

Man's Response to God's Grace & Mercy in Nehemiah

Lesson 4 of 4

"For all the people wept...."

Neh 8:9

By Russell Earl

Thesis: I want to show how it is possible to turn from your sins and make a commitment to follow God faithfully.

- Intro:
1. Sometimes coming back to God doesn't have to be complicated. It can be very simple.
 2. For these people in the past it had been hard for them. They had desired to continue disobeying God.
 3. But here, in chapters 8-10. They now desired to obey God, they were ready to become right in the sight of God.

I. The hearing...

A. What was read (**Neh 8:1-3**)

Now all the people gathered together as one man in the open square that was in front of the Water Gate; and they told Ezra the scribe to bring the Book of the Law of Moses, which the LORD had commanded Israel. So Ezra the priest brought the Law before the assembly of men and women and all who could hear with understanding on the first day of the seventh month. Then he read from it in the open square that was in front of the Water Gate from morning until midday, before the men and women and those who could understand; and the ears of all the people were attentive to the Book of the Law.

1. The people asked to hear the law. They were ready to hear-thus before they were not read to hear.
2. They listened for hours as Ezra read from the Book of the Law of Moses. This was there interest, there was nothing else.

B. The people worshipped God with respect and a humble attitude (**Neh 8:5-6**)

And Ezra opened the book in the sight of all the people, for he was standing above all the people; and when he opened it, all the people stood up. And Ezra blessed the LORD, the great God. Then all the people answered, "Amen, Amen!" while lifting up their hands. And they bowed their heads and worshiped the LORD with their faces to the ground.

1. They stood at the opening of the Law. They had a new respect for God's law. The people responded in a positive way –"Amen, Amen!" while lifting their hands
2. They worshipped with humbleness as they bowed their hands and worship with their faces to the ground. A great example of selfless worship and not selfish worship.

II. The weeping....

A. For the people wept

*(**Neh 8:9c**) And Nehemiah, who was the governor, 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 nor weep." For all the people wept, when they heard the words of the Law.*

1. Why did the people weep? Consider **Psalm 38:8-9,18**
 2. When did they weep?
- B. “when they heard the words of the Law”
- (Neh 8:9c)** *For all the people wept, **WHEN they heard the words of the Law.***
- (Heb 4:12)** *For the word of God is living and powerful, and sharper than any two-edged sword, piercing even to the division of soul and spirit, and of joints and marrow, and is a discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart.*
1. When did they weep? When they heard the law. They **KNEW** they were living contrary to God’s law.
 2. What did this cause, it caused them to desire to change.

III. The change & commitment

- A. Changing by again obeying God (**Neh 8:14, 18**)
- And they found written in the Law, which the LORD had commanded by Moses, that the children of Israel should dwell in booths during the feast of the seventh month, (v.18) Also day by day, from the first day until the last day, he read from the Book of the Law of God. And they kept the feast seven days; and on the eighth day there was a sacred assembly, according to the prescribed manner.*
1. He read from the book of the law of God & they kept the feast – changed by repenting and once again keeping the feasts commanded by God (**Neh 9:34-35**).
Neither our kings nor our princes, Our priests nor our fathers, Have kept Your law, Nor heeded Your commandments and Your testimonies, With which You testified against them. For they have not served You in their kingdom, Or in the many good things that You gave them, Or in the large and rich land which You set before them; Nor did they turn from their wicked works.
- B. Document of commitment
1. The document contents (**Neh 9:37-38**)
And it yields much increase to the kings You have set over us, Because of our sins; Also they have dominion over our bodies and our cattle At their pleasure; And we are in great distress. "And because of all this, We make a sure covenant and write it; Our leaders, our Levites, and our priests seal it."
 - a. They would keep the laws of the God that they have not been keeping.
 - b. If they did not keep God’s law they would remain under the power of the kings set over them by God.

- Conc: 1. These people wept when they heard God’s law read. They didn’t stop there, they then repented. (**Neh 9:1-3**).
Now on the twenty-fourth day of this month the children of Israel were assembled with fasting, in sackcloth, and with dust on their heads. Then those of Israelite lineage separated themselves from all foreigners; and they stood and confessed their sins and the iniquities of their fathers. And they stood up in their place and read from the Book of the Law of the LORD their God for one-fourth of the day; and for another fourth they confessed and worshiped the LORD their God.
- They didn’t stop there either, they then created a document showing their desire to once again obey God.
2. Are you ready to do the same things today. Are you ready to obey. If you are willing

to repent of your sins, and to follow God faithfully you can be made right in His sight. Being right in the sight of God-**is all that matters.**

3. Full Invitation