

# GETTING GOD'S ATTENTION-

## ARE YOU GETTING GOD'S ATTENTION?

### NEHEMIAH Chapter 1

What do we do, when we know that God is there, but we don't feel we have His attention?

In today's times it is so important to make sure that you have God's attention. Most people with a broad western world view would say "What's the point? God doesn't care". But as the beloved of Christ we know that God cares, yet there is always a feeling that the other voices might have some truth in what they have to say.

***Nehemiah 1: 1 The words of Nehemiah the son of Hachaliah. And it came to pass in the month Chisleu, in the twentieth year, as I was in Shushan the palace, 2 That Hanani, one of my brethren, came, he and certain men of Judah; and I asked them concerning the Jews that had escaped, which were left of the captivity, and concerning Jerusalem. 3 And they said unto me, The remnant that are left of the captivity there in the province are in great affliction and reproach: the wall of Jerusalem also is broken down, and the gates thereof are burned with fire.***

Let's face it... The circumstance in the above scripture is not a good one. Not only are the people in a horrible state physically, but the word 'reproach' implies a "devastated" mental state. The city itself is torn down in an almost un-repairable condition. As we continue to go deeper into the 21st century, it seems that we, as a people, are dealing with circumstances that are getting us closer and closer to these same conditions. That

is why it is important to ask ourselves the **HARD** questions...the questions that don't have man-made answers.

Using Nehemiah 1:1-3 answer the following:

1. Why it was important for Nehemiah to ask about the condition of Jerusalem? Give some other reasons why you think he needed to ask about the state of the city. Give some examples of questions that we *should* ask about the conditions in our society.

---

---

---

---

---

---

2. In receiving a bad report, what do you think you would do if you heard something similar happened to your hometown?

---

---

---

3. Why do you think the report about the people came *before* the report about the city in verse #3? Keep in mind, Jerusalem, the physical place would *seem* to be more important because it was a cultural place of worship, the city of God.

---

---

---

**Nehemiah 1:4** *And it came to pass, when I heard these words, that I sat down and wept , and mourned certain days, and fasted , and prayed before the God of heaven,*

The report that Nehemiah received troubled him so much that he is forced into what could be called a 'depression'. It is important to remember that when you are trying to get the attention of God... the first step: **Don't zone out from reality.**

With our hedonistic sin nature, it is more desirable to avoid anything that causes us pain. However, to get His attention we should allow Him to have ours' **first**. This point is driven home by Nehemiah choosing to weep, mourn, fast and pray for days on end.

1. If you were in Nehemiah's place, would you choose to ask a question not wanting but needing the answer?

---

---

---

2. In your life have you ever had a period of depression?, If so did you feel as if God was paying attention to you?

---

---

---

3. Do you think it was good for Nehemiah to be in that state of mind he was in for so long?

---

---

---

**Nehemiah 1:5** *And said , I beseech thee, O LORD God of heaven, the great and terrible God, that keepeth covenant and mercy for them that love him and observe his commandments: 6 Let thine ear now be attentive, and thine eyes open , that thou mayest hear the prayer of thy servant, which I pray before thee now, day and night, for the children of Israel thy servants, and confess the sins of the children of Israel, which we have sinned against thee: both I and my father's house have sinned . 7 We have dealt very corruptly against thee, and have not kept the commandments, nor the statutes, nor the judgments, which thou commandedst thy servant Moses.*

This verse is very intriguing, Nehemiah calls God *great* and *terrible*. I understand the word '*great*', because when you look at God you're forced to recognize how awesome He is. Yet, the word '*terrible*' doesn't bring forth endearing thoughts. It means that He

invokes fear into people. When we look at the westernized version of "God", the cultural "God", we do not see any imposing person. We see a mute and powerless, entity rather than a saving and redeeming God. However, when we get the right view of God, we will understand that our awe and wonder should prompt us into a state of humility.

Nehemiah plunges himself into a stance of humility. This is important, because in today's society we are taught not to respect God because "He can't do anything". But Nehemiah recognizes his position as a servant of God, then, he places the people of Israel as a whole in the same position. This is important, because when we pray we shouldn't disconnect ourselves from the sin or the situation of the people we have been sent to serve. Nehemiah takes on the sin of the whole, mentally, to save the whole. Sounds like our Savior doesn't it? He doesn't commit the sin, yet he associates with the reality of the sin in order to overcome it.

Let's look at another point that's made. Nehemiah places sin in the correct perspective. We normally only think of sin as pleasing us not in the way it effects God. When we sin it is a slap in the face of God. It takes for granted the covenant He's made with us and causes us to renege on the agreement we have made with him. In the scripture, Nehemiah acknowledges how God feels when we (the people) don't pay attention to him.

1. Based on the scripture, can you relate to the feeling of sin?

---

---

---

2. Do you think at times, we may not pay enough attention to God? Give reasons why or why not.

---

---

---

3. Do you agree that it's important in ministry, not to disconnect yourself from the sins of the people?

---

---

---

# IS HE GETTING YOUR ATTENTION?

**Nehemiah 1:8** Remember, I beseech thee, the word that thou commandedst thy servant Moses, saying, If ye transgress, I will scatter you abroad among the nations: 9 But if ye turn unto me, and keep my commandments, and do them; though there were of you cast out unto the uttermost part of the heaven, yet will I gather them from thence, and will bring them unto the place that I have chosen to set my name there. 10 Now these are thy servants and thy people, whom thou hast redeemed by thy great power, and by thy strong hand. 11 O Lord, I beseech thee, let now thine ear be attentive to the prayer of thy servant, and to the prayer of thy servants, who desire to fear thy name: and prosper, I pray thee, thy servant this day, and grant him mercy in the sight of this man. For I was the king's cupbearer.

In order to truly get God's attention you need to remind Him of His own Word. Nehemiah reminds God that He already knew what they were going to do and had a plan for the remnant. As the people of God, we should be glad to know that even though we break the agreement God can't. He keeps all of His promises. He knows that even if the majority do not keep His commandments the remnant do, and will.

I implore you, pray to God during this time of great trouble and depression. Give Him your attention and you will receive His. He's listening now, so **start talking**.

## **Remember:**

**Numbers 23:19** God is not a man, that he should lie; neither the son of man, that he should repent: hath he said, and shall he not do it? or hath he spoken, and shall he not make it good?

**1 Samuel 15:29** And also the Strength of Israel will not lie nor repent: for he is not a man, that he should repent.

**Psalms 51** Restore unto me the joy of thy salvation; and uphold me with thy free spirit. Then will I teach transgressors thy ways; and sinners shall be converted unto thee. Deliver me from bloodguiltiness, O God, thou God of my salvation: and my tongue shall sing aloud of thy righteousness. O Lord, open thou my lips; and my mouth shall shew forth thy praise. For thou desirest not sacrifice; else would I give it: thou delightest not in burnt offering. The sacrifices of God are a broken spirit: a broken and a contrite heart, O God, thou wilt not despise. Do good in thy good pleasure unto Zion: build thou the walls of Jerusalem. Then shalt thou be pleased with the sacrifices of righteousness, with burnt offering and whole burnt offering: then shall they offer bullocks upon thine altar.

**Luke 11:28** But he said, Yea rather, blessed are they that hear the word of God, and keep it.