

10/13/19

Ezra 1-2

The book of Ezra begins with the decree of Cyrus to repatriate the nation of Israel and rebuild the Temple.

Ezra 1

* The return under Zerubbable. Ezra 1-6

1:1-4 The fulfillment of the national repatriation of Israel. 1:1-4

1) The time and purpose of the prophecy, “Now in the first year of Cyrus king of Persia, that the word of the LORD by the mouth of Jeremiah might be fulfilled.” vs. 1a-b

a) The initiation always come from God and man responds, as the prophecy of Jeremiah deals with the captivity of 70 years, judgment of Babylon and reparriation. Jer. 25:11-12; 29:10

b) The Jew had not allowed the land to rest for 490 years, every 7th year. Lev. 26:33-34; 2Chron. 36:21

c) Medes and Pesians became one empire, under Cyrus the Persian and reigned over the Medo-Persian empire in 557 B.C., establishing Persian dominence and supremecy over the Medes. in 550 B.C.

d) Cyrus made Gobryas a viceroy, who is Darius. Dan. 6:2, 28

e) Darius was the son of Ahasuerus by lineage of the Medes made king over the

realm of the Chaldeans, his first year.

Dan. 9:1; 11:1

* Nowhere is Darius called the king of the Medes or of Persia in the book of Daniel!

f) Cyrus the king of Persian was known as “Cyrus the Great” who ruled from 536-30 B.C. Ezra 1:1

g) The Persian empire lasted from 536-330 B.C. , the first year of the reign of Cyrus the king of Persia was 536 B.C.

* Daniel continued till the first years of Cyrus and Darius (Gobryas) was a co-regent with Cyrus”. Dan. 1:21; 62, 28

h) Jesephus tells that someone showed Cyrus the Scripture and was eager to fuffill it? Is. 44-28; 45:1

2) The dealing of God regarding Cyrus, “the LORD stirred up the spirit of Cyrus king of Persia.” vs. 1c

a) The name Cyrus appears 19 time in the Old Testament, 15 are in Ezra.

* The name Cyrus “Kowresh” means “posses thou the furnace”.

b) Cyrus was God’s chosen vessel.

1)) To fulfill the prophecies, His Shepherd and anointed. Is. 44:28; 45:1

2)) To fulfill the interpretation of Daniel to Nebuchadnezzar’s image. Dan. 2; 7

- c) The revelation of the very mind and will to fulfill His purposes.
- 3) The response of Cyrus, “so that he made a proclamation throughout all his kingdom, and also put it in writing, saying.” vs. 1d-e
 - a) The decree was heard by all in his kingdom in the various languages.
 - b) Cyrus came from Pars and his kingdom was called the Achaemenid Empire after his family descent, modern day Iran.
 - c) “Daniel continued till the first years of Cyrus.” Dan. 1:21
- 4) The acknowledgement of Cyrus that all he had was due to God, “Thus says Cyrus king of Persia: All the kingdoms of the earth the LORD God of heaven has given me.” vs. 2a-b
 - a) The phrase “the God of heaven” appears 20 time in the Old Testament.
 - b) Nine in Ezra. Ezra 1:2; 5:11, 12; 6:9, 10; 7:12, 21, 23
 - c) Four in Nehemiah. Neh. 1:4, 5; 2:4, 20
 - d) Five in Daniel. Dan. 2:18, 19, 28, 37, 44
- 5) Cyrus acknowledged he had been commissioned by God, “And He has commanded me to build Him a house at Jerusalem which is in Judah.” vs. 2c
 - a) The word commanded “paqad” means to pay attention and attend to the decree.
 - b) The Scriptural evidence that Cyrus came to know Yahweh is very strong.

- c) The word “temple” appears 18 times, “house of God, Lord, etc” 43 times.
- d) The focus of the book is the temple, like Chronicles with the order of priest, singers, etc.
- e) Cyrus was God’s Shepherd, Anointed to build the temple. Is. 44:28
- f) The very experience of Belshazzar death and the plan for the siege, deflecting the Euphrates River and entering the gates left open that night. Is. 45:1, 13
- 6) The permission of Cyrus to every Jew to repatriate the nation of their own free-will, “Who is among you of all His people?” vs. 3a
 - a) Cyrus had reversed the policy of transporting and cross-populating people as the Assyrians and Babylonians, but permitted people to return to their countries and restore their own religious institutions.
 - b) The Cylinder of Cyrus discovered in the 19th century gives record of this to the cities beyond the Tigris.
 - c) A very small contingent went back with Zerubbabel, only (42,360) 49,897. Ezra 2
 - c) Then 80 years after Zerubbabel 1754 returned with Ezra in 457 B.C. Ezra 8
- 7) The blessing to those who decided to obey and go, “May his God be with him, and let him go up to Jerusalem which is in Judah,

and build the house of the LORD God of Israel (He is God), which is in Jerusalem.”
vs. 3b-d

- a) Jerusalem is mentioned 776 time in the Bible, more than any other city, 635 in the Old Testament, 141 in the New.
- b) Jerusalem appears 48 time in Ezra, an average of 4.8 times per chapter.
- c) Yahweh, the covenant God is the only true God. Is. 45:14, 18
- d) The city chosen for Himself to put His name there. 1Kings 11:36

8) The majority of Jews staying in Babylon were to help in the materials for the building, “And whoever is left in any place where he dwells, let the men of his place help him with silver and gold, with goods and livestock, besides the freewill offerings for the house of God which is in Jerusalem.”
vs. 4

- a) No one was excluded/
- b) Only what is done of one’s own free-will is honored by God, not how much one does!

1:5-6 The response of the fathers to return to build the temple. (reconstruction of the temple)

1) The leading men took the initiative at the hearing of the decree of Cyrus, “Then the heads of the fathers’ houses of Judah and Benjamin.” vs. 5a

- a) These were the heads of the various families, who were very young when they went into captivity or born in captivity.
 - b) The two tribes represent the southern kingdom of after the division at the time of Rehoboam.
- 2) The next group were those responsible for the service of the temple, “and the priests and the Levites.” vs. 5b
- a) The priests were of two orders, the High Priest and the assisting priests for the sacrifices and they were of the tribe of Levi after the family of Aaron.
 - b) The Levites refers to the other serving priests in their various duties under three families, Gershonites, Mererites and Kohathites, all belonging to the tribe of Levi.
- 3) The third group is to the remaining ten tribes from the northern kingdom, “with all whose spirits God had moved.” vs. 5c
- a) The twelve tribes were all present in Babylon as the book of Ezra shows by the term Judah, Benjamin and Israel.
 - b) The spirits “ruach” of man who are really are, as created in the image and likeness of God. Gen. 1:26-27
 - c) The teaching of the ten lost tribes is a fabrication of lies perpetrated by Hebert. W. Armstrong leader of the

World Wide Church of God in Pasadena California.

- 1)) Teaching that Jeremiah took an heir of David to England, evident that it is the only monarchy.
- 2)) The church recanted after his death in 1986 and changed its name to Grace Communion International.
- 3) This small contingent of Jews answered to the call of God to return to Jerusalem, “arose to go up and build the house of the LORD which is in Jerusalem.” vs. 5c
 - a) The very sight of Solomon’s temple.
 - b) Those of a willing heart.
- 4) The majority of the Jews remained in Babylon, but participated by their contributions for the building, “And all those who were around them encouraged them with articles of silver and gold, with goods and livestock, and with precious things, besides all that was willingly offered.” vs. 6
 - a) The Jews had gone into captivity and lost everything to Nebuchadnezzar, but they became very prosperous in Babylon.
 - b) They went from being an agrarian people to a people of commerce.
 - c) They were able to provide abundantly for the work and beyond by willing offerings.

1:7-11 The restoration of the temple articles by Cyrus.

- 1) The prompt action after the decree, “King Cyrus also brought out the articles of the house of the LORD.” vs. 7a
 - a) This was the known policy of Cyrus of allowing the captives to return to their homeland and establish their religious worship.
 - b) The Cyrus’ Cylinder verifies this fact.
- 2) The person responsible for taking the articles, “which Nebuchadnezzar had taken from Jerusalem.” vs. 7b
 - a) There were three sieges 606, 596, 586 B.C.
 - b) The record. 2Kings 23:36-24:6; 25:15; 2Chron. 36:5-8, 10, 18; Dan. 1:2
 - c) Darius took the vessels from Belshazzar from the drunken feast, as he conquered the city. Dan. 5; 6:1-2, 15
- 3) The place the articles had been stored, “and put in the temple of his gods.” vs. 7b
 - a) This was a testimony to the conquest of their gods.
 - b) Triumphant over Yahweh, but now having known God, he was being used to fulfill the prophecy of Jeremiah.
- 4) The person responsible for returning the articles, “and Cyrus king of Persia brought them out by the hand of Mithredath the treasurer, and counted them out to Sheshbazzar the prince of Judah.” vs. 8

- a) Mithredath “Mithr@dath”, means given by Mithra, the treasurer of the pagan temple or of Babylon?
 - b) He handed the articles by number to Sheshbazzar, “Sheshbastsar”, worshipper of fire, who is Zerubabbel.
- 5) The itemized ledger by scribes, “This is the number of them: thirty gold platters, one thousand silver platters, twenty-nine knives, thirty gold basins, four hundred and ten silver basins of a similar kind, and one thousand other articles.” vs. 9-10
- 6) The summary statement of the eventory list. vs. 11
- a) The total number of temple articles, “All the articles of gold and silver were five thousand four hundred.” vs. 11a
 - b) The safe delivery of the temple articles, “All these Sheshbazzar took with the captives who were brought from Babylon to Jerusalem.” vs. 11b
 - 1) Sheshbazzar is Zerubabbel. Ezra 3:8-11; 5:14; Hag. 1:1, 14; Zech. 4:9
 - 2) Zerubabbel was of the line of David. 1Chron. 3:9-19
 - c) The journey took about four month.

2:1-70 The faithful and daring people who returned to build. Ezra 2 (Man Responds)

2:1-35 The first group consisted of the general population.

2:1-2 The leading heads listed.

- 1) The identity of the people, “Now these are the people of the province who came back from the captivity, of those who had been carried away, whom Nebuchadnezzar the king of Babylon had carried away to Babylon.” vs. 1a-c
 - a) The province was the district in their homeland they were returning to.
 - b) The time they had been gone was 70 years and many had never been or seen their place of their origin. 536 B.C.
- 2) The location the people returned to, “and who returned to Jerusalem and Judah, everyone to his own city.” vs. 1d-e
 - a) Jerusalem the was the captital of Israel, the city of David and God, chosen by God.
 - b) Judah was the area roughly from Jerusalem southward.
 - c) Every person returning of the twleve tribes to their designated city of their birth.
- 3) The list of twelve name that included Zerubabbel, “Those who came with Zerubbabel were Jeshua, Nehemiah, Seraiah, Reelaiah, Mordecai, Bilshan, Mispar, Bigvai, Rehum, and Baanah. The

number of the men of the people of Israel.”
vs. 2

- a) Jeshua and Joshua is believed to be the same person, the High Priest at the time Nehemiah. Hag. 1:1, 12, 14; 2:2, 4; Zech. 3:1, 8; 6:11
- b) Nehemiah is not the Nehemiah that built the walls 80 year later, 457 B.C.
- c) Mordecai is not the one in Esther.
- d) The twelve were a representation of the entire nation of Israel.

2:3-20 The list of individuals according to their families and clans.

- * “the people of Parosh, two thousand one hundred and seventy-two; vs. 3
- the people of Shephatiah, three hundred and seventy-two; vs. 4
- the people of Arah, seven hundred and seventy-five; vs. 5
- the people of Pahath-Moab, of the people of Jeshua and Joab, two thousand eight hundred and twelve; vs. 6
- the people of Elam, one thousand two hundred and fifty-four; vs. 7
- the people of Zattu, nine hundred and forty-five; vs. 8
- the people of Zaccai, seven hundred and sixty; vs. 9
- the people of Bani, six hundred and forty-two; vs. 10

- the people of Bebai, six hundred and twenty-three; vs. 11
- the people of Azgad, one thousand two hundred and twenty-two; vs. 12
- the people of Adonikam, six hundred and sixty-six; vs. 13
- the people of Bigvai, two thousand and fifty-six; vs. 14
- the people of Adin, four hundred and fifty-four; vs. 15
- the people of Ater of Hezekiah, ninety-eight; vs. 16
- the people of Bezai, three hundred and twenty-three; vs. 17
- the people of Jorah, one hundred and twelve; vs. 18
- the people of Hashum, two hundred and twenty-three; vs. 19
- the people of Gibbar, ninety-five; vs. 20

2:21-35 The list of individual according to their villages and towns of their residence. vs. 20-35

- the people of Bethlehem, one hundred and twenty-three; vs. 21
- the men of Netophah, fifty-six; vs. 22
- the men of Anathoth, one hundred and twenty-eight; vs. 23
- 1) Anathoth was the city Jeremiah was from. About three miles north of Jerusalem. Jer. 1:1

- 2) When Jeremiah was in prison and his servant Barauch brought the title deed for a piece of land from Anothoth, as a guarantee from God that He was going to bring them back. Jer. ?

the people of Azmaveth, forty-two; vs. 24

the people of Kirjath Arim, Chephirah, and

Beeroth, seven hundred and forty-three; vs. 25

the people of Ramah and Geba, six hundred and twenty-one; vs. 26

the men of Michmas, one hundred and twenty-two; vs. 26

the men of Bethel and Ai, two hundred and twenty-three; vs. 28

the people of Nebo, fifty-two; vs. 29

the people of Magbish, one hundred and fifty-six; vs. 30

the people of the other Elam, one thousand two hundred and fifty-four; vs. 31

the people of Harim, three hundred and twenty; vs. 32

the people of Lod, Hadid, and Ono, seven hundred and twenty-five; vs. 33

the people of Jericho, three hundred and forty-five; vs. 34

the people of Senaah, three thousand six hundred and thirty. vs. 35

2:36-42 The second group consisted of those serving of the temple.

2:36-40 The list of priests and Levites.

1) “The priests: the sons of Jedaiah, of the house of Jeshua, nine hundred and seventy-three. vs. 36

2) “the sons of Immer, one thousand and fifty-two.” vs. 37

3) “the sons of Pashhur, one thousand two hundred and forty-seven.” vs. 38

4) “the sons of Harim, one thousand and seventeen.” vs. 39

5) “The Levites: the sons of Jeshua and Kadmiel, of the sons of Hodaviah, seventy-four.” vs. 40

6) A total of 5,360 priests, about 1/10 of the retruning population.

* The Levites had no inheritance in land, they lived in 48 Levitical cities and supported by the tithes. Deut. 12:12, 18; 14:29

2:41-42 The singers and gatekeepers.

1) “The singers: the sons of Asaph, one hundred and twenty-eight.” vs. 41

2) “The sons of the gatekeepers: the sons of Shallum, the sons of Ater, the sons of Talmon, the sons of Akkub, the sons of Hatita, and the sons of Shobai, one hundred and thirty-nine in all.” vs. 42

3) A total of 267 individuals.

2:43-54 The third group list of Nethinim.

- 1) “The Nethinim: the sons of Ziha, the sons of Hasupha, the sons of Tabbaoth.” vs. 43
- 2) “the sons of Keros, the sons of Siaha, the sons of Padon,” vs. 44
- 3) “the sons of Lebanah, the sons of Hagabah, the sons of Akkub.” vs. 45
- 4) “the sons of Hagab, the sons of Shalmal, the sons of Hanan.” vs. 46
- 5) “the sons of Giddel, the sons of Gahar, the sons of Reaiah.” vs. 47
- 6) “the sons of Rezin, the sons of Nekoda, the sons of Gazzam.” vs. 48
- 7) “the sons of Uzza, the sons of Paseah, the sons of Besai.” vs. 49
- 8) “the sons of Asnah, the sons of Meunim, the sons of Nephusim.” vs. 50
- 9) “the sons of Bakbuk, the sons of Hakupha, the sons of Harhur.” vs. 51
- 10) “the sons of Bazluth, the sons of Mehida, the sons of Harsha.” vs. 52
- 11) “the sons of Barkos, the sons of Sisera, the sons of Tamah.” vs. 53
- 12) “the sons of Neziah, and the sons of Hatipha.” vs. 54
* Notes from intro

2:55-58 The fourth group is the list of the sons of Solomon.

- 1) “The sons of Solomon’s servants: the sons of Sotai, the sons of Sophereth, the sons of Peruda.” vs. 55
- 2) “the sons of Jaala, the sons of Darkon, the sons of Giddel.” vs. 56
- 3) “the sons of Shephatiah, the sons of Hattil, the sons of Pochereth of Zebaim, and the sons of Ami.” vs. 57
* A similar list i. Neh. 7:6-69
- 3) The summary statement, “All the Nethinim and the children of Solomon’s servants were three hundred and ninety-two.” vs. 58

2:59-63 The third group consists of those rejected for service.

- 1) The criteria for service to build the temple or serve was their genealogical pedigree, “And these were the ones who came up from Tel Melah, Tel Harsha, Cherub, Addan, and Immer; but they could not identify their father’s house or their genealogy, whether they were of Israel.” vs. 59
- 2) The individuals listed by name. vs. 60-61
* “the sons of Delaiah, the sons of Tobiah, and the sons of Nekoda, six hundred and fifty-two; and of the sons of the priests: the sons of Habaiah, the sons of Koz, and the sons of Barzillai, who took a wife of the daughters of Barzillai the Gileadite, and was called by their name.’”

- 3) The confirmation of their disqualification, “These sought their listing among those who were registered by genealogy, but they were not found; therefore they were excluded from the priesthood as defiled.” vs. 62
- 4) The judgment declared by Zerubbabel. vs. 63
 - a) These individual were excluded from eating the priestly portions, “And the governor said to them that they should not eat of the most holy things.” Num. 3:1-10
 - b) The matter would be resolved by inquiring of God, “till a priest could consult with the Urim and Thummim.” vs. 63
 - 1) The terms mean lights and perfections.
 - 2) Their function was to seek and know the mind of God.
 - 3) Some say it was a white and black rock in the pouch of the ephod of the High Priest, no one knows.
 - 4) The appearances. Ex. 28:30; Lev. 8:8; Num. 27:21; Deut. 33:8; 1Sam. 28:30; Neh. 7:65

2:64-67 The summary statement of those returning to build the temple in Jerusalem and beast of burden.

- 1) The number of individuals, “The whole assembly together was forty-two thousand three hundred and sixty.” vs. 64

- 2) The servants, “besides their male and female servants, of whom there were seven thousand three hundred and thirty-seven; and they had two hundred men and women singers.” vs. 65
- 3) The beasts of burden, “Their horses were seven hundred and thirty-six, their mules two hundred and forty-five, their camels four hundred and thirty-five, and their donkeys six thousand seven hundred and twenty.” vs. 66-67

2:68-70 The contributions for the building of the temple.

- 1) The heads of the families, “Some of the heads of the fathers’ houses, when they came to the house of the LORD which is in Jerusalem, offered freely for the house of God, to erect it in its place.” vs. 68
- 2) The manner and amount of their giving, “According to their ability, they gave to the treasury for the work sixty-one thousand gold drachmas, five thousand minas of silver, and one hundred priestly garments.” vs. 69
 - * The total is eqivalent to about 1,133 pounds of gold.
- 3) The dwelling of the people, “So the priests and the Levites, some of the people, the singers, the gatekeepers, and the Nethinim,

dwelt in their cities, and all Israel in their cities.” vs. 70