

Nehemiah 8:9

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

And Nehemiah, which is the Tirshatha, and Ezra the priest the scribe, and the Levites that taught the people, said unto all the people, This day is holy unto the LORD your God; mourn not, nor weep. For all the people wept, when they heard the words of the law.

Analysis

And Nehemiah, which is the Tirshatha, and Ezra the priest the scribe, and the Levites that taught the people, said unto all the people, This day is holy unto the LORD your God; mourn not, nor weep. For all the people wept, when they heard the words of the law.

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

1 Corinthians 13:4 — Characteristics of love

1 John 4:8 — God is love

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

בְּכָה וְיַעֲזֹב אֶת
the priest || and Ezra and
הַתְּרַשְׁתָּה מִאֵת
which is the Tirshatha H1931
נָחָמִי הַאֲמָר
And Nehemiah H5166
יָדָר
said H559

לְכָל
For all the people H3605
בְּעֵד מִמְּלֹא
that taught H853
וּפְלִוִּים
and the Levites H3881
הַסְּפִיף רַב
the scribe H5608

אֶל אֱלֹהִיךְ מִתְּבָרְכָה
your God H408
לְיְהֻדָּה הַיּוֹם
unto the LORD H3068
בְּעֵד מִתְּבָרְכָה
is holy H1931
הַיּוֹם
This day H3117
קָדֵש
is holy H6918
בְּעֵד מִתְּבָרְכָה
For all the people H5971

בְּעֵד מִתְּבָרְכָה
For all the people H5971
כָּל בְּזָכִים
unto the LORD H3068
בְּזָכִים
not nor weep H3588
בְּזָכִים
not nor weep H1058
בְּזָכִים
not nor weep H1058
מִתְּבָרְכָה
and mourn H408

בְּעֵד מִתְּבָרְכָה
For all the people H5971
דְּבָרִים
the words H1697
קְשַׁמְעַת
of the law H8451
אֲתָּה
when they heard H8085
בְּעֵד מִתְּבָרְכָה
of the law H8451

Additional Cross-References

Nehemiah 7:70 (Parallel theme): And some of the chief of the fathers gave unto the work. The Tirshatha gave to the treasure a thousand drams of gold, fifty basons, five hundred and thirty priests' garments.

Nehemiah 7:65 (Holy): And the Tirshatha said unto them, that they should not eat of the most holy things, till there stood up a priest with Urim and Thummim.

Nehemiah 8:2 (Word): And Ezra the priest brought the law before the congregation both of men and women, and all that could hear with understanding, upon the first day of the seventh month.

Deuteronomy 12:12 (References God): And ye shall rejoice before the LORD your God, ye, and your sons, and your daughters, and your menservants, and your

maidservants, and the Levite that is within your gates; forasmuch as he hath no part nor inheritance with you.

Deuteronomy 12:7 (References God): And there ye shall eat before the LORD your God, and ye shall rejoice in all that ye put your hand unto, ye and your households, wherein the LORD thy God hath blessed thee.

Deuteronomy 16:11 (References God): And thou shalt rejoice before the LORD thy God, thou, and thy son, and thy daughter, and thy manservant, and thy maidservant, and the Levite that is within thy gates, and the stranger, and the fatherless, and the widow, that are among you, in the place which the LORD thy God hath chosen to place his name there.

Leviticus 23:24 (Holy): Speak unto the children of Israel, saying, In the seventh month, in the first day of the month, shall ye have a sabbath, a memorial of blowing of trumpets, an holy convocation.

Ezra 2:63 (Holy): And the Tirshatha said unto them, that they should not eat of the most holy things, till there stood up a priest with Urim and with Thummim.

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