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Devotion for September 17th, 2021

"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, so that he made a proclamation throughout all his kingdom and also put it in writing: "Thus says Cyrus king of Persia, 'The Lord, the God of heaven, has given me all the kingdoms of the world, and He has charged me to build Him a house at Jerusalem, which is in Judah. Whoever is among you of all His people, may the Lord his God be with him. Let him go up.'""

- 2nd Chronicles 36:22-23

Wow! As soon as Cyrus became king of Persia, things really started to happen for the children of Israel who were in captivity in Babylon for 70 years. Before they were taken into captivity, the prophet Jeremiah had given them God's message that if they did not turn away from their sinful ways, that the kingdom of Judah would fall and go into captivity for 70 years. And fall it did. Jerusalem was attacked, the city walls were knocked down, and the temple burned. Those people who were not killed were taken into captivity in the city of Babylon. It happened just like God said it would happen.

After the 70 years, true to His word like always, God raised up a king in Persia who had conquered Babylon, and He stirred up the spirit of the king whose name was Cyrus. Cyrus proclaimed to all the kingdoms he had conquered that it was the God of heaven who had given him the kingdoms of the world. He didn't just proclaim it verbally, he wrote it down and sent it out.

God restored Judah and Jerusalem through Cyrus. Cyrus followed God's will. He made sure that a new temple would be built in Jerusalem. He even opened the Persian treasury to pay for it. And after 70 years of captivity, he let any of the children of Israel go back to Jerusalem.

God is a faithful God. When He says that He will make something happen, it happens. God said He would send a Savior to save the world from the captivity of sin. The prophecy He gave through Jeremiah came true and so did the promise of a Savior. He sent His only Son, Jesus Christ, to die for the sins of the whole world. Jesus, who was sinless, died for those sins on Good Friday and rose to life on Easter morning many centuries ago. Because of this, for those who believe and trust in His name, there is forgiveness of sins and eternal life.

So, let us look objectively at our lives. Let us review our personal habits and look for the doors in our lives that are open to sin. Let us turn from our ways to God's ways through the reading, studying, and sharing of Holy Scripture and Christian love of those around us.

Let us pray. Lord, thank You for freeing us from the captivity of our sin by the saving work of Your Son, Jesus Christ. Please help us to slam the door on sin in our lives and forgive us our sins. We ask this in the name of Your Son, Jesus Christ. Amen!

*In Christ Jesus,
Rev. John Kyle, Associate Pastor
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