

THE PRIORITY OF HEARING THE WORD OF GOD

(Nehemiah 8:1-8)

I. EZRA THE PRIEST LEADS THE PEOPLE IN CORPORATE BIBLE STUDY (8:1-8)

A. The People had a YEARNING to HEAR the Word of God (8:1-6)

1. With the completion of the walls, the Jewish people had a _____ to gather together in the secure environment of Jerusalem and ask their spiritual _____ to read the Scriptures to them. (v. 1)

* What do we know about this man Ezra?

2. With such a _____ mood of _____ on the people's part, Ezra would not need to be asked twice; he brought the Book of the Law to those who had gathered in anticipation. (v. 2)

* What is significant about "*the seventh month*"?

3. They met at the newly established "*Water Gate*" and there Ezra read from "*_____ morning until midday*" which was approximately _____; this went on for a _____ (v. 18)! (v. 3a)

4. The audience consisted of those old enough to _____, but the amazing thing was that the people were _____ to the Scriptures. (v. 3b)

5. Perhaps in anticipation for such an event, a wooden _____ had been previously constructed as a stage so the people could _____ Ezra, and his voice could be _____ by the crowd. (v. 4)

6. When Ezra the priest unrolled the sacred scroll of the Law of Moses, the people responded by _____ out of _____. (v. 5)

7. The Jews' humble _____ toward their God was reflected in the humble _____ of bowing their faces to the ground. (v. 6)

B. Ezra and the Priests HELPED the People UNDERSTAND the Word of God (8:7-8)

1. While the people "*remained in their place,*" it is believed that Ezra would read a portion of Scripture, and this group of men (verses 4, 7) made themselves _____ in the crowd to _____. (v. 7)

2. These teachers _____ the Scriptures and gave the sense, so that the people could understand it and make _____. (v. 8)

* What can you personally apply from this passage today?