

EZRA CHAPTERS 1 & 2 – End of the Babylonian Captivity; The Captives Who Returned to Jerusalem

OBSERVATION

Monday 7:00pm, H 105 (1st floor, High School--foot of stairs, behind the gym, by the vending machine area), Tuesday 7:00am, Family, Room, CCCM – Phil Twente, cell #714 425 9221; email – ptwente@gmail.com For past studies, audio plus notes, go to: www.ptwente.com Click on “Bible Studies” on the left column. References include commentaries by numerous pastor/teachers.

INTERPRETATION

APPLICATION

EZRA – Chapters 1 & 2

I. Returning to the Land (1-2)

A. The proclamation (Ezr 1:1-4) - These verses are almost identical with 2Ch 36:22-23. Isaiah 44:28-45:3 contains an amazing prophecy of Cyrus, **more than 150 years before the great Persian ruler was born.** In **538-539 B.C. Cyrus conquered Babylon** and established the Persian empire. His policy with prisoners of war was opposite that of Babylon, for he encouraged the Jews to return to their land, rebuild their temple, and pray for his welfare. No doubt Cyrus extended this same privilege to other displaced nations and their gods. **His decree was in 538 B.C.** Do not confuse this decree with the one in **Dan 9:25**, which refers to the rebuilding of the city and is **dated 445 B.C.** Cyrus's decree had to do with the people returning to the land and rebuilding the temple. This decree was a marvelous fulfillment of Scripture.

B. The precious things (Dan 1:5-11) - The Spirit of God worked in the hearts of the people and of their captors. The temple treasures were restored to the Jews, and the Gentiles also gave them freewill contributions for their temple. See 2Ch 36:7; **Dan 1:2**. “Sheshbazzar” in **Ezr 1:8** and **Ezr 1:11** is **Zerubbabel**, the appointed governor. The Jews could not restore the temple worship without the appointed furnishings. How unlike our NT worship (**Joh 4:19-24**).

C. The people (Ezr 2:1-70) - About **fifty thousand Jews, led by Zerubbabel around 538BC**, were concerned enough to leave the safety and luxury of Babylon and return to their own land. This same list is cited in **Neh 7:6-73**. Note that this register is in special groups: the leaders (**Ezr 2:1-2**); certain families (**Ezr 2:3-19**); certain towns (**Ezr 2:20-35**); the priests (**Ezr 2:36-39**); the Levites (**Ezr 2:40-42**); the Nethinim, or temple helpers (**Ezr 2:43-54**); Solomon's servants (**Ezr 2:55-58**); and those with no genealogy (**Ezr 2:59-63**). The word “tirshatha” in **Ezr 2:63** refers to Zerubbabel. In **Ezr 2:64-70** we have the totals of the men and beasts: there were 49,897 people registered, along with a multitude of animals. Much has been said about the so-called “lost tribes of Israel,” but the NT makes it clear that **all twelve tribes** were represented in this remnant (see **Act 26:7** and **Jas 1:1**). **Ezr 2:70** says “all Israel.” In **Ezr 6:17** we see the priests offering twelve male goats for the twelve tribes; see also **Ezr 8:35**. Jesus will one day judge twelve tribes (**Luk 22:30**). Most of the Jews had settled down in Babylon and had no desire to return to their Promised Land. Content with security and material gain, they abandoned the land of their fathers and stayed with the captives in Babylon.

STANDING ON THE PROMISES - Russell Carter – Maranatha Singers

*1 Standing on the promises of Christ the King,
through eternal ages let His praises ring; glory in
the highest, I will shout and sing, standing on the
promises of God.*

*Refrain: Standing, standing, standing on the
promises of God my Savior; standing,
standing, I'm standing on the promises of God.*

*2 Standing on the promises that cannot fail, when the
howling storms of doubt and fear assail, by the living
Word of God I shall prevail, standing on the
promises of God. (Refrain)*

*3 Standing on the promises I now can see Perfect,
present cleansing in the blood for me; Standing in
the liberty where Christ makes free, Standing on the
promises of God. (Refrain)*

*4 Standing on the promises of Christ the Lord, bound
to Him eternally by love's strong cord, overcoming
daily with the Spirit's sword, standing on the
promises of God. (Refrain)*



TIME LINE – BOOKS OF EZRA – (“Bible Hub” online)

537 BC	The Proclamation of Cyrus	Ezra 1
537 BC	The Exiles Return	Ezra 2
535 BC	Temple Work Begins (70 yrs. from 605BC)	Ezra 3
534 BC	Adversaries Hinder Temple Work	Ezra 4
534 BC	Artaxerxes Orders Work Stopped	Ezra 4:17
520 BC	Tattenai's Letter to Darius	Ezra 5
520 BC	Temple Work Resumed by Darius' Decree	Ezra 6
(Books of Haggai & Zechariah occur here)		
515 BC	Completion and Dedication of the Temple	Ezra 6:16
(Book of Esther occurs here)		
458 BC	Ezra Journeys to Jerusalem	Ezra 7
458 BC	Ezra Commissioned by Artaxerxes	Ezra 7:11
457 BC	Families Return to Jerusalem with Ezra	Ezra 8
457 BC	Ezra's reforms	Ezra 9
456 BC	Ezra's Prayer About Intermarriage	Ezra 10

BOOK OF ESTHER (about 60 yrs. from 1st return)

483 BC	Queen Vashti Deposed	Esther 1
478 BC	Esther Becomes Queen	Esther 2
478 BC	Mordecai Thwarts a Conspiracy	Esther 2:21
474 BC	Haman Seeks Revenge on the Jews	Esther 3
473 BC	Mordecai Informs Esther of Haman's Plot	Esther 4
473 BC	Esther Prepares a Banquet	Esther 5
473 BC	The King Honors Mordecai	Esther 6
473 BC	Haman Is Hanged	Esther 7
473 BC	Xerxes' Edict on Behalf of Esther and Jews	Esther 8
472 BC	Purim Instituted	Esther 9
472 BC	Xerxes' Tribute to Mordecai	Esther 10

BOOK OF NEHEMIAH (about 100 years from 1st return)

445 BC	Nehemiah's Prayer for the Exiles	Nehemiah 1
444 BC	Artaxerxes Sends Nehemiah to Jerusalem	Nehemiah 2
444 BC	Builders of the Walls Named	Nehemiah 3
444 BC	Builders Overcome Ridicule	Nehemiah 4
444 BC	Nehemiah Abolishes Debt and Bondage	Nehemiah 5
444 BC	Sanballat's Plot	Nehemiah 6
444 BC	Completion of the Wall	Nehemiah 6:15
444 BC	Census of Returned Exiles	Nehemiah 7
444 BC	Ezra Reads the Law	Nehemiah 8
444 BC	Israelites Fast and Repent	Nehemiah 9
444 BC	Israelites Seal the Covenant	Nehemiah 10
444 BC	People Settle in Jerusalem	Nehemiah 11, 12
432 BC	Nehemiah Restores Laws	Nehemiah 13

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INTERPRETATION

APPLICATION

EZRA – Chapter 1 End of the Babylonian Captivity;

Ezr 1:1 *Now in the first year of Cyrus king of Persia, that the word of the LORD by the mouth of Jeremiah might be fulfilled, the LORD stirred up the spirit of Cyrus king of Persia, so that he made a proclamation throughout all his kingdom, and also put it in writing, saying,*

Ezr 1:2 *Thus says Cyrus king of Persia: All the kingdoms of the earth the LORD God of heaven has given me. And He has commanded me to build Him a house at Jerusalem which is in Judah.*

Ezr 1:3 *Who is among you of all His people? May his God be with him, and let him go up to Jerusalem which is in Judah, and build the house of the LORD God of Israel (He is God), which is in Jerusalem.*

Ezr 1:4 *And whoever is left in any place where he dwells, let the men of his place help him with silver and gold, with goods and livestock, besides the freewill offerings for the house of God which is in Jerusalem.*

Ezr 1:5 *Then the heads of the fathers' houses of Judah and Benjamin, and the priests and the Levites, with all whose spirits God had moved, arose to go up and build the house of the LORD which is in Jerusalem.*

v. 1 God stirs Cyrus to make a decree. ..first year of Cyrus.. God gave the Persian king a sense of urgency about this. The relief from exile was granted the very **first year** of his reign as **the LORD stirred up** his **spirit**. Cyrus made a decree giving the Jewish exiles the right to return to Jerusalem and rebuild the temple in 538 B.C. Daniel may have been instrumental in this stirring of Cyrus, *Daniel 6:28*; showing the king the prophecies of *Jer 25:8-13* and *Jer 29:10-14*, which refer to the punishment of Babylon and the end of Israel's exile. Also he would have included *Isa 44:28* to *Isa 45:5*, which mention Cyrus by name some 150 years before he was born. **And also put it in writing:** This writing was also recorded in *2Ch 36:22-23*.

v. 2 *All the kingdoms of the earth the LORD God of heaven..* This remarkable recognition of God's hand upon his life may be connected with the remarkable prophecies regarding Cyrus in *Isa 44:28* to *Isa 45:4*, **commanded me to build Him a house..** The command of Cyrus not only allowed the return of the exiled people, but also a rebuilding of the destroyed temple.

v. 3 In 3c. *Who is among you of all His people? May the LORD his God be with him, and let him go up to Jerusalem:* The Books of *1 & 2 Chronicles* end with this remarkable encouragement to return and rebuild Jerusalem. This was the necessary and helpful encouragement to the first readers of Chronicles, letting them see their connection with God's broader plan of the ages. In passages such as *Isa 10:22*, God promised that a remnant would return from exile - and only a remnant.

v. 4 *Besides the freewill offerings for the house of God...* This introduces a central theme for the Book of Ezra, **that of restoration** - the rebuilding of the temple. Cyrus's decree was not merely to return and reoccupy Jerusalem but to also rebuild the temple. The response of the people to the invitation to go back to Jerusalem.

v. 5 *With all whose spirits God had moved:* Though the returning exiles were a minority, they were a spirit-stirred minority. They were dedicated to the difficult and discouraging task of returning to a ruined city and once there to build the house of the LORD which is in Jerusalem. They would face many obstacles: • The journey itself was about 900 miles long, dangerous, and expensive. • They returned to a city in ruins. • They didn't have all the material resources they needed. • They would be spread out over the province of Judea. • They had many enemies. • Their land was actually the possession of another empire. **Arose to go up and build the house of the LORD:** So, a good number of the descendants of those exiled some two generations before decided to return to their ancestral land. These went; substantially more stayed behind in the land of their exile.

vs. 1-4 How do you answer the question, “How do you know your God is sovereign and is different from all other gods?” **Answer:** One of the ways is that God speaks to us in His Bible giving us foreknowledge of what will happen before it happens, so when it happens precisely as He said, we will know that He is indeed sovereign!

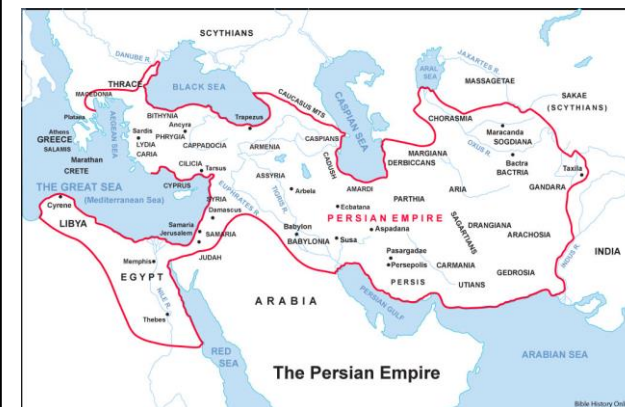
The chronology of prophecy of Cyrus is a perfect example as laid out in the following scriptures:

Jer. 25:12; 29:10-11

Daniel 6:28-*Daniel prospered in the reign of Darius and in the reign of Cyrus the Persian;* **9:2** Jeremiah prophesying 70 years of captivity – that period of captivity is coming to conclusion!

Is. 41:4; 21:23; 42:8-9; 44:6-7; 46:9-10

Is. 44:24-28; 45:1-5 **This is what stirred up Cyrus!**



v. 5 *all whose spirits God had moved, arose to go up and build the house* What would cause people who were well settled, living comfortably to leave and undertake such an arduous journey of some 900 miles, moving on foot, to a place of ruin? **The same thing that would cause you and I to go all out for God - God, who "works" in men "both to will and to do",** wrought powerfully by His Spirit on their hearts, inclined their minds, and made them willing to go!!! **How sensitive are we to His Spirit? How willing are we to "go"?**

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INTERPRETATION

APPLICATION

Ezr 1:6 And all those who were around them encouraged them with articles of silver and gold, with goods and livestock, and with precious things, besides all that was willingly offered.
Ezr 1:7 King Cyrus also brought out the articles of the house of the LORD, which Nebuchadnezzar had taken from Jerusalem and put in the temple of his gods;
Ezr 1:8 and Cyrus king of Persia brought them out by the hand of Mithredath the treasurer, and counted them out to Sheshbazzar the prince of Judah.
Ezr 1:9 This is the number of them: thirty gold platters, one thousand silver platters, twenty-nine knives,
Ezr 1:10 thirty gold basins, four hundred and ten silver basins of a similar kind, and one thousand other articles.
Ezr 1:11 All the articles of gold and silver were five thousand four hundred. All these Sheshbazzar took with the captives who were brought from Babylon to Jerusalem.

EZRA – Chapter 2 The Captives Who Returned to Jerusalem

The Exiles Return

Ezr 2:1 Now these are the people of the province who came back from the captivity, of those who had been carried away, whom Nebuchadnezzar the king of Babylon had carried away to Babylon, and who returned to Jerusalem and Judah, everyone to his own city.
Ezr 2:2 Those who came with Zerubbabel were Jeshua, Nehemiah, Seraiah, Reelaiah, Mordecai, Bilshan, Mispar, Bigvai, Rehum, and Baanah. The number of the men of the people of Israel:
Ezr 2:3 the people of Parosh, two thousand one hundred and seventy-two;
Ezr 2:4 the people of Shephatiah, three hundred and seventy-two;
Ezr 2:5 the people of Arah, seven hundred and seventy-five;
Ezr 2:6 the people of Pahath-Moab, of the people of Jeshua and Joab, two thousand eight hundred and twelve;
Ezr 2:7 the people of Elam, one thousand two hundred and fifty-four;
Ezr 2:8 the people of Zattu, nine hundred and forty-five;
Ezr 2:9 the people of Zaccai, seven hundred and sixty;
Ezr 2:10 the people of Bani, six hundred and forty-two;
Ezr 2:11 the people of Bebai, six hundred and twenty-three;
Ezr 2:12 the people of Azgad, one thousand two hundred and twenty-two;

v. 6 *And all those who were around them encouraged them:* This encouragement was more than verbal in that there was financial and practical backing for the work.
v. 7 *King Cyrus also brought out the articles* ...When Jerusalem was conquered the remaining treasures of the temple were taken to Babylon (2Ch_36:18).
v. 8 *Sheshbazzar the prince of Judah:* Apparently this man was an important leader of this first part of the resettlement of Judah. Some believe that he was a partner to Zerubbabel (Ezr_2:2; Ezr_3:2), and others believe that these were simply two names for the same person. The latter seems supported – *Ezra 5:14, 16; Hag. 1:14; 2:2, 21 vs. 9-11* ...*the number of them:* The careful reckoning of the returned articles shows how valued they were and how carefully they were treated. Significant temple articles - the altar of incense, the table of showbread, the brazen altar, the golden lampstand, and the ark of the covenant – are missing. Apparently these were lost at the destruction of the temple by the Babylonians.

v. 1 *...these are the people...* We have here the list of the families and individuals who made the return to Judah and Jerusalem, now that it was a province of the Persian Empire. The returning exiles were described as ‘children of the province’ (Ezr_2:1) - i.e., of the Persian province of Judea - and their leader bore the title of a Persian governor (*Tirshatha*, Ezr_2:63). Zerubbabel was no new Moses.
v. 2 *Those who came with Zerubbabel:* Here are eleven names mentioned. The list probably should contain twelve names (comparing with Neh_7:7 and noting the twelve sacrificial bulls of Ezr_8:35). *Nehemiah* ... *Mordecai:* Not that famous Nehemiah nor that renowned Mordecai so much spoken of in the Book of Esther, but others of the same name. *Zerubbabel:* Zerubbabel was the appointed governor over the province of Judah. He was also a descendent of the last reigning Judean king. He is probably the same person mentioned in Ezr_1:8 as Sheshbazzar. Ezr_5:16 says that Sheshbazzar laid the foundation of the temple; Ezr_3:8 seems to attribute that work to Zerubbabel. This strengthens the idea that they were in fact the same person. *Jeshua:* Hag_2:1-5 and several other passages among the post-exilic prophets mention this notable co-worker with Zerubbabel. “*Jeshua* the High Priest (Zec_3:1), whose name (in Greek, ‘Jesus’) is spelt Joshua in Haggai and Zechariah, was Zerubbabel’s fellow-leader.”

v. 6 Probably there were many who decided to stay in exile in Babylon. They were happy that others were going to build the house of the LORD and they wanted to support that work. **How willing are we either to go or to support those who do go?**
v. 7 Cyrus, after conquering the Babylonians, had a more generous policy towards the Jewish people. **When you have victory over someone, do you tend to be more like the Babylonians or as Cyrus in this case?**
v. 8 Note how exact and thorough Cyrus is after being stirred up by the LORD. He counts out the Jewish treasures that had been taken by the Babylonians and puts them in the hand of the governor of those going back. **A good example of obedience to God’s command!**
vs. 9-11 Notice here how the LORD knows and keeps track down to the finest detail of things here on earth!

vs. 1-70 About fifty thousand Jews, led by Zerubbabel around 538 BC, were concerned enough to leave the safety and luxury of Babylon and return to their own land. This same list is cited in Neh_7:6-73.

Note that this register is in special groups:

- the leaders (Ezr_2:1-2);
- certain families (Ezr_2:3-19);
- certain towns (Ezr_2:20-35);
- the priests (Ezr_2:36-39);
- the Levites (Ezr_2:40-42);
- the Nethinim, or temple helpers (Ezr_2:43-54);
- Solomon’s servants (Ezr_2:55-58);
- and those with no genealogy (Ezr_2:59-63).

In Ezr_2:64-70 we have the totals of the men and beasts: there were 49,897 people registered, along with a multitude of animals.

We see here the importance of names and attention to detail by the LORD. How important each is. **Can you imagine seeing you name in the Book of Life?** Hallelujah!!

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INTERPRETATION

APPLICATION

Ezr 2:13 the people of Adonikam, six hundred and sixty-six;
Ezr 2:14 the people of Bigvai, two thousand and fifty-six;
Ezr 2:15 the people of Adin, four hundred and fifty-four;
Ezr 2:16 the people of Ater of Hezekiah, ninety-eight;
Ezr 2:17 the people of Bezai, three hundred and twenty-three;
Ezr 2:18 the people of Jorah, one hundred and twelve;
Ezr 2:19 the people of Hashum, two hundred and twenty-three;
Ezr 2:20 the people of Gibbar, ninety-five;
Ezr 2:21 the people of Bethlehem, one hundred and twenty-three;
Ezr 2:22 the men of Netophah, fifty-six;
Ezr 2:23 the men of Anathoth, one hundred and twenty-eight;
Ezr 2:24 the people of Azmaveth, forty-two;
Ezr 2:25 the people of Kirjath Arim, Chephirah, and Beeroth, seven hundred and forty-three;
Ezr 2:26 the people of Ramah and Geba, six hundred and twenty-one;
Ezr 2:27 the men of Michmas, one hundred and twenty-two;
Ezr 2:28 the men of Bethel and Ai, two hundred and twenty-three;
Ezr 2:29 the people of Nebo, fifty-two;
Ezr 2:30 the people of Magbish, one hundred and fifty-six;
Ezr 2:31 the people of the other Elam, one thousand two hundred and fifty-four;
Ezr 2:32 the people of Harim, three hundred and twenty;
Ezr 2:33 the people of Lod, Hadid, and Ono, seven hundred and twenty-five;
Ezr 2:34 the people of Jericho, three hundred and forty-five;
Ezr 2:35 the people of Senaah, three thousand six hundred and thirty.
Ezr 2:36 The priests: the sons of Jedaiah, of the house of Jeshua, nine hundred and seventy-three;
Ezr 2:37 the sons of Immer, one thousand and fifty-two;
Ezr 2:38 the sons of Pashhur, one thousand two hundred and forty-seven;
Ezr 2:39 the sons of Harim, one thousand and seventeen.
Ezr 2:40 The Levites: the sons of Jeshua and Kadmiel, of the sons of Hodaviah, seventy-four.

vs. 3-35 A listing of the families returning to Judah and Jerusalem. **The people of:** This list names the heads of families, with the numbers of the men of those families. It means that the total number of people would be more, because they are listed and counted by heads of families. The thousands of those going back to Jerusalem are not lumped together, but (in characteristic biblical fashion) related to those local and family circles which humanize a society and orientate an individual. Such is God's way, who 'sets the solitary in families' (*Psa 68:6*). " **The people of Arah, seven hundred and seventy-five:** This differs with the record at *Neh 7:10*, and points to the often difficult correlation of numbers between the two passages. It seems that perhaps copyist error is the fault, but others have suggested alternative solutions. There are many difficulties in this table of names; but as we have no less than *three* copies of it *that* contained here from *Ezr 2:1-67*, a *second* in *Neh 7:6-69*, and a *third* in *1Es 5:7-43*, on a careful examination they will be found to correct each other. **Parosh . . . Shephatiah . . . Arah:** These names reflect the variety of influences that came in and among the children of Israel during the exile. Many of the names are connected to Biblical ideas, and others have connections to their exilic culture. • **Parosh** means *flea*. • **Shephatiah** means *Yahweh has judged*. • **Arah** means *wild ox*. • **Zaccai** means either *pure* or is a shortened form of *Zechariah*. • **Bani** is a shortened form of *Benaiah*, meaning *Yahweh has built*. • **Bebai** means *pupil of the eye*. • **Azgad** means *Gad is strong*. • **Adonikam** means *my Lord has arisen*. • **Adin** means *voluptuous*. • **Ater** means *lefty*. • **Bezai** is a shortened form of *Bezaleel* and means *in the shadow of God*. • **Jorah** means *autumn rain*. • **Hashum** means *broad nose*. • **Gibbar** means *strong man*.

vs. 36-57 A listing of the priests, Levites, and temple workers returning from exile.

v. 36 Jedaiah . . . Immer . . . Pashhur . . . Harim: These families represent only four of the twenty-four divisions of the priesthood established by King David in *1Ch 24:8*. Most of the priests stayed behind in Babylon.

v. 40 The Levites: The total number of Levites was actually less than the number of priests that returned. This means that a remarkably small percentage of the Levites returned from Babylon.

vs. 3-35 From verses 3-35, a list is given of the captives that returned, described by the families they were of, their ancestors from whence they sprung, or the towns and cities to which they originally belonged, and by their numbers; otherwise nothing more of them is known.

Notice the importance attached to families! **Just think whose family every believer is now a part of!**

v. 36-39 The priests,.... An account of them is given in this and the three following verses, and only four families are mentioned, those of Jedaiah, Immer, Pashur, and Harim, and the number of them amounted to 4,289; these, according to the Jews, were heads of four courses, which were all that returned from Babylon

vs. 40-42 The Levites,.... Singers and porters, who are reckoned in this, and the two following verses, whose numbers were no more than three hundred and forty one; whereas, in the times of David, they were 38,000,

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INTERPRETATION

APPLICATION

Ezr 2:41 The singers: the sons of Asaph, one hundred and twenty-eight.
Ezr 2:42 The sons of the gatekeepers: the sons of Shallum, the sons of Ater, the sons of Talmon, the sons of Akkub, the sons of Hatita, and the sons of Shobai, one hundred and thirty-nine in all.
Ezr 2:43 The Nethinim: the sons of Ziha, the sons of Hasupha, the sons of Tabbaoth,
Ezr 2:44 the sons of Keros, the sons of Siaha, the sons of Padon,
Ezr 2:45 the sons of Lebanah, the sons of Hagabah, the sons of Akkub,
Ezr 2:46 the sons of Hagab, the sons of Shalmi, the sons of Hanan,
Ezr 2:47 the sons of Giddel, the sons of Gahar, the sons of Reaiah,
Ezr 2:48 the sons of Rezin, the sons of Nekoda, the sons of Gazzam,
Ezr 2:49 the sons of Uzza, the sons of Paseah, the sons of Besai,
Ezr 2:50 the sons of Asnah, the sons of Meunim, the sons of Nephusim,
Ezr 2:51 the sons of Bakbuk, the sons of Hakupha, the sons of Harhur,
Ezr 2:52 the sons of Bazluth, the sons of Mehida, the sons of Harsha,
Ezr 2:53 the sons of Barkos, the sons of Sisera, the sons of Tamah,
Ezr 2:54 the sons of Nezhiah, and the sons of Hatipha.
Ezr 2:55 The sons of Solomon's servants: the sons of Sotai, the sons of Sophereth, the sons of Peruda,
Ezr 2:56 the sons of Jaala, the sons of Darkon, the sons of Giddel,
Ezr 2:57 the sons of Shephatiah, the sons of Hattil, the sons of Pochereth of Zebaim, and the sons of Ami.
Ezr 2:58 All the Nethinim and the children of Solomon's servants were three hundred and ninety-two.

Ezr 2:59 And these were the ones who came up from Tel Melah, Tel Harsha, Cherub, Addan, and Immer; but they could not identify their father's house or their genealogy, whether they were of Israel:

v. 46. The sons of Hanan: ‘Hanan’ ([God] is gracious) is derived from the verb *hanan* (‘to be gracious’), and its derivatives are the components of numerous names borne by fifty-one persons in the Old Testament. These include Baalhanan, Elhanan, Hananel, Hanani, Hananiah, Hannah, Hanun, Henadad, Jehohanan, and Tehinnah. ‘Johanan’ (‘Yahweh is gracious’) has given us the name John. The woman’s name Hannah gives us Anna, Ann, Nan, and Nancy.

v. 51 Bakbuk means “bottle,” referring to an earthenware container with a neck and a bulging body. Mr. **Bakbuk** man have earned his nickname by his big belly; or because his constant chatter sounded like the bubbling sound of water poured out from a bottle.

v. 55. The children of Solomon’s servants: Most believe that these were those employed by Solomon who came from other people groups. They came into Israel as foreign proselytes.

v. 58. Two special groups who came back from exile. All the Nethinim and the children of Solomon’s servants were three hundred and ninety-two. All the Nethinim: These seem to be the descendants of the Gibeonites, who were made special servants of the Levites and the priests at the temple. It seems likely that the more menial tasks fell to these men; and the presence of some foreign-looking names in the list may indicate that some of these groups came into Israel from David’s conquests, whether as immigrants or perhaps as prisoners of war.

vs. 59-63 Those among the priests with uncertain genealogies who returned from exile.

vs. 43-58 The Nethinims,.... Many suppose *the Nethinims* to be the Gibeonites, who were "given" by Joshua, as the word *Nethinims* signifies, to the congregation, to be hewers of wood and drawers of water; but also would include those given by David to assist the Levites and those who descended from Solomon's servants, who seem to be the remains of the Canaanites in the land, whom Solomon made bondservants of, 1Ki_9:20, who, and their posterity, became proselytes; or those sprung from men that were domestic servants of Solomon's, and valued themselves on that account; the number of the Nethinims and these together were three hundred ninety and two.

v. 59 And these were they that went up from Telmelah, Telharsa,.... Places in the land of Babylon, see Isa_37:12. **Cherub, Addan, and Immer;** but they could not show their father's house, and their seed, whether they were of Israel. **They had no proof of their genealogy** These were such that professed the Jewish religion, and went for Jews in Babylon, but could not trace their pedigree, and tell what family they were of, who their ancestors, and where they had lived in Judea; they had lost their genealogical tables, if they ever had any, and could not make it out, whether their parents were Israelites or proselyted Gentiles; or they were such who had been exposed, and taken out of the streets, and their parents unknown.

EZRA CHAPTERS 1 & 2 – End of the Babylonian Captivity; The Captives Who Returned to Jerusalem

OBSERVATION

Monday 7:00pm, H 105 (1st floor, High School--foot of stairs, behind the gym, by the vending machine area), Tuesday 7:00am, Family, Room, CCCM – Phil Twente, cell #714 425 9221; email – ptwente@gmail.com For past studies, audio plus notes, go to: www.ptwente.com Click on “Bible Studies” on the left column. References include commentaries by numerous pastor/teachers.

INTERPRETATION

APPLICATION

*Ezr 2:60 the sons of Delaiah, the sons of Tobiah, and the sons of Nekoda, six hundred and fifty-two;
Ezr 2:61 and of the sons of the priests: the sons of Habaiah, the sons of Koz, and the sons of Barzillai, who took a wife of the daughters of Barzillai the Gileadite, and was called by their name.*

Ezr 2:62 These sought their listing among those who were registered by genealogy, but they were not found; therefore they were excluded from the priesthood as defiled.

Ezr 2:63 And the governor said to them that they should not eat of the most holy things till a priest could consult with the Urim and Thummim.

Ezr 2:64 The whole assembly together was forty-two thousand three hundred and sixty,

Ezr 2:65 besides their male and female servants, of whom there were seven thousand three hundred and thirty-seven; and they had two hundred men and women singers.

Ezr 2:66 Their horses were seven hundred and thirty-six, their mules two hundred and forty-five,

Ezr 2:67 their camels four hundred and thirty-five, and their donkeys six thousand seven hundred and twenty.

Ezr 2:68 Some of the heads of the fathers' houses, when they came to the house of the LORD which is in Jerusalem, offered freely for the house of God, to erect it in its place:

Ezr 2:69 According to their ability, they gave to the treasury for the work sixty-one thousand gold drachmas, five thousand minas of silver, and one hundred priestly garments.

Ezr 2:70 So the priests and the Levites, some of the people, the singers, the gatekeepers, and the Nethinim, dwelt in their cities, and all Israel in their cities.

v. 61. Barzillai was a name that carried considerable weight; its bearer had been a staunch supporter of David, and a man of wealth (2Sa_19:32). It may be that in adopting this family's name (and becoming its heir?) the ancestor of these claimants had laid himself open to the charge that he had renounced his own birthright, the priesthood.

v. 62. *These sought their listing among those who were registered by genealogy, but they were not found:* This shows an admirable respect for God's law respecting the priesthood of Israel. These were those who had some claim to a priestly lineage, but could not prove their *genealogy*. They were therefore *excluded from the priesthood as defiled*.

v. 63. *They should not eat of the most holy things till a priest could consult with the Urim and Thummim:* Those with questionable genealogies were not permanently excluded; each case required more research and seeking God.

v. 64. The summary of the returning exiles. *The whole assembly together:* The size of this entire group is here stated to be about 50,000. However, this was only the first wave of repatriation to Israel from the Babylonian captivity and includes only the heads of families. The approximate total of the returned exiles was probably somewhere between 100,000 and 150,000. This was only a small percentage of those who had been exiled and their descendants; the great majority stayed behind in Babylon. Indeed, Josephus wrote, “many remained in Babylon, being unwilling to leave their possessions.”

vs. 66-67 *Their horses . . . their mules . . . their camels . . . their donkeys:* This group did not return with much, but they also did not return with nothing.

v. 68. The offerings made for the rebuilding of the temple. *Offered freely for the house of God:* Because of prominence of those who made this offering (*the heads of the fathers' houses*) and the priority in this record, we see how important it was for the leaders and the people to sacrificially give to the work of rebuilding the temple.

v. 69. *According to their ability:* These people gave generously, as generously as they could *according to their ability*. This showed how highly valued the house of God was in their eyes.

v. 70. *all Israel* - No problem with the “ten lost tribes”! God has not lost any! Here we see *all Israel* returning, meaning that a remnant from all the tribes returned.

v. 60 *The children of Delaiah, the children of Tobiah, and the children of Nekoda, six hundred fifty and two.* These, though their immediate parents were known, yet by their being mentioned here, it seems as if they could not carry their genealogy further, and make it clearly appear what was the house of their fathers, or what their family.

v. 63. *And the governor said to them that they should not eat of the most holy things till a priest could consult with the Urim and Thummim.;* At that time there was not any priest that had them; they were not to be found at the return from Babylon; the governor might hope they would be found, and a priest appear clothed with them, when it might be inquired of the Lord by them, whether such priests, before described, might eat of the holy things or not. That this point which could not be found out by human skill, might be determined by Divine direction. It appears that the Urim and Thummim were lost in the destruction of the city and temple, but the Jews had hopes of recovering them, but in vain. And by the want of that oracle, they were taught to expect the great oracle, the Messiah.

v. 64. “The figure of 42,360 appears as the total also in Neh 7:66 and 1Es 5:41, yet the individual items add up to three different totals, as follows: Ezra 29,818; Nehemiah 31,089; 1 Esdras 30:143. There have been attempts to explain the missing thousands: as members of the northern tribes, or as women, or as adolescents. But the narrative is silent on such points.

v. 66. From this small number of horses and camels it is apparent that the far greatest part of them must walk on foot. The animals must have been used to carry their goods or baggage; **How would we do today by going on a 900 mile journey by foot through desert conditions, for the most part?** **vs. 68-69.** *Some... of the heads ... when they came to the house of the LORD offered freely for the house of God, to erect it in its place: What an emotional time* when they came to the place where the temple formerly stood, and where were still the ruins of it: Here they were moved to offer freely, according to their ability, for the house of God, to set it up in its place; to rebuild it upon the spot where it formerly stood! **v. 70** *all Israel in their cities. It is apparent that God has not lost track of the ten northern tribes – “All Israel”!*