

In **verse 3 TLV** we see **action**. "Prayed" and "stationed guards". This is a two-fold, double barrier strategy.

While I am praying, you stand guard. There is a misconception that prayer, waiting or watching is "passive"- that couldn't any farther from the truth! Have you ever stayed up all night waiting for your teenager to get home? Technically that is waiting and watching. How does your mind and emotions feel? Are they at rest? How does your body feel losing sleep? Watching and praying is **work**. It is very active. Have you ever read this verse:

**"IN WEARINESS AND PAINFULNESS, IN WATCHINGS OFTEN, IN HUNGER AND THIRST,
IN FASTINGS OFTEN, IN COLD AND NAKEDNESS."** - 2 Corinthians 11:27

The Greek word for "watchings" - agrypnéō, means, "no sleeping; (figuratively) staying vigilant (alert, attentive), i.e. without any unnecessary "time off." Many translations use this phrase in it's place, "endured sleepless nights", as if Paul had insomnia or in persecution or hunger he had trouble sleeping, but if you look at this text his "watchings" are in the same sentence as his "fastings" meaning it was voluntarily. He fasted food and he fasted sleep.

What Nehemiah and the children of Israel did was and offensive action, "Nevertheless we made our prayer to our God, and because of them we set a watch against them day and night." It was a resolution. The impact that the opposition had on Nehemiah? It increased his RESOLVE. The night watch was established after opposition arose. See, the church today in America is now receiving a little opposition, and frankly, dare I say, it might be good for us? Being challenged on your beliefs makes you really look deeply on the inside. What do you really believe? What does the Bible really say?

The workers were challenged by the locals, the 'trials' or 'accusations' didn't cause Nehemiah fear. His response was to get more organized and set a night & day watch. What really stood out to me in this was that God used opposition to set them in position with even more resolve. Typically, opposition brings discouragement, fear, or weakening to us, but in this case it was the opposite.

An interesting thought, would the night watchmen have been established if there was never a threat in the first place? The security of the city was a big deal, and in the past the walls didn't remain, they obviously needed more security and more resolve. It looks to me like God used this opposition to their benefit in the end.

Here we see that security didn't happen until after there is a threat. If there wasn't the opposition, they wouldn't have set a watch. "Watchmen" were security guards. Setting the watchmen on the wall, though an offensive measure, was not preventative, it was dictated by the circumstance. The towers were build for watchmen. The crows nests, the lighthouses... they were built and designed after many shipwrecks. Practically speaking, it is "incidents" that lead to policies being put in place. So we should not fear or be troubled by opposition, we should look for the way it helps up organize and strengthen areas we may have missed.

