

Return

“For behold, days are coming, says the Lord, when I will restore the fortunes of my people, Israel and Judah, says the Lord, and I will bring them back to the land which I gave to their fathers, and they shall take possession of it.” Jeremiah 30

The Return to Judah

This has been quite a journey for God’s people: enslaved to the Egyptians, wandering the desert for 40 years, settling into the Promised Land and seeking earthly kings who wanted more power and land. God’s people were suffering. They became weak. They forgot God’s promise, and their hearts grew sad.

God’s people were captured and sent into exile at the hands of the Babylonians. Due to their unfaithfulness and idolizing other gods, God allowed them to undergo the curse of the exile. During that time, the Israelites began to see their physical exile as a sign of something deeper, a spiritual exile from God, shaped because of human sin. This brought remorse and purification of their soul, heart, mind, and body.

During the time of exile, kingdoms rose and fell. The Babylonians were conquered by a new power, the Persian Empire. Cyrus was the king of Persia. God stirred up the spirit of Cyrus and prompted him to let His people out of exile. Cyrus issued a decree allowing God’s people to return home to Judah. “The Lord, the God of heaven, has given me all the kingdoms of the earth, and he has charged me to build him a house (Temple) at Jerusalem, which is in Judah. Let each survivor be assisted by the men of his place with silver and gold.”

The king of Persia sent a man named Ezra, a priest, to return to Judah. He gave him the job of choosing leaders for the people who would rule by God’s law. God’s people had forgotten the laws that were given to Moses on Mount Sinai. When the people heard Ezra pray to God on how sorry he was that the people had turned away from Him, God’s people wept and agreed to set aside all that kept them from God. They were sorry for the times they had forgotten God’s goodness and asked for forgiveness.

The temple stood tall and beautiful. God’s people were ready to say yes to the covenant again, the oath to walk in God’s law, which was given to Moses. God’s people were returning home to brighter days.

Living our Faith Together

Family Fun: Choose an activity that brings us closer to God.

The Greatest Commandment Dot to Dot- [Click Here](#)

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The Return to Judah

Yellow: Judah returning home to brighter days



Did You Know

Cyrus, the king of Persia, was Persian. Cyrus did not know God nor worship Him. God stirred up Cyrus's spirit and was God's instrument to fulfill all His purposes.

God said to Cyrus, "For the sake of my servant Jacob, and Israel my chosen, I call you by your name, I surname you, though you do not know me. I am the Lord, and there is no other; besides me, there is no God."
(Isaiah 45)

Questions

Why were God's people in exile?

While the Israelites were in exile, what did they learn?

Who was the king of Persia? What did God want him to do?

Who did the king of Persia send out to help God's people remember God's laws?

What were the laws that were given to Moses on Mount Sinai?

What can we learn after reading the Return to Judah?
(God wants the best for us. He wants us to be faithful and worship Him only.)

What are ways we can remain faithful to God?

Family Prayer

Dear God,

Thank you for all the ways You save me! Help me love You more every day.

Amen

Ask Fr. Sean

After reading The Return to Judah, do you have a question to ask Fr. Sean?

Email Fr. Sean at dbq005@dbqarch.org