

# OUT OF THE ASHES

“Faithful to Fulfill: A Study of God as Revealed in Post-Exilic Scripture”

Ezra 1:1-11 Pastor Matthew Jones

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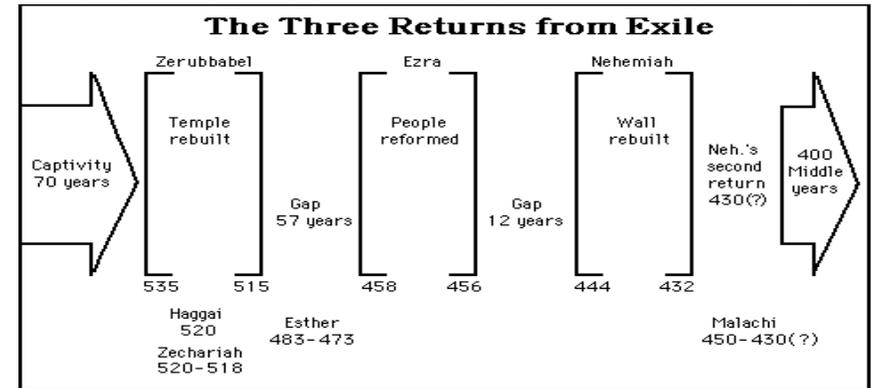
The Prophecy (Ezra 1:1)

The Proclamation (Ezra 1:2-4)

The People (Ezra 1:5)

The Price (Ezra 1:6-11)

## HISTORY OF POST-EXILIC ISRAEL IN SCRIPTURE



## COMMUNITY GROUP QUESTIONS

Reflective Questions for You and Your Small Group

1. The book of Ezra covers the history of Israel's return to the promised land after exile. Discuss why Israel was exiled to begin with (according to the Bible) and how their return to the holy land informs us about the covenantal faithfulness and grace of God for the children of Abraham (nation of Israel). With this in mind, how does the Lord's faithfulness to Israel inform the church in Christ regarding our faith, worship, life, work, and mission in the world.
2. The exilic period was a hard season for the history of God's people. Thinking about your own life, what have been the hardest season of your life and why? How has God used hard seasons in your life in hindsight for good?
3. In Ezra 1, God works sovereignly through the heart of a pagan ruler to accomplish His will in returning His people to the land of promise. In light of this, how have you seen God work in your life through nonbelievers to accomplish His will in your life?
4. The exile of Israel into Babylon symbolically mirrors this present age in which the church is in the fallen world (1Pt. 5:13) awaiting the coming kingdom of God (Mt.6:10, Jn.18:36, 1Cor.15:24, 2Tm.4:18, Rev.20-21). With this in mind, how does reading about Israel's return in Scripture give us a foretaste and hope of the Lord's future return and establishment of His kingdom in the earth? How does the promise of His coming kingdom inform our daily life, good works in the world, and spur us on mission with the gospel? Practically speaking, who are you actively seeking to share the gospel with as you're on mission throughout the week/month and how can we pray for your witness?