

## Lesson 5: Being Attentive to the Word of God

*Nehemiah 8:3 says, "Then Ezra read from it (the law) in the open square that was in front of the Water Gate from morning until midday, before the men and women and those who could understand; and the ears of all the people were attentive to the Book of the Law."*

As the WORD of GOD was being read by EZRA we get a description that the people of God were responding with ATTENTIVENESS. What a descriptive statement. The EARS of all the people were ATTENTIVE. The dictionary tells us that if one is ATTENTIVE, one is paying CLOSE attention. To pay close attention is to be paying SERIOUS attention! As the Word of God was proclaimed by the man of God the people of God were actively involved, paying close attention to what was being said they might learn and then apply it.

Just curious, how are you responding to their response? Did it get your attention?

ATTENTIVE. Is that a word that describes you? Are you attentive to details? Are you attentive to what is going on around you? Are you being attentive to what is being said? Are you an attentive person?

Opposite of attentive could have a person being described as someone not having a clue. They are absentminded. They are easily distracted. They are unfocused.

In going a little deeper with the word "ATTENTIVE" we find it not only in Nehemiah but also once in the New Testament. ATTENTIVE was used to describe a group of people listening to Jesus. In Luke 19:48 we find, "all the people were very attentive to hear Him." I think it is helpful sometimes to see how other versions may read. For instance, you can find Luke 19:48 in the ESV saying, "all the people were hanging on His words." Or "all the people were captivated by what they heard." HCSB. Or "all the people were hanging on to every word He said." NASB

ATTENTIVE - hanging on every word Jesus is saying! CAPTIVATED!!

As one would read from the Book of Proverbs one will find numerous admonitions to be ATTENTIVE to God's Word as Solomon called on his son, his children and/or the readers to HEAR or LISTEN to what he had to say. Notice:

*Proverbs 1:8 My son, hear the instruction of your father, And do not forsake the law of your mother;*

*Proverbs 4:1 Hear, my children, the instruction of a father, And give attention to know understanding;*

*Proverbs 4:10 Hear, my son, and receive my sayings, And the years of your life will be many.*

*Proverbs 5:7 Therefore hear me now, my children, And do not depart from the words of my mouth.*

*Proverbs 8:33 Hear instruction and be wise, And do not disdain it.*

*Proverbs 13:8 The ransom of a man's life is his riches, But the poor does not hear rebuke.*

*Proverbs 22:17 Incline your ear and hear the words of the wise, And apply your heart to my knowledge;*

*Proverbs 23:19 Hear, my son, and be wise; And guide your heart in the way.*

*Proverbs 1:5 A wise man will hear and increase learning, And a man of understanding will attain wise counsel.*

Interestingly Solomon also spoke to the role of the EAR in hearing. Notice:

*Proverbs 2:2 So that you incline your ear to wisdom, And apply your heart to understanding;*

*Proverbs 4:20 My son, give attention to my words; Incline your ear to my sayings.*

*Proverbs 5:1 My son, pay attention to my wisdom; Lend your ear to my understanding,*

*Proverbs 15:31 The ear that hears the rebukes of life will abide among the wise.*

*Proverbs 18:15 The heart of the prudent acquires knowledge, And the ear of the wise seeks knowledge.*

*Proverbs 22:17 Incline your ear and hear the words of the wise, And apply your heart to my knowledge;*

*Proverbs 23:12 Apply your heart to instruction, And your ears to words of knowledge.*

Two verses give great warnings regarding the ear and the Word of God:

*Proverbs 28:9 One who turns away his ear from hearing the law, Even his prayer is an abomination.*

*Proverbs 5:13 I have not obeyed the voice of my teachers, Nor inclined my ear to those who instructed me!*

*Proverbs 5:13 speaks of great regret for not listening!*

When we ask the question as to why is it so important to be attentive to God's Word we find the answer is being ATTENTIVE to the Word of God allows you to LEARN crucial instructions for living LIFE!

KNOWING God's Word helps you to make wise decisions! From Proverbs 1:4 We find God's Word is given "to give prudence to the simple, knowledge and discretion to the youth." When one is attentive one gains prudence. I like to define prudence as carefully considering the consequences of a choice.

One other thing is noteworthy regarding being attentive when reading God's Word is that God's Word does not always impact us the first time we read it or maybe even the 100th time we read it. In other words you might read God's Word year after year and all of sudden a verse of Scripture seems to leap off the page at you and cause you to wonder when did that verse get in the Bible. Being ATTENTIVE to the Word means you will see "fresh" insights. Charles Hadden Spurgeon said, "Nobody ever outgrows Scripture; the Word of God widens and deepens with our years."

When it comes to listening to and learning the Bible are you ATTENTIVE? Are you paying attention as the sermon is being delivered? Are you paying close attention to what is being said? Are you paying serious attention to what God may be saying to you? Are you hanging onto every word? Does God's Word CAPTIVATE you?

To DATE the Word is to be ATTENTIVE to the Word!