

Ezra 1 (ESV): The Second Exile

In the first year of Cyrus king of Persia, that the word of the LORD by the mouth of Jeremiah might be fulfilled, the LORD stirred up the spirit of Cyrus king of Persia, so that he made a proclamation throughout all his kingdom and also put it in writing:

²“Thus says Cyrus king of Persia: The LORD, the God of heaven, has given me all the kingdoms of the earth, and he has charged me to build him a house at Jerusalem, which is in Judah. ³Whoever is among you of all his people, may his God be with him, and let him go up to Jerusalem, which is in Judah, and rebuild the house of the LORD, the God of Israel—he is the God who is in Jerusalem. ⁴And let each survivor, in whatever place he sojourns, be assisted by the men of his place with silver and gold, with goods and with beasts, besides freewill offerings for the house of God that is in Jerusalem.”

⁵Then rose up the heads of the fathers' houses of Judah and Benjamin, and the priests and the Levites, everyone whose spirit God had stirred to go up to rebuild the house of the LORD that is in Jerusalem. ⁶And all who were about them aided them with vessels of silver, with gold, with goods, with beasts, and with costly wares, besides all that was freely offered. ⁷Cyrus the king also brought out the vessels of the house of the LORD that Nebuchadnezzar had carried away from Jerusalem and placed in the house of his gods. ⁸Cyrus king of Persia brought these out in the charge of Mithredath the treasurer, who counted them out to Sheshbazzar the prince of Judah. ⁹And this was the number of them: 30 basins of gold, 1,000 basins of silver, 29 censers, ¹⁰30 bowls of gold, 410 bowls of silver, and 1,000 other vessels; ¹¹all the vessels of gold and of silver were 5,400. All these did Sheshbazzar bring up, when the exiles were brought up from Babylonia to Jerusalem.

Discussion Question

a. Describe the most surprising act a non-believing friend, family member or co-worker has

done for you. Do you think God had a hand in their actions?

Bible Study Questions

Background

Author:

Date:_____

Theme:_____

Uniqueness:_____

1. What are the circumstances and situations that led to the Israelites being conquered by Babylon? (*2 Chronicles 36:15-21, Jeremiah 25:1-10*)

2. Who is Cyrus? How did he come into power?

3. Why did Cyrus' issue the proclamation in referenced in verse 1? (*Jeremiah 29:10-14, Jeremiah 25:8-13*)

4. How are the prophecies by Jeremiah fulfilled? By whom?

5. Describe the key provisions of the proclamation issued by King Cyrus.
(See also 2 Chronicles 36:22-23)

6. How was Cyrus' leadership style over conquered peoples was different than other kings? Discuss some political advantages to his allowing the Israelites to return to Jerusalem.

11. What are some reasons some may have wanted to stay behind? What were they going back to?
(Jeremiah 29:4-8, 2 Kings 25:8-12)

7. Cyrus is a pagan king. How would you characterize his attitude toward the "God of Israel"? Do you believe Cyrus is a true believer?
(Isaiah 44:24 to 45:7, Daniel 6:28)

12. What spiritual truths can be unearthed from this study? What change would you like to make as a result?

8. How did Cyrus assure that the work or rebuilding would be supported by the people?

9. Did all of the Israelites return to Jerusalem? Was it necessary for the spirit of the Lord to move the people?

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