Ring of Truth daily devotion

Ring of Truth provides 366 daily 'proofs' that the Bible is consistent throughout from Genesis to Revelation and relevant for our lives today!

1 April

Ezra 1:1

In the first year of Cyrus king of Persia, in order to fulfil the word of the Lord spoken by Jeremiah, the Lord moved the heart of Cyrus king of Persia to make a proclamation throughout his realm and to put it in writing.

Are you ready for a mind-blowing experience?

Isaiah made a prophecy in approximately 690 BC (see Isaiah 44:28) - ***Who says of Cyrus, 'He is My shepherd and will accomplish all that I please; he will say of Jerusalem "Let it be rebuilt," and of the temple, "Let its foundations be laid."'*** And in Chapter 45, ***"This is what the Lord says to His anointed, to Cyrus..."***

Well, the people of Judah could have been forgiven for thinking that Cyrus would be 'one of them', an Israelite. But Cyrus wasn't. Sennacherib, the Assyrian, as we have seen, attacked Jerusalem. Nebuchadnezzar followed Sennacherib and he was the one who took everyone captive in BC 587 (over 100 years after Isaiah's prophecy). And eventually, Cyrus conquered Babylonia in BC 539.

Cyrus was no 'saint' either. He was a pagan king with pagan gods but God used him to fulfil His purposes. That is amazing in itself, but what is even more incredible is Isaiah's prophecy. He actually named the person God was going to use to restore Jerusalem 150 years before it took place, and probably about 120 years before Cyrus was born, or even thought of.

Doesn't that thrill and surprise you? How accurate the Bible is. There is no discrepancy here. God revealed to Isaiah things that would happen well after his death and completely outside his comprehension or intelligent speculation. The nation that would have fulfilled Isaiah's natural vision was Assyria, not Babylon and certainly not Persia (historically 2 nations later). This prophecy is also further confirmation that God knows all about us long before we are born. That's awesome - isn't it?

So, here we have Cyrus, in his own words, ***"The Lord, the God of Heaven, has given me all the kingdoms of the earth and He has appointed me to build a temple for Him at Jerusalem in Judah. Anyone of His people among you - may his God be with him, and let him go up to Jerusalem in Judah and build the temple of the Lord, the God of Israel, the God who is in Jerusalem"*** (v 2-3).

"Moreover, King Cyrus brought out the articles belonging to the Temple of the Lord, which Nebuchadnezzar had carried away from Jerusalem and had placed in the temple of his god. Cyrus king of Persia had them brought by Mithredath the treasurer, who counted them out to Sheshbazzar the prince of Judah" (v 7-8). Verses 9 and 10 are an inventory of the 5,400 articles.

Listen - Our God is an awesome God. If He can use a Cyrus, a pagan of pagans, He can use anyone, and He can certainly use **you** and me. He knew us before we were born and longs for us to fulfil the plans He has for us. He has planned an awesome future just for you. Will you let Him fulfil it?

Why not spend a bit of time now, thanking Him for being so awesome and for having a specific plan just for you. Then ask Him what you need to do next in order to progress it further?