



COURSE: BIBLE HISTORY

SUBJECT: JOSHUA THROUGH NEHEMIAH – HISTORY OF THE HEBREW NATION

LESSON NO. 47 and 48 – EZRA, NEHEMIAH AND ESTHER

INTRODUCTION

In the last lesson Judah was carried away into Babylonian captivity. The recorded history of their stay there is sparse, only found in the books of Daniel and Ezekiel. When Cyrus and the Persian army conquered Babylon, a decree was issued to allow all captured people to return to their land and rebuild their religious centers. This was a fulfillment of the prophecy of Isaiah 44:28. This study will deal with the history of that period of time (536-430 B.C.)

IMPORTANT DATES

931 B.C.	Death of Solomon and division of kingdom.
721 B.C.	Fall of Samaria (Israel).
606 B.C.	First deportation of Nebuchadnezzar in reign of Jehoiakim.
597 B.C.	Second deportation in reign of Jehoiachin.
586 B.C.	Fall of Jerusalem (Judah) in reign of Zedekiah.
536 B.C.	Return under Zerubbabel and Joshua. Laid foundation of Temple.
520 B.C.	Haggai and Zechariah encourage resuming of temple building.
516 B.C.	Temple completed.
458 B.C.	Ezra returns and reforms under the law.
444 B.C.	Nehemiah's return to rebuild wall.
444-430 B.C.	Close of Old Testament – Book of Malachi.

- A. Revelation of The Redeeming Purpose *Gen. 1:1-11:9.*
1. The Hebrew Family *Gen. 11:10-50:26.*
 2. The Israelite Nation *Exodus-Nehemiah.*
 - a. Bondage *Exod. 1:1-7:7.*
 - b. Wonders -The Ten Plagues *Exod. 7:8-12:36.*
 - c. Exodus Wandering *Exod. 12:37-Num. 21:20.*
 - d. Conquest of The East Bank *Num. 21:21-36:13.*
 - e. Conquest of Canaan *Josh. 1-12.*
 - f. Division of the Land of Canaan *Josh. 13-22.*
 - g. The Judges *Judges 1:1-1 Samuel 8.*
 - h. The United Kingdom *1 Sam. 9:1-1 Kings 11:43.*
 - i. The Divided Kingdom *1 Kings 12:1-Neh. 13:31.*
 - j. Analysis of Ezra *(536-516 B.C. Chs. 1-6 / 458 B.C. Chs. 7-10)*
 - (1) Return from Captivity under Zerubbabel *Chs. 1-6 (20 Years).*
 - a. Emancipation of the Jews *Chs. 1-2.*
 - Restoration – Decree of Cyrus *Ch. 1.*
 - Registration – Return of Captives *Ch. 2.*
 - b. Inception of the Work *Chs. 3-4.*
 - Reconstruction – Sacrifice renewed; Foundation laid *Ch. 3.*
 - Opposition – Samaritans resist; work stopped *Ch. 4.*

- c. Dedication of the Temple *Chs. 5-6.*
 - Investigation – Inquiry of Tattenai; decree of Darius *Ch. 5.*
 - Consummation – Completion of Temple; observance of Passover *Ch. 6.*

NOTE: Book of Esther here chronologically.
Haggai and Zechariah 1-7 also.

- (2) Return from Captivity under Ezra *Chs. 7-10 (1 Year).*
 - a. The proclamation of Artaxerxes *Ch. 7.*
 - b. The liberation of the Jews *Ch. 8.*
 - c. The intercession of Ezra *Ch. 9.*
 - d. The reformation of the people *Ch. 10.*

- k. Analysis of Esther (484-465 B.C.)
 - (1) The Grave Danger to the Jews *Chs. 1-4.*
 - a. The dispossession of Vashti *Ch. 1.*
 - b. The exaltation of Esther *Ch. 2:1-20.*
 - c. The plot against Xerxes *Ch. 2:21-23.*
 - d. The malice of Haman *Ch. 3.*
 - e. The appeal of Mordecai *Ch. 4.*

 - (2) The Great Deliverance of the Jews *Chs. 5-10.*
 - a. The venture of Esther *Ch. 5:1-8.*
 - b. The design of Haman *Ch. 5:9-14.*
 - c. The recognition of Mordicai *Ch. 6:1-12a.*
 - d. The downfall of Haman *Ch. 6:12b-7:10.*
 - e. The rescue of the Jews *Ch. 8:1-9:12.*
 - f. The feast of Purim *Ch. 9:17-32.*
 - g. The greatness of Mordecai *Ch. 10.*

- l. Analysis of Nehemiah (445-420 B.C.)
 - (1) The Rebuilding of the Wall *Chs. 1-7.*
 - a. Preparation for the effort *Chs. 1-2.*
 - b. Reconstruction of the wall *Ch. 3.*
 - c. Opposition to the project *Ch. 4:1-6:14.*
 - d. Completion of the task *Ch. 6:15-7:3.*
 - e. Registration of the families *Ch. 4:4-73.*

 - (2) The Consecration of the People *Chs. 8-10.*
 - a. Revival of religion *Ch. 8.*
 - b. Confession of the people *Ch. 9.*
 - c. Renewal of the Covenant *Ch. 10.*

 - (3) The Consolidation of the Work *Chs. 11-13.*
 - a. Sundry catalogues of Importance *Ch. 11:1-12:26.*
 - b. Dedication of the walls of Jerusalem *Ch. 12:27-43.*
 - c. Religious appointments and reforms *Ch. 12:43-13:31.*