



### ***Biblical Building***

#### ***Sermon #12***

#### ***'The Need for Good People!'***

***Ezra 6:13-18***

Sunday, July 27th, 2025

#### **Last Sunday in the Biblical Building Sermon Series:**

- Today marks the 12th sermon, over 3 months, that we've been in the book of Ezra.
  - ***Last Sunday:***
    - We studied Ezra 6:1-12 with a sermon entitled 'Unexpected Blessings!'.
    - ***Last Sunday we were able to look at, read, and study King Darius's reply letter to Tattenai, the local Governor.***
  - I'm sure that it brought great relief to the Jews when they received the letter:
    - Last Sunday we looked at through that text:

- **Truth #1: *The Search Commences.* (vv. 1-2)**
- **Truth #2: *Sure Confirmation.* (vv. 3-5)**
- **Truth #3: *A Sovereign Cause.* (vv. 6-12)**

- From last Sunday's message, how have you noticed God's unexpected blessings in your life?
- How have you sought to bless people, unexpectedly this week?
- Have you sought to go the extra mile in every situation you've faced?
- This morning, we get to see how God can and does want to use good people...

#### ***'The Need for Good People!'***

***Ezra 6:13-18***

#### **Sermon in a Sentence:**

***Good people are a need in all walks of life because God regularly and consistently uses good people to do His work. We see that in this text with the Government leaders, God's leaders, and God's Laymen.***

#### **Intro:**

- Oftentimes we may fall into Satan's temptations that only the Pastors, Deacons, SS teachers, and Church staff can do good things for God in His Church.

- *This goes a little bit along the lines of the business model that I referenced the modern Church has flirted with.*
- *Because God has given each and every follower of Christ the priesthood of every believer, we are all called to do good things for our great God!*
  - ‘But you are a chosen race, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, a people for his own possession, that you may proclaim the excellencies of him who called you out of darkness into his marvelous light.’ 1st Peter 2:9
  - *According to the Scriptures, we are ALL called to proclaim the excellencies of our God!*
- *In our scripture text this morning, we find the completion of a project that was initiated way back in Ezra chapter 1.*
  - Even though the people had taken 15 years off of the project to work on their own homes, and had faced many different obstacles in this process, finally, they were able to see it completed.
    - *For the remainder of our study in the book of Ezra we will look at and study how they assimilated back into the temple and how Ezra led them in following the OT laws of Worship.*
  - Because of Darius’s decree, the building of the temple would be able to be completed.

- *Our text this morning, just 5 verses, does summarize how this occurred and what God was able to do.*
  - I clearly see in this text that God used good people, all the way up to this point Ezra 1:1-6:12 to do His will.
  - *Yes, the providence of God is clear in this text as the work on the temple had been completed, finally, but also the good men that God chose to use in order to complete His will for them.*
- *\*Illustration\**

#### **Question to Ask:**

*What are the three groups of ‘good’ people in this text that God chooses to use to rebuild the Temple?*

#### **Truth #1: *The Government Leaders. (v. 13)***

- ‘Then, according to the word sent by Darius the king, Tattenai, the governor of the province Beyond the River, Shethar-bozenai, and their associates did with all diligence what Darius the king had ordered.’ Ezra 6:13
  - *Throughout this entire saga, once the Israelites were ready to obey God under the leadership of the prophets and begin rebuilding again after a 15-year hiatus, God used good government leaders.*
    - Once Tattenai had begun doing his job as the governor of the area, from my perspective based on what we see in the

text, he was nothing but kind to these Jews.

- *And while I do not believe that the Persian leaders were by any means followers of Yahweh, God did use them, and I feel they sought to do the right thing.*

- There was a small detail in verse 12 of our text last week that I didn't draw much attention to, because I wanted us to look at it now.
- 'May the God who has caused his name to dwell there overthrow any king or people who shall put out a hand to alter this, or to destroy this house of God that is in Jerusalem. I Darius make a decree; let it be done with all *diligence*.'

- *Once King Darius's letter got back into Tattenai's possession, King Darius wanted them to act quickly so that these Jews could begin rebuilding.*

- That's just what they did.
- One important thing to mention here...

- **Good People Act quickly. (v. 13)**

- As I said, I don't believe Tattenai and his crew are believers in Yahweh.
  - *Which could then cause us to ask the question, what is a good person?*

- *I truly believe that apart from Jesus Christ, we cannot be 'good' people.*

- But, there are people who are saved that choose to do good things, make good decisions, and be morally 'good'.
- *The 'good' that they do is just in vain simply because it is not for the Kingdom of God.*
  - But it does not mean that lost people cannot do great things, they are for the wrong reasons and will be in vain.
- But, God can still use anything for his Glory, and a clear example of that is right here in verse 13.

- **Look again:**

- 'Then, according to the word sent by Darius the king, Tattenai, the governor of the province Beyond the River, Shethar-bozenai, and their associates did with all diligence what Darius the king had ordered.'

- *Notice how quickly Tattenai and his crew get to work on what King Darius had asked of them?*

- *What a great example of what non-believers can teach us as believers.*
- Out of all the Churches I've been apart of in my life, from when I was a little

boy until now, they all have 1 thing in common: *They drag their feet in doing the Lord's Work.*

- *Immediately Tattenai and his crew got to work.*

- Sometimes we as Baptists, myself included, take forever to do what we know must be done and what we know God Himself has called us to do.
- We wait until asked 8 times to call a committee meeting, we wait until asked 9 times to go and visit someone, we wait until asked 10 times to come to Sunday School.

- *I truly believe an attribute of 'good people' who do 'GREAT' things for God is that they act quickly.*

- The first group of Good people that God can and does want to use, 'Government Leaders!'

**Truth #2: *God's Leaders. (vv. 14-15)***

- God has people who He has called to be leaders among His people.
  - Within the context of the New Covenant, leaders in His Church.
  - *These leaders, as shown by the New Testament, are in two distinct offices today, Deacons and Elders.*
    - (Pastors are the Elders).

- *Within the context of Israel, it was elders of the Jews (family figure heads) and the Prophets.*

- When there is a clear move of God among His people, God's leaders must be a part of it.
- Our text tells us who these leaders are, and what has happened among the Jews in this movement of God.
- 'And the elders of the Jews built and prospered through the prophesying of Haggai the prophet and Zechariah the son of Iddo. They finished their building by decree of the God of Israel and by decree of Cyrus and Darius and Artaxerxes king of Persia; **15** and this house was finished on the third day of the month of Adar, in the sixth year of the reign of Darius the king.'
  - I believe there are **3** things to point out here regarding the leaders God had used to be apart of the result we find in verse 15.
- *Lay Leaders obeyed the Spiritual Leaders. (v. 14a)*
  - 'And the elders of the Jews built and prospered through the prophesying of Haggai the prophet and Zechariah the son of Iddo.'
  - *There does not seem to be any family drama, family power, or anyone running the group of Jews in this scenario.*
    - The elders of the Jews simply did what they were told through, what would have been at that time, the radical preaching ministries of Haggai and Zechariah.

- *When a Man of God is walking closely with God, Obeys God, and wants to lead others to be obey God, nothing is impossible through God, when the people of God listen and follow God's spokesperson.*

- Where things go array, is when people get power hungry and not hungry for God.

- *Verse 14 summarizes this short narrative that began in Ezra 5:1.*

- Notice in the text, it doesn't just say that they built the temple, but they prospered in doing so.

- *Church family, we don't just want to build a multi-purpose facility for the sake of saying we built something.*

- We want it to be the best that it can be, and we want God's Kingdom to prosper while doing so.

- Don't you think this took the Jewish lay leaders (heads of families) humbling themselves to hear haggai when he basically said *'Y'all have done nothing for 15 years other than focus on your own wealth, while the House of God lay in ruin?'*

- *If 90% of Baptist Preachers said that today, they'd get run off within a week.*

- *It's important that we humble ourselves. It's very difficult for a move of God to happen when we've already decided what we think or want God to say. This is also called pride.*

- On the flip side, Spiritual Leaders have to say what God has directed and told them to say.

- *In order for them to accurately hear God and proclaim it to their people they must be:*

- Walking closely with God, daily.
    - Praying without ceasing.
    - Being Convicted by the Holy Spirit and asking Him to cleanse their heart.
    - Leading their household with integrity.

- *Once that's in order, then comes the really hard part.*

- Being brave and bold enough to proclaim God's Word. Haggai and Zechariah were and in this case, it worked out amazingly because the people not only heard but heeded.

- *Those like Jeremiah, Isaiah, Moses, and others weren't as fortunate.*

- *From my personal experience, when you preach the Word of God clearly and boldly in*

**today's society, the following are going to happen.**

- People will join your Church.
- People will leave your Church.
- Satan will attack you relentlessly.
- God's protection will be upon you.
- People will pray over you.
- People will prey on you.
- You will feel free because you're in God's Will.
- You will feel incredibly lonely because you're in God's will.
- *Yes, it's important that lay leaders follow the spiritual leaders, but this can only happen when our spiritual leaders are living in obedience and integrity and speaking the truth of the Gospel, Boldly...*
- *The Lord uses Decisions of Kings for His Plans. (v. 14b)*
  - 'They finished their building by decree of the God of Israel and by decree of Cyrus and Darius and Artaxerxes king of Persia;'
  - *Notice in this verse, that 'by decree of the God of Israel' is mentioned first.*
    - Without God, none of this would have happened to the Jews there in Jerusalem. They certainly didn't do anything during their 15-year hiatus.

- *At that time in the ancient world, the most powerful word on earth was a decree of a Persian King.*
  - *But the unseen **HAND** of God worked behind the scenes because the **EYE** of God is ever so powerful (Ezra 5:5).*
- Ezra 6:14 is evidence that God works through history and historical processes.
  - *The fact that God is mentioned first in the list, shows that He is responsible and the one who made all of this occur.*
- God was in control, but he used the decrees of kings, several of them, to cause His temple to be rebuilt.
  - Now we do find a difficulty within the text here, and it's due to one name.
- **Artaxerxes:**
  - The fact that Artaxerxes name is included here causes problems because he wouldn't be king until a century later.
  - *Different solutions have been offered, but let me share one with you here for the sake of time.*
    - The author (Ezra) wrote this after the walls were built in the time of Artaxerxes I.
    - Up until Ezra arrived in Jerusalem in 458 B.C., what has

been recorded in Ezra thus far,  
was second hand accounts.

- *In Ezra 4, the author (Ezra) included opposition under Artaxerxes, here he included his support for the Jews.*
  - Although that support had to do with the walls and not the temple itself, I believe Ezra includes it because it's what he can see and is experiencing at that time.
- *One scholar even believes that this is the theme verse of Ezra-Nehemiah, and here's why:*
  - 'Temple (Ezra 1:7-6:22), community (7:1-10:44), and city (Nehemiah 1:1-7:5) were all built according to the one command of God working through the decree of the king'.

○ *Either way, God Himself used the kings to work according to His plans.*

- *A Note of Triumph! (v. 15)*
  - 'and this house was finished on the third day of the month of Adar, in the sixth year of the reign of Darius the king.'
  - *I hope and pray that we will one day be able to write and proclaim a similar thing to what we find in verse 15.*
    - The work on the temple re-began in earnest hard work under Haggai and Zechariah's preaching on September

21st, 520 B.C. and was finished  
four-and-a-half years later on March  
12th, 515 B.C.

- This means, from a timeline perspective, it would have been 72 years after the destruction of the temple in 587 B.C.

- *God uses leaders.*

- Are you a leader who is stepping up to what God has called you to do?
- This morning we saw Good Government Leaders, God's leaders, and now we get to see God's laymen dedicate the new temple.

**Truth #3: *God's Laymen. (vv. 16-18)***

- 1st Kings 8 is where Solomon's temple was dedicated, and you can check that out to see the similarities in this dedication, and that one.
- *But now God's leaders and laymen can gather together and celebrate what God has done in His power and providence. Here's what unfolded in the text:*
  - 'And the people of Israel, the priests and the Levites, and the rest of the returned exiles, celebrated the dedication of this house of God with joy. **17** They offered at the dedication of this house of God 100 bulls, 200 rams, 400 lambs, and as a sin offering for all Israel 12 male goats, according to the number of the tribes of Israel. **18** And they set the priests in their divisions and the Levites in their divisions,

for the service of God at Jerusalem, as it is written in the Book of Moses.'

- I believe there are **3** things to look at in these verses as God used His good laymen. The good people among the people of God!
- **Celebration. (v. 16)**
  - 'And the people of Israel, the priests and the Levites, and the rest of the returned exiles, celebrated the dedication of this house of God with joy.'
  - **When God does something, big or small, His people must celebrate and rejoice!**
    - In fact, throughout the narrative of Scripture I believe we see that celebrations are vital for God's people. They are occasions of fellowship, of worship, of glorifying God.
  - Notice the phrase there, '**People of Israel**'
    - Though this was just the returned exiles (which consisted only of three tribes), they are taken to represent all of Israel. Why?
    - **Because when part of the Kingdom of God is apart of doing something for the growth of the Kingdom and Glory of God, then all of the Kingdom benefits!**
      - Which means in the Church across the street, in another state,

or in another Country is moving and following the Lord's leading we benefit because of their work and vice-versa.

- **May celebration and not criticism be more about of our life as a Church family and body.**
  - God's laymen celebrate and also, they worship, through the Old Testament Sacrifices.
- **Sacrifice. (v. 17)**
  - 'They offered at the dedication of this house of God 100 bulls, 200 rams, 400 lambs, and as a sin offering for all Israel 12 male goats, according to the number of the tribes of Israel.'
  - Again, though the other 9 tribes (Northern Tribes of Israel) who stayed back in Babylon and did not come back to Jerusalem, they disobeyed God, but this was a victory for all of Israel even if they had disobeyed.
  - **In contrast to 1st Kings 8, this dedication ceremony did reflect the poverty of the Jewish community at this time, but this also because they had far less people at that time.**
    - **Though it was meager in the eyes of many who would look on after the fact, it was miraculous for those who were there, and witnessed a total move of God.**



- A celebration, a sacrifice, and also, organization was apart of this.
- **Organization. (v. 18)**
  - ‘And they set the priests in their divisions and the Levites in their divisions, for the service of God at Jerusalem, as it is written in the Book of Moses.’
  - **Verse 18 is clear that now that they had a temple to worship in, they had to get back to the organization as given in the book of Moses.**
    - The different divisions and duties of the priests and levites are given in 1st Chronicles 23-27. ***I believe this is another example that our God is a God of organization.***
  - Things are organized so that temple worship cannot just begin anew, but continue for a long time to come.

### **Conclusion:**

- Are you a good person?
  - ***If you answered yes, being a good person DOES NOT get you to Heaven.***
    - ‘For by grace you have been saved through faith. And this is not your own doing; it is the gift of God, **9** not a result of works, so that no one may boast.’  
Ephesians 2:8-9.
  - ***You cannot be a good person apart from the personhood and work of Jesus Christ, if you***

***don’t know Him, today can be the day of salvation for you!***

- If you do know Jesus as your Lord and Savior, do you try daily to be a good person to become more like Jesus Christ?
  - ***There is a HUGE need for Good people in our world.***
  - ***I believe that God Himself wants to use Good People for His Great Glory.***
    - Are you willing to be apart of God’s plan to do that in and through your life today?