

Ezra's Revival

“And all the people gathered as one man at the square which was in front of the Water Gate, and they asked Ezra the scribe to bring the book of the law of Moses which the Lord had given to Israel.”

Nehemiah 8:1

There are specific times throughout the Old Testament when the people of Israel experienced a spiritual revival. Most of those experiences were stimulated by reading and expounding the law. And then, having been moved by God's Word, the people responded and returned to God's commandments and precepts. This happened at the time of King Josiah. But Josiah's sons and the kings who followed did not obey the Lord, and God unleashed His judgment.

Judah went into captivity in Babylon. After 70 years, the people returned to Jerusalem. The prophets Nehemiah and Ezra helped rebuild the city, and they brought back the Word of God. In the text above, Nehemiah gathered the third captivity group. They rebuilt Jerusalem's walls in 52 days. God was with them. Ezra began to read. When the people assembled, “they gathered as one man at the square” (Nehemiah 8:1). The whole gathering was “attentive” (8:3). When Ezra opened the book, they all stood up, showing reverence for God and His Word (8:5). Ezra read the word from daybreak until noon. They had a hunger for the word of God.

Wouldn't it be great if our congregations would have the same hunger for God's Word? Wouldn't it be wonderful if you had that hunger? This biblical account should challenge us. It should motivate us to be obedient to the leading of the Holy Spirit. We who are prophets should preach and teach the whole counsel of God, law and gospel, sin and grace. God and His Word are powerful and never change. We preach the Gospel and call people to Christ, confidently knowing that God is at work through His Word and Spirit.

Like the disciple John wrote, “As many as received him, and believed in his name, he gave the right to become children of God” (John 1:12). Unless people receive Christ Jesus the Savior, they will be lost for all eternity. “Therefore, my dear brothers,” writes Paul, “stand firm. Let nothing move you. Always give yourselves fully to the work of the Lord, because you know that your labor in the Lord is not in vain” (I Corinthians 15:58).

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AFLC Promotion for May is Home Missions