

Nehemiah 8 (NLT)

1 All the people assembled with a unified purpose at the square just inside the Water Gate. They asked Ezra the scribe to bring out the Book of the Law of Moses, which the Lord had given for Israel to obey.

2 So on October 8 Ezra the priest brought the Book of the Law before the assembly, which included the men and women and all the children old enough to understand. 3 He faced the square just inside the Water Gate from early morning until noon and read aloud to everyone who could understand. All the people listened closely to the Book of the Law.

4 Ezra the scribe stood on a high wooden platform that had been made for the occasion.

To his right stood Mattithiah, Shema, Anaiah, Uriah, Hilkiah, and Maaseiah. To his left stood Pedaiah, Mishael, Malkijah, Hashum, Hashbaddanah, Zechariah, and Meshullam. 5 Ezra stood on the platform in full view of all the people. When they saw him open the book, they all rose to their feet.

6 Then Ezra praised the Lord, the great God, and all the people chanted, “Amen! Amen!” as they lifted their hands. Then they bowed down and worshiped the Lord with their faces to the ground.

7 The Levites—Jeshua, Bani, Sherebiah, Jamin, Akkub, Shabbethai, Hodiah, Maaseiah, Kelita, Azariah, Jozabad, Hanan, and Pelaiah—then instructed the people in the Law while everyone remained in their places.

8 They read from the Book of the Law of God and clearly explained the meaning of what was being read, helping the people understand each passage.

9 Then Nehemiah the governor, Ezra the priest and scribe, and the Levites who were interpreting for the people said to them, “Don’t mourn or weep on such a day as this! For today is a sacred day before the Lord your God.” For the people had all been weeping as they listened to the words of the Law.

10 And Nehemiah[b] continued, “Go and celebrate with a feast of rich foods and sweet drinks, and share gifts of food with people who have nothing prepared. This is a sacred day before our Lord. Don’t be dejected and sad, for the joy of the Lord is your strength!”

11 And the Levites, too, quieted the people, telling them, “Hush! Don’t weep! For this is a sacred day.” 12 So the people went away to eat and drink at a festive meal, to share gifts of food, and to celebrate with great joy because they had heard God’s words and understood them.

13 On October 9 the family leaders of all the people, together with the priests and Levites, met with Ezra the scribe to go over the Law in greater detail. 14 As they studied the Law, they discovered that the Lord had commanded through Moses that the Israelites should live in shelters during the festival to be held that month.

15 He had said that a proclamation should be made throughout their towns and in Jerusalem, telling the people to go to the hills to get branches from olive, wild olive, myrtle, palm, and other leafy trees.

They were to use these branches to make shelters in which they would live during the festival, as prescribed in the Law.

16 So the people went out and cut branches and used them to build shelters on the roofs of their houses, in their courtyards, in the courtyards of God's Temple, or in the squares just inside the Water Gate and the Ephraim Gate. 17 So everyone who had returned from captivity lived in these shelters during the festival, and they were all filled with great joy! The Israelites had not celebrated like this since the days of Joshua son of Nun.

18 Ezra read from the Book of the Law of God on each of the seven days of the festival. Then on the eighth day they held a solemn assembly, as was required by law.

1. The Bible brings relationships with God back to life

PSA 119 (NASB)

V25 'My soul clings to the dust; Revive me according to Your word'

V50 'Your word has revived me'

V93 'I will never forget Your precepts, for by them You have revived me.'

PSA 19:7 (ESV)

'The law of the LORD is perfect, reviving the soul'



1947 – Smith Wigglesworth Prophecy

‘When the Word and the Spirit come together, there will be the biggest move of the Holy Spirit that the nation, and indeed, the world has ever seen. It will mark the beginning of a revival that will eclipse anything that has ever been witnessed within these shores.’



2. Reading our Bible needs to become a priority for us

Neh 8:4-5 - Elevate and focus on the right things

3. Things come alive when we get practical with our Bible

Neh 8:7-8 - Take the time to ask - How does this apply to my life?



4. Allow the Bible time to touch you

Jam 1 – God’s Word is a mirror - it helps us evaluate ourselves

HEB 4:12 (NIV)

For the word of God is alive and active. Sharper than any double-edged sword, it penetrates even to dividing soul and spirit, joints and marrow; it judges the thoughts and attitudes of the heart.

MSG

His powerful Word is sharp as a surgeon’s scalpel, cutting through everything, whether doubt or defense, laying us open to listen and obey.

NEH 8:9-12 - God's Word leads us to repentance and into joy

PSA 30:11 (NIV)

'You turned my wailing into dancing; you removed my sackcloth and clothed me with joy'

Neh 8:12-13 & 17-18 - The Bible releases and helps us maintain joy

Neh 12:43 (AMP)

Also on that day they offered great sacrifices and rejoiced because God had given them great joy; the women and children also rejoiced, so that the joy of Jerusalem was heard from far away.

Ray Steadman – ‘What the Bible means to me’

‘I have learned to appreciate the Bible most because it brings me face to face with my God! That is the reason for Scripture. It is to reveal God to us. The relationship is so real and personal that it seems to be a face to face encounter. My heavenly Father becomes more real and close than any earthly father. I can all but see my Lord and Savior standing beside me and talking to me as I read his words in the gospels. Sometimes the words of Scripture become so vivid and luminous that I feel like kneeling or even falling on my face before the majesty of God. No other book has such power to transport me beyond earth to heavenly places.’