

# EXILE AND RETURN Lesson 11

## FIRST DAY

### Read Lesson 10 Notes

## SECOND DAY:

### Read Ezra 7:1-10

#### Ezra Comes to Jerusalem

[7:1] After these things, during the reign of Artaxerxes king of Persia, Ezra son of Seraiah, the son of Azariah, the son of Hilkiah, [2] the son of Shallum, the son of Zadok, the son of Ahitub, [3] the son of Amariah, the son of Azariah, the son of Meraioth, [4] the son of Zerahiah, the son of Uzzi, the son of Bukki, [5] the son of Abishua, the son of Phinehas, the son of Eleazar, the son of Aaron the chief priest— [6] this Ezra came up from Babylon. He was a teacher well versed in the Law of Moses, which the LORD, the God of Israel, had given. The king had granted him everything he asked, for the hand of the LORD his God was on him. [7] Some of the Israelites, including priests, Levites, singers, gatekeepers and temple servants, also came up to Jerusalem in the seventh year of King Artaxerxes.

[8] Ezra arrived in Jerusalem in the fifth month of the seventh year of the king. [9] He had begun his journey from Babylon on the first day of the first month, and he arrived in Jerusalem on the first day of the fifth month, for the gracious hand of his God was on him. [10] For Ezra had devoted himself to the study and observance of the Law of the LORD, and to teaching its decrees and laws in Israel.

## THIRD Day:

### Read Ezra 7:11-28

#### King Artaxerxes' Letter to Ezra

[11] This is a copy of the letter King Artaxerxes had given to Ezra the priest and teacher, a man learned in matters concerning the commands and decrees of the LORD for Israel:

[12] Artaxerxes, king of kings,

To Ezra the priest, a teacher of the Law of the God of heaven:

Greetings.

[13] Now I decree that any of the Israelites in my kingdom, including priests and Levites, who wish to go to Jerusalem with you, may go. [14] You are sent by the king and his seven advisers to inquire about Judah and Jerusalem with regard to the Law of your God, which is in your hand. [15] Moreover, you are to take with you the silver and gold that the king and his advisers have freely given to the God of Israel, whose dwelling is in Jerusalem, [16] together with all the silver and gold you may obtain from the province of Babylon, as well as the freewill offerings of the people and priests for the temple of their God in Jerusalem. [17] With this money be sure to buy bulls, rams and male lambs, together with their grain offerings and drink offerings, and sacrifice them on the altar of the temple of your God in Jerusalem.

[18] You and your brother Jews may then do whatever seems best with the rest of the silver and gold, in accordance with the will of your God. [19] Deliver to the God of Jerusalem all the articles entrusted to you for worship in the temple of your God. [20] And anything else needed for the temple of your God that you may have occasion to supply, you may provide from the royal treasury.

[21] Now I, King Artaxerxes, order all the treasurers of Trans-Euphrates to provide with diligence whatever Ezra the priest, a teacher of the Law of the God of heaven, may ask of you— [22] up to a hundred talents of silver, a hundred cors of wheat, a hundred baths of wine, a hundred baths of olive oil, and salt without limit. [23] Whatever the God of heaven has prescribed, let it be done with diligence

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for the temple of the God of heaven. Why should there be wrath against the realm of the king and of his sons? [24] You are also to know that you have no authority to impose taxes, tribute or duty on any of the priests, Levites, singers, gatekeepers, temple servants or other workers at this house of God.

[25] And you, Ezra, in accordance with the wisdom of your God, which you possess, appoint magistrates and judges to administer justice to all the people of Trans-Euphrates—all who know the laws of your God. And you are to teach any who do not know them. [26] Whoever does not obey the law of your God and the law of the king must surely be punished by death, banishment, confiscation of property, or imprisonment.

[27] Praise be to the LORD, the God of our fathers, who has put it into the king's heart to bring honor to the house of the LORD in Jerusalem in this way [28] and who has extended his good favor to me before the king and his advisers and all the king's powerful officials. Because the hand of the LORD my God was on me, I took courage and gathered leading men from Israel to go up with me.

## **FOURTH DAY:**

### **Read Ezra 8:1-20**

#### **List of the Family Heads Returning With Ezra**

[8:1] These are the family heads and those registered with them who came up with me from Babylon during the reign of King Artaxerxes:

[2] of the descendants of Phinehas, Gershom;

of the descendants of Ithamar, Daniel;  
of the descendants of David, Hattush [3] of the descendants of Shecaniah;  
of the descendants of Parosh, Zechariah, and with him were registered 150 men;

[4] of the descendants of Pahath-Moab, Eliehoenai son of Zerahiah, and with him 200 men;

[5] of the descendants of Zattu, Shecaniah son of Jahaziel, and with him 300 men;

[6] of the descendants of Adin, Ebed son of Jonathan, and with him 50 men;

[7] of the descendants of Elam, Jeshaiiah son of Athaliah, and with him 70 men;

[8] of the descendants of Shephatiah, Zebadiah son of Michael, and with him 80 men;

[9] of the descendants of Joab, Obadiah son of Jehiel, and with him 218 men;

[10] of the descendants of Bani, Shelomith son of Josiphiah, and with him 160 men;

[11] of the descendants of Bebai, Zechariah son of Bebai, and with him 28 men;

[12] of the descendants of Azgad, Johanan son of Hakkatan, and with him 110 men;

[13] of the descendants of Adonikam, the last ones, whose names were Eliphelet, Jeuel and Shemaiah, and with them 60 men;

[14] of the descendants of Bigvai, Uthai and Zaccur, and with them 70 men.

#### **The Return to Jerusalem**

[15] I assembled them at the canal that flows toward Ahava, and we camped there three days. When I checked among the people and the priests, I found no Levites there. [16] So I summoned Eliezer, Ariel, Shemaiah, Elnathan, Jarib, Elnathan, Nathan, Zechariah and Meshullam, who were leaders, and Joarib and Elnathan, who were men of learning, [17] and I sent them to Iddo, the leader in Casiphia. I told them what to say to Iddo and his kinsmen, the temple servants in Casiphia, so that they might bring attendants to us for the house of our God. [18] Because the gracious hand of our God was on us, they brought us Sherebiah, a capable man, from the descendants of Mahli son of Levi, the son of Israel, and Sherebiah's sons and brothers, 18 men; [19] and Hashabiah, together with Jeshaiiah from the descendants of Merari, and his brothers and nephews, 20 men. [20] They also brought 220 of the temple servants—a body that David and the officials had established to assist the Levites. All were registered by name.

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## **FIFTH DAY**

### **Read Ezra 8:21-36**

[21] There, by the Ahava Canal, I proclaimed a fast, so that we might humble ourselves before our God and ask him for a safe journey for us and our children, with all our possessions. [22] I was ashamed to ask the king for soldiers and horsemen to protect us from enemies on the road, because we had told the king, “The gracious hand of our God is on everyone who looks to him, but his great anger is against all who forsake him.” [23] So we fasted and petitioned our God about this, and he answered our prayer.

[24] Then I set apart twelve of the leading priests, together with Sherebiah, Hashabiah and ten of their brothers, [25] and I weighed out to them the offering of silver and gold and the articles that the king, his advisers, his officials and all Israel present there had donated for the house of our God. [26] I weighed out to them 650 talents of silver, silver articles weighing 100 talents, 100 talents of gold, [27] 20 bowls of gold valued at 1,000 darics, and two fine articles of polished bronze, as precious as gold.

[28] I said to them, “You as well as these articles are consecrated to the LORD. The silver and gold are a freewill offering to the LORD, the God of your fathers. [29] Guard them carefully until you weigh them out in the chambers of the house of the LORD in Jerusalem before the leading priests and the Levites and the family heads of Israel.” [30] Then the priests and Levites received the silver and gold and sacred articles that had been weighed out to be taken to the house of our God in Jerusalem.

[31] On the twelfth day of the first month we set out from the Ahava Canal to go to Jerusalem. The hand of our God was on us, and he protected us from enemies and bandits along the way. [32] So we arrived in Jerusalem, where we rested three days.

[33] On the fourth day, in the house of our God, we weighed out the silver and gold and the sacred articles into the hands of Meremoth son of Uriah, the priest. Eleazar son of Phinehas was with him, and so were the Levites Jozabad son of Jeshua and Noadiah son of Binnui. [34] Everything was accounted for by number and weight, and the entire weight was recorded at that time.

[35] Then the exiles who had returned from captivity sacrificed burnt offerings to the God of Israel: twelve bulls for all Israel, ninety-six rams, seventy-seven male lambs and, as a sin offering, twelve male goats. All this was a burnt offering to the LORD. [36] They also delivered the king's orders to the royal satraps and to the governors of Trans-Euphrates, who then gave assistance to the people and to the house of God.

## **SIXTH DAY:**

### **Review Ezra 7-8**

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### Ezra 8

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