



HEARING GOD – April 15

Nehemiah 8:1–9 (ESV) 1 And all the people gathered as one man into the square before the Water Gate. And they told Ezra the scribe to bring the Book of the Law of Moses that the LORD had commanded Israel. 2 So Ezra the priest brought the Law before the assembly, both men and women and all who could understand what they heard, on the first day of the seventh month. 3 And he read from it facing the square before the Water Gate from early morning until midday, in the presence of the men and the women and those who could understand. And the ears of all the people were attentive to the Book of the Law. 4 And Ezra the scribe stood on a wooden platform that they had made for the purpose. And beside him stood Mattithiah, Shema, Anaiah, Uriah, Hilkiah, and Maaseiah on his right hand, and Pedaiah, Mishael, Malchijah, Hashum, Hashbaddanah, Zechariah, and Meshullam on his left hand. 5 And Ezra opened the book in the sight of all the people, for he was above all the people, and as he opened it all the people stood. 6 And Ezra blessed the LORD, the great God, and all the people answered, “Amen, Amen,” lifting up their hands. And they bowed their heads and worshiped the LORD with their faces to the ground. 7 Also Jeshua, Bani, Sherebiah, Jamin, Akkub, Shabbethai, Hodiah, Maaseiah, Kelita, Azariah, Jozabad, Hanan, Pelaiah, the Levites, helped the people to understand the Law, while the people remained in their places. 8 They read from the book, from the Law of God, clearly, and they gave the sense, so that the people understood the reading. 9 And Nehemiah, who was the governor, and Ezra the priest and scribe, and the Levites who taught the people said to all the people, “This day is holy to the LORD your God; do not mourn or weep.” For all the people wept as they heard the words of the Law.

Read & Examine – In your own words, what is the main idea of this *passage*? Of the *sermon*?

Apply – Consider how God intends to use his Word to shape *your* heart and life now.

- Can you resonate with the struggle to maintain your identity in the city? Tell us more.
- The Jews gathered as “one man” with unified desires to hear from God. What desires do we have for our lives with God, for our community, for our neighborhoods?
- Do you suspect there are any areas where you might be settling for spiritual apathy? Do you notice any signs of spiritual numbness in your heart?
- We don’t read Scripture to get God to participate in our lives, we read it so we can participate in his. Speak candidly about your agenda/desires when you come to the Bible.
- If the Bible is truly living and active (Hebrews 4:12), how are you making yourself vulnerable to God’s Word? How could you? Where do you need help?
- Is there something you need to do in response to this Word from God? Where might you need to repent? Where do you need to receive God’s free forgiveness through Christ? Where do you need help from the Spirit to believe and live out of the gospel more deeply?

Pray – We have been listening to God’s Word, now respond together to him in prayer.

- What do you yearn for God to do in and through you and your community? Talk to God about it. Petition him for it. Confess your neediness and lack to be able to accomplish it.