

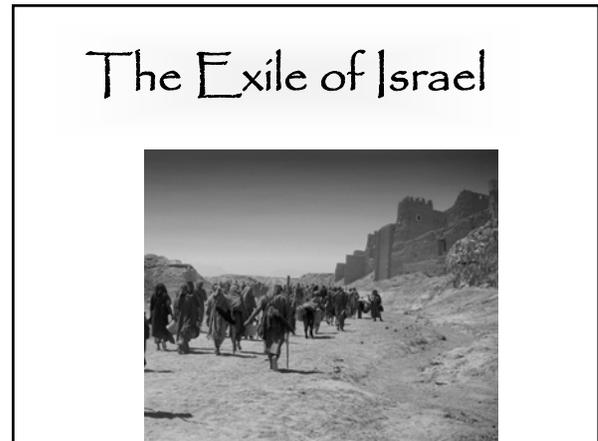


### The Nine Major Movements of OT History

• Universal Dealings	Gen. 1-11	4000-2166
• Patriarchal Period	Gen. 12-50	2166-1804
• Slavery in Egypt	Ex. 1	1804-1446
• The Exodus under Moses	Ex. 2—Deut.	1446-1406
• Conquest & Division of Canaan	Joshua	1406-1350
• Period of the Judges	Judges, Ruth, 1 Sam. 1-8	1350-1051

### The Nine Major Movements of OT History

• The Monarchy	1 Sam. 9—2 Sam; 1-2 Kings; 1-2 Ch.	1051-605
– United	- 1 Sam. 9—1 Kings 11	- 1051-931
– Divided	- 1 Kings 12—2 Kings	- 931-586
• The Babylonian Exile	Ezekiel, Daniel, certain Psalms	605-538
• Restoration Period	Ezra; Esther; Nehemiah	538-4



### The Exile: Three Deportations

- 1st Deportation: 606/605 BC
  - Nebuchadnezzar attacked Jerusalem and puts the city under siege.
  - Word reached him of his father's death, so he had to return to Babylon and secure the throne.
  - He decided to take with him a few of the best and brightest Jewish young men to train for leadership.
  - Daniel & his 3 friends.

### The Exile: Three Deportations

- 2nd Deportation: 597 BC
  - Judah refused to pay its annual tribute.
  - So Nebuchadnezzar returned to punish the city.
  - He took 10,000 captives from the most skilled, powerful, and influential.
  - Including Ezekiel – who would be called to be a prophet while living in exile in Babylon.

## The Exile: Three Deportations

- 3rd Deportation: 586 BC
  - Once again, Judah refused to pay its annual tribute.
  - So Nebuchadnezzar's army destroyed the city and the temple.
  - And he carried off to Babylon the majority of the population, leaving only the poorest and the most infirm.

## The Glory Cloud

- Ex. 40 – Tabernacle completed.
- The Glory Cloud took up residence (1444 BC).
- The Holy of Holies was the throne room of YHWH, Israel's king (Ezek. 43:7; cf. Lev. 16:2; Num. 9:17-19).
- Later, the Glory Cloud took up residence in Solomon's Temple (1 Kings 8:10-12).
- In 592 BC, the Glory Cloud departed.
  - Ezek. 10:3-4, 18-19; 11:22-23

## Why Did God Allow the Captivity?

- Deut. 11:26-28 - "See, I am setting before you today a blessing and a curse: 27 the blessing, if you listen to the commandments of the LORD your God, which I am commanding you today; 28 and the curse, if you do not listen to the commandments of the LORD your God, but turn aside from the way which I am commanding you today, by following other gods which you have not known.
- The worst and greatest curse was captivity in a foreign land (Deut. 30:11-20).

## The Prophets of the Exile

- During the 70 years in Babylon two prophets ministered to God's people in Babylon:
  - Daniel
    - Message: God's sovereignty over all of human history
  - Ezekiel
    - Message: Condemnation, Consolation, & Restoration

## Cyrus the Great

- Medo-Persian empire (the Aegean sea to India)
- October 12, 539 BC
  - He conquered the city of Babylon
  - The Babylonian empire fell
- 150 years before Isaiah prophesied it.
- Even addressed Cyrus, by name (although Cyrus wouldn't be born until 100 years later)
- Is. 44:28-45:7
- 538 BC: Cyrus' decree that allowed the Jews to return to their land

## The Seventy Years

- Option 1:
  - 606 BC (1st deportation)
  - 536 BC (2nd temple foundation laid)
- Option 2:
  - 586 BC (final deportation)
  - 516 BC (2nd temple completed)

# The Restoration of Israel



# The Restoration to the Land

- Recorded in two books: Ezra and Nehemiah
  - Considered one book by Josephus, Talmud, LXX, & Hebrew scribes
  - Origen (AD 185-253) was 1st to separate
- Ezra
  - 1-6 (history)
  - 7-10 (eyewitness)
- Nehemiah 1-13
  - Personal memoirs
- Together: a narrative of the restoration of God's people from the 70 years of Babylonian captivity to their own land.

The Return from Babylon				
Seventy year captivity: 605-538 BC				
First Stage	Interval	Second Stage	Interval	Third Stage
Ezra 1-6		Ezra 7-10		Nehemiah 1-13
Under Zerubbabel		Under Ezra		Under Nehemiah
538-516 BC		458-457 BC		445-432 BC
20 years	58 years	1 year	13 years	12 years
Temple rebuilt		Worship restored		Jerusalem fortified
50,000 return		2,000 return		
Haggai & Zechariah	Esther			Malachi

	70 Yrs. in Babylon	First deportation was in 606 BC (cf., Jer. 25:11-12)
	538	Zerubbabel Returns to Israel
	536	
	534	Altar & temple foundation rebuilt
Zerubbabel	532	
50,000 people	530	
Rebuilding the Temple (Ezra 1-6)	528	
	526	
	524	
	522	
	520	Haggai & Zechariah prophesy; temple construction resumes
	518	
	516	Temple completed
	Gap 58 years	The events in Esther occur (483-473)

	Gap 58 years	The events in Esther occur (483-473)
Ezra	458	Ezra returns to Israel
2,000 people		
Teaching the People (Ez. 7-10)	456	
	Gap 12 years	
	445	Nehemiah returns to Israel
	444	City wall rebuilt in Jerusalem
	442	
Nehemiah	440	
	438	
Rebuilding the Wall (Neh. 1-13)	436	
	434	
	432	Nehemiah returns to Babylon; Malachi prophesies
	430	Neh. 2nd return to Israel (?)
	400 silent years	

## EZRA THE SCRIBE

## Ezra the Historian

- Official lists (1:9-11; 2:1ff; 7:1-5; 8:1-14; 10:18-43)
- 7 official letters (1:2-4; 4:11-16; 4:17-22; 5:7-17; 6:2b-5, 6-12; 7:12-26)
- His official memoirs (ch. 7-10)

## Two Supporting Themes



## The Hand of God

- Ezra
  - 1:1 "stirred up Cyrus"
  - 1:5 "whose spirit God stirred up"
  - 6:22 "turned the heart of the King"
  - 7:6 "hand of God"
  - 7:9 "good hand of God"
  - 7:27 "put such a thing in the King's heart"
  - 8:18 "good hand of God"
- Nehemiah
  - 2:8 "good hand of God"
  - 2:12 "God putting into my mind"
  - 4:15 "God frustrated their plans"
  - 2:18 "hand of God had been favorable to us"

## Appeal to the Word of God

- Ezra
  - 1:1 "Fulfill the Word of the Lord to Jeremiah"
  - 3:2 "As it is written"
  - 3:4 "As it is written"
  - 3:11 People ordered their praise after Jeremiah
  - 5:1-2 People responded to the prophets
  - 6:18 "As it is written"
  - 7:23 A Persian king demanded obedience to the law!
  - 7:25 A Persian king authorized the teaching of the law.
  - Ch. 9-10 About conformity to the law (without a prophet)
- Nehemiah
  - 5:7 Violating usury laws & they immediately repent
  - Ch. 8-9 Theme = priority of God's law

## Ezra/Nehemiah's Purpose

- To show how God normally works
- To accomplish His will in the lives of His people, God uses...
  - His providence (ordering of events, circumstances, & people)
  - His Word
- Ezra's name means: "YHWH helps."
- How?
  - By His Word
  - By His providence

## Outline

- I. Rebuilding the Worship of God (Ezra)
  - A. Preparation of the *temple* for worship (1-6)
  - B. Preparation of the *people* for worship (7-10)
- II. Rebuilding the Walls of Jerusalem (Nehemiah)

## Ezra 1-6

Return Under Zerubbabel:  
preparation of the Temple for  
Worship

## The Cyrus Cylinder

"I returned to these sacred cities . . . , the sanctuaries of which have been in ruins for a long time, the images which used to live therein and established for them permanent sanctuaries. I also gathered all their former inhabitants and returned to them their habitations. May all the gods whom I have resettled in their sacred cities ask daily Bel & Nebo for a long life for me."

## Ezra

- Chapter 2 - list of people who returned with Zerubbabel
  - About 50,000
  - Probably not a majority
  - Many stayed in Babylon

## The Route Home



## Ezra

- Chapter 4 - Opposition
  - "Enemies" = Samaritans
    - Result of intermarriage between Jews left in the north after 722 and imported Assyrian colonists
- A summary (not chronological)
- The forms of opposition:
  - Distraction (Haggai 1:3-11)
  - Compromise (4:2)
  - Discouragement (4:4a)
  - Intimidation and threats (4:4b)
  - Undermining their reputation (4:5)
  - Accusations (4:6-23)
  - Physical Force (4:23)
- 4:24 The building stops for 10-16 years.

## Ezra

- Chapter 5 - Rebuilding Resumes
  - 1-2 God sends Haggai & Zechariah (c. 520)
  - 5 "eye of their God" - the resumption is the gracious design of God

## Ezra

- Chapter 6 - the Temple Completed
  - 516 BC
  - 20 years after it was begun
  - 1st Temple Period:
    - Solomon's temple
    - 959-586 BC
  - 2nd Temple Period:
    - Zerubbabel's temple, modified and rebuilt by Herod
    - 516 BC - 70 AD
- 58 years between Ezra 6-7
  - The events of Esther.
  - Ezra/Nehemiah occurs primarily in Canaan.
  - Esther's events occur in Persia.

## Ezra 7-10 -- Ezra's Memoirs

- Ezra 1-6 = the preparation of the *temple* for worship
- Ezra 7-10 = the preparation of the *people* for worship

## Artaxerxes Decree

- Ezra 7:11-26 - a detailed, official record
  - To the people of Israel (7:12-20)
    - Authorized the people to return (13-14)
    - Authorized the transport of Persian assets (15-16)
    - Established the proper use of the assets (17-19)
    - Authorized the use of government funds (20)
  - To the government treasurers (7:21-24)
    - Established a government budget for the project (21-23)
    - Exempted the temple personnel from taxes (24)
  - To Ezra (7:25-26)
  - Authority to set up a provincial government and to make political/judicial appointments (25)
  - Authority to carry out punishment of lawbreakers (26)
- Ezra 7:27-28
  - "Put it in the king's heart"
  - "Hand of God upon me"

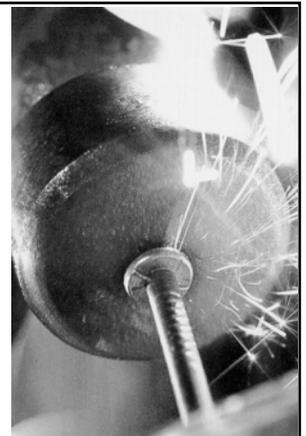
## Return Under Ezra

- Chapter 8 - in 458 BC, Ezra returned with 2,000 people.
- Chapter 9 - discovered mixed marriages
- Chapter 10 - people take an oath to deal with this sin

## The Restoration

- To rebuild their temple under Zerubbabel (Ezra 1-6)
- To purify worship under Ezra (Ezra 7-10)
- To rebuild and refortify the city of Jerusalem under Nehemiah (Neh. 1-13)

## Nehemiah the Builder



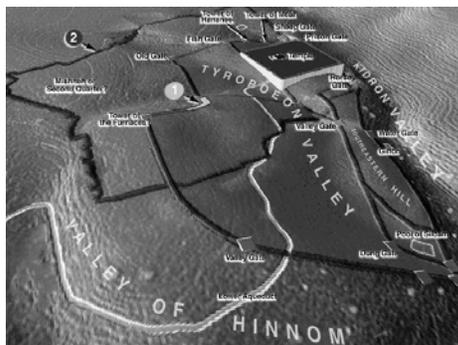
## Nehemiah

- **2:5** "Let me return & rebuild"
- **2:6b** "It pleased him to send me"
- **2:7** Nehemiah asks for...
  - 1) letters to governors; and
  - 2) a letter to Asaph – to supply timber for the project!
- How do you explain?
- **2:8** "King granted because good hand of God"
- **2:9** Nehemiah arrives about Aug. 445 BC.

## Nehemiah

- Chapters 4-6 - chronicles the tremendous opposition he faced
  - To show that rebuilding was humanly impossible
  - Nehemiah's constant prayers underscore that God is working behind the scenes:
    - 4:15 – God frustrated their plan
    - 4:20 – Our God will fight for us
  - **6:15** The wall was finished in 52 days!
  - **6:16** The key to understanding Nehemiah
    - How did they complete the wall?
    - v. 16b "accomplished w/ help of our God"

## Walls of Jerusalem (Nehemiah)



## Nehemiah

- Chapters 7-10
  - Rebuilding or reviving the people
  - Theme: God directs His people through His Word
  - Chapter 8 - a powerful lesson on the importance of God's Word.
    - **8:1** Oct. 8, 445 BC – All the people gather
    - **8:7** Ezra reads from the law of God & explains it from daybreak until noon
    - **8:9** The people wept, but Ezra and Nehemiah call for a celebration
    - **8:13-18** They gather the next day to study.
      - They discover command for the Feast of Booths.
      - And they immediately respond in obedience!
      - Note: "as it is written" "according to ordinance"
  - Chapter 9 – the people's prayer of confession

## Nehemiah

- Chapter 10 – The people covenant themselves, in writing, to obedience, especially in the areas of most flagrant disloyalty:
  - 1) Intermarriage (10:30)
  - 2) Keeping the Sabbath (10:31)
  - 3. Providing for temple service (10:32-39)

## Nehemiah

- Chapters 11-12
  - Repopulated city of Jerusalem (11:1-12:26)
  - Dedicated the walls (12:27-39)
  - Concluded with a celebration w/ focus on reason for returning & rebuilding and worship at house of God (12:40-47)
- Between chapters 12 & 13 is a time gap of roughly 14 years.
  - Nehemiah returned to Babylon for a short time.

## Nehemiah

- Chapter 13
  - Upon his return to Jerusalem for second term, he finds the people have been unfaithful in the 3 exact areas they had pledged faithfulness
  - So God raised up a prophet during Nehemiah's time:
    - Malachi
    - Called the people to repent and to prepare for the coming of the Lord.