

God Strengthens His People for His Kingdom's Work

Sermon Outline: Sunday, April 28th, 2024

Text

Ezra 7-8

I. Ezra

- A. A Priest and Scribe (7:6, 12, 21)
 - 1. Descendant of high priest Aaron (7:5)
- B. Biblical Scholar - Pentateuch expert
 - 1. Skilled in the law of Moses
 - 2. His heart was set on teaching the statutes and ordinances in Israel (7:10)
- C. Commissioned by Pagan King of Persia, King Artaxerxes
 - 1. Return to Jerusalem with 5,000 people, priests and Levites
 - 2. Ensure that God's people are obeying God's laws (7:14)
 - 3. Given gold, silver and silver vessels to take as an offering to God (7:15-20)
 - 4. Appoint magistrates and judges in Judah to judge the people. (7:25-26)
 - 5. Teach all those who do not know the laws of God. (7:25)

II. The Journey

- A. A 900 mile route through bandit-infested desert region
- B. Ezra prayed and fasted for three days before departing (8:21)
- C. Ezra did not ask the king for an escort, fully trusted God to protect them (8:22)
- D. The people and all their possessions arrived safely in Jerusalem (8:31)
- E. They made offerings to the Lord for His protection (8:35)

III. God strengthens us simply because He loves us - love is from everlasting to everlasting

IV. God strengthens us through:

- A. Prayer
- B. His Word
- C. Relationships and serving one another
- D. Life's trials, temptations and sufferings - as we learn to trust God
- E. The indwelling of the Holy Spirit

V. God strengthens us:

- A. So we can love Him, obey Him, and resist temptation to sin
- B. So that we can love others - as Jesus loves! (John 13:34; 15:12)
- C. So we can be bold in sharing the Good News - salvation through faith in His Son! (Matthew 28:19-20)

GOD STRENGTHENS US SO THAT WE CAN ACCOMPLISH HIS KINGDOM'S WORK!

Where are you trying to find strength apart from God?

What is God strengthening you to do for His Kingdom?