



The MBC Weekly

Only God Can Do That!

The Old Testament book of Ezra opens with these words: *“In the first year of Cyrus king of Persia, the word of the Lord spoken through Jeremiah was fulfilled. The Lord put it into the mind of King Cyrus to issue a proclamation throughout his entire kingdom and to put it in writing.”* Ezra, under the inspiration of God’s Holy Spirit, shares 2 significant details— First, that Jeremiah’s 70-year prophecy, of the length of Israel’s exile, was now completed in Cyrus’ first year of reign in Persia; and, second, that it was God who *“...put it into the mind...”* of Cyrus to issue a proclamation! This points, clearly, to God’s ultimate Sovereignty over all human affairs! Cyrus wasn’t in control! Nor was Persia in control! God put it in Cyrus’ mind: *“This is what King Cyrus of Persia says: ‘The Lord, the God of heaven, has given me all the kingdoms of the earth and has appointed me to build Him a house at Jerusalem in Judah. Whoever is among His people, may his God be with him, and may he go to Jerusalem in Judah and build the house of the Lord, the God of Israel, the God who is in Jerusalem’”* Ezra 1:2-4. That’s what God put in Cyrus’ mind! The book of Proverbs says: *“A king’s heart is like streams of water in the LORD’s hand: He directs it wherever He*

chooses” (21:1). And, it’s not just kings that God leads! Ezra continues, *“So the family leaders of Judah and Benjamin, along with the priests and Levites—everyone God had motivated—prepared to go up and rebuild the Lord’s house in Jerusalem”* (1:5). Look closely at that! Who was preparing to leave for Jerusalem to rebuild the temple? What does it say? *“...EVERYONE that God had motivated...”* So, GOD was in King Cyrus’ proclamation & GOD motivated those He wanted to go! There’s an important principle here; and, that is that humanity simply cannot fulfill God’s agenda! We’re broken! We’re deprived & incapacitated by our sin to accomplish God’s will without God’s help! I see that as the backdrop to the Bible stories of Ezra & Nehemiah. Here are 2 great, godly men; who, like Moses, just cannot deliver God’s people without God’s help! Even the best of men cannot liberate people from the cause of their bondage! Only God can do that! And, that is so counter-intuitive to our human psyche! And, it’s a real stumbling block for many! The natural man wants to feel important; like, he has something to contribute! But, God’s word even asks the question, *“WHAT do you have that you’ve not received?”* 1 Cor. 4:7. Whatever we may have to give has actually been given to us by God!

Men Of Greatness

So, even men of greatness— as WE count greatness— like Ezra & Nehemiah were not capable of delivering the Jewish people from their exile! God had to step in! And, He gave these 2 men, each, a different purpose as they came out of the exile! Ezra was 1st; and, he purposed to rebuild the temple in Jerusalem! Nehemiah followed him about 13 years later; and, he was commissioned to rebuild the walls of Jerusalem! Now, humanly speaking, that seems backwards at first glance! Human logic would tell us to rebuild the walls 1st for our own protection, right? But, God led the exiles to rebuild the temple first! Clearly, God intended to “rebuild” Israel spiritually, first! That was the priority because God had always told Israel that if they were faithful to Him that He would fight their battles for them; and, God, Himself, offered them greater protection than any wall or military ever could! Israel would come back to the centrality of God and His word!

“Greeting Team”

For Sunday, February 14

Remember: Meet in the coat room @ **10:30 am** for brief prayer & then go “welcome” people! NOTE: Keep an eye on the auditorium for those who slipped past!

Greeters this week:

Pastor Terry Sunday Night

- 1st— Erickson Thursday PM:
Jen Hagler Thursday PM
- 2nd— Terry Embke Sunday Night;
- 3rd— Randy Ehlers Sunday Night;
Donna Ehlers Monday Morning
- 4th— Curt Mastbergen Sunday Noon;
Tackett Sunday Night

Small Groups @ MBC

Meet A Minimum Of Two Times A Month

-Guide To: Small Group Ministry @ MBC-

Announcements

1. The Problem Of Evil?
Great article:
www.thegospelcoalition.org/essay/the-problem-of-evil/
2. Looking For A Good Podcast?
Checkout Phil Vischer’s
“The Holy Post”