

The Return of Ezra



Now therefore _____ to the Lord God of your fathers, and do His will; separate yourselves from the peoples of the land, and from the pagan wives.” Then all the assembly answered and said with a loud voice, “Yes! As you have said, so we must do. (Ezra 10:11-12)

He who covers his sins will not prosper, but whoever _____ and forsakes them will have mercy. (Proverbs 28:13)

God allowed Israel to be captured by the Babylonian King Nebuchadnezzar for their lack of continual obedience to Him. (Jeremiah 25:7-11, 2 Kings 24-25, Daniel 1:6) Israel returned 3 different times back to their land after having suffered in such captivity for 70 years, just as Jeremiah had prophesied. (Jeremiah 29:10-14)

Table Section	1st Return	2nd Return	3rd Return
Period	BC 538-516	BC 457	BC 444-425
Leader	Zerubbabel	Ezra	Nehemiah
Number of People Returning	49,897 people	1,754 People	Uncertain
Bible Record	Ezra 1-6	Ezra 7-10	Nehemiah
Events	Temple rebuilding	Repentance campaign	Temple wall rebuilding

The first return of the people of Israel to Jerusalem was a time of restoration for the ruined temple.

The second return was lead by Ezra, a very skilled scribe in the Law of Moses. (Ezra 7:5-6) He studied and followed the Words of God and also taught the people of Israel of the Law, making them realize of their sins. Ezra would bow down in front of the temple crying out prayers of repentance. The people followed Ezra’s words and confessed their sins to God. They put away their pagan wives and the pagan gods that they had brought with them and presented offerings to God.

When we are far from fellowship and in a state of spiritual gloom, it is hard to realize on our own the sins that we commit. In order to recover our relationship with God, we must confess our sins to Him and repent. However, true repenting is not in words but in actions. It was by no means an easy act for the Israelites to forsake their pagan wives and children, but they put their feelings aside to follow God’s way. When we truly repent to God, as Shechaniah said, “yet now there is hope in Israel in spite of this” (Ezra 10:2), we will also have hope through His great mercy and forgiveness. (Isaiah 43:25, Isaiah 44:22)





1. When we are disappointed at ourselves for committing a sin in our daily lives, what does Satan whisper to us? And what does God say to us? (Job 2:9, Psalms 22:8, Proverb 28:13, Hebrews 10:38-39)

2. What were Israel's sins? And what did they have to do in order to repent? (Ezra 9:7-12, 10:1-5)

3. When we first realize our sin, we have a tendency to make excuses for it. Make a list of your sins that you realized and should have corrected a year ago but still have not been able to. (example: absorbed in computer games, watching TV everyday but not bothering to read the Bible, dating a non-Christian, not praying in the morning, etc...)

4. From what we've learned through Ezra's prayer of repentance, let's share in what attitude we ought to repent before the Lord upon realization that we have sinned. (Zechariah 9:3-5)

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Memory Verse(s)

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