

Belaglik - Rory Dyer

4 *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? 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—if even a fox climbed up on it, he would break down their wall of stones!”*

⁴ *Hear us, O 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.*

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 men of Ashdod heard that the repairs to Jerusalem’s walls had gone ahead and that the gaps were being closed, they were very angry. 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. - Neh 4:1-9*

Whenever you make a decision for God there will be opposition. In Nehemiah 4 we see how the accusations begin to pile up from Sanballat & Tobiah. What are you doing? Will you restore the wall? Will you offer sacrifices? Will you finish in a day? Can you bring the stones back to life?

If you are going to build God’s way it will seem ridiculous / “belaglik” to the world and you need to be prepared for when the accusations come.

The seemingly ridiculous request from God to us, in an economic crisis in South Africa, is to build a building that will serve as a base for all that He wants to do in and through 3Ci. By doing this we are not investing in brick and mortar, we are investing in people. Creating a space for the lost to be cared for, young to be seen, injured to be healed and where the healthy are fed, as a complete contradiction to the shepherd in Zechariah 11:16.

In Nehemiah 4:14, however, we are given a picture of how to remain focused on the task at hand. He is convinced about the task he has been given and that nothing should hinder his work.

¹⁴ *And I looked and arose and said to the nobles and to the officials and to the rest of the people, “Do not be afraid of them. Remember the Lord, who is great and awesome, and fight for your brothers, your sons, your daughters, your wives, and your homes.” - Neh 4:14*

He doesn’t let the accusations of ridiculousness hinder or halt the work that God had called them to. Instead He gathers the people and reminds them of who God is, that He is great and awesome and encourages the people to fight for and invest in the people.

Questions for reflection

- Where have you been accused of being ridiculous / belaglik in your response to God?
- What is the next ridiculous response God is asking of you?