

Ezra 1 : 1-11. Study the chapter—Memory Verses, 5, 6.

Golden Text—The Lord hath done great things for us ; whereof we are glad.—
Psalm 126 : 3.



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 freewill 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 Levites, to go up to build the house of the LORD

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 Nebuchadnezz'zar 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 Sheshbaz'zar, 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 And all the vessels of gold and of silver *were* five thousand and four hundred. All *these* did Sheshbaz'zar bring up with *them* of the captivity that were brought up from Bab'ylon unto Jeru'salem.

THE LESSON RETOLD

When God's people had been in captivity in the heathen country of Babylon for about seventy years, the Lord fulfilled His promise made through the prophet Jeremiah and others, that one day they should be allowed to return in peace to their own land.

At this time Cyrus, king of Persia, was ruling in the land of Babylon. One of his first acts after conquering the country was to make a decree, that all captives within his dominions should be allowed to go free. Guided by the Spirit of the Lord, Cyrus now wrote a special proclamation to all Jews within his kingdom, in which he called for

everyone among them who was willing to volunteer, to join with him in a great work ; "for," said Cyrus, "the Lord has commanded me that I should, with you, His people, undertake for Him the re-building of His temple in Jerusalem, which since the days of Nebuchadnezzar has lain in ruins.

That all who wished to return might be prepared both for their work and for the long journey, Cyrus next commanded that in every town and village where there were Jews, the people of that place should help them with presents and gifts as well as free-will offerings for the temple.