

# Ezra's Return to Jerusalem

by Chuck Smith

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*Ezra's return to Jerusalem marks a significant moment in the history of the Jewish people, as they rebuild the temple and celebrate the Passover.*

**Duration:** 25:04

**Scripture:** Ezra 7:10, Matthew 7:21, Matthew 22:37-40, Luke 6:46, Romans 2:13, James 1:22, James 3:1

**Topics:** "Jerusalem"

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## Description

The video is a sermon on the topic of living a godly life and the impact it has on one's family. The speaker emphasizes the importance of making wise choices and doing what is right, as it not only affects oneself but also one's family. The sermon also discusses the role of the Holy Spirit in a believer's life and the importance of studying and meditating on the Word of God. The video concludes with a prayer for God's guidance and presence in the lives of the listeners.

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## Transcript

Oh, let the Son of God enfold you With His Spirit and His love Let Him fill your heart and satisfy your soul  
Oh, let Him have the things that mold you And His Spirit like a dove Will descend upon your life And make you whole  
Welcome to The Word for Today The broadcast ministry of Pastor Chuck Smith Of Calvary Chapel, Costa Mesa, California  
Pastor Chuck is currently leading us On a verse-by-verse venture through the entire Bible  
And on today's edition of The Word for Today We'll be continuing with Ezra's return to Jerusalem  
As we pick up in Ezra, chapter 7, verse 1 And now, here's Pastor Chuck Smith with today's lesson  
In the sixth chapter of the book of Ezra We have the account of the completion Of the rebuilding of the temple  
And the dedication and the celebration of the Passover Chapter

7 begins now after these things And in our English mindset We would think of immediately after these things  
But between the end of chapter 6 And the beginning of chapter 7 You have a space gap of 57 years  
So it's quite a while after these things The dedication of the temple 57 years later In the reign of Artaxerxes,  
the king of Persia Now the first repatriation Of the Israeli citizens back into the land Took place under the reign of Cyrus,  
king of Persia Who made the proclamation for the rebuilding Of the temple in Jerusalem  
Now is another movement This is under Artaxerxes Artaxerxes is the longinimus of secular history  
If you are familiar with the Persian history This Artaxerxes here is longinimus He is the king of Persia  
and Ezra The son of Zeruiah Now Ezra gives you his genealogy And

in this particular time of history Their genealogy was extremely important Coming back to the land They wanted to prove that they were Jews And some of them as you remember Who came back in the earlier time Were unable to prove that they were Jews They had lost their genealogies And thus they were not allowed to minister In the temple or to come into the Men's court of the temple to worship Until they could verify that they were truly Jews As you know the Jews had Sort of a degree of entering into the place of worship They had the outer court Which was for everyone The court of the Gentiles it was known as And there was a fence around the temple And the outer area of the court of the Gentiles Anybody could come there and worship the Lord But there were signs warning Gentiles Not to enter

any further in On the threat of death And then they had The next court was the court of the ladies Where the ladies were allowed to enter in The Jewish ladies And then the court of the men Inner court yet But then on into the temple They had of course the place Where only the priests could come Into the holy place And then on into the holy of holies Where only the high priests could come So as you move further in There was more exclusion From those who could enter But through Jesus Christ All the walls All the barriers have been taken down So that we can enter boldly Right into the presence of God Coming to the throne of grace Or throne of mercy to receive grace For ourselves So how thankful we are for Jesus Christ Who has broken down every wall Every barrier that stood between man and

God And that we have this blessed privilege Of coming right into the presence of God To worship Him No one excluded Who has received Jesus Christ He is our peace Who has broken down every wall And so Ezra Is careful to give his genealogy here And it is interesting That he carries his genealogy Back to Aaron The brother of Moses So he's got good records He can carry his pedigree All the way back to Aaron However He does not Come into the family of the high priest About three generations back He breaks away from the high priesthood His great great great grandfather Or whatever Was not the oldest son And thus the priesthood Like the monarchy Passed on to the oldest And thus Though Ezra can date back to Aaron He is not of the ruling high priest family But this Ezra, verse 6 Went up from

Babylon And he was a ready scribe In the law of Moses Which the Lord God of Israel had given And the king granted him All of his requests According to the hand of the Lord His God upon him A scribe was one who was engaged In the copying of the scriptures And thus one who was always considered A student of the scriptures He was a ready scribe In the law of the Lord It was more than just a job to him It was his life And he had favor With king Artaxerxes And there went up some of the children of Israel And of the priests, the Levites, of the singers, the porters Of the Nethanims unto Jerusalem In the seventh year of Artaxerxes The king over Persia About the year 457 B.C.

And he came to Jerusalem in the fifth month Which was the seventh year of the king For upon the first day of the first month Began he to go up from Babylon And on the first day of the fifth month He came to Jerusalem According to the good hand of God upon him A four month journey Across this barren wilderness area From Babylon to Jerusalem For Ezra had prepared his heart To seek the law of the Lord And to do it And to teach in Israel The statutes of judgment So he had studied He had prepared his heart How do you prepare your heart To seek the law of the Lord?

I think you prepare your heart through prayer Through meditation And through commitment You make a commitment I'm going to seek the Lord I'm gonna study the word of God I'm gonna commit the word of God to my heart I'm gonna learn what God has to say about himself And I think it's through commitment Through dedication Through prayer That a person prepares his heart Now notice He was preparing his heart First of all to seek the law of the Lord And then secondly To do it Paul the apostle said that the Jews

Were making a serious mistake in their day Because they thought that just because They had the law of the Lord They were justified But Paul said having the law of God Doesn't justify anybody It is the keeping of the law That justifies a man Now I think that sometimes We make the same mistake In thinking that Well I go to church I partake of the sacraments of the church And therefore I'm saved I'm alright And yet we are not really doing The things that the Lord commanded Jesus said Why do you call me Lord, Lord And yet you don't do the things That I command you to do It is really obedience unto him The doing of the word of God That is so important for us As James said Be ye doers of the word Not hearers only Because if you're just a hearer of the word You can deceive yourself You think well I know all about the Bible Yes I've studied under Pastor Chuck I really have gone through the Bible But that won't do it Are you obeying the Bible?

Are you obeying the precepts of the Bible? It is doing the word That is important And so Ezra set his heart to seek The word of God And then to do the word of God And ultimately To teach the word of God Now in setting yourself to teach the word of God You are setting yourself in a position Of awesome responsibility And great accountability James warns about Being quick to become a teacher For he said The teachers have the greater condemnation You see if you are teaching the word of God Then it is presupposing that you know it And if you know it and don't do it Then you are in a greater condemnation Than those that don't know And so a heavier obligation Is placed upon those Who are teaching The word of God That we teach it correctly I am appalled At the beliefs And at the things that are said By some men who stand in pulpits Professing To be a minister of God And not believe that the Bible Is the inspired word of God I can't understand that I wonder why they are even in the ministry If they don't believe what they are drawing Their whole theology from How important When teaching the word of God That we keep our own ideas In the background And so Ezra prepared his heart He wanted to seek the word of God He wanted to do the word of God He wanted to teach the word of God And teaching Is often by doing When Paul the Apostle When he met with the elders at Ephesus Said how that for the space of three years I taught and I showed By example I lived it among you You could see by my life I demonstrated And how important That our lives be a demonstration Of what we preach Now Ezra in the next section Of chapter 7 Gives us a copy Of the decree that was made By Artaxerxes granting Ezra And his group the permission To go on back to Jerusalem So this is a copy of the letter That King Artaxerxes gave to Ezra the priest The scribe Even a scribe of the words of the commandments of the Lord And his statutes to Israel This is it Artaxerxes King of kings The guy doesn't have a problem with pride does he?

Hey man I'm in you know Unto Ezra A priest A scribe of the law of the God of heaven Perfect peace at such a time I make a decree That all they of the people of Israel And all of his priests and Levites in my realm Which are minded of their own free will To go up to Jerusalem To go with you So here is a Choice being given To those who want You can return You can go with Ezra Back to Jerusalem No one is forced to go But no one will be hindered who wants to go It is so like God to give man a totally free choice You can serve God if you want You don't have to if you don't want to You can commit your life to Jesus Christ But you don't have to commit your life to Jesus Christ You can believe in Jesus as Lord and Savior Or you don't have to believe in Jesus It is man's choice Always a free

choice of man And so the king is offering to these people the free choice Anyone of their own free will If they want They can return with Ezra To Jerusalem For as much as you are sent of the king And of his seven counselors Now though Artaxerxes was the king There was also a ruling council With the king And so they no doubt had had this meeting And determined together That this decree should be made That you might return to inquire concerning Judah and Jerusalem According to the law of your God which is in

your hand And to carry the silver and the gold Which the king and his counselors have freely offered Under the God of Israel Whose habitation, that is whose house Is in Jerusalem It isn't that God lives in Jerusalem But the house of God The temple was built there in Jerusalem And all of

the silver and gold that you can find In all of the provinces of Babylon With the free will offering of the people And of the priest who offer willingly For the house of their God which is in Jerusalem So take back the treasure that I give Out of the treasury of Persia And of course Persia was an extremely wealthy empire Having conquered Babylon Which of course controlled the wealth of the world It now was an extremely wealthy empire And of course the conquest of Alexander the Great When he conquered Persia He conquered the vast wealth of Persia And those history books that deal with Alexander the Great Such as Ludwig's Tell of the tremendous treasures Of Persia That were captured by Alexander But here are treasures that are being sent From the king Plus the offerings that they gather

From the free will of the Jews throughout the province In order that they might Bring it to the temple For the use in the buying Of bullocks and rams and lambs For the meal offerings, the drink offerings To offer them on the altar of the house of your God Which is in Jerusalem And whatsoever shall seem good to you And to your brethren to do with the rest of the silver and gold That do after the will of your God In other words the money was first of all to be Used to buy bullocks and all to offer sacrifices But there was much more money than was just needed for sacrifices So when you get there what money is left over Do with it as it seems right As you wait upon God and get direction So expend the rest of the money Maybe in repairs, maybe in the beautifying of the temple or whatever But

you can use it for whatever purpose You desire And the vessels also that are given to you For the service of the house of your God Those deliver before your God in Jerusalem And so he is sending also these vessels to be used In worship and in the service of the temple Whatsoever more shall be needful for the house of God Which you have an occasion to bestow Bestow it out of the king's treasure house And I, even I art exercise the king to make a decree To all the treasures which are beyond the river That whatsoever Ezra the priest and the scribe of the law of God of heaven Shall require of you that it be done speedily And so to those that were collecting the taxes From the various provinces that were under the Persian control To those treasures he also tells them Look Ezra is in charge

Whatever he needs give it to him speedily Up to, because he puts the limit A hundred talents of silver and a hundred measures of wheat And a hundred baths of wine and a hundred baths of oil But no limit to the salt As much salt as he wants or needs Whatsoever is commanded by the God of heaven Let it be diligently done For the house of the God of heaven For why should there be wrath against the realm of the king and his sons An interesting motivation here Actually at this point of history Egypt had rebelled against Persia And also those of Athens had rebelled And so Persia was beginning to experience some reverses Now Ezra had told the king That the hand of the Lord Was on those who for good who would seek the Lord But the power and the wrath of God was against those that would forsake the

Lord So Artaxerxes Because of the reverses perhaps in Egypt And from the Athenians Decided to seek the Lord by making this decree In order that possibly they might change the course of events that were taking place Interestingly enough Right after this He sent the army against the Egyptians And they conquered over the Egyptians And brought them again under the reign of Persia As also the Athenians were defeated right after this And so if that were his motive it worked Because the kingdom was again reestablished From the Egyptians and the Athenians who were rebelling at that time We'll return with more of our study of Ezra In our next lesson As Pastor Chuck Smith continues his verse-by-verse venture

through the Bible And we do hope he'll make plans to join us But right now I'd like to

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Box 8000 Costa Mesa, California 92628 And be sure to include the call letters of this station With your correspondence And now on behalf of The Word for Today We'd like to thank all of you who share in supporting this ministry With your prayers and financial support And be sure to join us again next time As Pastor Chuck Smith continues his verse-by-verse study Through the book of Ezra That's right here on the next edition of The Word for Today And now once again here's Pastor Chuck Smith I pray that God will bless you this week In a very special way That your life will be guided By the Holy Spirit That you'll have that sense Of God's nearness And of God's presence And especially of God's love May He keep your heart pure And holy towards Him And thus May you grow In your love and in your commitment To the things of God In Jesus' name Dad, you touch the stuff you should touch And you do the things that you should do And it's not just going to cause you pain Your whole family is going to be aching Your whole family is going to pay the price Your sons and daughters and grandkids You will see what you do Impact and effect them positively or negatively The fruit of the Spirit Gospel communication And the responsibilities of a godly man For more information Please call The Word for Today At 1-800-272-WORD Or visit us online At [thewordfortoday.org](http://thewordfortoday.org) This program has been sponsored by The Word for Today In Costa Mesa, California

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