

Connect timeless truths with today's news.

LIONS RETURN TO THEIR HOMELAND

Four adult African lions—named Angela, Bellone, Säida, and Louga—have been returned to Africa after being part of a French traveling circus. The big cats, all born in captivity, were removed from the circus in 2018 and looked after by experts. They were set to be transported in 2019 to a sanctuary in South Africa by Born Free, an international wildlife charity. Then COVID-19 hit, and the plans were put on hold. But last month, the lions finally stepped onto African soil. “Lions in lockdown have had a long arduous journey,” said Catherine Gilson, Manager of Shamwari Private Game Reserve, “but [these lions] are settling in so well [with their other lions]. We have just seen them all under a tree together in the shade sheltering from heat here, which is a great relief for us.”

EXILES RETURN TO THEIR HOMELAND

After the Babylonian Captivity, any Jewish captives who wished to return to Israel were allowed to do so by the new king, Cyrus of Persia. He issued a decree that his own citizens should provide the returning exiles with silver, gold, and livestock. Moreover, Cyrus returned to the exiles thousands of gold and silver items that had been pillaged from Jerusalem by Nebuchadnezzar. Cyrus instructed the exiles to rebuild the temple in Jerusalem, and more than 40,000 Jewish people accepted the offer and went back to their homeland.

1. When have you had a “going home” moment? Did it live up to your expectations?
2. Why do you think Cyrus was so generous in giving away all that gold and silver, not to mention captives?
3. If you had been born in Babylon and had never seen Israel, do you think you would want to go there when given a chance? Why or why not?

Additional Resources

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- Music Video, Traditional: [“Come Ye Sinners, Poor and Needy” by Fernando Ortega](#)
Music Video, Multicultural: [“Come Ye Sinners, Poor and Needy” by Fernando Ortega](#)
Music Video, Contemporary: [“Come Ye Sinners, Poor and Needy” by Fernando Ortega](#)
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