

REVIVE US OH LORD
Next Steps Devotional Guide — Nehemiah 8
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Sermon Series > Nehemiah: Repair, Rebuild & Restore
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1. Read the following quote by Bob Morehead: *“The paradox of our time in history is that we have taller buildings but shorter tempers, wider Freeways, but narrower viewpoints. We spend more, but have less, we buy more, but enjoy less. We have bigger houses and smaller families, more conveniences, but less time. We have more degrees but less sense, more knowledge, but less judgment, more experts, yet more problems, more medicine, but less wellness. We drink too much, smoke too much, spend too recklessly, laugh too little, drive too fast, get too angry, stay up too late, get up too tired, read too little, watch TV too much, and pray too seldom. We have multiplied our possessions, but reduced our values. We talk too much, love too seldom, and hate too often. We’ve learned how to make a living, but not a life. We’ve added years to life not life to years. We’ve been all the way to the moon and back, but have trouble crossing the street to meet a new neighbor. We conquered outer space but not inner space. We’ve done larger things, but not better things. We’ve cleaned up the air, but polluted the soul. We’ve conquered the atom, but not our prejudice. We write more, but learn less. We plan more, but accomplish less. We’ve learned to rush, but not to wait. We build more computers to hold more information, to produce more copies than ever, but we communicate less and less. These are the times of fast foods and slow digestion, big men and small character, steep profits and shallow relationships. These are the days of two incomes but more divorce, fancier houses, but broken homes. These are days of quick trips, disposable diapers, throwaway morality, one night stands, overweight bodies, and pills that do everything from cheer, to quiet, to kill. It is a time when there is much in the showroom window and nothing in the stockroom. A time when technology can bring this letter to you, and a time when you can choose either to share this insight, or to just hit delete.”¹*
 - a. What do you think of Bob Morehead’s statement?
 - b. Does any of his statement reflect your life? How? What does that say to you?
2. Author David Meyers in his book writes this: *“There is much to celebrate. We now have, as average Americans, doubled our incomes and what money buys. We own twice as many cars per person and eat out two and a half times more often than our parents did. We have espresso coffee, the World Wide Web, sport utility vehicles, and caller ID. New drugs are shrinking our tumors and lengthening our lives. Yet, at the same time, our divorce rate has doubled; teen suicide has tripled; violent crime has quadrupled; the number of babies born out of wedlock has sextupled; the number of cohabiting couples has increased from 500,000 twenty years ago to 4.2 million today. Our economic good time has become dwarfed by our moral recession. One civic leader correctly assessed the problem when he said, “The accumulation of material goods is at an all-time high, but so is the number of people who feel an emptiness in their lives.”²*
 - a. What do you think of David Meyers’ statement? Why?
 - b. Does his statement resonate with you in any way? Why?
3. When you were growing up, did your church ever have what they called a “revival?” If so, what do you remember about it and what impact, if any, did it have on you?
4. When you hear or read the word “revival,” what comes to your mind?
5. We have become a consumer based culture and now this is infecting the church. We don’t want conviction; we want comfort. We don’t want guilt; we want grace. We prefer to be self-centered; not a servant. We no longer want to be created in God’s image; we want a god created in our image. In fact, in for many Christians, their lives and lifestyles are not different from those who do not go to church. In John 17:16, Jesus prayed that while we live in this world, we would not be of it. Why do think so many churches today are so accommodating to our culture?
6. Revival is not for the lost or unchurched. It is for the saved and redeemed. Read Ephesians 2:1 and Psalms 119:34 in your sermon outline. When it comes to revival, what do these passage say to you and why?
7. Based on Nehemiah 8, for the church to experience revival, the God’s people must have a resuscitated hunger for Scripture. Read Nehemiah 8:1-5 in your sermon outline. According to Nehemiah 8:2-3, 18, the people stood for about 6 hours each day with their children for 6 straight days to hear the Old Testament Law read by Ezra. He is same Ezra who wrote the Book of Ezra in the Old Testament. Not only do children get tired and irritated, so can adults standing that long. Why do you think these people were willing to stand this long for 6 hours for 6 straight days to hear Scripture read to them? Now compare yourself to them — how much time each day do you spend listening to God’s Word and why?
8. Based on Nehemiah 8, for the church to experience revival, the God’s people second must have a reverent and respectful attitude towards God.
 - a. Today, some people refer to God as “the man upstairs” or “a cool dude.” God is neither. Read Nehemiah 8:6a in your sermon outline as well as the explanation for the Hebrew word translated as “praised.” In Nehemiah 8:6a, Ezra’s first reference to God is using the Hebrew word — Yahweh. This was considered by Jews to be the most holy name of God; and most Jews would not even say it. Instead, they would say, “Adonia” or

¹ <https://www.goodreads.com/quotes/22242-the-paradox-of-our-time-in-history-is-that-we>.

² David G. Meyers, The American Paradox: Spiritual Hunger In An Age of Plenty, Preface.

- “Elohim” or El-shaddai” or other Hebrew names for God. Ezra is intentional in the name of God he chose to emphasize how holy God is. What does this say to you?
- b. Today, even Christians, some in their conversation will use the word “God” or “Lord,” but they are not praying or talking or referring to God. Instead, they are violating the 3rd Commandment in Exodus 20:7. Read this in your sermon outline. Do you ever misuse God’s name? Why? What is another term or word you can use other than profanity that would honor God rather than misusing His name?
 - c. Read Isaiah 40:15, 18, 22-23, 25-26, 28-31 in your sermon outline. This is NOT a promise from God to those who are not respectful, reverent, trusts, pursues and honors God. This passage, especially verse 31, which many Christians love, only applies to those who “wait” on the Lord. Read the explanation for the this Hebrew word translated as “wait” in your sermon notes. This refers to Christians who are trusting God, pursuing God, respecting God, and have reverence for God and God’s names.
 - d. Read Nehemiah 8:6b-6c in your sermon notes. After hearing this, the people’s response was to shout, “Amen” — “*So be it.*” In The Lord’s Prayer, Jesus taught us to say something similar, “*They kingdom come. They will be done on earth as it is in heaven*” (Matt. 6:10). When you hear or read God’s Word, is your response, “Amen!” — “*So be it*” or something else and why?
 - e. Read Isaiah 8:13 and Jesus’ words in Matthew 10:28 in your sermon outline. Both the Bible and Jesus emphasize that we should have a very real “fear” of God because He has the power to kill us and throw us in hell. Would you say you have that kind of fear? Why or why not?
9. Based on Nehemiah 8, for the church to experience revival, third, the church, God’s people must have a radical application of biblical truth.
 - a. Read Nehemiah 8:13 in your sermon outline as well as the explanation for the Hebrew word translated as “insight.” There is a vast difference between biblical input and biblical insight. What is that and what is the proof of it in your own life?
 - b. Read Mark 6:51b-52a in your sermon outline. The disciples had seen Jesus’ power demonstrated earlier but they never connected it to how they should live and act? Why do you think they failed to make this connection? Do you make this connection? Why or why not?
 10. Based on Nehemiah 8, for the church to experience revival, fourth, the church, God’s people, must have an appropriate remorse over sin. Today, many Christians justify their sin, make excuses for their sin and rationalize their sin. When we rationalize, we are making up a rational lie.
 - a. Read Nehemiah 6:9 and Hebrews 4:12 in your sermon outline. When the people experienced what Hebrews 4:12 says in Nehemiah 6:9, they began to mourn and weep. Do you justify, make excuses and even rationalize your sin or do you experience remorse and even weeping over it?
 - b. Read Nehemiah 8:10-12. Probably the most important word is the second to last word — “*understood.*” It is mentioned several times in Nehemiah 8. What is your understanding how God sees your sin and what it does to you and others? How do you think you should view your own sin?
 11. Based on Nehemiah 8, for the church to experience revival, fifth, the church, God’s people, must react with obedience and joy to God and His Word.
 - a. A century ago, Matthew Henry, was a British Minister who died on June 22, 1714 AD. He wrote this, “*Holy joy will be oil to the wheels of our obedience.*”³ What does this mean to you?
 - b. Read Nehemiah 8:14-17 in your sermon outline. Insight led to obedience and their obedience led to joy. It has been over 1,000 years according to Nehemiah 8:17 that the Jews had obeyed God like this. It brought them great joy. When you choose to obey God, in what ways have you experienced joy.
 12. At the end of the sermon, you were given 3 evidences that prove when revival occurs among God’s people:
 - a. You were told a story that happened in 1992. The Texas Education Board had reviewed and approved new history textbooks for their public schools. It was long that it was discovered there were over 8,000 mistakes in regards to dates, places, people and events. When the publisher, Prentice-Hall, Houghton Mifflin, Rinehart and Winston were informed, their spokesperson said this: “*Except for the errors, these were the finest textbooks they had ever seen.*” What do you think of this? The first evidence is when Christians confess their sin rather giving cop-outs for it — revival occurs. Do you cop-out or confess your sin?
 - b. A second evidence that reveal is coming to a church is compromise is replaced with courage. Someone made this comment to evangelist Billy Sunday in the early 1900s. They tried to make the point that since personal revival wasn’t a permanent end-all to temptation, sin, and failure, revival wasn’t important. Billy Sunday replied with his characteristic humor, “*A bath doesn’t last either, but it’s good to have one occasionally.*” It takes courage to confess your sins rather than live with compromise. Which are you? — do you exert courage in confessing your sin or do you choose to live with the compromise of your sin? Why?
 - c. A third evidence that revival is coming to the church is complacency is replaced with commitment. Read 2 Corinthians 4:7 in your sermon outline. The truth is — we all leak. No one is perfect, but still, that is not an reason to play down or ignore or overlook our sin. For the Jews in Nehemiah 8, insight led to obedience, obedience led to joy and joy led to salvation of others. Does your commitment to Christ lead to the salvation of others? Why or why not? Since we all leak, it is imperative that all of us stay under the faucet of God’s Word. Does this describe you? Why or why not?

³ <https://www.christianquotes.info/quotes-by-author/matthew-henry-quotes/>.