

September 23 Answers

- 1) The story of Ezra's return to Jerusalem teaches us several lessons. First, the character of Ezra. The text says, "Ezra had set his heart to **study** the Law of the LORD, and to **do** it and to **teach** his statutes and rules in Israel" (Ezra 7:10). That should be our goal—to make God's Word a part of our very being and to teach our families and others how to please God. Second, Ezra got all the support and money he needed for the return because "the **hand** of the LORD his God was on him" (Ezra 7:6). True success in ministry comes only from God's **approval** and blessing. Third, Ezra recognized that the king's decree was a **gift** from God, and he took time to **praise** God for His faithfulness and love (Ezra 7:27–28). This teaches us to give God the **glory** for any success that comes in ministry, for without Him, our labor would be in vain. Fourth, Ezra proclaimed a time of prayer and fasting, "that we might **humble** ourselves before our God, to **seek** from him a safe journey for ourselves, our children, and all our goods" (Ezra 8:21). Ezra told Artaxerxes that God's hand of blessing was on those who seek Him, and Ezra honored God's **reputation** by staking the safety of the entire journey on His protection. This teaches us to **depend** on God to meet our needs and to acknowledge that we're not **strong** enough to make it on our own.