

August 1, 2021
Ezra 1:1-4
"The Edict"

PRINCIPLES AND PRACTICAL APPLICATION

Author: probably Ezra.

Date: around 450 B.C.

The Israelites were taken into exile in three successive stages (605, 597, 586 B.C.) They also were returned in three successive stages.

"The theological theme of Ezra is that the true people of God are to be identified by true worship and obedience." *Believer's Study Bible*

The general purpose of both Ezra and Nehemiah is to describe the restoration of God's people after the Exile.

Ezra 1-6 describes the rebuilding of the temple.

Ezra 7-10 is about the reinstitution of the Law.

The quote king by Cyrus in **verse 2** does not indicate that he was a worshipper God. It does show that God sovereignly used Cyrus to reestablish His people. Inscriptions that have been discovered from his reign indicate that he was a clever politician. He knew how to win the loyalty of conquered people. Isaiah wrote about his coming more than 200 years earlier, see **Isaiah 44:28-45:4**.

Application:

God chastised His people for their sin. God's sovereignty over all becomes evident as one reads and understands that this captivity was predicted by Jeremiah and this part of the restoration under king Cyrus was predicted by Isaiah 200 year beforehand. God also used a secular king to accomplish His will for His people. God is still sovereign today, He still judges justly. "And we know that God causes all things to work together for good to those who love God, to those who are called according to His purpose." (**Romans 8:28** NASB) Take heart, God is in control!