

Nehemiah: Celebrating the Work - Physical and Spiritual

Nehemiah 8

MAIN IDEAS

For Ezra had devoted himself to the study and observance of the Law of the Lord, and to teach it decrees and laws in Israel. — Ezra 7:10

1. Ezra read the word of God
2. The Levites helped the people understand what was being read
3. The Word of God convicts
4. The Word of God moves His people from mourning to joy
5. The people rightly respond to God's Word in obedience

Describe the people's response to hearing and understanding the Word.

How many times are the words "understood/understand" used in verses 1-12? What's the connection between understanding God's word and its effectiveness?

How many times in Chapter 8 was the phrase "the people" repeated? What does this suggest about the importance of the walls of Jerusalem compared to its inhabitants?

After the Levites read, taught, and explained the Word, how did the people respond? Why did they respond that way?

Usually, grief is a response to some kind of loss. What had the Israelites lost and how did they come to realize it?

After they mourned, what were the people instructed to do? Why was that important?

What role does repentance play in worship?

Nehemiah, Ezra and the Levites were united in teaching the Word of God to the people. The people “stood as one man” united in their response to hearing and understanding what was taught. What roles does unity play in revival?

PERSONAL RESPONSE

Think back to a time you experienced conviction and grief over sin after hearing the Word of God taught or reading it on your own. In what ways did you experience a change of heart, mind and direction leading to obedience?

Pray:

- For reverence for the Word of God (Psalm 119:47-48)
- For understanding of the Word (John 16:13-14)
- For the Word of God to be effective in your life (1 Thessalonians 2:13)
- For rejoicing in the Word (Psalm 112:1, 119:103)
- For obedience to the Word (Nehemiah 8:17; 2 Chronicles 7:14)

GROUP RESPONSE

As we gather in small groups, bible studies, and for Sunday morning services, be mindful of the power of corporate worship. The Spirit of God works through the Word of God in the people of God for the glory of God. It is a gift to behold and treasure. How aware are you of God in the midst of corporate worship?

The people heard the Word from Ezra—they did not worship the Word—they did not worship Ezra—the Word of God pointed them to its source, Almighty God. As people created to worship, give careful thought to your heart’s affections. May God be magnified!

REPRODUCE

Make a list of ways you can celebrate the Word and its impact on your life. Share that list with an individual or group as a way of encouragement.

KEY VERSES

- Nehemiah 8
- John 16:13-14
- Psalm 119:103
- Ezra 7:10
- 1 Thessalonians 2:13
- Nehemiah 8:17
- Psalm 119:47-48
- Psalm 112:1
- 2 Chronicles 7:14