

Psalm 1:1-6 ¹ Oh, the joys of those who do not follow the advice of the wicked, or stand around with sinners, or join in with mockers. ² But they delight in the law of the Lord, meditating on it day and night. ³ They are like trees planted along the riverbank, bearing fruit each season. Their leaves never wither, and they prosper in all they do. ⁴ But not the wicked! They are like worthless chaff, scattered by the wind. ⁵ They will be condemned at the time of judgment. Sinners will have no place among the godly. ⁶ For the Lord watches over the path of the godly, but the path of the wicked leads to destruction." (NLT)

Nehemiah 1:5-7 ⁵ Then I said, "O Lord, God of heaven, the great and awesome God who keeps His covenant of unfailing love with those who love Him and obey His commands, ⁶ listen to my prayer! Look down and see me praying night and day for your people Israel. I confess that we have sinned against you. Yes, even my own family and I have sinned! Yes, even my own family and I have sinned! ⁷ **We have sinned terribly by not obeying the commands, decrees, and regulations that you gave us through your servant Moses.**" (NLT)

GETTING BACK to THE BOOK

Nehemiah 8:1-4 ¹ In October, when the Israelites had settled in their towns, all the people assembled with a unified purpose at the square just inside the Water Gate. They asked Ezra the scribe to bring out the Book of the Law of Moses, which the Lord had given Israel to obey. ² So on October 8 Ezra the priest brought the Book of the Law before the assembly, which included the men and women and all the children old enough to understand. ³ He faced the square just inside the Water Gate from early morning until noon and read aloud to everyone who could understand. All the people listened closely to the Book of the Law. ⁴ Ezra the scribe stood on a high wooden platform that had been made for the occasion ..." (NLT)

1. RESPECT God's Word.

Nehemiah 8:5-6 ⁵ Ezra stood on the platform in full view of all the people. When they saw him open the book, they all rose to their feet. ⁶ Then Ezra praised the Lord, the great God, and all the people chanted,

"Amen! Amen!" as they lifted their hands. Then they bowed down and worshiped the Lord with their faces to the ground." (NLT)

2 Peter 1:19-21 ¹⁹ Because of that experience, we have even greater confidence in the message proclaimed by the prophets. You must pay close attention to what they wrote, for their words are like a lamp shining in a dark place—until the Day dawns, and Christ the Morning Star shines in your hearts. ²⁰ Above all, you must realize that no prophecy in Scripture ever came from the prophet's own understanding, ²¹ or from human initiative. No, those prophets were moved by the Holy Spirit, and they spoke from God." (NLT)

2. RELAY God's Word.

Nehemiah 8:7-8 ⁷ The Levites—Jeshua, Bani, Sherebiah, Jamin, Akkub, Shabbethai, Hodia, Maaseiah, Kelita, Azariah, Jozabad, Hanan, and Peliaiah—the instructed the people in the Law while everyone remained in their places. ⁸ They read from the Book of the Law of God and clearly explained the meaning of what was being read, helping the people understand each passage." (NLT)

2 Timothy 3:14-17 ¹⁴ But you must remain faithful to the things you have been taught. You know they are true, for you know you can trust those who taught you. ¹⁵ You have been taught the holy Scriptures from childhood, and they have given you the wisdom to receive the salvation that comes by trusting in Christ Jesus. ¹⁶ All Scripture is inspired by God and is useful to teach us what is true and to make us realize what is wrong in our lives. It corrects us when we are wrong and teaches us to do what is right. ¹⁷ God uses it to prepare and equip people to do every good work." (NLT)

Hebrews 5:12 "You have been believers so long now that you ought to be teaching others. Instead, you need someone to teach you again the basic things about God's word. You are like babies who need milk and cannot eat solid food." (NLT)

3. REGRET disobeying God's Word.

Nehemiah 8:9 "Then Nehemiah the governor, Ezra the priest and scribe, and the Levites who were interpreting for the people said to them, "Don't mourn or weep on such a day as this! For today is a sacred day before

the Lord your God.” For the people had all been weeping as they listened to the words of the Law.” (NLT)

Hebrews 4:12 “For the word of God is alive and powerful. It is sharper than the sharpest two-edge sword, cutting between soul and spirit, between joint and marrow. It exposes our innermost thoughts and desires.” (NLT)

4. REJOICE over God’s Word.

Nehemiah 8:10-11 “¹⁰ And Nehemiah continued, “Go and celebrate with a feast of rich foods and sweet drinks, and share gifts of food with people who have nothing prepared. This is a sacred day before our Lord. Don’t be dejected and sad, for the joy of the Lord is your strength!” ¹¹ And the Levites, too, quieted the people, telling them, “Hush! Don’t weep! For this is a sacred day.” ¹² So the people went away to eat and drink at a festive meal, to share gifts of food, and to celebrate with great joy because they had heard God’s words and understood them.” (NLT)

John 8:31-32 “³¹ Jesus said to the people who believed in Him, “You are truly my disciples if you remain faithful to my teachings. ³² And you will know the **truth**, and the truth will set you free.” (NLT)

John 6:66-68 “⁶⁶ At this point many of His disciples turned away and deserted Him. ⁶⁷ Then Jesus turned to the Twelve and asked, “Are you also going to leave?” ⁶⁸ Simon Peter replied, “Lord, to whom would we go? You have the words that give **eternal life**.” (NLT)

Romans 15:4 “Such things were written in the Scriptures long ago to teach us. And the Scriptures give us **hope** and encouragement as we wait patiently for God’s promises to be fulfilled.” (NLT)

Jeremiah 15:16 “When I discovered your words, I devoured them. They are my joy and my heart’s delight, for I bear your name. O Lord God of Heaven’s Armies.” (NLT)

5. RESPOND to God’s Word.

Nehemiah 8:13-18 “¹³ On October 9 the family leaders of all the people, together with the priests and Levites, met with Ezra the scribe to go over the Law in greater detail. ¹⁴ As they studied the Law, they discovered that

the Lord had commanded through Moses that the Israelites should live in shelters during the festival to be held that month. ¹⁵ He had said that a proclamation should be made throughout their towns and in Jerusalem, telling the people to go to the hills to get branches from olive, wild olive, myrtle, palm, and other leafy trees. They were to use these branches to make shelters in which they would live during the festival, as prescribed in the Law. ¹⁶ So the people went out and cut branches and used them to build shelters on the roofs of their houses, in their courtyards, in the courtyards of God's Temple, or in the squares just inside the Water Gate and the Ephraim Gate. ¹⁷ So everyone who had returned from captivity lived in these shelters during the festival, and they were all filled with great joy! The Israelites had not celebrated like this since the days of Joshua son of Nun. ¹⁸ Ezra read from the Book of the Law of God on each of the seven days of the festival. Then on the eighth day they held a solemn assembly, **as was required by law.**" (NLT)

James 1:22-25 ²² But don't just listen to God's word. You must do what it says. Otherwise, you are only fooling yourselves. ²³ For if you listen to the word and don't obey it, it is like glancing at your face in a mirror. ²⁴ You see yourself, walk away, and forget what you look like. ²⁵ But if you look carefully into the perfect law that sets you free, and if you do what it says and don't forget what you heard, then God will bless you for doing it." (NLT)

John 14:15 "If you love me, obey my commandments." (NLT)

BOTTOM LINE

2 Timothy 4:3-4 ³ For a time is coming when people will no longer listen to sound and wholesome teaching. They will follow their own desires and will look for teachers who will tell them whatever their itching ears want to hear. ⁴ They will reject the truth and chase after myths." (NLT)

Ezra 7:8-10 ⁸ Ezra arrived in Jerusalem in August of that year. ⁹ He arranged to leave Babylon on April 8, the first day of the new year, and he arrived at Jerusalem on August 4, **for the gracious hand of his God was on him.** ¹⁰ This was because Ezra had determined to **study** and **obey the Law of the Lord** and to **teach** those decrees and regulations to the people of Israel." (NLT)

Psalms 119:1-3 ¹ Joyful are people of integrity, who follow the instructions of the Lord. ² Joyful are those who obey His laws and search

for Him with all their hearts. ³ They do not compromise with evil, and they walk only in His paths.” (NLT)