

Ezra 1

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SPEAKERS

Baruch Korman, Intro Voice

Intro Voice 00:03

Shalom and welcome to Vehafta Yisrael, a Hebrew phrase which means "You shall love Israel. We hope you'll stay with us for the next 30 minutes as our teacher, Dr. Baruch, shares his expository teaching from the Bible. Dr. Baruch is the senior lecturer at the Zera Avraham Institute based in Israel, although all courses are taught in Hebrew at the institute, Dr. Baruch is pleased to share this weekly address in English. To find out more about our work in Israel, please visit us on the web at loveisrael.org. That's one word, loveisrael.org. Now, here's Baruch with today's lesson.

Baruch Korman 00:42

Well, we have completed our study of the book of Numbers, and now we're going to move into another book, and that is the book of Ezra. And with Ezra, we're also going to continue. After we conclude, God willing, the book of Ezra, we are going to conclude or continue into the book of Nehemia or Nehemiah, and we see that these two men were very influential in bringing about a spiritual renewal for the children of Israel. And if we're going to be found faithful in these last days, we need to have as well a spiritual renewal, and therefore many of the things that we're going to be looking first in the book of Ezra and thereafter in the book of Nehemiah, these things will be foundational for us to grow spiritually and have a testimony that is pleasing to God, and that's what we desire to walk in obedience to Him, to witness in a way that He finds pleasing. So let's begin. Look with me, as I said, to the book of Ezra, and we're going to begin in chapter one. God willing, we are going to complete this first chapter in this first installment in the book of Ezra, let's begin. It says, and most Bibles here again, one of the great problems is that translators don't translate. They want to interpret. They want to make it easy for you to understand rather than being accurate. Let me just give you an example. As I was going over this passage with my wife, she, in her translation, which is a good translation, says in the first year, but it does not say that. It says, "U Vishnat achat" in one year, and this would be the first year of King Koresh, and that's what he is, Cyrus in English. So in the one year of Koresh, and who is Koresh? This Cyrus is the king of Persia, and notice what it says. If your Bible says fulfills. It's not the word fulfills. It means literally to bring something to its conclusion. And what is that? To conclude the word of the Lord from the mouth of Jeremiah. What happened? It says the Lord stirred up the spirit of Koresh, that is Cyrus, the king of Persia, and what did he do? Well, most will say he caused to pass a proclamation, but it's not the word proclamation; it's the Hebrew word koh, which is a voice. He simply revealed

something, he stated something, and it says he did so in all of his kingdom, and he did so also in writing, saying, "Now, what is he going to proclaim? Well, God is moving. Notice what the scripture says: that the Lord stirred up the spirit of Cyrus, the king of Persia, meaning he had a change in perspective. What was that? Well, let's move on to verse two. It says, "Thus, and again, we want to be accurate. Thus said the Lord, the God. Thus said Koresh, the king of Persia, all of the kingdoms of the earth, the Lord, the God of the heavens, has given to me, and He has commanded me to build for Him a house. Now, if your Bible says temple, that's fine, because in Hebrew we say Bethamidash, that means the holy house. But what are we talking about? The temple. So it says here that He has commanded upon me to build for Him a house in Jerusalem. Or temple in Jerusalem, which is in Judah. Now again, this is most informing because nothing is written by chance. When we look at this this house or temple in Jerusalem, what's it for? Well, when we find out that Jerusalem is located in Judah, that word Judah means to worship, to give thanks, to praise, to honor. So that is what worship is all about, and that's what we're called to do, as we saw in our call to worship every day, three times a day. So look again at verse two. Thus said Koresh, the king of Persia, all the kingdoms of the earth, the Lord has given to me, who is the Lord, the God of the heavens, and He has commanded upon me to build for him a house or temple in Jerusalem, which is in Judah. Now move on to verse three. This is vital. This is prophetic.

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This book of Ezra is not necessarily prophetic, but when we look at what it says as we continue on. We learn something prophetic, and what is that? God is going to bring the people, the Jewish people, back to the land of Israel in the last days, and that is happening. Very important that we know this. So look at verse three. Who among you, from all of his people, whose people the people of God, let it be his God to be with him, and he has gone up to Jerusalem. Now it's in the past. Why? Well, it's actually in the future. But when we have the vav in front of it, it changes it to a past understanding. And what is that? Even though God is giving this commandment at this time in verse three, it's something that that is the word of God, something that God has already determined is going to happen. So it says, and He has gone up to Jerusalem, which is in Judah, and built the house of the Lord, the God of Israel, for He is God who is in Jerusalem. Now we see something very important. We see that Jerusalem is figuring prominently in this passage of Scripture. Why? Because Jerusalem, in a unique way, is where God has caused His name, and not just his name, also his presence to dwell. So Jerusalem is a preferred place, and it is instrumental prophetically, not just in the past, but also in the future and also in the end times. Now, so many people doubt this, and it's very sad, because God has made it clear that He is coming back, and I mean the Son of God is coming back, and He's going to land on the Mount of Olives. We see this in Acts chapter one. We see it also in Zechariah chapter 14, and we see it other places as well. He's coming back to Jerusalem, and what is he going to do? He is going to defeat the enemies of Israel, and there will be numerous enemies in the last days. And what else? He is going to establish once more his temple in Jerusalem. Now let's get something straight: the next temple is not going to be a temple that is pleasing to God. It is going to have a different purpose. Instead of worshiping the one true God, what's going to happen there? It is the Antichrist temple, and what's going to happen in that place? The abomination of desolation. What is the abomination of desolation? We don't have to guess. We don't speculate. The Word of God tells us it is going to be one who will oppose and want to exalt himself above everything that is called of God, and therefore this one is going to do something. We read this in Second Thessalonians chapter two verses four and five that this one who opposes and

exalts himself above God, he is going. To ultimately take his seat in the holy of holies, and when he does so, that is known biblically as the abomination of desolation. And what is the abomination of desolation? The antichrist revealing himself that he is God, but he is a liar. He is a deceiver. So let's move on. Look with me to the next verse. We're now ready for verse four, where it says, "And all who remain from all of the places which he has dwelt there. What does it say? Says, and they will be lifted up. That is, that they will be lifted up, the people of its place, and how would be lifted up with silver, and with gold, and with possession. Now we would say possessions in English, but it's actually a singular word meaning rehus, which are possessions, and livestock with a donation for the house of God. Again, which is in Jerusalem. Now you can't read this without seeing the significance. And what is the significance? Very simply, for Messiah to come the first time, it was necessary that the people be back in the land of Israel for his first coming, and likewise for his second coming, there is a necessity prophetically for the people to be back in the land, and that's why over and over and over in the prophets, and we're talking about certainly the major prophets like like Isaiah and Jeremiah and Ezekiel, they speak of this.

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But also we see several times in the other prophets, the minor prophets, they also speak about the same thing, that in the last days Israel is going to return to the land. And why is that? So the Messiah will come the second time. Now the first time he came for the purpose of redemption. He's going to come again, and this is going to be for the outcome of redemption, the results of redemption. And what is that? Well, that is going to be the rapture of all believers, in order that we find ourselves where in heaven. Now we're not in heaven for eternity. Heaven is temporal. The Bible says emphatically, there will be a new heaven and a new earth. What is that new heaven and new earth called? Well, the first heaven and the first earth has passed away, and this new creation is called the new Jerusalem, and it speaks about the Jerusalem not of today but a future Jerusalem that is going to be uniquely created by God, and when you look at the prophecy of Ezekiel, this this New Jerusalem is also called by Ezekiel the Garden of God. Why? That there are some some resemblances to the Garden of Eden. Well, let's move on. Look, if you would, to verse five. And the heads of the fathers of Judah, they rose up, and Benjamin, meaning that tribe of Benjamin, and the priests and the Levites, for all whom God stirred His Spirit to go up to build the house of the Lord, meaning the temple where in Jerusalem. Now we've seen and we've just looked at it. If you look, you will see that in verse two, Jerusalem is mentioned. In verse three, we find that once more Israel is mentioned and also Jerusalem. In verse four, Jerusalem is mentioned, and then we see as well in verse five, Jerusalem is mentioned. So over and over, we see the significance in this passage of Jerusalem in bringing about a restoration to the plans and the purposes of God. Let's move on to verse six. And all who is around them, what does it say? Well, I believe my Bible says something different than my wife's. When she read it, it spoke about encouragement, but that's not what it says. It says their hands shall be strengthened with vessels of silver, vessels of gold, and again this possession, and also domesticated animals, and also valuable things in addition concerning all which is donated, so we see here that there is a need for people to provide resources, financial resources of gold and silver and valuable things and livestock. Why? Because God is bringing about a restoration of Jerusalem, and this is going to be done during the millennial kingdom as well. We see, for example, in Haggai chapter two, we're going to see how the nations are going to have a change of heart, that they are going to bring the desirable things to who, to the temple in Jerusalem, and that is going to be something that is going to characterize the millennial

kingdom. But let's move on. Look with me now to verse seven, and the king Koresh, that is Cyrus, he brought out the vessels of the house of the Lord, which Nebuchadnezzar had brought out from Jerusalem, and placed them in the house of his God. So Nebuchadnezzar, what did he do? He destroyed his armies. Destroyed the temple in Jerusalem, and he went into the storehouses. And what did he do? He took the valuable things out and he brought them to Babylon and he put them into the temple of his God. Verse eight. But notice the difference. But Koresh, the king of Persia, he brought them out by means of an individual called Mit Radat, who was the treasurer, and it says he counted them to Shazbazar, who was the president of Judah. Now I realize that many of your Bibles will say the prince of Judah, but it's word nasi, which means someone who is lifted up. So a very prominent person, and that's who Shazbazar was. Look at verse nine, and these are their number, and we're going to find out what these precious things are. They are dishes of gold, and how many were there? 30 dishes of silver, how many were there? 1000 and knives.

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there was 29 So we're talking about some of these vessels that have been in Babylon for more than 70 years. And then it says, "Look now at verse 10. And basins of gold, there were 30 bases of silver of a second type. A second type of silver. There were 5000 or excuse me, there was 410 And other vessels. There were 1000 So again, when we look at these vessels or basins of gold, there was 30 bases of a basins of a silver of a second type. There was 410 and other vessels there were 1000 Let's go to our last verse, verse 11, and all the vessels of gold and of silver were 5400 This was all that was brought up to who to Shazbazar with the exiles that went up from Babylon to Jerusalem, so now we're seeing something. This restoration, this group of people, they went back to Jerusalem from Babylon, and they were the exiled community. And why is that so important? Well, let's go back to another important truth. Let's go to verse one, because we skipped over this, but it's an important statement. Look, if you would, it says, in year one of Koresh, the king of Persia, to bring an end of the word of the Lord from the mouth of Jeremiah. Now, what did Jeremiah promise? He promised that the exile in Babylon would be 70 years, and when that came to an end, what would happen? God would bring the people back to Jerusalem, back to Judah, and the area known as Judah would be inhabited once more. This is that restoration, and again, for the kingdom plan to move forward again, and we're seeing it in our days. We see that the Jewish people must come back to the land, and that is what God is doing. And even when Messiah comes the second time, we read something. Let me go to that in the Scripture. If you look, for example, at the book of Matthew and chapter 20-four, Matthew chapter 20-four. Notice what it says in verse 30-one. It says, "And he will send forth his angels, who's the he, Messiah, with the great shofar, and will gather up the chosen ones from the four spirits or the four winds, from the end of heaven until the other end. Now, what is this talking about? It speaks about Messiah doing something. He's going to complete the work of his Father, and what does that work? To bring the people back to the land. That is a necessity. One of the things that we see so often when we look at end times prophecy is a Greek word, and it's the Greek word day. Now, day means something that is necessary, something that must happen, and it's going to happen in order that things can move forward on God's timetable. Understand something: even though you're going to see the Antichrist coming into his empire, we need to realize that the Antichrist is not sovereign. The Antichrist is not in control. Yes, the Bible makes it very clear that He will rule over every nation, every tribe, every people, and every language. He will do so. He will have that one world government, that empire that will rule over a fourth of the earth. Why is that significant? Because 1/4 of the earth is land, three fourths is water. So he is going to have control over

the land, but realize something: he is not going to be successful in accomplishing his purposes. And let me just conclude with one brief teaching. Want you to look at another passage of scripture. Look with me, if you would, to Second Thessalonians, Second Thessalonians, and chapter two again. Second Thessalonians and chapter two. Now this is the passage of scripture that is going to be speaking about the the restrainer, and here's the problem: all the time I hear people wanting to know who the restrainer is, and when we look at the Word of God, we find that this is not what this verse is about. And what verse am I speaking of? Two verses in actuality: Second Thessalonians chapter two and verses six and seven. Now let me point out to you something of great significance. When we look at the restrainer in verse six, he is in the neuter gender, so not male, not feminine, but neuter.

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But when we look at that same restrainer, and the same word is used, but when we look at it in verse seven, we find that that in verse seven that restrainer is masculine. So he has two different genders. What do we learn from that? Well, if you're a good scholar of Greek, when you have the same entity, but in two different genders. You know what that's telling us? It's telling us that we cannot know the identity. But let me be clear on something: the restrainer is not the church. That is the most popular teaching today, especially among those who are pre-trib. That the church is going to be removed. Here's the problem: when we look at the scripture, we do not see the church being removed. What we see is something different. It says here that the restrainer is going to basically restrain the antichrist from doing what? It's not that we know the identity of the restrainer. What we are told is we know his purpose. What is his purpose? Not to have the antichrist reveal himself other than on God's timetable, God's schedule. So what is he going to do? Never do we see that the restrainer is removed from this earth? That is a false understanding of the scripture. It doesn't say that. It says basically that he's going to simply move to the side. That's the language, not taken away from this world, as many teach concerning the restrainer, and who believe that the restrainer of the church doesn't say that, it simply says he's going to move. He's going to stop the antichrist from going forward and revealing himself until God's time. But when that time is right, he will step aside. He will simply move to the side, and then the Antichrist can do what he wants to do, and what is that? The abomination of desolation, that that wicked act that is going to be rejected by Israel. All of Israel didn't say that, but the majority of Israel will reject the Antichrist, and that's why the Antichrist is going to begin to persecute the Jewish people in the last days, and the Bible teaches that two thirds of them that begin these final seven years, two thirds of them are going to be put to death by what, by the Antichrist empire. But 1/3 is going to be saved. 1/3 is going to come to faith in that gospel message, and they are going to welcome Messiah when He returns the second time. And Messiah is coming to do three things. What are these three things? He is coming first to save Israel, that 1/3 remnant. Then what will he do? He will destroy the enemies of Israel, and then the final thing he will do is to establish that millennial kingdom, that kingdom that will rule for 1000 years over righteousness, over holiness. It will be a kingdom of justice, and what's going to be done? Sacrifices. Why are there sacrifices? Because these sacrifices are going to point to the work, the perfect work of Messiah. Let me share with you what a couple of very good Bible teachers have said. Now the first one is not a believer, and I'm talking about Rabbi Menachem Schneerson. He said this: that all the sacrifices leading up to Passover pointed towards that Passover sacrifice. Why? The Passover sacrifice is a sacrifice of redemption. When was Messiah crucified on Passover? Why? Because His work and His blood that was shed is for the purpose of redemption. And what do we know? Well, something different. Remember what Rabbi Schneerson said: All of these sacrifices before

the Passover sacrifice, those sacrifices pointed to the Passover sacrifice, because redemption is at the heart of the work of God. Well, what do we believe? Those sacrifices that will be done during the millennial kingdom. What is their purpose to point backwards to what Messiah did almost 2000 years ago, when he was crucified on Passover for sin? And what does his crucifixion do? It pays the price in full. Now, many times people will say it is finished. Messiah said that shortly before he gave up his spirit. He says it is finished. It does not mean it's simply over and done, but it means that word telestein means something was done and done perfectly, done completely, done in an acceptable way, in a way that is proper.

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That's what Messiah did when he shed his blood. He died, and his death purchased for us, purchases for us each. Eternal redemption-that's the good news, and we are going to be excited. Why? Because when Messiah comes the second time, He's not coming alone, but who's going to be with Him? Believer. Every believer is going to be on that white horse, following with Messiah. We're coming back to Jerusalem. Why? For a kingdom purpose. Because we, the believers, are going to rule and reign with Messiah for 1000 years. Good news that we can believe. Good news that hopefully we are growing spiritually. We're prepared for so that we will have a God pleasing testimony. Well, close with that. Until next time, shalom from Israel.

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Well, we hope you will benefit from today's message and share it with others. Please plan to join us each week at this time and on this channel for our broadcast of loveisrael.org. Again, to find out more about us, please visit our website loveisrael.org. There you will find articles and numerous other lectures by Baruch. These teachings are in video form. May download them or watch them in streaming video. Until next week, may the Lord bless you in our Messiah Yeshua, that is Jesus, as you walk with Him. Shalom from Israel.