

Celebrating God's Good Gifts

Ezra 6

God sovereignly moved King Darius not only to allow the Jews to complete rebuilding the temple in Jerusalem, but also to finance the project. The Jews responded by completing the work, and by celebrating God's goodness by observing the Passover Feast.

God sovereignly moved King Darius to approve and finance the temple building project (1-12)

King Darius searched the royal archives and discovered a memorandum from King Cyrus (1-2). It confirmed the edict from Cyrus to rebuild the temple in Jerusalem and provided instructions for the royal treasurer, making a way for him to implement the edict.

The memorandum provided the details the edict did not contain (3-5). It included the dimensions of the temple and the return of the vessels used in worship in the temple.

Darius issued a three-part decree regarding the project (6-12).

- First, Tattenai, the governor of Syria-Persia was not to interfere with the building project (6-7).
- Second, tax money would be used to finance the project and animals supplied daily for the sacrifices (8-10).
- Third, anyone who disobeyed the instructions would suffer a horrible fate (11-12).

The Jews completed the building project and celebrated God's goodness (13-22)

Tattenai carried out the instructions with diligence (13).

Several factors resulted in the completion of the temple.

- The elders of Israel led the work (14).
- The people were encouraged by the messages of the prophets Haggai and Zechariah (14).
- The Persian kings supported the project (14-15).

The people celebrated the completion of the project with great joy (16-18).

They observed the Passover Feast (19-21) and the Feast of Unleavened Bread (22).

They prepared for worship by separating from evil practices and by seeking God (21).

The completion of the temple and the resumption of worship is the climax of the first part of Ezra (chapters 1-6). The historical events provide several principles for revival.

Historical event	Principles for revival
The Jews are able to return to the Promised Land (chapters 1-2).	God invites us to return to him.
The Jews erected the altar and began offering sacrifices (3:1-6).	We need to rededicate ourselves to God through confession and repentance.
The Jews started rebuilding the temple (3:7-13).	We need to reestablish personal spiritual disciplines—Bible reading, prayer, worship, service.
The Jews faced opposition and adversaries (chapter 4).	We should expect opposition. Since revival is a work of faith, we must persevere in tests and trials.
The prophets exhorted and encouraged the people (5:1-6:14).	We need to listen to the encouragement of godly people. We must listen to God's Word.
The temple building project was completed (6:15-22).	We should celebrate God's good gifts. We must separate from sin and seek God in worship.