

17 & 18 JUNE, 2 - 5 PM

2022 HORA SEMINAR

LECTURE
NOTES

"Return and Restore: Rebuilding Jerusalem"

Lecture 1

Zerubbabel's Temple and Daniel

Dan 9:2 in the first year of his reign I, Daniel, observed in the books the number of the years which was [revealed as] the word of the LORD to Jeremiah the prophet for the completion of the desolations of Jerusalem, [namely,] seventy years.

INTRODUCTION

God works through the temple.

What is temple?

The temple is where _____ dwells.

Hab 2:20 But the LORD is in His holy temple. Let all the earth be silent before Him.”

1 Cor 3:16-17 ¹⁶Do you not know that you are a temple of God and *that* the Spirit of God dwells in you? ¹⁷If anyone destroys the temple of God, God will destroy that person; for the temple of God is holy, and that is what you are.

Babylon deportation = the result of sin

Jer 1:16 And I will pronounce My judgments against them concerning all their wickedness, since they have abandoned Me and have offered sacrifices to other gods, and worshiped the works of their own hands.

Jer 17:27 But if you do not listen to Me, to keep the Sabbath day holy by not carrying a load and coming in through the gates of Jerusalem on the Sabbath day, then I will set fire to its gates, and it will devour the palaces of Jerusalem and not go out.”

The work of restoration

Ps 85:1-3 LORD, You showed favor to Your land; You restored the fortunes of Jacob. ²You forgave the guilt of Your people; You covered all their sin. *Selah* ³You withdrew all Your fury; You turned away from Your burning anger.

Building of Zerubbabel's temple = Restoration

A hidden contributor to the construction of Zerubbabel's temple was Prophet Daniel.

1. Temple construction and King Cyrus

(1) King _____ liberated the Israelites from Babylonian captivity.

Ezra 1:1 Now in the first year of Cyrus king of Persia (538 BC), in order to fulfill the word of the Lord by the mouth of Jeremiah, the Lord stirred up the spirit of Cyrus king of Persia, so that he sent a proclamation throughout all his kingdom, and also put it in writing, saying:

Ezra 1:2 “Thus says Cyrus king of Persia, ‘The Lord, the God of heaven, has given me all the kingdoms of the earth and He has appointed me to build Him a house in Jerusalem, which is in Judah.

(2) King Cyrus read Prophet Isaiah’s writing and realized his mission (Josephus, Antiquities of the Jews 11.1.2).

Isa 44:28 It is I who says of Cyrus, ‘He is My shepherd! And he will perform all My desire.’ And he declares of Jerusalem, ‘She will be built,’ And of the temple, ‘Your foundation will be laid.’”

Isa 45:13 I have aroused him in righteousness And I will make all his ways smooth; He will build My city and will let My exiles go free, Without any payment or reward,” says the Lord of hosts.

(3) Who gave Prophet Isaiah’s writing to King Cyrus?

Dan 1:21 And Daniel continued until the first year of Cyrus the king (538 BC).

① _____ influenced King Cyrus.

Dan 6:28 So this Daniel enjoyed success in the reign of Darius and in the reign of Cyrus the Persian.

② Daniel realized the prophecy of Jeremiah.

Dan 9:1-2 In the first year of Darius the son of Ahasuerus, of Median descent, who was made king over the kingdom of the Chaldeans— ² in the first year of his reign, I, Daniel, observed in the books the number of the years which was *revealed* as the word of the LORD to Jeremiah the prophet for the completion of the desolations of Jerusalem, *namely*, seventy years.

(4) The people returned and gathered in Jerusalem (537BC 7th month)

Ezra 3:1 Now when the seventh month came, and the sons of Israel were in the cities, the people gathered together as one person to Jerusalem.

Ezra 3:6 From the first day of the seventh month they began to offer burnt offerings to the LORD, but the foundation of the temple of the LORD had not been laid.

2. Construction of the Temple and Daniel’s Prayer

(1) Duration of his prayer:

1st ~ 23rd day of the 1st month in the 3rd year of King Cyrus

Dan 10:1 In the third year of Cyrus king of Persia (536 BC, 86 years old) a message was revealed to Daniel, who was named Belteshazzar; and the message was true and one of great conflict, but he understood the message and had an understanding of the vision.

Dan 10:2 In those days, I, Daniel, had been mourning for three entire weeks.

Dan 10:3 I did not eat any tasty food, nor did meat or wine enter my mouth, nor did I use any ointment at all until the entire three weeks were completed.

Dan 10:4 On the twenty-fourth day of the first month, while I was by the bank of the great river, that is, the Tigris,

Daniel did a regular fast on the first and second day of the first month. Then, he did a three-week fasting prayer from the third day until the twenty-third day of the first month, and received a revelation on the 24th day.

(2) Content of the prayer

① **He prayed for the complete liberation of the nation.**

Exod 12:17 You shall also observe the Feast of Unleavened Bread, for on this very day I brought your hosts out of the land of Egypt; therefore you shall observe this day throughout your generations as a permanent ordinance.

② **He prayed for the temple construction.**

3. God's Answer

(1) As an answer to Daniel's prayer, the temple construction began.

(2nd month of the year _____ BC)

Ezra 3:8 Now in the second year of their coming to the house of God at Jerusalem in the second month, Zerubbabel the son of Shealtiel and Jeshua the son of Jozadak and the rest of their brothers the priests and the Levites, and all who came from the captivity to Jerusalem, began the work and appointed the Levites from twenty years and older to oversee the work of the house of the Lord.

(2) He showed the unfolding of redemptive history that will appear through world history.

Dan 10:14 Now I have come to give you an understanding of what will happen to your people in the latter days, for the vision pertains to the days yet future."

Jer 33:3 'Call to Me and I will answer you, and I will tell you great and mighty things, which you do not know.'

CONCLUSION

Daniel himself became the holy _____.

1 Tim 4:5 for it is sanctified by means of the word of God and prayer.

Deut 4:7 For what great nation *is there* that has a god so near to it as is the LORD our God whenever we call on Him?

Lecture 2

Temple construction & God's miracle

Ezra 6:14 And the elders of the Jews were successful in building through the prophesying of Haggai the prophet and Zechariah the son of Iddo. And they finished building according to the command of the God of Israel and the decree of Cyrus, Darius, and Artaxerxes king of Persia.

Ezra 6:15 This temple was completed on the third day of the month Adar; it was the sixth year of the reign of King Darius.

Introduction

The history of redemption is like completing the temple construction. But our enemy Satan has been continuing to interfere with building temple.

The state of the temple shows the state of the faith of God's people.

1. The period when the construction of the temple was halted

(1) The construction of Zerubbabel's temple was stopped for 16 years due to the enemies' interference. (536 BC ~ 520 BC)

Zec 4:4 Then the people of the land discouraged the people of Judah, and frightened them from building,

Zec 4:24 Then work on the house of God in Jerusalem ceased, and it was stopped until the second year of the reign of Darius king of Persia.

(2) The duration of 16 years refer to the indifference toward God's work.

Phil 2:21 For they all seek after their own interests, not those of Christ Jesus.

2. Trigger for Resuming the Construction of Zerubbabel's Temple

(1) The Word was proclaimed through Prophets

Hag 1:1 In the second year (520 BC) of Darius the king, on the first day of the sixth month, the word of the Lord came by the prophet Haggai to Zerubbabel the son of Shealtiel, governor of Judah, and to Joshua the son of Jehozadak, the high priest, saying,

Zech 1:1 In the eighth month of the second year of Darius, the word of the Lord came to Zechariah the prophet, the son of Berechiah, the son of Iddo saying, God's Word stirred the people of Israel.

- **Haggai**

Hag 1:4 "Is it time for you yourselves to dwell in your paneled houses (luxurious houses with walls covered with cedar wood) while this house lies desolate?"

Hag 1:9 "You look for much, but behold, it comes to little; when you bring it home, I blow it away. Why?" declares the Lord of hosts, "Because of My house which lies desolate, while each of you runs to his own house.

Hag 1:11 "And I called for a drought on the land, on the mountains, on the grain, on the new wine, on the oil, on what the ground produces, on men, on cattle, and on all the labor of your hands."

- **Zechariah**

Zec1:3 "Therefore say to them, 'Thus says the LORD of hosts,' Return to Me, "declares the LORD of hosts," that I may return to you, "says the LORD of hosts.

Zec 1:4 "Do not be like your fathers, to whom the former prophets proclaimed, saying, 'Thus says the LORD of hosts,' Return now from your evil ways and from your evil deeds. "'But they did not listen or give heed to Me," declares the LORD.

(2) God's Word stirred the people of Israel.

Hag 1:14 So the Lord stirred up the spirit of Zerubbabel the son of Shealtiel, governor of Judah, and the spirit of Joshua the son of Jehozadak, the high priest, and the spirit of all the remnant of the people; and they came and worked on the house of the Lord of hosts, their God,

The expression "stirred up" is *ur* (עוּר) in Hebrew, meaning "to awake, to rouse oneself, to work harder." It is in the hiphil (causative) form, indicating that God stirred up the hearts of the Israelites.

(3) The construction of the temple resumed on the 24th day of the 6th month in 520 BC.

Hag 1:15 on the twenty-fourth day of the sixth month in the second year of Darius the king.

3. Enemies' Interference and the Discovery of the Old Decree

(1) The enemies' accusations

- **Tattenai, Shethar-bozenai, and their colleagues interfered.**

Ezra 5:3 At that time Tattenai, the governor of the province beyond the River, and Shethar-bozenai and their colleagues came to them and spoke to them thus, "Who issued you a decree to rebuild this temple and to finish this structure?"

- **The people of Israel replied that it was ordered by King Cyrus.**

Ezra 5:4 Then we told them accordingly what the names of the men were who were reconstructing this building.

Ezra 5:13 However, in the first year of Cyrus king of Babylon, King Cyrus issued a decree to rebuild this house of God.

- **They inquired Darius, who was the king at the time.**

Ezra 5:5 But the eye of their God was on the elders of the Jews, and they did not stop them until the report could reach Darius, and then the decree concerning it could be sent back.

Ezra 5:17 And now, if it pleases the king, let a search be conducted in the king's treasure house, which is there in Babylon, as to whether a decree was issued by King Cyrus to rebuild this house of God in Jerusalem; and let the king send to us his decision concerning this *matter*."

(2) Discovery of King Cyrus' decree – God's miracle

- **It was not found in Babylon but in the fortress of Ecbatana, which was 458 km away from Babylon.**

Ezra 6:1 Then King Darius issued a decree, and search was made in the archives, where the treasures were stored in Babylon.

Ezra 6:2 In Ecbatana in the fortress, which is in the province of Media, a scroll was found and there was written in it as follows: "Memorandum—

- **Although 18 years had passed since the decree was issued in 538 BC, it was still found among the numerous decrees.**

Psalms 40:5 Many, O LORD my God, are the wonders which Thou hast done, And Thy thoughts toward us; There is none to compare with Thee; If I would declare and speak of them, they would be too numerous to count.

4. Proclamation of a New Decree

Ezra 6:6 "Now therefore, Tattenai, governor of the province beyond the River, Shethar, bozenai and your colleagues, the officials of the provinces beyond the River, keep away from there.

Ezra 6:7 Leave this work on the house of God alone; let the governor of the Jews and the elders of the Jews rebuild this house of God on its site.

The content of the new decree is as follows:

(1) God had them supplied with the necessary cost.

Ezra 6:8-12 ⁸ Furthermore, I issue a decree concerning what you are to do for these elders of Judah in the rebuilding of that house of God: the full cost is to be paid to those people from the royal treasury out of the taxes of *the provinces* beyond the *Euphrates* River, *and* that without interruption. ⁹ And whatever is needed, bulls, rams, and lambs for burnt offerings to the God of heaven, and wheat, salt, wine, and anointing oil, as the priests in Jerusalem order, *it* is to be given to them daily without

fail, ¹⁰ so that they may offer acceptable sacrifices to the God of heaven and pray for the lives of the king and his sons. ¹¹ And I issued a decree that any person who violates this decree, a timber shall be pulled out of his house and he shall be impaled on it; and his house shall be turned into a refuse heap on account of this. ¹² May the God who has caused His name to dwell there overthrow any king or people who attempts to change *it*, so as to destroy that house of God in Jerusalem. I, Darius, have issued *this* decree; *it* is to be carried out with all diligence!"

(2) God moved King Darius.

Ezra 6:22 And they observed the Feast of Unleavened Bread seven days with joy, for the Lord had caused them to rejoice, and had turned the heart of the king of Assyria toward them to encourage them in the work of the house of God, the God of Israel.

① "The king of Assyria" refers to King Darius (Darius I, 522-486 BC) who was ruling over the region of Assyria.

② "Turned" is in the hiphil (causative) form of sabab (סָבַב), (which means "to surround.")

This means that "God surrounded the heart of King Darius."

Conclusion

Zerubbabel temple was built according to God's word.

(1) The construction of the temple resumed successfully.

Ezra 6:14 And the elders of the Jews were successful in building through the prophesying of Haggai the prophet and Zechariah the son of Iddo. And they finished building according to the command of the God of Israel and the decree of Cyrus, Darius, and Artaxerxes king of Persia.

(2) God's Word that the Babylonian captivity would end in 70 years was fulfilled.

Ezra 6:15 This temple was completed on the third day of the month Adar; it was the sixth year of the reign of King Darius.

Jer 29:10 "For thus says the Lord, 'When seventy years have been completed for Babylon, I will visit you and fulfill My good word to you, to bring you back to this place.'"

Isa 55:11 So will My word be which goes out of My mouth; It will not return to Me empty, Without accomplishing what I desire, And without succeeding *in the purpose* for which I sent it.

Ultimately, the ruler of all history is God.

Dan 2:21 It is He who changes the times and the epochs; He removes kings and establishes kings; He gives wisdom to wise men and knowledge to men of understanding.

Lecture 1

The Beginning of Rebuilding the Walls of Jerusalem

Zerubbabel's temple was rebuilt in 516 BC, but the city did not have its walls to protect the temple and the people for **72 years** until the wall was finally completed in 444 BC. Let us examine the background and the process of how the city walls were rebuilt.

1. State of the City Walls in 444 BC

Neh 1:2-3 that Hanani, one of my brothers, and some men from Judah came; and I asked them concerning the Jews who had escaped *and* had survived the captivity, and about Jerusalem. **3** They said to me, "The remnant there in the province who survived the captivity are in great distress and reproach, and the wall of Jerusalem is broken down and its gates are burned with fire."

2. Rebuilding of the City Walls

(1) The city was destroyed during the third deportation to Babylon in _____ BC.

2 Kgs 25:10 So all the army of the Chaldeans who were with the captain of the guard broke down the walls around Jerusalem.

(2) The temple was finished in _____ BC after the first return, but the city walls of Jerusalem weren't rebuilt at the time.

Ezra 6:15 This temple was completed on the third day of the month Adar; it was the sixth year (516 BC) of the reign of King Darius.

(3) In his revelation of the seventy weeks, Daniel prophesied that the _____ of Jerusalem would be built again.

Dan 9:25 So you are to know and discern *that* from the issuing of a decree to restore and rebuild Jerusalem until Messiah the Prince there will be seven weeks and sixty-two weeks; it will be built again, with plaza and moat, even in times of distress.

If this decree was the decree for the second return from the Babylonian exile in _____ BC, it would indicate that people began repairing the sections of the walls since then. However, the walls still remained in a state of destruction prior to 444 BC.

At last, the reconstruction work was complete in 444 BC, connecting all the gates and the city walls that had been repaired only partially.

Neh 6:15 So the wall was completed on the twenty-fifth of the month Elul, in **fifty-two days**.

3. Trigger for Rebuilding the Walls – A report from Hanani (חַנַּנִּי, “gracious”)

Neh 1:1 The words of Nehemiah the son of Hachabiah. Now it happened in the month Chislew, **in the twentieth year (of King Artaxerxes)**, while I was in Susa the capital,
Neh 1:2 that **Hanani, one of my brothers, and some men from Judah came**; and I asked them concerning the Jews who had escaped *and* had survived the captivity, and about Jerusalem.

Neh 7:2 then I put **Hanani my brother**, and Hananiah the commander of the fortress, in charge of Jerusalem, for he was a faithful man and feared God more than many.

In order to resolve the national crisis, **Hanani traveled a great distance of about 1,600km** from Judah all the way to Susa capital where Nehemiah was.

Jas 2:26 For just as the body without *the* spirit is dead, so also **faith without works is dead**.

4. Nehemiah’s Fasting Prayer

Upon hearing Hanani’s report, Nehemiah sat down and wept and mourned for days, fasting and praying to God (Neh 1:4).

Neh 1:4 When I heard these words, I sat down and wept and mourned for days; and I was fasting and praying before the God of heaven.

What were the characteristics of Nehemiah’s prayer?

(1) _____

Neh 1:6 let Your ear now be attentive and Your eyes open to hear the prayer of Your servant which I am praying before You now, day and night, on behalf of the sons of Israel Your servants, **confessing the sins of the sons of Israel which we have sinned against You**; I and **my father’s house have sinned**.

2 Chr 7:14 and My people who are called by My name humble themselves and pray and seek My face and **turn from their wicked ways**, then I will hear from heaven, **will forgive their sin and will heal their land**.

Ps 32:5 I acknowledged my sin to You, and my iniquity I did not hide; I said, “I will confess my transgressions to the Lord”; And You forgave the guilt of my sin. *Selah*.

(2) Clung to the _____

Neh 1:8 Remember the word which You commanded Your servant Moses, saying, ‘If you are unfaithful I will scatter you among the peoples;

Neh 1:9 but if you return to Me and keep My commandments and do them, though those of you who have been scattered were in the most remote part of the heavens, I will gather them from there and will bring them to the place where I have chosen to cause My name to dwell.'

This prayer was based on Deuteronomy 30:1-4.

Deut 30:1-4 "So it shall be when all of these things have come upon you, the blessing and the curse which I have set before you, and you call *them* to mind in all nations where the Lord your God has banished you, **2** and you return to the Lord your God and obey Him with all your heart and soul according to all that I command you today, you and your sons, **3** then the Lord your God will restore you from captivity, and have compassion on you, and will gather you again from all the peoples where the Lord your God has scattered you. **4** If your outcasts are at the ends of the earth, from there the Lord your God will gather you, and from there He will bring you back.

(3) Specifically sought God's _____.

At the time, the person who could help rebuild the walls of Jerusalem was King Artaxerxes. Therefore, Nehemiah prayed that God would grant him compassion before King Artaxerxes.

Neh 1:11 O Lord, I beseech You, may Your ear be attentive to the prayer of Your servant and the prayer of Your servants who delight to revere Your name, and make Your servant successful today and grant him compassion before this man (King Artaxerxes)."

King Artaxerxes, also known as Longimanus, ruled Persia in 464-423 BC.

In the past, King Artaxerxes had stopped rebuilding the _____ after hearing the enemy's accusations.

Ezra 4:7 And in the days of Artaxerxes, Bishlam, Mithredath, Tabeel and the rest of his colleagues wrote to Artaxerxes king of Persia; and the text of the letter was written in Aramaic and translated *from* Aramaic.

Ezra 4:12-13 let it be known to the king that the Jews who came up from you have come to us at Jerusalem; they are rebuilding the rebellious and evil city and are finishing the walls and repairing the foundations. **13** Now let it be known to the king, that if that city is rebuilt and the walls are finished, they will not pay tribute, custom or toll, and it will damage the revenue of the kings.

Ezra 4:17 Then the king sent an answer to Rehum the commander, to Shimshai the scribe, and to the rest of their colleagues who live in Samaria and in the rest of *the provinces* beyond the River: "Peace. And now

Ezra 4:21-23 So, now issue a decree to make these men stop work, that this city may not be rebuilt until a decree is issued by me... **23** Then as soon as the copy of King Artaxerxes' document was read before Rehum and Shimshai the scribe and their colleagues, they went in haste to Jerusalem to the Jews and stopped them by force of arms.

Because he needed permission to rebuild the walls from the very king who had stopped it in the past, Nehemiah specifically prayed or God to move King Artaxerxes' heart.

CONCLUSION >

God surely answers our prayers when we specifically seek His will.

Matt 7:7-11 Ask, and it will be given to you; seek, and you will find; knock, and it will be opened to you. **9** Or what man is there among you who, when his son asks for a loaf, will give him a stone? **10** Or if he asks for a fish, he will not give him a snake, will he? **11** If you then, being evil, know how to give good gifts to your children, how much more will your Father who is in heaven give what is good to those who ask Him!

Lecture 2

History after the Completion of the City Walls

Although the walls of Jerusalem were completed on the 25th day of the 6th month in 444 BC, threats from Tobiah and his men continued. God initiated an internal spiritual reformation through the priest Ezra.

1. Threats from Tobiah and His party

(1) Even after the wall was completed, the nobles of Judah continued to communicate with Tobiah and inform him of all the news.

Neh 6:17 Also in those days many letters went from the nobles of Judah to Tobiah, and Tobiah's *letters* came to them.

(2) Tobiah's family married a powerful family in Jerusalem.

Neh 6:18 For many in Judah were bound by oath to him because he [Tobiah] was the son-in-law of Shecaniah the son of Arah, and his son Jehohanan had married the daughter of Meshullam the son of Berechiah.

(3) Tobiah sent letters to Nehemiah to frighten him.

Tobiah's allies spoke about Tobiah's good deeds to Nehemiah and informed Tobiah of everything that Nehemiah was doing. Tobiah continued to send letters to frighten Nehemiah.

Neh 6:19 Moreover, they were speaking about his good deeds in my presence and reported my words to him. Then Tobiah sent letters to frighten me.

(4) Later, Tobiah took advantage of his friendship with the priest _____ to obtain a large room in the temple for personal use.

Neh 13:4-6 Now prior to this, Eliashib the priest, who was appointed over the chambers of the house of our God, being related to Tobiah, **5 had prepared a large room for him**, where formerly they put the grain offerings, the frankincense, the utensils and the tithes of grain, wine and oil prescribed for the Levites, the singers and the gatekeepers, and the contributions for the priests. **6** But during all this time I was not in Jerusalem, for in the thirty-second year of Artaxerxes king of Babylon I had gone to the king. After some time, however, I asked leave from the king,

After returning from Persia, Nehemiah threw all of Tobiah's belongings out of the room and cleaned the room (Neh 13:7-9).

2. Ezra Read from the Book of the Law and the People Observed the Feast of Booths

The wall was completed on the 25th day of the 6th month in 444 BC, then the _____ was kept on the 1st day of the 7th month. Ezra began a spiritual revival by reading from the book of the law in front of the people and interpreting its meaning.

Neh 8:2 Then **Ezra the priest brought the law** before the assembly of men, women and all who *could* listen with understanding, **on the first day of the seventh month.**

(1) A revival of reading the Word

He read from the book of the law from dawn to _____.

Neh 8:3 He **read** from it before the square which was in front of the Water Gate **from early morning until midday(noon)**, in the presence of men and women, those who could understand; and all the people were attentive to the book of the law.

(2) A revival of fearing the Word

The people inclined their ear to the Word.

Neh 8:3 He read from it before the square which was in front of the Water Gate from early morning until midday, in the presence of men and women, those who could understand; and **all the people were attentive to the book of the law.**

Verse 3 reads, “All the people were attentive to the book of the law,” but the literal translation of the original text means, “the _____ of all the people were in the book of the law.” This means that the people listened intently without letting any words fall to the ground. People who fear the Word give their fullest attention to it (Prov 2:1-5).

Proverbs 2:1–5 My son, if you will receive my words And treasure my commandments within you, **2 Make your ear attentive** to wisdom, Incline your heart to understanding; **3** For if you cry for discernment, Lift your voice for understanding; **4** If you seek her as silver And search for her as for hidden treasures; **5** Then **you will discern the fear of the Lord** And **discover the knowledge of God.**

Proverbs 1:7 The fear of the Lord is the beginning of knowledge; . . .

(3) A revival of yearning to understand the Word clearly

Neh 8:7 Also Jeshua, Bani, Sherebiah, Jamin, Akkub, Shabbethai, Hodiah, Maaseiah, Kelita, Azariah, Jozabad, Hanan, Pelaiah, the Levites, **explained the law to the people** while the people *remained* in their place.

① **All the people who understood the Word wept.**

Through the Word, they realized their sinfulness, idleness, and ignorance, and wept bitterly.

Neh 8:9 Then Nehemiah, who was the governor, and Ezra the priest *and* scribe, and the Levites who taught the people said to all the people, “This day is holy to the Lord your God; **do not mourn or weep.**” **For all the people were weeping when they heard the words of the law.**

② **When we understand the Word, God gives us spiritual _____.**

Neh 8:10 Then he said to them, “Go, eat of the fat, drink of the sweet, and send portions to him who has nothing prepared; for this day is holy to our Lord. Do not be grieved, **for the joy of the Lord is your strength.**”

The phrase “joy of the Lord” is the Hebrew expression *hedwath yhwh* (הֵדוּתַת יְהוָה), which means “The joy of the Lord, the joy that the _____ gives.”

When we understand the Word, God gives us joy, and that joy becomes our strength as believers.

Neh 8:12 All the people went away to eat, to drink, to send portions and to **celebrate a great festival, because they understood the words** which had been made known to them.

③ **The more we understand the Word, the more we yearn for deep insight into the Word.**

The people of Israel loved the Word so much that their leaders went to Ezra the next day to learn more about the Word.

Neh 8:13 Then **on the second day** the heads of fathers’ *households* of all the people, the priests and the Levites were gathered to Ezra the scribe that they might **gain insight** into the words of the law.

④ **When we understand the word, God enables us to bear fruit through obedience.**

The people of Israel learned how to keep the _____ by hearing and understanding the Word.

Neh 8:14 **They found written in the law** how the Lord had commanded through Moses that the sons of Israel should **live in booths during the feast of the seventh month.**

Neh 8:15 **So they proclaimed** and circulated a proclamation in all their cities and in Jerusalem, saying, “Go out to the hills, and bring olive branches and wild olive branches, myrtle branches, palm branches and branches of *other* leafy trees, **to make booths,** as it is written.”

All the people built booths and obeyed God's commands.

Neh 8:17 The entire assembly of those who had returned from the captivity made booths and lived in them. The sons of Israel had indeed not done so from the days of Joshua the son of Nun to that day. And there was great rejoicing. (Lev 23:34-43)

People wholeheartedly observed the feast according to the law **for the first time in about 960 years** since the Israelites began observing the Feast of Booths after entering Canaan.

Neh 8:18 He read from the book of the law of God daily, from the first day to the last day. And they celebrated the feast seven days, and on the eighth day *there was* a solemn assembly according to the ordinance.

CONCLUSION >

We must carry on this spiritual revival of reading, fearing, and clearly understanding the Word.

Deut 17:19 It shall be with him and he shall read it all the days of his life, that he may learn to fear the Lord his God, by carefully observing all the words of this law and these statutes,

Deut 31:12-13 Assemble the people, the men and the women and children and the alien who is in your town, so that they may hear and learn and fear the Lord your God, and be careful to observe all the words of this law. (13) **Their children, who have not known, will hear** and **learn to fear the Lord your God**, as long as you live on the land which you are about to cross the Jordan to possess."