

FEAST OF THE TABERNACLE. NEH. 8:13-18. 1/26/25. #15.

¹³Now on the second day the heads of the fathers' houses of all the people, with the priests and Levites, were gathered to Ezra the scribe, in order to understand the words of the Law. ¹⁴And 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, ¹⁵and that they should announce and proclaim in all their cities and in Jerusalem, saying, "Go out to the mountain, and bring olive branches, branches of oil trees, myrtle branches, palm branches, and branches of leafy trees, to make booths, as *it is* written." ¹⁶Then the people went out and brought *them* and made themselves booths, each one on the roof of his house, or in their courtyards or the courts of the house of God, and in the open square of the Water Gate and in the open square of the Gate of Ephraim. ¹⁷So the whole assembly of those who had returned from the captivity made booths and sat under the booths; for since the days of Joshua the son of Nun until that day the children of Israel had not done so. And there was very great gladness. ¹⁸Also 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. More of the Word

- a. The day after the reading of the Law & the celebration of the rededication, the people gathered to hear more of the Law
 - a1. There was an intense interest in what the Law said & how God wanted them to do
 - a2. They paid attention to the details of the Law
- b. The heads of the households were to carry the teachings of the Law to their families & clans
 - a1. Dt. 6:6-9 it is the fathers who were to be the spiritual guides in their homes
 - a2. The priests were to instruct the fathers who would teach the homes
 - a3. Eph. 6:1-3 the fathers are responsible to bring up their children in the nurture & admonition of the Lord

2. Tabernacle Feast discovery

- a. By tradition the Jews kept the feast days while in captivity
 - a1. Many details had been lost
 - a2. Often, the meaning of the feasts were obscured & skewed
- b. Ezra read the Law of the feasts

- c. Lv. 23:37-43 seemed to have been a new discovery for the people
 - a1. The Law instructed them to live in tents or tabernacles to illustrate God's provision for Israel while in the wilderness
 - a2. A feast of remembrance of how God is faithful in providing for his people
 - d. Had god lifted his protection for Israel, they would have disappeared from history
 - e. The people were excited to comply with all the provisions of the Law
 - a1. They went into the hills to strip off branches of all manner of trees to make temporary shelters for their families
 - a2. The people built booths on their rooftops, in their courtyards, & in the public squares
 - f. The timing was good since the dedication of the wall was 2 weeks from the start of the Feast of the Tab.
 - a1. The feast was to run from 15-22 Tishri or September in our calendar
 - a2. At the end of the feast was to be a sacred assembly for prayer & dedication to Lord
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- a. Dt. 31:10-13 established a complete reading of the Law in the Sabbath year of release
 - a1. We do not know if this reading was in an actual Sabbath year
 - a2. Some believe that Ezra established an annual reading of the Law
 - b. The Word of God is the beginning of instruction as to how God wants us to conduct ourselves
 - a1. The Jews were intent to follow the prescribed teachings of the Law
 - a2. Following the precise regulations was a start, but a heart change needed to follow
 - c. Without the Word there can be no heart change, but without an open heart, the people resist change
 - d. The framework was now set to grow as a people of God, but the people needed to follow through