

Esther

Lesson 1 Cross-references

DAY FOUR

EZRA 4

- 1 Now when the enemies of Judah and Benjamin heard that the people of the exile were building a temple to the LORD God of Israel,
- 2 they approached Zerubbabel and the heads of fathers' *households*, and said to them, "Let us build with you, for we, like you, seek your God; and we have been sacrificing to Him since the days of Esarhaddon king of Assyria, who brought us up here."
- 3 But Zerubbabel and Jeshua and the rest of the heads of fathers' *households* of Israel said to them, "You have nothing in common with us in building a house to our God; but we ourselves will together build to the LORD God of Israel, as King Cyrus, the king of Persia has commanded us."
- 4 Then the people of the land discouraged the people of Judah, and frightened them from building,
- 5 and hired counselors against them to frustrate their counsel all the days of Cyrus king of Persia, even until the reign of Darius king of Persia.
- 6 Now in the reign of Ahasuerus, in the beginning of his reign, they wrote an accusation against the inhabitants of Judah and Jerusalem.

DAY FIVE

2 KINGS 24

- 8 Jehoiachin was eighteen years old when he became king, and he reigned three months in Jerusalem; and his mother's name was Nehushta the daughter of Elnathan of Jerusalem.
- 9 He did evil in the sight of the LORD, according to all that his father had done.
- 10 At that time the servants of Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon went up to Jerusalem, and the city came under siege.
- 11 And Nebuchadnezzar the king of Babylon came to the city, while his servants were besieging it.
- 12 Jehoiachin the king of Judah went out to the king of Babylon, he and his mother and his servants and his captains and his officials. So the king of Babylon took him captive in the eighth year of his reign.
- 13 He carried out from there all the treasures of the house of the LORD, and the treasures of the king's house, and cut in pieces all the vessels of gold which Solomon king of Israel had made in the temple of the LORD, just as the LORD had said.
- 14 Then he led away into exile all Jerusalem and all the captains and all the mighty men of valor, ten thousand captives, and all the craftsmen and the smiths. None remained except the poorest people of the land.
- 15 So he led Jehoiachin away into exile to Babylon; also the king's mother and the king's wives and his officials and the leading men of the land, he led away into exile from Jerusalem to Babylon.
- 16 All the men of valor, seven thousand, and the craftsmen and the smiths, one thousand, all strong and fit for war, and these the king of Babylon brought into exile to Babylon.

2 CHRONICLES 36

- 9 Jehoiachin was eight years old when he became king, and he reigned three months and ten days in Jerusalem, and he did evil in the sight of the LORD.
- 10 At the turn of the year King Nebuchadnezzar sent and brought him to Babylon with the

valuable articles of the house of the LORD, and he made his kinsman Zedekiah king over Judah and Jerusalem.

- 11 Zedekiah was twenty-one years old when he became king, and he reigned eleven years in Jerusalem.
- 12 He did evil in the sight of the LORD his God; he did not humble himself before Jeremiah the prophet who spoke for the LORD.
- 13 He also rebelled against King Nebuchadnezzar who had made him swear *allegiance* by God. But he stiffened his neck and hardened his heart against turning to the LORD God of Israel.
- 14 Furthermore, all the officials of the priests and the people were very unfaithful *following* all the abominations of the nations; and they defiled the house of the LORD which He had sanctified in Jerusalem.
- 15 The LORD, the God of their fathers, sent *word* to them again and again by His messengers, because He had compassion on His people and on His dwelling place;
- 16 but they *continually* mocked the messengers of God, despised His words and scoffed at His prophets, until the wrath of the LORD arose against His people, until there was no remedy.
- 17 Therefore He brought up against them the king of the Chaldeans who slew their young men with the sword in the house of their sanctuary, and had no compassion on young man or virgin, old man or infirm; He gave *them* all into his hand.
- 18 All the articles of the house of God, great and small, and the treasures of the house of the LORD, and the treasures of the king and of his officers, he brought *them* all to Babylon.
- 19 Then they burned the house of God and broke down the wall of Jerusalem, and burned all its fortified buildings with fire and destroyed all its valuable articles.
- 20 Those who had escaped from the sword he carried away to Babylon; and they were servants to him and to his sons until the rule of the kingdom of Persia,
- 21 to fulfill the word of the LORD by the mouth of Jeremiah, until the land had enjoyed its sabbaths. All the days of its desolation it kept sabbath until seventy years were complete.
- 22 Now in the first year of Cyrus king of Persia—in order to fulfill the word of the LORD by the mouth of Jeremiah—the LORD stirred up the spirit of Cyrus king of Persia, so that he sent a proclamation throughout his kingdom, and also *put it* in writing, saying,
- 23 “Thus says Cyrus king of Persia, ‘The LORD, the God of heaven, has given me all the kingdoms of the earth, and He has appointed me to build Him a house in Jerusalem, which is in Judah. Whoever there is among you of all His people, may the LORD his God be with him, and let him go up!’ ”

DANIEL 5

- 1 Belshazzar the king held a great feast for a thousand of his nobles, and he was drinking wine in the presence of the thousand.
- 2 When Belshazzar tasted the wine, he gave orders to bring the gold and silver vessels which Nebuchadnezzar his father had taken out of the temple which *was* in Jerusalem, so that the king and his nobles, his wives and his concubines might drink from them.
- 3 Then they brought the gold vessels that had been taken out of the temple, the house of God which *was* in Jerusalem; and the king and his nobles, his wives and his concubines drank from them.
- 4 They drank the wine and praised the gods of gold and silver, of bronze, iron, wood and stone.
- 5 Suddenly the fingers of a man’s hand emerged and began writing opposite the lampstand on the plaster of the wall of the king’s palace, and the king saw the back of the hand that did the writing.
- 6 Then the king’s face grew pale and his thoughts alarmed him, and his hip joints went slack and his knees began knocking together.

7 The king called aloud to bring in the conjurers, the Chaldeans and the diviners. The king spoke and said to the wise men of Babylon, “Any man who can read this inscription and explain its interpretation to me shall be clothed with purple and *have* a necklace of gold around his neck, and have authority as third *ruler* in the kingdom.”

8 Then all the king’s wise men came in, but they could not read the inscription or make known its interpretation to the king.

9 Then King Belshazzar was greatly alarmed, his face grew *even* paler, and his nobles were perplexed.

10 The queen entered the banquet hall because of the words of the king and his nobles; the queen spoke and said, “O king, live forever! Do not let your thoughts alarm you or your face be pale.

11 “There is a man in your kingdom in whom is a spirit of the holy gods; and in the days of your father, illumination, insight and wisdom like the wisdom of the gods were found in him. And King Nebuchadnezzar, your father, your father the king, appointed him chief of the magicians, conjurers, Chaldeans *and* diviners.

12 “*This was* because an extraordinary spirit, knowledge and insight, interpretation of dreams, explanation of enigmas and solving of difficult problems were found in this Daniel, whom the king named Belteshazzar. Let Daniel now be summoned and he will declare the interpretation.”

13 Then Daniel was brought in before the king. The king spoke and said to Daniel, “Are you that Daniel who is one of the exiles from Judah, whom my father the king brought from Judah?

14 “Now I have heard about you that a spirit of the gods is in you, and that illumination, insight and extraordinary wisdom have been found in you.

15 “Just now the wise men *and* the conjurers were brought in before me that they might read this inscription and make its interpretation known to me, but they could not declare the interpretation of the message.

16 “But I personally have heard about you, that you are able to give interpretations and solve difficult problems. Now if you are able to read the inscription and make its interpretation known to me, you will be clothed with purple and *wear* a necklace of gold around your neck, and you will have authority as the third *ruler* in the kingdom.”

17 Then Daniel answered and said before the king, “Keep your gifts for yourself or give your rewards to someone else; however, I will read the inscription to the king and make the interpretation known to him.

18 “O king, the Most High God granted sovereignty, grandeur, glory and majesty to Nebuchadnezzar your father.

19 “Because of the grandeur which He bestowed on him, all the peoples, nations and *men of every* language feared and trembled before him; whomever he wished he killed and whomever he wished he spared alive; and whomever he wished he elevated and whomever he wished he humbled.

20 “But when his heart was lifted up and his spirit became so proud that he behaved arrogantly, he was deposed from his royal throne and *his* glory was taken away from him.

21 “He was also driven away from mankind, and his heart was made like *that of* beasts, and his dwelling place *was* with the wild donkeys. He was given grass to eat like cattle, and his body was drenched with the dew of heaven until he recognized that the Most High God is ruler over the realm of mankind and *that* He sets over it whomever He wishes.

22 “Yet you, his son, Belshazzar, have not humbled your heart, even though you knew all this,

23 but you have exalted yourself against the Lord of heaven; and they have brought the vessels of His house before you, and you and your nobles, your wives and your concubines have been drinking wine from them; and you have praised the gods of silver and gold, of bronze,

iron, wood and stone, which do not see, hear or understand. But the God in whose hand are your life-breath and all your ways, you have not glorified.

24 “Then the hand was sent from Him and this inscription was written out.

25 “Now this is the inscription that was written out: ‘MENĒ, MENĒ, TEKĒL, UPHARSIN.’

26 “This is the interpretation of the message: ‘MENĒ’—God has numbered your kingdom and put an end to it.

27 “‘TEKĒL’—you have been weighed on the scales and found deficient.

28 “‘PERĒS’—your kingdom has been divided and given over to the Medes and Persians.”

29 Then Belshazzar gave orders, and they clothed Daniel with purple and *put* a necklace of gold around his neck, and issued a proclamation concerning him that he *now* had authority as the third *ruler* in the kingdom.

30 That same night Belshazzar the Chaldean king was slain.

31 So Darius the Mede received the kingdom at about the age of sixty-two.

ISAIAH 44

24 Thus says the LORD, your Redeemer, and the one who formed you from the womb,
 “I, the LORD, am the maker of all things,
 Stretching out the heavens by Myself
 And spreading out the earth all alone,

25 Causing the omens of boasters to fail,
 Making fools out of diviners,
 Causing wise men to draw back
 And turning their knowledge into foolishness,

26 Confirming the word of His servant
 And performing the purpose of His messengers.
It is I who says of Jerusalem, ‘She shall be inhabited!’
 And of the cities of Judah, ‘They shall be built.’
 And I will raise up her ruins *again*.

27 “*It is I* who says to the depth of the sea, ‘Be dried up!’
 And I will make your rivers dry.

28 “*It is I* who says of Cyrus, ‘*He is* My shepherd!
 And he will perform all My desire.’
 And he declares of Jerusalem, ‘She will be built,’
 And of the temple, ‘Your foundation will be laid.’ ”

Chapter 45

1 Thus says the LORD to Cyrus His anointed,
 Whom I have taken by the right hand,
 To subdue nations before him
 And to loose the loins of kings;
 To open doors before him so that gates will not be shut:

2 “I will go before you and make the rough places smooth;
 I will shatter the doors of bronze and cut through their iron bars.

3 “I will give you the treasures of darkness
 And hidden wealth of secret places,
 So that you may know that it is I,
 The LORD, the God of Israel, who calls you by your name.

4 “For the sake of Jacob My servant,
 And Israel My chosen *one*,
 I have also called you by your name;
 I have given you a title of honor

Though you have not known Me.

5 “I am the LORD, and there is no other;
Besides Me there is no God.

I will gird you, though you have not known Me;

6 That men may know from the rising to the setting of the sun
That there is no one besides Me.

I am the LORD, and there is no other,

7 The One forming light and creating darkness,
Causing well-being and creating calamity;
I am the LORD who does all these.¹

¹ *New American Standard Bible : 1995 update.* 1995 (Is 44:24–45:7). LaHabra, CA: The Lockman Foundation.