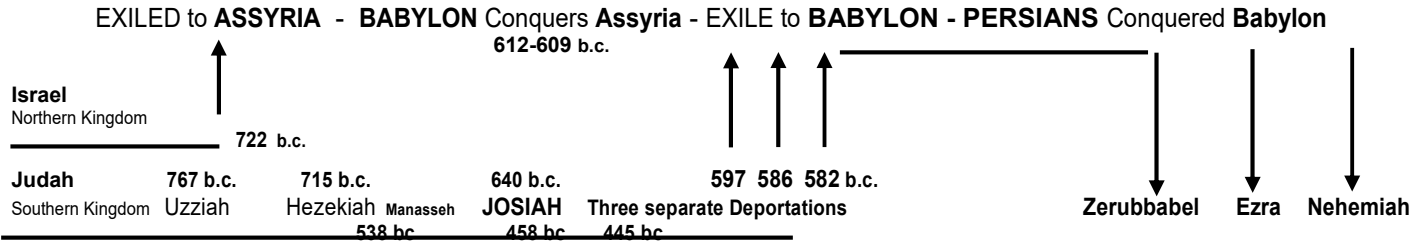


Our Promise KEEPING God ~ Ezra 1-2

→ Scripture Reading - Jeremiah 29:10, Daniel 9:1-4

INTRODUCTION



Going HOME? ~ Ezra 1:1-4

^{1:1} In the first year of King Cyrus of Persia, the LORD fulfilled the prophecy He had given through Jeremiah. He stirred the heart of Cyrus to put this proclamation in writing and to send it throughout his kingdom: ² “This is what King Cyrus of Persia says: “The LORD, the God of heaven, has given me all the kingdoms of the earth. He has appointed me to build Him a Temple at Jerusalem, which is in Judah. ³ Any of you who are His people **may go** to Jerusalem in Judah to rebuild this Temple of the LORD, the God of Israel, who lives in Jerusalem. And may your God be with you! ⁴ Wherever this Jewish remnant is found, let their neighbors contribute toward their expenses by giving them silver and gold, supplies for the journey, and livestock, as well as a voluntary offering for the Temple of God in Jerusalem.” (NLT)

IMPLICATION

Daniel 9:4 (NLT) I prayed to the LORD my God and confessed: “O Lord, you are a great and awesome God! You always fulfill your covenant and keep your promises of unending love to those who love you and obey your commands.

→ **Because God Kept His Promises to Israel we can Count on His Promises to us**

➤ **We have High Priest who UNDERSTANDS us**

Heb.4:15-16 (NIV) ¹⁵ For we do not have a high priest who is unable to sympathize with our weaknesses, but we have one who has been tempted in every way, just as we are - yet was without sin. ¹⁶ Let us then approach the throne of grace with confidence, so that we may receive mercy and find grace to help us in our time of need.

➤ **We can Come to the Throne of Grace Boldly**

➤ **We WILL go through Testing and Trials**

John 15:18, 20 (NIV) ¹⁸ “If the world hates you, keep in mind that it hated ME first. ...²⁰ Remember the words I spoke to you: ‘No servant is greater than his Master.’ If they persecuted Me, they will persecute you also...

➤ **We NEVER Suffer Alone**

Heb 13:5 (NIV) ⁵ Keep your lives free from the love of money and be content with what you have, because God has said, “NEVER will I Leave you; NEVER will I Forsake you.”

➤ **We Can RESIST the Devil**

Jam 4:7 (NIV) Submit yourselves, then, to God. Resist the devil, and he will flee from you.

Returning ARTICLES from the Temple ~ Ezra 1:5-11

⁵ Then God stirred the hearts of the priests and Levites and the leaders of the tribes of Judah and Benjamin to go to Jerusalem to rebuild the Temple of the LORD. ⁶ And all their neighbors assisted by giving them articles of silver and gold, supplies for the journey, and livestock. They gave them many valuable gifts in addition to all the voluntary offerings.

⁷ King Cyrus himself brought out the articles that King Nebuchadnezzar had taken from the LORD’s Temple in Jerusalem and had placed in the temple of his own gods. ⁸ Cyrus directed Mithredath, the treasurer of Persia, to count these items and present them to Sheshbazzar, the leader of the exiles returning to Judah... ¹¹ In all, there were 5,400 articles of gold and silver. Sheshbazzar brought all of these along when the exiles went from Babylon to Jerusalem. (NLT)

IMPLICATION

⁵ Then the family heads of Judah and Benjamin, and the priests and Levites - everyone whose Heart God had MOVED - prepared to go up and build the house of the LORD in Jerusalem. (NIV)

Hebrews 3:7-8 (NIV) So, as the Holy Spirit says: "Today, IF you Hear HIS voice, ⁸ do not Harden your hearts as you did in the rebellion..."

Ephesians 4:29 (NIV) Do not let any unwholesome talk come OUT of your mouths, but only what is HELPFUL for BUILDING others up according to THEIR NEEDS, that it may BENEFIT those who listen.

Zerubbabel LEADS the First WAVE Home ~ Ezra 2:1-2

Two Major Leaders in the Book of Ezra...

Zerubbabel chpt. 1-6

1-2 Zerubbabel leads 50,000 people back to Israel

3-6 Rebuild the Temple

Ezra chpt. 7-10

7-8 Ezra leads a group of 5 thousand back to Israel

9-10 Religious Revival

^{2:1} Here is the list of the Jewish exiles of the provinces who returned from their captivity. King Nebuchadnezzar had deported them to Babylon, but now they returned to Jerusalem and the other towns in Judah where they originally lived. ² Their leaders were Zerubbabel...

The Lists included people...

- by Family Grouping
- by Geography
- by Vocation

...⁶⁴ The whole company numbered 42,360, ⁶⁵ besides their 7,337 menservants and maidservants; and they also had 200 men and women singers. ⁶⁶ They had 736 horses, 245 mules, ⁶⁷ 435 Camels and 6,720 Donkeys. (NLT)

→Map

Giving According to their ABILITY ~ Ezra 2:68-70

^{2:68} When they arrived at the Temple of the LORD in Jerusalem, some of the family leaders made voluntary offerings toward the rebuilding of God's Temple on its original site, ⁶⁹ and each leader gave as much as he could... ⁷⁰ So the priests, the Levites, the singers, the gatekeepers, the Temple servants, and some of the common people settled in villages near Jerusalem. The rest of the people returned to their own towns throughout Israel. (NLT)

IMPLICATION

^{2:68} After they arrived at the LORD's house in Jerusalem, some of the family heads gave freewill offerings for the house of God in order to have it REBUILT on its original site. (CSB)

Hebrews 13:5 (NIV) Keep your lives FREE from the Love of money and be CONTENT with what you have, because God has said, "Never will I leave you; never will I forsake you."

TAKE AWAY ??

Jeremiah 29:11 (NIV) ¹¹ For I know the plans I have for you," declares the LORD, "plans to prosper you and not to harm you, plans to give you hope and a future.

Jeremiah 29:10-13 (NIV) ¹⁰ This is what the LORD says: "When seventy years are completed for Babylon, I will come to you and fulfill my gracious promise to Bring you Back to this place. ¹¹ For I know the plans I have for you," declares the LORD, "plans to prosper you and not to harm you, plans to give you hope and a future. ¹² Then you will call upon Me and come and pray to Me, and I will listen to you. ¹³ You will seek Me and find Me when you seek Me with all your heart.

There is strength within the sorrow - There is beauty in our tears
And you meet us in our mourning - With a love that cast out fear
You are working in our waiting - You're sanctifying us
When beyond our understanding - You're teaching us to trust
Your plans are still to prosper - You have not forgotten us
You're with us in the fire and the flood - You're faithful forever
Perfect in love - You are sovereign over us