



HOMEWORK FOR October 24

Exile: Return and Rebuild

Jeremiah 31:1-25; Isaiah 10:20-23; Ezra 1-4, 5:1-2, 6:1-15, 9:1-15; 2 Kings 17:21-41; Haggai 1:1-15, 2:1-9, 20-23; Zechariah 6:9-15; Matthew 1:13; John 2:13-21; 1 Corinthians 6:19-20; Romans 12:1; Isaiah 29:13

QUESTIONS

- 1) Read Jeremiah 31:1-25 and reflect on the imagery and language that God uses to talk about His bringing His people back from exile. What metaphors does He use? How does He describe their prosperity, restoration, and fruitfulness? What emotions do you see? _____

How does this language and imagery connect to the way the Old Testament had talked about Israel's relationship with God up to this point? _____

The way it talked about their disobedience and the exile? _____

How does the promise of returning a remnant to the land show that God has "loved them with an everlasting love"? _____

- 2) Read Isaiah 10:20-23. Why would only a remnant of God's people return to the land? _____

What does this tell us about God's promises to Abraham? _____

- 3) Read Ezra 1. How did God orchestrate the return of the remnant? How did He provide for the resources they needed to rebuild? _____

What does this tell us about God? What does it tell us about His plans? _____

Only ~50,000 Jews chose to return to the land, while many more stayed in Babylon. Why might some people not want to go back? What does this tell us about them? _____

How does this connect to the theological idea of the "remnant"? _____

- 4) Read Ezra 3:1-6. Why do you think they may have feared the people of the land? What does it tell us about them that they built the altar anyway? _____

5) Read Ezra 3:7-13 and describe the emotions of the people. Why might they feel this way? What does this tell us about the process of restoration and reconciliation, even when it's orchestrated by God? _____

6) Read 2 Kings 17:21-41 and Ezra 4. Who were these enemies of Judah who were in the land? Why did they think they had a right to also take part in the building of the Temple? _____

Why would the leaders of Judah think they didn't? _____

7) Read Haggai 2:1-9 and 20-23 and Matthew 1:13. How does Haggai say this Temple compares to the glory of Solomon's Temple? _____

When we know that Zerubbabel is ancestor of Jesus, what does this prophecy tell us about Jesus and the New Covenant and the Temple? _____

8) Read John 2:13-21. What does this story tell us about Jesus's feelings about the Temple? _____

What does it tell us theologically about what the true Temple is? _____

APPLICATION

Read 1 Corinthians 6:19-20 and Romans 12:1-2.

- Take some time to reflect on what it looks like for you to be a living sacrifice to the Lord. Imagine yourself bringing honor and glory to Him in everything you do. Imagine yourself being a walking, talking, living, breathing Temple of the Holy Spirit. Taking His Spirit out into the world and reflecting who He is in everything you do and say. How would your life be different? What habits, attitudes, thoughts, or behaviors would change if the Spirit was controlling your every move?

Read Isaiah 29:13.

- Take some time to reflect on what it means to have a heart of worship. Not just getting really into it when you sing hymns or worship music. But having a heart that is completely devoted to the Lord, not divided with any other loyalty. How would having a heart like that affect the way you live your life? The way you spend your time and money? Your hopes, your dreams, your passions? Your relationships, your choices, your career, your thoughts, your goals, your words?

Pray for the Lord to soften your heart and grow the fruit of the Spirit in you. Ask Him to reveal to you any ways that you are not living for Him and change you from the inside out.