

# Ezra 1:3

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

Who is there among you of all his people? his God be with him, and let him go up to Jerusalem, which is in Judah, and build the house of the LORD God of Israel, (he is the God,) which is in Jerusalem.

## Analysis

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**Who is there among you of all his people? his God be with him, and let him go up to Jerusalem, which is in Judah, and build the house of the LORD God of Israel, (he is the God,) which is in Jerusalem.** Cyrus's decree transitions from proclamation to invitation. The interrogative 'Who is there among you' functions as both invitation and challenge, requiring voluntary response. The blessing 'his God be with him' acknowledges the personal covenant relationship between Yahweh and His people.

The parenthetical affirmation 'he is the God' represents remarkable confession. Whether Cyrus was affirming monotheism or acknowledging Yahweh's supremacy, this validated Jewish faith and provided official recognition. The phrase 'which is in Jerusalem' emphasizes Jerusalem's unique status as God's chosen dwelling place.

Theologically, this verse teaches that true worship must be voluntary, not coerced. The invitation-format respects human agency while providing divine authorization. God's presence ('his God be with him') is the true source of success, not merely favorable circumstances.

## Historical Context

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Ancient decrees typically commanded obedience; Cyrus's invitation-format respected Jewish religious conviction. The journey from Babylon to Jerusalem covered approximately 900 miles, requiring four months of travel. This involved real sacrifice and risk, separating those with deep conviction from those comfortable in exile.

Many Jews had established successful lives in Babylon over two generations and faced genuine dilemma about leaving prosperity for uncertain future. The voluntary nature meant returnees demonstrated genuine commitment rather than mere compliance.

The emphasis on Jerusalem's unique status countered syncretistic tendencies to worship elsewhere. The Samaritans had established alternative worship centers, but God's presence was specifically identified with Jerusalem.

## Related Passages

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**John 3:16** — God's love and salvation

**Ephesians 2:8** — Salvation by grace through faith

**Hebrews 11:1** — Definition of faith

**James 2:17** — Faith and works

## Study Questions

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1. What does the voluntary nature teach about authentic faith versus cultural religion?
2. How do believers navigate tension between attachment to comfort and God's call to costly obedience?
3. What does Cyrus's blessing teach about divine presence as the true source of security?

## Interlinear Text

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מִי	בְּכֶם	מִכָּל	עִמּוֹ	יְהוָה	יְהוָה
H4310	H0	H3605	H5971	H1961	H430
Who is there among you of all his people				he is the God	
עִמּוֹ	וְיָעַל	בִּירוּשָׁלַם:	אֲשֶׁר	בִּיהוּדָה	
H5973	H5927	H3389	H834	H3063	
be with him and let him go up			to Jerusalem		which is in Judah
וְיָבֵן	אֶת	בֵּית	יְהוָה	יְהוָה	וְיִשְׂרָאֵל
H1129	H853	H1004	H3068	H430	H1931
and build		the house		of the LORD	
				he is the God	
				of Israel	
יְהוָה	אֲשֶׁר	בִּירוּשָׁלַם:			
H430	H834	H3389			
he is the God		to Jerusalem			

## Additional Cross-References

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**Jeremiah 10:10** (References God): But the LORD is the true God, he is the living God, and an everlasting king: at his wrath the earth shall tremble, and the nations shall not be able to abide his indignation.

**Daniel 6:26** (References God): I make a decree, That in every dominion of my kingdom men tremble and fear before the God of Daniel: for he is the living God, and stedfast for ever, and his kingdom that which shall not be destroyed, and his dominion shall be even unto the end.

**Isaiah 45:5** (References God): I am the LORD, and there is none else, there is no God beside me: I girded thee, though thou hast not known me:

**Acts 10:36** (References God): The word which God sent unto the children of Israel, preaching peace by Jesus Christ: (he is Lord of all:)

**Matthew 28:20** (Parallel theme): Teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you: and, lo, I am with you alway, even unto the end of the world. Amen.

**Deuteronomy 32:31** (Parallel theme): For their rock is not as our Rock, even our enemies themselves being judges.

**Joshua 1:9** (References God): Have not I commanded thee? Be strong and of a good courage; be not afraid, neither be thou dismayed: for the LORD thy God is with thee whithersoever thou goest.

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