

Thursday Evening Bible Study
Series: The Book of Isaiah

Teaching Summary for Week 71

Isaiah Chapter 44:21-45:13

This evening, we finally arrive at **Isaiah 44:21-23: the Lord has redeemed Israel.**

This section of Isaiah ends in triumph. The Lord has done it!

The Lord invites Israel to do three things: Remember, return, and rejoice.

In **verse 21**, the Lord asks the people to “remember these things”. What things?

The things that were mentioned in 43:22-44:20!

- Because of their sins, they needed to be redeemed (43:22-24).
- The Lord promised that He would forgive them and bless their descendants(43:25-44:5).
- His promises are certain because He is the one and only God, a God of righteousness, omniscience, and power (44:6-20).

Verse 21 ends with the Lord promising that He will always remember His people Israel, no matter what.

What follows next in **verse 22** is a tremendous expression of the grace of God.

Notice that all the things that they need to know are things which the Lord has done for them, not the other way around. Contrast that with the idol-makers and their “gods”.

The Lord redeemed His people in spite of their actions, not because of them. He formed the people of Israel. He wiped out their sins and transgressions. He redeemed them.

He says these things as **facts**, as certainties in His mind, so certain that He uses the past tense.

Only after that does He invite them to return to Him. Such tremendous grace! Return to Me BECAUSE I HAVE redeemed you. Not “return to me so that I will redeem you”.

Verse 23 is a verse of joy, joy, and more joy. All of creation shouts for joy at the redemption of the Lord: the heavens and the earth; the mountains, forests and trees.

SING! The Lord has done it! He has saved us, and all of creation will rejoice. See **Romans 8:19-21**.

The Psalms also express the joy of all creation when the Savior returns to set up His kingdom. See **Psalms 96 and 98**.

The Lord has also redeemed us! **Rom 3:21-24, Eph 1:7, Col 1:13-14, 1Pe 1:18-19**. Let’s also rejoice in the LORD! **Philippians 4:4-9**.

Our next section of Isaiah is Chapter 44:24-45:13.

We begin with a brief overview:

In chapter 43, the Lord promised that He would redeem His people Israel from their bondage in Babylon. Let's refresh our memories by reading **Isaiah 43:1-7**.

Now in Isaiah 44:24 – 45:13, He reveals that He has chosen a human agent to deliver His people. But it will not be a deliverer like Moses. No, the Lord is going to do something new. He is going to call a pagan king to rescue His people from Babylon!

The LORD is their Redeemer. He formed the nation in the womb. He is the Creator of all things, things in the heavens and things on earth. He can do as He wishes.

Let's read **Isaiah 44:24-28**.

In verse 28, the Lord, through His servant Isaiah, announces the name of His chosen agent: **Cyrus**.

Isaiah's prophetic ministry ended around 690 BC. Cyrus, King of Persia, will conquer Babylon in 539 BC. A year later, he will issue the edict to permit the people of Judah to return to Jerusalem.

In other words, the Lord predicted an event that would not occur for another 150 years. The LORD is the only One who can predict the future. In so doing, He makes fools out of the pagan soothsayers.

Time for another history lesson.

In Isaiah 44:28, the Lord proclaims three things that He will bring about in the future:

1. He will call Cyrus to be His shepherd who will perform all His desire in rescuing His people.
2. He will cause the city of Jerusalem to be built.
3. He will cause the foundation of the temple to be laid.

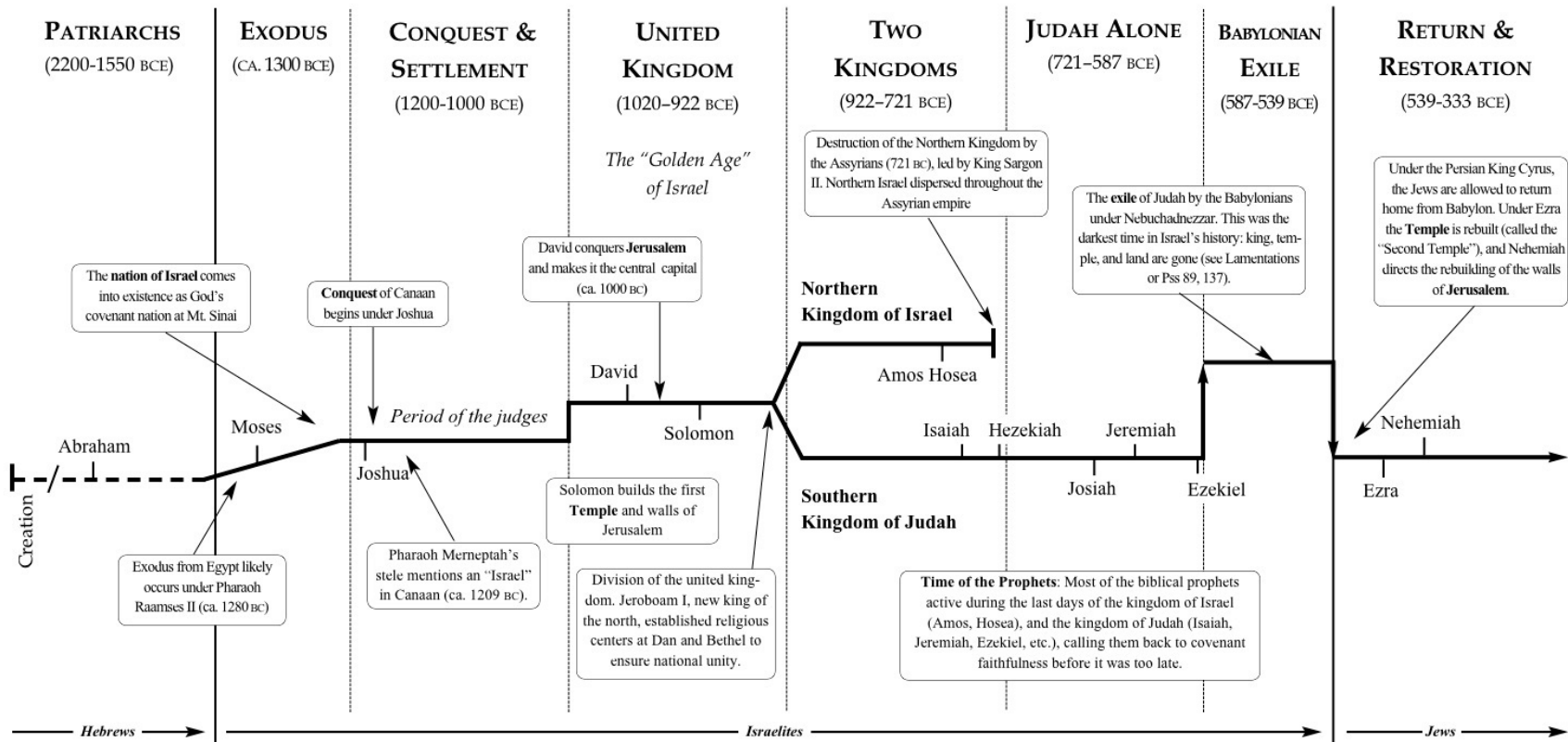
We will now turn to three of the historical books of the Old Testament to learn how, after 70 years of captivity in Babylon, the Lord fulfilled His promise to restore Israel, the city of Jerusalem, and the temple.

The Lord would use three Persian kings to accomplish His tremendous plan.

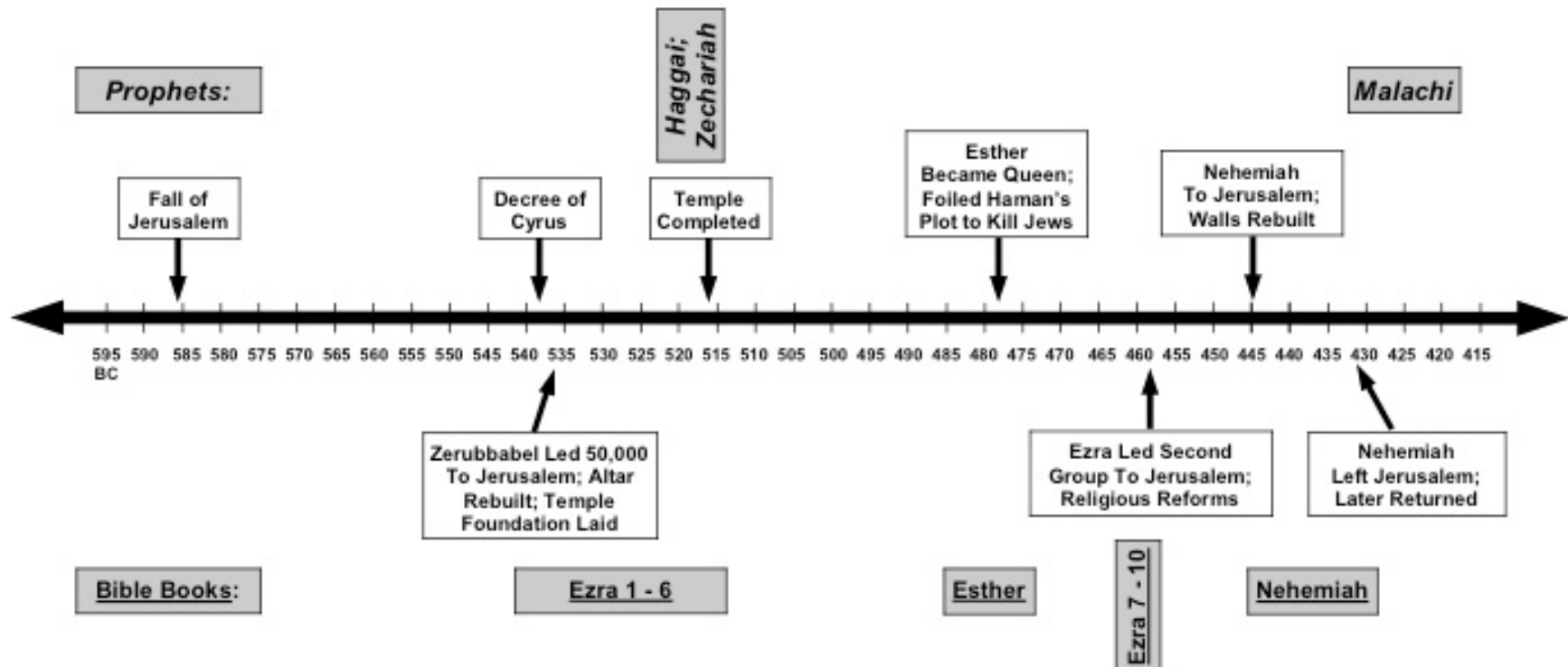
The Lord declared	Persian King(s)	The scriptural record	Notes
His shepherd would release His people from Babylon	Cyrus	2 Chronicles 36:22, 23 Ezra 1:1-3; 2:1-2	
The foundation of the Temple will be laid	Cyrus and Darius	Ezra 3:8-13; 5:16; 6:1-15	During the reign of Cyrus, the work of rebuilding the Temple did not progress beyond laying the foundations.
Jerusalem will be rebuilt	Artaxerxes	Nehemiah 2:3-8; 6:15-16	

The walls of Jerusalem were rebuilt by Nehemiah in 445 BC - 245 years after Isaiah predicted it!

The Old Testament Story†



Timeline of Haggai, Zechariah, and Malachi



RETURN FROM BABYLON

Chronology of the return	World events during the return
605-536 B.C. General period of captivity	ca. 563-ca.483 Buddha (in India)
605, 597, Leading Judean citizens deported,	551-478 B.C. Confucius (in China)
586 B.C. including Daniel and Ezekiel	549 B.C. Cyrus united Persia and Media
538 B.C. Edict of Cyrus permitting the return	546 B.C. Cyrus conquered Lydia
536 B.C. Return of 49,897 from Babylon to Jerusalem	539 B.C. Cyrus conquered Babylon
536 B.C. Altar rebuilt, sacrifice offered in seventh month	530 B.C. Cyrus died
535 B.C. Temple rebuilding begun, but stopped	539-331 B.C. Persian Empire
535-520 B.C. Economic and political struggle	530-522 B.C. Cambyses
520 B.C. Ministry of Haggai	522-486 B.C. Darius I
520-515 B.C. Ministry of Zechariah	490 B.C. Darius defeated at Marathon
515 B.C. Temple completed	486-465 B.C. Xerxes I (Ahasuerus)
458 B.C. Return of Ezra	485-425 B.C. Herodotus
445 B.C. Nehemiah rebuilt the walls	480 B.C. Persians defeated at Thermopylae and Salamis
	470-399 B.C. Socrates
	460-429 B.C. Golden age of Pericles
	428-322 B.C. Plato and Aristotle