

Lesson 9 The Remnant Returned

Jeremiah 29:10 For thus says the LORD: After seventy years are completed at Babylon, I will visit you and perform my good word toward you, and cause you to return to this place.

Let's clarify the elements of the return.

1. Understand the three stages of the **exile** from Jerusalem to Babylon
 - 606 BC – Daniel and the most educated and capable of the Jews
 - 597 BC – Ezekiel and the majority of the remaining Jews
 - 586 BC – Zedekiah and the rest - Temple destroyed.
2. Understand the three Leaders and the three Prophets,
 - a. Zerubbabel, Ezra and Nehemiah were leaders.
 - b. Haggai, Zachariah and Malachi were Prophets.
3. Understand the Three stages of the **Return**
 - a. 536 BC – Zerubbabel and Joshua
 - i. The Persian King **proclaimed** the return
 1. Cyrus (Ezra 1:1-4)
 2. A small yet spiritual minority answered the call including Zerubbabel and Joshua a priest. (40,000- 50,000)
 - ii. The People **reclaimed** their heritage
 1. They reclaimed their genealogy (Ez 2)
 2. They reclaimed their **Theology** - (Ezra 3)
 - iii. The opposition tried to **defame** their efforts
 1. Through compromise 4:1-3
 2. Through slander – 4:4-24
 - iv. The Lord **sustained** them though opposition
 1. Two prophets preached boldly – Haggai and **Zachariah**
 2. A new King was placed on the throne. 6:1-12
 3. 516 BC they finished the Temple
 - b. 455 BC – Ezra and the 2nd wave of pilgrims. (Ezra 7-10)
 - i. **Cooperation** from the King (7)–
 - ii. **Preparation** of the returnees – (8)
 1. 1500 families and 3000 Levites – returned
 2. They carried a large amount of gold, silver and article for the Temple
 3. They stopped to make **spiritual preparations** for their treacherous journey
 - iii. Supplication by the Scribe – (9)
 1. Ezra investigated
 2. Ezra **interceded**

- iv. Purification of the people
 - 1. They were **convicted** of their sin
 - 2. They put away their sin.
- c. 445 BC – Nehemiah – The Jews had been in Jerusalem for 90 years. The temple is finished and rededicated.
 - i. In Jerusalem
 - 1. The **defenses** are down – the wall was in ruins
 - 2. Their **discouragement** was up –
 - ii. In Shushan
 - 1. Nehemiah is **devastated** by the news
 - 2. He was **delighted** by the king
 - iii. In Jerusalem
 - 1. The **walls** started going up
 - 2. The **worries** started rising
 - a. The Jews were complaining
 - b. Their enemies were conspiring (Sanballot and Tobiah)
 - 3. The work started slowing.
 - 4. The **work** was restarted
 - a. It was finished in 52 days. A wall roughly 80 ft thick and 4 ½ miles long was finished.
- d. Understand the Three powerful Persians
 - i. **Haman** – who hated the Jews – (he was an Agagite)
 - ii. **Esther** – Who saved the Jews
 - iii. **Artaxerxes** – Who helped the Jews. But why?
- e. Understand our all-powerful God.
 - 1. He acted in **sovereignty**
 - 2. He acted in **providence**
 - a. The first Jews went back under Zerubbabel in 536 BC
 - b. The temple was completed in 516 BC
 - c. Esther became Queen in 478 BC (50 years after the temple was completed.)
 - d. She stood before Xerxes in 473 BC – Haman was hanged.
 - e. Her stepson Artaxerxes allows Ezra to return in 455 BC
 - f. Artaxerxes also allows Nehemiah to return and build the wall in 445 BC. Do you think Esther had an influence in this? Praise the Lord!