

GLAD TIDINGS

“And we bring you good tidings of the promise made unto the fathers...” (Acts 13:32)

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DO WE HAVE A PREPARED HEART LIKE EZRA?

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For Ezra was a *skilled scribe in the Law of Moses, and had prepared his heart to seek the Law of the Lord, and to do it, and to teach statutes and ordinances in Israel* (Ezra 7: 6, 10).

In these two passages Ezra prepared his heart to accomplish these four distinctive characteristics in doing the Lord's work. Ezra's life revolved around seeking and doing the Lord's will.

What a great example we have from the Old Testament to demonstrate the importance of having a prepared heart. Let's examine these characteristics Ezra manifested and ask yourselves, “Do I have a heart prepared like Ezra?”

Ezra Was Skilled In The Law Of Moses. The word “skilled” means; to be ready or prepared. Ezra at any given time was ready and prepared to present the word of God and give an answer. Christians are to be ready in presenting the word of God. Peter says, “*always be ready to give a defense to everyone who asks for the reason of hope...*” (1Peter 3:15). This implies studying God's word on a daily basis to be ready to give an answer. Look at

the blessings that come when we are skilled in the word of God. This will allow us to be able teach the lost and save a soul. If we never study God's word, how are we going to be able to give an answer?

Ezra Prepared His Heart To “Seek” The Law Of The Lord.

The word “seek” means; to seek with care, pursue, or to inquire after knowledge. A focal point in the life of Ezra was to inquire the knowledge of the Law of Moses. Christians have the responsibility to pursue the knowledge of God. Paul told Timothy, “*be diligent to present himself approved of God rightly dividing the word of truth...*” (2Timothy 2:15). Being diligent in God's word demands that we study. Studying will give us the knowledge to cut the word straight. How do we expect to have a prepared heart like Ezra, if we never open our Bibles and seek the knowledge that God inquires.

Ezra Prepared His Heart To “Do” The Law Of The Lord.

The word “do” means; to practice. Ladies and gentlemen this involves action. Ezra was more than a hearer of the word. He was a doer. Ezra practiced what he preached. James says, “Be doers of the word,

and not hearers only” (James 1:22). Ladies and gentlemen not only are we to do it, we must keep doing it. Paul told Timothy, “*Take heed to yourself and to the doctrine. Continue in them, for in doing this you will save both yourself and those who hear you*” (1Timothy 4:16).

Ezra Prepared His Heart To “Teach” The Law The Lord.

The word “teach” means; doctrine. Ezra taught only from the book of Moses. Today, we have the same word, from the same source, yet many are teaching different doctrines. Apostle John says, “*we are to abide only in the doctrine of Christ*” (2John 9-11). Also, Paul told Timothy “*to commit the gospel to faithful men who will be able to teach others also*” (2Timothy 2:2).

Having a prepared heart demands that we meet certain criteria: studying God's word to be able to give an answer, be doers of the word, not hearers only, and teach the doctrine of Christ. Are we preparing our hearts to manifest these characteristics like Ezra?