

“Lessons for Today from Nehemiah 8-10”

“For whatsoever things were written aforetime were written for our learning...” Rom 15:4

We live in a day where authority and standards are questioned, belittled, and sometimes even evolve over time. How wonderful to be able to say with the Psalmist “...forever O Lord, thy Word is settled in heaven.” Ps 119:89. The word settled means to stand, set, or set over. Just as God never changes, neither does His Word. The challenge is to consider whether or not I can say before the Lord “forever, O Lord thy Word is settled in my life.” What a wonderful thing it is to be able to declare before God that my life, and every aspect of it, is governed solely by His Word. Indeed, many things in our lives change over time, but His Word never does – it is a solid rock! In addition, it is, always has been, and always will be the authority for the life of any child of God that desires a life of blessing.

If we step back and consider what is perhaps the greatest need for those that belong to the Lord today, we may conclude that it’s a re-realization of the following three things:

1. Recognize the standard and that it hasn't changed: The Word of God is and must be the standard by which I govern every department of my life.
2. Self examination: Have I fallen short in some areas? As the standard is brought to light again, the Lord would help me see that there may be some areas of my life that need to be addressed which would lead to confession.
3. Re-dedication: As those areas are confessed, the Lord would give the grace needed for me to commit or re-commit those areas of my life back to Him.

Chapters 8, 9, and 10 of this wonderful book parallel the three thoughts above and provide some very practical truths that can be applied today. These three chapters trace the actions of a small number of people that have just come out of years of captivity and realized that not only was God’s Word the authority by which they were to order their lives, but that ALL of their difficulties were directly related to their disobedience of it. Having realized that, they re-establish the authority of God’s Word over them, repent of their failures, recount God’s faithfulness, and re-dedicate themselves back to the Lord.

Chapter 8 – The Remnant **Re-establish** the Authority of the Word of God

1. Discuss from vs. 1 the following: who gathered together, how they gathered, and where they gathered. What is the significance of where they gathered? How can we apply these three thoughts to us?
2. What is the significance of the walls being constructed before their gathering together? What do the walls speak of today?
3. What did the people desire from Ezra, and how can we apply this?
4. What did they find had changed since the Lord first gave the law? Was it still applicable for them?
5. What is the significance of and why would the Spirit of God use the words “those that could understand”?

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6. What was the people’s attitude towards God’s Word (vs. 3, 5)?
7. What is the significance of the pulpit of wood, and why was it made? How do we apply this?
8. What effect did the Word of God have on the hearts of the hearers (vs. 9-18)?
9. What parallels can we draw to 2 Timothy 3:16?
10. What is the significance of the last 4 words of vs. 15?
11. What was the people’s response to the Word of God?
12. Discuss and apply Ps. 119:130?
13. How would we make application today to the “booths”.
14. What is the significance of the portions that the Lord led Ezra to read? Consider their circumstances and the time of the year they were in. Was it a coincidence? How do we apply this?
15. Discuss the “response time” of the people after they heard the Word of God.

Chapter 9 – The Remnant **Repent** of their Failure and **Recount** God’s Faithfulness

1. What is the significance of the 3 day gap between the last verse of ch. 8 and the first verse of ch. 9.
2. What parallel can we draw to Isaiah 55:11?
3. What is signified by the sackclothes and earth. How would we apply this?
4. What is the significance of “separation”? Discuss how we apply this.
5. Why is the order we find in vs 3, and 5-8 important?
6. Discuss verse 13, what did the people recognize they had at one time but were now missing? Consider and apply the character of the laws God gave them.
7. What parallel can we draw to 2 Timothy 2:13?
8. What was the root of their problem that they identified in verse 16? Discuss.
9. What did the people lack in the wilderness? Apply.
10. How many times do the words “great provocation” appear in this chapter compared to the word or form of the word mercy? What does this tell us?
11. Discuss and apply verse 30.
12. What did the people recognize in verse 33?
13. From verse 37, what was the result of their disobedience?

Chapter 10:28-39 – The Remnant **Re-dedicate** themselves to the Lord

1. Why does the Spirit of God take the time to name all of the individuals in the first 28 verses of ch. 10?
2. Discuss and apply some of the commitments the people made:
 - a. Walk based on the Word of God (vs. 28-29)
 - b. Remain separate from the world and evil (vs. 30)
 - c. Give the Lord what He is due (v.31)
 - i. How can we apply this to the Lord’s Day?
 - d. Serve the Lord and not forsake the House of God (v.32-39)
 - e. Give the Lord His rightful place (the preeminence) in their lives (v.35-37)
 - i. Consider how many times the word “first” is used.