

Ezra 8 - Man of Humility

Last time we learned *the Hand of the LORD* was upon Ezra - His was “**A Life Centered on God**”

- He was devoted to the **WORD of GOD**
- He was urged to make decisions in accordance with the **WILL of GOD**
- He was encouraged to follow what God prescribed - **WAYS of GOD**
- He was encouraged to seek the **WISDOM of GOD** in making decisions

Today we will look at another aspect HUMILITY

Humility = Recognizing God’s Involvement in the Events of My Life

Ezr 7:27-28 NIV Praise be to the LORD, the **God** of our ancestors, who has **put it into the king's heart** to bring honor to the house of the LORD in Jerusalem in this way 28 and who has extended his good favor to me before the king and his advisers and all the king's powerful officials **because the hand of the LORD my God was on me**, I took courage and gathered leaders from Israel to go up with me.

- Ezra recognized the hand of God as active in his life
- It is easy to see when things go well [as the case with Ezra] -- **but what about when things DO NOT GO WELL**
 - **Joseph** - you meant it for evil - God meant it for good
 - **Job** - the LORD gives the LORD takes away - BLESSED BE THE NAME OF THE LORD
- Knowing how to **ABASE** [Greek - be humbled vs abound] is something **we can do through Christ**
 - Php 4:12-13 KJV I know both how to be **abased**, and I know how to abound: every where and in all things I am instructed both to be full and to be hungry, both to abound and to suffer need. 13 **I can do all things through Christ** which strengtheneth me.

Humility - Recognizing I Need Others

7:28 thru 8:1 **because the hand of the LORD my God was on me**, I took courage **and gathered leaders from Israel to go up with me**.....Ezr 8:1-36 NIV These are the family heads and those registered with them **who came up with me** from Babylon during the reign of King Artaxerxes: 2 of the descendants of Phinehas, ... etc

There is something to be said about having someone **GO UP WITH ME**

- Ezra gathered people to go up with him
- 1496 men [along with women and children estimates are 6,000 to 7,000] came along

We need one another

- Ecc 4:9-10 KJV **Two are better than one**; because they have a good reward for their labour.
10 For if they fall, the one will lift up his fellow: but woe to him that is alone when he falleth; for he hath not another to help him up.
 - Jesus sent the disciples out 2x2
 - Paul had his Timothy and others
 - 2Ti 4:9 NIV Do your best to **come to me quickly**
 - 2Ti 4:21 NIV **Do your best to get here before winter**. Eubulus greets you, and so do Pudens, Linus, Claudia and all the brothers and sisters.
 - Tit 3:12 NIV As soon as I send Artemas or Tychicus to you, **do your best to come to me at Nicopolis**, because I have decided to winter there.
 - Jonathan had his armor bearer
 - 1Sa 14:6-7 NIV Jonathan said to his young armor-bearer, "Come, let's go over to the outpost of those uncircumcised men. Perhaps the LORD will act in our behalf. Nothing can hinder the LORD from saving, whether by many or by few."
7 "Do all that you have in mind," his armor-bearer said. "Go ahead; **I am with you heart and soul.**"

When we got saved - Jesus elected to put us into the family of God

- **Do not forsake the assembly of yourselves together - as is the habit of some**
 - The importance of body ministry
 - The importance of fellowship
 - The importance of participation

Humility - Camping BEFORE the Journey

15 I assembled them at the canal **[RIVER]** that flows toward Ahava, **and we camped there three days**. When I checked among the people and the priests, **I found no Levites there**. 16 So I summoned Eliezer, Ariel, Shemaiah, Elnathan, Jarib, Elnathan, Nathan, Zechariah and Meshullam, **who were leaders**, and Joiarib and Elnathan, **who were men of learning**, 17 and I ordered them to go to Iddo, the leader in Kasiphia. I told them what to say to Iddo and his fellow Levites, the temple servants in Kasiphia, **so that they might bring attendants to us for the house of our God**.

We need times of pulling aside - "CAMPING"

- [NOT to get out of the work - but to be envisioned and empowered]
- Jesus spent 40 days in the wilderness BEFORE he began his ministry
 - **Result?** Luk 4:14 KJV And Jesus returned in the power of the Spirit into Galilee: and there went out a fame of him through all the region round about.

DEFINITION

CAMPED = properly to **incline**; by implication to **decline** (of the slanting rays of evening); specifically to **pitch a tent**; generally to **encamp** (for abode or siege)

Comes from the root meaning = properly to **bend** or **stoop** in kindness to an inferior; to **favor**, **bestow**; causatively to implore (that is, **move to favor by petition**)

The Act of this CAMPING - IN A SENSE IS TO STOOP AND PETITION GOD

1) At the River He Saw What He Lacked

'He checked among the people'...I FOUND NO LEVITES HERE

- When we stop to evaluate we see things that we were "blind to" ["there are no Levites here"]
- Search my heart and try me
 - Psa 139:23-24 NIV Search me, God, and know my heart; test me and know my anxious thoughts. (24) See if there is any offensive way in me, and lead me in the way everlasting.
 - *Are we afraid to slow down - afraid of what we might find if we stop and meditate*
- Jesus went to a quiet place
- Sometimes the Lord speaks in a still small voice

2) At the River He Saw The Lord Provide Abundantly

18 Because the gracious hand of our God was on us, they brought us **Sherebiah**, a capable man, from the descendants of Mahli son of Levi, the son of Israel, and Sherebiah's sons and brothers, 18 in all; 19 and **Hashabiah**, together with Jeshaiiah from the descendants of Merari, and his brothers and nephews, 20 in all. 20 They also brought 220 of the temple servants--a body that David and the officials had established to assist the Levites. All were registered by name.

He sent for Levites - **and because the gracious hand of God was on him** -- 261 people came...

Eph 3:20 NIV Now to him who is able to do immeasurably more than all we ask or imagine, according to his power that is at work within us,

3) At the River, He sought to pursue Humility

21 There, by the Ahava Canal, **I proclaimed a fast, so that we might humble ourselves before our God and ask him for a safe journey for us and our children, with all our possessions.** 22 I was ashamed to ask the king for soldiers and horsemen to protect us from enemies on the road, because we had told the king, "The gracious hand of our God is on everyone who looks to him, but his great anger is against all who forsake him." 23 So we fasted and petitioned our God about this, and he answered our prayer.

- A fast to humble ourselves before God
- Prayer is by nature a position of humility
- To ask for a safe journey
- He had affirmed the hand of God upon him, so he felt ashamed to ask the king for help

Humility

Prayer

2Ch 7:13-14 NIV "When I shut up the heavens so that there is no rain, or command locusts to devour the land or send a plague among my people, 14 if my people, who are called by my name, **will humble themselves and pray and seek my face and turn from their wicked ways, then I will hear from heaven**, and I will forgive their sin and will heal their land.

Submission

1Pe 5:5 NIV In the same way, you who are younger, submit yourselves to your elders. All of you, clothe yourselves with humility toward one another, because, "**God opposes the proud but shows favor to the humble.**"

Obedient Servant's Heart

Php 2:6-9 KJV Who, being in the form of God, thought it not robbery to be equal with God: 7 But made himself of no reputation, and took upon him the form of a servant, and was made in the likeness of men: 8 And being found in fashion as a man, **he humbled himself, and became obedient** unto death, even the death of the cross. 9 Wherefore God also hath highly exalted him, and given him a name which is above every name:

Value Others Above Yourself

Php 2:3-5 NIV Do nothing out of selfish ambition or vain conceit. Rather, **in humility value others above yourselves**, 4 not looking to your own interests but each of you to the interests of the others. 5 In your relationships with one another, have the same mindset as Christ Jesus: