



1 Then king Darius gave orders, and search was made in the house of the rolls, where the treasures were laid up in Babylon. **2** And there was found at Achmetha in the fortress that is in the province of Media a roll, and therein was a record thus written: **3** In the first year of king Cyrus, king Cyrus made a decree concerning the house of God at Jerusalem: Let the house be built for a place where they offer sacrifices, and let its foundations be solidly laid; its height sixty cubits, its breadth sixty cubits, **4** with three rows of great stones, and a row of new timber; and let the expenses be given out of the king's house: **5** and also let the golden and silver vessels of the house of God, which Nebuchadnezzar took out of the temple that is at Jerusalem and brought to Babylon, be restored and brought again to the temple that is at Jerusalem, in their place; and thou shalt put them in the house of God. **6** Therefore Tatnai, governor beyond the river, Shethar-boznai, and your companions the Apharsachites, who are beyond the river, be ye far from thence: **7** let the work of this house of God alone; let the governor of the Jews and the elders of the Jews build this house of God in its place. **8** Moreover, I give orders what ye shall do to these elders of the Jews, for the building of this house of God: that of the king's goods, of the tribute beyond the river, expenses be diligently given to these men, that they be not hindered. **9** And that which they have need of, both young bullocks and rams and lambs, for the burnt-offerings to the God of the heavens, wheat, salt, wine, and oil, according to the appointment of the priests that are at Jerusalem, let it be given them day by day without fail; **10** that they may present sweet odours to the God of the heavens, and pray for the life of the king and of his sons. **11** Also I have given order that whosoever shall alter this rescript, let timber be pulled down from his house, and being set up, let him be hanged thereon, and let his house be made a dunghill for this. **12** And the God that has caused his name to dwell there overthrow every king and people that shall put forth their hand to alter or to destroy this house of God which is at Jerusalem. I Darius have given this order; let it be done diligently.

13 Then Tatnai, governor on this side the river, Shethar-boznai, and their companions, because of that which king Darius had sent, did so diligently. **14** And the elders of the Jews built; and they prospered through the prophesying of Haggai the prophet and Zechariah the son of Iddo. And they built and completed it according to the commandment of the God of Israel, and according to the commandment of Cyrus, and Darius, and Artaxerxes king of Persia. **15** And this house was finished on the third day of the month Adar, which was in the sixth year of the reign of king Darius. **16** And the children of Israel, the priests and the Levites, and the rest of the children of the captivity, kept the dedication of this house of God with joy; **17** and they presented at the dedication of this house of God a hundred bullocks, two hundred rams, four hundred lambs, and for a sin-offering for all Israel, twelve he-goats, according to the number of the tribes of Israel. **18** And they set the priests in their classes, and the Levites in their divisions, for the service of God, which is at Jerusalem: as it is written in the book of Moses. **19** And the children of the captivity held the passover upon the fourteenth of the first month. **20** For the priests and the Levites had purified themselves as one man: they were all pure; and they killed the passover for all the children of the captivity, and for their brethren the priests, and for themselves. **21** And the children of Israel that were come back out of captivity, and all such as had separated themselves to them from the filthiness of the nations of the land, to seek Jehovah the God of Israel, did eat; **22** and they kept the feast of unleavened bread seven days with joy; for Jehovah had made them joyful, and turned the heart of the king of Assyria to them, to strengthen their hands in the work of the house of God, the God of Israel.