*Ezra**

**Ezra 1:1-5** (1) Now in the first year of Cyrus king of Persia, that the word of the LORD by the mouth of Jeremiah might be fulfilled, the LORD stirred up the spirit of Cyrus king of Persia, that he made a proclamation throughout all his kingdom, and put it also in writing, saying,
(2) Thus saith Cyrus king of Persia, The LORD God of heaven hath given me all the kingdoms of the earth; and he hath charged me to build him an house at Jerusalem, which is in Judah.
(3) Who is there among you of all his people? his God be with him, and let him go up to Jerusalem, which is in Judah, and build the house of the LORD God of Israel, (he is the God,) which is in Jerusalem.
(4) And whosoever remaineth in any place where he sojourneth, let the men of his place help him with silver, and with gold, and with goods, and with beasts, beside the freewill offering for the house of God that is in Jerusalem.
(5) Then rose up the chief of the fathers of Judah and Benjamin, and the priests, and the Levites, with all them whose spirit God had raised, to go up to build the house of the LORD which is in Jerusalem.
*It is reasonably certain that Ezra wrote the book, as well as the two books of Chronicles. The last two verses of 2nd Chronicles are almost identical to the first two verses of Ezra, the author thereby indicating that the one was intended as a continuation of the other. The combined accounts of Ezra and Nehemiah, along with the prophetic books of Haggai and Zechariah, tell the story of the returning remnant of Jews undertaking to rebuild the temple after their seventy-year captivity in Babylon. Ezra and Nehemiah were once considered to be one book, and since Ezra and Nehemiah were contemporaries in post-exile Jerusalem, there is much in common between the two books. It is also of particular*

*interest to note that Isaiah some 150 years before the rein of Cyrus, had prophesied the rebuilding of Jerusalem, even calling Cyrus by name. Cyrus the Great, king of Persia, is mentioned twenty-two times in the Old Testament—an evidence of his prominence in the biblical scheme of things in Judah's history. When Cyrus overthrew the Babylonian regime in 539 B.C., he was disposed quite favorably toward the Jews in order to fulfill the word of Jehovah by the mouth of Jeremiah. Jehovah stirred up the spirit of Cyrus king of Persia, so that he sent a proclamation throughout all his kingdom as we read in Ezra chapter one. The prophecy of;*

**Isaiah 44:24-28** (24) Thus saith the LORD, thy redeemer, and he that formed thee from the womb, I am the LORD that maketh all things; that stretcheth forth the heavens alone; that spreadeth abroad the earth by myself;
(25) That frustrateth the tokens of the liars, and maketh diviners mad; that turneth wise men backward, and maketh their knowledge foolish;
(26) That confirmeth the word of his servant, and performeth the counsel of his messengers; that saith to Jerusalem, Thou shalt be inhabited; and to the cities of Judah, Ye shall be built, and I will raise up the decayed places thereof:
(27) That saith to the deep, Be dry, and I will dry up thy rivers:
(28) That saith of Cyrus, He is my shepherd, and shall perform all my pleasure: even saying to Jerusalem, Thou shalt be built; and to the temple, Thy foundation shall be laid.

*But why was Jerusalem in ruins? Turn with me to;*

**Jeremiah 25:10-12** (10) Moreover I will take from them the voice of mirth, and the voice of gladness, the voice of the bridegroom, and the voice of the bride, the sound of the millstones, and the light of the candle.
(11) And this whole land shall be a desolation, and an astonishment; and these nations shall serve the king of Babylon seventy years.
(12) And it shall come to pass, when seventy years are

accomplished, that I will punish the king of Babylon, and that nation, saith the LORD, for their iniquity, and the land of the Chaldeans, and will make it perpetual desolations.
*Exactly how the Lord "stirred up the spirit" of the Persian ruler no one is able to say precisely. That God is able to operate in international affairs—to effect His sovereign will—is certain, but how He accomplishes these things, by means of seemingly natural processes, remains a mystery. However, there is an interesting possibility. Josephus, the famous Hebrew historian who had access to historical records long since lost, stated that Cyrus was exposed to the prophecies of Isaiah, who, more than 150 years earlier, had called the Persian monarch by name, and had announced his noble role in releasing the Hebrews from captivity and assisting in the rebuilding of the Jewish temple. It is a fact that Daniel was still living in the early years of Cyrus' reign, and he might well have been the very one who introduced the Persian commander to Isaiah's testimony.*
{[During excavations at Babylon in 1879-82, archaeologist Hormuzd Rassam discovered a small, ten inch, clay, barrel-shaped cylinder that contained an inscription from Cyrus. Now housed in the British Museum, the cylinder reported the king's policy regarding captives: "I [Cyrus] gathered all their [former] inhabitants and returned [to them] their habitations". As noted scholar Jack Finegan observed: "The decree of release which is quoted in the Old Testament is confirmed by the Cyrus cylinder.] From Cyrus the Great: King of Persia by Wayne Jackson}
*The character attributes of Cyrus, King of Persia, was quite different from Persian leaders today. In a recent news release is a chilling disposition of Persian rulers today;*
[Published 8/25/11, Iranian President Mahmoud Ahmadinejad said that Iran was determined to eradicate Israel in an interview with a Lebanese television network,] carried by Islamic Society of N.A.

*So what is the relationship between Persia and Iran? History records that in 1925, Reza Shah Pahlavi seized power in Persia and developed close ties with Hitler's Germany in 1933. Seduced by Hitler's ideology of racial purity, he draws attention to the fact that both Germans and Persians are from the Aryan (Indo-european) race. He renames Persia and calls it Iran in reference to Aryan. It was a name change suggested by Hitler's banker, Hjalmar Schacht, to Iran's embassador to Germany.*

***Quote**; by Reza Shah Pahlavi;* "Germany was our age-old and natural ally, Love of Germany was synonymous with love for Iran. The sound of German officers' footsteps was heard on the shores of the Nile. Swastika flags were flying from the outskirts of Moscow to the peaks of the Caucasus Mts. Iranian patriots eagerly awaited the arrival of their old allies. My friend and I would spin tales about the grandeur of the superior race. We considered Germany the chosen representative of this race in Europe and Iran its representative in Asia. The right to life and role was ours. Others had no choice but submission and slavery. We discarded the old maps and remade Iran into a country larger than it was in Achaemenian times. ***Unquote***

*Iran was not our friend and ally during World War 2, and Iran is not our friend and ally today. There is a dreadful prophecy concerning Islam in Revelation, of which the beliefs and interests of Iran are ruled. It's government is called an Islamic republic, but it is anything but a republic. A republic is a state in which supreme power of the people rests in the word of God. In Iran the supreme power rest with the Supreme Leader of the Islamic Revolution and holds power for life unless removed by the Assembly of Experts. He has final say on all domestic, foreign, and security policies for Iran. Now turn with me to;*

**Revelation 9:1-11** (1) And the fifth angel sounded, and I saw a star fall from heaven unto the earth: and to him was given the key of the bottomless pit.

(2) And he opened the bottomless pit; and there arose a smoke out of the pit, as the smoke of a great furnace; and the sun and the air were darkened by reason of the smoke of the pit.
(3) And there came out of the smoke locusts upon the earth: and unto them was given power, as the scorpions of the earth have power.
(4) And it was commanded them that they should not hurt the grass of the earth, neither any green thing, neither any tree; but only those men which have not the seal of God in their foreheads.
(5) And to them it was given that they should not kill them, but that they should be tormented five months: and their torment was as the torment of a scorpion, when he striketh a man.
(6) And in those days shall men seek death, and shall not find it; and shall desire to die, and death shall flee from them.
(7) And the shapes of the locusts were like unto horses prepared unto battle; and on their heads were as it were crowns like gold, and their faces were as the faces of men.
(8) And they had hair as the hair of women, and their teeth were as the teeth of lions.
(9) And they had breastplates, as it were breastplates of iron; and the sound of their wings was as the sound of chariots of many horses running to battle.
(10) And they had tails like unto scorpions, and there were stings in their tails: and their power was to hurt men five months.
(11) And they had a king over them, which is the angel of the bottomless pit, whose name in the Hebrew tongue is Abaddon, but in the Greek tongue hath his name Apollyon.
{[These demon locusts are thought by many commentators, to be the predictive picture of the rise and spread of Mohammedanism.
Here are some reasons that make it look like this Fifth Trumpet may refer to Mohammedanism. Shapes of locusts like war-horses, scorpion-like tails, crowns like gold, faces like

men's faces, hair like women's hair, brestplates like iron, and wing's that sound like chariots and horses rushing to war. Arabia-pre-eminently was a land of locusts. It was in Arabia that Mohammedanism originated. Mohammedan armies were composed of fierce, relentless horsemen. Famous for their beards with long hair like women's hair, with yellow turbans on their heads that looked like gold, and they had iron coats of armor. Their king in Hebrew is Abaddon, in Greek is Apollyon who is satan or one of his angels.**]** Halley's Bible Handbook, 24th edition.**}**

*With this we have a somewhat comparison of ancient Persia and the Persia of today, the Islamic nation of Iran.*

*However there are more insights into the book of Ezra, listen to this;* For Ezra had prepared his heart to seek the law of the LORD, and to do it, and to teach in Israel statutes and judgments (Ezra 7:10). *Islam does not seek the gospel of the Lord, but is antichrist. In the early eighth century A.D. the heart of the Persian Empire was conquered by Arab armies and became part of the early Islamic empires. Christians have a moral obligation to seek the faith in Jesus Christ, to do His will, and not receive antichrist into his house or give him encouragement. Are you listening? Turn to;*

**2John 1:7-11** (7) For many deceivers are entered into the world, who confess not that Jesus Christ is come in the flesh. This is a deceiver and an **antichrist**.

(8) Look to yourselves, that we lose not those things which we have wrought, but that we receive a full reward.

(9) Whosoever transgresseth, and abideth not in the doctrine of Christ, hath not God. He that abideth in the doctrine of Christ, he hath both the Father and the Son.

(10) If there come any unto you, and bring not this doctrine, receive him not into your house, neither bid him God speed:

(11) For he that biddeth him God speed is partaker of his evil deeds.

*From;* **[**Matthew Henry's Concise Commentary

1:7-11 The deceiver and his deceit are described: he brings some error concerning the person or office of the Lord Jesus. Such a one is a deceiver and an antichrist; he deludes souls, and undermines the glory and kingdom of the Lord Christ. Let us not think it strange, that there are deceivers and opposers of the Lord Christ's name and dignity now, for there were such, even in the apostles' times. The more deceivers and deceits abound, the more watchful the disciples must be. Sad it is, that splendid attainments in the school of Christ, should ever be lost. The way to gain the full reward is, to abide true to Christ, and constant in religion to the end. Firm cleaving to Christian truth unites us to Christ, and thereby to the Father also; for they are one. Let us equally disregard such as abide not in the doctrine of Christ, and those who transgress his commands. Any who did not profess and preach the doctrine of Christ, respecting him as the Son of God, and salvation by him from guilt and sin, were not to be noticed and countenanced. Yet in obeying this command, we must show kindness and a good spirit to those who differ from us in lesser matters, but hold firmly the all-important doctrines of Christ's person, atonement, and holy salvation.]
*From;* [Barnes' Notes on the Bible
A person who is truly consistent is never suspected of countenancing error, even when he is distinguished for liberality, and is ready, like the good Samaritan, to pour in oil and wine in the wounds of any waylaid traveler. The command not to "receive such an one into the house," in such circumstances as those referred to by John, would be probably understood literally, as he doubtless designed that it should be. To do that, to meet such persons with a friendly greeting, would be construed as countenancing their doctrine, and as commending them to others; and hence it was forbidden that they should be entertained as such.
Neither bid him God speed - Καὶ χαίρειν αὐτῷ μὴ λέγετε Kai chairein autō mē legete - "and do not say to him, hail, or joy."

Do not wish him joy; do not hail, or salute him. The word used expresses the common form of salutation, as when we wish one health, success, prosperity, Matthew 26:49; Acts 15:23; Acts 23:26; James 1:1. It would be understood as expressing a wish for success in the enterprise in which they were embarked; and, though we should love all people, and desire their welfare, and sincerely seek their happiness, yet we can properly wish no one success in career of sin and error.**]**
*To get the whole story of what happened after Judah's exile in Babylon, the book of Ezra needs to be cut in half. In Ezra chapters 1-6, Ezra describes the first return of the Jews from Babylon to Jerusalem--a return that happened before Ezra was born. It took place in 536 B.C. under the leadership of Joshua the priest and Zerubbabel. The main purpose of the first returning Jews was the rebuilding of the temple. In 515 B.C. the new temple was finally completed. Between chapters 6 and 7 of Ezra, there is a fifty eight year gap. During that gap of time the events of Esther took place.*
*The second section of Ezra describes the return of the second group of Jews from Babylon to Jerusalem. The date of Ezra's return is 458 B.C. Ezra traveled to Jerusalem with six thousand Jews and with enormous gifts of gold and silver for use in the temple. They even made the three-and-a-half-month trip without a military escort and were happy to report;* and the hand of our God was upon us, and he delivered us from the hand of the enemy, and of such as lay in wait by the way (Ezra 8:31). *The priority of Ezra was to restore the law of God as the basis for the Jewish community. Ezra was followed fourteen years later in 444 B.C. by Nehemiah, who brought a third group of Jews to their homeland. Ezra was still in Jerusalem teaching God's word when Nehemiah sparked the reconstruction of the walls of the city. The last two chapters of Ezra are about unlawful marriages to foreign women and how Ezra dealt with the problem. The sin was in disobeying the express demand of*

*the law that they confine their marriages to the people of their own nation. Now the solution may seem foreign to some, but Ezra was working in harmony with God.* Ezra 10:3 *says;* Now therefore let us make a covenant with our God to put away all the wives, and such as are born of them, according to the counsel of my Lord, and of those that tremble at the commandment of our God; and let it be done acording to the law. *According to Deuteronomy 24:1-4 a man is to give his wife a writing of divorcement and sent her out of his house. So one hundred fifty years after the desolation of Jerusalem; the community was finally restored to it's place of prominence and security in the land God had given to their ancestors. And in due time God;* Hath in these last days spoken unto us by his Son, whom he hath apppointed heir of all things. by whom also he made the worlds; (Heb 1:2).

*The priority of Jesus was to fulfill the old law of ordinances and to usher in the new covenant,* For if that first covenant had been faultless, then should no place have been sought for the second (Hebrews 8:7). *Now turn with me to;*

**Hebrews 10:23-26** (23) Let us hold fast the profession of our faith without wavering; (for he is faithful that promised;)
(24) And let us consider one another to provoke unto love and to good works:
(25) **Not forsaking the assembling of ourselves together**, as the manner of some is; but exhorting one another: and so much the more, as ye see the day approaching.
(26) For if we sin wilfully after that we have received the knowledge of the truth, there remaineth no more sacrifice for sins,

*Now the assembling of ourselves is to be on the first day of the week. Don't take my word, Turn to;*

**Acts 20:6-7** (6) And we sailed away from Philippi after the days of unleavened bread, and came unto them to Troas in five days; where we abode seven days.
(7) And upon the **first day of the week**, when the disciples

came together to **break bread**, **Paul preached** unto them, ready to depart on the morrow; and continued his speech until midnight.

*Another proof of first day of the week observance is in;*

**1Corinthians 16:1-2** (1) Now concerning the **collection** for the saints, as I have given order to the churches of Galatia, even so do ye.

(2) Upon the **first day of the week** let every one of you lay by him in store, as God hath prospered him, that there be no gatherings when I come.

*The ordinances of the law included the sabbath's and were nailed to the cross of Jesus. With a change of covenant came a change of Priesthood. With a change in Priesthood came a change in ordinances from sabbath day ordinances to the first day of the week. The Jews became citizens of their nation by birth. By faith Christians become citizens of the Kingdom of God by being born again of water and of the spirit. But what faith? Faith in Christ that is the effect of belief in His word, and submission to baptism; only those who first believe the testimony of God, and by faith repent of their sins, confess Jesus Christ is the Son of God, and are baptized into Him for remission of sins, have the full and explicit testimony of pardon. This is the gospel. It's invitation is open, come while time is on your side, or if one needs prayer for other reasons, in either case come while we persuade with song.*

*This message approved by*
*Jack Warford*
*a minister for Christ*

**The Lord and King Cyrus by Henry M. Morris, Ph.D.**
Evidence for Creation
"That saith of Cyrus, He is my shepherd, and shall perform all my pleasure: even saying to Jerusalem, Thou shalt be built; and to the temple, Thy foundation shall be laid." (Isaiah 44:28)
This is a remarkable prophecy, one of the main stumbling blocks of liberals who use it as an excuse for their completely wrong notion of a "second Isaiah." Long before Jerusalem was invaded and its temple destroyed by the armies of Babylon, Isaiah was already prophesying its rebuilding!
Furthermore, the great Persian emperor, Cyrus (whose nation would eventually conquer Babylon), was here named by God about 150 years before he was born and 175 years before he would fulfill Isaiah's prophecy by giving Ezra authority to rebuild the temple (Ezra 1:1-2).
Since liberal scholars do not want to believe in miracles and fulfilled prophecy, they have decided that this prophecy could not have been written by the original Isaiah, but by some later writer living after Cyrus. The truth is, however, that God controls the future and can reveal it if He chooses, using this very fact as proof that He will keep His other promises. "Thus saith the Lord to his anointed, to Cyrus . . . I have even called thee by thy name: I have surnamed thee, though thou has not known me" (Isaiah 45:1, 4).
God had also named King Josiah before he was born (1 Kings 13:2; 2 Kings 23:15-16), with the specific prophecy concerning him waiting to be fulfilled for over 300 years after it was first spoken.
It may take a long time, but God will surely do all He has said. "I am God, and there is none like me, Declaring the end from the beginning, and from ancient times the things that are not yet done, saying, My counsel shall stand, and I will do all my pleasure" (Isaiah 46:9-10). HMM

**The Lord God of Heaven by Henry M. Morris, Ph.D.**

"Thus saith Cyrus king of Persia, The Lord God of heaven hath given me all the kingdoms of the earth; and he hath charged me to build him an house at Jerusalem, which is in Judah." (Ezra 1:2)

It is noteworthy that the words of this verse are almost the same as in the last verse of 2 Chronicles. This is an indication that Ezra the scribe (who wrote the book of Ezra) was also the compiler and editor of the two books of Chronicles.

Even more noteworthy is the fact that the great emperor Cyrus seemed to acknowledge that the God of Israel was not just a tribal god, as many have claimed, but the Lord God of heaven--that is Jehovah Elohim--recognizing Him as both Creator and Redeemer of the world. The Persians were largely followers of Zoroaster, but his religious system did bear some resemblance to the true monotheism of Israel.

But Cyrus had been called, and even named, by God, long before he was born (Isaiah 44:28-45:6). When he conquered Babylon, the prophet Daniel was there (Daniel 6:28). The Jewish historian Josephus wrote that Daniel even became prime minister under Cyrus and was able to read Isaiah's remarkable prophecy to him, thus influencing him to send the Jews back to Jerusalem.

There have also been other Gentile rulers who acknowledged God, even before Christ came. Nebuchadnezzar of Babylon, once hating God, finally was forced to confess that He was "the most High" and "King of heaven" (Daniel 4:34, 37). Another was the Queen of Sheba, who recognized "the LORD thy God" (again Jehovah Elohim, 1 Kings 10:9). Then there was the king of Nineveh and Assyria, who believed in God at the preaching of Jonah (Jonah 3:6-10). In fact, in the ages to come "the kings of the earth" will all "bring their glory and honour" to the Lord in the holy city (Revelation 21:24). HMM

*This article was originally published August, 2011. "The Lord God of Heaven", Institute for Creation Research, http://www.icr.org/article/6153/ (accessed April 21, 2016).*

**[**In more recent history of Persia, an unexpected threat of Christianity was quickly approaching from the East: Islam. With Muhammad as its leader, the religion of Islam originated in A.D. 622 and spread aggressively. Less than 25 years from the beginning of Muhammad's flight from Mecca, the followers of Muhammad had taken control of Egypt, Palestine, Persia, and Syria. With its thirst for conquest, this religion threatened to convert the whole world to its beliefs.]; Apologetics Press--Origin and History of Catholicism [Part II] by Moisés Pinedo**]**

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Study Aids; Institute for Creation Research.
Bible Commentary by E. M. Zerr
The message 'Ezra; presented to;