

THE BEAUTY OF UNITY AS REVEALED IN NEHEMIAH EIGHT

INTRODUCTION:

- A. It is a key theme in the Holy Bible—unity or oneness.
- B. The cry and command for unity in religion is not a New Testament only doctrine.
- C. It is revealed in all ages revealed in Scripture.
- D. Yet, it has been attacked in every age as well.
- E. The patriarchs Noah, Abraham, Isaac, and Job all worshipped the same way (Gen.8:20-21; 12:7; 22:5; 26:5; Job 1:5).
- F. Under the Law of Moses, the Scriptures make it abundantly clear that there was only one object of worship (Deu.6:1ff).
- G. God made it known that there was just one place or city where He would build his house or temple for His worshippers (Deu.12:5-11; 1 Kng.8:29; 9:3; 2 Kng.21:4, 7).
- H. The Jews were given an inspired psalm to remind them of the importance of this matter (Psa.133).
- I. Nehemiah 8 is a most beautiful illustration of the Bible concept of unity.

THE KEY INGREDIENTS ARE REVEALED

- A. **Unity of location** (v.1). God designed the assembly for a specific purpose (1 Cor.11:17-20; Heb.10:24-25).
- B. **Unity of belief and purpose** (v.1). They requested the Law; the Corinthians were reminded of this key matter (1 Cor.1:10).
- C. **Unity of understanding** (v.2). God's Law is capable of being understood alike by all men.
NOTE: God does not command anything of us that we are incapable of understanding.
- D. **Unity of attention span** (v.3). Each Christian should study along with the teacher as long as he is using correctly God's Word (Acts 17:11). If you do not get anything out of the lesson...
- E. **Unity of respect** (v.5). Their actions reveal their respect for the word of God. John 14:15 requires us Christians to do the same thing.
- F. **Unity of worship** (v.6). Every one participated in praising the Almighty. This is exactly what Ephesians 5:19 and Hebrews 10:24-25 require of us.
- G. Unity among teachers (vv.7-8). Their goal and message were the same. They, through plain teaching, caused the audience to understand God's Word. 1 Corinthians 1:10 and 1 Peter 4:11 command the same of us Christians.
- H. **Unity of emotions** (vv.9-12). The target of the Word is the human heart (Acts 2:36-37; Heb.4:11-12). Does the Word of God ever cause you to weep because of God's goodness? The end result was mirth or joy because they had a better understanding of God's Word.
- I. **Unity in the leadership** (v.13). The chief of the fathers took the initiative to learn better their tasks as prescribed in the Law. This is what good leaders do in contrast to what was occurring in the churches at Corinth and Jerusalem (1 Cor.3:1-4; Heb.5:11-14).
- J. **Unity of practice** (vv.14-18). This is a description of the Feast of Tabernacles or tents (cf.Lev.23:33-43; Deu.16:13-15). Pay attention to the detailed instructions they all had to honor alike. The latter part of verse 17 reveals what takes place when hearts are serving the Lord in the manner in which He has instructed: "And there was very great gladness."

CONCLUSION

- A. In order for true unity to exist, God's law alone must be the standard.
- B. In order for true unity to exist, all the worshippers or participants must be of one mind.
- C. In order for true unity to exist, all teachers must speak the same thing.
- D. In order for true unity to exist, all the worshippers must worship in the same manner.