

# Ezra 7-8 – 28 February 2016

## Introduction –

Set up the history:

- 1) Zerubbabel /Joshua under Cyrus and Darius start the temple
- 2) Haggai/Zechariah compel them to continue and finish the temple
- 3) Esther under Xerxes
- 4) And now Ezra the priest under Artaxerxes

## Chapter 7

1. Vs 1-5 – Ezra the son of the last High Priest

**Ezra is a man who did amazing things, within his God-given talents & abilities. I believe He accomplished great things for 3 key reasons.**

2. Vs 6-10 – 1<sup>st</sup> key reason that Ezra accomplished great things is that he prepared and planned his life around the pursuit of pleasing God.

- a. Ezra set his life around the ideas of
  - b. Seeking to know the Lord
  - c. Doing the will of the Lord
  - d. Teaching the way of the Lord
3. Vs 11-18 – Why would the king give them such bounty to bring with them?
- a. Persia has been trying to restore control over Egypt for 20 years.
    - i. There's trying to strengthen all these eastern territories.
  - b. But there's another reason...."according to the good hand that was upon" Ezra from the Lord.
    - i. God's favor can move mountains.
4. Vs 19-23 – The king didn't want to suffer for the wrongs of Babylon before them.
5. Vs 24-26 – **2<sup>nd</sup> key reason that Ezra accomplished great things is that his aim was the spiritual enlightenment of God's people.**

- a. This endeavor was meant by Ezra and the king to be for the spiritual growth of the people not some personal gain.
- 6. Vs 27-28 – Notice Ezra praised the Lord for having the king act thus.

## Chapter 8

- 1. Vs 1-20
  - a. Vs 15 - The patience of waiting 3 days before going, realized there were no priests.
  - b. This patience allowed them to get there need met before leaving and before it became a problem.
- 2. Vs 21-22
  - a. **3<sup>rd</sup> key reason that Ezra accomplished great things is that he not only talked in faith but also walked in faith.**
  - b. We need to walk in faith and talk in faith to go deeper into experiencing God acting on behalf of us.
    - i. Has to be according to His word.

1. Not “God will provide me a Ferrari”.
2. But “God will provide me a way to get to work.”
3. Not “God will provide me money to eat at a fancy restaurant 7 dys/wk.”
4. But “God will provide me something to eat each day.”
5. Not God will provide for my 300 channel cable bill”
6. But “God will provide for my home heating bill.”

ii. How do you expect an unbeliever to understand the Christian walk of faith, if you never let them see you walk in faith?

1. They need to see that b/c you believe God you *don't* do certain things.
2. They need to see that b/c you believe God you *do* do certain things.

c. Our walk of faith will prompt of to stay closer to God....read on.

3. Vs 23-31 – The Lord rewards Ezra, being a man of integrity.
  - a. As soon as they begin their journey, Ezra gives the money for the temple to the priests...  
b/c it was already dedicated to the work of the Lord at the temple.
    - i. Would have been tempting to keep it and spend along the way. (That's greed)
    - ii. Would have been tempting to keep it and prepare for thieves or invaders along the way. (That's fear)
  - b. Vs 31 – The Lord honors Ezra's faith and protects them in their journey.
4. Vs 32-36 – The journey home is complete, but the desire to teach the people is just beginning!

### Conclusion –

Ezra planned his life around pleasing God.

Ezra sought the spiritual growth of God's people.

Ezra talked and walked by faith.