



## The Jews Return to Jerusalem

### Supplies Needed

You will need the following:

12 Sheets of [Cardstock](#) (8.5" x 11")

12 3 mil Laminating [Film](#)

### Directions

- Print pages 2-25 two-sided on cardstock. Laminate the pages.
- Hold up the pictures while you read the story.





***Before holding up the picture:***

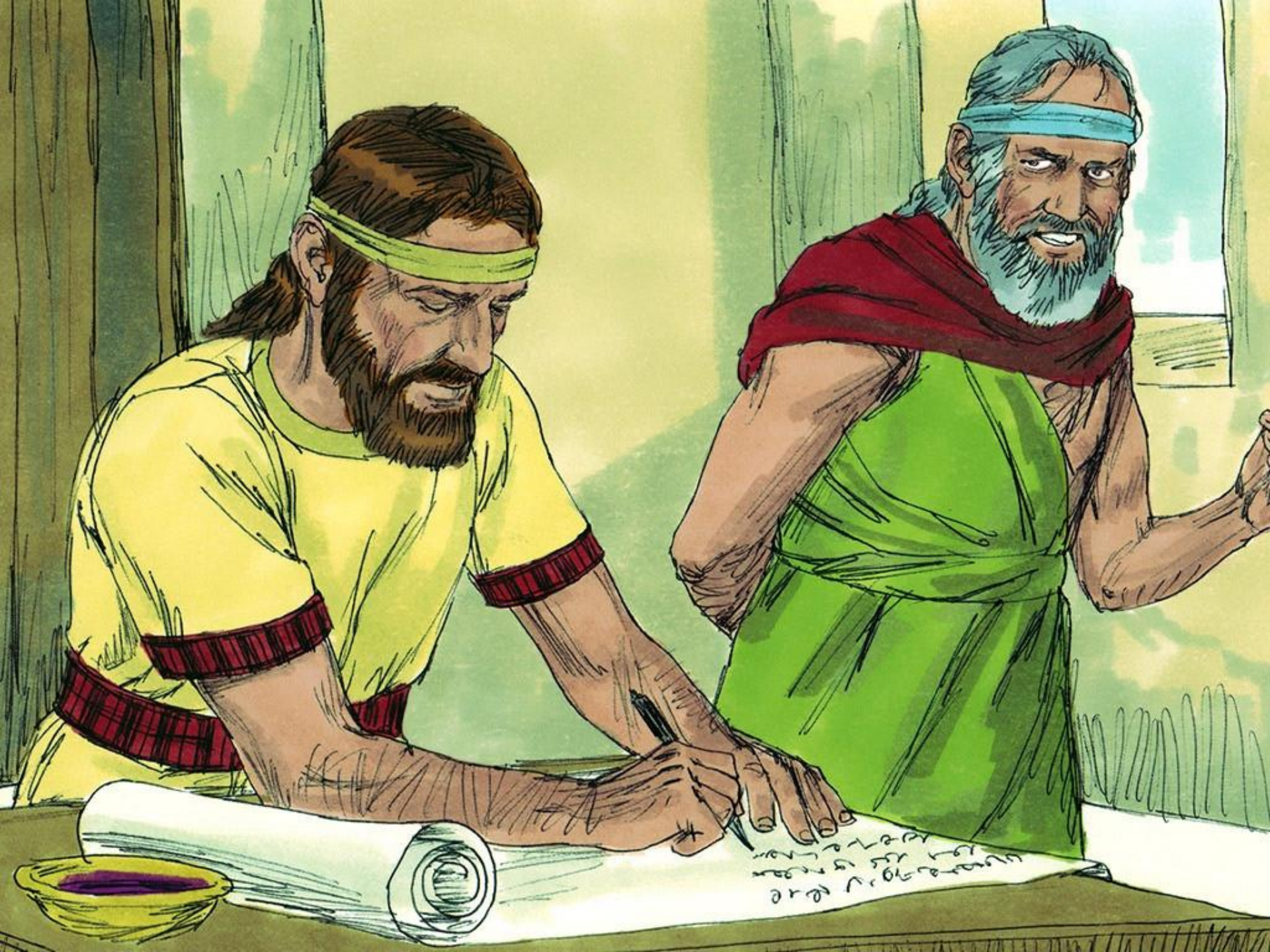
Daniel is nearing the end of his life and the land is now being ruled by two rulers, Darius the Mede and Cyrus the Great, of Persia. Do you remember Nebuchadnezzar's dream of the statue and the handwriting on the wall with Belshazzar? We've gone from the Babylonian Empire (the gold head) ruling the land, to the Medo-Persian Empire (the silver chest) ruling the land. God used both of these empires for His own purposes. Today, we will see how God used Cyrus to help the Israelites.

***Hold up picture:***

Do you remember why the Jews were in Babylon? *(They had disobeyed God by worshipping idols)*

Correct, and what happened to the Temple when Nebuchadnezzar conquered Jerusalem? *(The Babylonians took the valuable articles of gold and silver from the Temple. Then they destroyed the Temple and the city.)*





***Hold up picture:***

Right before Jerusalem was captured by Nebuchadnezzar, the prophet Jeremiah had warned the Israelites that if they didn't repent, they would be forced into Babylonian captivity, which is exactly what happened. But did you know that Jeremiah also predicted how long the Israelites' captivity would last? How many years do you think the Israelites would be in captivity, according to Jeremiah's prophecy from God? **(70 years)**





***Hold up picture:***

Daniel knew the scriptures , including Jeremiah’s prophecy, and he said in Daniel Chapter 9:

“I understood from the word of the LORD given to Jeremiah the prophet, that the desolation of Jerusalem would last seventy years. So I turned to the Lord and pleaded with him in prayer and in fasting...”

It has been almost 70 years since Daniel came to Babylon, so Daniel prays to God to forgive the Israelites and to have mercy on them. Daniel asks God to return them to the holy city of Jerusalem. That’s the end of our lessons on Daniel, but the story continues in the book of Ezra.





**Medes and Persian Empire**

**Jerusalem**

**Susa (Shushan)**

**Ethiopia**





***Hold up picture:***

Ezra tells us that in order to fulfill Jeremiah's prophecy, the Lord moved the heart of King Cyrus to make a proclamation throughout his kingdom. He announced that any Jews who wanted to return to Jerusalem could now do so.





***Hold up picture:***

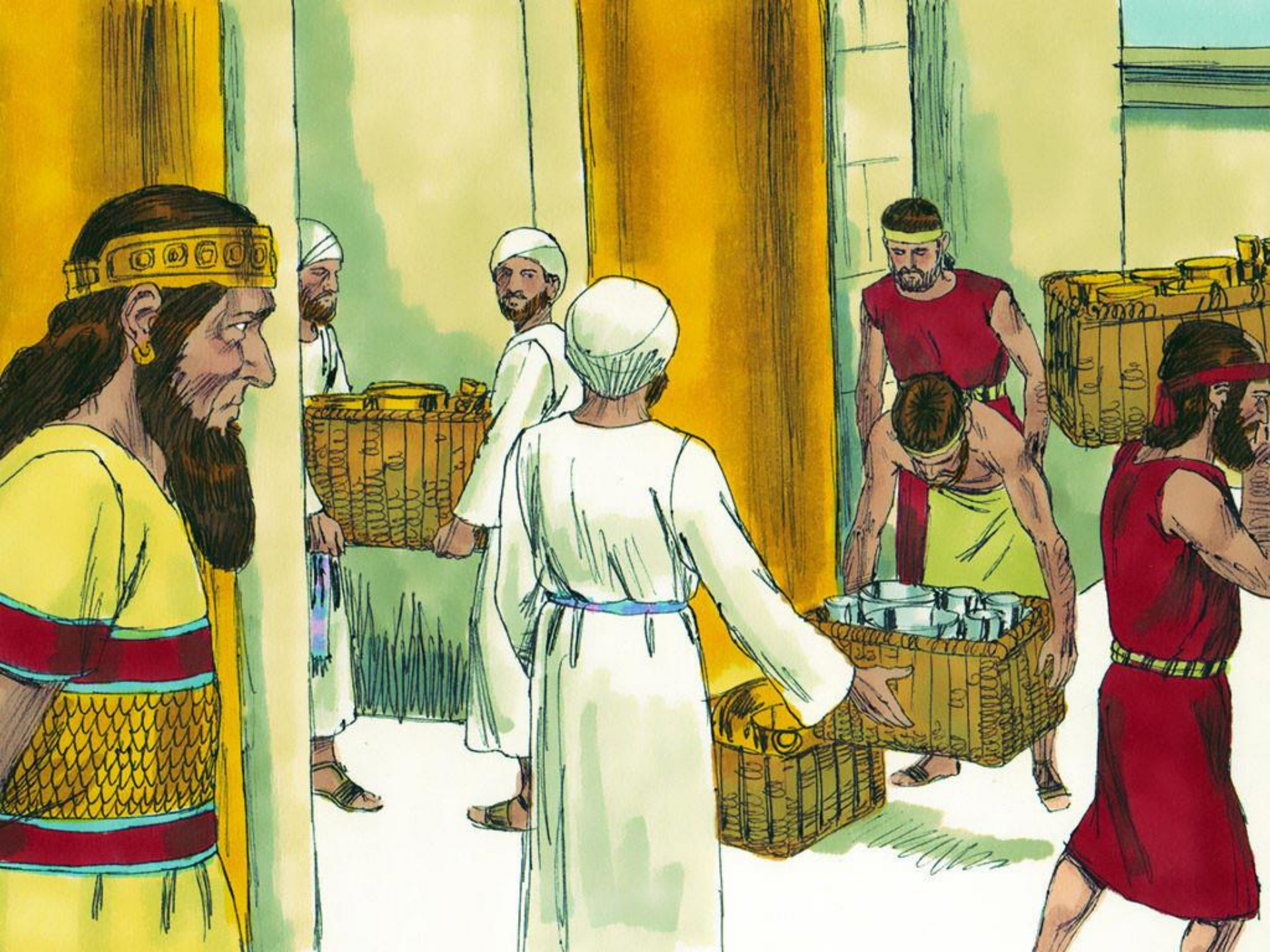
Cyrus also declared that God had told him to rebuild the temple in Jerusalem. And those who were living in the area should help by donating silver, gold, animals and goods to the Jews for the temple. Cyrus put his order in writing and marked it with his seal so that everyone would know it was the King's command.





***Hold up picture:***

When the announcement was read, many of the Israelite families, the Priests, and Levites prepared to return to Jerusalem and the surrounding region of Judea to rebuild the Temple and to live back in the land God had given them years ago.





***Hold up picture:***

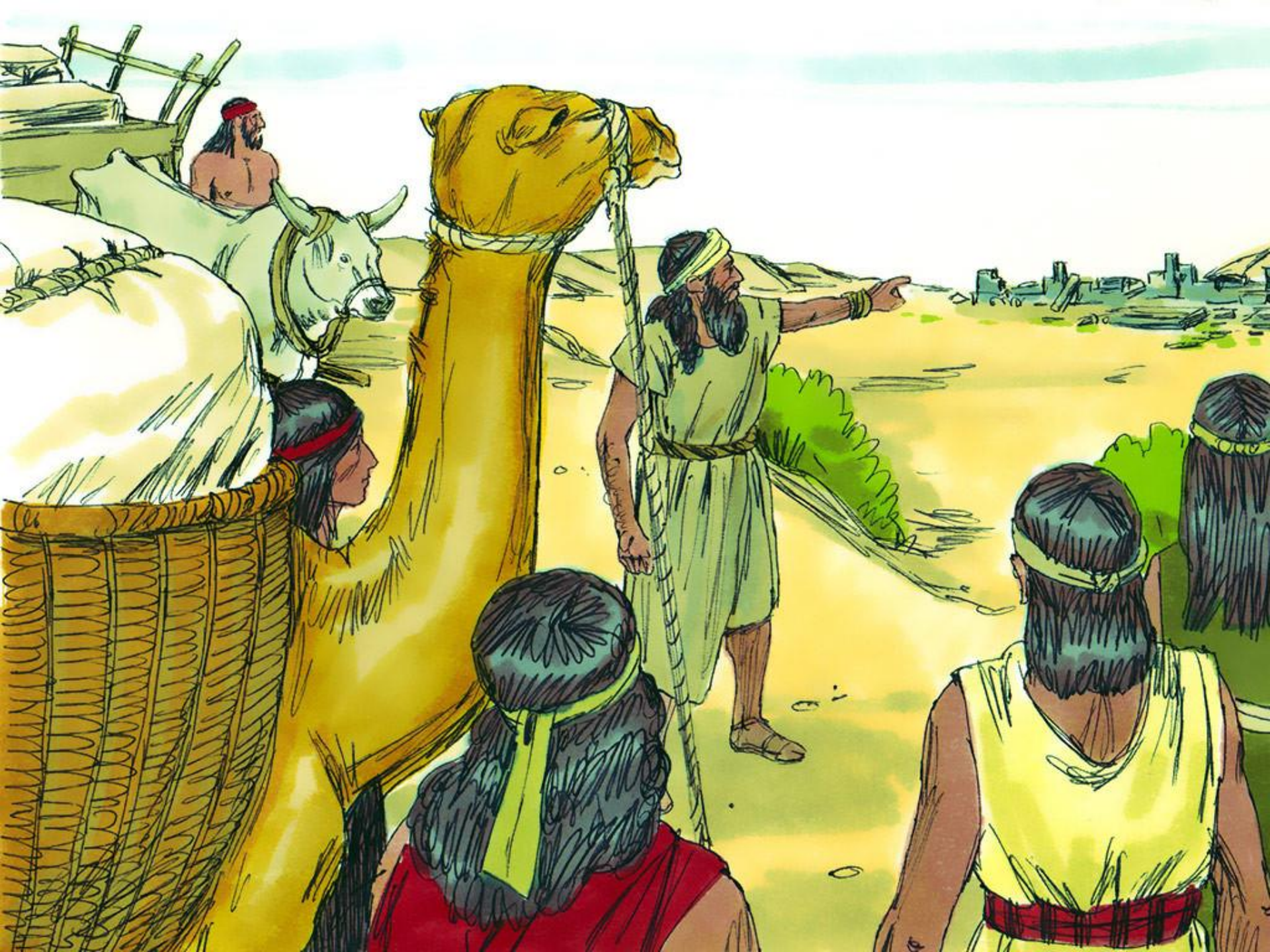
All those living around the Jews were very generous, giving them gifts of silver, gold, animals, and other goods and precious things.





***Hold up picture:***

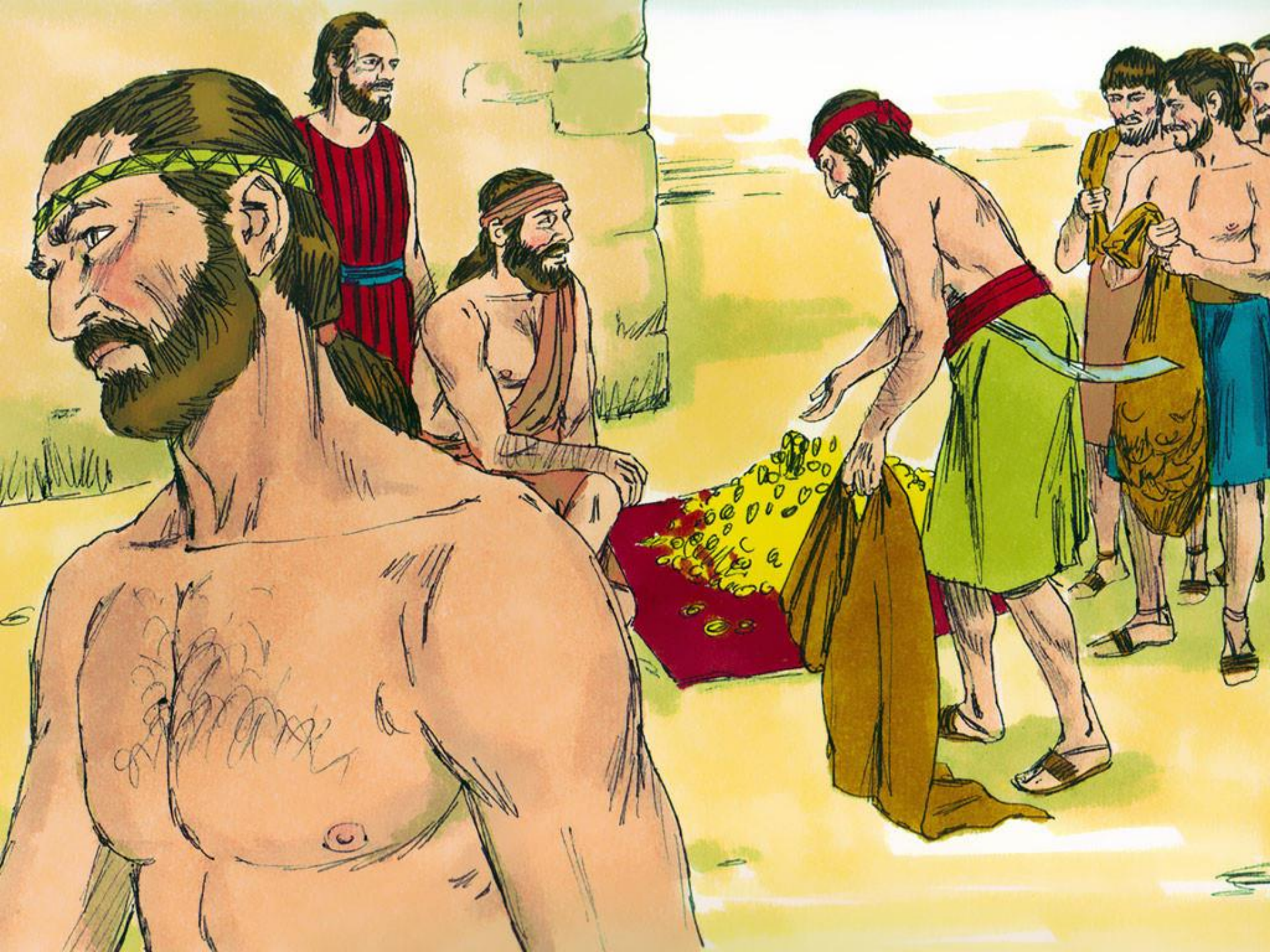
And remember the gold and silver items that King Nebuchadnezzar took from the Temple when he conquered Jerusalem? Well, King Cyrus returned all of them! Cyrus returned 5,400 valuable objects of gold and silver which the Babylonians had stolen from the Temple to Sheshbazzar, one of the leaders of the Jews.





***Hold up picture:***

In total, over 42,000 Israelites set off with their servants and animals on the long trip back to Jerusalem. When they arrived back in Jerusalem they found the city in ruins.





***Hold up picture:***

At the site of the ruined temple many of the families gave generously to help pay for the rebuilding work. They donated over 1,100 pounds of gold and 6,500 pounds of silver. Also donated were 100 sets of special clothes for the priests.





***Hold up picture:***

The Israelites started rebuilding their houses in towns and cities of Judea. Jeshua and Zerubbabel rebuilt the altar of the Temple so they could offer burnt offerings on it.





### ***Hold up picture:***

Then, during the seventh month, the Jews gathered in Jerusalem. The Israelites offered sacrifices to God as they celebrated the Feast of Tabernacles. And from then on, the Israelites kept all the regular burnt offerings and feasts that God had appointed in the Law of Moses, even though the foundation of the Temple had not yet been laid.

### ***Discuss / Ask:***

One of the things we can learn from this lesson is that God keeps his promises. God had told the Israelites, through Jeremiah, that their captivity wouldn't last forever. God had set the time to 70 years and when those seventy years were over, God kept his promise and used King Cyrus to send the Israelites back to their land. Can you think of an other promises that God has kept? ***(Rainbow Promise...not to flood the earth again; Three Promises to Abraham; etc.)*** What promise are we waiting for God to fulfill? ***(Second Coming of Jesus)*** Daniel knew when God promised to end the Israelites captivity; do we know when God will end this world and Jesus will coming again? ***(No, God didn't tell us how many years so we should always be ready.)***