

## **JULY 23**

### **2 Chronicles 8:11-10:19**

#### 2 Chronicles 8:11-18

Vs. 11-15 It seems that Ezra is showing the short-term, good effect "being spiritual" had on Solomon. Notice in all of this, it was still the effect of David's devotion to the Lord that was directing people.

V. 11 This isn't quite correcting his mistake for marrying Pharaoh's daughter, but Solomon does remove her from the city of David. Ezra's people intermarried and then in repentance annulled those marriages.

V. 12 Solomon used to offer on the high places. Now he is only offering in Jerusalem in the temple.

Notice the two references to the commands of Moses and David.

Vs. 16-18 So, after the "mission" was complete, why did Solomon still need a lot of gold? You can calculate the tonnage by multiplying the talents by 75 (1 talent = 75lbs.). In 2 Chronicles 9:13 notice how much gold Solomon brought in yearly, even after the temple and his palace were finished.

#### 2 Chronicles 9

Vs. 1-12 The visit of the Queen of Sheba showed that Solomon and Israel had international recognition and acclaim. I think Ezra's point in this story is stated toward the end. Remember, in building up the people's identity with the calling of God, Ezra is trying to show them that there was a time that the glory of Israel was beyond that of Babylon and Persia. Returning to Israel and to Jerusalem was not a "step down."

Vs. 13-21 This is meant to show the vast and lavish richness of Solomon's Israel. It would have been the vacation destination of the world.

Vs. 22-28 These would have been the verses to the generation of returnees.

Vs. 29-30 Notice that Ezra doesn't say anything negative about Solomon. This is the same as his review of the life of David. Ezra has focused on God's promises as established in David and in Solomon's dedication of the temple. The glory of Israel is in its God and in His promises. And there was a time when the glory of Israel excelled that of all kings and kingdoms on earth.

#### 2 Chronicles 10

So, what do you see as the key verses in this chapter?

In writing this, Ezra has material to draw from. Certainly he has what is written in Samuel and Kings. We know also that there were other documents. (See 1 Chron. 29:29.) Ezra is putting them together to give this returning people a perspective on following God that will make them proud to return and make them watchful to remember to obey.

Vs. 1-15 And suddenly all the grandeur and blessing was lost. The history of what had happened here was already written elsewhere, but writing it like this would show the exiles how quickly sin can destroy everything. This king didn't obey the Lord for sure; but specifically, he didn't lead the people as David and Solomon had done. God withdrew His blessing, and disaster followed.

Vs. 16-19 Even in exile, there were probably hard feelings between tribes. Israel had been two separate kingdoms for hundreds of years. The people who went into exile never knew of a unified nation. How would they return and achieve that now? Here is the explanation of how

God divided the kingdoms and why. The remedy to disunity would be seen in Ezra showing that if God was obeyed, there was blessing and unity.

### **Romans 8:9-21**

Notice how often the Spirit is being mentioned. This chapter is that final link showing the redeemed how they can live a life of growth and fruit as a result of Christ. Since we've been left here to follow in the harvest, we can only grow and bear fruit as we abide in Christ and follow the Spirit daily.

Vs. 9-11 Paul is affirming that all believers have been reborn in the Spirit, and the Spirit is resident within us. There is no excuse for following the flesh as if the Spirit weren't there.

Vs. 12-13 Since we owe our sinful nature nothing, why should we obey it? But we owe the Spirit everything. This is written to believers. So how will you "die" *if you live according to the flesh*? I believe this is salvation from damage as in 1 Timothy 4:16, *Keep a close watch on yourself and on the teaching. Persist in this, for by so doing you will save both yourself and your hearers.* If we choose to live by the urgings of the flesh (our old nature woven into this body), not intentionally following the Spirit, we can live just as wrecked as everyone else. This gets proven every day and in every church. If a believer decides to step in front of a truck, he gets run over too.

Vs. 14-17 This is the privilege of our relationship to God. It shouldn't be duty to follow the Father who loves us. It should be our desire and passion. But this is also a choice.

V. 17 There are two things that this verse **doesn't** mean. First, it **doesn't** mean that a person can lose their salvation. Second, it **doesn't** mean that because a person has been saved, they fully share the glory of Christ on earth in the harvest, if they are unwilling to suffer with Him. If we deny Him, He will deny us and withhold the support He would have given our testimony.

There are rewards built into our relationship with Christ that are not automatic or equal with salvation. Our work on the foundation of Christ is judged...gold, silver, precious stone, wood, hay, straw...for example. Also, in the last verse of Isaiah 53, it says that Christ *shall divide the spoil with the strong*. Not everyone who comes to Christ decides to live for Him in the harvest; and therefore, they don't get the personal knowledge of Him here, and they don't get the rewards from Him there.

Living as a Christian in Rome wasn't easy. In a few years, Christians strapped to poles, standing soaked in basins of oil, would be used to light the city; and those who stood for the name of Christ would be entertaining the masses as they died in the coliseum.

V. 18 Paul is moving into another thought. We suffer in truly following Christ in the harvest, but is it worth it?

Vs. 19-21 We knew this, right? The entire creation is tied into our fall. We humans are the center of creation. Notice that in the creation in Genesis, the sun, moon, planets and stars were not created until the fourth day. And notice that they were made to serve us. The creation of man was the reason God created the universe. We didn't come from some cosmic spore or some alien life form. How silly.

If we really wanted to save the planet, we would all bow to Christ. When we who belong to Christ are resurrected in spiritual bodies, free of sin, then the creation will be set free from its bondage. That will be a day of great celebration.

On this point of suffering, when Roman persecution caught up to Paul, he was deserted by all his help except Luke. Paul was a needy guy physically. Notice how often Paul, writing from a Roman dungeon, has to tell a seasoned disciple like Timothy in 2 Timothy to be willing to suffer.

If you're not in the harvest you can hide. To be in the harvest with Christ means that you will suffer, but that's cool, right? More on that tomorrow.

### **Psalm 18:16-36**

Vs. 16-19 are the rescue.

Vs. 20-24 During the time David ran, he drew close to the Lord. His righteousness is shown in his desire to please God, and when he had the chance, twice, he spared Saul. David also showed fairness to his men in the situation at Ziklag. God rewarded David for his devotion.

Vs. 25-27 It is interesting. David states that God pays in kind. If you've been devoted, that's good. If you've been evil, that is not so good.

Vs. 28-36 David gave God all the glory for all he was able to do and for all that was accomplished through him.

This psalm was written by David, summarizing all of the help God gave him during the 10 years he was chased by Saul and after the 7 years of civil war as he reigned over the tribe of Judah.

After 17 years of uncertainty, fear, depression and waiting for God to fulfill the promise of becoming king when Samuel anointed him, this is David's debriefing on all that the Lord had done for him.

Again regarding suffering, you have to endure all of this to be saved from damage and get to the place of being able to give this kind of testimony. Jesus said to His disciples in Matthew 10:22, *and you will be hated by all for my name's sake. But the one who endures to the end will be saved.* (from the damage of giving in).

### **Proverbs 19:26**

Who would disagree? I wonder if this violence and chasing can mean something other than physical.