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material, but we have these inscriptions that show that that was the policy of Cyrus the first of the kings of the Persian empire, and in the Bible we have given a letter from Cyrus, a decree from Cyrus, which is similar to the decrees which we have archaeological evidence of that he gave to other gods and just as in those inscriptions he describes himself as the servant of the gods, helping them, sending back their people who have been captured by the Babylonians, similarly in the one quoted in the Bible he describes himself as the servant of the god of the Jews and as releasing those people who have been held by the Babylonians, allowing them to go back, giving them his own property, that is giving certain money from the kings, from the royal treasury to help them to go back, and they had no statue to take back—to those countries, they had no image of their gods, but instead, then, of giving them an image, he gave them the vessels from the temple, gave them golden vessels which had been in the temple, which had been taken to Babylon by Nebuchadnezzar, and so we have a parallel between his treatment of other nations as described in the archaeological inscriptions and his treatment of the Jews as described in the Bible. Now the Persian period runs on from 538 to 331. It is a period of over 200 hundred years, much longer than the Neo-Babylonian empire. During this Persian period we do not have a great deal of history recorded in the Bible and in the latter part of it we have no history recorded from it, to speak of. This may be because they began using papyrus more for writing and consequently the material didn't last. At any rate the last part of the Persian period is a very dark period, a period which the Jews completely forgot about, so that in the Talmud it is, and in some of the Apocrypha writings it speaks of events which were taking place in which men who were taken captive when the Jews went into captivity were still at the end of the Persian period, at the coming of Alexander the Great. Now of course that is utterly impossible and it is evident that through the Jews this long period was forgotten and