

Courage, Resilience, and Perspective  
Ezra and Nehemiah  
Coming Home

1. When the seventh month arrived—the Israelites being settled in their towns—the entire people assembled as one man in Jerusalem. Then Jeshua son of Jozadak and his brother priests and Zerubbabel son Shealtiel and his brothers set to and built the altar of the God of Israel to offer burnt offerings upon it as is written in the Torah of Moses, the man of God

Ezra 3:1-2

2. Large Animals are acquired, by being handed over and small animals by lifting, the words of Rabbi Meir and Rabbi Elazar. The sages say: small animals are acquired by being led. The ownership of property can be secured though money, a document or a proprietary act.

Mishnah Brachot 1:4-5

3. Apollo 11 astronauts Buzz Aldrin and Neal Armstrong planted an American flag on the moon on July 20, 1969.

4. On February 23, 1945 Joe Rosenthal took a photograph of six marines, Ira Hayes, Harold Keller, Harold Shultz, Franklin Sousley, Michael Strank and Harland Block raising the American flag on Mount Suribachi on Iwo Jima. It was quickly reproduced in papers all over the country. It became an iconic image.

5. Between 1936 and 1947 the Jewish Nation Fund sought to settle the land that it had purchased, establishing facts on the ground. During that dangerous and difficult time they built 118 “Chomah Umigdal, Stockade and Watch Tower” settlements “overnight” using an old Ottoman law which prohibited the demolition of completed settlements. Hundreds of volunteers worked together to quickly assemble the community from prefabricated parts.

6. See, I place the land at your disposal. Go, take possession of the land that the Eternal swore to your fathers, Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, to assign to them and to their heirs after them.

Deuteronomy 1:8

7. A parable: A king gave his servant a certain field as a gift, gave it to him as it was. The servant went to work to improve it, saying, “What I have is only that which was given to me as it was,” and planted a vineyard in it, saying again, “What I have is only that which was given to me as it was.”

So also when the Holy One, blessed be He, gave Abraham the land, He gave it to him only as it was, as it is said, Arise, walk through the land in the length of it and in the breadth of it; for unto thee will I give it (Gen. 13:17). Abraham then went to work to improve it, as it is said, “And Abraham planted a tamarisk tree in Beer-sheba” (Gen. 21:33). Isaac likewise went to work to improve it, as it is said, “And Isaac sowed in that land, and found in the same year a hundredfold” (Gen. 26:12). Jacob too went to work to improve it, as it is said, “And he bought the parcel of ground” (Gen. 33:19).

Sifrei Piska 8

8. All the people raised a great shout extolling the Eternal because the foundation of House of the Eternal had been laid. The old people who had seen the first house, wept loudly at the sight of the founding of this house.

Ezra 3:11-12

9. *This wording describes call and response singing like "Miriam called to them: Sing unto God ..."* and the people answered in song.

Rashi on Ezra 3:11

10. *These were the many people, the larger portion of the community, who had not seen the First Temple they greatly rejoiced and raised their voices in happiness and celebration.*

Rashi on Ezra 3:12

11. *Those who heard them could distinguish the shouts of joy from the sound of weeping of the people. The sound of the rejoicing was loud but the sound of the weeping was louder to people listening at a distance.*

Rashi on Ezra 3:13

12. In 1961 Major League Baseball came to Minnesota. The Washington Senators moved and became the Minnesota Twins. I was 11 years old.

13. When they sacrificed these sin offerings for the idolatry committed in the time of King Zedekiah (at the end of the First Temple period) they sacrificed them for the living, for those survivors who had worshipped idols in the time of King Zedekiah and were still alive and had returned to rebuild the Second Temple.

Talmud Terumah 15b

14. Click your heels together three times and say 'There's no place like home' and you'll be there.  
Glinda the Good Witch of the North

15. In baseball the object is to go home! And to be safe! - I hope I'll be safe at home!

George Carlin