



PITWM VERSE BY VERSE

EZRA 6:13-22

LESSON: THE SERVICE OF GODLY LEADERS — June 26, 2022

INTRODUCTION:

The Book of Ezra records the fulfillment of God's promise to Israel through Jeremiah to bring them back to their land through the help of three Persian kings, and the leadership of godly Jews. The second Temple was completed and true worship restored in Jerusalem. After seventy years of captivity. One of those godly leaders is Ezra whose name comes from the Hebrew word azar meaning "help," "aid," or "protect." He is the author of Ezra and is a part of a literary work of four Books called the "*priestly history of Israel*" (I and II Chronicle and Nehemiah). All written by Ezra, except for Nehemiah. Ezra is the "seer", "scribe", and "priest" of God.

After the death of Solomon and during the reign of his son, Rehoboam, the people revolted against heavy taxes levied by Solomon and Rehoboam. The house of Israel was divided into two kingdoms. In the north - Israel, and in the south - Judah. The Israelites formed their capital in the city of Samaria, and the Judaeans kept their capital in Jerusalem. These kingdoms remained separated for over two hundred years.

The First Temple was built in 1000 BC by King Solomon. Later it was greatly ruined and destroyed in 586 BC by King Nebuchadnezzar of Babylon. Many times, the Babylonians came against and conquered Jerusalem as God allowed them, and the Jews went into exile as a punishment for idolatry and disobedience to Yahweh. Nebuchadnezzar stole and brought back all the vessels from the temple of God.

God had given charge to Cyrus king of Persia in his first year of reign (Ezra 1:1-5) to the building of the Temple of God in Jerusalem.

- Ezra 3 king Cyrus allowed the return of those in the exiles to come build the alter for offerings to God and then to begin rebuilding the temple of God.
- Ezra 4 hinderance came from Artaxerxes king of Persia. Now, King Artaxerxes of Persia issued a decree, and a search was conducted to find out the loyalty of the Jews to other kings. The word "*insurrection*" was used (4:19). Then an order for these men to stop, so that this city will not be rebuilt until a further decree has been pronounced (4:21).
- Ezra 5 ¹Haggai and Zechariah preached and kept the Jews that were of Judah and Jerusalem with the desire to build according to the Will of God.

Three decrees were made:

- The first decree to build the Temple of God in Jerusalem was given to Cyrus king of Persia by God in Ezra 1:1-5.
- The second decree (6:8) renewed the building of the house of God (6:7) by Darius king of Persia in Ezra 6:1-12.
- And the third decree was given by Artaxerxes king of Persia to Ezra the priest /scribe (7:15) to carry the silver and gold freely offered by the king and his counselors (Ezra 7:11-28).

And because God had placed the desire to repair the wall of Jerusalem in Nehemiah, Artaxerxes the king sent letters with Nehemiah to rebuild the wall in Nehemiah 1:7, 18-20.

¹ <http://www.lovetheLord.com/books/ezra/06.html>
<http://www.pitwm.net/pitwm-versebyverse.html>





PITWM VERSE BY VERSE

OUTLINE EZRA 6:1-12

1. We know that after Cyrus king of Persia's death, came Darius king of Persia. He made a decree commanding that the records be searched in the Babylonian archives of this decree to build the house (Temple) of God (6:1).
2. All the things were found in the province of Medes in the foothills of Babylon where Cyrus and other Persian kings had their summer homes (6:2).
3. And the vessels which were stolen by Nebuchadnezzar from the temple of God were brought to Babylon. However, they were to be restored and brought back to the house of God (Temple) at Jerusalem. Everything was to be placed back into its proper place.
4. Money from Cyrus' storehouse will pay for everything in the building of God's temple (6:3-4).
5. No one was to hinder or interfere with the rebuilding of the Temple. They were to "leave them alone" (6:5-7).
6. So, king Darius goes forth to make a decree describing what they were to do to help with the work.
 - Give from the king's goods the money from the tribute (taxes) to the Jews in order to finance the expenses of these men to do the work,
 - Give them the animals for the sacrifice;
 - Give them the wheat, salt, wine, and oil each day without fail for the priests (6:8-9).
7. You see Darius also had ulterior motives in helping the Jews re-establish their worship. He wanted them to pray to the God of heaven for him and his sons, and seek God's blessings for them.
8. Anyone who disobeys or alters this word or put their hands against the Temple at Jerusalem to alter and destroy where God has caused His name to dwell would be hanged.
 - All kings and people would be destroyed by God's wrath, for king Darius calls upon a greater power! (6:10-12).

That's what godly leaders do.

Faith is tested through trials—Not produced through trials. Trials reveal what kind of Faith we should have.

Faith comes by hearing and hearing and hearing the Word of God. Therefore, when the Trial comes, you already have the Word of God in you; the faith to believe you'll get through this. The Output will line up with the Input you've been sticking to. What have you been inputting into your spirit? Don't get upset with the Output or outcome when you're not concerned or focused with the Input. The Word says "Walk in the Spirit and ye shall not fulfill the lust of the flesh" Gal.5:16.

Testing and Trials will come. They come to test our Faith –Not produce it! Testing and Trials produce patience James 1:3. God sometimes won't deliver you out of something, for He's trying to deliver you in it, meaning be Patient. That verse 4 of James says "Let Patience have her perfect work, that ye maybe Perfect and entire, wanting nothing. "

LESSON: I. THE TEMPLE FINISHED EZRA 6:13-15

6:13 Then Tatnai, governor on this side the river, Shetharboznai, and their companions, according to that which Darius the king had sent, so they did speedily. Tatnai and his fellow officials responded quickly to carry out king Darius' decree. Darius had instructed Tatnai (Persian governor), Shetharbazai (Persian advisers), and companions (the Apharsachites-Ez.5:6) that were beyond the river (west of the Euphrates) to not hinder or interfere with the rebuilding of the Temple. They were to "leave them alone" (6:5-7). "On this side the river" or "beyond the river" still refer to west of the Euphrates.

6:14 And the elders of the Jews builded, and they prospered through the prophesying of Haggai the prophet and Zechariah the son of Iddo. And they builded and finished it according to the command

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PITWM VERSE BY VERSE

ment of the God of Israel of Cyrus, and Darius, and Ataxerxes king of Persia. We learn that whenever the temple of God is to be built, it is first commanded by God. You don't build unless God has placed it in the man of God's heart. God always give certain specifications to the one who would build, who's in charge—talking about a godly leader.

Well, the first temple of Jerusalem was built by King Solomon, but destroyed by the Babylonian King Nebuchadnezzar. However, the Jewish elders completed the building of the second Temple at Jerusalem. God used kings Cyrus, and Darius, and Artaxerxes of Persia to begin with. And the elders of the Jews were able to build, finish their building program, and prosper as they received physical and spiritual nourishment through the prophesying of the prophets Haggai, and Zechariah the son of Iddo. ²Haggai and Zechariah preached and kept them with the desire to do this according to the Will of God.

In Ezra 1 king Cyrus had written instructions given him from the Lord. In Ezra 6 king Darius received further instructions and in Ezra 7:20-21 king Artaxerxes was given further orders of how it was to be finished.

Can you see the flow of God's plan going on? And that His plan in your life will be finished if you stay with Him; stay connected to Him; and let go of your Will, for He will always get you to the goal line!

6:15 And this house was finished on the third day of the month Adar, which was in the sixth year of the reign of Darius the king. Ezra here gives the exact day of the completion of the house of God. The sixth year of the reign of Darius was 516 B.C., exactly 70 years after the destruction of the first temple (586) by Nebuchadnezzar, thus fulfilling the prophecy of 70 years of exile— punishment God had spoken by His prophet Jeremiah over the Jews (Jere.29:10), and now the temple house was finished the third day of the month Adar.

II. THE TEMPLE DEDICATED EZRA 6:16-18

6:16 And the children of Israel, the priests, and the Levites, and the rest of the children of the captivity, kept the dedication of this house of God with joy. This was a time of celebration just as Solomon and the people did in their first dedication of the Temple of God. Therefore, the children of Israel, the priests, the Levites, and the rest of the children from captivity also kept the dedication of the house of God with joy. It was a very much needed and fulfilling festive occasion for all.

6:17 And offered at the dedication of this house of God an hundred bullocks, two hundred rams, four hundred lambs; and for a sin offering for all Israel, twelve he goats, according to the number of the tribes of Israel. The dedication of the house of God was followed with constant sacrifices which did not exceed the dedication of Solomon's Temple. They offered less which was a hundred bullocks, two hundred rams, four hundred lambs as sacrifices. They also offered twelve "he" goats for a sin offering for all Israel. Although it was the southern tribes (Judah) who were taken into captivity, and permitted to return, and rebuild, they were conscious of the fact that Israel was a nation of twelve tribes.

6:18 And they set the priests in their divisions, and the Levites in their courses, for the service of God, which is at Jerusalem; as it is written in the book of Moses. ³Many years earlier, God had told Moses how the priests and Levites should serve in the temple. Moses wrote these commands in his books (Numbers 3:6-9; 18:1-32). ⁴The priests were Levites, but not all Levites were priests (just a few were priests). Some were keepers of the doors. Some were singers and musicians, however, all Levites were to serve the Lord.

² <http://www.lovetheLord.com/books/ezra/06.html>

³ <http://www.easyenglish.info/bible-commentary/ezra-lbw>.

⁴ <http://www.lovetheLord.com/books/ezra/06.html>

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PITWM VERSE BY VERSE

III. THE PASSOVER OBSERVED EZRA 6:19-22

6:19 And the children of the captivity kept the passover upon the fourteenth day of the first month.

The ones who had returned from exile were the children of the captivity. After the dedication of the temple, they kept the observance of the Passover on its appointed date, the fourteenth day of the first month each year, which required the Jewish men to make three trips to Jerusalem. They celebrated Passover, Pentecost, and the Feast of Tabernacles where they came to remember how God had delivered them from Egyptian bondage.

6:20 For the priests and the Levites were purified together, all of them were pure, and killed the passover for all the children of the captivity, and for their brethren the priests, and for themselves. Great preparations were made. The purification of the priests and the Levites was important and qualified them for holy service. The temple had been dedicated, so now the people were dedicating themselves to the Lord. What good is a dedicated Temple if you don't have dedicated people? The Passover was a time to put away all evil from their lives and consecrate themselves to God, and remember their deliverance from Egyptian slavery. The Levites killed the Passover animals, and was to be eaten by the exiles, the priests, and themselves. And the priests sprinkled the blood.

6:21 And the children of Israel, which were come again out of captivity, and all such as had separated themselves unto them from the filthiness of the heathen of the land, to seek the Lord God of Israel, did eat,—Not all the people were children of Israel when they came out of Egypt. There were the proselytes who had embraced the Jewish religion by having mingled with the Jews in their captivity. This means that the heathens saw it and walked in the light of the Lord with them. Let your light shine and others will see it. A significant rule regarding the Passover was that it could not be celebrated by those who had not repented of sin. Only those who had lived separated lives could partake and eat. ⁵They were all ready at one time to observe the proper rites and ceremonies.

6:22 And kept the feast of unleavened bread seven days with joy: for the Lord had made them joyful, and turned the heart of the king of Assyria unto them, to strengthen their hands in the work of the house of God, the God of Israel. Following the Passover (a 24hr. period), then the Feast of Unleavened Bread which lasts for seven days. During this time the Jews had to remove all yeast (leaven) from their dwellings, a picture of personal purification. To a Jew, yeast was a symbol of evil, so Passover was a time to put away all evil from their lives. This was now to be a joyous time in their lives, when they looked at all the things that had occurred in their lives: the rebuilding of the Temple, its dedication, the Passover, and the Feast of Unleavened Bread, they saw that they were all possible because of what God had done. All were with joy, because the Lord had given them cause to be joyous. They were quick to give God all the credit for this joyful moment. There is spontaneous joy when God's people see evidence of Him. However, in the 40yr year journey in the wilderness, it took a period of 40yrs, for a new generation to bloom. God worked through and even turned the heart of the king of Assyria to assist them.

The title: King of Assyria was held by every king who succeeded the great Neo-Assyrian Empire regardless of what country they may have come from.

This encouraged them to complete the rebuilding which strengthened their hands in the work of the house of the God of Israel. Ezra carefully pointed out that rebuilding the temple was commanded first by God, then by the kings, who were His instruments. God's will is supreme over all rulers, all historical events, and all hostile forces.

⁵ <http://www.bibletools.org/index.cfm/fuseaction/Bible.show/sVerseID/12172/eVerseID/12172/RTD/Clarke>
<http://www.pitwm.net/pitwm-versebyverse.html>





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SUMMARY:

⁶Governor Tattenai, Shethar Bozenai, and their advisors carefully obeyed King Darius (6:13). With great success the Jewish leaders continued working on the temple, while Haggai and Zechariah encouraged them by their preaching (6:14). And so, the temple was completed at the command of the God of Israel and further by the orders of kings Cyrus, Darius, and Artaxerxes of Persia. The Temple was completed on the third day of the month of Adar, in the sixth year of the reign of King Darius (6:15). **(6:13-15). Godly Leaders serve Faithfully.**

The children of Israel, the priests, the Levites, and the rest of the children from captivity kept the dedication of the house of God with joy (6:16). One hundred bulls, two hundred rams, and four hundred lambs were offered as sacrifices at the dedication (6:17). Also twelve goats were sacrificed as sin offerings for the twelve tribes of Israel. Then the priests and Levites were assigned their duties in God's temple in Jerusalem, according to the instructions Moses had written (6:18) **(6:16-18). Godly Leaders serve with Joy.**

The returned exiles kept the Passover on the fourteenth day of the first month (6:19). The priests and the Levites had purified themselves together, meaning all of them were clean (pure) and they all came together in unity. The Passover was observed and the Passover lambs were killed for all (6:20). And the sacrifices were eaten by the Israelites who had returned, and by the neighboring people who had given up the sinful customs of other nations in order to worship the LORD God of Israel (6:21). Then for seven days they celebrated the Festival of Unleavened Bread. Everyone was happy because the LORD God of Israel had made sure that even the king of Assyria would be kind to them and help them build the temple (6:22). Ezra carefully pointed out that rebuilding the temple was commanded first by God, then by the kings, who were His instruments. God's will is supreme over all rulers, all historical events, and all hostile forces. **(6:19-22). Godly Leaders serve remembering God's Goodness.**

APPLICATION:

If I trust in God's power and love, with complete dedication to Him, no opposition can stop me.

⁶ <http://www.family-times.net/commentary/the-temple-is-dedicated/>
<http://www.pitwm.net/pitwm-versebyverse.html>

