

Ezra

Chapter 1

After the Jewish people had been in Babylon about 70 years, the Lord moved the heart of the king of Persia to free the Jews.

The king also told the Jews to re-build their temple in Jerusalem.

Dear Lord, please give freedom to
all the peoples of the world

Chapters 2, 3

About 50,000 Jews returned to Israel after 70 years of exile in Babylon.

The returnees gathered in Jerusalem for worship. They were overcome with joy.

Dear God, please help all exiles return to their homeland

Chapter 4

Having returned from exile, the Jews started to rebuild their temple in Jerusalem.

But some enemies of Israel tried to frighten and dishearten the Jews from rebuilding the temple.

Dear God, when anyone tries to stop us from doing good,
please give us courage to keep going

Chapters 5, 6

The prophets Haggai and Zechariah encouraged the people in the rebuilding of the temple.

Despite opposition, the Jews kept on rebuilding the temple.

Dear God, please help me be
a person of encouragement for others

Chapter 7

Ezra was a scholar who loved to study the Law of the Lord. He was a descendant of Aaron.

The Lord moved the heart of the king of Persia to grant any request that Ezra made to help the Jews.

Ezra prayed: "Blessed be the Lord our God, for moving the king's heart to look favorably on the rebuilding of our temple."

Dear God, please move the hearts of
all government leaders to look favorably on citizens
who want to do good things

Chapters 8, 9, 10

Before the Jews left Babylon, Ezra had organized them to pray and fast for a safe journey.

When the Jews reached Jerusalem, Ezra dissolved any marriages that had been arranged with foreign women while the Jews were in Babylon.

Dear God, please help us to remember to pray for safety
each time we set out on a journey