

RETURNING FROM CAPTIVITY

Lesson IX.

Ezra 1: 1-11—Memory Verses, 2-4

August 27, 1899

1 Now in the first year of Cy'rus king of Per'sia, that the word of the LORD by the mouth of Jeremi'ah might be fulfilled, the LORD stirred up the spirit of Cy'rus king of Per'sia, that he made a proclamation throughout all his kingdom, and put it also in writing, saying,

2 Thus saith Cy'rus king of Per'sia, The LORD God of heaven hath given me all the kingdoms of the earth; and he hath charged me to build him an house at Jeru'salem, which is in Ju'dah.

3 Who is there among you of all his people? his God be with him, and let him go up to Jeru'salem, which is in Ju'dah, and build the house of the LORD God of Is-rael, (he is the God,) which is in Jeru'salem.

4 And whosoever remaineth in any place where he sojourneth, let the men of his place help him with silver, and with gold, and with goods, and with beasts, beside the free-will offering for the house of God that is in Jeru'salem.

5 Then rose up the chief of the fathers of Ju'dah and Ben'jamin, and the priests, and the Le'vites, with all them whose spirit God

had raised, to go up to build the house of the LORD which is in Jeru'salem.

6 And all they that were about them strengthened their hands with vessels of silver, with gold, with goods, and with beasts, and with precious things, beside all that was willingly offered.

7 Also Cy'rus the King brought forth the vessels of the house of the LORD, which Neb'uchadnezzar had brought forth out of Jeru'salem, and had put them in the house of his gods:

8 Even those did Cy'rus king of Per'sia bring forth by the hand of Mith'redath the treasurer, and numbered them unto Sheshbazzar, the prince of Ju'dah.

9 And this is the number of them: thirty chargers of gold, a thousand chargers of silver, nine and twenty knives,

10 Thirty basons of gold, silver basons of a second sort four hundred and ten, and other vessels a thousand.

11 All the vessels of gold and of silver were five thousand and four hundred. All these did Sheshbazzar bring up with them of the captivity that were brought up from Bab'ylon unto Jeru'salem.

THE LESSON RETOLD

God's time came at last for setting His people free.

They had found out in Babylon how bitter



a thing it is to disobey God and they were now ready to obey Him.

At this time, Cyrus was king and God put

into the heart of Cyrus to help Him.

Cyrus wrote a message to the Jews in all his kingdom. He said, "The Lord, the God of Heaven, has told me to build Him a house in Jerusalem. Who among His people are willing to go?"

Then all those in whose hearts was God's spirit said, "We are willing."

Now the Jews had been slaves so long that they were poor. So Cyrus said to his people "You are to give these Jews money, and horses, and everything they need for the journey, and for building the house of the Lord."

So their neighbors helped them heartily, and when they were almost ready, king Cyrus went into his treasure-house and brought out the holy dishes that had been taken from the temple so long before. After they were counted he gave them to one of the princes of Judah to take back with him to Jerusalem.

By and by everything was ready, and