

Chapter 7

Efdras, with manie other Prieftes and Leuites, ascended to Ierufalem to teach, and affift the people: 11. bringing Artaxerxes Edict, declareth it to the people, 27. and geueth thanks to God.

The fecond part. Efdras instructeth the people.

And after thefe things in the reigne of Artaxerxes king of Perfians, Efdras the fonne of Saraias, the fonne of Azarias, the fonne of Helcias, ² the fonne of Sellum, the fonne of Sadoc, the fonne of Achitob, ³ the fonne of Amarias, the fonne of Azarias, the fonne of Maraioth, ⁴ the fonne of Zarahias, the fonne of Ozi, the fonne of Bocci, ⁵ the fonne of Abifue, the fonne of Phinees, the fonne of Eleazar, the fonne of Aaron the Prieft from the begynning. ⁶ The fame Efdras ^a)came vp from Babylon, and he was a quicke fcribe in the law of Moyfes, which our Lord God gaue to Ifrael: and the king gaue him according to the hand of our Lord his God vpon him al his petition. ⁷ And there came vp of the children of Ifrael, and of the children of the Prieftes, and of the children of the Leuites, and of the finging men, and of the porters, and of the Nathineites into Ierufalem in the feuenth yeare of Artaxerxes the king. ⁸ And they came into Ierufalem the fifth moneth, that is the feuenth yeare of the king. ⁹ For in the firft day of the firft moneth he began to goe vp from Babylon, and in the firft day of the fifth moneth he came into Ierufalem according to the good hand of his God vpon him. ¹⁰ For Efdras prepared his hart to fearch the law of our Lord, and to doe and to teach in Ifrael preceptes and iudgement. ¹¹ And this is the copie of the epiftle of the edict, which king Artaxerxes gaue to Efdras the Prieft, the learned fcribe, in the wordes and preceptes of our Lord, and his ceremonies in Ifrael. ¹² Artaxerxes the king of kings to Efdras the Prieft, the moft learned fcribe of the law of God of heauẽ, greeting.

^a Efdras came with the firft from Babylon (*2. Efd. 12.*) but returned thither and now ascended the fecond time to Ierufalem.

13 It is decreed by me that whōfoeuer it fhall pleafe in my kingdom of the people of Ifrael, and of the Prieftes and Leuites, to goe into Ierufalē, let him goe with thee. 14 For thou art fent from the face of the king, and of his feuen counfelers, that thou mayft vifite Iewrie and Ierufalem in the law of thy God, which is in thy hand. 15 And that thou maift carie the filuer & gold, which the king & his counfelers haue voluntarily offered to the God of Ifrael, whofe tabernacle is in Ierufalem. 16 And al the filuer and gold whatfoeuer thou fhalt finde in al the prouince of Babylon, and the people wil offer, and of the Prieftes that fhall voluntarely offer to the houfe of theyr God, which is in Ierufalem, 17 take freely, and bye diligently of this money calues, rammes, lambes, and the facrifices and libamentes of them, and offer them vpon the altar of the temple of your God, that is in Ierufalem. 18 Yea and if it fhall pleafe thee, and thy brethren to doe any thing with the reft of the filuer and gold, doe ye according to the wil of your God. 19 The veffels alfo, which are geuen thee for the minifterie of the houfe of thy God, deliuer thou in the fight of God in Ierufalem. 20 Yea and other thinges wherof neede fhall be for the houfe of thy God, how much foeuer is neceffarie for thee to fpend, thou fhalt geue it out of the treafure, and exchequer of the king, and from me. 21 I Artaxerxes the king haue appointed and decreed to al the keepers of the common coffe, that are beyond the Riuer, that whatfoeuer Efdras the Priefte, the fcribe of the law of God of heauen, fhall afke of you, you geue it without delay, 22 vnto an hundred talentes of filuer, and vnto an hundred cores of wheat, and vnto an hundred bates of wyne, and vnto an hundred bates of oyle, but falt without meafure. 23 Al that pertayneth to the rite of the God of heauen, let it be geuen diligantly in the houfe of the God of heauen: left perhaps he be angrie agaynft the kingdom of the king, and of his fonnes. 24 We doe you alfo to vnderftand concerning al the Prieftes, and Leuites, and the fingers, and the porters, the Nathineites, and minifters of the houfe of this God, that you haue no authoritie to put tolle and tribute, and yearlie rentes vpon them. 25 And thou

Efdras according to the wifedom of thy God, which is in thy hand, appoynt iudges and prefidentes, that they may iudge for al the people, that is beyond the Riuer, that is for them which know the law of thy God, yea and the ignorant teach ye frely. ²⁶ And euerie one that fhall not doe the law of thy God, and the law of thy king diligently, there fhall be iudgement of him, either vnto death, or into banifhment, or to the confifcation of his fubftance, or at the leaft into prifon. ²⁷ Bleffed be our Lord, the God of our fathers, which hath put this in the kinges hart, that he would glorifie the houfe of our Lord, which is in Ierufalem, ²⁸ and hath inclined his mercie toward me before the king and his counfelers, and al the mightie princes of the king: and I taking courage by the hand of our Lord my God, which was on me, gathered together out of Ifrael princes that fhould goe vp with me.