

Are We People- Who Demand The Hearing Of The Word of God? - - Neh 8:1-12

Intro:

- A. Our text this evening, has important lessons that we can learn from regarding answering this question - Are we a people, who demand the hearing of the word of God?
1. I must begin by noting a few facts - we are not bound to the Old Law and Testament as an authority in religion today - however, we are bound to the Old Testament as a great tutor. - **Romans 15:4** (NKJV) - 4 For whatever things were written before were written for our learning, that we through the patience and comfort of the Scriptures might have hope.
 - a. **1 Corinthians 10:11** and **Gal 3:24-25**
 - (1) **1 Corinthians 10:11** (NKJV) - 11 Now all these things happened to them as examples, and they were written for our admonition, upon whom the ends of the ages have come.
 - (2) **Galatians 3:24-25** (NKJV) - 24 Therefore the law was our tutor to bring us to Christ, that we might be justified by faith. 25 But after faith has come, we are no longer under a tutor.
- B. In our lesson tonight - we want to examine and learn the principles of a people who were pleasing toward God and towards His Word. Four principles are found here in the reflection of our attitude towards the handling of God's Word.- **Neh. 8:1-12**
1. The walls of Jerusalem have been completed and the people have returned to settle in their homeland - **Neh. 1:1-7:73**
 2. It was the seventh month, (Tishri - Sept. – Oct.), the Feast of Trumpets began the month of festivals- (**Lev. 23:24; Num. 29:1**), the 10th day was the day of atonement, (**Lev. 16: 23:26-32**), the 15th-21st was the Feast of Tabernacles, (**Lev. 23:33-36**).
 - a. **7:73b-8:9**. When the seventh month arrived the Israelites were settled in their towns (cf. **7:73a**). The seventh month was September-October (see the chart "Calendar in Israel," near **Ex. 12:1**). Then the people met near the Water Gate or the east wall (cf. **Neh. 3:26**, and see the map "Jerusalem in the Time of Nehemiah," near **3:1**) to hear Ezra, a scribe (cf. **8:4, 9, 13; 12:26, 36**) and also a priest (**8:2, 9; 12:26**), read and teach the Law of Moses (the five books of Moses).
 - b. Ezra had returned to Jerusalem in 458 b.c., 14 years before Nehemiah, also with the blessing of King Artaxerxes (**Ezra 7**). His primary purpose in going to his homeland was to teach the Jews God's Law.
 - c. In **Ezra 7:6, 11-12, 21** he was called a teacher. Of course Ezra and Nehemiah were contemporaries (cf. **Neh. 12:33, 36**). Ezra's descent from Eleazar, Aaron's third son, is seen in the chart "Ezra's Lineage," near **Ezra 7:1-5**.
 - d. When Ezra first arrived in Jerusalem, the moral and spiritual condition of the people was deplorable (**Ezra 9:1-4; 10:2, 10**). But as he prayerfully taught them God's Word, they began to respond to and to obey the laws of God. A few years later Nehemiah arrived in Jerusalem and challenged them to trust God to help them rebuild the walls.
 - e. The effectiveness of Ezra's ministry is also reflected in the people's behavior after the walls were completed. The two-month building program was an interlude in Ezra's teaching, but apparently it helped motivate the people to want to know more of God's Law. They themselves asked Ezra to continue his teaching ministry among them (**Neh. 8:1**). This was the first day of the seventh month, the day which was to be the Feast of Trumpets (**Lev. 23:24; Num. 29:1**). Adults and children who were old enough to understand (**Neh. 8:2-3**) listened attentively all morning as Ezra faced west by the Water Gate (cf. v. 1). ---- ***Bible Knowledge Commentary***
 3. The priesthood and sacrificial system had been restored at an earlier time, (**Ezra 3:1-13**),
 - a. **Ezra 3:1-13** (NKJV) - 1 And when the seventh month had come, and the children of Israel were in the cities, the people gathered together as one man to Jerusalem. 2 Then Jeshua the son of Jozadak and his brethren the priests, and Zerubbabel the son of Shealtiel and his brethren, arose and built the altar of the God of Israel, to offer burnt offerings on it, as it is written in the Law of

Moses the man of God. 3 Though fear had come upon them because of the people of those countries, they set the altar on its bases; and they offered burnt offerings on it to the Lord, both the morning and evening burnt offerings. 4 They also kept the Feast of Tabernacles, as it is written, and offered the daily burnt offerings in the number required by ordinance for each day. 5 Afterwards they offered the regular burnt offering, and those for New Moons and for all the appointed feasts of the Lord that were consecrated, and those of everyone who willingly offered a freewill offering to the Lord. 6 From the first day of the seventh month they began to offer burnt offerings to the Lord, although the foundation of the temple of the Lord had not been laid. 7 They also gave money to the masons and the carpenters, and food, drink, and oil to the people of Sidon and Tyre to bring cedar logs from Lebanon to the sea, to Joppa, according to the permission which they had from Cyrus king of Persia. 8 Now in the second month of the second year of their coming to the house of God at Jerusalem, Zerubbabel the son of Shealtiel, Jeshua the son of Jozadak, and the rest of their brethren the priests and the Levites, and all those who had come out of the captivity to Jerusalem, began work and appointed the Levites from twenty years old and above to oversee the work of the house of the Lord. 9 Then Jeshua with his sons and brothers, Kadmiel with his sons, and the sons of Judah, arose as one to oversee those working on the house of God: the sons of Henadad with their sons and their brethren the Levites. 10 When the builders laid the foundation of the temple of the Lord, the priests stood in their apparel with trumpets, and the Levites, the sons of Asaph, with cymbals, to praise the Lord, according to the ordinance of David king of Israel. 11 And they sang responsively, praising and giving thanks to the Lord: "For He is good, For His mercy endures forever toward Israel." Then all the people shouted with a great shout, when they praised the Lord, because the foundation of the house of the Lord was laid. 12 But many of the priests and Levites and heads of the fathers' houses, old men who had seen the first temple, wept with a loud voice when the foundation of this temple was laid before their eyes. Yet many shouted aloud for joy, 13 so that the people could not discern the noise of the shout of joy from the noise of the weeping of the people, for the people shouted with a loud shout, and the sound was heard afar off.

4. The time had come for the Law of God to be read before the people so that their worship and lives may be restored to God's prescribed order, (**Nehemiah 8:1-12**)
 - a. **Nehemiah 8:1-12** (NKJV) - 1 Now all the people gathered together as one man in the open square that was in front of the Water Gate; and they told Ezra the scribe to bring the Book of the Law of Moses, which the Lord had commanded Israel. 2 So Ezra the priest brought the Law before the assembly of men and women and all who could hear with understanding on the first day of the seventh month. 3 Then he read from it in the open square that was in front of the Water Gate from morning until midday, before the men and women and those who could understand; and the ears of all the people were attentive to the Book of the Law. 4 So Ezra the scribe stood on a platform of wood which they had made for the purpose; and beside him, at his right hand, stood Mattithiah, Shema, Anaijah, Urijah, Hilkiyah, and Maaseiah; and at his left hand Pedaiah, Mishael, Malchijah, Hashum, Hashbadana, Zechariah, and Meshullam. 5 And Ezra opened the book in the sight of all the people, for he was standing above all the people; and when he opened it, all the people stood up. 6 And Ezra blessed the Lord, the great God. Then all the people answered, "Amen, Amen!" while lifting up their hands. And they bowed their heads and worshiped the Lord with their faces to the ground. 7 Also Jeshua, Bani, Sherebiah, Jamin, Akkub, Shabbethai, Hodijah, Maaseiah, Kelita, Azariah, Jozabad, Hanan, Pelaiah, and the Levites, helped the people to understand the Law; and the people stood in their place. 8 So they read distinctly from the book, in the Law of God; and they gave the sense, and helped them to understand the reading. 9 And Nehemiah, who was the governor, Ezra the priest and scribe, and the Levites who taught the people said to all the people, "This day is holy to the Lord your God; do not mourn nor weep." For all the people wept,

when they heard the words of the Law. 10 Then he said to them, “Go your way, eat the fat, drink the sweet, and send portions to those for whom nothing is prepared; for this day is holy to our Lord. Do not sorrow, for the joy of the Lord is your strength.” 11 So the Levites quieted all the people, saying, “Be still, for the day is holy; do not be grieved.” 12 And all the people went their way to eat and drink, to send portions and rejoice greatly, because they understood the words that were declared to them.

C. There are **FOUR** important reflections on attitudes towards God’s Word that can be seen in this reading.

1. They wanted to Learn
2. They showed the Word of God Respect
3. They Sought Understanding
4. And they Obeyed the Word of God.

II. **THEY WANTED TO LEARN**

A. Can Be Seen In Their **Desire To Assemble Together For Acceptable Worship - 8:1a** ----. . . all the people gathered together as one man

1. **Nehemiah 8:1b** (NKJV) ---- . . and they told Ezra the scribe to bring the Book of the Law of Moses, which the LORD had commanded Israel.

2. To **worship & hear God’s word** – **Acts 4:23-31; 20:7,8; 1 Cor. 11:33**

a. **Acts 4:23-31** (NKJV) - 23 And being let go, they went to their own companions and reported all that the chief priests and elders had said to them. 24 So when they heard that, they raised their voice to God with one accord and said: “Lord, You are God, who made heaven and earth and the sea, and all that is in them, 25 who by the mouth of Your servant David have said: ‘Why did the nations rage, And the people plot vain things? 26 The kings of the earth took their stand, And the rulers were gathered together Against the Lord and against His Christ.’ 27 “For truly against Your holy Servant Jesus, whom You anointed, both Herod and Pontius Pilate, with the Gentiles and the people of Israel, were gathered together 28 to do whatever Your hand and Your purpose determined before to be done. 29 Now, Lord, look on their threats, and grant to Your servants that with all boldness they may speak Your word, 30 by stretching out Your hand to heal, and that signs and wonders may be done through the name of Your holy Servant Jesus.” 31 And when they had prayed, the place where they were assembled together was shaken; and they were all filled with the Holy Spirit, and they spoke the word of God with boldness.

b. **Acts 20:7** (NKJV) - 7 Now on the first day of the week, when the disciples came together to break bread, Paul, ready to depart the next day, spoke to them and continued his message until midnight.

(1) **Acts 20:8** (NKJV) - 8 There were many lamps in the upper room where they were gathered together.

c. **1 Corinthians 11:33** (NKJV) - 33 Therefore, my brethren, when you come together to eat, wait for one another.

3. **Means of edification - not to be forsaken** – **Heb. 10:24,25**

a. Hebrews 10:24 (NKJV) - 24 And let us consider one another in order to stir up love and good works,

(1) Hebrews 10:25 (NKJV) - 25 not forsaking the assembling of ourselves together, as is the manner of some, but exhorting one another, and so much the more as you see the Day approaching.

B. **Some have the attitude of the Jews in Mal. 1:13** instead of the Jews in **Nehemiah 8**

1. **Malachi 1:13** (NKJV) - 13 You also say, ‘Oh, what a weariness!’ And you sneer at it,” Says the Lord of hosts. “And you bring the stolen, the lame, and the sick; Thus you bring an offering! Should I accept this from your hand?” Says the Lord.

2. We should be like David - "I was glad when they said unto me, Let us go into the house of the Lord"

(Psalm 122:1).

- C. They assembled with a united purpose, to learn what God had revealed to them so they could obey and be pleasing to Him – 8:1
1. The goal of our teaching and preaching - Acts 10:24-33
 - a. Acts 10:24-33 (NKJV) - 24 And the following day they entered Caesarea. Now Cornelius was waiting for them, and had called together his relatives and close friends. 25 As Peter was coming in, Cornelius met him and fell down at his feet and worshiped him. 26 But Peter lifted him up, saying, “Stand up; I myself am also a man.” 27 And as he talked with him, he went in and found many who had come together. 28 Then he said to them, “You know how unlawful it is for a Jewish man to keep company with or go to one of another nation. But God has shown me that I should not call any man common or unclean. 29 Therefore I came without objection as soon as I was sent for. I ask, then, for what reason have you sent for me?” 30 So Cornelius said, “Four days ago I was fasting until this hour; and at the ninth hour I prayed in my house, and behold, a man stood before me in bright clothing, 31 and said, ‘Cornelius, your prayer has been heard, and your alms are remembered in the sight of God. 32 Send therefore to Joppa and call Simon here, whose surname is Peter. He is lodging in the house of Simon, a tanner, by the sea. When he comes, he will speak to you.’ 33 So I sent to you immediately, and you have done well to come. Now therefore, we are all present before God, to hear all the things commanded you by God.”
 - D. They together: Unity ---- Psalms 133:1; Philippians 1:27
 1. Psalm 133:1 (NKJV) - 1 A Song of Ascents. Of David. Behold, how good and how pleasant it is For brethren to dwell together in unity!
 - a. Philippians 1:27 (NKJV) - 27 Only let your conduct be worthy of the gospel of Christ, so that whether I come and see you or am absent, I may hear of your affairs, that you stand fast in one spirit, with one mind striving together for the faith of the gospel,
 2. Conformity To The Truth ---- Ephesians 4:1-16; 1 Corinthians 1:10; 1 John 1:7
 - a. Ephesians 4:1-16 (NKJV) - 1 I, therefore, the prisoner of the Lord, beseech you to walk worthy of the calling with which you were called, 2 with all lowliness and gentleness, with longsuffering, bearing with one another in love, 3 endeavoring to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace. 4 There is one body and one Spirit, just as you were called in one hope of your calling; 5 one Lord, one faith, one baptism; 6 one God and Father of all, who is above all, and through all, and in you all. 7 But to each one of us grace was given according to the measure of Christ’s gift. 8 Therefore He says: “When He ascended on high, He led captivity captive, And gave gifts to men.” 9 (Now this, “He ascended”—what does it mean but that He also first descended into the lower parts of the earth? 10 He who descended is also the One who ascended far above all the heavens, that He might fill all things.) 11 And He Himself gave some to be apostles, some prophets, some evangelists, and some pastors and teachers, 12 for the equipping of the saints for the work of ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ, 13 till we all come to the unity of the faith and of the knowledge of the Son of God, to a perfect man, to the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ; 14 that we should no longer be children, tossed to and fro and carried about with every wind of doctrine, by the trickery of men, in the cunning craftiness of deceitful plotting, 15 but, speaking the truth in love, may grow up in all things into Him who is the head—Christ— 16 from whom the whole body, joined and knit together by what every joint supplies, according to the effective working by which every part does its share, causes growth of the body for the edifying of itself in love.
 - b. 1 Corinthians 1:10 (NKJV) - 10 Now I plead with you, brethren, by the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, that you all speak the same thing, and that there be no divisions among you, but that you be perfectly joined together in the same mind and in the same judgment.
 - c. 1 John 1:7 (NKJV) - 7 But if we walk in the light as He is in the light, we have fellowship with

one another, and the blood of Jesus Christ His Son cleanses us from all sin.

3. **God's Word - The Truth** ---- **John 17:20; Ephesians 4:4-6;11-15**
 - a. **John 17:20** (NKJV) - 20 "I do not pray for these alone, but also for those who will believe in Me through their word;
 - b. **Ephesians 4:4-6** (NKJV) - 4 There is one body and one Spirit, just as you were called in one hope of your calling; 5 one Lord, one faith, one baptism; 6 one God and Father of all, who is above all, and through all, and in you all.
 - c. **Ephesians 4:11-15** (NKJV) - 11 And He Himself gave some to be apostles, some prophets, some evangelists, and some pastors and teachers, 12 for the equipping of the saints for the work of ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ, 13 till we all come to the unity of the faith and of the knowledge of the Son of God, to a perfect man, to the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ; 14 that we should no longer be children, tossed to and fro and carried about with every wind of doctrine, by the trickery of men, in the cunning craftiness of deceitful plotting, 15 but, speaking the truth in love, may grow up in all things into Him who is the head—Christ—
- E. **[vrs 3]** . . . all the people were attentive to the Book of the Law
 1. Can Be **Seen In Their Willingness To Give God's Word Their Time & Attention**— **8:1**
 - a. Literally . . . "From the light" (about 6 hours, Keil & Delitzsch commentary)
 2. The **law was read each day of the seven day feast** (**Nehemiah 8:18** NKJV) - 18 Also day by day, from the first day until the last day, he read from the Book of the Law of God. And they kept the feast seven days; and on the eighth day there was a sacred assembly, according to the prescribed manner.
 - a. Bible classes – (Attendance, preparation, attentiveness)
 - b. Preaching – (Listening, following in Bible, taking notes)
 - c. Personal Bible reading and study – (Daily, habitual meditation, cross references)
 3. **Needed to build faith** – **Romans 10:17** (NKJV) - 17 So then faith comes by hearing, and hearing by the word of God.
 - a. Needed to grow – **1 Pet 2:2** (NKJV) - 2 as newborn babes, desire the pure milk of the word, that you may grow thereby,
 - b. Needed for us to teach others – **Heb. 5:12,13**
 - (1) **Hebrews 5:12** (NKJV) - 12 For though by this time you ought to be teachers, you need someone to teach you again the first principles of the oracles of God; and you have come to need milk and not solid food.
 - (a) **Hebrews 5:13** (NKJV) - 13 For everyone who partakes only of milk is unskilled in the word of righteousness, for he is a babe.
 - c. Needed for us to discern good & evil – **Hebrews 5:14** (NKJV) - 14 But solid food belongs to those who are of full age, that is, those who by reason of use have their senses exercised to discern both good and evil.
- F. **Three Questions to consider:**
 1. Who is least enthused when a baseball game goes into extra innings?
 2. Who is least enthused when a football game goes into overtime?
 3. Who is least enthused at the length of an all day seminar?
 - a. Cf: "for where your treasure is, there your heart will be also" - (**Matt. 6:21**). (**Amos 8:5; Rom 8:6**)
 - (1) **Amos 8:5** (NKJV) - 5 Saying: "When will the New Moon be past, That we may sell grain? And the Sabbath, That we may trade wheat? Making the ephah small and the shekel large, Falsifying the scales by deceit,
 - (2) **Romans 8:6** (NKJV) - 6 For to be carnally minded is death, but to be spiritually minded is life and peace.

III. **THEY GAVE IT RESPECT** - vrs 4

A. Can Be Seen In Their Preparation For The Hearing of God's Word – 8:4

1. A **planned event** that the **people prepared** for – (They were prepared to hear, learn and obey)
2. Ezra and those who helped him were prepared – (Ezra had prepared his heart, (**Ezra 7:10**), the platform)
 - a. **Ezra 7:10** (NKJV) - 10 For Ezra had prepared his heart to seek the Law of the Lord, and to do it, and to teach statutes and ordinances in Israel.

B. Can Be Seen In **OUR** Preparation For The Hearing of God's Word

1. Going to bed at a reasonable hour
2. Bible class preparation
3. Punctuality
4. Those leading the worship should be prepared.

C. **Day before** - Prepare your mind - Be as well-rested as possible.

1. Sunday Morning Get up on time
2. On Arrival - Try to use the rest room before the worship period. Toddlers to Teens need instruction regarding reverence -
3. During Worship - Concentrate on worship - Put all other things out of your mind. - Don't distract others around you.

D. **Can Be Seen In Their Actions** – **Nehemiah 8:5-7** (NKJV) ---- 5 And Ezra opened the book in the sight of all the people, for he was standing above all the people; and when he opened it, all the people stood up. 6 And Ezra blessed the LORD, the great God. Then all the people answered, "Amen, Amen!" while lifting up their hands. And they bowed their heads and worshiped the LORD with their faces to the ground. 7 Also Jeshua, Bani, Sherebiah, Jamin, Akkub, Shabbethai, Hodijah, Maaseiah, Kelita, Azariah, Jozabad, Hanan, Pelaiah, and the Levites, helped the people to understand the Law; and the people stood in their place.

1. When **Ezra opened the scroll the people stood**
2. **Responded to Ezra's praising God** by saying "Amen" – raising their hands and bowing themselves
...
3. **Remained in their place** as the Law was explained . .

E. Can Be **Seen In OUR** Actions – **8:5-7**

1. The position of our hearts and minds . . .
2. In our participation in the worship – (worship is not a spectator event)
3. Remaining in our place, listening carefully and participating enthusiastically . . .
 - a. **Lev 10:3** - "By those who come near Me I must be regarded as holy; and before all the people I must be glorified"
 - b. **Psalm 89:7** (NKJV) ---- 7 God is greatly to be feared in the assembly of the saints, And to be held in reverence by all those around Him.
 - c. **Hebrews 12:28** (NKJV) ---- 28 Therefore, since we are receiving a kingdom which cannot be shaken, let us have grace, by which we may serve God acceptably with reverence and godly fear.
4. **John 4:23-24** (NKJV) ---- 23 But the hour is coming, and now is, when the true worshipers will worship the Father in spirit and truth; for the Father is seeking such to worship Him. 24 God is Spirit, and those who worship Him must worship in spirit and truth."
5. **Matthew 15:8-9** (NKJV) ---- 8 'These people draw near to Me with their mouth, And honor Me with their lips, But their heart is far from Me. 9 And in vain they worship Me, Teaching as doctrines the commandments of men.' "

IV. **THEY SOUGHT UNDERSTANDING** - **Nehemiah 8:8-12** (NKJV) ---- 8 So they read distinctly from the book, in the Law of God; and they gave the sense, and helped them to understand the reading.

9 And Nehemiah, who was the governor, Ezra the priest and scribe, and the Levites who taught the people said to all the people, "This day is holy to the LORD your God; do not mourn nor weep." For all the people wept, when they heard the words of the Law. 10 Then he said to them, "Go your way, eat the fat, drink the sweet, and send portions to those for whom nothing is prepared; for this day is holy to our LORD. Do not sorrow, for the joy of the LORD is your strength." 11 So the Levites quieted all the people, saying, "Be still, for the day is holy; do not be grieved." 12 And all the people went their way to eat and drink, to send portions and rejoice greatly, because they understood the words that were declared to them.

A. Can Be Seen In Their Handling of It – **8:8-12**

1. They **read distinctly** from the book, in the Law of God - (vrs **8**) –
2. They **gave the sense**, (vrs **8**) – (explained the meaning)
3. Therefore the **people were able to understand the Law** – (vrs **9b, 12b**)

B. Can Be Seen In OUR Handling of It

1. People **need to know what the scriptures say** - (**2 Tim 4:2; 1 Pet. 4:11**)
 - a. **2 Timothy 4:2** (NKJV) - 2 Preach the word! Be ready in season and out of season. Convince, rebuke, exhort, with all longsuffering and teaching.
 - b. **1 Peter 4:11** (NKJV) - 11 If anyone speaks, let him speak as the oracles of God. If anyone ministers, let him do it as with the ability which God supplies, that in all things God may be glorified through Jesus Christ, to whom belong the glory and the dominion forever and ever. Amen.
2. **Good preaching and teaching explains what the scriptures mean** - (**Luke 24:27; 2 Tim 2:15; 2 Pet. 3:15-18**)
 - a. **Luke 24:27** (NKJV) - 27 And beginning at Moses and all the Prophets, He expounded to them in all the Scriptures the things concerning Himself.
 - (1) **2 Timothy 2:15** (NKJV) - 15 Be diligent to present yourself approved to God, a worker who does not need to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth.
 - (2) **2 Peter 3:15-18** (NKJV) - 15 and consider that the longsuffering of our Lord is salvation—as also our beloved brother Paul, according to the wisdom given to him, has written to you, 16 as also in all his epistles, speaking in them of these things, in which are some things hard to understand, which untaught and unstable people twist to their own destruction, as they do also the rest of the Scriptures. 17 You therefore, beloved, since you know this beforehand, beware lest you also fall from your own steadfastness, being led away with the error of the wicked; 18 but grow in the grace and knowledge of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. To Him be the glory both now and forever. Amen.
 - b. Too many today use pulpits to entertain, tell jokes, tell stories, and focus more on social ills than actually teaching the word of God –
 - c. Consequently, too many remain untaught about what the Bible actually teaches.
 - (1) Plain Preaching ---- "So they read distinctly from the book, in the Law of God; and they gave the sense, and helped them to understand the reading" (**Neh. 8:8**). C. F. Keil translates this verse as, "they made the law comprehensible to the hearers." Keil goes on to explain, "Hence the occurrence may well have taken place as follows: Ezra first read a section of the law, and the Levites then expounded to the people the portion just read."
 - (2) Bible preaching involves the explanation of the Scriptures, not just a reading of it (**cf. Acts 2:14-16; 7; 8:34; 17:2-3**). Plain preaching killed John the Baptist (**Matt. 14:4**) and Stephen (**Acts 7**)
 - (a) **Acts 2:14-16** (NKJV) - 14 But Peter, standing up with the eleven, raised his voice and said to them, "Men of Judea and all who dwell in Jerusalem, let this be known to you, and heed my words. 15 For these are not drunk, as you suppose, since it is only the third hour of the day. 16 But this is what was spoken by the prophet Joel:

- (b) **Acts 2:7** (NKJV) - 7 Then they were all amazed and marveled, saying to one another, "Look, are not all these who speak Galileans?"
 - (c) **Acts 8:34** (NKJV) - 34 So the eunuch answered Philip and said, "I ask you, of whom does the prophet say this, of himself or of some other man?"
 - (d) **Acts 17:2-3** (NKJV) - 2 Then Paul, as his custom was, went in to them, and for three Sabbaths reasoned with them from the Scriptures, 3 explaining and demonstrating that the Christ had to suffer and rise again from the dead, and saying, "This Jesus whom I preach to you is the Christ."
 - (e) **Matthew 14:4** (NKJV) - 4 Because John had said to him, "It is not lawful for you to have her."
3. **False teachers prey on the uneducated – Eph. 4:14; 2 Pet 2:18; 3:16-18**
- a. **Ephesians 4:14** (NKJV) - 14 that we should no longer be children, tossed to and fro and carried about with every wind of doctrine, by the trickery of men, in the cunning craftiness of deceitful plotting,
 - b. **2 Peter 2:18** (NKJV) - 18 For when they speak great swelling words of emptiness, they allure through the lusts of the flesh, through lewdness, the ones who have actually escaped from those who live in error.
 - c. **2 Peter 3:16-18** (NKJV) - 16 as also in all his epistles, speaking in them of these things, in which are some things hard to understand, which untaught and unstable people twist to their own destruction, as they do also the rest of the Scriptures. 17 You therefore, beloved, since you know this beforehand, beware lest you also fall from your own steadfastness, being led away with the error of the wicked; 18 but grow in the grace and knowledge of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. To Him be the glory both now and forever. Amen.
 - d. It takes longer to clean up a mess than starting from scratch . . .

V. **THEY OBEYED IT - Nehemiah 8:9-12** (NKJV) ---- 9 And Nehemiah, who was the governor, Ezra the priest and scribe, and the Levites who taught the people said to all the people, "This day is holy to the LORD your God; do not mourn nor weep." For all the people wept, when they heard the words of the Law. 10 Then he said to them, "Go your way, eat the fat, drink the sweet, and send portions to those for whom nothing is prepared; for this day is holy to our LORD. Do not sorrow, for the joy of the LORD is your strength." 11 So the Levites quieted all the people, saying, "Be still, for the day is holy; do not be grieved." 12 And all the people went their way to eat and drink, to send portions and rejoice greatly, because they understood the words that were declared to them.

A. **They did as they were instructed – (vrs 10-12)**

- 1. **They repented and corrected** not keeping the feast days - (**Neh. 8:13-17**).
- a. **Nehemiah 8:13-17** (NKJV) - 13 Now on the second day the heads of the fathers' houses of all the people, with the priests and Levites, were gathered to Ezra the scribe, in order to understand the words of the Law. 14 And they found written in the Law, which the Lord had commanded by Moses, that the children of Israel should dwell in booths during the feast of the seventh month, 15 and that they should announce and proclaim in all their cities and in Jerusalem, saying, "Go out to the mountain, and bring olive branches, branches of oil trees, myrtle branches, palm branches, and branches of leafy trees, to make booths, as it is written." 16 Then the people went out and brought them and made themselves booths, each one on the roof of his house, or in their courtyards or the courts of the house of God, and in the open square of the Water Gate and in the open square of the Gate of Ephraim. 17 So the whole assembly of those who had returned from the captivity made booths and sat under the booths; for since the days of Joshua the son of Nun until that day the children of Israel had not done so. And there was very great gladness.
- 2. **Put away their pagan wives - (Neh. 13:1-3)**.
- a. **Nehemiah 13:1-3** (NKJV) - 1 On that day they read from the Book of Moses in the hearing of the

people, and in it was found written that no Ammonite or Moabite should ever come into the assembly of God, 2 because they had not met the children of Israel with bread and water, but hired Balaam against them to curse them. However, our God turned the curse into a blessing. 3 So it was, when they had heard the Law, that they separated all the mixed multitude from Israel.

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- B. **Matthew 7:21-23** (NKJV) ---- 21 "Not everyone who says to Me, 'Lord, Lord,' shall enter the kingdom of heaven, but he who does the will of My Father in heaven. 22 Many will say to Me in that day, 'Lord, Lord, have we not prophesied in Your name, cast out demons in Your name, and done many wonders in Your name?' 23 And then I will declare to them, 'I never knew you; depart from Me, you who practice lawlessness!'
 - C. **James 1:21-25** (NKJV) ---- 21 Therefore lay aside all filthiness and overflow of wickedness, and receive with meekness the implanted word, which is able to save your souls. 22 But be doers of the word, and not hearers only, deceiving yourselves. 23 For if anyone is a hearer of the word and not a doer, he is like a man observing his natural face in a mirror; 24 for he observes himself, goes away, and immediately forgets what kind of man he was. 25 But he who looks into the perfect law of liberty and continues in it, and is not a forgetful hearer but a doer of the work, this one will be blessed in what he does.

VI. **Conclusion:**

- A. Do we hunger for it?
 - 1. Do we prepare ourselves to receive it?
 - 2. Do we reverence it?
 - 3. Do we seek to understand it?
 - 4. Are we willing to obey it?
- B. **Matthew 11:28-30** (NKJV) ---- 28 Come to Me, all you who labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest. 29 Take My yoke upon you and learn from Me, for I am gentle and lowly in heart, and you will find rest for your souls. 30 For My yoke is easy and My burden is light."

¹ *The New King James Version*. Nashville : Thomas Nelson, 1982