

## NEHEMIAH 8:1-18

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### Ezra Reads the Law

<sup>1</sup>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. <sup>2</sup>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. <sup>3</sup>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.

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**<sup>4</sup>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, Mishaël, Malchijah, Hashum, Hashbaddanah, Zechariah, and Meshullam on his left hand. <sup>5</sup>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. <sup>6</sup>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.**

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<sup>7</sup>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. <sup>8</sup>They read from the book, from the Law of God, clearly, and they gave the sense, so that the people understood the reading.

### This Day Is Holy

<sup>9</sup>And Nehemiah, who was the governor, and Ezra the priest and scribe, and the Levites who taught the people said to all the people,

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**"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.  
<sup>10</sup>Then he said to them, "Go your way. Eat the fat and drink  
sweet wine and send portions to anyone who has nothing ready,  
for this day is holy to our Lord. And do not be grieved, for the  
joy of the Lord is your strength." <sup>11</sup>So the Levites calmed all the  
people, saying, "Be quiet, for this day is holy; do not be  
grieved." <sup>12</sup>And all the people went their way to eat and drink  
and to send portions and to make great rejoicing, because they  
had understood the words that were declared to them.**

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### Feast of Booths Celebrated

<sup>13</sup>On the second day the heads of fathers' houses of all the people, with the priests and the Levites, came together to Ezra the scribe in order to study the words of the Law. <sup>14</sup>And they found it written in the Law that the Lord had commanded by Moses that the people of Israel should dwell in booths during the feast of the seventh month, <sup>15</sup>and that they should proclaim it and publish it in all their towns and in Jerusalem, "Go out to the hills and bring branches of olive, wild olive, myrtle, palm, and other leafy trees to make booths, as it is written."

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**<sup>16</sup>So the people went out and brought them and made booths for themselves, each on his roof, and in their courts and in the courts of the house of God, and in the square at the Water Gate and in the square at the Gate of Ephraim. <sup>17</sup>And all the assembly of those who had returned from the captivity made booths and lived in the booths, for from the days of Jeshua the son of Nun to that day the people of Israel had not done so. And there was very great rejoicing. <sup>18</sup>And day by day, from the first day to the last day, he read from the Book of the Law of God. They kept the feast seven days, and on the eighth day there was a solemn assembly, according to the rule.**

## **PSALMS 133:1-3**

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**<sup>1</sup>Behold, how good and pleasant it is  
when brothers dwell in unity!**

**<sup>2</sup>It is like the precious oil on the head,  
running down on the beard,  
on the beard of Aaron,  
running down on the collar of his robes!**

**<sup>3</sup>It is like the dew of Hermon,  
which falls on the mountains of Zion!**

**For there the LORD has commanded the blessing,  
life forevermore.**

## JOHN 17:20-23

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<sup>20</sup>“I do not ask for these only, but also for those who will believe in me through their word, <sup>21</sup>that they may all be one, just as you, Father, are in me, and I in you, that they also may be in us, so that the world may believe that you have sent me. <sup>22</sup>The glory that you have given me I have given to them, that they may be one even as we are one, <sup>23</sup>I in them and you in me, that they may become perfectly one, so that the world may know that you sent me and loved them even as you loved me.”



## **EZRA 7:10**

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**Ezra had determined to study and obey the Law of the LORD and to teach those decrees and regulations to the people of Israel.**

## HEBREWS 1:1-3

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<sup>1</sup>Long ago, at many times and in many ways, God spoke to our fathers by the prophets, <sup>2</sup>but in these last days he has spoken to us by his Son, whom he appointed the heir of all things, through whom also he created the world. <sup>3</sup>He is the radiance of the glory of God and the exact imprint of his nature, and he upholds the universe by the word of his power. After making purification for sins, he sat down at the right hand of the Majesty on high,

## HEBREWS 11:13-16

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<sup>13</sup>These all died in faith, not having received the things promised, but having seen them and greeted them from afar, and having acknowledged that they were strangers and exiles on the earth. <sup>14</sup>For people who speak thus make it clear that they are seeking a homeland. <sup>15</sup>If they had been thinking of that land from which they had gone out, they would have had opportunity to return. <sup>16</sup>But as it is, they desire a better country, that is, a heavenly one. Therefore God is not ashamed to be called their God, for he has prepared for them a city.