



"REBUILDING THE WALLS" CHAPTER 21



As we come to the close of the Old Testament we meet two important figures in the history of Israel.

Ezra – Shows up on the scene during the reign of King Artaxerxes, king of Persia.

He is dedicated to the Word of God and wants to make sure the people of Israel heard and followed God's Law.

King Artaxerxes was privileged to have both Nehemiah and Ezra serving in his court.



Artaxerxes sends Ezra back to Jerusalem about fifty years after the return to Jerusalem.

He does this through a letter, in which he offers to Ezra and the people all that their God needs to restore and rebuild.

The king recognizes that Ezra possesses great wisdom, encourages him to appoint magistrates and judges to administer the land.

God moves the king to do all of this through Ezra.



While the temple had been rebuilt the walls of the city still lay in ruins.

More important was their lack of following God and being faithful to their God.

God, through Artaxerxes and Ezra tries to bring the people of Israel back into harmony with God's Word.

Loaded with the king's gifts and supplies Ezra heads back to Jerusalem with seven thousand Israelites.

The people are moved by Ezra's message and repent.

EZRA



| Focus | Restoration of the Temple | | Reformation of the People | |
|------------|---------------------------|----------------------------|----------------------------|---------------------------|
| References | 1:1 | 3:1 | 7:1 | 9:1 |
| Division | First Return to Jerusalem | Construction of the Temple | Second Return to Jerusalem | Restoration of the People |
| Topic | 1st Return (40,897) | | 2nd Return (1,754) | |
| Leaders | Zerubbabel | | Ezra | |
| Time | 22 years (538-516 B.C.) | | 1 Year (458-457 B.C.) | |
| Kings | Cyrus (539-530) | Darius (521-486) | Artaxerxes (464-423) | |

ESTHER Xerxes (486-456)

Ezra – Nehemiah - Esther



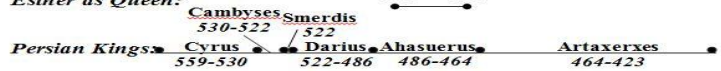
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| Book of Ezra covers: | 538 - 516 Temple rebuilt | 458 - 457 Reform of people |
|-----------------------------|-----------------------------|-------------------------------|

Zerubbabel governed: 538 - 516

Ezra ministered: 458 - 445

Nehemiah governed: 445 - 425

Esther as Queen: 478 - 464



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|---------------------------------|---|
| Book of Nehemiah covers: | 445 - 425 Wall rebuilt Further reforms of people |
|---------------------------------|---|

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| Book of Esther covers: | 483 - 471 Preservation of Jews |
|-------------------------------|-----------------------------------|



Nehemiah - Served as cupbearer to the king. This was a treasured position requiring the greatest of security.

Approximately thirteen years after Ezra Nehemiah is moved to return to Jerusalem.

His job would be to lead the rebuilding of the walls to the city.

God gifted Nehemiah with great vision, a devote prayer life and great skills of administration.



Nehemiah was able to rebuild the walls of Jerusalem even though he had to endure great opposition by some of the local leaders.

We see God giving gifts and ability to these two men to accomplish His plan for His people, in rebuilding Jerusalem.

There is a lesson here for people and Pastors about working together.

There is something to be said about the people of God working with their spiritual leaders to accomplish the ministry God desires for us.

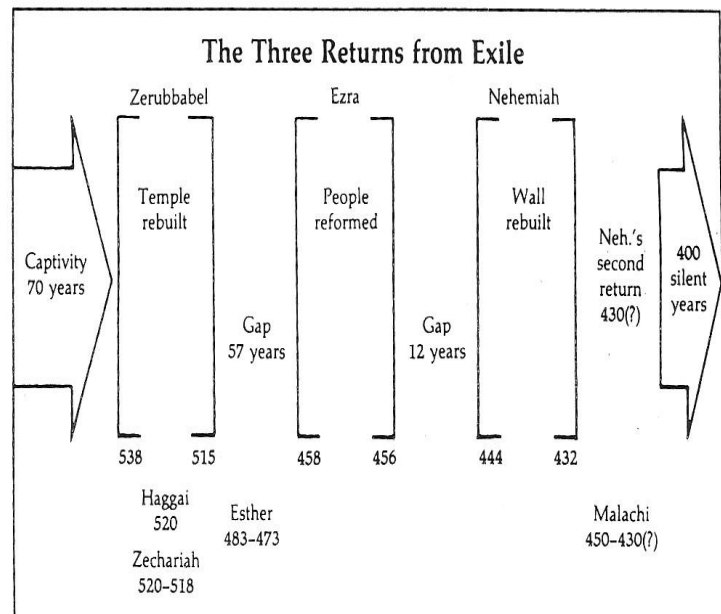


Even though much had been accomplished through Ezra and Nehemiah. The people of God were once again worshiping God, yet, many of the leaders and people still strayed from the faith.

God raises up the last of the Old Testament prophets in Malachi.

He came to call the people to repentance for their compromise of worship, especially not giving to God the best of their sacrifices.

The people did not support the needs of the temple

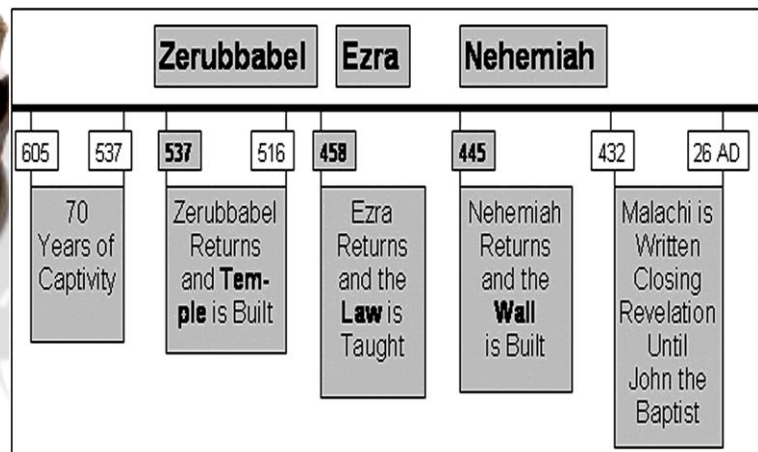


Malachi foretold the coming of the prophet Elijah (John the Baptist), who would prepare the way of the Lord.

Having spoken through numerous prophets, urging the people to turn and repent God goes silent for four hundred years.

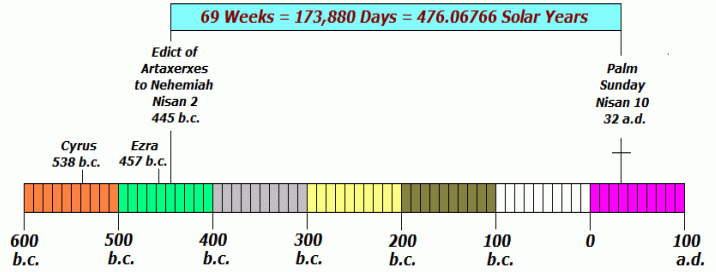
During this period God did not remove Himself from the human story, much of what we know during this period was revealed in the "Dead Sea Scrolls."

After four hundred years, God reappears on the scene through John the Baptist (Elijah) where we see the rest of the story





The Edict of Artaxerxes Longinus given to Nehemiah in 445 b.c. is the only edict that takes the 69 weeks or 'sevens' of Biblical (360 day) years, (173,880 days) to find 'Messiah the Prince'. The 69 weeks terminate precisely on Palm Sunday, 32 A.D.



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