out!

We need to be going through our things: prove all things, test all things, and hold fast that which is good. Buying the preparations and the equipment is indeed the first step. What must come next is testing and proving. Put your hands on it. Take it out to the range. It has to be used, tested, and proven. Hold fast, relying on that which has been proven successful and good.

To finish out the passage, notice verse 40: “And he,” that is David, “took his staff in his hand and chose him five smooth stones out of the brook and put them in a shepherd's bag which he had.” David selected five smooth stones—not random stones, but fine stones for flinging through the air, hand-selected smooth stones out of the brook. Why five stones? It took only one stone to defeat the giant. David knew God would give him the victory, so why take four stones he did not need? Why choose any stones at all? Why not just pray the giant down, as we alluded to earlier? Because David was being consistent with tactical preparations. The Lord would give him the victory, but it was prudent and appropriate for David to get reloads.

If the first one missed, he would be ready again in the victory of the Lord. David was consistent. He was faithful to proper military tactical process and procedure. It makes tactical sense to have reloads, and it makes preparation sense for us to store up ammunition. There is a foolish group within the church who just want to pray it all away. That is not what Scripture demands of us. We are fully reliant on the Lord, but it cannot just be praying it out.

We are to prepare. We are to practice and prove that which is good. Our God, the Lord of War, will give us the victory, but we must also be consistent and sensible with our tactical equipment and preparations. Again, the Lord can multiply the loaves and fishes. The Lord can multiply the bullets and magazines. In our Lord's grace and victory, He might give us thirty-one rounds in that AR-15.

I counted thirty and still had the miracle. Thank the Lord, because here is the man charging at me and I have expended it. But the Lord gave the extra one. Let Him do it. David's victory and ours will always be firstly spiritual. But we must be faithful to the physical equipment, physical preparation, physical accumulation, and tactical action. In all this concept of prepping, purchasing, and preparing, prove all things and hold fast that which is good. Surely we need to purchase these things.

Whether it is food, boil some of those beans. Taste them. Get some of those freeze-dried meals, cook them up, and give them a taste. Do they need salt? What do you need to add to them? Prove all things. Test all things. Hold fast to that which is good. Test theology, this theology that has been given to us. Prove it. Prove the Lord your God, and hold fast to that which is good.

Source Notes

Chapter 1: Biblical Mandates for Defense Part 1
JW00121 | SermonAudio

Chapter 2: Biblical Mandates for Defense Part 2
JW00124 | SermonAudio

Topical Index

Chapter titles and section headings are listed with the pages on which they begin.

A

Alert to a Surprise Attack p. 28

Application: Do Whatever Needs to Be Done p. 37

Applications: Ignoring Ridicule and Taking Responsibility p. 20

B

Biblical Mandates for Defense p. 5

Biblical Mandates for Defense Part 1 p. 5

Biblical Mandates for Defense Part 2 p. 23

C

Concluding Exhortation and Prayer p. 39

F

Fifth Defensive Mandate: Preparedness to Fight and Encouragement in the Lord p. 32

First Defensive Mandate: Prayer p. 24

Fourth Defensive Mandate: Awareness of Those Who Fraternize with the Enemy p. 30

I

Introduction to Nehemiah's Context p. 5

N

Nehemiah's Response: Imprecatory Prayer p. 19

R

Review of Previous Principles p. 23

S

Second Defensive Mandate: Situational Awareness p. 27

Seventh Defensive Mandate: Have a Rallying Point p. 35

Sixth Defensive Mandate: Err on the Side of Caution When Enemies Are Routed p. 34

T

The Enemies' First Question: 'Will They Fortify Themselves?' p. 10
The Enemies' Fourth Question: 'Will They Revive the Stones?' p. 17
The Enemies' Second Question: 'Will They Sacrifice?' p. 13
The Enemies' Third Question: 'Will They Make an End in a Day?' p. 16
The Fifth Defensive Mandate p. 31
The Nature of Opposition to God's Work p. 7
Third Defensive Mandate: Alertness to Surprise Attack p. 28
Tobiah's Mockery and the Quality of Work p. 18

W

Warren Luke: Prove All Things, Hold Fast That Which Is Good p. 40

Scripture Index

Scripture references identified in chapter readings, headings, and manuscript text are listed with their page locations.

1 Samuel

1 Samuel 17 p. 39, p. 40

2 Chronicles

2 Chronicles 13:3 p. 25

Nehemiah

Nehemiah 2 p. 10, p. 11

Psalm

Psalm 9 p. 19

Psalm 31:15 p. 24

Psalm 34:4 p. 25

Psalm 66 p. 11

Psalm 66:19 p. 25

Psalm 66:9 p. 24

Psalm 127:1 p. 24

Proverbs

Proverbs 6:6 p. 16

Proverbs 21:31 p. 25

Proverbs 29:25 p. 33

Isaiah

Isaiah 42 p. 34

Luke

Luke 14:28 p. 12

John

John 15 p. 9

1 Thessalonians

1 Thessalonians 5:21 p. 39, p. 40

WEAVER BIBLE COLLEGE

Your companion study guide

Biblical Mandates for Defense

Follow the Scripture references, reflect on each lesson, and use the written-response space to apply what you learn.

Scan to open the matching study guide

Downloadable PDF | 8.5 x 11 inches
No sign-in required

studyguides.weaverbiblecollege.com

If you cannot scan the code, visit the address above and search for this book by title.