

“The Example of Ezra”

Ezra 7:6-10

Introduction

- I. Have you ever stopped to notice a construction work?
 - A. Maybe you've seen the building of a huge skyscraper.
 - B. Perhaps the building of a bridge.
 - C. For each of those works to be finished, there are certain things that must be accomplished (a “check list,” if you will).
 1. There are usually preliminary plans in the minds of individuals (“seeing” the finished work before beginning).
 2. Then there may be the completion of blueprints, diagrams, obtaining of permits and such like.
 3. That leads to much manual labor, which hopefully will end with a finished “product.”
 - D. If we are able to see the need for such actions when it comes to physical things, then why not think about what can be accomplished when we do likewise with spiritual things?
- E. Years ago in the 5th century B.C., there was a man by the name of Ezra.
 1. Ezra was a scribe, who lived in captivity in Babylon (Ezra 7:6).
 2. He was granted permission by Artaxerxes Longimanus, who reigned from 465-425 B.C., to go to city of Jerusalem (Ezra 7:8-9).
 3. A description of Ezra's behaviors is given to demonstrate his intentions (Ezra 7:10).
 - a. Ezra had “prepared his heart.” (mind)
 - b. Ezra sought the law of God.
 - c. Ezra obeyed the law of God.
 - d. Ezra intended to teach the law of God.
- F. This, Ezra, can serve as an example to the people of God today (1 Cor. 1:1-10; Rom. 15:4; 1 Cor. 11:1).

Discussion

- I. Ezra had “prepared his heart (mind).”
 - A. If Ezra was going to be effective at accomplishing his goals, then he needed to have the proper mindset.
 - B. It seems that before even arriving in Jerusalem, Ezra decided what he needed to do (did not happen on a whim; “was thought out”).
 - C. All who want to serve the Lord should be so minded.
 1. Jesus was prepared in his mind to accomplish whatever the Father wanted done (Phil. 2:5-11; Matt. 3:15).
 2. Paul used that example of Jesus to encourage the Philippian brethren to prepare themselves.
- D. Have we prepared our “hearts”/minds?
 1. Are we sure that no matter what, our “hearts”/minds are fixed?

2. Or are we unfortunately unsure about what we do in certain situations?
- II. Ezra sought the law of God.
 - A. Man must make a decision whether or not to seek God's law.
 - B. No one is to be forced to seek God's law, but rather each individual has a choice (Jos. 24:15; Matt. 11:15).
 - C. God wants man to seek His law (Matt. 6:33; cf. Psm. 119:172; 2 Tim. 2:15).
 - D. By large, most of the world is not seeking God's law, thus ignorance is rampant (Hos. 4:6).
- III. Ezra obeyed the law of God.
 - A. It is not enough to prepare one's mind, and to seek God's law.
 - B. God wants obedience to His law (Acts 10:35; Heb. 5:9; Rom. 6:16-18; Acts 5:29).
- IV. Ezra intended to teach the law of God.
 - A. It truly is refreshing and encouraging when one sets his mind on the law of God and becomes a Christian.
 - B. That is not the end of the journey though.
 - C. God wants His Word taught to others (Mark 15:16; Matt. 28:18-20; Col 1:6 & 23 & 28; Acts 5:42).

Conclusion

- I. There is a definite order to which Ezra applied himself when it came to the law of God (Ezra 7:10).
 - A. Ezra "prepared his heart" (mind).
 - B. Ezra sought God's law.
 - C. Ezra obeyed God's law.
 - D. Ezra intended to teach God's law.
- II. If a man wants to accomplish great physical things (skyscrapers/bridges/etc...), then usually there is pattern to follow.
- III. For people of God, Ezra set forth a good pattern when it comes to the Word of God.