

1. Gathering to hear the Word of God

- a) Nehemiah 7:73-8:1a What was the significance of the 7th month (Tishri) of the Jewish calendar? (Feast of Trumpets, Yom Kippur, Feast of Tabernacles)
- b) Nehemiah 8:1 What request did the people make to Ezra after the walls had been rebuilt?
- c) Why do you think the Jewish people made this request? Deuteronomy 31:9-13
- d) Nehemiah 8:2 What is the significance of the fact that both men and women gathered, all who could hear with understanding?
- e) They gathered “as one man” to hear the Word of God. What lesson can we learn from this gathering for our lives today?

2. Reading and Hearing the Word of God

- a) Nehemiah 8:3 What portion of the Word of God did Ezra read in the open square?
- b) Nehemiah 8:4-6 What are your thoughts and feelings about the scene described in these verses?
- c) How did the 13 individuals who stood with Ezra assist him when the Book of the Law was read?
- d) What important narratives and instructions are included in the Book of the Law?
- e) Why is it important to listen attentively to the Word of God? Deuteronomy 4:1, 6:3-4; Joshua 1:8; Psalm 1:2, 119:105; Proverbs 19:20

- f) What are some practical ways you have found to listen to the Word of God?

3. Understanding the Word of God

- a) Nehemiah 8:7-8 Another 13 individuals are listed here. What was their ministry assignment?
- b) Why is it vitally important not only to hear the Word of God but also understand it? Acts 8:26-38
- c) Why did Ezra delegate responsibility to others to assist with this important ministry assignment?
- d) Who has helped you to more fully understand the Word of God?
- e) Share a time when you were blessed as you explained the Word of God to someone.

4. The Response of Those Who Heard the Word of God

- a) Nehemiah 8:9 Why do you think the people wept when they heard the Word of God?
- b) Nehemiah 8:10 Explain the meaning of the phrase “the joy of the LORD is your strength”.
- c) Why is it important to focus on the love, grace, and mercy of God when we sense our own sinfulness?
- d) Nehemiah 8:13-17 What can we learn from the attitude of those who gathered on the second day?
- e) Share a time when you found joy in the LORD.

