

**Reading the Law with Joy**

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Introduction: Biblical illiteracy and the fog of intellectual and social arrogance...

Text: Nehemiah 8 (excerpted sections)

Main Idea: The God of the Bible is revealed as the God who speaks. This makes His followers:

- I. The People of “the Law” or “the Book”
  - A. The Priest – Ezra who reads
  - B. The People – the assembled who hears
  - C. The Parchment – the LORD who speaks through the Word(s) and work(s)

Big Point – All temporary projects must be founded in the eternal plan of God

- II. The Process of Understanding the Law
  - A. What it says - covenantal content
  - B. What it meant – revealed character
  - C. What it means – collective implications

- III. The Praise, Penitence & Provision
  - A. Tears of repentance – the Law as a mirror
  - B. Praise of reverence – the Law as a motivator
  - C. Joy of renewal – the Law as means to relational restoration

Apply – Where has my reading of the Bible caused me tears, praise & joy?

- IV. The Community’s Participation - Festival of Booths

Big Point – When God speaks, we ought not just listen but obey...and develop a lifestyle of obedience...

Conclusion: a vision statement...

We commit ourselves to be

- People of “the Book”... engaged in a
- Process of understanding its meaning ... which result in
- Praise, Penitence & Provision ... which makes us
- A Community that Participates together in obeying/reflecting God’s words and ways to the world around!