



# VICTORIOUS CHRISTIAN MINISTRY

## Weekly Bible Study - 23:05:2012

Website: [www.victoriouschristianministry.org](http://www.victoriouschristianministry.org)

### **Study 30: A NEW BEGINNING**

#### ***Nehemiah 8:1-8***

The seventh month was traditionally the time for the feast of Sabbath (Leviticus 23:24-25; Numbers 29:1-6). The Jews remembered and kept this Sabbath. Perhaps memory of the fact that their captivity was partly a consequence of their negligence of Sabbath made them respond without a reminder. **“Remember therefore from whence thou art fallen, and repent, and do the first works; or else I will come unto thee quickly, and will remove thy candlestick out of his place, except thou repent”** (Revelation 2:5). Believers ought not to forget times of worship, Bible Study and Church Home Meetings, as these are divine appointments for spiritual renewal and growth. Fresh memories of divine intervention in the building work raised their enthusiasm and added new zest and flavour to this ceremony. They saw this as a golden opportunity for worshipping God who has so wonderfully delivered them.

Celebration of victory and achievement can help to immortalise the memory and facilitate future similar accomplishments. However, the manner and method of the celebration is vital to future outcomes. In the world today, many use times of success, graduation, birthdays, achievements, promotions and breakthroughs as occasions for parties, dancing and drinking. Believers should learn from these Jews that such occasions should serve as opportunities for worship, sober reflections and drawing closer to the God from whom all blessings flow. Our text illustrates the excitement of the people at worship; the exposition of the word; the explanation of the way and the encouragement in the way.

#### **1. EXCITEMENT AT WORSHIP:** Nehemiah 7:73; 8:1,5 (note vs. 3, 6); Psalms 119:9-16.

At completion of the work, the Jews returned to their cities. When the seventh month came they were all gathered together at the water gate and requested Ezra to read to them from the Law of Moses. The response of the people to worship was spontaneous and respectful. When Ezra opened the book to read, they respectfully stood up. They had respect for the Word of God and were conscious of the presence of the Lord. Though excited at the prospect of worship, they maintained gravity and proper decorum that befits divine presence. They did not use the occasion as opportunity for shoptalk, jesting, unhealthy humour and such frivolity that would undermine the seriousness of the worship.

#### **2. EXPOSITION OF THE WORD:** Nehemiah 8:2-6,8; Joshua 1:6-9; Deuteronomy 4:5-9

It is interesting to note that the central activity at this convocation was the exposition of the Law of Moses. The reading of the word was exalted above eating, singing or dancing. Special preparations were made for the reading of the law to enhance visibility and audibility; and very little to none concerning meals or melody. They knew that neglect of the Word led to their captivity and destruction of the walls. If the victory they had just obtained was to be kept, they were to know and keep that word.

**Your Spiritual Welfare Is Our Concern**

Abiding by the word of God *is* the only sure way to victory, power, success and lasting happiness.

**3. EXPLANATION OF THE WAY:** Nehemiah 8:4,7-9; Ezra 7:10; Proverbs 26:20a; Philippians 4:2.

Ezra the scribe was to read from the law and all others were in attendance. His earlier consecration to seek, do and teach the law made him qualified to teach on this occasion. God always ensures that doors of opportunity open to the prepared and ready. "It is better to be prepared without opportunity coming, than to have opportunity and not be prepared". Nehemiah was in attendance in a subordinate role! He did not allow his secular learning or position to adversely affect the unity of the people. Note their unity! No one was trying to create an empire for himself. There was no 'colonial' style strategy of 'divide and rule'. The devil exploits division and disunity to harm the body of Christ. No one is above the word of God. Their main concern was depth of understanding rather than length of the reading. The assistants (including Nehemiah) carefully and unanimously explained to the understanding of everyone the passages read. What a lesson! If all leaders would unanimously stand by the same word, believe the same thing, uphold the same principles, practice the same truth, the devil will lose the battle and God will be glorified. Never compromise the Word of God to save a situation! (e.g. children may display tantrum to get what they want. To allow them their way just to pacify an awkward situation is to spoil them and undermine their potentials for success). Bible principles rather than carnal human schemes must always be our priority. Learn from History! Hitler could only continue perpetrating his atrocities so long as he had the support of loyal allies (the fifth column). The enemies could only arrest Christ through the loyal support of Judas. **"Where no wood is, there the fire goeth out: so where there is no talebearer, the strife ceaseth"** (Proverbs 26:20). I have made up my mind NEVER TO BE A FIFTH COLUMN IN HITLER'S WARFARE.

**4. ENCOURAGEMENT IN THE WAY:** Nehemiah 8:9; Matthew 5:4; Ecclesiastes 7:3.

The people mourned for their sins on hearing the law. Mourning is a lost art among many today, who would rather laugh it off or resort to positive confessions. Bible exposition should always lead to genuine repentance. They were honest enough to admit their sins publicly. This is bible salvation; it starts with repentance before believing. The way something begins affects its course. Today, many lack the honesty and sincerity to own up to their sins even when they are so glaring. In an attempt to believe without repenting they end up becoming wolves in sheep's clothing, tares among wheat, the mixed multitude, opportunist nobles among earnest servants, miracle babies and bread seekers who cannot endure sound doctrine. Their profession of faith lacks luster, depth, sincerity and steadfastness. And they attract more rebuke than encouragement in the way. Blessed are they that mourn for they shall be comforted. "Thus saith the LORD, The heaven is my throne, and the earth is my footstool: where is the house that ye build unto me? and where is the place of my rest? For all those things hath mine hand made, and all those things have been, saith the LORD: **but to this man will I look, even to him that is poor and of a contrite spirit, and trembleth at my word"** (Isaiah 66:1-2).