

## Unpacking the Preach

Date: 16th January 2022  
Sermon Title: Rejoice  
Bible Passage: Nehemiah 8:1-12

### **Introduction**

Take time to read the passage through from a couple of different translations.

- What do you think is the main point?
- What stands out to you from this passage?
- Are there any questions you are left with?

### **Recapping the Preach**

Stu began with a brief outline of Nehemiah and mentioned that it is a story about the rebuilding of the walls of Jerusalem and also the revitalisation of the spiritual life of God's people.

He worked through the text picking out some key verses and unpacked them:

- 7:23b - the gathering for the feast of Trumpets
- 8:1 - all the people came together as one man
- 8:1b - they asked Ezra to read the Book of the Law
- 8:3b - they listened attentively
- 8:6 - the attentive listening led to worship
- 8:9 - the attentive listening led to repentance
- 8:10-11 - the attentive listening ultimately led to peace with God, joy of salvation and strengthening of faith.

With the above points in mind reflect on the following questions:

- Why do you think God ordained different festivals / feasts for the people to observe (Leviticus 23:4-44)?
- Their gathering as 'one man' is a picture of unity of heart and purpose. How does this challenge the church today, where there is often division over all manner of topics, while ignoring our common truths which unite us?
- Statistics reveal that a large percentage of the church do not have a regular habit of reading the Bible. Why do you think this is? How can this be changed?
- Why do you think their attentive listening to Scripture led to worship?
- Read Hebrews 4:2 and 2 Timothy 3:16 - what do these verses tell us about the Bible?
- Why did the people begin to weep and mourn when they heard the Book of the Law being read?
- 'We should not only read Scripture, but should allow Scripture to read us' - would you agree (compare James 1:22-25)? How does Scripture read us?

Stu shared how the Levites explained the Law to the people so that they could understand.

- Why do you think Nehemiah and Ezra told the people not to weep and mourn (8:9)?
- What do you think Nehemiah meant when he said, 'Do not grieve, for the joy of the Lord is your strength'?
- What do you think 'the joy of the Lord' is? And how does this give us strength?

**Response**

- Is there anything from the preach and passage that you will be taking away to reflect on or work on?
- Do you have a habit of regular reading and meditating on Scripture?
- Who can you partner with to help you build a habit of reading Scripture to keep you accountable?

**Prayer pointers**

- Take time to share prayer requests and pray for one another.
- Pray that God would give you a hunger for His Word and a spirit of wisdom and revelation so that you may know Him better (Ephesians 1:17)

**Additional resources:**

If you need some additional resources the below websites are useful:

- <https://www.gotquestions.org>
- <https://enduringword.com>
- <https://www.biblica.com>
- <https://biblehub.com/commentaries/>