### Ezra

## Chapter 7

1It was during the reign of ArthaSastha the king of Persia, that Ezra returned from Babylon.  
  
[Ezra was:]  
  
 • The son of SeraiJah,  
 • The son of AzariJah,  
 • The son of HilkiJah,  
 • 2The son of ShalLum,  
 • The son of ZaDok,  
 • The son of AhiTob,  
 • 3The son of AmariJah,  
 • The son of AzariJah,  
 • The son of MeraiOth,  
 • 4The son of ZerahiJah,  
 • The son of UzZi,  
 • The son of BukKi,  
 • 5The son of AbiShua,  
 • The son of PhneHas,  
 • The son EliEzer,  
 • The son of Aaron, The first Priest.  
  
6He was a scribe who was well-versed in the Law that Jehovah the God of IsraEl had given to Moses. And because the hand of his God Jehovah was with him, the king gave him everything that he requested.  
  
7Then the sons of IsraEl, the Priests, the Levites, the singers, the gatekeepers, 8and the Nethinim returned to JeruSalem in the 5th month of the 7th year of the reign of King ArthaSastha.  
  
9It was on the 1st day of the 1st month that he arranged for their return from Babylon, and it was on the 1st day of the 5th month that [Ezra] came to JeruSalem, because the good hand of his God was upon him.  
  
10Now, Ezra had prepared his heart to search the Law of Jehovah and then to practice and teach all its regulations and decisions to IsraEl.  
  
11King ArthaSastha also gave a copy of the following edict to the Priest Ezra (who was the scribe of the scroll of the words of the Commandments of Jehovah), which contained his orders concerning IsraEl.  
  
[The decree said]:  
  
 12‘ArthaSastha (the king of kings) to the Priest Ezra, the scribe of the Law of the God of heaven:  
  
 13‘May my reply to this matter now be initiated, for I’ve sent a decree that tells all those in my kingdom among the people of IsraEl, including their Priests and Levites who wish to return to JeruSalem with you, that they may go there.  
  
 14‘And here, before the king and his 7 advisors, I’m sending you to oversee Judah and JeruSalem according to the Law of your God! 15You are to carry all the silver and gold to the Temple of Jehovah that the king and his counselors are willing to donate to the God of IsraEl who camps in JeruSalem, 16as well as all the silver and gold that you can find in Babylon, as an offering.  
  
 ‘This is in addition to whatever your people may wish to offer to the Temple of your God in JeruSalem.  
  
 17‘Now, for everyone who’s willing to go, you must (by this edict) arrange for them to bring along calves, rams, lambs, sacrifices, and drink offerings for presentation at the Altar of your God in JeruSalem.  
  
 18‘Also, carry along anything that you and your brothers see that you [will need], in addition to the silver and gold.  
  
 ‘Do whatever pleases your God!  
  
 19‘Carry with you the items that were given to you for the services at the Temple of God, and present them before your God in JeruSalem. 20Also, carry along anything else that you see will be needed for your God from the treasury in the king’s palace.  
  
 21‘I, King ArthaSastha, have also sent a decree regarding the treasuries that are on the other side of the river, that whatever Ezra the Priest and scribe of the Law of the God of heaven asks of [those people] must be readily obeyed.  
  
 22‘They must give you:  
  
 • 3 tons (2,700kg) of silver,  
 • 600 bushels of wheat,  
 • 600 gallons (2,200l) of wine,  
 • 600 gallons (2,200l) of olive oil, and  
 • salt (no amount was specified).  
  
 23‘They must supply whatever the God of heaven has decreed for the Temple of the God of heaven!  
  
 ‘They must be very careful to do this, for any attempt against the Temple of the God of heaven at any time will bring [my] rage upon the king of that kingdom and upon his sons.  
  
 24‘And let it be made known that in regard to all the Priests, Levites, singers, gatekeepers, Nethinim, and officials at the Temple of God... No one is authorized to impose any sort of tax or toll upon them!  
  
 25‘As for you, O Ezra:  
  
 ‘Use the wisdom of God that’s been placed in your hands to appoint scribes, as well as judges who know the Laws of your God, so as to judge all the people on the other side of the river and to teach them to anyone who doesn’t already know them!  
  
 26‘Then you must decide whether any person who doesn’t diligently obey the Laws of God and the laws of the king must be killed, exiled, taught, fined, or locked in prison.’  
  
  
27O praise Jehovah the God of our ancestors who put it into the heart of the king to glorify the Temple of Jehovah in JeruSalem this great way, 28and for causing the eyes of the king, his advisors, and his leading men to look so mercifully upon me!  
  
[And praise] the good hand of my God Jehovah that has strengthened me, so that I could gather all the leaders of IsraEl and bring them back with me!