

## Does Anybody Really Care?

**1. He cared enough to ask (Neh. 1:1–3)**

- Nehemiah was the cupbearer to Artaxerxes, who ruled Persia from 464 to 423 B.C.
- No doubt it was just another routine day when Nehemiah met his brother Hanani, but it turned out to be a turning point in Nehemiah's life.
- Why would Nehemiah inquire about a struggling remnant of people who lived hundreds of miles away?
  - Some people prefer not to know what's going on, because information might bring obligation.
  - "What you don't know can't hurt you," says the old adage; but is it true?
- Nehemiah asked about Jerusalem and the Jews living there because he had a caring heart.
- What did Nehemiah learn about Jerusalem and the Jews? Three words summarize the bad news:
  - remnant, ruin, and reproach

**2. He cared enough to weep (Neh. 1:4)**

- What makes people laugh or weep is often an indication of character.
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
- When God puts a burden on your heart, don't try to escape it; for if you do, you may miss the blessing He has planned for you.

**3. He cared enough to pray (Neh. 1:5–10)**

- This prayer is the first of twelve prayers in this book. (2:4; 4:4, 9; 5:19; 6:9, 14; 9:5ff; 13:14, 22, 29, 31.)

- This prayer begins with *ascription of praise to God (1:5)*.
    - To what kind of a God do we pray when we lift our prayers to the God of heaven?
  
  - The greater part of Nehemiah's prayer was devoted to confession of sin (1:6–9).
    - Note that Nehemiah used the pronoun "we" and not "they," identifying himself with the sins of a generation he didn't even know.
  
  - This humble prayer closed with an expression of confidence.
  
  - Too often, we plan our projects and then ask God to bless them; but Nehemiah didn't make that mistake. He sat down and wept (Neh. 1:4), knelt down and prayed, and then stood up and worked because he knew he had the blessing of the Lord on what he was doing.
- 4. He cared enough to volunteer (Neh. 1:11)**
- It has well been said that prayer is not getting man's will done in heaven but getting God's will done on earth.
  
  - Nehemiah planned to volunteer to go to Jerusalem to supervise the rebuilding of the walls.
  
  - The king's cupbearer would have to sacrifice the comfort and security of the palace for the rigors and dangers of life in a ruined city.
  
  - God works through people who care!