

QUESTIONS FOR DISCUSSION

1. What had Ezra done to make him the man for the job at this time?
2. Is it necessary to be prepared? How? In what ways?
3. How was the King used in God's plan?
4. How important is our stewardship of material things?
How important is our stewardship of spiritual things?
5. What is our responsibility before God? Our accountability?

SUMMARY:

Ezra went forward in the work that God set before him. The way was not always open, but as the obstacles came each was faced with determination and prayer, seeking God's direction and then going forward in faith. Ezra had prepared himself by seeking the law of God for his own personal life and then going forward, teaching all those things to his own people. In truly seeking God's guidance, answered prayer was experienced and Ezra felt the hand of God upon him, and the great and tender blessings of the Lord that followed.

NOTES:

APOSTOLIC CHRISTIAN CHURCH

Bible Lesson #6

August 9, 2020

Third Quarter

EZRA'S MISSION

LESSON TEXT: *Ezra 7:1-28; 8:21-36*

LESSON SETTING: Journey from Babylon to Jerusalem.

TIME: Approximately 457 B.C.

I. EZRA'S DETERMINATION. Ezra 7:1-10

- A. God's Hand (vs. 9) Psalm 37:24; John 10:28-29
- B. Preparation (vs. 10) 2 Timothy 2:15
- C. Obedience - John 9:7
- D. Instruction:
 1. Given - Jeremiah 32:33; John 6:45; 2 Timothy 2:24-25
 2. Rejected - Proverbs 1:7; 5:12
 3. Received - John 9:36; Acts 8:31; Colossians 3:16

II. THE KING'S DESIRE. Ezra 7:11-28

- A. Those Willing May Go (vs. 13)
- B. Gold and Silver Given (vs. 15-16)
- C. Complete Provision Made (vs. 17-23)
- D. Taxes Withdrawn (vs. 24)
- E. Ezra as Judge (vs. 25)
- F. Judgment to be Executed (vs. 26)
- G. Ezra Praises God (vs. 27-28)

III. EZRA'S DEDICATION. Ezra 8:21-36

- A. Seeking God's Guidance (vs. 21) Luke 11:10; Acts 17:27
- B. Prayer Answered (vs. 23) Acts 4:31
- C. Stewardship (vs. 24-36) Luke 19:13; 1 Corinthians 4:2
 1. Accountability - Luke 12:20; Romans 14:12
 2. Responsibility - Ezekiel 18:20; Galatians 6:5
- D. Blessings - Psalm 68:19; Matthew 6:33

GOLDEN TEXT: *I WAS STRENGTHENED AS THE HAND OF THE LORD MY GOD WAS UPON ME.*

Ezra 7:28

NEXT SUNDAY'S LESSON: Ezra 9:1-15; 10:1-19

SUPPLEMENTAL REFERENCES: Psalm 24:1-10

Colossians 3:1-10

1 Thessalonians 4:1-7

2 Timothy 2:15-21

QUARTERLY THEME: God's People Restored

TOPIC: A REVIVAL OF HOLINESS

INTRODUCTION:

When Ezra returned to Jerusalem, he was told there were some among the exiles that had married strange wives and had brought them and their children with them.

This was in direct disobedience to God's laws and Ezra was deeply affected and saddened. He was overwhelmed by the horrible sin of his people and in deep sorrow he confessed all to God. When the people saw how deeply he repented for the sin of those who had transgressed, they were willing to ask all to give up their strange wives and children. "*The children of captivity did so.*" (Ezra 10:16)

Only after the awful sin was repented and confessed could God again bless them. What an example for us today. If we discover sin within our own lives, we must immediately repent and confess it, if we wish to again walk close with God. He will not tolerate sin as it separates us from Him. We cannot expect His power, strength or Spirit to help us. We must ask for forgiveness and believe that Christ's blood has washed us clean and that we are again under God's grace.

CENTRAL TRUTH: Those who use their hands for God's work may expect His hand of help and favor to rest upon them.

GOLDEN TEXT: IF WE CONFESS OUR SINS, HE IS FAITHFUL AND JUST TO FORGIVE US OUR SINS, AND TO CLEANSE US FROM ALL UNRIGHTEOUSNESS.

1 John 1:9

When Ezra realized that the returned captives whom God had blessed—and had helped to rebuild His city and temple—had again broken God's commandments, His heart was burdened with the guilt of his people. With prayer and fasting, he confessed to God the sins of the people and sought God's guidance and grace that they might regain His favor. The answer was that they must separate themselves from the sins and idols of the Canaanites before their worship and sacrifices could be acceptable to God.

The Golden Text from John's Epistle shows how this same principle must be applied to our lives before we can truly be in God's service. It also shows how this is a cooperative plan for our salvation. We must acknowledge and confess our sins and have faith that Jesus' blood will cover them. God is "*faithful and just*" to forgive us. Then God will cleanse us, as we with His help separate ourselves from all unrighteousness: that of the past and of that in which Satan will again strive to ensnare us. May we surrender ourselves to God, for then, as the writer of the hymn, we can say, "His way is best."

O do Thou hold me fast,
From sin, O make me free -
So that hence forth my heart
Thy temple pure may be. Z. H. 45:7

DAILY BIBLE READINGS FOR THE WEEK OF August 10 – 16

M. *Holiness Needed. Ezra 9:1-4

T. *Holiness Sought. Ezra 9:5-15

W. *Holiness Required. Ezra 10:1-13

T. *Holiness Pledged. Ezra 10:14-19

F. The Blessing of Holiness. Psalm 24:1-10

S. The Experience of Holiness. Romans 6:11-22

S. The Life of Holiness. Hebrews 13:12-21

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