

“Revival Comes To Jerusalem!”

Nehemiah 8:1-18

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Teaching Aim: To understand the accurate teachings of the Word of God is critical to revival happening in any land. To realize the Law of God doesn't save anybody; it convicts us of our sin and points to our need for a Savior. To see how valuable personal quiet times, expository teaching and small group Bible studies are to our spiritual growth. To realize the life and ministry of Jesus Christ revolved around the Seven Feasts of Israel. To see each feast points to an aspect of Christ's ministry!

DIGGING DEEPER INTO GOD'S WORD (BIBLE STUDY)

Part I: Ezra reads the Law of God to the people of God during the Feast of Trumpets (Neh. 7:4-8:6)

1. What three feasts of Israel took place during the seventh month of the Jewish calendar year? (Hint: Google “The Seven Feasts Of Israel”) According to **verse 1**, what did the people do? What if any symbolism is there in the people meeting at the Water Gate in Jerusalem? Who asked Ezra to read the Book of Moses? At what feast were the people commanded to gather for the reading of God's Law? (See **Deut. 31:9-10**) How often was the Law to be read to the Jewish people corporately?

2. This assembly took place on the first day of the seventh month, the month of Tishri on the Jewish Calendar (**vs. 2**). Which of the Seven Feasts of Israel took place on this date? What was the significance of “*the Feast of Trumpets*” to the Jews? (See Commentaries) What is the significance of this feast to Christians today?

3. According to **Deut. 31:10-13**, who was to attend the public reading of the Scriptures, more specifically the Tora, which is the first five books of the Old Testament (**vs. 2**)? Why do you think the children who were old enough to understand were also required to attend? At what point do you think children should start attending our adult worship services today?

4. For how many hours did Ezra read the Scriptures publicly on this, the first day of the civil calendar (**vs. 3**)? (See Commentaries) According to **verse 3b**, how did the people respond to the public reading of Sacred Scripture? Should we stand today in respect of the reading of God's Word? What makes you excited about hearing God's Word taught each Sunday?

5. According to **verses 4 & 5**, how many Jewish leaders were on the platform with Ezra as he read the Word of God to the people? What did their presence symbolize? Why thirteen representatives and not twelve? (See **Josh. 4:1-10**) Who is on the platform today when modern evangelists preach? What is the significance of local religious leaders being on the platform with an evangelist who is speaking in their community? How does this relate to the scene taking place in **Nehemiah chapter 8**?

6. How did the Jewish people respond in **verse 5** to the LORD as Ezra opened "*the Torah*" (the Book of the Law)? Why did the people do this? Why do you think more churches don't have their people stand in reverence to the Lord today as the Word of God is being read corporately? Should we?

7. What did Ezra do before he began reading the Word of God to the people (**vs. 6**)? What did the people say together in unison as Ezra finished? What does this word mean? Is there any special significance in the repetition of the word "*Amen*"?

8. How did the people reach out to God in their prayers (**vs. 6b**)? Is it only charismatics who raise their hands in public worship or should every believer feel the freedom to do so? (See **Psalm 63:3-4; 134:1-3; 143:5-6; 1 Timothy 2:8**) Why do you think so many believers today don't raise their hands in worship? Why did the Jewish people "*bow their heads and worship the LORD with their faces to the ground*"? Is it appropriate for us to bow our heads and worship the LORD with our faces to the ground in private worship today? How about in corporate worship? What does this act symbolize?

Part II: Ezra's team helps the people in understanding the Law of God (Neh. 8:7-12)

1. What was the role of the additional thirteen individuals and Levites listed in **verse 7**? Do you think the individuals helped translate the difficult Hebrew words into the common language of the day: Aramaic, or did they explain the meaning of the Scriptures to the people in a way that they could understand and apply to their lives (**vs. 8**)? What do we call this kind of preaching today?

2. What are some of the advantages to expository preaching? Is it wrong to teach the Scriptures topically? Why are both methods needed? According to **Ezra 7:10**, how prepared was Ezra to teach the Word of God to the Jewish people? What steps have you taken to prepare yourself to understand God's Word and to teach it to others (even your children or grandchildren)?

3. Why do you think the Jewish people began to weep as they heard the Word of God (**vs. 9**)? (See **Rom. 3:20; 7:24**) What instruction did Nehemiah, Ezra and the Levites give to those who were weeping (**vv. 9-11**)? Why were all the feasts (except the Day of Atonement) to be a time of joy? How does understanding the faithfulness of God and the gospel message bring joy to your life and hope for each new day?

4. According to **verse 12**, how did the people respond emotionally once they understood the exposition of God's Word? How much time do you spend daily studying the Bible? If you are not spending time in the Bible, why aren't you? If you do read the Bible, are you doing it out of a sense of duty, or out of a love for God with the desire to know Him more deeply and intimately?

Part III: A unique celebration of the Feast of Tabernacles (Neh. 8:13-18)

1. According to **verse 13**, what happened on the second day of the seventh month? Do you think the people were excited as they listened to God's Word? Why or why not? What treasure did the Jewish people discover as Ezra read through the Word of God (**vv. 14 & 15**)? (See **Deut. 16:13-15**) Do the Jews, and even some Christians, still celebrate Tabernacles today?

2. What historical event were the Jewish people remembering as they celebrated the Feast of Tabernacles? (See **Lev. 23:42-43**) What future event does Tabernacles point toward? How was the Feast of Tabernacles a family affair for the Jewish people (**vv. 15-16**)? What message was being taught as the people dramatically acted out this event?

3. Does **verse 17** indicate the Jewish people hadn't celebrated Tabernacles since the days of Joshua? (See **1 Chron. 7:8-10; Ezra 3:4**) What does it indicate? (See Commentaries)

4. According to **verse 18**, what was done during every day of the Feast of Tabernacles? How do you think this time in God's Word affected the Jewish people? How have revivals in our day led by evangelists like Billy Graham and others affected people around the world?

5. Why should every Christian seek a Bible believing/Bible teaching church as they worship the Lord? (See **Heb. 10:24-25; Eph. 4:11-13**) What are some of the additional benefits of being in a small group Bible Study? Are you in a small group? If not, will you join one?

6. What touched you the most about today's study in Nehemiah **chapter 8**? What are some practical applications that you've picked up from **chapter 8**?
 - 1)
 - 2)
 - 3)
 - 4)
 - 5)

MINER'S CORNER ~ *Manna to live by!*

- The life and ministry of Jesus revolved around the Seven Feasts of Israel.
- Each feast pointed toward a specific aspect of the future ministry of Jesus Christ: "*Trumpets*" points to the rapture; "*Tabernacles*" to the millennial kingdom of Christ.
- An in-depth, yet practical, study of God's Word should be a part of our corporate worship services today.
- The expository teacher should read the Scriptures in its context, then explain the meaning in a way that people can understand and apply to their lives.
- Personal quiet times and small group Bible studies give us a better understanding of God's Word, foster fellowship and help us to grow spiritually.
- With the exception of the Day of Atonement, the Seven Feasts of Israel are intended to be joyous occasions as they point to the hope that we have in Jesus Christ.