

Return from Exile

Studies in Ezra, Nehemiah, Esther, Haggai, Zechariah, Malachi

The Return to Jerusalem

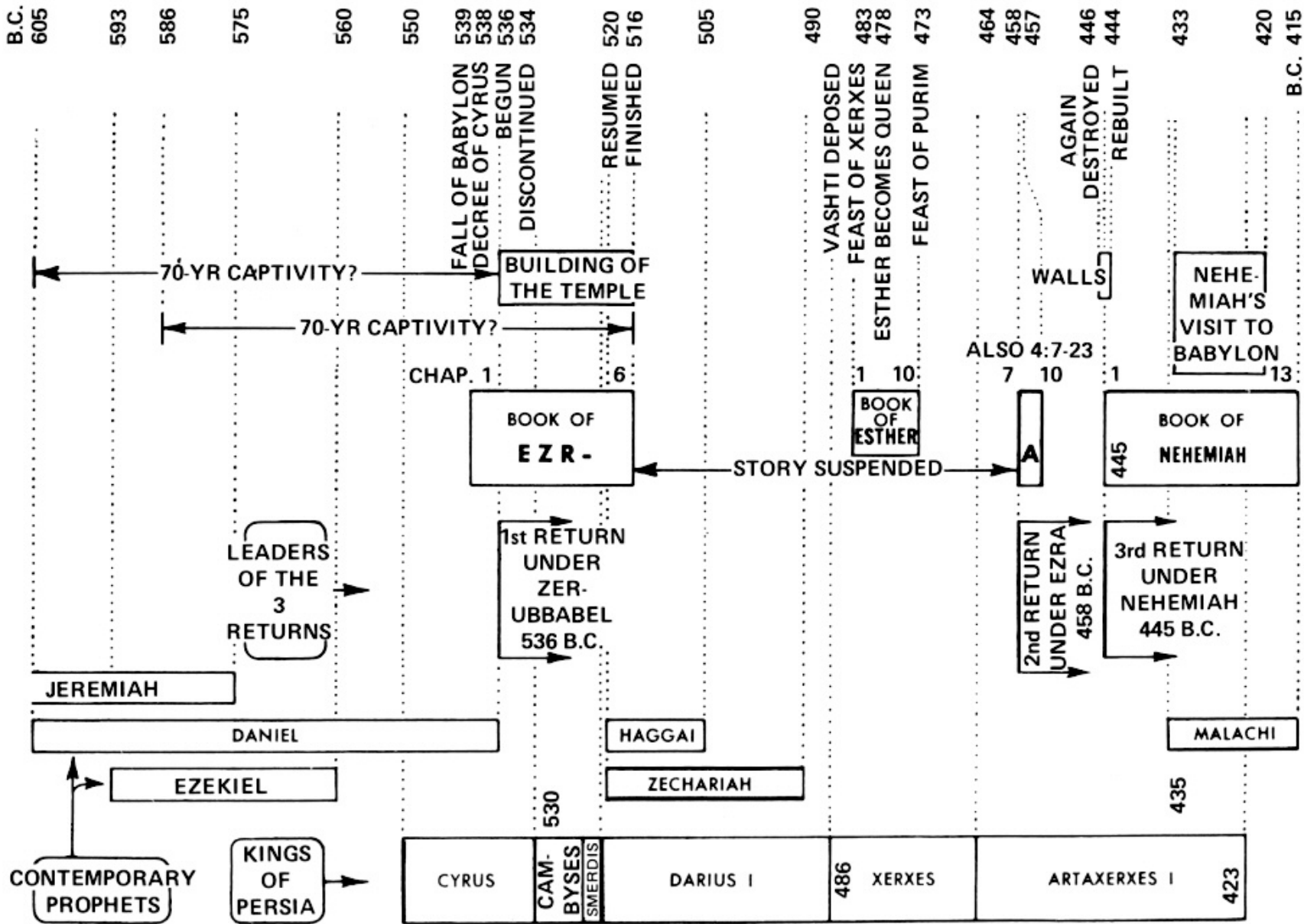
Ezra 1-3

Lesson 1

*Trinity Bible Church Sunday School
September 5, 2010*

The Old Testament Appendix

- ▶ 3 history books
Ezra, Nehemiah, Esther
- ▶ 3 prophets
Haggai, Zechariah, Malachi



The Divine Plan: Salvation

- ▶ Genesis 3:15 – the Seed of the woman
- ▶ Genesis 12:1-3, 7 – Abrahamic Promise
 - Blessing – salvation
 - A Great Nation – Israel
 - Blessing/salvation for the Gentiles through Israel
 - The Seed of the woman is the Seed of Abraham
- ▶ 1 Samuel 7 – Davidic Promise
 - Eternal Davidic dynasty

Is Israel a failed experiment?

- ▶ Israel is a total disaster and rejected by God
- ▶ In Ezra's day: no *GREAT nation* – *no nation!*
- ▶ Man's depravity v. God's Promise
- ▶ Why bring Israel back into the Promised Land?
- ▶ Do we expect a different outcome here?

The Old Testament Appendix

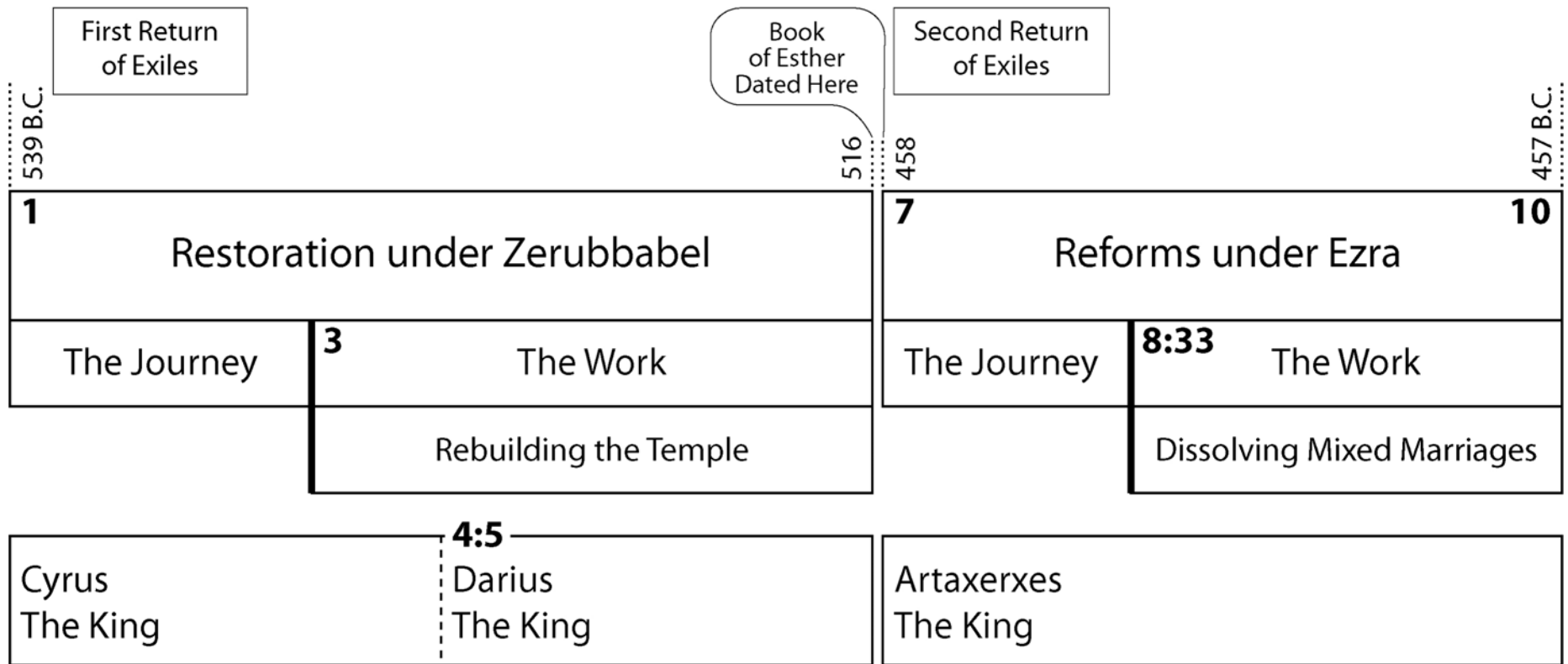
- ▶ No surprises – not a pretty picture of Israel
- ▶ Ezra and Nehemiah – no change in the people
- ▶ Esther – a people without God
- ▶ A temple without glory

More than an Appendix

- ▶ Malachi – God does not change
- ▶ Haggai – a greater glory for this temple
- ▶ Zechariah – the Priest/King is coming
- ▶ The Grace of God on display
- ▶ Rejoice, your King comes . . .
- ▶ Preparation for Messiah

Ezra

Restoration and Reform



Key words and phrases: went up, Jerusalem, decree, house of the Lord, Law of the Lord
 Key verses: 6:21-22; 2:1; 7:10

The Decree of Cyrus

- ▶ The sovereignty of God
- ▶ The Word of God
 - Isaiah 39:6-7 (Babylonian captivity)
 - Isaiah 44:28-45:7, 13 (Cyrus to deliver)
 - Jeremiah 25:11-12; 29:10-12 (70 years)
 - A type of a yet future return
- ▶ A partial fulfillment
 - Jeremiah 29:14; 30:18-21 – restored from all nations
 - Jeremiah 30:8-9 – a King
 - Jeremiah 30:18 – a rebuilt palace
 - Isaiah 45:14; 49:22-23 – a dominion over the nations

The Decree of Cyrus

- ▶ A political decision
- ▶ An unbeliever
- ▶ Proverbs 21:1 – The king's heart in God's hand

The decree goes into effect

- ▶ The sovereignty of God over His people
- ▶ Judah, Benjamin, Priests, Levites
- ▶ Gifts from neighbors
- ▶ Cyrus releases Temple articles
- ▶ Sheshbazzar – “prince of Judah”

The exiles return – Ezra 2

- ▶ Nehemiah 7:6-73
- ▶ “Each to his own town”
- ▶ Priest, Levites
- ▶ Temple servants, sons of Solomon’s servants
- ▶ Undocumented emigrants
- ▶ A small remnant
 - Some gave offerings for the house of the LORD
 - The rest of Israel in their towns

Rebuilding – Ezra 3

- ▶ The altar of the LORD
- ▶ The Feast of Booths
- ▶ The temple foundation
- ▶ The celebration – cheers and tears

My Father's world

This is my Father's world,
O let me ne'er forget
That though the wrong seems oft so strong,
God is the ruler yet.
This is my Father's world:
The battle is not done;
Jesus who died shall be satisfied,
And earth and heav'n be one.