

# Nehemiah 8:12

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

And all the people went their way to eat, and to drink, and to send portions, and to make great mirth, because they had understood the words that were declared unto them.

## Analysis

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**And all the people went their way to eat, and to drink, and to send portions, and to make great mirth, because they had understood the words that were declared unto them.**

This verse within Nehemiah 8 addresses themes of Scripture centrality, teaching, understanding, worship. The public Scripture reading demonstrates how spiritual renewal requires understanding God's Word, not mere ritual observance. This passage demonstrates biblical principles applicable across both testaments—God's sovereignty combined with human responsibility, faith expressed through obedient action, and the necessity of both individual and corporate commitment to covenant faithfulness. Nehemiah models leadership that combines vision, prayer, courage, integrity, and perseverance amid sustained opposition.

## Historical Context

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Nehemiah's account occurs during Persian imperial dominance (539-331 BC), specifically 445-433 BC under Artaxerxes I. The spiritual reforms under Ezra and Nehemiah shaped Judaism for centuries, establishing Scripture's centrality and patterns of worship continuing into the intertestamental period and beyond. The Persian period was crucial transitional time when Jewish identity shifted from monarchical nationalism to Torah-centered covenantal community. Without political independence, the people's cohesion depended on shared scripture,

temple worship, and covenant obedience. This established patterns persisting through the Second Temple period into New Testament times. Understanding this context illuminates Jesus's ministry among a people shaped by these reforms and challenges.

## Related Passages

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**1 John 4:8** — God is love

**1 Corinthians 13:4** — Characteristics of love

**Psalm 19:1** — Heavens declare God's glory

**Colossians 1:16** — All things created through Christ

## Study Questions

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1. How does regular engagement with Scripture transform understanding of God and His will for your life?
2. What specific commitments do you need to make (or renew) regarding Bible reading, worship, and obedience?
3. How can the principles demonstrated in this passage inform your response to current challenges in your life or church?

## Interlinear Text

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וַיֵּלֶךְ וְלִשְׁלַח	וְלִשְׁתָּוֹת	וְלִשְׁתָּוֹת	וְלִשְׁלַח
went their way	And all the people	to eat	and to drink
H3212	H3605	H5971	H398
לְאָכְלָה	כָּל	בַּעַמֵּד	לְאָכְלָה
and to send	and to drink	and to send	and to send
H7971	H8354	H8354	H7971
בְּיַד	גָּדוֹל	שְׂמֹחַת	בְּיַד
because they had understood	great	mirth	and to make
H995	H3588	H8057	H6213
מִן	מִן	וְתִּשְׁמַחַת	וְתִּשְׁמַחַת
the portions	the great	the mirth	and to make
H4490	H1419	H8057	H6213
לְקַרְבָּן	רָאשָׁה	יְהִי	לְקַרְבָּן
the words	that were declared	the words	the words
H1697	H834	H3045	H0

## Additional Cross-References

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**Psalms 119:174** (Word): I have longed for thy salvation, O LORD; and thy law is my delight.

**Psalms 119:97** (Word): O how love I thy law! it is my meditation all the day.

**Psalms 119:72** (Word): The law of thy mouth is better unto me than thousands of gold and silver.

**Psalms 119:130** (Word): The entrance of thy words giveth light; it giveth understanding unto the simple.

**Psalms 119:111** (Parallel theme): Thy testimonies have I taken as an heritage for ever: for they are the rejoicing of my heart.

**Psalms 119:171** (Parallel theme): My lips shall utter praise, when thou hast taught me thy statutes.

**Psalms 119:127** (Word): Therefore I love thy commandments above gold; yea, above fine gold.

**Luke 24:32** (Word): And they said one to another, Did not our heart burn within us, while he talked with us by the way, and while he opened to us the scriptures?

**Psalms 119:14** (Parallel theme): I have rejoiced in the way of thy testimonies, as much as in all riches.

**Psalms 119:16** (Word): I will delight myself in thy statutes: I will not forget thy word.

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