

# Vessels of God; Instruments of Change

October 20, 2024 | *Ezra 8*

## VESSELS OF GOD; INSTRUMENTS OF CHANGE: EZRA 8



### Observations from Ezra 8:

What is happening in these verses?

#### **V 1-14: The Recorded Names of Those Who Returned**

- These recorded names are important in the eyes of God; known by Him.

#### **V 15-20: The Search for Levites; Leaders for the People of God**

- The Levites had specialized roles for the temple and the people of God.
  - Offering Sacrifice, Teaching the Law, Protecting the Congregation
  - Ref: **Numbers 3:5-10 and Deuteronomy 33:8-10**
- The Levites are much like Pastors today who shepherd the congregation
  - Protect, Teach, Preach, Care and Oversee
  - V18-20: Levites Found: 38 Levites, 220 Servants.

#### **V 21-23: Fasting and Prayer**

- To rely on God and not man (Applicable then and now!)
- Seeking God in our vulnerable moments, times of trial and tribulation.

#### **V 24-36: The Protection of the Vessels / Offerings**

- **12 Priests called to protect and transport the vessels from Babylon to Jerusalem**
  - **12 Representing Completeness / 12 Tribes of Israel**

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Ontario Community Church: **Encouraging, Equipping and Engaging lives for Christ.**

John 6:47 (ESV) "Truly, truly, I say to you, whoever **believes** has eternal life"

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## Lessons from Ezra 8

What can we learn (interpret) from these verses?

- 1. Your name is written in the Book of Life through faith in Jesus Christ.**
  - *Philippians 4:3, Revelation 3:5, Revelation 20:12, Revelation 21:27, John 10:27-28, Luke 10:20*
- 2. God calls and equips us for service.**
  - *2 Timothy 4:2-4, Titus 1:7-9, Acts 20:28, 1 Timothy 3:1-7, Ephesians 4:11-13, Romans 12:4-8*
- 3. In times of crisis, seek God through fasting and prayer.**
  - *Matthew 17:21, 2 Chronicles 20:3-4, Acts 13:2-3, Joel 2:12, Philippians 4:6-7*
- 4. Christ and the Church Foreshadowed in Ezra**

Cyrus represents Christ	Isaiah 45:1
Vessels represents believers	2 Timothy 2:21
Babylon represents sin / Jerusalem represents redemption	Revelation 18:2 and Galatians 4:26
Nebuchadnezzars Temple = Darkness. Zerubbabels Temple = God's Kingdom	1 Peter 2:9
12 Tribes Represent the church	James 1:1 and Revelation 7:4-9

## Application from Ezra 8

How can I apply / live out these verses?

- 1. Be Remembered by God- Believe in Christ and Be Saved**
  - *Revelation 20:15, John 3:16, John 10:27-28*
- 2. Be on a Journey in Christ- Vessels Filled with the Holy Spirit**
  - *2 Corinthians 4:7, Romans 8:9, Romans 9:23, Philippians 1:6, Romans 12:1-2*
- 3. Be Active in Your Faith; Pray and Fast in Uncertain Times**
  - *Philippians 4:6, Matthew 6:16-18, Joel 2:12*
- 4. Step Up to Where God Wants You to Be (Answer God's call for greater things)**
  - *Ephesians 4:11-13, 1 Corinthians 12:12-14, Ephesians 2:8-10, Hebrews 12:1-2*

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