



SOUTH CAROLINA SUPPLEMENT
S.K. Michael W Kirk
R. E. Grand Commander
Grand Commandery of South Carolina
Web Site: www.scgyr.org

Greeting Sir Knights!

This month let us examine a person who is referenced in the Templar degrees as well as other York Rite degrees.

CYRUS – Cyrus the Great, who founded the Persian Empire in the 6th Century (BC), rose to power by rebellion and expanded his domain by conquest. He consolidated his position with Magnanimity and ruled with moderation.

Cyrus' origins and background remain uncertain, obscured by the legends that developed around him. His revolt against Astyages began sometime before 550 B.C. Cyrus deposed Astyages and proclaimed himself King of Medes and Persians. The Persian Empire was founded.

Cyrus appears to have displayed magnanimity toward his defeated enemies. He spared the deposed king and consolidated his power by trying to win the support of those who opposed him. Medes, as well as Persians, held high positions throughout his rule.

Trying to stop Cyrus' expansion, Lydia, Egypt, Chaldea, and Sparta formed a defensive alliance. Cyrus was triumphant in all the battles and again demonstrated his magnanimity. After the battle with Lydia, Cyrus made a separate peace with the Egyptian contingent and allowed it to return home with honor. When the end came at Sardis (Croesus' capital), Cyrus spared Croesus, as well as the lesser prisoners. One account stated that Croesus joined Cyrus' court and received the governorship of Barme in Media.

Cyrus turned eastward and overran Parthia and other territories. The Chaldeans, who had joined the anti-Persian effort, could only wait the inevitable Persian move. Some of the Jewish exiles in Chaldea saw Cyrus as a potential deliverer from their captivity.

Cyrus conquered the Chaldean empire between 539 and 537 B.C. Thereby adding Mesopotamia, Syria, and Palestine to his empire. Again, consolidated his rule through magnanimity toward his defeated enemies. He spared enemy leaders, often appointing them to high positions. More important, he allowed the conquered people considerable freedom and autonomy in religion, culture, and local government.

In keeping with his enlightened policies, Cyrus issued an edict in 538 B.C., allowing the Jewish exiles in Babylon to return to their homeland. This ended the Babylonian captivity. Cyrus allowed and encouraged the Jewish people to rebuild the Temple in Jerusalem. He even returned to them the treasure that Nebuchadnezzar had carried off.

In Masonic ritual, Cyrus is mentioned frequently in connection with his liberation of the Jews from Babylon, the freedom to worship that he permitted them, and the aid he provided to enable them to return to Jerusalem and to rebuild their Temple.

And to close out, Father, thank you for the love You reveal each day.

We invite You to send us out in the power of the Holy Spirit. Fan into the flame the gifts that you give us, come reveal Your grace and truth to us each day.

For yours is the Kingdom, the power, and the glory, for ever and ever.

Amen

Fraternally,
Mike Kirk
Grand Commander