

“Take It Personally!”
Nehemiah 2:1-8

Introduction:

1. Have You Every Known Someone Who Takes Things A Little Too Personally?
 - We All May Be Too Sensitive About Some Things!
 - And Sometimes, We May Need To “Stop Taking Things So Personally!”
 - But, Then Again, There Are Some Things That We:
 - Don’t Take Personally, But Should!
 - Like Our Relationships With God And His People – His Church!
 - Nehemiah Shows Us What This Means!
2. After Nehemiah Learned About The Broken Condition Of Jerusalem:
 - Both The Walls Of Jerusalem, And Most Importantly, The People Of Jerusalem!
 - It Impacted Him Greatly!
 - It Broke His Heart!
 - It Brought Him To His Knees!
 - But It Didn’t Stop There!
 - Nehemiah Took These Great Problems To Heart!
 - He Wanted To Do Something About It!
 - He Took It Personally!
 - And When It Comes To The Condition Of Our Own Church:
 - We Too Need To Take It Personally!
 - What Did Nehemiah Take Personally?

1. *He Took His Commitments Personally!*

- 2:1-3 - “And it came to pass in the month Nisan, in the twentieth year of Artaxerxes the king, that wine was before him: and I took up the wine, and gave it unto the king. Now I had not been beforetime sad in his presence. / 2 Wherefore the king said unto me, Why is thy countenance sad, seeing thou art not sick? this is nothing else but sorrow of heart. Then I was very sore afraid, / 3 And said unto the king, Let the king live for ever: why should not my countenance be sad, when the city, the place of my fathers’ sepulchres, lieth waste, and the gates thereof are consumed with fire?”
 - Nehemiah Was A Man Of Commitment! A Man Of His Word!
- He Was Faithfully Committed To His Prayer! (2:1a)
 - The Month Nisan Was 4 Months After Nehemiah First Heard From His Brother, Hanani, About The Condition Jerusalem Was In!
 - 4 Months! 4 Months Of Continuing Brokenness! 4 Months Of This Burden! 4 Months Is A Long Time!
 - Nehemiah Probably Wanted To Run Right Down To Jerusalem! But He Didn’t! He Couldn’t!
 - So, What Was Nehemiah Doing All This Time?
 - He Was Praying! He Was Waiting On The Lord & His Timing! End Of Chapter 1!
 - It Takes Time To Be Prepared For The Work Of The Lord!
 - And Nehemiah Was Committed To God’s Time! Ecclesiastes 3:11 - “He hath made everything beautiful in His time!”
 - Take It Personally! Be Faithfully Committed To Where God Has Placed You!
 - “And let us not be weary in well doing: for in due season we shall reap, if we faint not!” (Galatians 6:9)
 - Because “Waiting Time Is Not Wasted Time!”
 - He Was Diligently Committed To His Profession! (2:1b)
 - He Was The King’s Cupbearer! (1:11)
 - A Very Close Position To The King! Both Politically, Physically, And Even Personally!
 - This Position Required Complete Trustworthiness!
 - **IE:** My “Water-Cup Bearer!”
 - Even With His Broken Heart & Heavy Burden, Nehemiah Remained Diligent In The Service Of His King!
 - And We See The Hand & Providence Of God!

- Who Put Nehemiah In This Position? God!
- Remember Esther 4:14 - "Who knoweth whether thou art some to the kingdom for such a time as this?" (Mordecai To Esther In The Same Palace!)
- God Always Puts The Right Person In The Right Place At The Right Time For His Right Purpose!
- Take It Personally! Be Diligently Committed To Where God Has Placed You!
 - Could You Be The One – The Nehemiah – That God Has Placed Here To Fulfill A Significant Part Of His Plan? Sometimes It Takes Only One!
- He Was Heartfully Committed To His People! (2:1c)
 - Nehemiah Had A Hard Time Hiding His Burden! So:
 - Nehemiah Expressed His Sorrow Before The King! (2:2)
 - And He Was "Sore Afraid!"
 - Rightfully So! Esther 4:2 - "For none might enter into the king's gate clothed with sackcloth!"
 - Nehemiah Explained His Sorrow Before The King! (2:3)
 - This Is Sometimes How We Feel When We See Buildings This Way! From Fire Damage / Tornado Damage! Is This How We Feel When We See Soul Damage?
 - Nehemiah Took It Personally! The Condition Of His People!
 - So Should We! Take It Personally! Be Heartfully Committed To Where God Has Placed You!
- We Need To Take Our Commitments Personally!
 - Why? Think Of How Jesus Has Committed Himself To Us In This Way!

2. ***He Took His Calling Personally!***

- 2:4-6 - "Then the king said unto me, For what dost thou make request? So I prayed to the God of heaven. / 5 And I said unto the king, If it please the king, and if thy servant have found favour in thy sight, that thou wouldest send me unto Judah, unto the city of my fathers' sepulchres, that I may build it. / 6 And the king said unto me, (the queen also sitting by him,) For how long shall thy journey be? and when wilt thou return? So it pleased the king to send me; and I set him a time!"
 - It Could Have Gone Either Way! But, By God's Grace & Guiding Hand, Nehemiah Found Favor In The King's Sight!
 - When The King Noticed Nehemiah's Burdened & Broken Heart, He Offered Himself & His Service To Nehemiah!
 - Isn't This How Our King, The Lord Jesus Christ, Treats Us?
- The Call To Prayer! (2:4)
 - Nehemiah Understood What It Meant To "Pray Without Ceasing!"
 - "Quick As Thought The Silent Prayer Of The Heart Flew To The Ear Of God! And Not In Vain!" (PHC)
 - He Was Ready To Pray In This Way Because He Had Learned To Pray The Way In 1:5-11!
 - "Special Prayer Should Be The Outcome Of Constant Prayerfulness!" (PHC)
 - Nehemiah Took His Prayer Personally!
 - And So Should We!
 - We Are Called To Prayer – Especially For His People – And Our Church!
- The Call To Service! (2:5)
 - Nehemiah's Eyes Were Soon Opened To The Answer To His Prayer!
 - And He Took His Opportunity To Serve Personally!
 - He Was Heart-Willing To Serve!
 - As Isaiah Said: "Also I heard the voice of the Lord, saying, Whom shall I send, and who will go for us? Then said I, Here am I; send me!" (Isaiah 6:8)
 - He Had Already Spent Time Preparing Himself In Prayer Before The Lord!
 - He Was Hard Working In Service!
 - Didn't He Say The Conditions Were Bad?
 - "Lieth Waste" / "Consumed With Fire" (2:3)
 - But It Didn't Matter! He Was Ready To Serve!
 - He Was Humbly Wanting To Serve!
 - He Recognized That He Wasn't Doing God A Favor By Serving Him – God Was Doing

- Him A Favor By Using Him In His Service!
- Nehemiah Took His Opportunity To Serve Personally!
 - And So Should We!
 - We Are Called To Serve – Especially To His People – And Our Church!
- The Call To Prepare & Plan! (2:6)
 - What An Unexpected Answer By The King!
 - But Nehemiah Was Ready!
 - He Had Prayed & Prepared In Faith!
 - When Given The Opportunity, He “Set Him A Time!”
 - If We Pray But Fail To Prepare, Do We Have Faith?
 - If We Pray For Opportunities, But Are Not Prepared For Them, Do We Believe God Will Answer?
 - By Faith, We Have The Plans In Place!
 - Prayerfully Building A Spiritual Infrastructure!
 - Nehemiah Took His Preparation Personally!
 - And So Should We!
 - We Are Called To Prepare – Each Of Us – Especially In The Process Of Rebuilding!
- Are We Taking Our Callings Personally?

3. ***He Took His Contacts Personally!***

- 2:7-8 - “Moreover I said unto the king, If it please the king, let letters be given me to the governors beyond the river, that they may convey me over till I come into Judah; / 8 And a letter unto Asaph the keeper of the king’s forest, that he may give me timber to make beams for the gates of the palace which appertained to the house, and for the wall of the city, and for the house that I shall enter into. And the king granted me, according to the good hand of my God upon me!”
 - Nehemiah Understood That God Uses People In His Plans!
 - This Would Be No Different Here! And It Is No Different To Rebuilding Lives / Families / Churches!
- It Would Take The Pleasure Of The King!
 - Without It, The Rebuilding Project Couldn’t Even Start!
 - So, By Prayer & Faith, He Took His Contact & Relationship With The King Personally!
 - And Asked The King To Help Him With His Needs!
 - So It Is With Any Rebuilding Project The Lord Gives Us!
 - Psalm 127:1 - “Except the LORD build the house, they labour in vain that build it: except the LORD keep the city, the watchman waketh but in vain!”
 - We Need To Take Our Relationship With Our King Personally – Seriously!
- It Would Take The Protection Of The Governors!
 - Without It, The Rebuilding Project Would Surely Fail!
 - So, Nehemiah Used His Personal Contacts, Not For His Own Benefit, But For The Work Of The Lord!
 - And This Is Where It Must Start For Us!
 - God Works Through The People In His Local Church To Accomplish His Will!
 - If We Don’t Take Personally Our Relationships With Each Other In Rebuilding Our Church, Will It Ever Get Done?
 - We Need To Take Our Relationship With Our Church Personally!
- It Would Take The Provision Of Asaph! (2:8)
 - And His Provision & Supplies!
 - That He Would Use In Rebuilding The People & Walls Of Jerusalem For The Lord!
- Nehemiah Took His Contacts & Relationships Personally!
 - And So Should We!
 - We Need To Keep In Contact With People In Order To Get The Lord’s Work Done Here At Grace Baptist Church!
 - First & Foremost With Our King!
 - Seeking His Pleasure & Blessing Upon His Work!
 - Then, With Our Own Church!

- Those Who Come Alongside To Help & Strengthen In Service!
- Then, Toward Those God Has Called Us To Minister With & To!
 - Because It Is People Who Make Up The Building Of God! 1 Corinthians 3:9-10 - “For we are labourers together with God: ye are God’s husbandry, ye are God’s building. / According to the grace of God which is given unto me, as a wise masterbuilder, I have laid the foundation, and another buildeth thereon. But let every man take heed how he buildeth thereupon!”
 - **IE:** There Are Many Church Buildings That Are Not Used For Churches Any Longer!

Conclusion:

1. This Is Why We Must Take It Personally!
 - Our Commitments!
 - Our Calling!
 - Our Contacts!
 - All For The Rebuilding Of Lives!
2. Always Relying Upon:
 - The “Good Hand Of My God Upon Me!”

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