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SABBATH-SCHOOL

LESSON QUARTERLY

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SABBATH-SCHOOL LESSONS

FOR

SENIOR DIVISION

A Study of the Book of Ezra

FIRST QUARTER, 1907

GENERAL NOTE.—The book of Ezra contains the key to a proper understanding of the message that proclaims the opening of the investigative judgment in the heavenly courts. Daniel states that the twenty-three hundred years which mark the beginning of the judgment, would begin with the ‘‘going forth of the commandment to restore and to build Jerusalem;’’ but the book of Ezra contains *the only divine record of the going forth of that commandment.*

LESSON I.—Going Out of Babylon.

JANUARY 5, 1907.

Questions.

1. What kingdom was ruling at the beginning of Ezra's record? Name the king. Ezra 1:1.
2. What did the Lord influence the king to do? Ezra 1:1. Note 1.
3. Of what prophecy was this the fulfilment? Jer. 29:10. Note 2.
4. How extensively was the proclamation proclaimed? Ezra 1:1.

The offerings for this quarter go to the most needy fields.

5. From whom did Cyrus say he received his kingdom? Ezra 1:2.

6. What reason did Cyrus give for having the temple built? Verse 2.

7. What class of people were called to go up to Jerusalem? Verse 3. Note 3.

8. What help was to be rendered the poor? Verse 4.

9. Who responded to the call? Verse 5.

10. How and with what spirit did their neighbors assist them? Verse 6.

11. What did Cyrus give them? Verse 7.

12. Who had taken these vessels from Jerusalem? 2 Chron. 36:7, 18.

13. Where had they kept them? Dan. 1:1, 2. Note 4.

14. How many vessels were there? Ezra 1:9, 10.

15. After what model had these vessels been made? Ex. 25:40; 1 Chron. 28:11-13, 19.

16. Who was placed in charge of them? Ezra 1:11.

17. Had they been disturbed during the seventy years' captivity? Dan. 5:1, 2.

18. How did God show His displeasure because of the insult offered to the sacred vessels? Dan. 5:5, 26-28. Note 5.

Notes.

1. Cyrus evidently believed in the god of good and evil much as the Parsees of India do to-day, and that the God of the Hebrews was a powerful God, and to secure His favor would greatly increase his power.

2. Daniel was a prominent man in the Persian court, and no doubt had instructed Cyrus in regard to the prophecy of Jeremiah, as we find Daniel earnestly studying these prophecies three years before Cyrus issued his decree. Dan. 9:1, 2.

Nine-tenths of the women of India never heard of a Saviour.

3. The call was to all God's people, and if all had heeded the call, the work would have gone forward rapidly.

4. Nebuchadnezzar respected sacred things and placed these holy vessels in the best place he had, *viz.*, in the treasure-house of his god.

5. While they were drinking wine from those sacred vessels, a hand appeared writing upon the wall. Consternation and confusion followed, and while they were in this condition the army of Cyrus entered the city and slew the king and the princes. Dan. 5:30, 31; Jer. 51:57. The sacred vessels must have been scattered throughout the banquet hall. Who was there with power to gather them? The last kingly act of Belshazzar was to publicly proclaim Daniel the third ruler in the kingdom. Dan. 5:29. This gave Daniel power to command the servants to search carefully for all the sacred vessels and restore them to a place of safety.

LESSON II.—*The First Company to Leave Babylon.*

JANUARY 12, 1907.

Questions.

1. When the people returning from the captivity reached Jerusalem, where did they go? Ezra 2:1. Note 1.

2. What leading men were mentioned? Verse 2.

3. What was done with those who could not give a clean family record? Verses 58-62.

4. How and by whom was the question decided? Verse 63 (margin).

5. What was the Urim and Thummim? Ex. 28:30; Num. 27:21; 1 Sam. 28:6. Note 2.

6. How many Jews returned? Ezra 2:64, 65. Note 3.

7. What did they take with them? Verses 66, 67.

8. Who led out in making offerings to rebuild the temple? Verse 68.

Prayerfully consider the unentered fields.

9. In what spirit were the offerings made? Verse 68.
10. How does the Lord regard this spirit? 2 Cor. 9:7.
11. How did the "chief of the fathers" give? Ezra 2:69. How much was given?
12. Who dwelt in their cities? Verse 70.
13. If "all Israel" dwelt in their cities, how many tribes were represented? Acts 26:7.
14. For how many tribes were offerings made at the dedication of the temple? Ezra 6:17.
15. How many tribes will be represented in those that come out of modern Babylon? Rev. 7:4-8.
16. Will they dwell in a city already prepared for them? Heb. 11:16. See also Rev. 21:9-26.

Notes.

1. These cities were substantially built. Many of them had been built by the heathen that dwelt in the land before Israel came from Egypt. Deut. 6:10; Joshua 24:13. During the seventy years' captivity, these cities had remained the same and stood ready to receive those that returned from captivity.

Travelers state that in some portions of Palestine the ancient cities still remain. Mr. Porter in "Giant Cities of Bashan," speaks of one of these cities as follows:

"Selcah is one of the most remarkable cities of Palestine. It has been long deserted; and yet, as nearly as I could estimate, *five hundred* of its houses are still standing, and three or four hundred families might settle in it at any moment without laying a stone, or expending an hour's labor on repairs." If some of the cities are still standing, it is easy to understand how Israel was so quickly settled in their cities.

2. At the right and left of the breastplate were two large stones of great brilliancy. These were known as the Urim and Thummim. By them, the will of God was made known through the high priest. When questions were brought for decision before the Lord, a halo of light encircling the precious stone at the right was a token of the divine consent or approval, while a cloud

"Lift up your eyes and look on the fields; for they are white already to harvest."

shadowing the stone at the left, was an evidence of the denial or disapprobation."—*Patriarchs and Prophets, chapter 30.*

3. Only a small proportion heeded this call to "come out of Babylon." They loved their houses and lands in Babylon better than the Lord and His temple. Many remain in modern Babylon to-day for the same reason.

LESSON III.—*The Foundation of the Temple Laid.*

JANUARY 19, 1907.

Questions.

1. What did the people do in the seventh month? Ezra 3:1. Note 1.

2. What two men were leaders of the people? Verse 2.

3. What was the first work done toward establishing the service of God? Verse 3.

4. What feast does the record say they kept? Verse 4.

5. When and how was this feast celebrated? Lev. 23:34-44.

6. After the Feast of Tabernacles had been celebrated, what continual offering was established? Ezra 3:5; Ex. 29:38, 39.

7. When did they begin these offerings? Ezra 3:6.

8. What other feasts are spoken of as being established? Verse 5.

9. What preparations were being made to build the temple? Verse 7.

10. When did they begin the work? Verse 8.

11. By whom was the foundation laid? Zech. 4:9.

12. Who assisted in the work? Ezra 3:8.

The needs of the cause of God are world-wide.

13. Who was placed in charge of the work? Verse 9.
14. Describe the service connected with laying the foundation. Verses 10, 11.
15. Why did the old men weep? Verse 12.
16. How did this temple compare with the former one in appearance? Hag. 2:3.
17. What did the Lord say of this temple? Note 2. Hag. 2:9.
18. Of what was the work of building the temple an object-lesson? Acts 15:13-18.

Notes.

1. The seventh month was an important month in the religious service. The first day of the seventh month was the day of blowing of trumpets; the tenth day was the day of atonement, while the Feast of Tabernacles began in the fifteenth day of the same month.

2. If the old men could have known that they were building a temple, in which, as restored by Herod, the long-promised Saviour would teach, they, too, would have rejoiced.

LESSON IV.—*The First Protest Against the Work.*

JANUARY 26, 1907.

Questions.

1. Who heard that the temple was being built? Ezra 4:1.
2. What request did they make? Verse 2.
3. Give Zerubbabel's answer. Verse 3.
4. What was the character of these people that wished to help build the house of the Lord? 2 Kings 17:33, 34. Note 1.

We expend sixty per cent of our efforts upon four per cent of our field.

5. In what way did these Samaritans show their true character? Ezra 4:4, 5.

6. How long did they keep up this warfare of spite? Verse 5.

7. What did they finally do? Verse 6.

8. To whom did they next appeal? Verse 7. Note 2.

9. Who were the leading spirits in writing the letter? Verses 7, 8.

10. How many were represented in the letter? Verses 9, 10.

11. What did they write in regard to the Jews and Jerusalem? Verses 11-13.

12. What reason did they give for sending the letter? Verse 14 (margin).

13. What request did they make? Verse 15.

14. Give the first part of the king's letter. Verses 17-19.

15. What did Artaxerxes say about the former kings of Jerusalem? Verse 20.

16. Give the decree of the king? Verses 21, 22.

17. When the Samaritans received the letter, what did they do? Verse 23.

18. How long was the work stopped? Verse 24.

Notes.

1. The Samaritans did not love nor fear the Lord; they wished to help build because they thought if Jerusalem was rebuilt it would be a wise policy for them to have a part in it. Such helpers hinder the Lord, and Zerubbabel showed great spiritual discernment in refusing them. 2 Kings 17:24-34 gives the origin of the Samaritans.

2. From the Bible record we have the names of Ahasuerus and Artaxerxes, kings reigning between the time of Cyrus and

The offerings for this quarter go to the most needy fields.

Darius the Persian. According to profane history Cambyses and Smerdis the Impostor reigned during this time, hence it has been thought probable that these names refer to the same kings.

LESSON V.—The Work Revived.

FEBRUARY 2, 1907.

Questions.

1. In the crisis regarding the rebuilding of Jerusalem what prophets did the Lord raise up? Ezra 5:1. Note 1.
2. What reason did Israel give for not building the house of the Lord? Hag. 1:2.
3. What response did the prophet make? Verses 3, 4.
4. What did the prophet tell them to consider? Verses 5-11.
5. How did Zechariah encourage them to build? Zech. 2:4, 5.
6. How did the Lord encourage them to go forward in the work? Ezra 5:2; Hag. 1:14.
7. When Zerubbabel decided to go forward with the building, what precious words of encouragement were sent him by the Lord? Zech. 4:6-10. Note 2.
8. Who stood by the leaders when they determined to do their duty and go forward? Hag. 1:13; Ezra 5:2.
9. Give the year, the month, and the day of the month that the work was resumed. Hag. 1:14, 15.
10. Twenty-seven days after they began building, what wonderful testimony came to them from the prophet? Hag. 2:1-9. Note 3.

We expend sixty per cent of our efforts upon four per cent of our field.

11. What wonderful message came from the prophet Haggai just three months from the day they resumed the work upon the temple? Hag. 2:10-19; chapter 1:15.

12. What encouraging message came from Zechariah at this time? Zech. 8:9-15.

13. What does James say the work of the Gospel really is? Acts 15:13-16.

14. To what period of the world's history does Paul apply the words of Hag. 2:6, 7? See Heb. 12:26, 27.

15. How does the Lord regard an individual that will arise in the time of a crisis and build the work of the Lord? Hag. 2:23. Note 4.

16. When was the temple finished? Ezra 6:15.

17. How long was this after the work of building was resumed? Compare Hag. 1:15 with Ezra 6:15.

Notes.

1. Haggai began his work in the sixth month of the second year of Darius the Persian, and Zechariah began to prophecy two months later. When God raises up a prophet for a special work God's people are preserved. Hosea 12:13.

2. These words of encouragement have strengthened many a builder in the Lord's work.

3. The Saviour taught in this temple and His presence there was more than the glory of the former temple. Zechariah describes the Saviour's triumphant entry into Jerusalem. Zech. 9:9.

4. Zerubbabel was an object-lesson to all who arise in the strength of the Lord and build up the work of the Lord. All who do this are precious in His sight!

"The Advent message to the world in this generation"—our watchword.

LESSON VI.—Difficulties Arise.

FEBRUARY 9, 1907.

Questions.

1. What question was asked by the governor of the land? Ezra 5:3. Note 1.
2. What reply was made to him?—"Then we told them after this manner, what the names of the men were that were making this building." Verse 4, A. R. V.
3. What special protection was granted the Jews? Verse 5.
4. Upon whom is the eye of the Lord said to especially rest? Ps. 33:18; Job 36:7.
5. Were the adversaries able to stop the work? Ezra 5:5.
6. Who was king of Persia at this time? Verse 6. Note 2.
7. Who wrote him a letter? Verse 6.
8. What report was given of the work being done at Jerusalem? Verse 8.
9. In answer to the governor's question, whose servants did the Jews say they were? Verses 9-11. Note 3.
10. What reason did the Jews give for being carried into captivity? Verse 12.
11. To what did they refer as authority for building? Verses 13-15.
12. How long had they been building the house? Verse 16; compare chapter 3:8. Note 4.
13. With what request did they close the letter? Ezra 5:17.

Prayerfully consider the unentered fields.

14. What was the general character of their whole letter?

15. How does it compare with the letter written by the Samaritans? Ezra 4:7-16. Note 5.

16. Of what scripture was Tatnai's letter an illustration? Prov. 16:7.

17. On receipt of the letter what did Darius do? Ezra 6:1, 2.

18. Give the principal points in the decree of Cyrus. Verses 3-5.

Notes.

1. The Jews were building in direct opposition to a royal command not to build. Ezra 4:23, 24. This required much faith.

2. Darius the Persian was known in history as Darius Hystaspes. He came to the throne after Smerdis the Impostor.

3. Their power lay in recognizing God alone as their Master. The work of the Lord will always go forward with power when the workers *know of a surety* in their hearts that they are "servants of the God of heaven," and not men-servers, and souls are of more value to them than wages. Then they can carry forward the work rapidly and it will prosper in the face of opposition and discouraging circumstances.

4. The foundation of the temple was laid in the second year of Cyrus. Cyrus reigned five years after the work began. Cambyses reigned seven and one-half years, Smerdis six months, and this was the second year of Darius (Ezra 4:14), making fifteen years since they had commenced building the temple.

5. The letter of Tatnai was a fair, open, honorable letter, stating the facts in their true light; while the letter of the Samaritans was just the opposite. History repeats itself. The Samaritans "feared the Lord and served their graven images." 2 Kings 17:41. The cause of God will often receive better treatment to-day from worldly people, than from half converted, professed Christians.

"This Gospel of the kingdom shall be preached in all the world for a witness unto all nations; and then shall the end come."

LESSON VII.—The Second Part of the Great Decree.

FEBRUARY, 16, 1907.

Questions.

1. What command was sent by Darius to the governor and his associates? Ezra 6:6, 7.
2. What provision did Darius make for the building of the house? Verse 8.
3. How was the expense of establishing the worship maintained? Verses 9, 10. Note 1.
4. What request did the king make? Verse 10.
5. Give the penalty for disregarding the decree. Verse 11.
6. Who did the king say would also punish those who disregarded the decree? Verse 12.
7. How was the decree received by the governor and his associates? Verse 13.
8. What gave prosperity to the work of building? Verse 14.
9. What relation must we sustain to the teachings of the prophet in order to prosper? 2 Chron. 20:20.
10. Who was the original framer of the great decree? Ezra 6:14. How many earthly kings had a part to act in issuing it?
11. When was the house finished. Verse 15.
12. Who took part in the dedication of the house of God? Verse 16.
13. How many tribes were represented in the service? Verse 17.

“The Advent message to the world in this generation”—our watchword.

14. What order was established? Verse 18. Compare 1 Chron. 24:1-19; 1 Chron. 23:6.

15. What feast was kept the first month after the temple was finished? Ezra 6:19,22.

16. Who influenced the heart of the king to help the work? Verse 22; Prov. 21:1.

17. Who will always prosper in the work of the Lord? Ps. 122:6.

Note.

Past history is but an object-lesson of the present and the future. Those in the closing work who will take a firm stand to carry out the teachings of the spirit of prophecy will find Isa. 60:10 fulfilled in behalf of the work of the Lord to-day. Eccl. 1:9, 10.

LESSON VIII.—*The Third and Last Part of the Great Decree.*

FEBRUARY 23, 1907.

Questions.

1. By whom was this decree issued? Ezra 7:11.
 2. In what year of his reign? Verses 7-11.
 3. What period of time intervened between this decree and that of Cyrus? Compare Ezra 1:1 with Ezra 7:7-11. Note.

4. To whom was it given? Ezra 7:11.

5. What was the first provision in the decree? Verse 13.

6. What reason did the king give for allowing all the captives to go up with Ezra? Verse 14.

“There shall be delay no longer”—our confidence.

7. Was this the first time permission had been given for them to return? Ezra 1:3, 4.

8. What were the Jews to carry with them? Ezra 7:15.

9. How much silver and gold could they take with them? Verse 16.

10. What were they to buy with the money? Verse 17.

11. What liberty was given in spending the balance of the money? Verse 18.

12. What besides money was given them? Verse 19.

13. State what further provision was made for the work? Verse 20.

14. How did the king show his confidence in Ezra? Verse 21.

15. To what extent could demands be made upon the public treasury? Verse 22.

16. Whose command was Artaxerxes trying to carry out? Verse 23.

17. What exemption was made those connected with the temple service? Verse 24.

18. What besides the worship was established by this part of the decree? Verse 25.

19. How much power had the restored government to enforce its laws? Verse 26.

Note.

The first of the commandment was given in the first year of Cyrus. Cyrus reigned seven years; his son Cambyses, seven and one-half years; Smerdis the Impostor, half a year; Darius Hystaspes, thirty-six years; Xerxes, twenty years; and the last of the decree was given in the seventh year of Artaxerxes, making seventy-nine years. It took seventy-nine years for man to carry

The offerings for this quarter go to the most needy fields.

out the command of God; but there came a time when God could wait no longer. It might have come before; but it could be delayed no longer.

LESSON IX.—The Complete Decree.

MARCH 2, 1907.

Questions.

1. Who first issued the commandment regarding the restoration and building of Jerusalem? Ezra 6:14.

2. How many kings helped to carry out the commandment? Verse 14.

3. When and by whom was the first part issued? Ezra 1:1-4. What was embraced in this part of the decree? Note 1.

4. When and by whom was the second part of the decree issued? Ezra 6:1-12; 4:24.

5. How does the decree of Darius compare with the decree of Cyrus? Compare Ezra 1:1-4 with Ezra 6:1-12. Note 2.

6. How much time intervened between the decrees of Cyrus and Darius? Ezra 1:1; 4:24. Note 3.

7. Who issued the third and last part of the decree? Ezra 7:11.

8. What do we find in this part of the decree that was not found in the other parts? Verses 25, 26. Note 4.

9. How much time intervened between the decree of Darius and the decree of Artaxerxes? Ezra 4:24; 7:7-11. Note 5.

“There shall be delay no longer”—our confidence.

10. At what date did the command really go forth? Ezra 7:7-11. Note 6.

11. When was the decree of Artaxerxes issued? Verses 8-11.

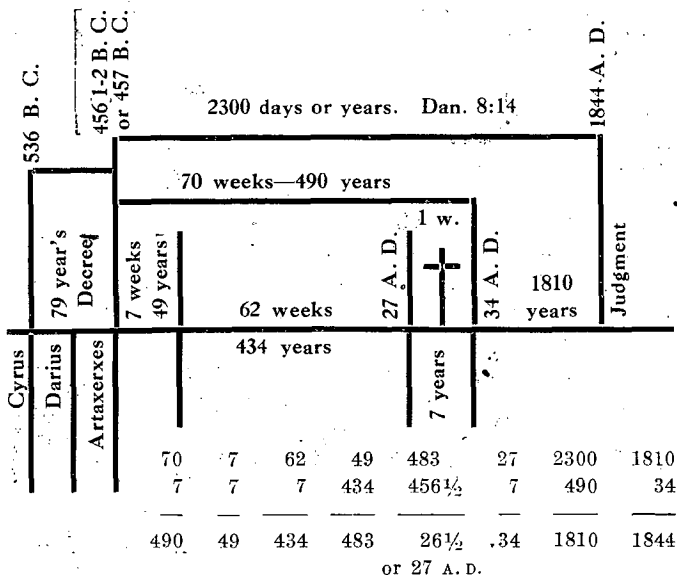
12. How long did it take Ezra to reach Jerusalem? Verse 9.

13. To whom did Ezra deliver the decree? Ezra 8:36.

14. How much of the year had passed before the decree was delivered? Ezra 7:9. Note 7.

Notes.

1. The decree of Cyrus made provision for the rebuilding of the temple and the establishing of the worship.



2. The decree of Darius was a repetition of the one issued by Cyrus and embraced the rebuilding of the temple and the establishment of the worship.

3. By referring to the list of Persian kings given in Note 1, under Lesson VIII, it will be seen that seventeen years intervened between the first year of Cyrus and the second year of Darius the Persian.

4. Artaxerxes made provision for the establishment of the government. This was not mentioned by either Cyrus or Darius.

5. From the second year of Darius the Persian to the seventh year of Artaxerxes was sixty-two years. This, with the seventeen years between the decrees of Cyrus and Darius, makes seventy-nine years covered by the full decree.

6. Before the captivity, Jerusalem had a government as well as a temple and worship, and a decree to "restore and to build Jerusalem" must include the re-establishment of the government as well as the worship; therefore, the command could not be said to have gone forth until provision was made for the establishing of the government. This was in 457 B. C., in the decree of Artaxerxes.

The following taken from an editorial in the *Review and Herald* of April 5, 1906, contains important historical data on this question, and should be carefully studied:

According to the generally accepted chronology, the seventh of Artaxerxes was B. C. 457, as is noted in the margin of the Authorized Version of the book of Ezra; but, as is the case with almost every important doctrine, some have disputed this date, and have asserted that there was not sufficient proof to establish this important position. We have therefore thought it might be worth the while to bring forward some historical evidence bearing upon this question, evidence of such a character that it can not be set aside by mere assertion.

As the extract which we shall quote involves some abbreviations and expressions not now in common use in reckoning time, we will interpret some of them, so that all our readers may have as clear an understanding as possible of the grounds upon which the reckoning is based. The expression "An. 1, Olymp. 87" means "in the first year of the eighty-seventh Olympiad," and the expression "An. 4, Olymp. 88" means "in the fourth year of the eighty-eighth Olympiad," and the expression "An. 1, Olymp. 75" means "in the first year of the seventy-fifth Olympiad," and the expression "An. 4, Olymp. 83" means "in the fourth year of the eighty-third Olympiad." The Olympiad was "the period of four years between any two celebrations of

Nine-tenths of the women of India never heard of a Saviour.

the Olympic games," at Olympia in Elis, one of the States of Greece, the first Olympiad being reckoned from B. C. 776. Whenever the abbreviation "An. J. P." occurs, it may be interpreted, "The year of the Julian Period." This was "a chronological period of 7,980 years, combining the solar, lunar, and indiction cycles," which was given a theoretical starting-point in B. C. 4713. "The Julian Period was proposed by Scaliger, to remove or avoid ambiguities in chronological dates, and was so named because composed of Julian years." The abbreviation "lib." should be read "book." The expression "Anno Urbis Conditae 273" may be read "in the two hundred and seventy-third year from the founding of the city," referring to the founding of Rome in B. C. 754. The other abbreviations will doubtless be understood by the average reader.

The quotation to which reference has been made is from Part I, Chap. 10, of Sir Isaac Newton's work on the prophecies of Daniel, and reads as follows:

The grounds of the chronology here followed [to show that the seventh year of Artaxerxes was B. C. 457] I will now set down as briefly as I can.

The Peloponnesian War began in spring, An. 1, Olymp. 87 (B. C. 432), Diodorus, Eusebius, and all other authors agree. It began two months before Pythodorus ceased to be Archon (Thucyd. 1, 2), that is, in April, two months before the end of the Olympic year. Now, the years of this war are most certainly determined by the fifty years distance of its first year from the transit of Xerxes inclusively (Thucyd. 1, 2), or forty-eight years exclusively (Eratosth. apud Clem. Alex.); by the sixty-nine years distance of its end, of twenty-seventh year, from the beginning of Alexander's reign in Greece; by the acting of the Olympic games in its fourth and twelfth years (Thucyd. 1, 5); and by three eclipses of the sun and one of the moon, mentioned by Thucydides and Xenophon. Now, Thucydides, an unquestionable witness, tells us that the news of the death of Artaxerxes Longimanus was brought to Ephesus, and from thence by some Athenians to Athens, in the seventh year of the Peloponnesian, when the winter half-year was running, and therefore he died An. 4, Olymp. 88, in the end of An. J. P. 4289 (B. C. 425), suppose a month, or two, before mid-winter, for so long the news would be in coming. Now, Artaxerxes Longimanus reigned forty years, by the consent of Diodorus, Eusebius, Jerome, Sulpitius, or forty-one, according to Ptol. in Can., Clem. Alexand. (1. 1), Strom., Chron. Alexand., Abulpharagius, Nicephorus, including therein the reign of his successors, Xerxes and Sogdian, as Abulpharagius informs

The needs of the cause of God are world-wide.

us. After Artaxerxes, reigned his son, Xerxes, two months, and Sogdian, seven months; but their reign is not reckoned apart in summing up the years of the kings, but is included in the forty, or forty-one years' reign of Artaxerxes; omit these nine months, and the precise reign of Artaxerxes will be thirty-nine years and three months. And therefore since his reign ended in the beginning of winter, An. J. P. 4289 (B. C. 425), it began between midsummer and autumn An. J. P. 4250 (B. C. 464).

The same thing I gather also thus: Cambyses began his reign in spring, An. J. P. 4185 (B. C. 529), and reigned eight years, including the five months of Smerdis; and then Darius Hystaspes began in spring, An. J. P. 4193 (B. C. 521), and reigned thirty-six years, by the unanimous consent of all chronologers. *The reigns of these two kings are determined by three eclipses of the moon, observed at Babylon, and recorded by Ptolemy; so that it can not be disputed.* One was in the seventh year of Cambyses, An. J. P. 4191 (B. C. 523), July 16, at eleven at night; another in the twentieth year of Darius, An. J. P. 4212 (B. C. 502), November 19, at 11:45 at night; a third in the thirty-first year of Darius, An. J. P. 4223 (B. C. 491), April 25, at 11:30 at night. By these eclipses, and the prophecies of Haggai and Zechary compared together, it is manifest that his years began after the twenty-fourth day of the eleventh Jewish month, and before the twenty-fifth day of April, and by consequence about March. Xerxes, therefore, began in spring, An. J. P. 4229 (B. C. 485), for Darius died in the fifth year after the battle of Marathon, as Herodotus (lib. 7) and Plutarch mention; and that battle was in October, An. J. P. 4224 (B. C. 490), ten years before the battle of Salamis. Xerxes, therefore, began within less than a year after October, An. J. P. 4228 (B. C. 486), suppose in the spring following; for he spent his first five years, and something more, in preparations for his expedition against the Greeks; and this expedition was in the time of the Olympic games, An. 1, Olymp. 75, Calliade Athenis Archonte, twenty-eight years after his regifuge and consulship of the first counsel, Junius Brutus, Anno Urbis Condita 273 (B. C. 481), Fabio and Furio Coss. The passage of Xerxes' army over the Hellespont began in the end of the fourth year of the seventy-fourth Olympiad, that is, in June, An. J. P. 4234 (B. C. 480), and took up one month; and in autumn, three months after, on the full moon, the sixteenth day of the month of Munychion, was the battle of Salamis, and a little after that an eclipse of the sun, which, by the calculation, fell on October

"This Gospel of the kingdom shall be preached in all the world for a witness unto all nations; and then shall the end come."

2. His sixth year, therefore, began a little before June, suppose in spring, An. J. P. 4234 (B. C. 480), and his first year consequently in spring, An. J. P. 4229 (B. C. 485), as above. Now, he reigned almost twenty-one years, by the consent of all writers. Add the seven months of Artabanus, and the sum will be twenty-one years and about four or five months, which end between mid-summer and autumn, An. J. P. 4250 (B. C. 464). At this time, therefore, began the reign of his successor, Artaxerxes, as was to be proved.

The same thing is also confirmed by Julius Africanus, who informs us out of former writers that the twentieth year of this Artaxerxes was the one hundred and fifteenth year from the beginning of the reign of Cyrus in Persia, and fell in with An. 4, Olymp. 83. It began, therefore, with the Olympic year soon after the summer solstice. An. J. P. 4269 (B. C. 445). Subtract nineteen years, and his first year will begin at the same time of the year, An. J. P. 4250 (B. C. 464), as above.

Thus, by three independent lines of historical proof, Sir Isaac Newton shows that Artaxerxes began His reign in B. C. 464, and "the seventh year of Artaxerxes the king" would consequently be B. C. 457.

LESSON X.—An Important Prophetic Period.

MARCH 9, 1907.

Questions.

1. Of what was the decree to restore and to build Jerusalem the starting point? Dan. 9:25.
2. What two periods are mentioned in this verse?
3. By what two events are they bounded? Note 1.
4. How many years are embraced in a prophetic week? Gen. 29:27, 20.
5. How many years in seven weeks and three score and two weeks? Ans.—483 years. Note 2.
6. When did the decree to restore and to build Jeru-

"There shall be delay no longer"—our confidence.

sa^olem go forth? Ezra 7:9. *Ans.*—456½ B. C. See Note 6 in Lesson 9.

7. When was Christ baptized? Luke 3:21, 22. Note 3.

8. How many weeks were determined, or cut off upon the Jews? Dan. 9:24.

9. From what period was the seventy weeks taken? Dan. 8:14; 9:23.

10. What event took place in the middle of the remaining week of the seventy weeks? Dan. 9:26, 27.

11. For how long was the covenant to be confirmed to the Jews? Verse 27.

12. How was this fulfilled? Heb. 2:3.

13. When did the seventy weeks end? Acts 8:1-4. Marginal date. Note 4.

14. When did the 2300 years end? *Ans.*—1844. Note 5.

15. What four very important events are definitely located by the study of the 2300 years? *Ans.*—First, the baptism of Christ 27 A. D. Second, the crucifixion of Christ three and one-half years later. Third, the Gospel going to the Gentiles 34 A. D. Fourth, the beginning of the investigative judgment or the cleansing of the heavenly sanctuary 1844 A. D.

Notes.

1. The seven weeks and sixty-two weeks begin with the commandment to restore and to build Jerusalem, and close with "Messiah the Prince." John 1:41 (margin), Acts 10:38 with Luke 3:21, 22 show that Jesus became the Messiah or the "Anointed One" when He was anointed with the Holy Ghost at His baptism. Therefore the sixty-nine weeks reach from the

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going forth of the commandment to rebuild Jerusalem to the baptism of Jesus.

2. Seven weeks would contain seven times seven years, or forty-nine years, and sixty-two weeks would contain seven times sixty-two, or 434 years. Forty-nine years plus 434 years equal 483 years.

3. Four hundred and eighty-three years minus $456\frac{1}{2}$ years leaves $26\frac{1}{2}$ years A. D., or 27 A. D., the date of the baptism of Christ.

4. Seventy weeks or 490 years were determined upon the Jews. The sixty-nine weeks ended in 27 A. D. Seven years, or one week, added to this brings us to 34 A. D. the end of the seventy weeks.

5. The seventy weeks, or 490 years, taken from the 2,300 years leaves 1,810 years yet remaining at the end of the seventy weeks. The seventy weeks, or 490 years, ended 34 A. D. The 2,300 years ended 1,810 years later, or in 1844.

LESSON XI.—Ezra's Journey to Jerusalem.

MARCH 16, 1907.

Questions.

1. How did Ezra express his thankfulness for the decree given him by the king? Ezra 7: 27, 28. What was he encouraged to do?

2. In what knowledge was Ezra especially proficient? Verses 6, 11, 12, 21.

3. What did the king grant? Why? Verse 6; Prov. 22: 11. Note 1.

4. Who went with Ezra? Ezra 7: 7. Note 2.

5. When Ezra examined the company what lack did he discover? Ezra 8: 15.

6. How many, and what kind of men were chosen as messengers? Ezra 8: 16.

"There shall be delay no longer"—our confidence.

7. What command did they carry to Iddo? Verse 17.
8. How many were brought? Verses 18-20.
9. Why was a fast proclaimed? Verse 21.
10. What reason did Ezra give for not requesting a guard from the king? Verse 22. Note 3.
11. What assurance did Ezra receive? Verse 23.
12. How did Ezra dispose of the treasure on the journey? Verses 24-28.
13. Who had given this treasure to the Lord's work? Verse 25.
14. What instruction was given those that carried the treasure? Verses 29, 30.
15. Who protected them from danger on their journey? Verse 31. Note 4.
16. What ceremony took place upon the fourth day after they arrived in Jerusalem? Verses 33, 34. Note 5.
17. What number of offerings were offered? Verse 35.
18. What would this suggest in regard to the number of tribes represented there?

Notes.

1. It was Ezra's intimacy with the Lord that caused the king to grant *all* his requests; "it was according to the hand of the Lord his God upon him." The same intimacy to-day will bring like results.

2. From the record given in Ezra 8:1-14, there were over fifteen hundred males in the company that went up with Ezra. With women and children this made a large party.

3. It was not the safety of the party only, but the honor of God that was at stake. The king had granted every request and may have offered a guard, but Ezra had told the king of the power of God to deliver.

4. The desert was infested with bands of robbers, then as now, and it was not safe for a caravan to cross the desert without a guard of armed men.

Prayerfully consider the unentered fields.

5. The strictest business policy should be used in dealing with the Lord's treasure. Notice how accurate Ezra was. Every article was both weighed and counted, and the record kept. "Cursed is he that doeth the work of the Lord negligently." Jer. 48:10 (margin).

LESSON XII.—The Condition of the Jews in Jerusalem.

MARCH 23, 1907.

Questions.

1. What complaint did the princes bring to Ezra? Ezra 9:1.
2. What was one of the leading sins? Verse 2. Who were chief in this trespass?
3. How did the news affect Ezra? Verse 3.
4. How did this compare with Nehemiah's course under similar conditions, over twenty-five years later? Neh. 13:23-25.
5. What did Ezra require of them? Ezra 10:5.
6. What did Ezra do in the evening? Ezra 9:5.
7. What did he say of their trespass? Verse 6 (last clause). Compare Jer. 2:22.
8. What had their iniquities brought upon them? Ezra 9:7.
9. How had the Lord blessed and favored them? Verses 8, 9.
10. Had Israel obeyed the Lord? Verse 10.
11. What had the Lord said of the people of the land? Verse 11.

Nine-tenths of the women of India never heard of a Saviour.

12. What special command had the Lord given? Verse 12.

13. How did their punishment compare with their sin? Verse 13.

14. What questions does Ezra ask of the Lord? Verse 14.

15. With what statement did Ezra close his prayer? Verse 15.

16. What was indicated by the personal pronoun used throughout the prayer?

17. How was the same spirit shown in the prayer of Daniel? Dan. 9:3-19.

LESSON XIII.—*A Separation.*

MARCH 30, 1907.

Questions.

1. How did Ezra's course effect the people? Ezra 10:1.

2. What confession was made? Verse 2.

3. What covenant was made? Verse 3.

4. With what words did they encourage Ezra to go forward with the work? Verse 4.

5. What did Ezra require of them? Verse 5.

6. How did Ezra's course compare with those who will receive the mark of God upon their foreheads? Verse 6; Eze. 9:4.

7. What proclamation did Ezra issue? Ezra 10:7, 8.

"This Gospel of the kingdom shall be preached in all the world for a witness unto all nations; and then shall the end come."

8. When did they gather together? Verse 9.
9. What did Ezra say to them? Verses 10, 11.
10. How did the congregation respond? Verse 12.
11. What reason was given for postponing the work?
Verse 13.
12. What plan was suggested? Verse 14.
13. How was the separation made? Verses 15-17.
14. What course did the priest pursue? Verses 18, 19.
15. What separation does God require of His people
to-day? Rev. 18:4.
16. Can a Christian be a friend of the world? James
4:4.
17. What is the only safe position for the Christian?
1 John 2:15.
18. What is Christ's will concerning His followers?
John 17:15.

*“Pray ye therefore the Lord of the harvest that He will send
forth laborers into His harvest.”*

An After-the-Fire Story

By the Book Department Manager

When the 5 P. M. bell rang Friday, July 20, our press-room boys were finishing a twenty-thousand edition of "Heralds of the Morning." The plates for the last form were still on the press.

Five thousand copies were in process of binding on the gathering boards and around the bindery sewing machines.

Fifty full Morocco prospectuses were being finished for delivery the following Monday to as many anxious agents whose old cloth prospectuses were badly worn.

Two hundred eleven copies of the complete book, new edition, had been delivered to the shipping room that afternoon, and had been forwarded to our Kansas City house, with the exception of a sample copy which had been sent to the writer's home.

In the field there were more than one hundred agents successfully soliciting orders.

AND THAT NIGHT THE FIRE CAME

The most of the following night was spent in counsel by the Board of Directors, foremen, and others.

Before the flames had died down, one of our most experienced men was on a fast train bound for the East, with the sample copy of "Heralds of the Morning,"

and with orders to secure the publication of a large edition at the earliest possible moment.

As the plates and engravings were all gone, this was no light task.

So successful was he in his mission that within ten days after the fire a ten-thousand edition of the book had been contracted for with a large Kansas City firm, and typesetting machines and photo-engravers had begun work.

And here came a strange experience. Our agents, many of them, had poor prospectuses, some of them torn, others nearly worn out. They pasted in loose leaves, sewed in sheets of writing-paper for additional names, *but they all kept at work.*

Girls, without previous experience took orders for \$50.00, \$60.00, \$68.50, and then some one jumped up to \$100.00, \$150.00, and some experienced workers up to \$240.00, \$255.00, and finally one man took orders *for \$280.00 worth of this book in a single week.*

Remember, this was done with old prospectuses, and at a time when the securing of books was somewhat questionable.

It proves, beyond a doubt, that "Heralds of the Morning" is a book with a mission; that its mission is one in which the people of the world are interested.

When, after various delays, books began to be delivered, orders had piled up so that *almost four thousand*

copies—about four tons—*had to be sent by express, at mail rates.*

One agent in an almost inaccessible portion of California had to have nearly one hundred books sent to him by mail. Imagine the surprise of the mail carrier, who usually carries three or four pounds of mail, to receive a consignment to one party of 200 pounds! But orders had been taken and books must be delivered, even though Uncle Sam's letter carriers had to be pressed into service.

It was soon found that the three hundred copies being delivered each day were not sufficient, hence the following telegram was sent to our Kansas City representative:

“Try St. Louis binders for ‘Heralds’ and ‘Controversy.’ Try make forfeiture contract.”

In a few hours back flashed this message, “Binding material all here. Kansas City firm signs penalty contract to-day. Letter:”

When the letter came it contained copy of a contract calling for a heavy forfeiture for every day in which at least 500 copies of “Heralds of the Morning” were not delivered.

In a few more days this telegram came: “‘Heralds’ all sold. Shall we print five thousand more?”

And, of course, we said, “Yes.”

And now we are preparing for 1907.

First, “Heralds of the Morning” is being translated into German, Swedish, and Danish.

Secondly, new engravings have been added, together with chapter on recent calamities.

Thirdly, a beautiful new prospectus, designed by those who have been selling the book most successfully, is being printed.

Fourthly, a canvass, which, for brevity, directness, simplicity, and selling points, has seldom, if ever, been equaled, has been worked out by expert salesmen.

Fifthly, although in its revised and enlarged form the book contains nearly 400 pages, we have decided to keep the price down to \$1.75. This applies to the English, German, Danish, and Swedish editions.

Sixthly, the plates for the book have been recalled from Kansas City, and among the first printing to be done in our new Pacific Press home will be a twenty-thousand run on "Heralds of the Morning," which we hope will be the first instalment *of a one-hundred-thousand copy edition to be manufactured and sold during 1907.*

If you wish to have a part in placing that many copies of this message-filled book in the homes of the people, talk with or write to your tract society secretary or state agent and ask for the canvass. It's free.

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