

God on the Move: The Comeback

Ezra 1



- the good old comeback story

God on the Move for His People:

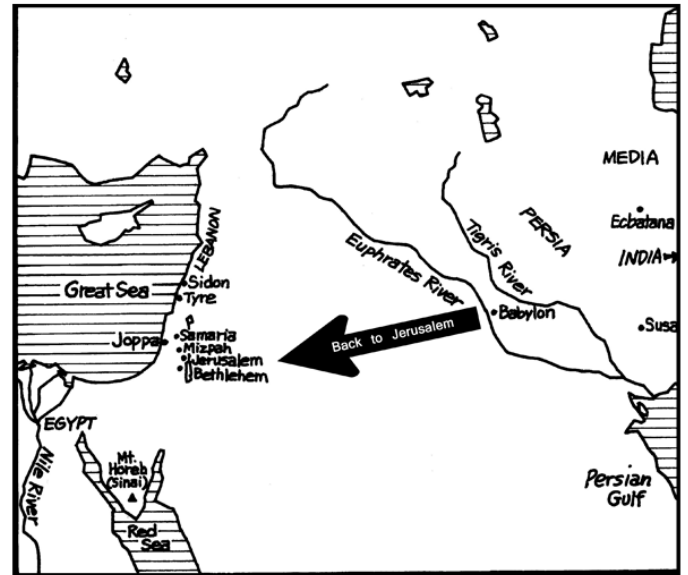
➡ God's purposes for the world through his chosen people may seem ruined. ¹

➡ God can sovereignly move world leaders to make political policy changes. ²

➡ God can move King's hearts to unintendedly fulfill His generations-old promises. ³

➡ God moves this world in answer to the prayers of His people. ⁴

➡ God moves to restore relationship with His people ⁵



¹ Backstory: In 586/7 B.C. Babylon destroyed Jerusalem and the Temple capturing and exiling the people of Judah in three successive waves of deportation (**Jeremiah 52:27b-30**). These Jewish exiles were under God's disciplinary hand for 70 years in Babylonian captivity until they weren't. When Cyrus the Great of Persia conquered Babylon (539 B.C.) a policy change permitted these chastened Jews to make a comeback and return home to Jerusalem to rebuild the city, its walls, and the Temple, the physical symbol of God's desire to live and rule in their midst.

² Isaiah called the pagan king, Cyrus of Persia, God's "anointed" (**Isaiah 45:1**) and God's "shepherd" (**44:28**), and little did Cyrus know that God had ordained him to play a special role in redemptive history: "he will build my city and set my exiles free" (**42:13**); our God is the King of kings and nations (**Proverbs 21:1; Psalms 22:28; 103:19; John 19:11a**).

³ Jeremiah had prophesied a 70 yr. Babylonian exile for the Jews (e.g. **Jeremiah 29:10-14**) generations before Cyrus took the Persian throne in 538 B.C.

⁴ In Babylonian captivity, Daniel read his "Bible" (**Daniel 9:2**) from **Jeremiah 25:11-12; 29:10** and responsively pleaded for God to keep His promises (**Daniel 9:3, 17-19**).

⁵ Jeremiah prophesied not just the people's return but the safe return of the articles belonging to the Temple (**Jeremiah 27:19-22**).