

Nehemiah 8:4

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

And Ezra the scribe stood upon a pulpit of wood, which they had made for the purpose; and beside him stood Mattithiah, and Shema, and Anaiah, and Urijah, and Hilkiah, and Maaseiah, on his right hand; and on his left hand, Pedaiah, and Mishael, and Malchiah, and Hashum, and Hashbadana, Zechariah, and Meshullam.

Analysis

And Ezra the scribe stood upon a pulpit of wood, which they had made for the purpose; and beside him stood Mattithiah, and Shema, and Anaiah, and Urijah, and Hilkiah, and Maaseiah, on his right hand; and on his left hand, Pedaiah, and Mishael, and Malchiah, and Hashum, and Hashbadana, Zechariah, and Meshullam.

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

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

Matthew 25:31 — Final judgment

Romans 2:1 — Judging others

Study Questions

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

אֲשֶׁר עַל מִזְבֵּחַ עַל הַסְּפִירָה תְּעַמֵּד

him stood And Ezra the scribe upon a pulpit of wood

H5975

H5830

H5608

H5921

H4026

H6086

H834

מִתְתַּחַת הַאָזֶל וְתַּעֲמֵד עַל

which they had made for the purpose him stood and beside Mattithiah

H6213

H1697

H5975

H681

H4993

עַל וּמִשְׁעָנָיו הַזְּלָקִי הַעֲלִיה וְשַׁמְעָנָיו

and Shema and Anaiah and Urijah and Hilkiah and Maaseiah

H8087

H6043

H223

H2518

H4641

H5921

וּמֶלֶךְ הַמִּישָׁא לְפָנָיו וּמִשְׁמָאלׁו יְמִינָו

on his right hand and on his left hand Pedaiah and Mishael and Malchiah

H3225

H8040

H6305

H4332

H4441

מִשְׁלָמָם זְכָרִי הַמִּשְׁבָּדָנה וְשַׁמְעָנָיו

and Hashum and Hashbadana Zechariah and Meshullam

H2828

H2806

H2148

H4918

From KJV Study • kjvstudy.org