

Ezra 8:18

by Chuck Smith

God's good hand is working in our lives for good, even when we can't see it.

Scripture: Ezra 8:18, Psalm 139:5, Isaiah 45:1, Jeremiah 29:10, Daniel 6:26

Topics: "God's Sovereignty", "Restoration"

Description

Chuck Smith emphasizes the theme of God's faithful hand at work in the lives of His people, as seen in the restoration of the Jews after their captivity. He highlights God's promises through prophets like Jeremiah and Isaiah, who foretold their return and the role of King Cyrus in this restoration. Despite opposition and challenges faced during the rebuilding of the temple, God's sovereignty prevails, demonstrating that when we walk with Him, even adversities can be turned for good. Smith reassures that God's presence is constant, even when we may not perceive it, echoing David's acknowledgment of God's encompassing hand.

Transcript

"THE GOOD HAND OF OUR GOD ON US"

Intro: This seems to be the theme of this book. God is constantly working in the lives of His people for good. We can't always see this. These were the good days of restoration.

I. GOD HAD PROMISED THIS DAY.

A. Through Jeremiah.

1. He prophesied of their being carried away captive to Babylon.
2. The period of their captivity 70 years.
3. That He would restore them to their land.

B. Over 100 years earlier through Isaiah.

1. He named Cyrus the Persian King as the instrument through which this restoration would come.

2. 150 years before he is born God said: "I have named you though you do not know me."

a. Imagine his parents choosing a name for their child.

II. THE DAY OF GOD'S PROMISE HAS ARRIVED.

A. God moved upon the heart of Cyrus to send the Jews back to rebuild the house of God.

1. He gave to them the gold and silver vessels taken by Babylon.

2. He also raised funds for the building.

B. As they began to rebuild opposition arose.

1. The inhabitants of the land came and offered help.

2. When this offer refused they sent letters to Ahasuerus or Artaxerxes who was now King, warning him to read the history books and learn the nature of these people.

3. Ahasuerus responded with a cease and desist order.

4. However at his death the work resumed under the leadership of Zerubbabel and Joshua encouraged by Haggai & Zechariah the prophets.

5. The inhabitants of the area again sought to stop their work, this time by intimidation.

a. What are your names? Who gave the orders?

b. They just answered we are the servants of the living God & He ordered us.

6. They sent letters to King Darius telling him to check the records & send a stop work order.

a. But God had gotten to Darius before them.

b. God had given him a special liking for Daniel.

c. This had created jealousy & a conspiracy.

d. Darius had been flattered into a vain decree that trapped Daniel.

e. When there was found no way to deliver Daniel he sought to comfort

him.

f. When he saw the power of Daniel's God, he send forth a decree that men everywhere tremble & fear before the God of Daniel, He is the living God.

g. So when he got this letter he sent back an order to leave them alone, in fact they were to take their tax money and contribute it to the building.

When you walk with God and His hand is on your life, though your enemies seek to work against you, he can turn it for good

We may not always see his hand at the moment. In Jerusalem Zerubbabel & Joshua were probably saying, "Oh God, what are you doing?" In the lion's den, Daniel probably said, "Oh, God."

David said you are before me and behind me and your hand is upon me.

The good hand of our God on us.

Source: <https://sermonindex.net/speakers/chuck-smith/ezra-818/>

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