



Minor Prophets

Lesson 15

Ezra 7-10 The Return

“Now after these things...” The first group of Jews had returned by the decree of Cyrus king of Persia and completed the initial building projects under the leadership of Zerubbabel. The Temple had been rebuilt and dedicated during the reign of Darius (Ezra 6:15), and they had celebrated Passover together. Now, approximately 55-58 years have passed, and Artaxerxes is king (probably Artaxerxes Longimanus 458 BC). Ezra the Scribe was a part of the first group that had returned (Nehemiah 12:1), but he had gone back to Babylon sometime during those interim years. During the time between these two groups’ return to Jerusalem, the events of Esther took place in Persia.

In chapter 7, we are told of Ezra’s return with the second group which consisted of much of the

Levites and priests. They were entrusted with the responsibility of returning many of the valuable pieces that had been removed from the temple many years earlier as well as delivering monetary offerings from Persia. Ezra was also given a commission by King Artaxerxes to teach the people the Law of God and give instruction on how to follow it fully. “And you, Ezra, according to the wisdom of your God which is in your hand, appoint magistrates and judges that they may judge all the people who are in the province beyond the River, even all those who know the laws of your God; and you may teach anyone who is ignorant of them. And whoever will not observe that law of your God and the law of the king, let judgment be executed upon him strictly, whether for death or for banishment or for confiscation of goods or for imprisonment.” Ezra 7:25-26

READ CHAPTER 7

1. According to Ezra 7:9, how long did it take to make the journey?

2. *What can we assume was Ezra's reason for returning? 7:10*



A scribe had gained increased importance during the captivity, and their influence upon their countrymen eclipsed even that of the priest. Scribes were devoted to the minute study of the written law and sought to expound and impress upon the people the duty of its rigid observance. A "ready scribe" (vs. 6) would be prompt and skillful at interpreting the difficulties of the law at any time.

~Cambridge Bible for Schools and Colleges

3. *Summarize the instructions the king gave to Ezra. What was his motive in doing this? 7:11-26*

READ CHAPTER 8

4. *Considering what they were transporting (Ezra 8:24-30), what did Ezra do before they started their journey? Ezra 8:21 Why didn't he ask the king for protection? Ezra 8:22*

5. *What did they do with the treasure they brought to Jerusalem? 8:33-34*

6. *How many bulls and goats did they offer and what might that signify? 8:35*

READ CHAPTER 9

7. *What is the first issue of adherence to the law that Ezra has to deal with? 9:1-2*

8. *How does Ezra respond to this crisis? 9:3-4. How did this affect some of the people? Vs.5*

9. *Read Deuteronomy 7:2-4. Why was God so adamant against intermarriage?*

10. *Identify the parts of Ezra's prayer (9:6-15) that stand out to you. How might parts of this prayer teach us what is important in prayer?*

READ EZRA 10

11. *How did the people respond to the situation? 10:1-4*

12. *What was the solution, and how was it to be carried out? 10:10-17 What does this event teach you about the seriousness of sin?*

Prayer requests:

Group time notes:
