

A Renewed Remnant

Lesson 8

The Decree Of Artaxerxes I & The 2nd Return Led By Ezra (Ezra 7-8)

Introduction

In **Ezra 6:22**, the record is completed covering Zerubbabel's work in restoring Jerusalem's temple in the 6th year of Darius I (516 B.C.). Silent in Ezra's writing, but not in the Scripture, is the story of **Esther** and how the Jews who stayed behind in Persia survived a threat of extinction during the days of Ahasuerus, or Xerxes I (538 B.C.). This occurred before Ezra leads his group back to Jerusalem.

Starting in **Ezra 7:1**, the focus shifts to activity from the 2nd return (458 B.C.). Ezra was "point man" now, and his emphasis was rebuilding the "spiritual infrastructure" of the remnant. Simply having a temple to worship would not be enough...God's people were going to have know and practice the Law of Moses. Ezra the scribe had "set his heart" to please his God and serve his brethren.

- 1) Who is king of Persia? (7:1a) What happens in 7:1b? Referring back to pg. 3, what is the date for the events recorded in this chapter? (7:7b-8)

- 2) How long had the remnant been back in Jerusalem? How much time has elapsed since the events recorded at the end of **Ezra 6**?

- 3) What is recorded in 7:1b-5? What would this establish?

- 4) How is Ezra further described in 7:6? Why would he be "successful?" (7:6b) How long did it take for him to journey from Persia to Jerusalem? (7:9) What accounted for this accomplishment?

- 5) What important information is listed in 7:10? Comment on how this verse can still serve as a good model for N.T. Christians to follow today.

- 6) What is recorded in 7:11-26? Given this edict from Artaxerxes I, what do you judge the spiritual condition of the remnant in Jerusalem now to be?

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- 7) Using the blanks below, list some of the topics covered in the king's edict.
- v. 13 _____
- vv. 15-18 _____
- vv. 21-24 _____
- v. 25 _____
- v. 26 _____
- 8) *Thought question:* be able to harmonize this decree with the actions of Artaxerxes I recorded back in 4:7-23. [Refer to Lesson 4, ppg. 9-10]
- 9) How does Ezra praise the Persian king? (7:27-28)
- 10) What is listed in 8:1-14? How many men are numbered? What would you guess the total to be including women & children? How does this compare to the 1st group? (2:64-65)
- 11) What happens along the way to Jerusalem? (8:15) What did Ezra do? (8:16-20)
- 12) Before resuming the journey, what did Ezra do? (8:21) How had he previously shown his faith to Artaxerxes I? (8:22-23)
- 13) What did Ezra do next? (8:24-30)
- 14) How did God vindicate Ezra's faith in Him? (8:31-32; cp. Hag. 1:13; Heb. 13:5b-6)
- 15) What does Ezra do on the 4th day after arriving in Jerusalem? (8:33-36)