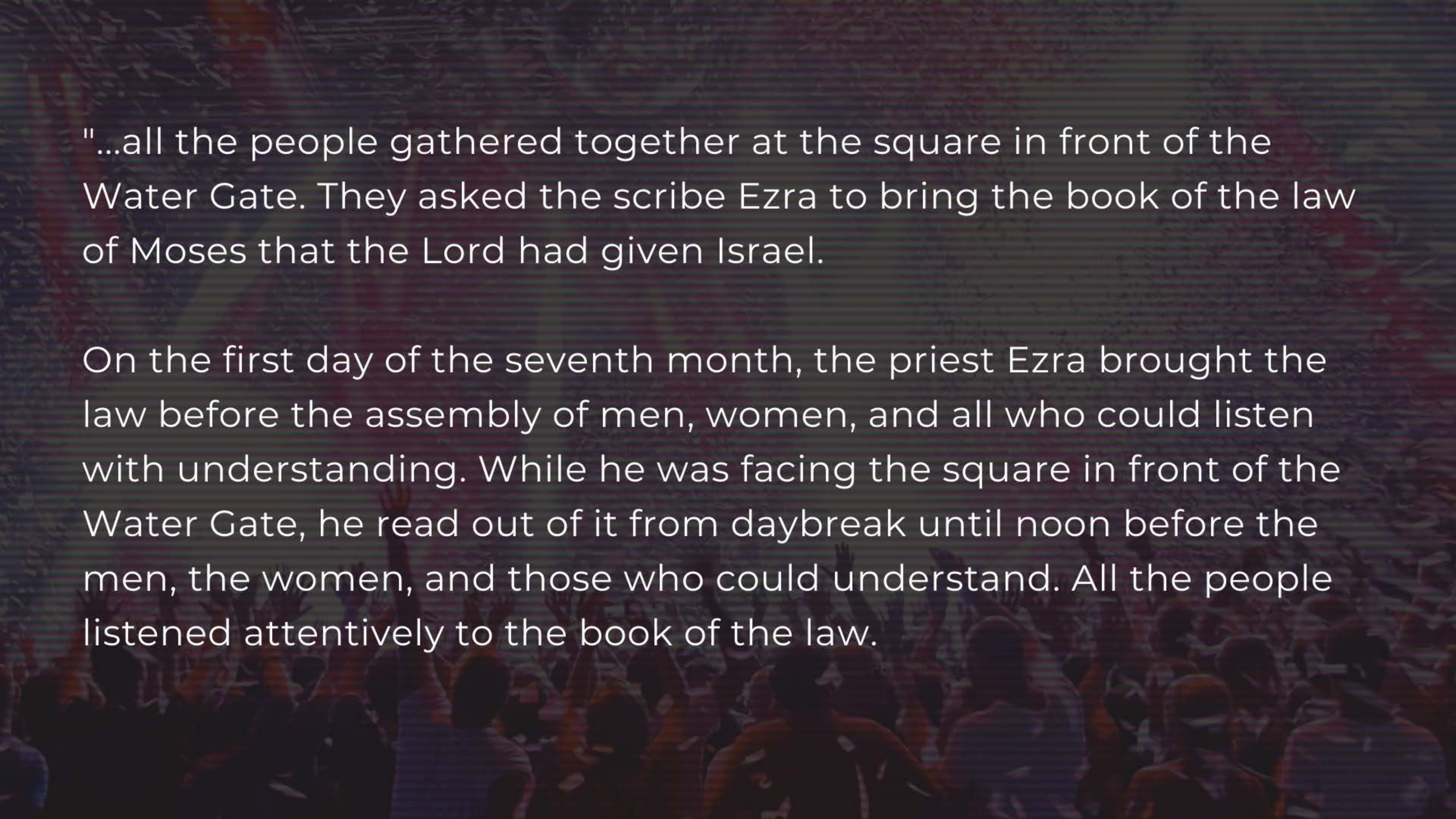




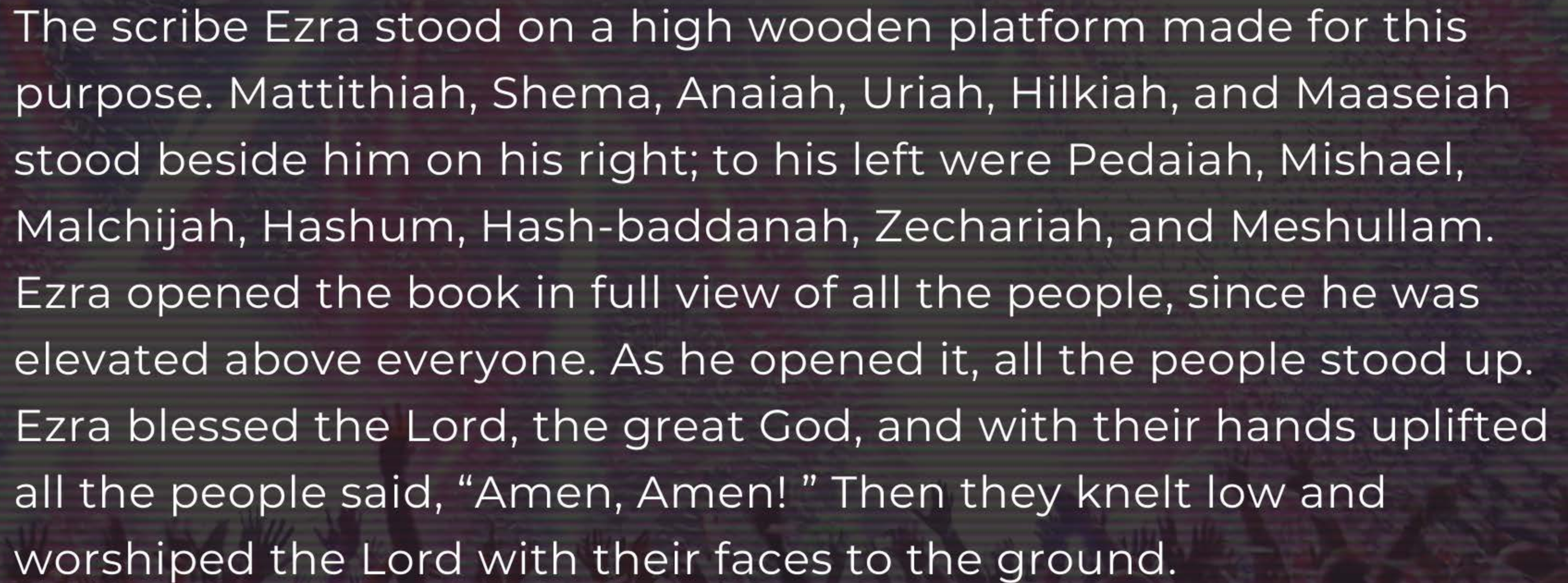
PARTY THEOLOGY

Nehemiah 8:1-12 | Don Rayman

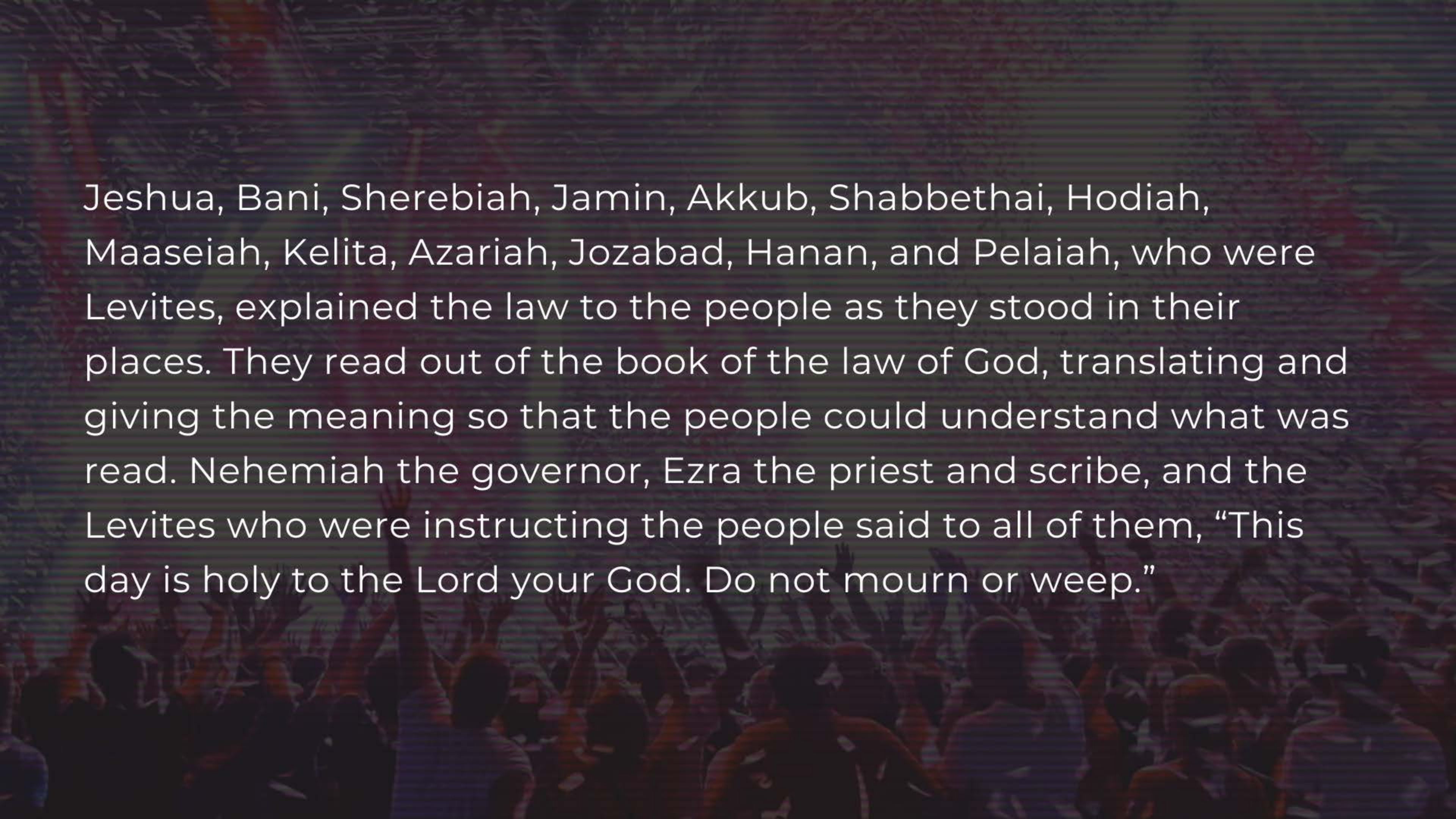
A dark, low-key photograph of a large crowd of people, likely in a church or a public gathering. Many of the people have their hands raised in the air, suggesting a moment of praise, prayer, or celebration. The lighting is dim, with some highlights on the people's faces and hands, creating a sense of a large, active assembly.

"...all the people gathered together at the square in front of the Water Gate. They asked the scribe Ezra to bring the book of the law of Moses that the Lord had given Israel.

On the first day of the seventh month, the priest Ezra brought the law before the assembly of men, women, and all who could listen with understanding. While he was facing the square in front of the Water Gate, he read out of it from daybreak until noon before the men, the women, and those who could understand. All the people listened attentively to the book of the law.

The background of the image shows a large crowd of people, likely a church congregation, with their hands raised in a gesture of praise or worship. The scene is dimly lit, with a warm, reddish-brown color palette. The text is overlaid on this background in a white, sans-serif font.

The scribe Ezra stood on a high wooden platform made for this purpose. Mattithiah, Shema, Anaiah, Uriah, Hilkiah, and Maaseiah stood beside him on his right; to his left were Pedaiah, Mishael, Malchijah, Hashum, Hash-baddanah, Zechariah, and Meshullam. Ezra opened the book in full view of all the people, since he was elevated above everyone. As he opened it, all the people stood up. Ezra blessed the Lord, the great God, and with their hands uplifted all the people said, "Amen, Amen!" Then they knelt low and worshiped the Lord with their faces to the ground.

A large crowd of people is shown from behind, with their arms raised in a gesture of praise or worship. The scene is dimly lit, with a warm, reddish-brown glow, suggesting a church service or a religious gathering. The text is overlaid on this background.

Jeshua, Bani, Sherebiah, Jamin, Akkub, Shabbethai, Hodiah, Maaseiah, Kelita, Azariah, Jozabad, Hanan, and Pelaiah, who were Levites, explained the law to the people as they stood in their places. They read out of the book of the law of God, translating and giving the meaning so that the people could understand what was read. Nehemiah the governor, Ezra the priest and scribe, and the Levites who were instructing the people said to all of them, "This day is holy to the Lord your God. Do not mourn or weep."

For all the people were weeping as they heard the words of the law. Then he said to them, "Go and eat what is rich, drink what is sweet, and send portions to those who have nothing prepared, since today is holy to our Lord. Do not grieve, because the joy of the Lord is your strength." And the Levites quieted all the people, saying, "Be still, since today is holy. Don't grieve." Then all the people began to eat and drink, send portions, and have a great celebration, because they had understood the words that were explained to them."

NEHEMIAH 8:1-12

MESSAGE **OUTLINE**

The Band Takes the Stage



MESSAGE **OUTLINE**

The Band Takes the Stage

The People Sing a Dirge

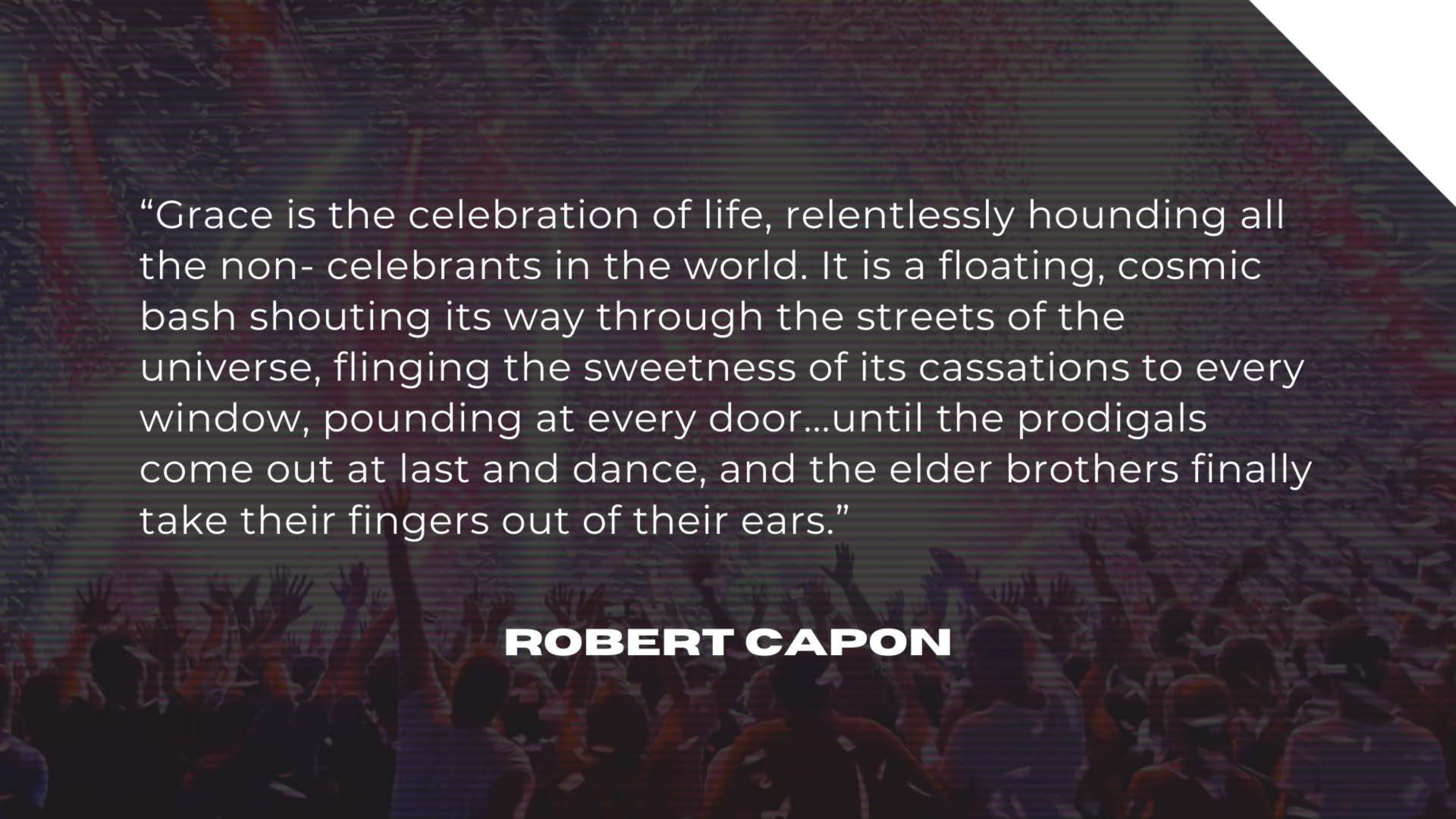


MESSAGE **OUTLINE**

The Band Takes the Stage

The People Sing a Dirge

God Takes Over the Turntable

A crowd of people is shown from behind, with their arms raised in the air, suggesting a celebration or a religious gathering. The background is dark and textured, possibly a wall or a large screen. The overall mood is one of joy and collective participation.

“Grace is the celebration of life, relentlessly hounding all the non-celebrants in the world. It is a floating, cosmic bash shouting its way through the streets of the universe, flinging the sweetness of its cassations to every window, pounding at every door...until the prodigals come out at last and dance, and the elder brothers finally take their fingers out of their ears.”

ROBERT CAPON

MESSAGE **OUTLINE**

The Band Takes the Stage

The People Sing a Dirge

God Takes Over the Turntable

The Song that Never Ends