

Wow! WOW! God is good. We had church today!

Love y'all,

Pastor Heard

## **Part 20 – Feel the Passion!**

### **Texts:**

**Ecclesiastes 9:7 (The Message)** - "Seize life!"

**Hebrews 4:14-16 (KJV)** - "Seeing then that we have a great high priest, that is passed into the heavens, Jesus the Son of God, let us hold fast our profession. [15] For we have not an high priest which cannot be touched with the feeling of our infirmities; but was in all points tempted like as we are, yet without sin. [16] Let us therefore come boldly unto the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy, and find grace to help in time of need.

**Nehemiah 6:1-9 (NKJV)** - "Now it happened when Sanballat, Tobiah, Geshem the Arab, and the rest of our enemies heard that I had rebuilt the wall, and that there were no breaks left in it (though at that time I had not hung the doors in the gates), [2] that Sanballat and Geshem sent to me, saying, "Come, let us meet together among the villages in the plain of Ono." But they thought to do me harm. [3] So I sent messengers to them, saying, "I am doing a great work, so that I cannot come down. Why should the work cease while I leave it and go down to you?" [4] But they sent me this message four times, and I answered them in the same manner. [5] Then Sanballat sent his servant to me as before, the fifth time, with an open letter in his hand. [6] In it was written: It is reported among the nations, and Geshem says, that you and the Jews plan to rebel; therefore, according to these rumors, you are rebuilding the wall, that you may be their king. [7] And you have also appointed prophets to proclaim

concerning you at Jerusalem, saying, "There is a king in Judah!" Now these matters will be reported to the king. So come, therefore, and let us consult together. [8] Then I sent to him, saying, "No such things as you say are being done, but you invent them in your own heart." [9] For they all were trying to make us afraid, saying, "Their hands will be weakened in the work, and it will not be done." Now therefore, O God, strengthen my hands."

## **Key No. 12 (Part 6) – Incredible Keys to Incredible Breakthroughs!**

### A. The Key of EXTRAORDINARY LEADERSHIP

1. We are continuing our study of this amazing book of Nehemiah, one of the greatest leadership books ever written.
2. In one way or another, we are all leaders. However, many do not realize the importance of learning good leadership principles. Sadly, by failing to study effective leadership methods, many anointed speakers have accomplished very little for God. No matter how righteous your cause or powerful your anointing, no one succeeds in ministry without applying these principles.
3. I love to read John Maxwell's publications and have attended many of his leadership seminars. His books, *Leadership Gold*, *The 21 Irrefutable Laws of Leadership*, and *Developing the Leader Within You*, are outstanding resources.
  - a. Other inspiring authors are Ken Blanchard, Les Brown, Jack Welch, the former CEO of General Electric, and Sir Richard Branson, who will motivate you to think outside the box.
  - b. Anthony Robbins, Jim Rohn, and Susan Jeffers have also published exemplary books for personal and inner development. Steven

Covey gives incredible advice about focusing on our circle of influence rather than our circle of concern.

4. Having honored these and other unnamed authors, I must confess that Nehemiah's leadership strategies are by far the best I've ever read. His teachings are awesome! Not only does he tell you what to do, but what **not** to do. As anyone will affirm who has lived a while, understanding what *not* to do is as important as knowing what *to* do!

5. **Joke:** Knowing What Not to Do!

Three guys decided to celebrate their college graduation in Mexico. But they partied so hard and got so drunk, all three landed in a Mexican jail facing execution the next morning. Worse still, they couldn't remember a thing they had done the night before.

The first guy, Henry, was strapped in the electric chair and asked if he had any last words. He said, "Well, I just graduated from Houston Baptist University and I believe in the almighty power of God to intervene on behalf of the innocent."

The jailer pulled the switch—but nothing happened. Immediately, the Mexican authorities fell to their knees, begged for Henry's forgiveness, and promptly released him.

Bill, the second guy, was strapped in the chair and spoke these last words: "I just graduated from the University of Houston Law Center, and I believe in the power of justice to intervene on the part of the innocent." Again, the jailer pulled the switch and nothing happened. Immediately, the officials fell to their knees, begged for Bill's forgiveness and quickly released him.

Finally, it was Boudreaux's turn for execution. (I can tell this because I'm part Cajun). After being strapped in, he says, "Well, I'm from Texas A&M and just graduated with a degree in civil engineering. I can tell you boys right now, you won't ever electrocute anyone if ya'll don't plug this thing in." . . . . OOPS!

6. Without reviewing the first nine leadership principles from the book of Nehemiah, let's continue our discussion of these essentials.

**B. Leadership Principle No. 10** - Nehemiah confronted and then defeated the low morale and objections of his team.

1. **Nehemiah 4:10 (NKJV)** - "Then Judah said, "The **strength of the laborers is failing**, and there is so much **rubbish** that we are not able to build the wall."
2. Momentum will either be in your favor or against you. But sooner or later, it will shift to the wrong direction. While everything was going well, Nehemiah was confident that his visit to Jerusalem was in the will of God. But then, "Wham!" . . . momentum shifted.
  - a. When momentum shifts to the opposite direction, how can you cope? Suddenly, your family is attacked, your job is threatened, or your business that was doing so well begins to slump.
  - b. Or, your marriage will hit the doldrums. You go to bed thinking you're married to an angel and your kids are so exceptional, they should be strapped to the bed to prevent them from floating off to heaven in their sleep.
  - c. Then you wake up the next morning and wonder if your home has been invaded by body snatchers. Overnight, your wife has been transformed into a witch and the kids have become the seed of Chucky and Rosemary's baby.
  - d. It happens to individuals, businesses, nations and yes, even to churches. If you don't believe momentum can affect a church, read what happened to the seven churches of Asia in the book of Revelation. Once on fire for God, they either lost their first love, compromised their beliefs, or became so spiritually dead, Christ is standing at the door knocking, asking to re-enter His own church!

3. Nehemiah's team became tired . . . they grew weary in well doing. And notice who was grumbling—it was Judah (which means “praise”). Don't ever stop praising God! He will do wonders that defy the imagination if we continue to praise—and refuse to be distracted by all the *junk!*
4. Another truth to consider is that Nehemiah's strongest advocates who sang his praises one day were complaining about his leadership ability the next. And he had not done one thing differently!
5. One of their big problems was the many piles of “junk” that remained after the Babylonians had ransacked and destroyed Jerusalem. Before they could think about rebuilding, the rubble had to be removed. Do you ever grow weary of seeing so much junk?
6. When a team grows weary, the enemy begins to turn up the pressure. For Nehemiah, distractions accumulated to the point that the enemy began plotting to kill both the leader and his workers.
7. The enemy clearly understands what we may fail to comprehend: ***it takes team work to make the dream work!*** He will attack your team's morale, whether it comes from a member of your family, your ministry, business partners or work force.
  - a. **Nehemiah 4:12 (NKJV)** - “And our adversaries said, 'They will neither know nor see anything, till we come into their midst and kill them and ***cause the work to cease.***’”
8. What does the enemy ultimately hope to accomplish? He wants to ***stop what you are doing!*** It's not really about you--it's about what you are doing!

C. As their leader, Nehemiah refused to be discouraged by adversity. He knew that if he became discouraged, it would affect everyone else.

1. Leaders must remember that someone who is watching (dad, mom, or a team member), will be influenced by your response to the situation.
2. (Video of laughing man at a train stop: <http://youtu.be/Wk9-gkT2bI8>).

3. Nehemiah chose to regroup and then encouraged his team to "up" their level of commitment.
  - a. **Nehemiah 4:13-14 (NKJV)** - "Therefore I positioned men behind the lower parts of the wall, at the openings; and I set the people according to their families, with their swords, their spears, and their bows. [14] And I looked, and arose and said to the nobles, to the leaders, and to the rest of the people, 'Do not be afraid of them. Remember the Lord, great and awesome, and fight for your brethren, your sons, your daughters, your wives, and your houses.'"
  - b. First, he instructed them to 'remember the Lord.' Then he reminded that the power behind them was greater than the opposition facing them!
4. The breakthrough they so desperately needed was not just for themselves, it was for their brethren, their kids, wives, and their "house"-or future generations. Since God is building you a house, you will never have to face this battle alone.
5. In spite of being weary and distressed, they pushed forward. And God came through by reducing the enemy's strategy to nothing. Families must push on; churches, ministries, and businesses must keep moving forward!
  - a. **Nehemiah 4:15 (NKJV)** - "And it happened, when our enemies heard that it was known to us, and ***that God had brought their plot to nothing***, that all of us returned to the wall, everyone to his work."
  - b. If you can just step back for a moment from the problem, remove the emotion and realize that this is nothing but an attack of the enemy, you can move forward. As God brings his schemes to nothing, the enemy's plans will fall apart.
  - c. If you panic, give up, blame God, get mad at everybody, or succumb to either self-pity or pity from others, the enemy's plot

has just succeeded. Why? Because he wants you to stop what you're doing!

6. In chapter 6, the enemy even sent messengers for Nehemiah to meet with them to discuss their problem. I love his answer:
  - a. **Nehemiah 6:3 (NKJV)** - "So I sent messengers to them, saying, **"I am doing a great work, so that I cannot come down.** Why should the work cease while I leave it and go down to you?"
  - b. That's what you should tell the enemy when he tries to persuade you to stop working on your dream and focus on the immediate problem. Just tell him that you're doing a **great work** and you can't come down!
7. Remind yourself: "The enemy has failed! I've figured out his game—and his strategy has been **brought to nothing!**" That is a Word for someone!