Power of God's Word
Nehemiah 8

I. Hearing God's Word – 8:1-8
1. There was a hunger for God's Word – 1
   People gathered united asking for God's Word
     Perhaps stirred by what they saw God do
       Protected them from their enemies
       Enabled them to build the wall in 52 days
   Asked Ezra to read God's Law to them
     They did not have individual copies of Scripture
2. Ezra brought the Law to them – 2
   Men, women & all old enough to understand
   Note there was a sense of urgency
     1st day of seventh month – note 7:23
3. They listened attentively - 3
   Ezra read from early morning until midday
4. People stood as God's Word was read – 5
   Sense of respect as they listened
5. They worshipped the God of the Book – 6
   Ezra led, blessed the Lord, the great God
   People responded "Amen, Amen"
     With lifted hands toward the God of His Word
   People bowed worshipped with faces to ground
6. Provision made to help understanding – 7-8
   Levites scattered among the people
     To make sure people understood what they heard

II. Hearts Stirred by God's Word – 9-12
1. All wept as they heard God's Law – 9
   Perhaps under a sense of conviction
2. Nehemiah & Ezra comforted them – 9-10
   Don't weep, this day is holy to the Lord
     It is a day to turn mourning into great joy
       When hearts are touched as we hear God's Word
3. Became day of feasting & rejoicing – 10-12
   People feasted together with great joy
   Sent portions to those who needed – share joy
   All in response to what they had heard

III. Obeying God's Word – 13-18
1. Obedience begins promptly – 13
   2nd day of 7th month leaders gathered with Ezra
     To study the words of the Law
2. Discovered time for Feast of Booths – 14
   Feast to remember how Israel lived in wilderness
3. Proclaimed this feast to the people – 15
   Told them how to build these shelters
4. People responded in building booths – 16
   They lived in these shelters for that week
5. They rejoiced in keeping this Feast - 17
   Feast not kept this way since days of Joshua
   It was a time of great rejoicing
6. Ezra read from the law each day – 18
   Did it for 7 days – 8th day a solemn assembly