

## The Hand Of The Lord

Ezra 7:28

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## How The Hand Of The Lord Was On Ezra

- ▶ His requests were granted by the king
  - Verse 6 – “the king granted him all”
- ▶ Artaxerxes allowed him to:
  - Go to Jerusalem – Verses 12-13 – “anyone ... may go with you”
  - Take money to buy animals for sacrifice – Verses 14-17 – “buy bulls, rams, and lambs”
  - Buy what is needed for the service of the house of God – Verses 18-23 – “let it be done in full for the house of the God of heaven”

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## How The Hand Of The Lord Was On Ezra

- ▶ His requests were granted by the king
- ▶ Artaxerxes allowed him to:
  - Be free from taxation – Verse 24 – “not be lawful to impose tribute”
  - Set up magistrates and judges – Verses 25-26 – “appoint magistrates and judges”
- Ezra recognized the hand of God was at work – Verses 27-28 – “who put such a thing as this into the heart of the king”

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## How The Hand Of The Lord Was On Ezra

- ▶ In Finding Servants For The Temple
  - Ezra 8:15 – “I found there none of the sons of Levi”
  - Ezra 8:15-17 – “send us ministers for the house of our God”
  - By the hand of God on them they find those needed – Ezra 8:18-20 – “with his sons and kinsmen, 18 ... his kinsmen and their sons, 20; besides 220 of the temple servants”

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## How The Hand Of The Lord Was On Ezra

- ▶ In providing safe journey to Jerusalem
  - Ezra 8:21-23 – “we fasted and implored our God for this, and he listened to our entreaty”
  - God’s hand was on them, and they arrived safely in Jerusalem – Ezra 8:31-32 – “and he delivered us from the hand of the enemy and from ambushes by the way”

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## Why The Hand Of The Lord Was On Ezra

- ▶ Ezra had prepared himself
- ▶ Ezra 7:9-10 – God was with him:
  - “For Ezra had set his heart ...”
  - “... to study the Law of the Lord ...”
  - “... to do it ...” (to apply it to himself first)
  - “and to teach his statutes and rules in Israel!”
- ▶ First made himself “useful to the master of the house, ready for every good work” – II Timothy 2:21

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## Why The Hand Of The Lord Was On Ezra

- ▶ Ezra had sought the Lord
  - Believed God would be with those who seek Him – Ezra 8:22 – “The hand of our God is for good”
  - Entreated God through fasting and prayer – Ezra 8:21-23 – “So we fasted and implored our God”
  - Believed God rewards those who seek Him – Hebrews 11:6 – “he rewards those who seek him”

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## Why The Hand Of The Lord Was On Ezra

- ▶ Ezra was willing to proceed in faith
  - Ezra 8:31 – “he delivered us from the hand of the enemy and from ambushes by the way”
  - Ezra demonstrated a living faith
    - cf. James 2:17, 24, 26 – “justified by works and not by faith alone”
    - cf. Galatians 5:6 – “faith working through love”

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## Why The Hand Of The Lord Was On Ezra

- ▶ Ezra was willing to face difficult situations
  - Many of the Israelites had intermarried with Gentile women
    - Ezra 9:1-2 – “have not separated themselves from the peoples of the lands”
    - Ezra 9:3 – “I ... sat appalled”
    - Others joined him – Ezra 9:4 – “all who trembled”
    - He accepted responsibility that was his – Ezra 10:1-8 – “Then Ezra arose”
  - Encouraged by those willing to repent

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## The Hand Of The Lord Was On Ezra Because He:

- ▶ Had prepared himself
- ▶ Sought the Lord
- ▶ Was willing to proceed in faith
- ▶ Was willing to face difficult situations

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## Ezra Was Not The Only Person Who The Hand Of The Lord Was On

- ▶ Nehemiah 2:18 – “the hand of my God that had been upon me for good”
- ▶ I Samuel 5:6 – “The hand of the Lord was heavy against the people of Ashdod”

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## How Will The Hand Of The Lord Be For Us?

- ▶ For our good, if we emulate Ezra by:
  - Preparing ourselves to be useful to the Master
  - Seeking the Lord with diligence and faith
  - Proceeding in faith against the odds
  - Facing difficult issues and situations head on.

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### What God Wants You To Do

- Hear the Word of God
  - James 1:21 – “Therefore put away all filthiness and rampant wickedness and receive with meekness the implanted word, which is able to save your souls.”
- Believe the Gospel message
  - Hebrews 11:6 – “And without faith it is impossible to please him, for whoever would draw near to God must believe that he exists and that he rewards those who seek him.”

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### What God Wants You To Do

- Repent of your sins
  - Acts 3:19 – “Repent therefore, and turn again, that your sins may be blotted out”
- Confess that Jesus is the Son of God
  - Romans 10:9-10 – “... because, if you confess with your mouth that Jesus is Lord and believe in your heart that God raised him from the dead, you will be saved. 10 For with the heart one believes and is justified, and with the mouth one confesses and is saved.”

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### What God Wants You To Do

- Be immersed in water
  - Acts 2:38 – “And Peter said to them, ‘Repent and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the forgiveness of your sins, and you will receive the gift of the Holy Spirit.’”
- Remain faithful
  - Hebrews 3:12-14 – “... if indeed we hold our original confidence firm to the end”

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