

Discussion Guide For the Week of Dec. 2, 2018

Read Nehemiah 8:1-12; 9:1-5

- Nehemiah 8:1 said the people had a “unified purpose.” What was their purpose (see verse 2)? Why is it significant that they were intent on hearing from God?
- The people stood up (Neh. 8:5), which was a way of showing respect to God’s Word. Why is this significant?
- Nehemiah told them not to weep or mourn because that was a special day (Neh. 8:9). It was a time to REJOICE!!! What was so special about that day? Does Neh. 9:12 give us a clue? What’s so special about hearing and understanding God’s Word?
- The people in Nehemiah 9:1 wore “sackcloth.” Sackcloth was a coarse material, often made of goat’s hair. In the Old Testament days, wearing “sackcloth” and putting ashes / dirt on their heads was a sign of mourning and repentance. Why were they mourning (Neh. 9:2-3)?
- They confessed their sins and the sins of their ancestors (Neh. 9:2). To “confess” literally means to tell the truth. They were accepting the truth (responsibility) about their sins and the sins of their ancestors. Ancestors could refer to their extended family or even the nation as a whole. Why would they “confess” their ancestors’ sins? Is it possible we might need to not only “confess” our own sins but those of our ancestors? What are some of your “ancestors’ sins?” Spend some time thinking about the sins of your family, your ancestors, your nation. Now confess them to God.
- Neh. 9:5: stand up and praise God – this means to show respect and give praise to God. This is a good idea – especially after confessing sins and receiving God’s forgiveness. Spend some time showing respect to and praising God! Thank Him for His amazing grace!