

COMPLETING THE TEMPLE
(Ezra 6:1-22)

- I. ROYAL AUTHORIZATION for the Rebuilt Temple (Ezra 6:1-12)
 - A. The edict of Cyrus DISCOVERED (6:1-5)
 - 1. It was FOUND in the FORTRESS in Ecbatana
 - 2. It was written on a SCROLL
 - 3. The edict ORDERED the Temple to be rebuilt
 - 4. The construction was to be FINANCED by the “ROYAL treasury”
 - 5. The UTENSILS of worship were to be returned
 - B. The edict of Cyrus REINFORCED (6:6-12)
 - 1. Forbade Tattenai to INTERFERE with the project
 - 2. Tattenai is to FUND the CONSTRUCTION from regional TAX revenues without DELAY
 - 3. Tattenai is to provide EVERYTHING for “ACCEPTABLE sacrifices”
 - 4. Tattenai must ask the Jews to PRAY for DARIUS and his SONS
 - 5. Violators would be executed by IMPALEMENT and their homes DESTROYED
- II. RAPID COMPLETION of the Rebuilt Temple (Ezra 6:13-15)
 - A. Work UNIMPEDED by Persian oversight (6:13)
 - B. Work UNHESITATING by Jewish leadership (6:14-15)

III. REVERENT DEDICATION of the Rebuilt Temple (Ezra 6:16-18)

- A. They CELEBRATED with JOY
- B. They offered SACRIFICES to God
 - 1. This was an offering for SIN
 - 2. This was an offering of THANKSGIVING
- C. They re-instituted the Priestly DIVISIONS and Levitical ORDERS (Ex. 29:1-46; Lev. 8:1-36; cf. 1 Chron. 23:3-24; 24:4-19)

IV. RITUAL CELEBRATION in the Rebuilt Temple (Ezra 6:19-22)

- A. They GATHERED to celebrate PASSOVER
- B. The priests and Levites had been PURIFIED (cf. Ex. 29:4; Num 8:7)
- C. The participants were also PREPARED
 - 1. Included “the SONS of Israel who returned from EXILE”
 - 2. Included LOCALS who had SEPARATED from paganism
- D. They also celebrated the seven days of UNLEAVENED BREAD
 - 1. Characterized by great JOY
 - 2. Acknowledged GOD’S having “TURNED the heart of the king”

V. Lessons

- A. We ought to PRAY for our secular LEADERS (cf. 1 Tim. 2:1-2)
- B. The Lord is concerned about the ATTITUDE of your HEART, not the SIZE of your OFFERING
- C. God uses the decisions of PAGAN KINGS to accomplish HIS COMMANDS
- D. All the SACRIFICES were FULFILLED in CHRIST