

each response for each question. Call on one person for each response to tell the class why he or she chose that answer.

### **Making It Personal**

#### *Drawing conclusions*

#### ● **The people that day experienced life-changing Bible study. Why?**

● List their responses on the chalkboard or a large sheet of paper. Here are some they may mention:

- they were hungry for God's Word
- they listened attentively
- they gave a large block of time
- the message was clearly explained
- the people allowed themselves to respond emotionally
- they took the message seriously
- they measured their own lives according to the standard presented in the Bible
- they turned away from actions they learned were wrong and embraced actions they learned were right

### **Wrapping It Up**

● **God's Word has the power to convict people of sin and lead them to repentance and commitment. But we must be willing to let God's Word impact us. Are we willing to open ourselves up to the cutting edge of the sword of God's Word?**

● Call on someone to lead in prayer.

- they made new commitments
- they changed their lifestyles
- they allowed God's Word to impact their families, their business, and their finances

#### ● **What would we have to do as class in order to have that kind of life-changing Bible study?**

Wait for responses.

● Allow this to develop into a group discussion among the class members. After some discussion, ask, **What specific actions are you willing to take as a class in order to experience that kind of life-changing Bible study?** Wait for responses.

● **What do you think would happen if we paid that kind of price in order to really have life-changing Bible study?** Wait for responses.



#### **Faith at Home**

Do you include the oral reading of God's Word in your family devotional time? Don't neglect it! God's Word has the power to change lives.

# Teacher's Toolbox

*Getting your class into God's Word  
and God's Word into your class*

**ExcitingBibleStudy.com**

**Bible Series**

**Nehemiah 8**

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**HOW TO USE TEACHER'S TOOLBOX:** Make a four-page folded teacher's leaflet from the first two sheets by printing two-sided (or by putting the blank sides together). The other two sheets are for duplicating, displaying, distributing, or otherwise using as called for in the lesson plan.



**Faith at Home** – A specific application of today's Bible passage to family life, to be used for individual reflection, family discussion, or class activity.



### **Getting Started**

#### *Remembering and sharing*

● **What is your earliest memory of reading the Bible or hearing it read?** Let several respond.

● Ask for volunteers to tell briefly about how reading the Bible led them to repentance at some point in their life. Let several share.

● **From the beginning of the church, the reading and study of God's Word has always been an important part of what Christians do when they come together to worship. Let's look at a few New Testament passages that show us that truth.** Have learners find, read aloud, and discuss briefly the following passages: Acts 2:42; 1 Timothy 4:13; 2 Timothy 3:16–4:2; and 1 Thessalonians 5:27.

● **In today's study we will examine an incident in the Old Testament in which the public reading of God's Word led to massive conviction of sin and repentance.**

- Have learners turn to Nehemiah 8. Have someone read aloud verses 1-3. Then call on someone to lead the class in prayer.

## Exploring God's Word

### Skit

- Enlist two persons to present the following skit. Give each a copy of the script (duplicate Item 1).

### Skit

*B is standing, motionless, facing the class, looking up slightly into the distance. A enters.*

**A:** *(Looks up to see what B is looking at)* What's going on?

**B:** *(Glances at A, then resumes looking into the distance)* Ezra is reading the law to us. Where have you been?

**A:** Had an ox in the ditch. Has he just started?

**B:** No, been at it since daybreak.

**A:** Since daybreak? Why, it's nearly noon now!

**B:** Really? Doesn't seem like it's been that long.

**A:** You mean you've been here the whole time listening?

**B:** Yes. Please don't talk to me. I'm trying to hear what he is saying.

**A:** *(After a pause)* Has everybody been standing like this the whole time, too?

**B:** Yes.

**A:** *(After a pause, fidgeting)* How much longer do you think he's going to

read?

**B:** *(Irritated)* Please!

**A:** Sorry. *(After a pause)* Are you crying? I mean, is it because of something I said?

**B:** No, of course not. I'm crying because we have not been keeping God's law. We have sinned against Him.

**A:** But, at least now, we are hearing God's law again. This is not a time to weep. It is a time to rejoice and to celebrate!

**B:** Yes, but it is also a time for confession. We must confess our sins and the sins of our fathers. We are like slaves today here in the land God has given us because of our sins. All of God's blessings go right through us and into the hands of others.

**A:** Then let's confess.

**B:** And we must repent, turning away from our sin. We must not allow our children to marry the children of the people who live around us. We must not desecrate the Sabbath by doing business on that day. We must be faithful in giving back a portion of God's blessings. There is so much of the law that we have neglected.

**A:** But now that we know, we can confess, we can repent, we can start over. Can't we?

**B:** Yes, we can, if we will.

**A:** Then there will be real reason to celebrate!

**B:** God is so good to forgive us!

- After the skit, have someone read aloud Nehemiah 8:1-9:3.

### Interactive Bible study

- Give each person a pencil and a copy of the following (duplicate Item 2).

### Interactive Bible Study

*Put yourself in today's Bible story and answer the following questions as though you were there.*

\_\_\_\_\_ 1. I am there and I am:

A. Ezra, the scribe/priest reading the law to the people.

B. a Levite, making the meaning clear to the people.

C. Nehemiah, telling the people not to cry.

D. one of the people, listening to God's Word.

\_\_\_\_\_ 2. As the law is read, my primary emotion is:

A. sorrow.

B. joy.

C. guilt.

D. fear.

\_\_\_\_\_ 3. The number one question in my mind is:

A. Why haven't we done this before?

B. What are we going to do now?

C. What have we done?

D. What is God going to do?

\_\_\_\_\_ 4. As soon as possible I am anxious to:

A. change into sackcloth and begin fasting.

B. celebrate a festival we have been neglecting.

C. tell someone else what I have just learned.

D. make new commitments and change my lifestyle.

\_\_\_\_\_ 5. The greatest impact of this event will be felt by:

A. the surrounding nations.

B. our children and grandchildren.

C. those of us who heard the law read.

D. those who read and explained the law.

\_\_\_\_\_ 6. The biggest change in my life will be:

A. a new commitment to studying God's Word.

B. a new commitment to celebrating the festivals.

C. a new commitment to obeying God's law.

D. a new commitment to sharing God's message.

\_\_\_\_\_ 7. Tomorrow I plan to:

A. rest all day.

B. pray and fast.

C. celebrate.

D. go back to work.

- Allow three to five minutes for members to mark their answers. Then call for a show of hands on

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\_\_\_ **2. As the law is read, my primary emotion is:**

- A. sorrow. B. joy. C. guilt. D. fear.

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- A. Why haven't we done this before?
- B. What are we going to do now?
- C. What have we done?
- D. What is God going to do?

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- A. change into sackcloth and begin fasting.
- B. celebrate a festival we have been neglecting.
- C. tell someone else what I have just learned.
- D. make new commitments and change my lifestyle.

\_\_\_ **5. The greatest impact of this event will be felt by:**

- A. the surrounding nations.
- B. our children and grandchildren.
- C. those of us who heard the law read.
- D. those who read and explained the law.

\_\_\_ **6. The biggest change in my life will be:**

- A. a new commitment to studying God's Word.
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