



CAPITOL COMMISSION™

Inviting God's Blessings (Ezra 7:25)

FEBRUARY 6, 2013

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Sin and bad judgment have consequences for each of us. Leaders have a greater responsibility for impacts on humanity.

INTRODUCTION

God established a covenant with Abraham, agreeing to greatly bless him and his descendents (Genesis 17:1-2). Abraham's obligation was to stay in close fellowship with Yahweh God, obey some restrictions, and convey this covenant to future generations. Although the Israelites were apostate (backsliding), there was always a faithful remnant to carry the teaching onto the next generation (Zephaniah 3:12-13). These covenant people were unfaithful, worshipping other gods, and committing the abominable acts associated with idolatry (2Kings 7-18; Jeremiah 2:7-13). God warned them through His prophets, eventually allowing a variety of disasters to get their attention.¹ Over the next one thousand years, several other nations alternatively put the Israelites in bondage, even exiled them to other lands. Our application for today comes from the directive of a conquering king, leader of the Persian Empire. God moved in the heart of Artaxerxes to allow Israelites to relocate back to Jerusalem, equip the temple, and worship the God of heaven.

RESTORATION DIRECTIVE

Ezra 7:25 And you, Ezra, in accordance with the wisdom of your God, which you possess, appoint magistrates and judges to administer justice to all the people of Trans-Euphrates—all who know the laws of your God. And you are to teach any who do not know them.²

Over fifty thousand gathered outside the temple to hear the reading of the Torah, the first five books of the Old Testament. As Ezra taught, the people wept, realizing their sin and its consequences over the years. **Can you recall the cost of bad decisions in your life? How have you suffered due to the actions of others?**

God judged a nation due to the sin of the people. **Do you think that God may be judging Europe, America, even Kansas during these trying times?**

A NEW COVENANT

Romans 5:1 Therefore, because we have been declared righteous by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ.³

God does not extract our penalty for sin after we acknowledge Jesus' payment through His death on the cross. Though our body perishes, our spirit is with God for eternity (John 3:16). Being pardoned should result in a desire to please God, as a young bride seeks to please her new family. There certainly are consequences for sin or wrong choices. Consequences impact us personally and corporately. Some of these consequences are immediate; others are for a lifetime, perhaps impacting future generations. The priest Ezra saw the relationship between sin and consequences as apparent judgment from God. He studied, prepared, and addressed the challenge. **What obligation do we, in our generation, have as individuals or leaders?**

CONCLUSION

Abraham Lincoln felt that America's national sin of enslaving humans had brought God's judgment on the Nation.⁴ **How might America's leaders have headed off a devastating civil war? What are personal and civil options that may lead to God's blessings on our Nation and our State?**

A PRAYER

Father God, help me to learn from Your Word rather than from my own experience, especially my mistakes. Inspire me to be an Ezra, learning Your ways and sharing Your wisdom with family and my greater community. Help me to impact my generation, even future generations during these most challenging times. This I pray in the Name of Christ. Amen.

¹ John MacArthur, The MacArthur Study Bible (Thomas Nelson Inc.) 2006. p627.

² The Holy Bible, New International Version. (Biblica, Inc.) 1984.

³ The Holy Bible, Lexham English Bible. (Logos Bible Software.) 2012.

⁴ Abraham Lincoln, Second Annual Message to Congress 1862. Quoted in Bartlett's Familiar Quotations. 2002. p476.