

It shall be given back

Scripture Reading: Ezra 1:1-11, 2:64-70, Jeremiah 25:8-11

After two years of Babylon's captivity, Cyrus the king of Persia was victorious over all of that region and was called Cyrus the great. Cyrus was not a Jew, but he glorified the living God by knowing Him through people like Daniel. He praised the Jews for their passion towards their God. It had been seventy years since the Jews were brought into slavery by Nebuchadnezzar and it was fifty years since Jerusalem was burnt. Daniel along with his friends were in higher governing positions. Many others were living a very comfortable life. But all of them were very desperate to go back to the land that God had promised and blessed them.

Jeremiah and Isaiah had prophesied that they would return to their home land after a period of seventy years slavery. 70 years had passed by. Many who had come from Jerusalem were dead by that time. Their children and grandchildren desired Jerusalem. They truly sought after God. They were completely out of idol worship. They desired to rebuild the temple and worship God there. There was a miracle after the seventy year period of slavery. King Cyrus declared that the Jews can return to Jerusalem if they desired to. This declaration was made a law that cannot be changed. The dreams of the Jews came to pass. They had their deliverance without any effort from their side.

God intervened and dealt with Cyrus. He obeyed God and allowed the Jews to go back to Jerusalem and also encouraged them to build the temple. God had already foretold this through His prophet Isaiah (Isaiah 44:28; 45:1). The words of God will surely come to pass. The people who heard this rejoiced and were glad. All those who decided to leave were prepared for the journey. Those who decided to stay back gave their gold, silver, garments and food to those who left. King Cyrus too gave many things. All the things that were looted from the temple by king Nebuchadnezzar were counted and given back. He ordered that those things be kept back in the temple of God. The Jews experienced joy indescribable.

Questions:

1. Whom did Cyrus glorify?
2. What will surely come to pass?
3. What did king Cyrus count and gave it back?