


The Book of Ezra

REPENT - RETURN - REBUILD - RESTORE



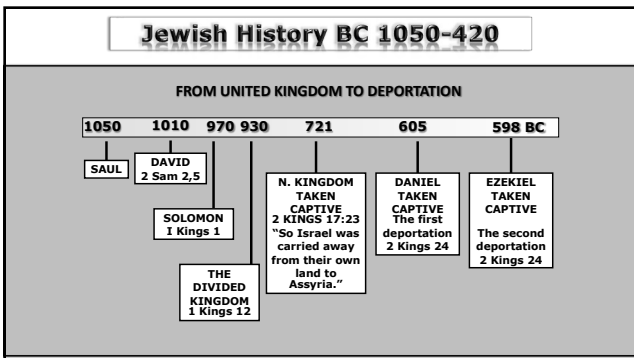
Thursday Morning Bible Class
Our Redeemer Lutheran Church
Wauwatosa, WI

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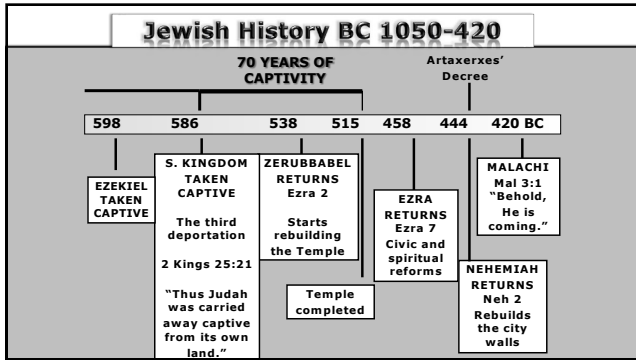
The Post-exilic Books

- † The books written in Jerusalem after the return from the exile, now commonly called post-exilic, are five in number, namely: **Ezra, Nehemiah, Haggai, Zechariah, and Malachi.**
- † To that we need to add the Books of Daniel and Esther, which take place during the exile.
- † **Ezra** - To rebuild the Temple and reestablish the Law of Moses. (The Torah)
- † **Nehemiah** – To rebuild the city of Jerusalem.

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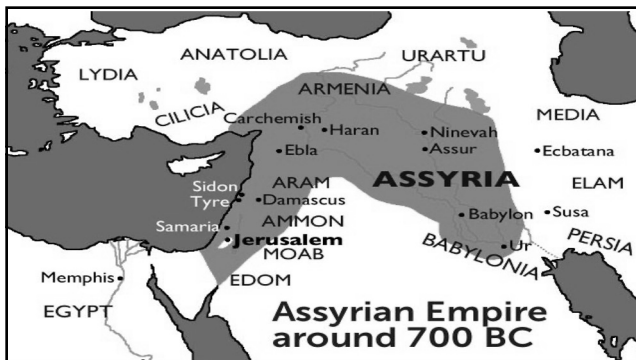
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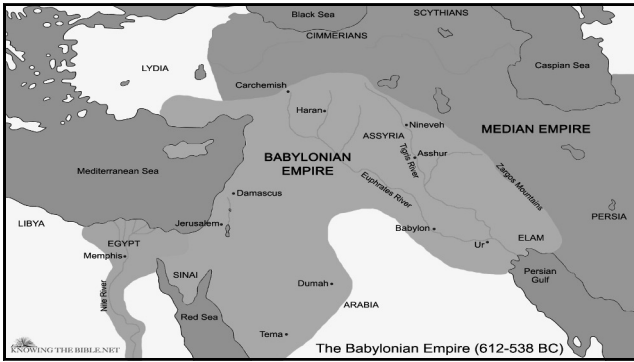
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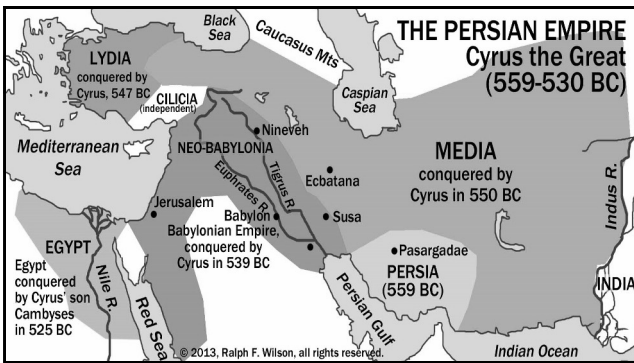
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Persian Kings in the Bible

NAME	B.C. DATE	PERSIAN NAME	BIBLE NAME	BIBLE REFERENCE
Cyrus	539-530	Koorush	Cyrus	Isaiah 45, Daniel, Ezra 1-3
Cambyses	530-521	Cambujieh	Ahasruerus	Ezra 4-6
Pseudo Smerdis	521	Berooyeh Doroughi	Artaxerxes	Ezra 4:7-23
Darius the Great	521-486	Darryoosh	Darius	Ezra 5-6
Xerxes	486-465	Khashayarshah	Ahasruerus	Esther 1-10
Artixerxes	464-423	Ardeshier Dernaz Dast	Artaxerxes	Neh. 1-13, Ezra 7:10

 "I am Cyrus, King of the world. When I entered Babylon...I did not allow anyone to terrize land...I kept in view the needs of Babylon and all its sanctuaries to promote the well-being...I put an end to their misfortune."
Cyrus Charter of Human Rights

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Introduction

- † Ezra the Scribe was descended from the priestly family of Aaron, sort of a second Moses.
- † The fledgling Jewish community was under siege and disintegrating.
 - † Physically threatened
 - † Intermarrying and assimilating
 - † Desecrating the Sabbath.

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Introduction

- † Ezra did not come with the first returnees, but stayed with his teacher Baruch, a disciple of Jeremiah.
- † He then organized 40,000 Jews to return with him.
- † What he found was a Jewish community that had broken down spiritually.

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Themes of Ezra 1 and 2

- † Ezra 1 and 2 contains the account of the first wave of Judeans to return to Jerusalem.
- † A theme in this section is how the promises of God are being fulfilled.
- † Gospel note: God delivers His people.

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Chapter 1

- † The first year of Cyrus, King of Persia – 538 BC.
- † Ezra (and Jeremiah) firmly believes that God is behind this action of Cyrus.
- † The book in Hebrew begins with the letter that means “and.” Usually done to connect it to something previous.
- † Connects to 2 Chron. 26:22-23.

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Chapter 1

- † v. 2 – Cyrus makes two claims: 1) that God had given him all the kingdoms of the earth, and 2) God had charged him to rebuild the temple in Jerusalem.
- † This proclamation sets the tone of the entire book – God is reestablishing worship at the temple and restoring the means whereby the people can receive forgiveness. God is providing the means of grace.

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Chapter 1

- † 5 – God also “aroused” the people to respond and make the journey.
- † 6 – The “neighbors” were perhaps non-jews who gave valuables and supplies.
- † 7 – Cyrus also brought out all the temple furnishings that had been taken by Nebuchadnezzar 70 years before.
- † Sheshbazzar appointed governor (Zerubbabel?)

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Chapter 2

- † Chapter 2 is the list of all those who were in the first wave of returnees.
- † The list is almost a duplicate of Neh. 7.
- † The emphasis is not on their journey, but on the people.
- † The list also highlights the size of the return. It is a large group, but only a small fraction of the Israelite population in Persia.

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Chapter 2

- † v. 1 – “People of the province” – not just exiles, but the people of God.
- † God is not just restoring a temple, but also restoring his people for the sake of the coming Messiah.
- † v. 2 – The leaders number 12, connecting them to the 12 tribes of Israel.

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Chapter 2

- † vv. 3-20 – the list of the inhabitants of Jerusalem.
- † vv. 21-35 – People listed by their ancestral city.
- † vv. 26-58 – The list of temple and royal personnel: Priests, Levites, and temple servants.
- † vv. 59-63 – Those who could not prove their lineage.

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Chapter 2

- † v. 64 – Total number of returnees: 42,360, but the list adds up to 29,818. Women and children not included?
- † vv. 65-69 – The property shows their were fairly affluent.
- † vv. 68-70 – One of the first actions of the returnees was to offer gifts for the erection of the temple.
