

EZRA'S COMMISSION
(Ezra 7:1-28)

- I. Ezra's PERSON (Ezra 7:1-10)
 - A. His PLACE in TIME: 458 BC (7:1*a*, 7*b*-9*a*)
 - B. His PEDIGREE (7:1*b*-5)
 - 1. He descended from a long line of HIGH PRIESTS
 - 2. He was a PRIEST, but not HIGH PRIEST
 - 3. He "went UP from BABYLON"
 - C. His PREPARATION (7:6-10)
 - 1. He was a SCRIBE, especially SKILLED in Mosaic Law
 - 2. By God's providential FAVOR he received the SUPPORT of the king (cf. 7:28; 8:18, 22, 31)
 - 3. He gathered a large group to RETURN to JERUSALEM
 - *4. He was DEDICATED to God's WORD (7:10)
- II. Ezra's PERMISSION (Ezra 7:11-26)
 - A. Acknowledged Ezra's QUALIFICATIONS (7:11-12)
 - B. Authorized Ezra to RECRUIT any who want to ACCOMPANY him (7:13)
 - C. Instructed Ezra to insure they WORSHIPED according to God's LAW (7:14-20)—

- D. Instructed the royal treasurers to RELEASE the FUNDS (7:21-23)
 - 1. Set reasonable LIMITS
 - 2. Eager to appease God's WRATH toward the KINGDOM, the KING, and his SONS
- E. Decreed that Israel's RELIGIOUS workers were exempt from TAXES (7:24)
- F. Established Ezra's CIVIL authority over Israel
 - 1. He was to ENFORCE the law of GOD and of the KING
 - 2. He could sentence lawbreakers to DEATH, EXILE, loss of PROPERTY, or IMPRISONMENT

III. Ezra's PRAISE (Ezra 7:27-28)

- A. For God's DIRECTING the king's HEART (cf. Prov. 20:1)
 - 1. He INCITED him to "ADORN" the Temple
 - 2. He PROVOKED him to FAVOR Ezra
- B. For God's STRENGTHENING Ezra in the eyes of ISRAEL

IV. Lessons

- A. Studying our HISTORY produces confidence in God's SOVEREIGNTY
- B. Addressing life's PROBLEMS requires KNOWLEDGE of and OBEDIENCE to God's WORD
- C. Today, biblical MORALITY must be TAUGHT by the CHURCH, not ENFORCED by the GOVERNMENT