Week 3: Service of Ezra

Week 3: Ezra 8-10

Objective:

- Fasting and Prayer for Protection
- The Return to Jerusalem
- Intermarriage with Pagans
- Confession of Improper Marriages
- Pagan Wives Put Away

Resources:

- Fr Tadros Y Malaty Commentary
- Catena Bible Commentary
- Fr Dawoud Lamie Bible study (Arabic)

Reading:

- ○ Ezra 8:21-36
  ○ Ezra 9:1-15
  ○ Ezra 10:1-19

Key verse(s):

“Arise, for this matter is your responsibility. We also are with you. Be of good courage, and do it.” Ezra 10:4

Comments:

- Names of those who returned with Ezra in chapter 8 were worthy to have their names written in the Book of Life. These people left their luxurious life, stability, and success to work on reviving their land and the Temple. This is God's message to us. Our names will be written in the Book of Life if we choose him over earthly matters.
- Before returning back, Ezra proclaimed a fast. This shows the importance of fasting and submitting to God before conducting anything or any service we take on.
- Ahava river flowed into the Euphrates somewhere in the northwest of Babylon. This was their meeting point before traveling back home.
- Many of the men who returned with Ezra had pagan wives. Ezra found out how deep that problem was as they have been married for a long time and some of them had children

already. Ezra explained to them that this should end. If we are starting a new life of repentance with God, sinful habits, people, and any earthly matter should be eliminated.
- Even the priests and the Levites taking pagan wives to themselves shows how far these people were away from God and the commandments.
- Ezra 9:8: "to give us a peg in His holy place" means security in His Holy place.
- The people accepted to separate from their pagan wives. They accepted the consequences and chose the heavenly reward.

Review/recap questions:
***Servant may add more questions*

1. How did Ezra prepare the people spiritually for the journey?
2. Why was Ezra ashamed to request an escort of soldiers?
3. What wrong doing did the people of Israel do?
4. What did Ezra do at the Evening Sacrifice?
5. Who suggested making a covenant with God?
6. Why did Ezra eat no bread and drink no water for a while?

Homework:
***Servant may add more questions*



1. Who called for a fast?
   a) Darius b) Cyrus c) Ezra d) Eliezer
2. When they camped by the river at Ahava who was missing?
   a) the priests b) the sons of Levi c) Ezra d) the king
3. At the evening of the sacrifice, Ezra
   a) fell on his knees b) prayed c) tore his garment d) all of these
4. Concerning the people of the lands, God asked the people of Israel not to:
   a) give your daughters to their sons b) pay them taxes c) eat with them
5. Who took to themselves pagan wives?
   a) the priests b) the Levites c) the people d) all of these
6. Ezra ate no bread and drank no water because:
   a) he was on a diet b) there was no food or drink c) he was mourning d) he was in prison

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