

“Taking Aim At Apathy!”
Nehemiah 13:10-14

Introduction:

1. Review The Service Of Nehemiah In Jerusalem:
 - Nehemiah Led - For 12 Years!
 - Nehemiah Left - Responsibilities To The King - Cupbearer!
 - Nehemiah Returned!
 - Only To Find The People Having Returned Back To Their Same Old Ways Of Thinking & Acting!
 - Nehemiah Probably Remembered More Than 12 Years Earlier!
 - When Everyone Had Re-Committed Themselves To Serve The Lord Faithfully!
 - 10:28-39 - They Made A “Sure Covenant!”
 - Written Down & Even Signed! (10:38)
 - But When Nehemiah Left:
 - They Forsook Their Promise To God! (10:28-30)
 - They Forsook The Servants Of God! (10:37)
 - They Forsook The House Of God! (10:39)
2. Upon Nehemiah’s Return:
 - Already Dealt With Two Major Issues / Sins:
 - Intermarrying / Eliashib & Tobiah!
 - But All Of These Issues / Sins Were Interrelated!
 - “One Sin Follows Hard On The Heels Of Another!” (Raymond Brown)
 - Eliashib Used The Chambers Of The Temple!
 - Which Was For Holding The Tithe!
 - Which Would Support The Levites!
 - To Make A Lavish Apartment For Tobiah - Traitor!
 - Seems Like They Stopped Receiving The Tithes As Well!
 - No Longer Important / No Longer A Priority!
 - Sin Is Never Content!
 - One Sin Will Lead To Another!
 - First: The People Had No Caution!
 - Led To Pragmatism / Pragmatic Methods!
 - Second: The Priest – Even The High Priest – Had No Conviction!
 - Led To Outright Worldliness!
 - Third: No Care / Concern!
 - Apathy! This Is Where Sin Always Leads!
3. Now, Nehemiah Takes Aim At This Problem!
 - Because It Had Infected Everyone!
 - From The Leaders To The Laborers To The Laypeople!
 - All Were Infected! And The Work Of God Came To A Screeching Halt!
 - Like Nehemiah:
 - We Need To Take Aim At Apathy As Well!
 - **IE:** Taking Aim At A Target!
 - How Can We Deal With Apathy? 4 Steps:

* You Must:

1. ***See The Symptoms Of Apathy!***
 - 13:10 - “And I perceived that the portions of the Levites had not been given them: for the Levites and the singers, that did the work, were fled every one to his field!”
 - The Symptoms Nehemiah Saw:
 - A Lack Of Support!
 - They Stopped Giving! And This Was To Be The Continual Support Of The Levites!
 - They Stopped Caring!
 - A Lack Of Service!

- The Levites Were Serving Through The Word Of God!
- The Singers Were Serving Through The Worship Of God!
- The Service Stopped!
- A Lack Of Servants!
 - Without The Necessary Provisions - Even These Faithful Servants Stopped “Seeking First The Kingdom Of God!”
 - Can’t Blame Them!
 - Needed Food For Themselves & Their Families!
- But These Were Just Symptoms Of A Worse Condition!
 - Apathy! Nehemiah Took Aim At Their Apathy!
- We Need To Take Aim At Our Own Apathy!
 - Seen In What You Are Neglecting!
 - Have You Stopped Giving?
 - Generously? Cheerfully?
 - Jesus Said: “For where your treasure is, there will your heart be also!” (Luke 12:34)
 - This Is A Symptom Of Apathy!
 - Have You Lost Your Desire For The Word & Worship?
 - Another Symptom Of Apathy!
 - Have You Stopped Serving?
 - With His People? Even In His Church?
 - Another Symptom Of Apathy!
- What Are You Going To Do?
 - There’s A Problem!
 - These Are Symptoms – Need To Get To The Source!
 - **IE:** My Dad’s Eye Problems - Symptoms First - Had To Uncover The Source - Major Problem - Cancer!

* You Must:

2. Stop The Source Of Apathy!

- 13:11a - “Then contended I with the rulers, and said, Why is the house of God forsaken?”
 - Nehemiah Went From The Symptoms To The Source!
 - The Source Of The Problem Was The “Rulers” (Or Political Officials) Who Had The Responsibility To See That The Collections Continued To Take Place & That The Levites Were Being Taken Care Of!
 - They Didn’t!
 - The Source Of Apathy Needs To Be Stopped!
 - Because:
- The Source Is Stubborn!
 - “Contended!”
 - A Strong Word, Indicating That An Argument Took Place!
- The Source Is Strong!
 - Reached To The Highest Places In Jerusalem - Rulers!
 - It Reaches The Highest Places In Our Lives / Hearts / Church As Well!
- The Source Is Sin!
 - “Why Is The House Of God Forsaken?”
 - This Was The Root Of The Problem!
 - Sin Is Strong & Stubborn & If Not Taken Care Of, Will Lead To Apathy! Sin Is The Source Of Apathy!
- We Need To Take Aim At Our Own Apathy!
 - And Stop It At Its Source!
 - What Sin Has Taken A Stubborn & Strong Place In Your Life?
 - You Will Never Be Able To Deal With Your Apathy Until You Deal With Its Source – Sin!
 - Deal With It Through:
 - Conviction / Contrition - Repentance / Confession / Cleansing From The Lord!

- When You Are Convicted, Don't Just Let Things Continue As They Have Been!
- When You Do Deal With Your Sin:

*You Will:

3. Start The Solution For Apathy!

- 13:11b-12 - "And I gathered them together, and set them in their place. / Then brought all Judah the tithe of the corn and the new wine and the oil unto the treasuries!"
 - Having Received Cleansing, It Was Time To Start The Solution! Restoration & Renewal!
 - The Old Ways Were Not Wrong, Just Neglected!
 - Everything That Was Neglected Had To Be Restored!
- Restore The Servants!
 - "Gathered The Together!"
 - Where Had They Been?
- Restore The Service!
 - "Set Them In Their Place!"
 - What Had They Been Doing?
- Restore The Support!
 - "Brought – Tithe!"
 - All That They Had Neglected Was Restored & Renewed!
- We Need To Be Restored / Renewed / Revived As Well!
 - Like The Churches In Revelation!
 - Ephesus - Revelation 2:4-5 - "Nevertheless I have somewhat against thee, because thou hast left thy first love. / Remember therefore from whence thou art fallen, and repent, and do the first works!"
 - Sardis - Revelation 3:2 - "Be watchful, and strengthen the things which remain, that are ready to die: for I have not found thy works perfect before God!"
 - Renew Yourself As A Servant!
 - Return To The Lord, Your First Love!
 - Renew Your Own Service!
 - Get Busy In The Word / Work / Worship Of God!
 - Renew Your Support!
 - Give!
 - Turn Your Apathy Into Action!
 - Because Of Your Freedom From The Guilt Of Sin!

*You Then Must:

4. Strive For Security From Apathy!

- 13:13-14 - "And I made treasurers over the treasuries, Shelemiah the priest, and Zadok the scribe, and of the Levites, Pedaiah: and next to them was Hanan the son of Zaccur, the son of Mattaniah: for they were counted faithful, and their office was to distribute unto their brethren. / Remember me, O my God, concerning this, and wipe not out my good deeds that I have done for the house of my God, and for the offices thereof!"
 - It Is So Easy To Fall Back Into Sin & Complacency & Apathy!
 - A Vicious Cycle! Seems Never-Ending!
 - Benjamin Franklin - "An Ounce Of Prevention Is Worth A Pound Of Cure!"
 - Need To Prevent Apathy From Happening Again!
 - Nehemiah Strived For Security / Victory!
 - Didn't Want The Same Problem Happen Again!
 - Remember How Much Effort & Energy Went Into Rebuilding The Walls Of Jerusalem!
 - There Needed To Be As Much, If Not More, Effort & Energy In Preventing Sin & Apathy! Walls Need To Be Built – Standards – For Spiritual Protection!
 - Steps Of Security:
- Striving For Accountability!
 - 4 Different Men / Different Roles / Different Functions!
 - We Need Each Other To Prevent Sin & Apathy!

- Striving For Attention!
 - “They Were Counted Faithful!”
 - Pay Attention To: Personal Responsibility & Character & Conduct!
- Striving For Approval!
 - By God!
 - This Was Nehemiah’s Motive In 13:14!
- Keep Taking Aim At Your Apathy!
 - Stay Alert & Watchful! Over Your Own Walk With The Lord & Your Own Sins!
 - Are You Taking The Steps Necessary To Prevent Apathy?
 - Accountability / Attention / Approval - Motive!

Conclusion:

1. It Is Time For Us To Take Aim At Our Own Apathy!
 - And Be Renewed / Restored / Re-Committed To The Lord, His People, & His Work!
 - Say Like They Did Earlier:
 - 10:39 - “We Will Not Forsake The House Of Our God!”

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