

PHM SABBATH SCHOOL  
STUDY GUIDE

EZRA  
COMING OUT OF  
BABYLON

QUARTER 1

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# TABLE OF CONTENTS

Going Out of Babylon.....	3
The First Company to Leave Babylon.....	7
Foundation of the Temple Laid.....	10
The First Protest Against the Work.....	13
The Work Revived.....	16
Difficulties Arise.....	19
Second Part of the Great Decree.....	23
Last Part of the Great Decree.....	26
The Complete Decree.....	29
An Important Prophetic Period.....	37
Ezra's Journey to Jerusalem.....	40
Jews' Condition in Jerusalem.....	43
A Separation.....	46

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## General Note

The book of Ezra contains the key to a proper understanding of the message that proclaims the opening of the investigative judgment in the heavenly courts. Daniel states that the twenty-three hundred years which mark the beginning of the judgment, would begin with the “going forth of the commandment to restore and to build Jerusalem;” but the book of Ezra contains *the only divine record of the going forth of that commandment.*

# **Going Out of Babylon**

## **QUESTIONS**

1. What kingdom was ruling at the beginning of Ezra's record? Name the king. Ezra 1:1

2. What did the Lord influence the king to do? Ezra 1:1

**Note 1.** Cyrus evidently believed in the god of good and evil much as the Parsecs of India do today, and that the God of the Hebrews was a powerful God, and to secure His favor would greatly increase his power.

3. Of what prophecy was this the fulfillment? Jer. 29:10

**Note 2.** Daniel was a prominent man in the Persian court, and no doubt had instructed Cyrus in regard to the prophecy of Jeremiah, as we find Daniel earnestly studying these prophecies three years before Cyrus issued his decree. Dan. 9:1, 2

4. How extensively was the proclamation proclaimed? Ezra 1:1

5. From whom did Cyrus say he received his kingdom? Ezra 1:2

## LESSON 01

Jan 02 – Jan 08

6. What reason did Cyrus give for having the temple built? Verse 2

7. What class of people were called to go up to Jerusalem? Verse 3

**Note 3.** The call was to all God's people, and if all had heeded the call, the work would have gone forward rapidly.

8. What help was to be rendered the poor? Verse 4

9. Who responded to the call? Verse 5

10. How and with what spirit did their neighbors assist them? Verse 6

11. What did Cyrus give them? Verse 7

12. Who had taken these vessels from Jerusalem? 2Ch. 36:7, 18

13. Where had they kept them? Dan. 1:1, 2

**Note 4.** Nebuchadnezzar respected sacred things and placed these holy vessels in the best place he had, viz., in the treasure-house of his god.

14. How many vessels were there? Ezra 1:9, 10

15. After what model had these vessels been made? Ex. 25:40; 1Ch. 28:11-13, 19

16. Who was placed in charge of them? Ezra 1:11

17. Had they been disturbed during the seventy years' captivity? Dan. 5:1, 2

18. How did God show His displeasure because of the insult offered to the sacred vessels? Dan. 5:5, 26-28.

**Note 5.** While they were drinking wine from those sacred vessels, a hand appeared writing upon the wall. Consternation and confusion followed, and while they were in this condition the army of Cyrus entered the city and slew the king and the princes. Dan. 5:30, 31; Jer. 51:57. The sacred vessels must have been scattered throughout the banquet hall. Who was there with power to gather them? The last kingly act of Belshazzar was to publicly proclaim Daniel the third ruler in the kingdom. Dan. 5:29. This

# LESSON 01

**Jan 02 – Jan 08**

gave Daniel power to command the servants to search carefully for all the sacred vessels and restore them to a place of safety.

# **The First Company to Leave Babylon**

## **QUESTIONS**

1. When the people returning from the captivity reached Jerusalem, where did they go? Ezra 2:1

**Note 1.** These cities were substantially built. Many of them had been built by the heathen that dwelt in the land before Israel came from Egypt. Deu. 6:10; Jos 24:13. During the seventy years' captivity, these cities had remained the same and stood ready to receive those that returned from captivity.

Travelers state that in some portions of Palestine the ancient cities still remain. Mr. Porter in "Giant Cities of Bashan," speaks of one of these cities as follows:

"Selcah is one of the most remarkable cities of Palestine. It has been long deserted; and yet, as nearly as I could estimate, five hundred of its houses are still standing, and three or four hundred families might settle in it at any moment without laying a stone, or expending an hour's labor on repairs." If some of the cities are still standing, it is easy to understand how Israel was so quickly settled in their cities.

2. What leading men were mentioned? Verse 2

## LESSON 02

Jan 09 – Jan 15

3. What was done with those who could not give a clean family record? Verses 58-62

4. How and by whom was the question decided? Verse 63 (margin)

5. What was the Urim and Thummim? Exo. 28:30; Num. 27:21; 1Sa. 28:6

**Note 2.** At the right and left of the breastplate were two large stones of great brilliancy. These were known as the Urim and Thummim. By them the will of God was made known through the high priest. When questions were brought for decision before the Lord, a halo of light encircling the precious stone at the right was a token of the divine consent or approval, while a cloud shadowing the stone at the left, was an evidence of the denial or disapprobation." – *Patriarchs and Prophets, chapter 30.*

6. How many Jews returned? Ezra 2:64, 65

**Note 3.** Only a small proportion heeded this call to "come out of Babylon." They loved their houses and lands in Babylon better than the Lord and His temple. Many remain in modern Babylon today for the same reason.

7. What did they take with them? Verses 66, 67

## LESSON 02

Jan 09 – Jan 15

8. Who led out in making offerings to rebuild the temple? Verse 68

9. In what spirit were the offerings made? Verse 65

10. How does the Lord regard this spirit? 2Co. 9:7

11. How did the “chief of the fathers” give? Ezra 2:69. How much was given?

12. Who dwelt in their cities? Verse 70

13. If “all Israel” dwelt in their cities, how many tribes were represented? Acts 26:7

14. For how many tribes were offerings made at the dedication of the temple? Ezra 6:17

15. How many tribes will be represented in those that come out of modern Babylon? Rev. 7:4-8

16. Will they dwell in a city already prepared for them? Heb. 11:16. See also Rev. 21:9-26.

# **Foundation of the Temple Laid**

## **QUESTIONS**

1. What did the people do in the seventh month? Ezra 3:1

**Note 1.** The seventh month was an important month in the religious service. The first day of the seventh month was the day of blowing of trumpets; the tenth day was the day of atonement, while the Feast of Tabernacles began in the fifteenth day of the same month.

2. What two men were leaders of the people? Verse 2

3. What was the first work done toward establishing the service of God? Verse 3

4. What feast does the record say they kept? Verse 4

5. When and how was this feast celebrated? Lev. 23:34-44

6. After the Feast of Tabernacles had been celebrated, what continual offering was established Ezra 3:5; Exo. 29:38, 39

## LESSON 03

Jan 16 – Jan 22

7. When did they begin these offerings? Ezra 3:6
  
8. What other feasts are spoken of as being established?  
Verse 5
  
9. What preparations were being made to build the temple? Verse 7
  
10. When did they begin the work? Verse 8
  
11. By whom was the foundation laid? Zec. 4:9
  
12. Who assisted in the work? Ezra 3:8
  
13. Who was placed in charge of the work? Verse 9
  
14. Describe the service connected with laying the foundation. Verses 10, 11
  
15. Why did the old men weep? Verse 12

## LESSON 03

Jan 16 – Jan 22

16. How did this temple compare with the former one in appearance? Hag. 2:3

17. What did the Lord say of this temple? Hag. 2:9

**Note 2.** If the old men could have known that they were building a temple, in which, as restored by Herod, the long-promised Savior would teach, they too would have rejoiced.

18. Of what was the work of building the temple an object-lesson? Acts 15:13-18

# The First Protest Against the Work

## QUESTIONS

1. Who heard that the temple was being built? Ezra 4:1
2. What request did they make? Verse 2
3. Give Zerubbabel's answer. Verse 3
4. What was the character of these people that wished to help build the house of the Lord? 2Ki. 17:33, 34.

**Note 1.** The Samaritans did not love nor fear the Lord; they wished to help build because they thought if Jerusalem was rebuilt, it would be a wise policy for them to have a part in it. Such helpers hinder the Lord, and Zerubbabel showed great spiritual discernment in refusing them. 2Ki. 17:24-34 gives the origin of the Samaritans.

5. In what way did these Samaritans show their true character? Ezra 4:4, 5
6. How long did they keep up this warfare of spite? Verse 5

## LESSON 04

Jan 23 – Jan 29

7. What did they finally do? Verse 6

8. To whom did they next appeal? Verse 7

**Note 2.** The kings which succeeded Cyrus the great were Cambyses, his son, Smerdis, an impostor, Darius I, Ahasuerus (Xerxes), his son, and Artaxerxes, his grandson.

9. Who were the leading spirits in- writing the letter? Verses 7, 8

10. How many were represented in the letter? Verses 9, 10

11. What did they write in regard to the Jews and Jerusalem? Verses 11-13

12. What reason did they give for sending the letter? Verse 14 (margin)

13. What request did they make? Verse 15

14. Give the first part of the king's letter. Verses 17-19

## **LESSON 04**

**Jan 23 – Jan 29**

15. What did Artaxerxes say about the former kings of Jerusalem? Verse 20.

16. Give the decree of the king? Verses 21, 22

17. When the Samaritans received the letter, what did they do? Verse 23

18. How long was the work stopped? Verse 24

# **The Work Revived**

## **QUESTIONS**

1. In the crisis regarding the rebuilding of Jerusalem what prophets did the Lord raise up? Ezra 5:1

**Note 1.** Haggai began his work in the sixth month of the second year of Darius I, and Zechariah began to prophesy two months later. God raised up a prophet for a special work, in order to preserve his people. Hosea 12:13

2. What reason did Israel give for not building the house of the Lord? Hag. 1:2

3. What response did the prophet make? Verses 3, 4

4. What did the prophet tell them to consider? Verses 5-11

5. How did Zechariah encourage them to build? Zec. 2:4, 5

6. How did the Lord encourage them to go forward in the work? Ezra 5:2; Hag. 1:14

## LESSON 05

Jan 30 – Feb 05

7. When Zerubbabel decided to go forward with the building, what precious words of encouragement were sent him by the Lord? Zec. 4:6-10

**Note 2.** These words of encouragement have strengthened many a builder in the Lord's work.

8. Who stood by the leaders when they determined to do their duty and go forward? Hag. 1:13; Ezra 5:2

9. What was the year, month, and day of the month that the work was resumed? Hag. 1:14, 15

10. Twenty-seven days after they began building, what wonderful testimony came to them from the prophet? Hag. 2:1-9

**Note 3.** The Savior taught in this temple, and His presence there was more than the glory of the former temple. Zechariah describes the Savior's triumphant entry into Jerusalem. Zec. 9:9

11. What wonderful message came from the prophet Haggai, just three months from the day they resumed the work upon the temple? Hag. 2:10-19; 1:15

12. What encouraging message came from Zechariah at this time? Zec. 8:9-15

## LESSON 05

Jan 30 – Feb 05

13. What does James say the work of the Gospel really is? Acts 15:13-16

14. To what period of the world's history does Paul apply the words of Hag. 2:6, 7? See Heb. 12:26, 27

15. How does the Lord regard an individual that will arise in the time of a crisis and build the work of the Lord? Hag. 2:23

**Note 4.** Zerubbabel was an object-lesson to all who arise in the strength of the Lord, and build up the work of the Lord. All who do this are precious in His sight.

16. When was the temple finished? Ezra 6:15

17. How long was this after the work of building was resumed? Compare Hag. 1:15 with Ezra 6:15

# **Difficulties Arise**

## **QUESTIONS**

1. What question was asked by the governor of the land? Ezra 5:3

**Note 1.** The Jews were building in direct opposition to a royal command not to build. Ezra 4:23, 24. This required much faith.

2. What reply was made to him? “Then we told them after this manner, what the names of the men-were that were making this building.” Verse 4, A. R. V.

3. What special protection was granted the Jews? Verse 5

4. Upon whom is the eye of the Lord said to especially rest? Psa. 33:18; Job 36:7

5. Were the adversaries able to stop the work? Ezra 5:5

6. Who was king of Persia at this time? Verse 6

**Note 2.** Darius I was known in history as Darius Hystaspes. He came to the throne after the short usurpation of Smerdis the impostor.

7. Who wrote him a letter? Verse 6

8. What report was given of the work being done .at Jerusalem? Verse 8

9. In answer to the governor's question, whose servants did the Jews say they were? Verses 9-11

**Note 3.** Their power lay in recognizing God alone as their Master. The work of the Lord will always go forward with power when the workers know of a surety in their hearts that they are "servants of the God of heaven," and not men-servers, and souls are of more value to them than wages. Then they can carry forward the work rapidly, and it will prosper in the face of opposition and discouraging circumstances.

10. What reason did the Jews give for being carried into captivity? Verse 12

11. To what did they refer as authority for building? Verses 13-15

12. How long had they been building the house? Verse 16; compare chapter 3:8

**Note 4.** The foundation of the temple was laid in the second year of Cyrus. Cyrus reigned five years after the work began. Cambyses reigned seven and one-half years, Smerdis six months, and this was the second year of Darius (Ezra 4:14), making fifteen years since they had commenced building the temple.

13. With what request did they close the letter? Ezra 5:17

14. What was the general character of their whole letter?

15. How does it compare with the letter written by the Samaritans? Ezra 4:7-16

**Note 5.** The letter of Tatnai was a fair, open, honorable letter, stating the facts in their true light; while the letter of the Samaritans was just the opposite. History repeats itself. The Samaritans “feared the Lord and served their graven images.” 2Ki. 17:41. The cause of God will often receive better treatment today from worldly people, than from half converted, nominal Christians.

16. Of what scripture was Tatnai’s letter an illustration? Pro. 16:7

## **LESSON 06**

**Feb 06 – Feb 12**

17. On receipt of the letter what did Darius do? Ezra 6:1, 2

18. Give the principal points in the decree of Cyrus.  
Verses 3-5

# **Second Part of the Great Decree**

## **QUESTIONS**

1. What command was sent by Darius to the governor and his associates? Ezra 6:6, 7

2. What provision did Darius make for the building of the house? Verse 8

3. How was the expense of establishing the worship maintained? Verses 9, 10

**Note.** Past history is foreshadowing of the present and the future. Those in the closing work who will take a firm stand to carry out the teachings of the spirit of prophecy will find Isa. 60:10 fulfilled in behalf of the work of the Lord today. Ecc. 1:9, 10.

4. What request did the king make? Verse 10

5. Give the penalty for disregarding the decree. Verse 11

6. Who did the king say would also punish those who disregarded the decree? Verse 12

## LESSON 07

Feb 13 – Feb 19

7. How was the decree received by the governor and his associates? Verse 13

8. What gave prosperity to the work of building? Verse 14

9. What relation must we sustain to the teachings of the prophet in order to prosper? 2Ch. 20:20

10. Who was the original framer of the great decree? Ezra-6:14. How many earthly kings had a part to act in issuing it?

11. When was the house finished? Verse 15

12. Who took part in the dedication of the house of God? Verse 16

13. How many tribes were represented in the service? Verse 17

14. What order was established? Verse 18. Compare 1Ch. 24:1-19 & 1Ch. 23:6.

## **LESSON 07**

**Feb 13 – Feb 19**

15. What feast was kept the first month, after the temple was finished? Ezra 6:19, 22

16. Who influenced the heart of the king to help the work? Verse 22; Pro. 21:1

17. Who will always prosper in the work of the Lord? Psa. 122:6

# **Last Part of the Great Decree**

## **QUESTIONS**

1. By whom was this decree issued? Ezra 7:11
2. In what year of his reign? Verses 7-11
3. What period of time intervened between this decree and that of Cyrus? Compare Ezra 1:1 with Ezra 7:7-11

**Note.** The first of the commandment was given in the first year of Cyrus. Cyrus reigned seven years; his son Cambyses, seven and one-half years; Smerdis the impostor, half a year; Darius Hystaspes, thirty-six years; Xerxes, twenty years; and the last of the decree was given in the seventh year of Artaxerxes, making seventy-eight years. It took nearly seventy-nine years for man to carry out the command of God; but there came a time When God could wait no longer. It may have come before, but it could be delayed no longer.

4. To whom was it given? Ezra 7:11
5. What was the first provision in the decree? Verse 13

## LESSON 08

Feb 20 – Feb 26

6. What reason did the king give for allowing all the captives to go up with Ezra? Verse 14

7. Was this the first time permission had been given for them to return? Ezra 1:3, 4

8. What were the Jews to carry with them? Ezra 7:15

9. How much silver and gold could they take with them? Verse 16

10. What were they to buy with the money? Verse 17

11. What liberty was given in spending the balance of the money? Verse 18

12. What besides money was given them? Verse 19

13. State what further provision was made for the work? Verse 20

14. How did the king show his confidence in Ezra? Verse 21

## LESSON 08

Feb 20 – Feb 26

15. To what extent could demands be made upon the public treasury? Verse 22

16. Whose command was Artaxerxes trying to carry out? Verse 23

17. What exemption was made for those connected with the temple service? Verse 24

18. What besides the worship was established by this part of the decree? Verse 25

19. How much power had the restored government to enforce its laws? Verse 26

# **The Complete Decree**

## **QUESTIONS**

1. Who first issued the commandment regarding the restoration and building of Jerusalem? Ezra 6:14

2. How many kings helped to carry out the commandment? Verse 14

3. When and by whom was the first part issued? Ezra 1:1-4. What was embraced in this part of the decree?

**Note 1.** The decree of Cyrus made provision for the rebuilding of the temple and the establishing of their worship.

4. When and by whom was the second part of the decree issued? Ezra 6:1-12; 4:24

5. How does the decree of Darius compare with the decree of Cyrus? Compare Ezra 1:1-4 with Ezra 6:1-12

**Note 2.** The decree of Darius was a repetition of the one issued by Cyrus, and embraced the rebuilding of the temple and the establishment of the worship.

## LESSON 09

Feb 27 – Mar 05

6. How much time intervened between the decrees of Cyrus and Darius? Ezra 1:1; 4:24

**Note 3.** By referring to the list of Persian kings given in the note, under Lesson 8, it will be seen that approximately seventeen years intervened between the first year of Cyrus and the second year of Darius the Persian.

7. Who issued the third and last part of the decree? Ezra 7:11

8. What do we find in this part of the decree that was not found in the other parts? Verses 25, 26

**Note 4.** Artaxerxes made provision for the establishment of the government. This was not mentioned by either Cyrus or Darius.

9. How much time intervened between the decree of Darius and the decree of Artaxerxes? Ezra 4:24; 7:7-11

**Note 5.** From the second year of Darius the Persian to the seventh year of Artaxerxes was sixty-two years. This, with the seventeen years between the decrees of Cyrus and Darius, makes seventy-nine years covered by the full decree.

10. At what date did the command really go forth?  
Ezra 7:7-11

**Note 6.** Before the captivity, Jerusalem had a government as well as a temple and worship, and a decree to “restore and to build Jerusalem” must include the reestablishment of the government as well as the worship; therefore, the command could not be said to have gone forth until provision was made for the establishing of the government. This was in 457 B.C., in the decree of Artaxerxes.

The following taken from an editorial in the Review and Herald of April 5, 1906, contains important historical data on this question, and should be carefully studied:

According to the generally accepted chronology, the seventh of Artaxerxes was B.C. 457, as is noted in the margin of the Authorized Version of the book of Ezra; but, as is the case with almost every important doctrine, some have disputed this date, and have asserted that there was not sufficient proof to establish this important position. We have therefore thought it might be worth the while to bring forward some historical evidence bearing upon this question, evidence of such a character that it cannot be set aside by mere assertion.

As the extract which we shall quote involves some abbreviations and expressions not now in common use in reckoning time, we will interpret some of them, so that all our readers may have as clear an understanding as possible of the grounds upon which the reckoning is based.

The expression “An. 1, Olymp. 87” means “in the first year of the eighty-seventh Olympiad,” therefore

the expression “An. 4, Olymp. 88” means “in the fourth year of the eighty-eighth Olympiad,” and so on. An Olympiad was “the period of four years between any two celebrations of the Olympic games,” which occurred near Mt. Olympia in Elis, one of the States of Greece. The first Olympiad was reckoned from B.C. 776.

When-ever the abbreviation “An. J. P.” occurs, it refers to “The year of the Julian Period.” This system was “a chronological period of 7,980 years, combining the solar, lunar, and indiction cycles,” which were given a theoretical starting-point of B.C. 4713. “The Julian Period was proposed by Scaliger, to remove or avoid ambiguities in chronological dates, and was so named because composed of Julian years.”

The abbreviation “lib.” is the Latin abbreviation for “book”. The expression “Anno Urbis Conditae 273” is Latin for “the two hundred and seventy-third year from the founding of the city,” referring to the founding of Rome in B.C. 754. The other abbreviations will doubtless be understood by the average reader.

The quotation to which reference has been made is from Part 1, Ch. 10, of Sir Isaac Newton’s work on the prophecies of Daniel, and it reads as follows:

The grounds of the chronology here followed [to show that the seventh year of Artaxerxes was B.C. 457], I will now set down as briefly as I can.

The *Peloponnesian* War began in spring, An. 1, Olymp. 87 (B.C. 432-31), *Diodorus*, *Eusebius*, and all other authors agree. It began two months before *Pythodorus* ceased to be *Archon*, *Thucyd. l, 2*, that is, in April, two months before the end of the *Olympic*

year. Now, the years of this war are most certainly determined by the 50 years distance of its first year from the transit of *Xerxes* inclusively, *Thucyd. l, 2*, or 48 years exclusively, (*Eratosth, apud Clem. Alex.*, by the 69 years distance of its end, of 27<sup>th</sup> year, from the beginning of *Alexander's* reign in Greece; by the acting of the *Olympic* games in its fourth and twelfth years, *Thucyd. l, 5*; and by three eclipses of the sun and one of the moon, mentioned by *Thucydides* and *Xenophon*. Now, *Thucydides*, an unquestionable witness, tells us that the news of the death of *Artaxerxes Longimanus* was brought to *Ephesus*, and from thence by some *Athenians*. to *Athens*, in the 7<sup>th</sup> year of the *Peloponnesian* war, when the winter half-year was running, and therefore he died *An. J. P. 4289* (B.C. 425), suppose a month, or two, before mid-winter, for so long the news would be in coming. Now, *Artaxerxes Longimanus* reigned forty years, by the consent of *Diodorus*, *Eusebius*, *Jerome*, *Sulpitius*, or forty-one, according to *Ptol. in Can.*, *Clem. Alexand. (1. 1)*, *Strom.*, *Chron Alexand.*, *Abulpharagius*, *Nicephorus*, including therein the reign of his successors, *Xerxes* and *Sogdian*, as *Abulpharagius* informs us. After *Artaxerxes*, reigned his son, *Xerxes*, two months, and *Sogdian*, seven months; but their reign is not reckoned apart in summing up the years of the kings, but is included in the forty, or forty-one years' reign of *Artaxerxes* omit these nine months, and the precise reign of *Artaxerxes* will be thirty-nine years and three months. And therefore since his reign ended in the beginning of winter, *An. J. P. 4289* (B.C. 425), it began between midsummer and autumn *An. J. P. 4250* (B.C. 464).

The same thing I gather also thus: *Cambyzes* began his reign in spring, *An. J. P. 4185* (B.C. 529), and

reigned eight years, including the five months of *Smerdis*; and then *Darius Hystaspes* began in spring, *An. J. P. 4193* (B.C. 521), and reigned thirty-six years, by the unanimous consent of all chronologers. The reigns of these two kings are determined by three eclipses of the moon, observed at *Babylon*, and recorded by *Ptolemy*; so that it can not be disputed. One was in the seventh year of *Cambyses*, *An. J. P. 4191* (B.C. 523), July 16, at eleven at night; another in the twentieth year of *Darius*, *An. J. P. 4212* (B.C. 502), November 19, at 11:45 at night; a third in the thirty-first year of *Darius*, *An. J. P. 4223* (B.C. 491), April 25, at 11:30 at night. By these eclipses, and the prophecies of *Haggai* and *Zechary* compared together, it is manifest that his years began after the twenty-fourth day of the eleventh Jewish month, and before the twenty-fifth day of April, and by consequence "about March *Xerxes*, therefore, began in spring, *An. J. P. 4229* (B.C. 485), for *Darius* died in the fifth year after the battle of *Marathon*, as *Herodotus* (lib. 7) and *Plutarch* mention; and that battle was in October, *An. J. P. 4224* (B.C. 490), ten years before the battle of *Salamis*. *Xerxes*, therefore, began within less than a year after October, *An. J. P. 4228* (B.C. 486), suppose in the spring following; for he spent his first five years, and something more, in preparations for his expedition against the *Greeks*; and this expedition was in the time of the *Olympic* games, *An. 1, Olymp. 75, Calliade Athenis Archonte*, 28 years after his *Regifuge* and consulship of the first counsel, *Junius Brutus, Anno Urbis Conditm 273* (B.C. 481), *Fabio* and *Furio Coss.* The passage of *Xerxes'* army over the *Hellespont* began in the end of the fourth year of the 74<sup>th</sup> *Olympiad*; that is, in June, *An. J. P. 4234* (B.C. 480), and took up one month; and in autumn, three

months after, on the full moon, the 16<sup>th</sup> day of the month of *Munychion*, was the battle of *Salamis*, and a little after that an eclipse of the sun, which, by the calculation fell, on October 2. His sixth year, therefore, began a little before June, suppose in spring, *An. J. P. 4234* (B.C. 480), and his first year consequently in spring, *An. J. P. 4229* (B.C. 485), as above. Now, he reigned almost twenty-one years, by the consent of all writers. Add the seven months of *Artabanus*, and the sum will be twenty-one years and about four or five months, which end between mid-summer and autumn, *An. J.P. 4250* (B.C. 464). At, this time, therefore, began the reign of his successor, *Artaxerxes*, as was to be proved.

The same thing is also confirmed by *Julius Africanus*, who informs us out of former writers that the 20<sup>th</sup> year of this *Artaxerxes* was the 115<sup>th</sup> year from the beginning of the reign of *Cyrus* in Persia, and fell in with *An. 4, Olymp. 83*. It began, therefore, with the *Olympic* year soon after the summer solstice, *An. J. P. 4269* (B.C. 445). Subtract nineteen years, and his first year will begin at the, same time of the year, *An. J. P. 4250* (B.C. 464), as above.

Thus, by three independent lines of historical proof, Sir Isaac Newton shows that *Artaxerxes* began. His reign in B.C. 464, and “the seventh year of *Artaxerxes* the king” would consequently be B.C. 457.

11. When was the decree of *Artaxerxes* issued? Verses 8-11

## **LESSON 09**

**Feb 27 – Mar 05**

12. How long did it take Ezra to reach Jerusalem? Verse 9

13. To whom did Ezra deliver the decree? Ezra 8:36

14. How much of the year had passed before the decree was delivered? Ezra 7:9

# **An Important Prophetic Period**

## **QUESTIONS**

1. Of what was the decree to restore and to build Jerusalem the starting point? Dan. 9:25

2. What two periods are mentioned in this verse?

3. By what two events are they bounded?

**Note 1.** The seven weeks and sixty-two weeks begin with the commandment to restore and to build Jerusalem, and close with “Messiah the Prince.” Joh. 1:41 (margin), Acts 10:38 with Luke 3:21, 22 show that Jesus became the Messiah or the “Anointed One” when He was anointed with the Holy Ghost at His baptism. Therefore the sixty-nine weeks reach from the going forth of the commandment to rebuild Jerusalem to the baptism of Jesus.

4. How many years are embraced in a prophetic week? Gen. 29:27, 20

5. How many years in seven weeks and three score and two weeks? Ans. 483 years.

## LESSON 10

Mar 06 – Mar 12

**Note 2.** Seven weeks would contain seven times seven years, or forty-nine years, and sixty-two weeks would contain seven times sixty-two, or 434 years. Forty-nine years plus 434 years equal 483 years.

6. When did the decree to restore and to build Jerusalem go forth? Ezra 7:9. Ans. 456  $\frac{1}{2}$  B.C. See Note 6 in Lesson 9.

7. When was Christ baptized? Luke 3:21, 22

**Note 3.** Four hundred and eighty-three years minus 456  $\frac{1}{2}$  years leaves 26  $\frac{1}{2}$  years A.D., or 27 A.D., the date of the baptism of Christ.

8. How many weeks were determined, or cut off upon the Jews? Dan. 9:24

9. From what period was the seventy weeks taken? Dan. 8:14; 9:23

10. What event took place in the middle of the remaining week of the seventy weeks? Dan. 9:26, 27

11. For how long was the covenant to be confirmed to the Jews? Verse 27

## LESSON 10

Mar 06 – Mar 12

12. How was this fulfilled? Heb. 2:3

13. When did the seventy weeks end? Acts 8:1-4, marginal date.

**Note 4.** Seventy weeks or 490 years were determined upon the Jews. The sixty-nine weeks ended in 27 A.D. Seven years, or one week, added to this brings us to 34 A.D. the end of the seventy weeks.

14. When did the 2300 years end? Ans. 1844

**Note 5.** The seventy weeks, or 490 years, taken from the 2,300 years leaves 1,810 years yet remaining at the end of the seventy weeks. The seventy weeks, or 490 years, ended 34 A.D. The 2,300 years ended 1,810 years later, or in 1844.

15. What four very important events are definitely located by the study of the 2300 years? Ans.—First, the baptism of Christ 27 A.D. Second, the crucifixion of Christ three and one-half years later. Third, the Gospel going to the Gentiles 34 A.D. Fourth, the beginning of the investigative judgment or the cleansing of the heavenly sanctuary 1844 A.D.

# Ezra's Journey to Jerusalem

## QUESTIONS

1. How did Ezra express his thankfulness for the decree given him by the king? Ezra 7:27, 28. What was he encouraged to do?

2. In what knowledge was Ezra especially proficient? Verses 6, 11, 12, 21

3. What did the king grant? Why? Verse 6; Pro. 22:11

**Note 1.** It was Ezra's intimacy with the Lord that caused the king to grant *all* his requests; "it was according to the hand of the Lord his God upon him." The same intimacy to-day will bring like results.

4. Who went with Ezra? Ezra 7:7

**Note 2.** From the record given in Ezra 8:1-14, there were over fifteen hundred males in the company that went up with Ezra. With women and children this made a large party.

5. When Ezra examined the company what lack did he discover? Ezra 8:15

## LESSON 11

Mar 13 – Mar 19

6. How many, and what kind of men were chosen as messengers? Ezra 8:16

7. What command did they carry to Iddo? Verse 17

8. How many were brought? Verses 18-20

9. Why was a fast proclaimed? Verse 21

10. What reason did Ezra give for not requesting a guard from the king? Verse 22

**Note 3.** It was not the safety of the party only, but the honor of God that was at stake. The king had granted every request and may have offered a guard, but Ezra had told the king of the power of God to deliver.

11. What assurance did Ezra receive? Verse 23

12. How did Ezra dispose of the treasure on the journey? Verses 24-28

13. Who had given this treasure to the Lord's work? Verse 25

## LESSON 11

Mar 13 – Mar 19

14. What instruction was given those that carried the treasure? Verses 29, 30

15. Who protected them from danger on their journey? Verse 31

**Note 4.** The desert was infested with bands of robbers, then as now, and it was not safe for a caravan to cross the desert without a guard of armed men.

16. What ceremony took place upon the fourth day after they arrived in Jerusalem? Verses 33, 34

**Note 5.** The strictest business policy should be used in dealing with the Lord's treasure. Notice how accurate Ezra was. Every article was both weighed and counted, and the record kept. "Cursed is he that doeth the work of the Lord negligently." Jer. 48:10 (margin).

17. What number of offerings were offered? Verse 35

18. What would this suggest in regard to the number of tribes represented there?

# **Jews' Condition in Jerusalem**

## **QUESTIONS**

1. What complaint did the princes bring to Ezra? Ezra 9:1
2. What was one of the leading sins? Verse 2. Who were chief in this trespass?
3. How did the news affect Ezra? Verse 3
4. How did this compare with Nehemiah's course under similar conditions, over twenty-five years later? Neh. 13:23-25
5. What did Ezra require of them? Ezra 10:5
6. What did Ezra do in the evening? Ezra 9:5
7. What did he say of their trespass? Verse 6 (last clause). Compare Jer. 2:22

## LESSON 12

Mar 20 – Mar 26

8. What had their iniquities brought upon them? Ezra 9:7

9. How had the Lord blessed and favored them? Verses 8, 9

10. Had Israel obeyed the Lord? Verse 10

11. What had the Lord said of the people of the land? Verse 11

12. What special command had the Lord given? Verse 12

13. How did their punishment compare with their sin? Verse 13

14. What questions does Ezra ask of the Lord? Verse 14

15. With what statement did Ezra close his prayer? Verse 15

16. What was indicated by the personal pronoun used throughout the prayer?

## **LESSON 12**

**Mar 20 – Mar 26**

17. How was the same spirit shown in the prayer of Daniel? Dan. 9:3-19

# **A Separation**

## **QUESTIONS**

1. How did Ezra's course effect the people? Ezra 10:1
2. What confession was made? Verse 2
3. What covenant was made? Verse 3
4. With what words did they encourage Ezra to go forward with the work? Verse 4
5. What did Ezra require of them? Verse 5
6. How did Ezra's course compare with those who will receive the mark of God upon their foreheads? Verse 6; Eze. 9:4
7. What proclamation did Ezra issue? Ezra 10:7
8. When did they gather together? Verse 9

## LESSON 13

Mar 20 – Apr 02

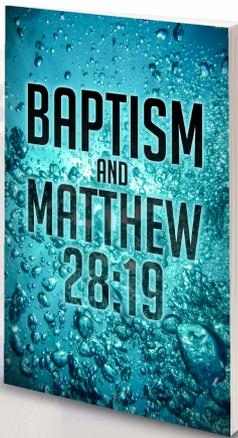
9. What did Ezra say to them? Verses 10, 11
  
10. How did the congregation respond? Verse 12
  
11. What reason was given for postponing the work? Verse 13
  
12. What plan was suggested? Verse 14
  
13. How was the separation made? Verses 15-17
  
14. What course did the priest pursue? Verses 18, 19
  
15. What separation does God require of His people today? Rev. 18:4
  
16. Can a Christian be a friend of the world? James 4:4
  
17. What is the only safe position for the Christian? 1Jo. 2:15

## **LESSON 13**

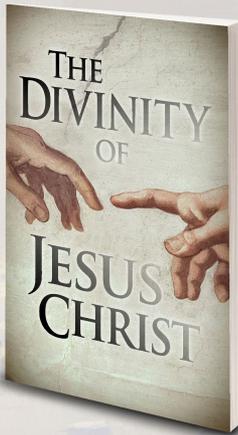
**Mar 20 – Apr 02**

18. What is Christ's will concerning His followers? John 17:15



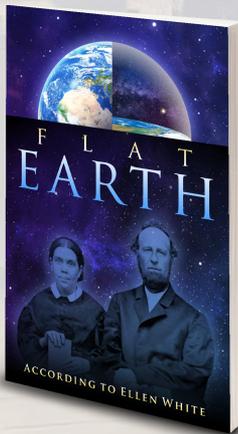


Christ gave his followers a positive promise that after his ascension he would send them his Spirit. “Go ye therefore,” he said, “and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father [a personal God], and of the Son [a personal Prince and Saviour], and of the Holy Ghost [sent from heaven to represent Christ]: teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you; and, lo, I am with you always, even unto the end of the world.” RH Oct. 26, 1897



Have you ever had a Trinitarian question your belief in the divinity of Christ? If so, it was likely for the following reason: You’ve dared to accept Jesus Christ as the literal Son of God, begotten in eternity past. Why would this disqualify you as believing in the divinity of Christ? Because of the faulty definition of divinity held by most all Trinitarians. That is, to insist that divinity requires an eternal past existence.

We will be examining a similar issue in this booklet. Some insist that Jesus was not significantly restricted in regard to His omnipotence, omniscience, and omnipresence during the incarnation. They would also say that, if Christ did not have active use of these abilities while here on earth, then He would have ceased to be divine. The definition of divinity will become important as to how we view our fully divine, fully human Saviour.



What is salvation? Does salvation depend on our knowledge of the shape of the earth? Is it important for us to understand the shape of the earth? Is proclaiming the shape of the earth our commission for these last days? These are a few questions we will try to address. We will take a look at counsel given within the Bible and Spirit of Prophecy on this subject.

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