

# Bethel Bible Series

## The Restoration

Week 20

Welcome & Announcements

Opening - What causes God to intervene with man so that history is really His Story?

Prayer Requests and Opening Prayer

### Review of Last Week

Review of Last Week - *History Itself is the Judgment of God*

Was God's promise & destiny only for the Jews? = All believers are heirs of promise  
When did Gentiles become part of God's plan? = From beginning, revealed thru Christ

*Globe on blueprint* = God has a divine plan for His world  
*Hand crashes through blueprint* = Hand of God through history  
*Hand hold scales of justice* = God's judgment ensures justice

*Calendars of time* = History itself is the Judgment of God (Nations follow God's call)  
*Two gavels between calendars* = Judgment is administered while we live  
*Small gavel beyond surface of globe* = All are judged beyond the grave

*Small gavel on left* = Negative aspect of judgment is to condemn evil  
*Large gavel on left* = Positive aspect of judgment is to save the lost  
*Flowers on large gavel* = God judges because of His love for all people

### Lesson - *The Restoration*

The Edict of Restoration

What had God promised before the exile that comforted the Jews in Babylon?  
Isaiah 13:1, 11, 17, 19, 14:1 = God will stir Medes against Babylon & return Israel  
Jeremiah 25:11-12 = God would punish Babylon after 70 yrs of exile

Who lived through this 70 years of exile and remembered this promise?

Daniel 9:2-3 = Daniel prayed to God to fulfill His promise

How was this promise fulfilled?

Ezra 1:1-4 = Soon after conquering Babylon, King Cyrus freed the Jews to return

What important items did Cyrus send back with this first group of Jews?

Ezra 5:13-14 = Gold & silver articles taken from the temple by Nebuchadnezzar

Who was this Sheshbazzar that Cyrus appointed as governor over Judah?

1 Chronicles 3:17-18 = Sheshbazzar (Shenazzar) was Jehoiachin's son

Who returned with this group and how much wealth did they bring?

Ezra 1:5, 11 = *All whose heart God had moved*, 5400 gold & silver items

Ezra 2:1, 64-67 = Over 42,000 plus 7500 servants

*Broken chain* = Babylonian bondage is broken when Persians conquer Babylon

*Golden seal* = Cyrus issues "The Edict of Restoration" freeing the Jews

# Bethel Bible Series

## The Restoration

Page 2

### Reconstruction of the Temple

What did the Jews begin to do after first settling homes in the towns?

Ezra 3:1-2 = They began rebuilding the altar to sacrifice

What was their next step after building the altar and starting sacrifices?

Ezra 3:8 = They began rebuilding the temple

Who was this Zerubbabel who directed the rebuilding of the altar & temple?

1 Chronicles 3:17-19 = He was Jehoiachin's grandson, Sheshbazzar's nephew

How did the Jews feel when they saw the temple foundations?

Ezra 3:10-13 = They wept aloud & shouted for joy in celebration

### Efforts Frustrated by Samaritans

Who wanted to help rebuild the temple?

Ezra 4:1-2 = Samaritans: We've sacrificed to God since Assyrians brought us here

2 Kings 17:24, 28 = Assyrians transplanted others in Samaria, taught to worship God

Did the Jews accept this help & why or why not? = *You have no part with us*

Ezra 4:3 = No, the Samaritans weren't pure Israelites

How did the Samaritans accept this rejection?

Ezra 4:4-5 = They worked to frustrate the reconstruction efforts

What happened as a result of this opposition?

Ezra 4:24 = Reconstruction of the temple was stopped

### Temple Construction Resumed

Why did God raise the prophets Haggai and Zechariah?

Haggai 1:3-4, 7-8 = To remind the people to build His temple

Did the people listen to these prophets?

Ezra 5:1-2 = Yes, the Jews began working on the temple again

*Haggai & Zechariah trumpets over bricks* = Haggai and Zechariah encouraged rebuilding of temple

Did they meet any opposition this second time around?

Ezra 5:3-17 = Yes, the Samaritans tried to stop them again & wrote a letter to Darius

How did King Darius respond?

Ezra 6:1-5 = He searched records & found Cyrus' Restoration edict

What extra touch did Darius add?

Ezra 6:7-8 = He ordered the Samaritans to stay away and to help financially

What did the Jews do after the temple was completed?

Ezra 6:15-16, 19 = They dedicated the temple & celebrated Passover in 515 BC

# Bethel Bible Series

## The Restoration

Page 3

### Reconstruction of the City Walls

What project did the Jews focus on after the temple was completed?

Ezra 4:12 = They began rebuilding the city walls

Did this effort meet any opposition?

Ezra 4:6 = Under Xerxes, the Samaritans tried again to thwart the Jews' efforts

How did the Samaritans try to get an official order to stop this effort?

Ezra 4:12-13 = They wrote to King Artaxerxes warning of danger

Did King Artaxerxes agree with their concern?

Ezra 4:19, 21 = Yes, and he ordered the reconstruction to stop

### Nehemiah Gets Involved

Who was Nehemiah? = Cup bearer chose & tasted king's wine to verify it wasn't poisoned, very trusted

Nehemiah 2:1 = He was a Jew serving as cupbearer to King Artaxerxes

For what did Nehemiah ask of King Artaxerxes?

Nehemiah 2:4-5 = He asked for permission & authority to rebuild Jerusalem's city walls

How did Artaxerxes help Nehemiah?

Nehemiah 2:9 = He sent Nehemiah with letters and military protection

What did Nehemiah do as soon as he arrived in Jerusalem?

Nehemiah 2:11-16 = He secretly inspected the city walls

How did the Jews respond to Nehemiah's call to begin rebuilding the walls?

Nehemiah 2:17-18 = They agreed and immediately began the work

Nehemiah 3 = Various sections were assigned to different groups

### Jerusalem's City Walls are Completed

Did they meet any opposition the second time around?

Nehemiah 2:19-20 = Others asked: *Are you rebelling against the king?*

Nehemiah 4:1-3 = The Samaritans ridiculed the Jews & their efforts

How did the Samaritans respond when the wall reached half its height?

Nehemiah 4:6-8, 11 = They planned to attack Jerusalem & end the work

Did this threat stop the efforts?

Nehemiah 4:16-18 = The Jews kept working but were always ready to defend

What other opposition did Nehemiah resist?

Nehemiah 6:1-14 = Tried to harm Nehemiah out of town, charged treason, tried to discredit him

How long did this reconstruction effort take?

Nehemiah 6:15-16 = 52 days, To God's glory

Nehemiah 12:27-43 = The wall was dedicated in a large celebration

How was Jerusalem populated now that it had protective walls?

Nehemiah 11:1-2 = Ten percent of the Jews were chosen by lot to live in Jerusalem

*Nehemiah trumpet over city walls* = Nehemiah led rebuilding of city walls

# Bethel Bible Series

## The Restoration

Page 4

### Ezra Returns to Jerusalem

Who was Ezra?

Ezra 7:6 = A Jewish scribe in Babylon, well versed in God's Law, descended from Aaron

Why did Artaxerxes send Ezra to Jerusalem?

Ezra 7:19-20, 25-26 = To outfit temple; teach & execute God's Law

What did Ezra do before setting out for Jerusalem with ~2000 men & riches?

Ezra 8:21 = Everyone fasted 3 days and asked God for a safe journey

What was the first problem Ezra was presented in Jerusalem?

Ezra 9:1-2 = Jews had not stayed separate & had intermarried

What did Ezra and the people agree to do?

Ezra 10:11-12 = Remove foreign wives & their children from the community

### Law Reform

How did the people learn about God's Law?

Nehemiah 8:2-3 = Ezra read the Book of the Law to the large assembly

Did the people really want to learn God's Law or were they just acting?

Nehemiah 8:5-6 = The people shouted Amen! bowed down & worshipped

How did the people understand since they now spoke Aramaic?

Nehemiah 8:8 = Levites translated the Hebrew to Aramaic

How did the people respond when they realized how they had been sinning?

Nehemiah 8:9 = They cried & mourned

How did they respond later in the month after their situation sank in?

Nehemiah 9:1-3 (8:1-9:37) = They were greatly moved & confessed their sins

Nehemiah 9:38; 10:29 = They rededicated themselves & made an oath to keep God's Laws

*Ezra trumpet over law tablets* = Ezra initiated law reforms

### Summary - *The Restoration*

*Broken chain* = Babylonian bondage is broken when Persians conquer Babylon

*Golden seal* = Cyrus issues "The Edict of Restoration" freeing the Jews

*Trumpets* = God's people who proclaimed hope and led the returning exiles

*Haggai & Zechariah trumpets over bricks* = Haggai & Zechariah pushed rebuilding temple

*Nehemiah trumpet over city walls* = Nehemiah led rebuilding of city walls

*Ezra trumpet over law tablets* = Ezra initiated law reforms

### Closing Prayer

Distribute Materials = Hand out Study 20 and New Testament Assignment 1

Next Week - *In the Fullness of Time*