

WHO HATH DESPISED THE DAY OF SMALL THINGS?

Class 1:
A Call to Return
Home









THE DAY OF SMALL THINGS

“The hands of Zerubbabel have laid the foundation of this house; his hands shall also finish it; and thou shalt know that the LORD of hosts hath sent me unto you.

¹⁰ For who hath despised the day of small things? ”

Zechariah 4:9-10







PAST

PRESENT

FUTURE

PERSPECTIVE IS A KEY TO OUR FAITH

“Looking unto Jesus the author and finisher of our faith; who for the joy that was set before him endured the cross, despising the shame, and is set down at the right hand of the throne of God.”

Hebrews 12:2

CLASSES THIS WEEKEND

1. A Call to Return Home
2. Consider Your Ways and the Day of Small Things
3. Let Us Rise Up and Build
4. Living Now in the Day of Small Things (SS)

SCRIPTURAL REASONS FOR LOOKING AT HISTORY

“For whatsoever things were written aforetime were written for our learning, that we through patience and comfort of the scriptures might have hope.”

Romans 15:4

WHY THE STUDY OF THE SECOND TEMPLE?

SOUND FAMILIAR?

Waiting for the arrival of the Messiah.

Comfortable, affluent lives in Babylon.

Second temple didn't "measure up" and they were disillusioned.

Self-examination broken and unable to discern holiness vs. sin.

Increasing apathy in things of holiness.

Leadership was failing.

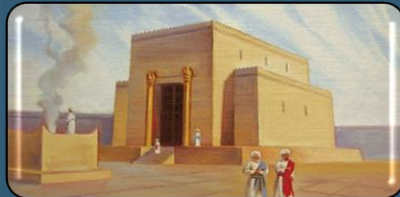
Need for reformation.

THE THREE TEMPLES



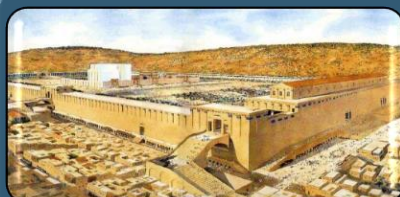
Solomon's Temple

957-587 B.C.



Zerubbabel's Temple

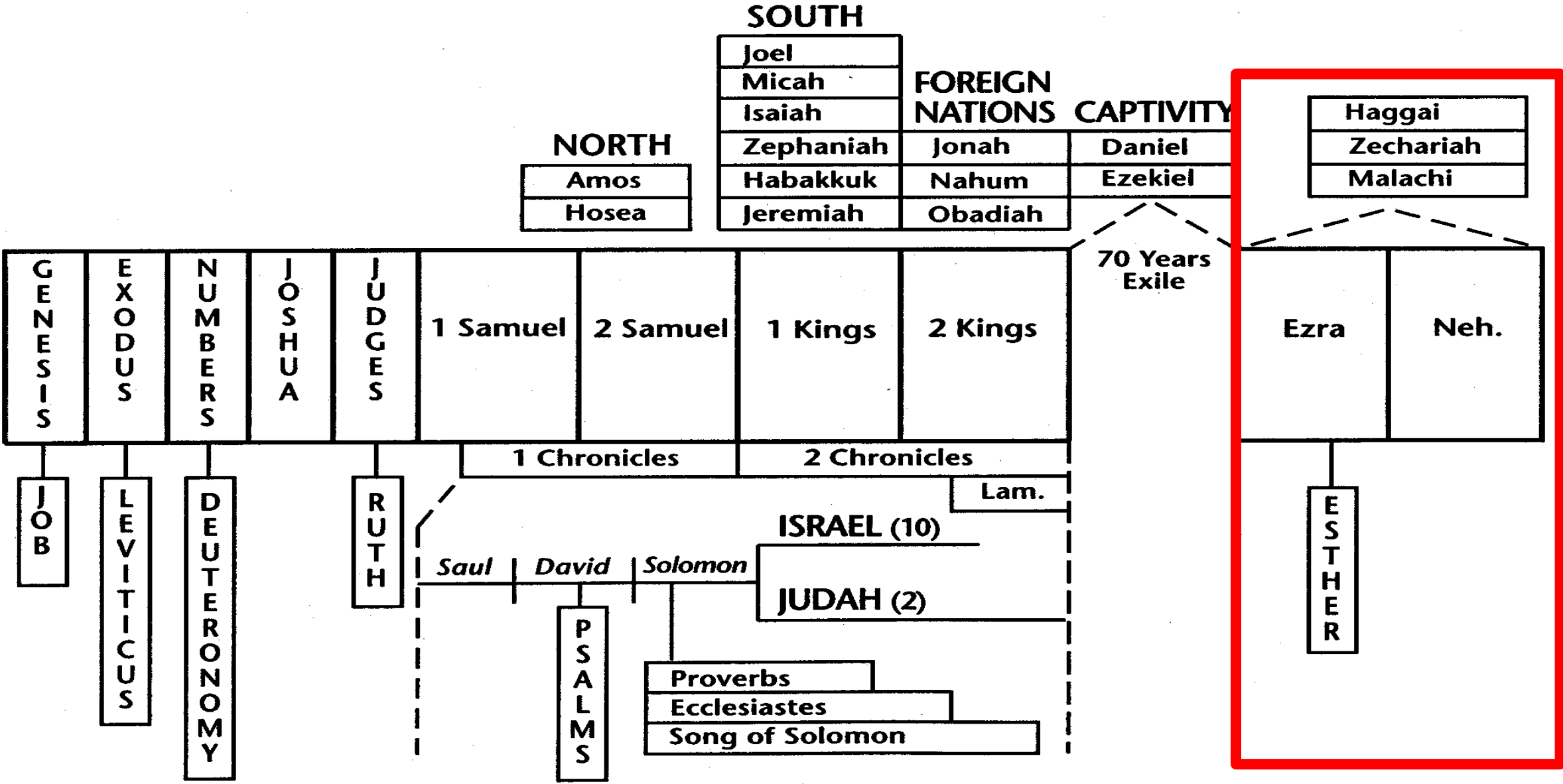
516 B.C. – 19 B.C.



Herod's Temple

19 B.C. – 70 A.D.

CHRONOLOGICAL ORDER OF BOOKS



ANOTHER WAY OF THINKING OF THIS PERIOD

2 Chronicles, Jeremiah, Daniel, Ezekiel – prophecies dealing with the fall of Judah and the promised future return and rebuilding of Jerusalem.

Haggai, Zechariah, Malachi – exhortations to the people about the urgency of their undone work and their spiritual readiness.

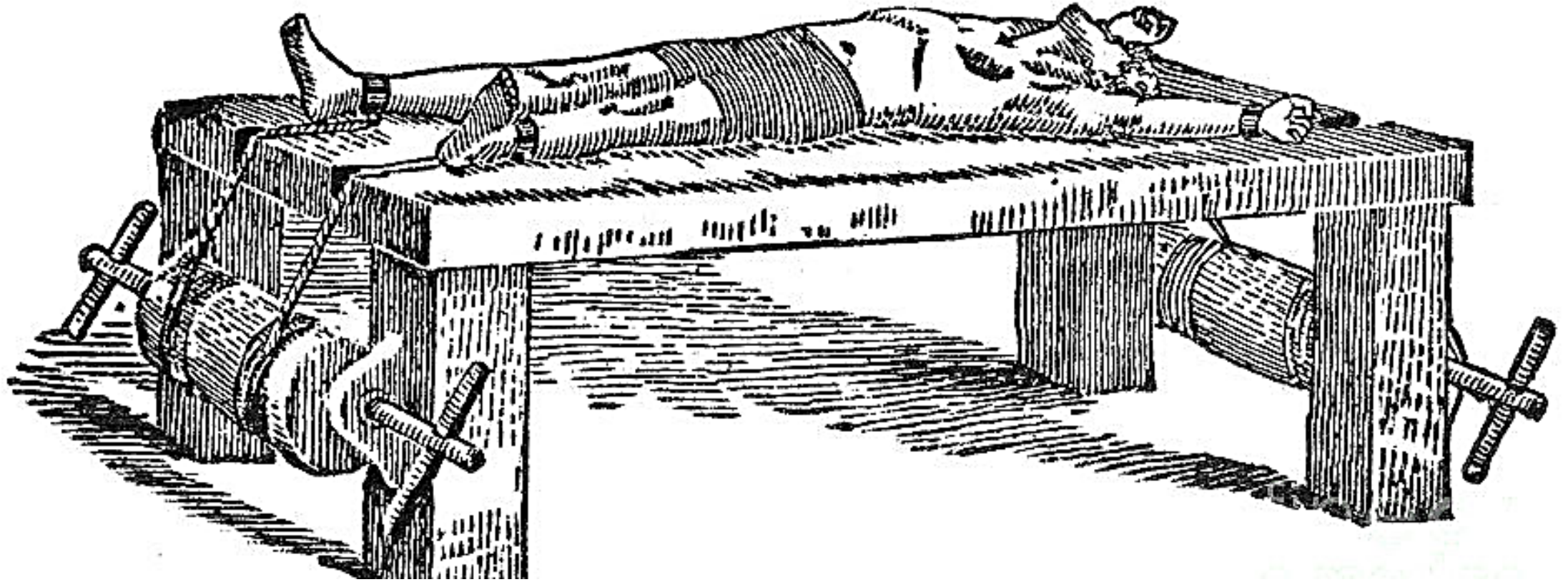
Ezra, Nehemiah – The actual work to rebuild the Temple, the city and the spiritual minds of the people.

TIME IS ELAPSING

“Seventy weeks are determined upon thy people and upon thy holy city, to finish the transgression, and to make an end of sins, and to make reconciliation for iniquity, and to bring in everlasting righteousness, and to seal up the vision and prophecy, and to anoint the most Holy. ²⁵ Know therefore and understand, that from the going forth of the commandment to ① restore and to build Jerusalem unto the Messiah the Prince shall be seven weeks, and threescore and two weeks: ② the street shall be built again, and the wall, even in troublous times.”

Daniel 9:25





**MAKING SENSE OF CHRONOLOGY:
NOT FOR TORTURE, BUT TO BETTER UNDERSTAND THE STORY!**

March 2022

No.	Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
9			1	2	3	4	5
10	6	7	8	9	10	11	12
11	13	14	15	16	17	18	19
12	20	21	22	23	24	25	26
13	27	28	29	30	31		

JEWISH HISTORY
CLAIMS WE ARE IN
YEAR 5,781
SINCE THE CREATION.

Jewish calendar pegs
birth of Jesus in 3,758,
or 2,023 years ago.

A CONFUSED TIMELINE!

Event	Jewish Calendar	Julian/Gregorian	Gap
David becomes king	877 BC	1010 BC	133
Hezekiah	562 BC	716 BC	154
Jeremiah/Ezekiel prophecies	430-410 BC	597 BC	177
Burning of Temple	423 BC	586 BC	163
Daniel in lion's den	372 BC	539 BC	167
Proclamation of Cyrus	371 BC	537 BC	166
Zerubbabel begins return	371 BC	536 BC	165
Ezra	348 BC	534 BC	186
Esther	357 BC	530 BC	173
Second Temple complete	349 BC	515 BC	167
Ezra (second)	348 BC	534 BC	186
Nehemiah	335 BC (3,403)	502 BC	167

37 yrs.

37 yrs.

52

50

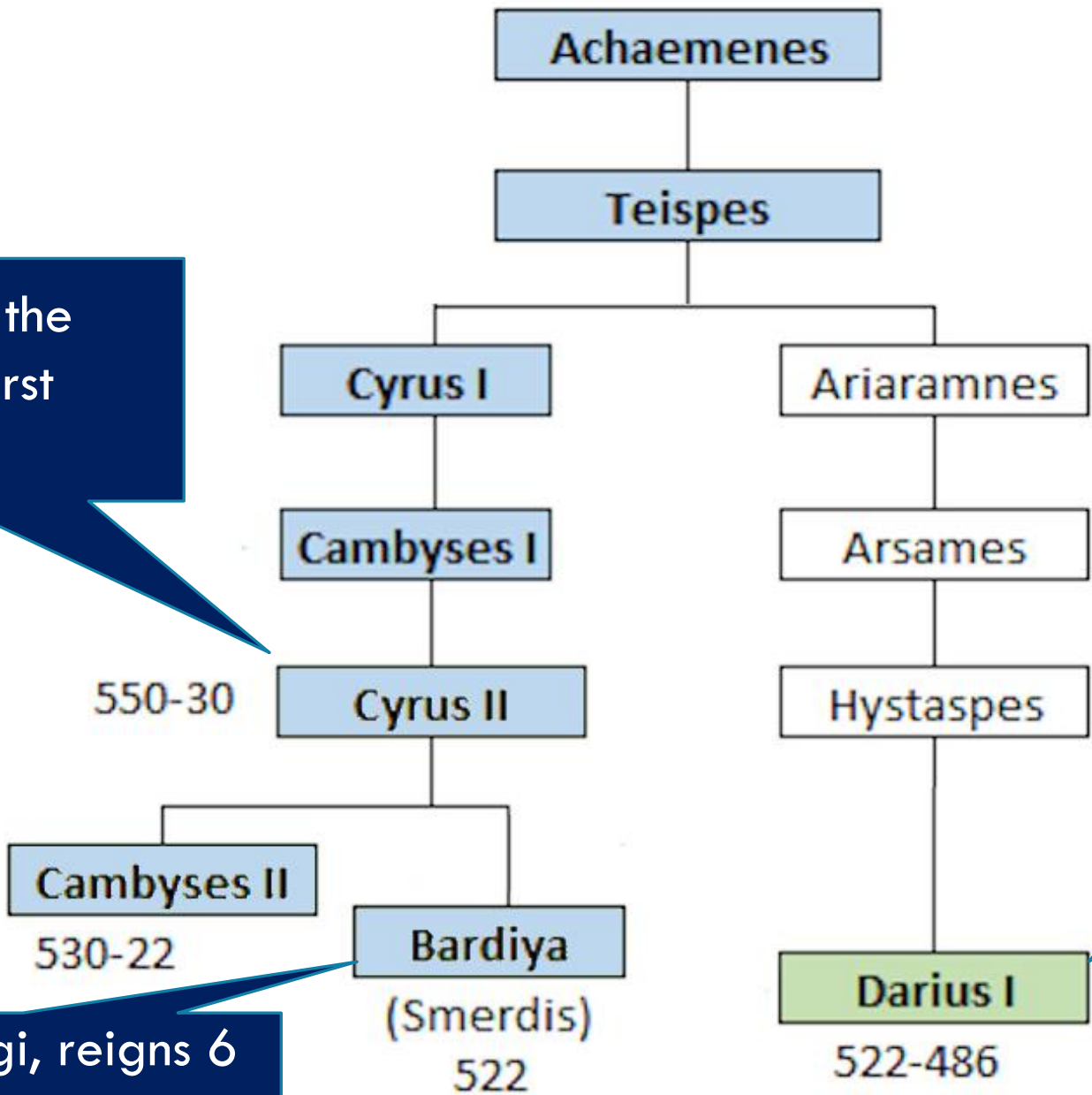
WHAT WE CAN CONCLUDE

The actual years aren't what is important.

The relationship of events is what we should focus on.

In other words, who is contemporary, and what is the overall context?

During his reign, the captives begin first return to land.



Imposter Magi, reigns 6 months. Killed by Darius I

This is Darius the Great/Artaxerxes of Ezra 6-7. Same man, different names/titles.

**DARIUS, SON OF HYSTASPES/
ARTAXERXES/
DARIUS THE GREAT/DARIUS I**

May have reigned from 522-486 BC



DARIUS/ARTAXERXES

Ezra 6:1, 15

“Then **Darius the king** made a decree, and search was made in the house of the rolls, where the treasures were laid up in Babylon.”

“And this house was finished on the third day of the month Adar, which was in the sixth year of the reign of Darius the king.” (516 BC)

Ezra 7:1, 8

“Now after these things, in the reign of **Artaxerxes king** of Persia, Ezra the son of Seraiah, the son of Azariah, the son of Hilkiah,”

“And he came to Jerusalem in the fifth month, which was in the seventh year of the king.”

TIME STAMP OF NEHEMIAH

“And it came to pass in the month Nisan, in the twentieth year of Artaxerxes the king, that wine was before him: and I took up the wine, and gave it unto the king. Now I had not been beforetime sad in his presence.”

Nehemiah 2:1



20th year would have been 502 BC. In Neh. 5:14, he stays through 30th year, 492 BC.

First Exiles
Return

536 BC

15th Year of Cyrus II

Esther

Temple
Finished

516 BC

6th Year of
Darius Hystaspes

Haggai
Zechariah

Ezra's
Second Work

515 BC

7th Year of
Darius Hystaspes

Nehemiah's
Initial Work

502-492 BC

20th-30th Years of
Darius Hystaspes

Malachi

Return to Nehemiah:
34 years (536-502 BC)

EZRA 2:1-2

“Now these are the children of the province that went up out of the captivity, of those which had been carried away, whom Nebuchadnezzar the king of Babylon had carried away unto Babylon, and came again unto Jerusalem and Judah, every one unto his city; Which came with **Zerubbabel**: Jeshua, **Nehemiah**, Seraiah, Reelaiah, **Mordecai**, Bilshan, Mizpar, Bigvai, Rehum, Baanah. The number of the men of the people of Israel:”

CLUE ON ESTIMATING AGE OF ZERUBBABEL

Sheshbazzar – “worshipper of fire.”

Zerubbabel – Brown-Driver-Briggs: “sown in Babylon.” Strong’s – “descended of Babylon.” Thayer’s – “born at Babel” (from Matthew 1:13 – Zorobabel).

If Jeconiah was brought to Babylon in 597 BC, and Zerubbabel was his grandson. Zerubbabel goes from Babylon to Jerusalem in 536 BC. If he was born in Babylon, the OLDEST he would be is 61.

By the time Nehemiah returns to build the walls (502 BC), Zerubbabel does not appear to be in office and Nehemiah is fulfilling that role as Tirshatha (governor).

SAME MORDECAI?

“Now in Shushan the palace there was a certain Jew, whose name was Mordecai, the son of Jair, the son of Shimei, the son of Kish, a Benjamite; Who had been carried away from Jerusalem with the captivity *which had been carried away with Jeconiah king of Judah*, whom Nebuchadnezzar the king of Babylon had carried away. And he brought up Hadassah, that is, Esther, his uncle's daughter: for she had neither father nor mother, and the maid was fair and beautiful; whom Mordecai, when her father and mother were dead, took for his own daughter.”

Esther 2:5-7

This account is linking his family to the initial captivity with Jehoiakim/Jeconiah. He was likely born in Babylon, like Zerubbabel.



When back in Jerusalem with Esther, he is early 50s, **BEFORE** the Temple was finished. This must have been a significant change in his plans.

A POSSIBLE STORY?

Mordecai goes to Jerusalem as a family leader from Benjamin to begin the work in Jerusalem of completing the Temple.

Perhaps he returns to Shushan, hearing of Esther becoming orphaned?

He returns to take care of her and raise her. At this point he is in his early 50s.

He misses out of the final building/dedication of Temple.

Yet, it is because he is in Shushan with Esther, that God works His plan to save the Jewish people from the attempted genocide.

If this is so, we can see the hand of God, moving in mysterious ways, to save His people.

Rival Temple

“In the third year of the reign of Jehoiakim king of Judah came Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon unto Jerusalem, and besieged it. ² And the Lord gave Jehoiakim king of Judah into his hand, **with part of the vessels of the house of God: which he carried into the land of Shinar to the house of his god; and he brought the vessels into the treasure house of his god.** And the Lord gave Jehoiakim king of Judah into his hand, with part of the vessels of the house of God: which he carried into the *land of Shinar to the house of his god*; and he brought the vessels into the treasure house of his god.”

Daniel 1:1-2



EZRA 1:6-8

“And all they that were about them strengthened their hands with vessels of silver, with gold, with goods, and with beasts, and with precious things, beside all that was willingly offered. **Also Cyrus the king brought forth the vessels of the house of the LORD, which Nebuchadnezzar had brought forth out of Jerusalem, and had put them in the house of his gods; Even those did Cyrus king of Persia bring forth by the hand of Mithredath the treasurer, and numbered them unto Sheshbazzar, the prince of Judah.**”

LIST OF RETURNEES — EZRA 2

Israelites mentioned by family or place of origin.

The priests, Levites, singers, porters, Nethinim, Solomon's servants.

Many of **doubtful** descent.

Unlike reentry under Joshua, they would not be permitted to “claim the land” from other people and would endure great material suffering.

Totaling 42,360 heads of household — likely 29,818 from Judah and Benjamin. Estimated 200,000 in total.



LIST OF THOSE NOT FOUND BY GENEALOGY (EZRA 2:61-63)

Though many were likely from priest families, they had not retained the proper identification.

This may seem to us a small item, but I can assure you it was not.

They had lost their identity in captivity, indicating they had not been active in these roles in captivity.

Their priesthood was considered polluted and unable to eat of the holy things.

THE RETURN — WHERE DID THEY SETTLE?

“And some of the chief of the fathers, when they came to the house of the LORD which is at Jerusalem, offered freely for the house of God to set it up in his place: They gave after their ability unto the treasure of the work threescore and one thousand drams of gold, and five thousand pound of silver, and one hundred priests' garments. **So the priests, and the Levites, and some of the people, and the singers, and the porters, and the Nethinims, dwelt in their cities, and all Israel in their cities.**”

Ezra 2:68-70



RETURNING, BUT OF DIFFUSED VISION

Priests, Levites, porters, singers,
Nethamin dwelt in their cities (Ezra
2:70).

Quickly the vision of rebuilding
Temple worship would be diverted to
establishing their inheritance in land.

Build my home first! My comfort first!

No one wanted to live in Jerusalem!

ISAIAH 1-6 — CONDITION OF ISRAEL

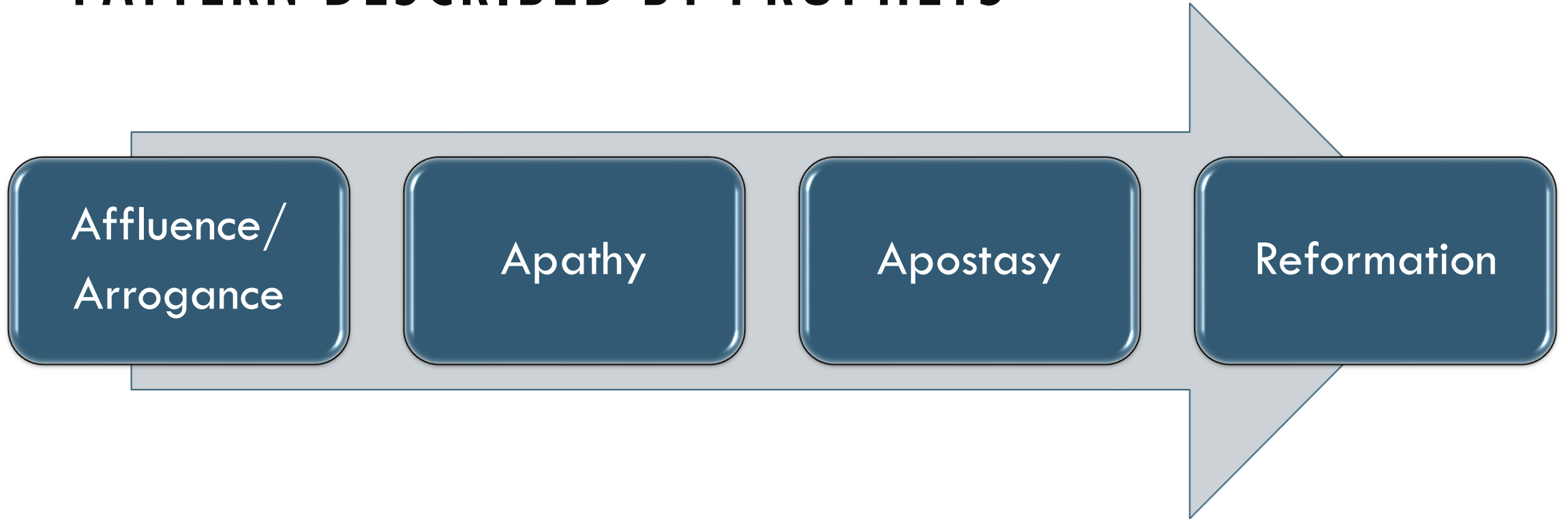
Fleshly pride.

Lack of self-examination.

Inadequate spiritual leadership.



PATTERN DESCRIBED BY PROPHETS



Affluence/
Arrogance

Apathy

Apostasy

Reformation

Stipulation	References
General References to the Covenant being broken	Jer. 11:1-8
1st Commandment - No other gods (Exod. 20:3)	Jer. 1:16; 7:9; 9:14; 10:13, 17; 13:10; 16:10-13; 17:1-4; 19:1-4, 13; 22:8-9; 25:4-7; 32:26-29; 44:1-6; Zeph. 1:4-9
2nd Commandment - No idols (Exod. 20:4-6)	Jer. 1:16; 2:1-3:6, 23-25; 5:7, 19; 7:6, 9, 17-19, 30; 11:9-13; 16:18; 18:15; 25:4-7; 32:34-35; Ezek. 5:8-9; 6:1-7, 11-14; Ezek. 16:35-36; 22:9; 36:17-19
3rd Commandment - No blasphemy (Exod. 20:7)	Jer. 5:1-2; 7:9; Ezek. 20:27
4th Commandment - Sabbath (Exod. 20:8-11)	Jer. 17:19-27; Ezek. 22:8, 26; Neh. 13:9-18
5th Commandment - Honor parents (Exod. 20:12)	Ezek. 22:7
6th Commandment - Murder (Exod. 20:13)	Jer. 7:9; Ezek. 22:9; 36:17-19
7th Commandment - Adultery (Exod. 20:14)	Jer. 5:7-9; 7:9; Ezek. 22:11
8th Commandment - Theft (Exod. 20:15)	Jer. 7:9
9th Commandment - False testimony (Exod. 20:16)	Jer. 7:9; Ezek. 22:9
10th Commandment - Covetousness (Exod. 20:17)	Micah 2:2-5
Human sacrifices (Deut. 12:31)	Jer. 7:31; 19:5; 32:35; Ezek. 16:20-22, 35-36; 20:31
False Prophecy	Jer. 23:9-39
Mistreating the fatherless, the alien and the widow (Exod. 22:21-24; Deut. 27:19)	Isa. 10:1-4; Jer. 5:28; 7:6; Ezek. 22:7, 29
Bribery (Exod. 23:8; Deut. 16:19)	Ezek. 22:12; Micah 3:11-12
Consulting the dead (Deut. 18:11)	Isa. 65:4
Eating unclean meats (Lev. 11:7-8)	Isa. 65:4

AS SODOM AND GOMORRAH

“I have seen also in the prophets of Jerusalem an horrible thing: they commit adultery, and walk in lies: they strengthen also the hands of evildoers, that none doth return from his wickedness; they are all of them unto me as Sodom, and the inhabitants thereof as Gomorrah.”

Jeremiah 23:14

Not only were the prophets contemptible, but they enabled sin and failed to turn the flock to repentance.



CAPTIVITY IN BABYLON

FAITHFUL LONGING FOR ZION

“By the rivers of Babylon, there we sat down, yea, we wept, when we remembered Zion. We hanged our harps upon the willows in the midst thereof. For there they that carried us away captive required of us a song; and they that wasted us required of us mirth, saying, Sing us one of the songs of Zion. How shall we sing the LORD's song in a strange land? If I forget thee, O Jerusalem, let my right hand forget her cunning. If I do not remember thee, let my tongue cleave to the roof of my mouth; if I prefer not Jerusalem above my chief joy.

Psalm 137:1-6



“SENT FOR THE GOOD”

“Thus saith the LORD, the God of Israel; Like these good figs, so will I acknowledge them that are carried away captive of Judah, whom I have sent out of this place into the land of the Chaldeans **for their good**. For I will set mine eyes upon them for good, and I will bring them again to this land: and I will build them, and not pull them down; and I will plant them, and not pluck them up.”

Jeremiah 23:5-6

INITIAL REACTIONS TO CAPTIVITY

Most were secluded, separate in camps and ghettos.

Repulsed by the godlessness and idolatry of Babylon.

Helped to “define and refine” as they were exposed to the utter idolatry and fleshly pride of Babylon.

Face to face with consequences of their sin.

Awareness of what has been lost.

Focused them on the promise of return.



LIFE IN BABYLON — A SURVEY OF ISRAEL'S HISTORY — DR. LEON WOOD

Institutions maintained.

Freedom of movement.

Correspondence privileges
back to Land.

Employment opportunities.

Fertile, well-watered land.



Possible Chebar River site.

GOD STILL WITH THEM IN BABYLON

“Thus saith the LORD of hosts, the God of Israel, unto all that are carried away captives, whom I have caused to be carried away from Jerusalem unto Babylon; Build ye houses, and dwell in them; and plant gardens, and eat the fruit of them; Take ye wives, and beget sons and daughters; and take wives for your sons, and give your daughters to husbands, that they may bear sons and daughters; that ye may be increased there, and not diminished. And **seek the peace of the city** whither I have caused you to be carried away captives, **and pray unto the LORD for it: for in the peace thereof shall ye have peace.**”

Jeremiah 29:4-7

LAND RESTORED, PEOPLE NOT CAST OFF

“The land also shall be left of them, and shall enjoy her sabbaths, while she lieth desolate without them: and they shall accept of the punishment of their iniquity: because, even because they despised my judgments, and because their soul abhorred my statutes. And yet for all that, when they be in the land of their enemies, **I will not cast them away, neither will I abhor them, to destroy them utterly, and to break my covenant with them: for I am the LORD their God. But I will for their sakes remember the covenant of their ancestors, whom I brought forth out of the land of Egypt in the sight of the heathen, that I might be their God: I am the LORD.”**

Leviticus 26:43-45

PUTTING IT TOGETHER

Israel was on precipice of being lost in sin.

God brought about severe judgment on Jerusalem.

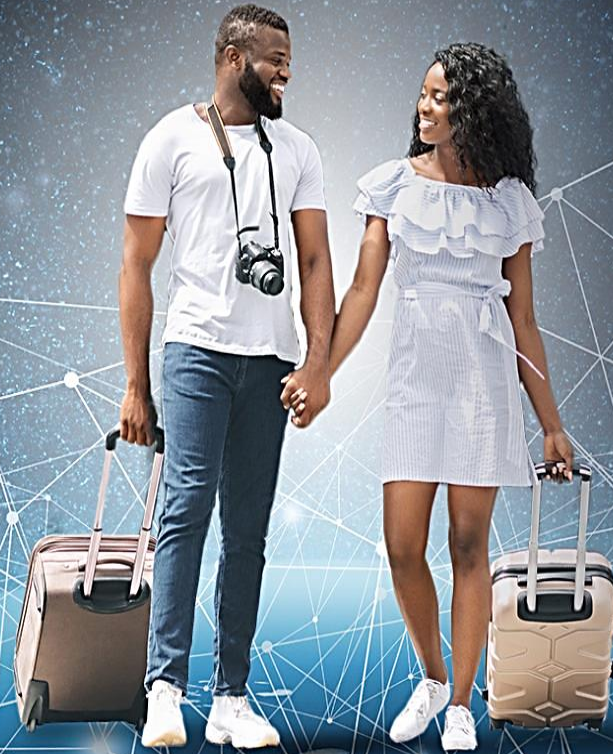
He saved many (good figs) and placed them in an ideal location to change thinking and restore peaceful lives.

He put them in a land where they could retain identity.

He placed them in an idolatrous extreme to lead self-examination.

Focused them on the future and the promised return.

LIVING AS EXILES
AND STRANGERS IN
DIGITAL
BABYLON





PERSIAN
“WINDOW OF
OPPORTUNITY”

JEREMIAH 51:11

“Make bright the arrows; gather the shields: the LORD hath raised up the spirit of the kings of the Medes: for his device is against Babylon, to destroy it; **because it is the vengeance of the LORD, the vengeance of his temple.**”

PROMISE TO RETURN

“Thus saith the LORD of hosts, the God of Israel; Take these evidences, this evidence of the purchase, both which is sealed, and this evidence which is open; and put them in an earthen vessel, that they may continue many days. For thus saith the LORD of hosts, the God of Israel; Houses and fields and vineyards shall be possessed again in this land.”

Jeremiah 32:14-15



SOUND FAMILIAR?

God reveals His plan for redemption of Israel.

He reveals the nations that He will use to bring this about.

But He doesn't reveal all the details, He provides the outline and an understanding of the timeframe.

He asks Israel to believe in His power and the surety of His plan.

They will be able to watch the Plan unfold and take comfort in the return to the Land.

They need to be watchful and ready and not entangled in Babylon!

ISAIAH 43:14

“Thus saith the LORD, your redeemer, the Holy One of Israel; For your sake I have sent to Babylon, and have brought down all their nobles, and the Chaldeans, whose cry is in the ships. I am the LORD, your Holy One, the creator of Israel, your King.”



ISAIAH 44:26-28

“That confirmeth the word of his servant, and performeth the counsel of his messengers; that saith to Jerusalem, Thou shalt be inhabited; and to the cities of Judah, Ye shall be built, and I will raise up the decayed places thereof: That saith to the deep, Be dry, and I will dry up thy rivers: That saith of Cyrus, He is my shepherd, and shall perform all my pleasure: ***even saying to Jerusalem, Thou shalt be built; and to the temple, Thy foundation shall be laid.***”

Nearly 150 years before the birth of Cyrus!

ISAIAH 45:1-6

“Thus saith the LORD to his anointed, to Cyrus, whose right hand I have holden, to subdue nations before him; and I will loose the loins of kings, to open before him the two leaved gates; and the gates shall not be shut; I will go before thee, and make the crooked places straight: I will break in pieces the gates of brass, and cut in sunder the bars of iron: And I will give thee the treasures of darkness, and hidden riches of secret places, that thou mayest know that I, the LORD, which call thee by thy name, am the God of Israel. For Jacob my servant's sake, and Israel mine elect, I have even called thee by thy name: **I have surnamed thee, though thou hast not known me.** I am the LORD, and there is none else, there is no God beside me: I girded thee, though thou hast not known me: That they may know from the rising of the sun, and from the west, that there is none beside me. I am the LORD, and there is none else.”

CYRUS'S CONQUEST OF BABYLON

He was no “God-fearing” man!

He lulled the Babylonians into inactivity during his war with Lydia, a potential ally for Babylon. Then he took maximum advantage of internal disaffection and discontent within Babylon.

With the stage thus set, the military campaign against Babylon came almost as an anticlimax.

Cyrus marched into town in the late summer of 539 BC, seized the hands of the statue of the city god Marduk as a signal of his willingness to rule as a Babylonian and not as a foreign conqueror, and was hailed by many as the legitimate successor to the throne.



CYRUS CYLINDER (539 BC)

“I announce that I will respect the traditions, customs and religions of the nations of my empire and never let any of my governors and subordinates look down on or insult them while I am alive. From now on..., I never let anyone oppress any others, and if it occurs, I will take his or her right back and penalize the oppressor.” “I will never let anyone take possession of movable and landed properties of the others by force or without compensation. While I am alive, I prevent unpaid, forced labor. Today, I announce that everyone is free to choose a religion. People are free to live in all regions and take up a job provided that they never violate other’s rights.”



**CYRUS
PROPHECY —
APPROXIMATELY
537 B.C.**

“Now in the first year of Cyrus king of Persia, that the word of the LORD spoken by the mouth of Jeremiah might be accomplished, the LORD **stirred up the spirit** of Cyrus king of Persia, that he made a proclamation throughout all his kingdom, and put it also in writing, saying, Thus saith Cyrus king of Persia, **All the kingdoms of the earth hath the LORD God of heaven given me; and he hath charged me to build him an house in Jerusalem, which is in Judah**. Who is there among you of all his people? The LORD his God be with him, and let him go up.”

2 Chronicles 36:22-23

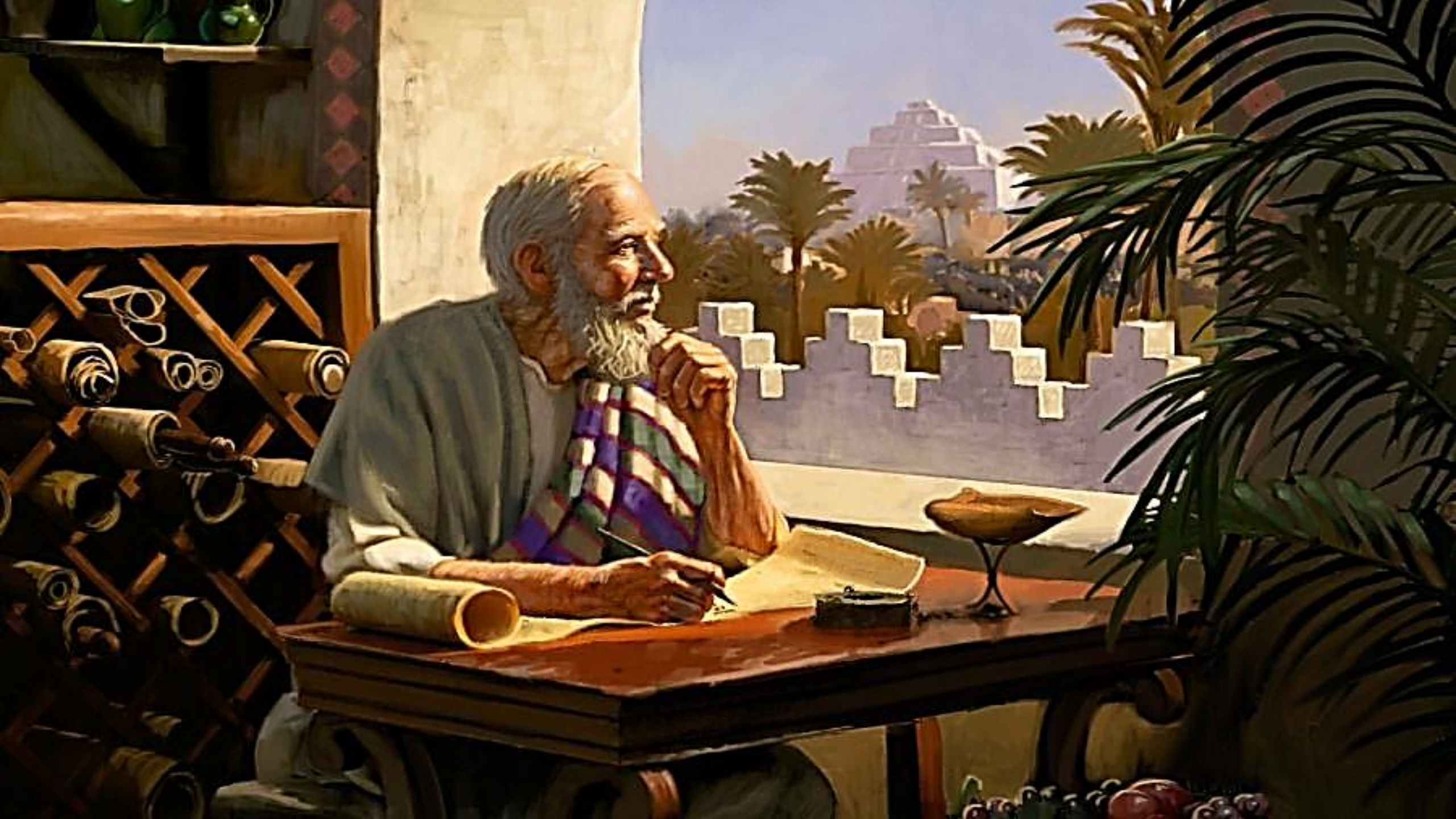
SPIRIT STIRRED UP

“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...**”

Ezra 1:1

“Then rose up the chief of the fathers of Judah and Benjamin, and the priests, and the Levites, **with all them whose spirit God had raised**, to go up to build the house of the LORD which is in Jerusalem.”

Ezra 1:5



PROCLAMATION OF CYRUS

“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, that he made a proclamation throughout all his kingdom, and put it also in writing, saying, Thus saith Cyrus king of Persia, **The LORD God of heaven hath given me all the kingdoms of the earth; and he hath charged me to build him an house at Jerusalem, which is in Judah.** Who is there among you of all his people? 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 the God,) which is in Jerusalem.”

Ezra 1:1-3

ADDITIONAL DETAILS OF CYRUS'S DECREE

“In the first year of Cyrus the king the same Cyrus the king made a decree concerning the house of God at Jerusalem, **Let the house be builded, the place where they offered sacrifices, and let the foundations thereof be strongly laid;** the height thereof threescore cubits, and the breadth thereof threescore cubits; With three rows of great stones, and a row of new timber: and let the expenses be given out of the king's house: And also **let the golden and silver vessels of the house of God, which Nebuchadnezzar took forth out of the temple which is at Jerusalem, and brought unto Babylon, be restored,** and brought again unto the temple which is at Jerusalem, every one to his place, and place them in the house of God.”

Ezra 6:3-5

NEXT CLASS

Consider Your Ways