

Ezra 5:11-13

And this was their reply to us:  
“We are the servants  
of the God of heaven and earth,  
and we are rebuilding the house  
that was built many years ago,  
which a great king of Israel  
built and finished.”

Ezra 5:11-13

“But because our fathers had angered  
the God of heaven, he gave them into the hand  
of Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon, the Chaldean,  
who destroyed this house and carried away  
the people to Babylonia.

“However, in the first year of Cyrus king of Babylon,  
Cyrus the king made a decree that  
this house of God should be rebuilt.”

Ezra 6:8-10

“Moreover, I make a decree regarding what you shall do for these elders of the Jews for the rebuilding of this house of God. The cost is to be paid to these men in full and without delay from the royal revenue, the tribute of the province from Beyond the River.”

Ezra 6:8-10

“And whatever is needed – bulls, rams, or sheep  
for burnt offerings to the God of heaven,  
wheat, salt, wine, or oil,  
as the priests at Jerusalem require –  
let that be given to them day by day without fail,  
that they may offer pleasing sacrifices  
to the God of heaven  
and pray for the life of the king and his sons.”

Psalm 33:16-17

The king is not saved by his great army;  
a warrior is not delivered by his great strength.  
The war horse is a false hope for salvation,  
and by its great might it cannot rescue.

Psalm 20:7-8

Some trust in chariots and some in horses,  
but we trust in the name of the LORD our God.  
They collapse and fall,  
but we rise and stand upright.

Ezra 7:1-6a

Now after this,  
in the reign of Artaxerxes king of Persia,  
Ezra the son of Seraiah, son of Azariah,  
son of Hilkiah, son of Shallum, son of Zadok,  
son of Ahitub, son of Amariah, son of Azariah,  
son of Meraioth, son of Zerahiah, son of Uzzi,  
son of Bukki, son of Abishua, son of Phinehas,  
son of Eleazar, son of Aaron the chief priest –  
this Ezra went up from Babylonia.

Ezra 7:6b

He was a scribe skilled in the Law of Moses  
that the LORD the God of Israel had given,  
and the king granted him all that he asked,  
for the hand of the LORD his God was on him.

Ezra 7:7-8

And there went up also to Jerusalem,  
in the seventh year of Artaxerxes the king,  
some of the people of Israel,  
and some of the priests and Levites,  
the singers and gatekeepers,  
and the temple servants.

And he came to Jerusalem in the fifth month,  
which was in the seventh year of the king.

Ezra 7:9-10

For on the first day of the first month  
he began to go up from Babylonia,  
and on the first day of the fifth month  
he came to Jerusalem,  
for the good hand of his God was on him.

For Ezra had set his heart  
to study the Law of the LORD,  
and to do it  
and to teach his statutes and rules in Israel.

Ezra 7:11

This is a copy of the letter that King Artaxerxes gave to Ezra the priest, the scribe, a man learned in matters of the commandments of the LORD and his statutes for Israel: <sup>12</sup>

“Artaxerxes, king of kings, to Ezra the priest, the scribe of the Law of the God of heaven. Peace.

And now <sup>13</sup> I make a decree that anyone of the people of Israel or their priests or Levites in my kingdom, who freely offers to go to Jerusalem, may go with you. <sup>14</sup>

Ezra 7:11-12a

This is a copy of the letter that King Artaxerxes gave to Ezra the priest, the scribe, a man learned in matters of the commandments of the LORD and his statutes for Israel:

“Artaxerxes, king of kings, to Ezra the priest, the scribe of the Law of the God of heaven. Peace.”

Ezra 7:12b-13

And now I make a decree that  
anyone of the people of Israel  
or their priests or Levites in my kingdom,  
who freely offers to go to Jerusalem,  
may go with you.

Ezra 7:14-16

For you are sent by the king and his seven counselors to make inquiries about Judah and Jerusalem according to the Law of your God, which is in your hand, and also to carry the silver and gold that the king and his counselors have freely offered to the God of Israel, whose dwelling is in Jerusalem, with all the silver and gold that you shall find in the whole province of Babylonia, and with the freewill offerings of the people and the priests, vowed willingly for the house of their God that is in Jerusalem.

Ezra 7:17-18

“With this money, then, you shall with all diligence buy bulls, rams, and lambs, with their grain offerings and their drink offerings, and you shall offer them on the altar of the house of your God that is in Jerusalem.

“Whatever seems good to you and your brothers to do with the rest of the silver and gold, you may do, according to the will of your God.”

Ezra 7:19-20

The vessels that have been given you  
for the service of the house of your God,  
you shall deliver before the God of Jerusalem.

And whatever else is required for the house  
of your God, which it falls to you to provide,  
you may provide it out of the king's treasury.

Ezra 7:21-22

“And I, Artaxerxes the king, make a decree  
to all the treasurers in the province  
Beyond the River:

“Whatever Ezra the priest, the scribe  
of the Law of the God of heaven,  
requires of you, let it be done with all diligence,  
up to 100 talents of silver, 100 cors of wheat,  
100 baths of wine, 100 baths of oil,  
and salt without prescribing how much.”

Ezra 7:23-24

“Whatever is decreed by the God of heaven,  
let it be done in full for the house of  
the God of heaven, lest his wrath be against  
the realm of the king and his sons.

“We also notify you that it shall not be lawful  
to impose tribute, custom, or toll on anyone  
of the priests, the Levites, the singers,  
the doorkeepers, the temple servants,  
or other servants of this house of God.”

Ezra 7:25

“And you, Ezra, according to the wisdom  
of your God that is in your hand,  
appoint magistrates and judges who may judge  
all the people in the province Beyond the River,  
all such as know the laws of your God.

“And those who do not know them,  
you shall teach.”

Ezra 7:26

“Whoever will not obey the law of your God  
and the law of the king,  
let judgment be strictly executed on him,  
whether for death or for banishment  
or for confiscation of his goods  
or for imprisonment.”

Ezra 7:27-29

Blessed be the LORD, the God of our fathers,  
who put such a thing as this into the heart  
of the king, to beautify the house of the LORD  
that is in Jerusalem, and who extended to me  
his steadfast love before the king and his counselors,  
and before all the king's mighty officers.

I took courage,  
for the hand of the LORD my God was on me,  
and I gathered leading men from Israel  
to go up with me.

Ezra 8:21

Then I proclaimed a fast there, at the river Ahava,  
that we might humble ourselves before our God,  
to seek from him a safe journey for ourselves,  
our children, and all our goods.

Ezra 8:22-23

For I was ashamed to ask the king  
for a band of soldiers and horsemen  
to protect us against the enemy on our way,  
since we had told the king,  
“The hand of our God is for good  
on all who seek him, and the power of his wrath  
is against all who forsake him.”

So we fasted and implored our God for this,  
and he listened to our entreaty.

1 Timothy 1:5

The aim of our charge is love  
that issues from a pure heart  
and a good conscience  
and a sincere faith.

1 Timothy 1:12-14

I thank him who has given me strength,  
Christ Jesus our Lord,  
because he judged me faithful,  
appointing me to his service,  
though formerly I was a blasphemer,  
persecutor, and insolent opponent.

But I received mercy  
because I had acted ignorantly in unbelief,  
and the grace of our Lord overflowed for me  
with the faith and love that are in Christ Jesus.

1 Timothy 1:15-17

The saying is trustworthy and deserving of full acceptance, that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners, of whom I am the foremost.

But I received mercy for this reason, that in me, as the foremost, Jesus Christ might display his perfect patience as an example to those who were to believe in him for eternal life.

To the King of ages, immortal, invisible, the only God, be honor and glory forever and ever.

Amen.

ALTAR

God saves us and judges us faithful!

TEMPLE

God is with us!  
Cultivate a pure heart.

LAW

God's will be done in us!  
Cultivate a good conscience.

WALLS

God will protect and provide!  
Go forth with sincere faith.

Psalm 33:12-22

Blessed is the nation whose God is the LORD,  
the people whom he has chosen as his heritage!

The LORD looks down from heaven;  
he sees all the children of man;  
from where he sits enthroned he looks out  
on all the inhabitants of the earth,  
he who fashions the hearts of them all  
and observes all their deeds.

Psalm 33:12-22

The king is not saved by his great army;  
a warrior is not delivered by his great strength.  
The war horse is a false hope for salvation,  
and by its great might it cannot rescue.

Behold, the eye of the LORD  
is on those who fear him,  
on those who hope in his steadfast love,  
that he may deliver their soul from death  
and keep them alive in famine.

Psalm 33:12-22

Our soul waits for the LORD;  
he is our help and our shield.  
For our heart is glad in him,  
because we trust in his holy name.

Let your steadfast love, O LORD,  
be upon us,  
even as we hope in you.