

Session 7: Exile and Return

Apprentice Track Workshop

1) Life in Exile

a) Historical Overview of Judah's Captivity

i) The Condition of Judah at the End

(1) Josiah's (the last good king of Judah) reign ended in 609 BC. The final 23 years of Judah's existence saw four frantic kings _____ the reality of the situation.

- (a)** Jehoahaz (3 Months)
- (b)** Jehoiakim (11 years)
- (c)** Jehoiachin/Jeconiah (3 months)
- (d)** Zedekiah (11 years)

(2) In these final years idolatry had become _____.

- (a)** Idols were present both in the high places and in the temple of the Lord
- (b)** God's people worshiped the sun, moon and constellations.
- (c)** Horses and chariots were housed in the temple which was dedicated to the sun.
- (d)** Male prostitutes lived in the temple
- (e)** Child sacrifice was practiced
- (f)** Sorcery, divinations, consultation of mediums and spiritisms ("abominations" and "detestable practices").

ii) A 3 _____ Exile

(1) First Exile (597 BC, Jehoiachin/Jeconiah)

- (a)** 2 Kings 24:10-16
- (b)** Temple plundered
- (c)** "None remained, except the poorest people of the land" (vs. 14).

- (d) Government officials, 7,000 of the best soldiers, and the craftsmen-about 10,000 total.

(2) **Second Exile** (586 BC, Zedekiah)

- (a) 2 Kings 25:1-21
- (b) Temple, palaces, and city walls destroyed
- (c) Everyone was taken except for the poorest farmers to maintain the vineyards.

(3) **Third Exile** (582 BC)

- (a) Jeremiah 52:30
- (b) 745 people taken captive

iii) The Fall of Babylon and the Rise of Medo-Persia

- (1) Babylon turned out to be merely a _____ in the _____.
- (2) In the year _____, Cyrus the Great of Persia defeated the Babylonian forces at the Battle of Opis.

b) Big Concepts that God's People Needed to Come to Terms with in Exile:

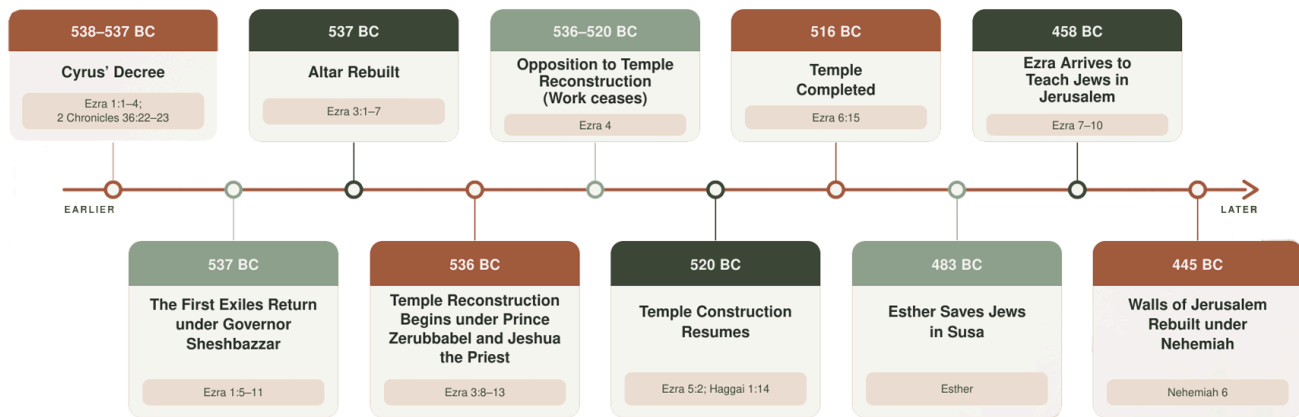
- i) God has _____ our mourning (Lamentations 2; Jeremiah 14)
- ii) We must adopt a new _____ identity by seeking the _____ of Babylon (Jeremiah 29:4-7)
- iii) We must resolve not to _____

2) Life After Exile

a) A Historical Overview of Ezra-Nehemiah

The history recorded in Ezra-Nehemiah spans from the time the Jews began to return to Jerusalem, in 538 BC to a _____ after that first return.

Return from Exile



b) Themes from Ezra-Nehemiah

- i) Ezra is all about the construction of the _____ which renews correct worship and the keeping of the _____.
- ii) Nehemiah is all about rebuilding the _____ of Jerusalem.
- iii) **Theme Summary:** *God is renewing the covenant by _____. His people, the temple, true worship, and Jerusalem. But it's not the end, and it doesn't fulfill all the great _____. Thus, His people still look to the _____.*
 - (1) Prophets like Isaiah, Micah, and Ezekiel promised the New _____ and New _____! The return from exile was exciting. But it wasn't all it was expected to be.
 - (2) Exile from the land is _____. But now the people are facing a spiritual exile _____ the land.

c) The Post-Exilic Prophets – God's commentary on Judea's history after exile

- i) *Haggai* - In the fall of 520 BC Haggai urges the people to continue rebuilding the temple because the Lord's house would _____ his presence. Particularly, Haggai aims at Zerubbabel, son of David, and calls him to lead in this endeavor (Ezra 5:1-2)
- ii) *Zechariah* prophesied two months after Haggai and presented a series of _____ that attacked the _____ lethargy of the people and foresaw the messianic age. He is not as concerned about the rebuilding of the temple but instead attacks the peoples' sin and gives them courage to withstand opposition in the face of their enemies for God would prevail.
- iii) *Malachi* also _____ religious apathy and promised a coming Messiah. He prophesied after the Temple was rebuilt, likely in the mid 5th century BC, about 80 years after Haggai and Zechariah and was also likely active at the same time that Ezra and Nehemiah were leading.

3) The Biblical Story's Three Main Themes

a) God's Promise

- i) Over the course of the biblical story, we've seen God make sweeping unilateral promises to his people.
 - (1) Abraham
 - (2) David
- ii) The Exile and Return directly call into question God's _____ and _____ to keep his unilateral promises.
 - (1) All the elements of both the Abrahamic and Davidic covenants seemed to be unravelling (land, king, blessed to bless, population, etc).
 - (2) Will God be faithful to his promise in the end? Has he just given up on his people? Is he even able to make good on his promises?

b) God's Kingdom

- i) God's commission to Adam and Eve (represent the reign of God by exercising dominion over the earth and subduing it) was extended to the Kingdom of Israel.
- ii) David's line, while _____ from its throne was not _____ out.
 - (1) Zedekiah and his heirs are killed.
 - (2) BUT! The line continued through Zedekiah's brother:

Jehoiachin --- Shealtiel --- Zerubbabel (Matthew 1)

- iii) But God is still using his anointed, chosen _____ ruler to lead his people to _____ him as he intended.

c) God's Presence

- i) At the beginning of the Exile, the prophet Ezekiel saw a vision of the temple, but horrifyingly, he saw the glory of God, the presence of God that dwelled with his people, rise from the Temple and then _____ from it (Ezekiel 10). In other words, God did not just allow his people to lose a famous building, he withdrew his presence from them.
- ii) God's presence departing from the Temple and God's people departing from the land is a _____ of the Fall, the curse, and the exile from Eden.