

Lesson 1
The First Return Permitted and Recorded
(Ezra 1-2)

Questions

1. What proclamation did Cyrus king of Persia make for the Jews of the Babylonian captivity (1:1-3; see also 5:13; 6:3-4)?

2. What help and strengthening did the returning Jews get from their neighbors (1:4-6)?

3. What came back with the Jews who returned to Jerusalem (1:7-11; see also 5:14-15; 6:5)?

4. What Jews are recorded in Ezra 2:1-2?

5. What Jews are recorded in Ezra 2:3-19?

6. What Jews are recorded in Ezra 2:20-35?

7. What Jews are recorded in Ezra 2:36-39?

8. What Jews are recorded in Ezra 2:40-42?

9. What Jews are recorded in Ezra 2:43-54?

10. What Jews are recorded in Ezra 2:55-58?

11. What was different about the Jews who are recorded in Ezra 2:59-63?
12. How many Jews returned on this occasion and who came with them (2:64-67)?
13. What did some of the family heads do when they came to Jerusalem (2:68-69)?
14. Where did the people live when they returned (2:70)?

Digging Deeper

1. Who was Cyrus king of Persia and what is the approximate date for his proclamation to return (1:1)? What do we learn from Ezra 3:7; 4:3; 5:13-17; and 6:3, 14 about this proclamation?
2. Where in the book of Isaiah are we told about the role Cyrus would play in allowing the Jews to return from the captivity to rebuild the temple (1:1)?
3. Where in the book of Jeremiah did he speak about the return from the Babylonian captivity (1:1)?
4. When did Nebuchadnezzar remove the vessels from the house of the Lord and what OT scripture records this (1:7)? When did he carry away the captives to Babylon and what OT scripture records this (2:1)? What do we know about these vessels, according to Daniel 5:1-4? What did Jeremiah prophesy concerning these vessels (Jer. 27:21-22)?
5. Why do the numbers given in 1:9-10 not add up to the number given in 1:11?

6. Who was Sheshbazzar (1:8, 11; see also 5:14, 16)? Was he the same person as Zerubbabel (2:2)?

7. Where in the book of Nehemiah is a list found that is similar to Ezra 2:1-70?

8. Locate on a map the probable route of the Jews' return to Jerusalem (2:1).

9. Who were the Nethinim (2:43, 58)?

10. Where are the places located on a map that are mentioned in Ezra 2:59?

11. What OT law required that the people serving in the Lord's house be of a particular genealogy (2:62)?

12. What was the Urim and the Thummim (2:63)?

13. How much was a "daric" of gold at this time (2:69)?

Applications for Today

1. The Lord keeps his promises. His words will always come to pass (1:1; 1 Pet. 1:23-25).
2. The Lord can stir up the heart of a person to do his will (1:1, 5; Prov. 21:1; 2 Tim. 1:6).
3. There is still work to be done on the Lord's house today. His house (temple) continues to be built today as souls are added to his church (1:2-5; Eph. 2:20-21; 1 Tim. 3:15).

4. The Lord wants us to give free-will offerings to accomplish his work (1:4, 6; 2:68-69; 2 Cor. 9:6-7).
5. We strengthen our brethren when we support them in the work they are doing for the Lord (1:6; Acts 16:5).
6. All of God's law must be followed at all times and in all places (2:59-63; Phil. 2:12).
7. The Lord's priesthood is to be pure, not polluted (2:62; 1 Pet. 2:5, 9).