

Friday, Aug 9

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Ezra 8:21 - 9:15

8 21 There, by the Ahava Canal, I proclaimed a fast, so that we might humble ourselves before our God and ask him for a safe journey for us and our children, with all our possessions. **22** I was ashamed to ask the king for soldiers and horsemen to protect us from enemies on the road, because we had told the king, “The gracious hand of our God is on everyone who looks to him, but his great anger is against all who forsake him.” **23** So we fasted and petitioned our God about this, and he answered our prayer. **24** Then I set apart twelve of the leading priests, namely, Sherebiah, Hashabiah and ten of their brothers, **25** and I weighed out to them the offering of silver and gold and the articles that the king, his advisers, his officials and all Israel present there had donated for the house of our God. **26** I weighed out to them 650 talents of silver, silver articles weighing 100 talents, 100 talents of gold, **27** 20 bowls of gold valued at 1,000 darics, and two fine articles of polished bronze, as precious as gold. **28** I said to them, “You as well as these articles are consecrated to the LORD. The silver and gold are a freewill offering to the LORD, the God of your ancestors. **29** Guard them carefully until you weigh them out in the chambers of the house of the LORD in Jerusalem before the leading priests and the Levites and the family heads of Israel.” **30** Then the priests and Levites received the silver and gold and sacred articles that had been weighed out to be taken to the house of our God in Jerusalem. **31** On the twelfth day of the first month we set out from the Ahava Canal to go to Jerusalem. The hand of our God was on us, and he protected us from enemies and bandits along the way. **32** So we arrived in Jerusalem, where we rested three days. **33** On the fourth day, in the house of our God, we weighed out the silver and gold and the sacred articles into the hands of Meremoth son of Uriah, the priest. Eleazar son of Phinehas was with him, and so were the Levites Jozabad son of Jeshua and Noadiah son of Binnui. **34** Everything was accounted for by number and weight, and the entire weight was recorded at that time. **35** Then the exiles who had returned from captivity sacrificed burnt offerings to the God of Israel: twelve bulls for all Israel, ninety-six rams, seventy-seven male lambs and, as a sin offering, twelve male goats. All this was a burnt offering to the LORD. **36** They also delivered the king’s orders to the royal satraps and to the governors of Trans-Euphrates, who then gave assistance to the people and to the house of God.

9 **1** After these things had been done, the leaders came to me and said, “The people of Israel, including the priests and the Levites, have not kept themselves separate from the neighboring peoples with their detestable practices, like those of the Canaanites, Hittites, Perizzites, Jebusites, Ammonites, Moabites, Egyptians and Amorites. **2** They have taken some of their daughters as wives for themselves and their sons, and have mingled the holy race with the peoples around them. And the leaders and officials have led the way in this unfaithfulness.” **3** When I heard this, I tore my tunic and cloak, pulled hair from my head and beard and sat down appalled. **4** Then everyone who trembled at the words of the God of Israel gathered around me because of this unfaithfulness of the exiles. And I sat there appalled until the evening sacrifice. **5** Then, at the evening sacrifice, I rose from my self-abasement, with my tunic and cloak torn, and fell on my knees with my hands spread out to the LORD my God **6** and prayed: “I am too ashamed and disgraced, my God, to lift up my face to you, because our sins are higher than our heads and our guilt has reached to the heavens. **7** From the days of our ancestors until now, our guilt has been great. Because of our sins, we and our kings and our priests have been subjected to the sword and captivity, to pillage and humiliation at the hand of foreign kings, as it is today. **8** “But now, for a brief moment, the LORD our God has been gracious in leaving us a remnant and giving us a firm place in his sanctuary, and so our God gives light to our eyes and a little relief in our bondage. **9** Though we are slaves, our God has not forsaken us in our bondage. He has shown us kindness in the sight of the kings of Persia: He has granted us new life to rebuild the house of our God and repair its ruins, and he has given us a wall of protection in Judah and Jerusalem. **10** “But now, our God, what can we say after this? For we have forsaken the commands **11** you gave through your servants the prophets when you said: ‘The land you are entering to possess is a land polluted by the corruption of its peoples. By their detestable practices they have filled it with their impurity from one end to the other. **12** Therefore, do not give your daughters in marriage to their sons or take their daughters for your sons. Do not seek a treaty of friendship with them at any time, that you may be strong and eat the good things of the land and leave it to your children as an everlasting inheritance.’ **13** “What has happened to us is a result of our evil deeds and our great guilt, and yet, our God, you have punished us less than our sins deserved and have given us a remnant like this. **14** Shall we then break your commands again and intermarry with the peoples who commit such detestable practices? Would you not be angry enough with us to destroy us, leaving us no remnant or survivor? **15** LORD, the God of Israel, you are righteous! We are left this day as a remnant. Here we are before you in our guilt, though because of it not one of us can stand in your presence.”

1 Corinthians 5:1 - 13

5 1 It is actually reported that there is sexual immorality among you, and of a kind that even pagans do not tolerate: A man is sleeping with his father's wife. **2** And you are proud! Shouldn't you rather have gone into mourning and have put out of your fellowship the man who has been doing this? **3** For my part, even though I am not physically present, I am with you in spirit. As one who is present with you in this way, I have already passed judgment in the name of our Lord Jesus on the one who has been doing this. **4** So when you are assembled and I am with you in spirit, and the power of our Lord Jesus is present, **5** hand this man over to Satan for the destruction of the flesh, so that his spirit may be saved on the day of the Lord. **6** Your boasting is not good. Don't you know that a little yeast leavens the whole batch of dough? **7** Get rid of the old yeast, so that you may be a new unleavened batch—as you really are. For Christ, our Passover lamb, has been sacrificed. **8** Therefore let us keep the Festival, not with the old bread leavened with malice and wickedness, but with the unleavened bread of sincerity and truth. **9** I wrote to you in my letter not to associate with sexually immoral people— **10** not at all meaning the people of this world who are immoral, or the greedy and swindlers, or idolaters. In that case you would have to leave this world. **11** But now I am writing to you that you must not associate with anyone who claims to be a brother or sister but is sexually immoral or greedy, an idolater or slanderer, a drunkard or swindler. Do not even eat with such people. **12** What business is it of mine to judge those outside the church? Are you not to judge those inside? **13** God will judge those outside. "Expel the wicked person from among you."

Psalms 31:1 - 8

31 1 In you, LORD, I have taken refuge; let me never be put to shame; deliver me in your righteousness. **2** Turn your ear to me, come quickly to my rescue; be my rock of refuge, a strong fortress to save me. **3** Since you are my rock and my fortress, for the sake of your name lead and guide me. **4** Keep me free from the trap that is set for me, for you are my refuge. **5** Into your hands I commit my spirit; deliver me, LORD, my faithful God. **6** I hate those who cling to worthless idols; as for me, I trust in the LORD. **7** I will be glad and rejoice in your love, for you saw my affliction and knew the anguish of my soul. **8** You have not given me into the hands of the enemy but have set my feet in a spacious place.

Proverbs 21:1 - 2

21 **1** In the LORD's hand the king's heart is a stream of water that he channels toward all who please him. **2** A person may think their own ways are right, but the LORD weighs the heart.