



Nehemiah 8

# EXPERIENCING JOY!

*Joy is the great note all through the Bible. We have the notion of joy that arises from good spirits or good health, but the miracle of the joy of God has nothing to do with a man's life or his circumstances or the condition he is in.*

*Jesus does not come to a man and say, "Cheer up"; He plants within a man the miracle of the joy of God's own nature.*

*...We may have the fulfillment of our ambitions, we may have love and money, yet there is the sense of something unfulfilled, something not finished, not right. A man is only joyful when he fulfills the design of God's creation of him, and that is a joy that can never be quenched.*

—Oswald Chambers

After rebuilding the walls of Jerusalem, it was time for the bigger challenge of rebuilding the people of Jerusalem (1:3). The people gathered together *as one man* in the seventh month of the year in front of the Water Gate (8:1). There they experienced refreshment, renewal, and revival.

There are seven elements of revival that you can observe in Nehemiah 8:1-18:

1. Unity among the people of God.
2. Hunger for the Word of God.
3. Preaching of God's Word expositively.
4. A heart of worship for the greatness of God.
5. A heart of repentance before the holiness of God.
6. A heart of joy because of the grace of God.
7. A life of obedience motivated by the love of God.

## THE PRIORITY OF SCRIPTURE

*So they read distinctly from the book, in the Law of God; and they gave the sense, and helped them to understand the reading. (8:8)*

*For Ezra had set his heart to study the law of the Lord and to practice it, and to teach His statutes and ordinances in Israel. (Ezra 7:10)*

- We are called to read and study God's Word. (Psalm 1; 19; 119; 1 Tim. 4:13; 2 Tim. 2:15; 3:14-17)
- We are changed by understanding and living God's Word. (Isaiah 55:11; Matt. 13:23; John 8:31-32; 17:17; 1 Pet. 1:22-2:2)
- We are commissioned to teach and proclaim God's Word. (Matt. 28:19-20; Acts 5:42; 17:2-3; Col. 1:28; 2 Tim. 2:2; 4:1-2)

*We cannot organize revival, but we can set our sails to catch the wind from Heaven.*

—G. Campbell Morgan

*If we want revivals, we must revive our reverence for the Word of God.*

—Charles H. Spurgeon

*At its best, expository preaching is the presentation of biblical truth, derived from and transmitted through a historical, grammatical, Spirit-guided study of a passage in its context, which the Holy Spirit applies first to the life of the preacher and then through him to the congregation.*

—Haddon W. Robinson

*Men and women cannot live by ideas alone, no matter how eloquently they are stated or argued, but solely by a patient reading and explanation of all of Scripture, line after line, paragraph after paragraph, chapter after chapter, book after book.*

—Walter Kaiser

*The law had always envisioned a **wise and understanding people**, taught from childhood not only the words of God but what the words and rituals meant. Mindless superstition was the mark of paganism.*

—Derek Kidner

## THE POWER OF JOY

- The \_\_\_\_\_ of joy.

*You will show me the path of life;  
In Your presence is fullness of joy;  
At Your right hand are pleasures forevermore. (Psalm 16:11)*

*Well done, good and faithful servant; you were faithful over a few things,  
I will make you ruler over many things. Enter into the joy of your lord.  
(Matthew 25:21, 23)*

*I have told you this so that My joy may be in you and that your joy may  
be complete. (John 15:11; cf. 17:13)*

*And the disciples were continually filled with joy and with the Holy Spirit.  
(Acts 13:52; cf. Gal. 5:22; Eph. 5:18-21; 1 Thess. 1:6)*

*For the kingdom of God is not a matter of food and drink but of  
righteousness, peace, and joy in the Holy Spirit. (Romans 14:17)*

- The \_\_\_\_\_ of joy.

*Behold, how good and how pleasant it is  
For brothers to dwell together in unity! (Psalm 133:1)*

*Make my joy complete by being of the same mind, maintaining the same  
love, united in spirit, intent on one purpose. (Philippians 2:2)*

- The \_\_\_\_\_ of joy.

*Though the fig tree should not blossom, nor fruit be on the vines,  
the produce of the olive fail and the fields yield no food,  
the flock be cut off from the fold and there be no herd in the stalls,  
Yet I will rejoice in the Lord;  
I will take joy in the God of my salvation.  
God, the Lord, is my strength;  
He makes my feet like the deer's;  
He makes me tread on my high places. (Habakkuk 3:17-19)*

### The Greek Words Related to Joy

<i>chara</i>	<i>charizomai</i>
<i>charis</i>	<i>eucharisteo</i>

*God is full of joy. Undoubtedly he is the most joyous being in the universe. The abundance of his love and generosity is inseparable from his infinite joy. All of the good and beautiful things from which we occasionally drink tiny droplets of soul-exhilarating joy, God continuously experiences in all their breadth and depth and richness. —Dallas Willard*

*God's happiness is inseparably linked in with His holiness.  
—Robert Murray McCheyne*

*I pray, O God, that I may know  
Thee, that I may love Thee, so  
that I may rejoice in Thee. And if  
I cannot do this to the full in this  
life, at least let me go forward  
from day to day until that joy  
comes to fullness.  
—St. Anselm (1033-1109)*

*The happiness of the creature  
consists in rejoicing in God, by  
which also God is magnified and  
exalted. —Jonathan Edwards*

*Christianity is a divine project of  
replacing inferior joys in inferior  
objects with superior joys in God  
Himself. —John Piper*

*Halfway Christianity is the most  
miserable existence of all.  
Halfhearted Christians know  
enough about their sin to feel  
guilty about themselves, but they  
haven't given themselves enough  
to the Savior to become happy in  
Him. —Ray Ortlund*

*The more cheerful we are in our  
religious exercises the more we  
shall abound in them. Holy joy  
will be oil to the wheels of our  
obedience. —Matthew Henry*