Week 1: End of the Babylonian Captivity

Week 1: Ezra 1,3,4

Objective:

- End of the Babylonian Captivity
- Worship Restored at Jerusalem
- Restoration of the Temple Begins
- Resistance to Rebuilding the Temple
- Rebuilding of Jerusalem Opposed

Resources:

- Fr Tadros Y Malaty Commentary
- Catena Bible Commentary
- Fr Dawoud Lamie Bible study (Arabic)

Reading:

- ◦ Ezra 1:1-11
  ◦ Ezra 2: Skip
  ◦ Ezra 3:1-13
  ◦ Ezra 4:1-24

Key verse(s):

“And they sang responsively, praising and giving thanks to the Lord: “For *He is* good, For His mercy *endures* forever toward Israel.” Ezra 3:11

Comments:

- King Cyrus of Persia took over the Babylonian kingdom. Now we are in the era of the Persian Kingdom.
- God moved King Cyrus's heart to let the Israelites go back to their land to rebuild.
- Zerubbabel was the leader of the first wave of people to come back from exile to Jerusalem.

- Many Israelites were established in the Babylonian land and did not want to go back and rebuild a demolished country.
- Chapter two has some of the names who came back with Zerubbabel. Church Fathers look at this in a way where those people who believed in God, offered to work and serve, and left their luxurious, lives were worthy to have their names written in the Book of Life.
- Chapter 3 talks about the beginning of the service and the leaders that led the people to this reformation.
- Chapter 4 talks about the hardships they are facing. We see the devil is not happy with the spiritual reformation and trying to stop what Zerubbabel is trying to accomplish.

Review/recap questions:
***Servant may add more questions*

1. Who went to Jerusalem to build the House of the Lord?
2. Give the three main points in the Cyrus Proclamation.
3. . How did they celebrate the laying of the foundation of the temple?
4. Why did the older Israelites weep?
5. Why wouldn’t the Jews accept help from the inhabitants of the land?
6. What accusations were sent to King Artaxerxes?

Homework:
***Servant may add more questions*

1. Cyrus made a proclamation to build the temple because:
   a) the Lord filled his spirit b) Jeremiah ordered him to c) he was forced to
2. The House of the Lord was to be built in:
   a) Persia b) Babylon c) Jerusalem d) Egypt
3. Who exiled the people of Israel to Babylon?
   a) Zerubbabel b) Nebuchadnezzar c) Jeremiah d) the Nethinim
4. What feast did the people keep?
   a) the Passover b) the Feast of Hanukah c) the Feast of Tabernacles d) Christmas
5. Who oversaw the work of the House of the Lord?
   a) Kadmiel b) Jeshua c) the Levites d) all of these
6. Who offered to help the Israelites build the temple?
   a) the adversaries of Judah and Benjamin b) Jerubbabel c) King Darius d) Cyrus
7. The letter sent to Artaxerxes was written in:
   a) in English b) in Arabic c) in Aramaic d) in Hebrew

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