

August 1, 2021
Ezra 1:4-11
"Motivated"

PRINCIPLES AND PRACTICAL APPLICATION

Principle: "**whose spirits God had moved**" God is sovereignly at work to accomplish His plans in His timing. God has now stirred up the heart of king Cyrus to make this decree. God has also stirred up the hearts of some of His own people to go to Jerusalem to restore it and the temple. About 50k went up to Jerusalem, many remained in Babylon. God is in the details!

Principle: "**the articles of the house of the Lord**" God always has a plan. These were vessels which Nebuchadnezzar had plundered and brought to Babylon. Notice this about the sovereignty of God, the temple and its furniture were utterly destroyed in 586 BC. God literally preserved these articles by having a foreign king remove them! Now God is at work having the items returned to their rightful place. God is sovereign over His creation!

Principles: God will accomplish His will, His timing is not our timing, His ways are not our ways, His ways are always right and best. Interesting to note is that Israel was the only nation known to have been so totally devastated and the people exiled only to come back into their own land to possess it. What is more, this happened again, a second restoration of Israel, about 2,500 years later. God often does the impossible!

APPLICATION:

Even when you cannot see nor understand what God is doing, you can always trust that God is in control. God is a God of love and because He loves His children; He will sometimes chastise His children to teach a lesson they will not forget. Sin led Israel into captivity. In the predetermined time by God they **confessed** and **repented** of their sin. Then God began His redemptive plan of **restoration**. In this second wave of restoration led by Ezra the temple will be **rebuilt** and very importantly there will be a **reinstitution** of the Law.

God still works the same way today. Once saved always saved. However, if a believer has ongoing sin in his or her life and they are unrepentant, look out, God chastens those whom He loves. (See **Hebrews 12:6-11**)

The application rest upon this, ask the Lord to search you to see if there is any unclean way in you, (**Psalms 139:23-24**). If so, follow the example found in Ezra: confess the sin, repent of the sin (turn away from it), by doing so one is restored into fellowship with God. Rebuild that relationship by reading the Word and heeding the Word of God. Put away old habits that were bad and got you into this time of chastisement to begin with. With fresh perspective, reinstitute the ways of the Lord's teaching in place of those of the world. (**Revelation 2:1-7**)