

Ezra Ch 1&2 God Uses Government Leaders

In reading these passages, I was immediately struck with the first 2 verses of Ezra 1. It says "... the Lord moved the heart of Cyrus, King of Persia to make a proclamation throughout his realm and to put it in writing... The Lord, the God of heaven has given me all the kingdoms of the earth and has appointed me to build a temple for him at Jerusalem in Judah..."

Just think of what this is saying. First of all, God speaks to whom he will to accomplish his purposes. God speaks to leaders whom we may consider "heathen" or "pagan." We get the idea somehow that God first requires a conversion in people in order to work through them. That is our idea, but not necessarily God's idea. God can use people, circumstances, even tragedies, to transform them into what he desires.

Then consider that Cyrus truly listened to God and moved on it. Cyrus, with his immense power, was in a unique position to make known and make happen the will of God. Cyrus put to shame most of the kings of Judah and Israel as he responded to God's moving. Once again we see that God works in the paradox. The very appointed rulers of God's chosen people often rejected him, yet here is Cyrus willing to move on the prompting of God.

Yes, I know that Cyrus had political reasons for this as well, but we must realize that God works through all of our motives, even the ones that are not so pure. God knows how we are wired and he uses all these circumstances and motivators to work together for his purpose.

Could Cyrus have rejected this idea? Of course he could. If he had, God would have given the opportunity to someone else. Don't forget that God uses whom he will, and if we decide to not follow him in a great mission, he can, and will find someone else - all the more reason for the people who call God by name as Father, to respond quickly to his call.

Finally, remember Proverbs 21:1 ***The king's heart is in the hand of the LORD, as the rivers of water: he turns it wherever he will.*** Remember this as you pray for our government leaders. It gives us encouragement to know that God is in charge of the leaders of our country, and it is our responsibility to pray for them daily.

Prayer: Father, it is our desire to turn over to you our government leaders for your direction and safekeeping, for we too are in their hands. Bless them and give them your wisdom to lead us into peace and justice. Amen.