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## A JOURNEY THROUGH THE BIBLE

Reading: Ezra 1:1-11

### 16. THE BOOK OF EZRA

Late one night, in 1914, Thomas Edison's facilities in West Orange, New Jersey were heavily damaged by fire. Edison lost about a million dollar's worth of equipment, along with a lot of paperwork containing the details of his inventions. Walking about the charred embers of his hopes and dreams the following morning, the 67 year old inventor said, "*There is value in disaster. God has worked it out so that all of our mistakes are burned up. Now, we can start anew.*" The books of Ezra and Nehemiah which originally were probably one book present to us the people of God beginning afresh, and starting anew. Now in introducing this book there are several things we need to keep in mind. The first is,

#### **1. The Captivity of Judah:**

##### (a) The Captivity Commenced:

With three deportations, of Judah. In 605 B.C. Nebuchadnezzar first invaded the land and took away Jehoiakim and the leading nobles. You see, if you take away the cream of the nation, people like Daniel it's easier to keep thing under control. Then in 597 B.C.

Babylon came a second time and took away all the craftsmen and merchants in the hope that if they removed the people who made the money they could impoverish the people and finally bring them under control. Among those who were taken was a man called Ezekiel. Then, in 586 B.C. the final destruction of Jerusalem took place. The temple was razed to the ground and the Babylonians destroyed everything. The land began to make up for its neglected Sabbaths. ( 2 Chron 36:21 ) So the captivity commenced with three deportations and

##### 2. The Captivity Concluded:

With three returns. About the year 538 B.C. Cyrus the Persian issued a decree that gave the Jews liberty to return to Jerusalem and rebuild the temple. Led by Zerubbabel about 50,000 people responded. Then in 458 B.C. a further group returned the leadership of Ezra. This return was a whole generation later than the first. Then in the year 445 B.C. Nehemiah a high official in the Persian court was given permission to return to rebuild the walls of Jerusalem. So in the three returns there is the rebuilding of the spiritual life, the social life and the physical life.

#### **2. The History of the Old Testament:**

Do you see now that there were two "*exodus*," movements in Old Testament history ? The first was from Egypt to Canaan and the second was from Babylon to Canaan with almost a millennium lying between the two events. Now both these exiles and returns were the subject

of prophecy the first in ( Gen 15:13-14 ) and the second in ( Jer 25:11-12 29:10-11 ) 1, 2,

### **3. The Chronology of the Period:**

*A brief chronology of the period would look like this.*

*In 605, 597 and 586 B.C. Babylon begins invading and deporting people from the city of Jerusalem.*

*In 539 B.C. Babylon falls to Cyrus and the Media-Persian empire begins.*

*In 538 or 536 B.C. Cyrus permits the Jews to return, about*

*50,000 return.*

*In 535 B.C. the Jews begin to rebuild the temple, but the work stops.*

*In 520 B.C. after fifteen years, the work begins again.*

*In 515 B.C. the temple is completed and dedicated.*

*In 476 B.C. Esther becomes Queen of Persia.*

*In 458 B.C. Ezra travels to Jerusalem with a further group.*

*In 445 B.C. Nehemiah comes to Jerusalem to rebuild the walls.*

So the whole drift of Ezra and Nehemiah has to do with the return to the land and city, the rebuilding of the temple, the reforming of the people and the rebuilding of the walls. 1, 2, 3, but think of

### **4. The Variety of the Leaders:**

Ezra is presented to us as a godly and patriotic Jew who was a priest and a scribe ( 7:1-6 ) He was a devoted

student of the Scriptures and helped to restore the Law to the nation. He was also a man of prayer ( 8:21-23 ) and a man who was greatly burdened for the spiritual welfare of his people ( 9:3-4 ) His name means “ *help*.” Now please note that Ezra did not lead the first group of Jews back to Jerusalem, this was done by Zerubbabel and Joshua. Zerubbabel was also called Sheshbazzar, ( 1:8, 11; 5:16 ) His official title was “ *tirshatha*,” ( 2:63 ) which means “ *governor*,” and First Chronicles indicates that Zerubbabel was in the royal line of David. ( 3:17-19 ) Joshua was the high priest at this time ( 3:2; Hag. 1:1, 12, 14, Zech. 3:1-10 ) Nehemiah was an officer in the king's court when God called him to return to Jerusalem and rebuild the walls. And the two prophets were Haggai and Zechariah. Now, having given you all that by way of background, I want us to look at this book in three ways. First of all we see the people,

#### **(1) RETURNING CH's 1-2**

Did you notice that it all begins with God ? ( 1:1 ) The Lord moves the heart of the king ( 1:1 ) the hands of the people ( 1:5 ) and even their neighbor's who reach for their purses ( 1:4, 6 ) Now Cyrus was the Persian ruler who had conquered Babylon and he was the ruler of the number one world power at this time but he seems to have been a very benevolent man and he had a policy of kindness towards conquered peoples. His policy with prisoners of war was opposite that of Babylon for he encouraged the Jews to return to their own land. And yet beyond all that we see the hand of God. For the Jews are returning,

**(a) IN GOD'S PURPOSE:**

These opening verses in Ezra are almost identical to the closing verses in ( 2 Chron 36:22-23 ) which leads many to believe that the same author was responsible for 1 & 2 Chronicles and Ezra and Nehemiah. Ezra was a careful man who was able to keep records and it looks as if he wrote Ezra, Nehemiah and 1 and 2 Chronicles. No doubt Cyrus had been influenced by Daniel ( Dan 6:28 ) but behind all of this return was “ *the hand of God.* ” ( 7:6 ) For they were returning in God's purpose. Do you recall what Jeremiah prophesied concerning them ? ( Jer 29:10-14 ) My .... the decree of Cyrus was the fulfillment of prophecy. No doubt during the long night of the exile God's people must have wondered at times if they would ever see Jerusalem again. But God was faithful to His Word and did not forget His people. You see, it was the Lord who raised up Nebuchadnezzar “ *My servant,* ” ( Jer 25:9 27:6 43:10 ) to chasten the people of Judah and then God raised up Cyrus to defeat the Babylonians and reestablish the Persian Empire.

Do you know what the Lord called Cyrus ? He calls him “ *My shepherd.* ” ( Is 44:28 ) and “ *My anointed.* ” ( 45:1 ) The Lord said, “ *He shall build my city and he shall let go my captives.* ” ( Is 45:13 ) Isn't that amazing ? Many scholars can't believe that Isaiah could possibly have known the name, and insist that the text was written after the event. But did God know the name of the man ? Two hundred years before Cyrus issued his decree Isaiah told us the name of the man who would set the Jews free. Isn't it wonderful to stand back and see the heart of God

planning and the hand of God shaping ? My .... God is still on the throne.

**(b) AS GOD'S PEOPLE:**

Look if you will at ( 1:3 ) Now although only three tribes are mentioned here we know from other passages that there were representatives from all twelve tribes who returned. For example in ( 2 Chron 11:13-17 ) we are told at the time of Israel's civil war that various individuals from all twelve tribes moved to Jerusalem. Paul speaks of “ *our twelve tribes,* ” ( Acts 26:7 ) Do these verses alone not challenge the doctrine of British Israelism which teaches the “ *ten lost tribes,* ” are really the British and the Americans ? Now the actual number who responded to Cyrus decree was very small, in all about fifty thousand people. One reason the number was small related to the journey itself. You see, it involved a four to five month journey a distance of almost 1,000 miles. And then all were not ready to leave Babylon. Jerusalem and its temple lay in ruins but that did not matter to them. The majority of Jews preferred the land of plenty to the land of promise. Babylon looked good to them and they preferred to stay. Your revival is disturbing, upsetting and life changing.

I wonder is that why history records so few ? I mean do you see what happened here ? “ *Then rose up .... all them whose spirit God had stirred.* ” ( 1:5 ) My .... is this not what revival is all about ? God stirring the hearts of His people. Revival is not something on the outside that works in its something that God does on the inside that works

out. Revival is a heart matter. It is something that begins to take place in the human heart. There is Divine Sovereignty in revival as God stirs the heart, but there is Human Responsibility in revival as we meet the challenge. “ *Who is there among you of all his people ? let him go up and build.* ” ( 1:3 ) My .... we cannot create the wind but we can set the sails. Is your cry this .... ?

*Oh, for the floods on a thirsty land  
Oh for a mighty revival  
Oh for a sanctified fearless band  
Ready to hail its arrival*

**(c) WITH GOD’S PROVISION:**

I mean the Lord had called them back to do a difficult job, to rebuild the temple, restore the city and reform the people. Who would meet the need ? God. Who would provide the materials ? God. Who would give the manpower ? God. Now the people of Babylon gave gifts towards the rebuilding programme. ( 1:6 ) King Cyrus also restored the treasures captured from the temple ( 1:7 ) But behind it all was God. Do you know what one of the great names for God in the Bible is ? *Jehovah-Jireh, the Lord will provide.* ( Gen 22:14 ) You see, those whom God calls He equips. One night George Muller of Bristol made known his intention at a public meeting to start an orphanage. He made it clear that no one would ever be asked for money or materials, there would be no charge for admission and no restriction on entry because of class or creed. *All those employed as masters, matrons and assistants would be unpaid and had to be believers.* At the

end of the meeting no collection was made but a lady gave him ten shillings and volunteered for the work. The next day, a husband and wife volunteered their help, and also promised to give all their furniture for use in the orphanage. From that point on Muller never looked back and never lacked support for the work. *For God’s work done in God’s way will never lack God’s supply.* (a)(b)(c)

**(d) UNDER GOD’S PRESERVATION:**

Now be honest. What do you do when you come to a chapter in God’s Word like ( Ch 2 ) ? Do you say, “ *Why this is only a list of names,* ” and so you hurry on. Well, the Holy Spirit would never have moved Ezra to write it unless it had a purpose. This same list is cited in ( Neh 7:6-73 ) and it shows that the returning exiles were the legitimate descendants of the Jews who occupied Israel prior to their deportation to Babylon. Such lists are meant to show that God has preserved the chosen people and the promised line of Messiah from generation to generation. My .... Israel is a remarkable nation. Israel, not Ulster is God’s covenant people. And throughout the history of this tiny nation an invisible hand has been upon her and it is the hand of God. Israel is the nation that will not go away. She is an indestructible people. ( Jer 31:35-37 )

And here Judah in the exile was preserved by God. Dr. Ironside says, “ *Most of the names are for us only names but God has not forgotten one of the persons once called by these names on earth.* ” Think of the pains the children of Israel took to keep a strict record of their families while

in captivity, and here God uses his servant Ezra under the inspiration of the Spirit of God to pen their names. You see they were preserved by God because they were precious to God. Now they did not feel like that. Do you know something ? These same people down in Babylon felt that the Lord had forgotten them. “ *But Zion said, the Lord hath forsaken me, and my Lord hath forgotten me.* ” ( Is 49:14 ) My .... is that exactly how you feel this .... ?

Do you feel that because that trial has crossed your pathway that God does not care ? Do you recall what the Lord Jesus to His disciples ? “ *Are not two sparrows sold for a farthing ? And one of them shall not fall on the ground without your Father. But the very hairs of your head are all numbered. Fear ye not therefore, ye are of more value than many sparrows.* ” ( Matt 10:29-31 ) My .... at the very time you’re saying “ *My Lord has forgotten me,* ” at that moment God is saying, “ *Behold I have graven thee upon the palms of my hands.* ” ( Is 49:16 ) So here they were going up to Jerusalem (a) (b) (c) (d) you see the first phase is all about **Returning**.

## (2) REBUILDING Ch’s 3-6

You see, here they are at the end of the journey and they are back in the land. Can you imagine the depth of feeling they experienced ? Can you try and enter into the very thoughts that must have coursed through their minds ? As they stood in a ruined city, in a desecrated temple, in the very place that God had chosen to reveal His glory, but now there was a new beginning, a glorious opportunity to start over again. I wonder is that what you need to do ? As

a believer have you lived carelessly, failed miserably, and disobeyed continually ? Thank God you can start again for look at these chapters and notice,

### (a) **WORSHIP WAS RESTORED:**

Look if you will at ( 3:2-3 ) The altar was the place of worship. Of Abram we read, “ *And Abram went up out of Egypt .... unto the place of the altar, which he had made there at the first and there Abram called on the name of the Lord.* ” ( Gen 13:4 ) What was the first thing that Elijah did as he challenged the prophets of Baal on Mount Carmel ? The Bible says, “ *And he repaired the altar of the Lord that was broken down.* ” ( 1 Kings 18:30 ) You see, the people had to get back to a right relationship with God through worship and prayer. Of course revival always results in worship. When there is a “ **stirring**, ” of the people of God, the result is they will return to the place of worship. One of the sad things in Ulster is, that so many people whose names are on church rolls, seldom if ever darken the door of those churches. I think of members of this fellowship, who are rarely here to worship the Lord with us. But here were a people who were determined to set their worship and lives on a right footing from the beginning.

We read “ *they offered burnt offerings thereon unto the Lord,* ” ( 3:3 ) You see, the burnt offering was the one that spoke specifically of worship. The burnt offering was all for God. There was no sharing here. All for God for God must come first. What a picture of our Lord’s dedication of Himself to God. “ *Lo I come in the volume of the book*

*it is written of me, I delight to do thy will O my God yea thy law is within my heart.*” ( Ps 40:7-8 ) My .... is your devotion to the Lord full ? Have you presented your body as “ *a living sacrifice, holy acceptable to God ?*” (a)

**(b) WORK WAS RESUMED:**

*“ Now in the second year of their coming unto the house of God at Jerusalem in the second month, began Zerubbabel .... and Joshua .... to set forward the work of the house of the Lord.”* ( 3:8 ) Worship is always followed by service. God’s work goes forward. The house of the Lord was rebuilt. We read, “ *and all the people shouted with a great shout, when they praised the Lord, because the foundation of the house of the Lord was laid.*” ( 3:11 ) When the building got under way, there was a division of labour and a commitment to see the job done. “ ***Facing a task unfinished,***” is that not where we are today ? How thankful we are for those who have gifts and talents to bring into the service of the Lord, but then the Holy Spirit has not left one single believer without some gift to enable him or her to serve God. He has “ *divided to everyone severally according to His will.*” ( 1 Cor 12:11 )

But the real question is seldom one of gift or even of opportunity, but rather one of faithfulness and commitment. My .... does the fervour of these Old Testament saints put us to shame ? Are you still enthusiastic about the Lord’s work ? Or are you saying, “ *I have given enough, I’ve done my bit.*” I’m reminded of David Livingstone, the pioneer missionary to Africa, who walked over 29,000 miles. His wife died early in their

ministry and he faced stiff opposition from his Scottish brethren. However, the words in his diary ought to challenge us “ ***Lord, send me anywhere, only go with me. Lay any burden on me, only sustain me. Sever me from any tie, but the tie that binds me to your service and heart.***” How does that leave you ? It leaves me feeling ashamed. I mean here they were (a) (b) and then,

**(c) WARFARE WAS RESISTED:**

You see, this revival among the people of God soon ran into opposition. It is often a repeated truism that where God is at work then Satan will be at work as well. My .... God’s purpose is to build up and edify, Satan’s purpose is to tear down and destroy. So every time God begins to build, you can be sure that the Devil will begin to battle. Opportunity and opposition usually go together, and the greater the opportunity, the greater the opposition. Do you recall Paul’s words ? “ *For a great door and effectual is opened unto me and there are many adversaries.*” ( 1 Cor 16:9 ) Opportunity and opposition always go together, and that’s exactly what we find here. The Samaritans were half Jewish and half Gentile and they had a false religion. The Bible says “ *they feared the Lord and served their own gods.*” ( 2 Kings 17:33 )

**1. Their First Approach was very Subtle:**

“ *Let us build with you for we seek your God as ye do,*” ( 4:2 ) Why was it so subtle and dangerous ? Because they would have led the Jews, back into idolatry again.

( Deut 7:1-11 12:1-3 ) My .... is this not the offer of the ecumenical movement ? “ *Let’s cooperate, lets sink our differences, we may differ slightly, but lets compromise for the sake of the common good.* ” Is this not what we are being told on a church level ? “ *Lets sink our differences, forget about our principles, join together on a common platform ?* ” Aren’t you glad that Zerubbabel was not like so many church leaders ? He was not a compromiser, or a ditherer “ *Ye have nothing to do with us to build an house unto our God but we ourselves together will build .....* , ” ( 4:3 ) Do you see what happened when God’s people stood their ground and said “ **no,** ” ? You see if 1.

## 2. Their Further Approach was very Strong:

Literally, all hell broke loose. Do you see ( 4:4 ) ? You see, sometimes Satan comes as the serpent to deceive ( 4:2 ) and when that fails he comes as the lion to devour. ( 4:4 ) He will use friends and family, times of joy and sadness, times when things are going well with us, and times when circumstances are against us. But always his aim is the same, to undermine the work of God and to crush the people of God. And here it looked as if Satan was successful. For did you notice that,

## **(d) WEARINESS WAS REVEALED:**

“ *Then ceased the work of the house of God which is at Jerusalem.* ” ( 4:24 ) The constant opposition had taken its toll. The work ceased. The immediate cause was opposition from without, but the secondary cause was discouragement from within. For Haggai, who was a

contemporary, tells us in his book that the people of God had lost heart, and thinking only of themselves and their own houses were saying, “ *the time is not come, the time that the Lord’s house should be built.* ” ( Haggai 1:2 )

1. They lost Heart: the battle was too much.

2. They lost Vision: they went back to put materialism before the things of God.

3. They lost sight of God: For 15 years they had an altar, but the freshness of their first love was gone. Is this you ? Are you on the brink of resigning from some Christian ministry through discouragement ? Are you ready to call it a day ? To call it quits ? Some years ago someone gave me a little plaque that said, “ ***It’s always too soon to quit.*** ” Why would you quit ? Sure, you have the Word of God before you, the Christ of God beside you, the Spirit of God within you, the people of God around you, the glory of God before you. My .... “ *let us not be weary in well doing for in due season we shall reap if we faint not, ( if we do not lose heart.* ” ) ( Gal 6:9 ) My .... do you know what you need ? You need to hear the Word of God again, for we see here,

## **(e) WITNESSING WAS RENEWED:**

“ *Then the prophets Haggai .... and Zechariah .... prophesied unto the Jews that were in Judah and Jerusalem in the name of the God of Israel .... then rose up Zerubbabel .... and Jeshua .... and began to build the house of God .... and they builded and finished it according to the commandment of the God of Israel.* ”

( 5:1-2 6:14 ) Now the opposition did not stop. Indeed it became more vocal and vehement than ever but God's people simply left the opposition to God and went on with the work. Within 5 years the temple was completed. Isn't it amazing how the Word of God can transform people ? This discouraged and fearful people were changed into warriors who wielded trowels in the battle to build for the glory of God. You see, the temple was completed in 515 BC. ( 6:15 ) It started about 535 BC ( 3:10 ) So it was over 20 years in building. In

**Chapter 3: The Building Commenced:**

**Chapter 4: The Building Ceased:**

**Chapter 5: The Building Continued**

**Chapter 6: The Building Completed:**

Human nature, however remains human nature. Even such a great revival as this could not last. My .... no revival has ever lasted. Within a generation was needed a fresh visitation of the Spirit of God. Someone has said that a movement that ceases to move becomes a monument. So we move on from Ezra ( Ch 6 ) to ( Ch 7 ) remembering as we do that we pass over fifty seven years and to this interim period belongs the story of Esther. Now we have come to the final phase of the book,

### (3) REFORMING Ch's 7-10

Now the word "*reform*," means "*correction of abuses or malpractices*," or "*to improve by correcting abuses*." Was this not exactly what happened here in Ezra's day ?

You see, Ezra was only there four months ( 7:9 10:9 ) when he learned that all was not well with the people of God. *There was sin in the camp*. God's own people were marrying their non-Jewish idol worshipping neighbors. Can you imagine the grief and disappointment of the man of God ? You see, if the first section of the book is all about ***national restoration*** ( Ch's 1-6 ) then the last section of the book has to do with ***spiritual reformation***. ( Ch's 7-10 ) *You see, if revival comes from above, then reformation comes from below*. In revival the supernatural element is uppermost as the Spirit of God works in the hearts of the people of God. But in reformation the human element is largely at work in taking the initiative to plan and bring about change for the better. You see, Ezra as a teacher of the Word of God could see that the people needed to be taught afresh the doctrine of separation. This was a reforming process and it was done with great thoroughness and prayer. Do you know what this tell us ? *It tells us, that while we long for revival in the church, but cannot make it happen, we can nevertheless bring about a reformation where it is needed.*

Leaders, members, believers, can reform the structures of their local church so as to make its witness more effective in the community. My .... is this not vital if the gospel is to meet the challenges of today, and the church is to remain relevant in this age ? *What about our personal lives ? Do we not need from time to time to take a long hard look at ourselves and ask ourselves if we need reforming ? What about your prayer life ? What about your faithfulness at the services ?* Your input, into the local church. Are these not areas that need reforming in



order to give a sharper edge to our Christian experience and witness ? Now I want you to notice that this reformation,

***(a) Commences on a Scriptural Level:***

Now remember sixty years had almost elapsed since Zerubbabel had finished the temple. But then sixty years is a long time in human history. A generation passes away, another generation takes its place and waxes old and prepares to hand over to the grandchildren. My .... its not often that the third generation has the fervor and fire of the first for spiritual truth or for a spiritual awakening. My .... do we not even see this in the local church ? Well, in Israel, in the Promised Land spiritual truth had worn thin. The Scriptures had been neglected and the people were occupied with material things. So God found a man, Ezra by name who was addicted to the Word of God. Look at ( 7:10 ) You see, Ezra had prepared his heart for the day that he would return to his own land. He knew it was coming because he had faith in God, so he inwardly determined to make three things the chief objective of his life. He was determined,

***1. To Ponder God's Word:***

Do you see how he puts it ? “ *To seek the law of the Lord.* ” ( 7:10 ) He would have agreed with the Psalmist who wrote, “ *Oh how I love thy law it is my meditation all the day.* ” ( Ps 119:97 ) What time do you give to the reading and meditation of God's Word ?

***2. To Practice God's Word:***

“ *And to do it,* ” ( 7:10 ) Martin Luther speaking of a pastor by the name of Nicholas Hussman said, “ *what we preach he lives.* ” Could that be said of you ?

***3. To Preach God's Word:***

“ *And to teach in Israel statutes and judgments.* ” ( 7:10 ) My .... Ezra was a man of the book. He wanted to know it, obey it and teach it. As we have said it is believed he wrote Chronicles, Ezra and Nehemiah, organized the sacred writings into the Old Testament canon, wrote Psalm 119 as well as Psalm 1 as a preface to the book of psalms and promoted the “ *synagogue,* ” as the local place to teach God's word. No wonder Ezra was able to bring about reform. He knew God's Word.

***(b) Continues on a Spiritual Level:***

***1. Ezra had a Heart for God:***

He was a man of Prayer: Before he left for the Promised Land his group sought the Lord “ *that we might afflict ourselves before our God to seek of him a right way for us and for our little ones and for all our substance.* ” ( 8:21 ) They brought the matter of *their footsteps, their families and their finances before the Lord.* When he got back to Jerusalem and discovered that God's people were marrying outside of the people of God, ( Deut 7:1-3 Ex 34:15-17 ) he was broken. Hear him as he cries “ *O my God I am ashamed and blush to lift up my face to thee.* ”

( 9:6 ) My .... is sin still shocking to you ? Do the sins of God's people move you to tears ? 1.

2. Ezra knew the Hand of God:

Indeed was this not the secret of his ministry ? The hand of God is,

**1. A Giving Hand:** “ *the king granted him all his request according to the hand of the Lord his God upon him.* ”  
( 7:6 )

**2. A Sustaining Hand:** for they kept safe on their long journey of 4 months “ *according to the good hand of his God upon him.* ” ( 7:9 )

**3. An Enabling Hand:** “ *And I was strengthened as the hand of the Lord my God was upon me.* ” ( 7:28 )

**4. A Protecting Hand:** “ *And the hand of our God was upon us and he delivered us from the hand of the enemy.* ”  
( 8:31 ) You see, this reformation (a) (b)

***(c) Culminates on a Social Level:***

You see, the people who had been born in the land after the first revival soon lost sight of a basic spiritual truth. They lost sight of the truth of separation from the world. I mean do you see what happened when Ezra came ?  
( 9:1-3 ) Do you see what was needed ? Things needed to be put right socially, domestically and personally. Do you know what the last verse in the book says ? “ *Some of*

*them had wives by whom they had children.* ” ( 10:44 )  
Can you imagine the pain when they had to put away their foreign wives and children ? But this was the price of continuing reformation. You see, God's desire for Israel then, is God's desire for you now. “ *Be ye holy for I am holy,* ” ( 1 Pet 1:16 Lev 11:44 ) That's the standard of separation. Are you violating it ? Are there aspects of your life that need reforming ? Has the Lord been placing His finger on those things ? How will you respond ? Will you say with God's people of old “ *Lord as thou hast said, so must we do.* ” ( 10:12 )

**Lord, take my life and make it wholly Thine  
Fill my poor heart with Thy great love Divine  
Take all my will, my passion, self and pride  
I now surrender, Lord in me abide**

