

BUILDING FOR GOD
(Book of Ezra)

Pembroke Bible Chapel
Mark Floyd – 2009 May 17
Series No. MF-EZRA-06

TRUSTING IN GOD, NOT MAN
(Ezra 8)

As they traveled from Babylon to Jerusalem, Ezra was concerned about the testimony he and his colleagues would have for God. They carried a great treasure given to them by the Persian king (Artaxerxes) to adorn the rebuilt temple in Jerusalem. They had proclaimed to the king that God's hand was upon them, but against those who would oppose Him (them). Who would they trust for protection as they traveled with great riches for four months? Would God be glorified if they sought protection from the soldiers and horsemen of the king?

Ezra and the people accompanying him did not seek the protection afforded by mankind (the world). They humbled themselves before God and prayerfully sought His guidance and protection. God delivered them from those that would attempt to rob and harm them.

How are the following scriptures relevant to this event?

Judges 7:1-7 (Gideon's army reduced to 300 men)

Joshua 9:14 (Joshua deceived by Gibeonites)

Isaiah 30:1-2 (Israel trusting in Egypt's strength)

John 18:10 (Peter resorts to violence)

1 Corinthians 6:1-8 (Christians seeking justice in court)

John 2:24 (Christ would not entrust Himself to men)

Application

We have a natural tendency to trust our own reasoning to guide our decisions. When we lack the resources to provide for our own wellness, the natural reaction is to rely on the world (the culture we live in).

Mankind's efforts to provide for human well-being are, at best, flawed. The truth is that we need the security that God offers (*the just shall live by faith*). We should humbly pray for His guidance and protection from all types of peril. This will require sacrificing some of our other indulgences. When making decisions, we should consider what testimony our actions will have – will God be honoured?

Where do you look for wisdom, protection and security? Do you pray concerning decisions and uncertainty you face? What recent decisions have you made? Did they bring glory to God? What areas of your life do you need to be more reliant on God for His guidance?

*“Trust in the LORD with all your heart, and lean not on your own understanding; in all your ways acknowledge Him, and He will direct your paths.”
(Proverbs 3:5-6)*