Return from Exile

Ezra Ministers in Jerusalem
Ezra 7-10
Lesson 3

Trinity Bible Church Sunday School
September 19, 2010
The restoration of Israel

- 70 years: Jeremiah 25:11-12; 29:10
- The Great Nation – Genesis 12:1-3
- The Throne of David – 1 Samuel 7
- Israel – a nation under wrath
- Israel – a promise of restoration
  - Amos 9:11-15
  - Jeremiah 31:31-34
  - Ezekiel 36:22-36
  - Joel 2:28-3:3
A token fulfillment

- Necessity of holiness
- Necessity of the Messiah
Rebuilding under Ezra

- Ezra 7 – Preparation for return
- Ezra 8 – The return
- Ezra 9-10 – Revival – spiritual rebuilding
Ezra (7:1-6)

- Priestly line – Divine priority
- Scribe – skilled in Law of Moses (God’s Law)
- King granted his request
- The hand of the LORD his God was on him
  - Ezra 7:6, 9, 28; 8:18, 22, 31; and twice Neh 2:8, 18)
- Ezra a testimony to the grace of God
Ezra's Mission (7:7-10)

- Return to Jerusalem
- Establish Temple service
- Study, do, teach – statutes and rules
- The good hand of his God was on him
Decree of Artaxerxes (7:11-26)

- Establish God’s Law in Jerusalem (7:13-14)
- A grant to buy sacrifices and temple vessels (7:15–19)
- Further provision from the King’s treasury (7:20–23)
- No tax on temple officials (7:24)
- Authorized Ezra to set up a judicial system (7:25–26)
Ezra blesses the LORD (7:27-28)

- Bless the LORD – attribute honor and glory
- Bless the sovereign God Who has acted here
- Courage for Ezra to lead the return
- The hand of the LORD my God was on me
The returning remnant (8:1-14)

- Two priestly families
- Royal Line: Hattush
  - great, great grandson of Zerubbabel
- 12 families – possibly 12 tribes of Israel
  - 1496 men (perhaps 5,000 with women and children)
Recruitment of Levites (8:15-20)

- Encamped 3 days – no Levites present
- Casiphia ("the place")
  - "the place" often designates a sanctuary
  - Deuteronomy 12:5; Jeremiah 7:3, 6–7
- Sherebiah, man of understanding – and others
- Brought by the good hand of our God on us
- Temple servants (Nethinim)
The need for protection (8:21-23)

- Fasting – temporal support v. spiritual support.
- Ashamed to ask the king for protection
- Hand of our God is for good on all who seek Him
- Hand of God is against those who forsake Him
The Return (8:24-36)

- Preparation for the journey – Gold and silver
- The journey – 900 miles in 3½ months
- The hand of our God delivered us . . .
- Silver and gold delivered to the temple.
- Burnt offerings
- Decree of Artaxerxes given to the King’s satraps and governors – they assisted
Intermarriage with pagans (9:1-4)

- Not separated from the peoples of the land
- Holy race – mixed with the peoples of the land
- Abominations of the peoples of the land
- Faithlessness – leaders were foremost
- Conviction by preaching?
Ezra’s prayer (9:5-15)

- Ezra trembled at the words of God
- Confession of historical sin
- Praise for grace
- Request: Grant us reviving in our slavery
- Praise for steadfast love
- Confession of current sin
- Praise – for God’s mercy
- No request – no hope?
Revival (10:1-17)

- Ezra before the house of God
- An assembly of the people
  - Bitter weeping
  - Call for a covenant by the people
  - Oath is made with the leaders
- Ezra casts himself upon the mercy of God
- Decree to assemble
- Call to separate from foreign wives
- Obedience
The guilty men (10:18-44)

- Priests
- Temple service: Levites; singers; gatekeepers
- Israel
Ezra – a book without conclusion

- God at work – great expectations
- *Man* – nothing new under the sun
- Restoring the “old time religion”
Ezra – a light in a dark place

- The good hand of the LORD is upon Him
- A student, a doer, a teacher – of God’s Word
- The power of the Word of God – Haggai, Zechariah, Ezra
- Ezra trembled before the LORD
  - Isaiah 66:2
  - Ezra 9:4
- Seek the Lord and His righteousness
  - Zephaniah 2:3
  - Hosea 10:12
  - Matthew 6:33