

605-445 B.C.

- 605 - 1st deportation (Daniel and friends)
- 597 - 2nd deportation (Ezekiel)
- 586 - 3rd deportation, temple destroyed
- 559 - Cyrus becomes king of Persia
- 539 - Babylon surrenders to Cyrus
- 536 - 1st return (Zerubbabel); Foundation of temple laid
- 521 - Darius becomes king
- 520 - Work on temple resumes - Haggai & Zachariah
- 516 - Temple completed
- 458 - 2nd return (Ezra)
- 445 - 3rd return (Nehemiah)

Three returns from captivity

1. Main body - 538/7 B.C. - **Ezra 1,2**
2. Ezra's party - 458 B.C. - **Ezra 7**
3. Nehemiah - 445 B.C. - **Neh 2**

Persian Rulers

- **Cyrus - 539-530 B.C. (Isa 44:28-45:4; 2Ch 36:22; Ezra 1:1; Dan 1:21; 6:28; 10:1)**
Cyrus "the Great." 550-530 B.C.
- **Darius the Mede - 539-525 B.C. (Dan 5:31; 6:1...28; 9:1; 11:1)**
Co-regent with Cyrus. Made ruler over the realm of Babylon.
- **Cambyses II - 530-522 B.C. (kam BYE seez)**
- **Gaumata (gou MA ta) / False Smerdis - 522-521 B.C.**
Known as "False Smerdis." Smerdis was the brother of Cambyses II and younger son of Cyrus the Great. Cambyses II secretly murdered him for suspected disloyalty. "False-Smerdis," or "Gaumata," pretended to be Smerdis, usurped the throne in 522 B.C., and ruled Babylon from March to September, 522 B.C. Darius I captured and killed him in 521 B.C.
- **Darius I (Hystaspis) - 521-486 B.C. (Ezra 4:5,24; Hag 1:1; Zech 1:1)**
Surnamed "Hystaspis" (his TAS pis), i.e. son of Hystaspis.
Called "Darius the Great." NOT the same as Darius the Mede in Daniel - **Dan 5:31; 6:1,6,9,25,28; 9:1; 11:1**
- **Xerxes - 486-464 B.C. (Ahasuerus of Esther. Esther 1:1)**
Called "the Great." Son of Darius Hystaspis.
His son Artaxerxes I (Artaxerxes Longimanus)
- **Artaxerxes - 464-423 B.C. (Ezra 4:7-8; 7:1; Neh 2:1)**
Called Longimanus (lon JIM a nus)

Author:

Who is the author? (How do you know from these texts?) **7:1,6, 10...27, 28; 9:5,6...10:1**

Two major divisions of the book

- **chs 1-6** - period before Ezra's return (see **1:1**, Cyrus, 539-530 B.C.)
- **chs 7-10** - Ezra's return and after (see **7:1**, Artaxerxes, 464-423 B.C.)

56-60 years separate the end of chapter 6 and the beginning of chapter 7. Temple completed in 516 B.C. Ezra's return in 458 B.C. Esther falls in this c. 58 year time period.

This is a simple reading exercise. Read the book and complete the information below. This will give a brief synopsis of the contents. The first one in each part is given as an example.

- **Part 1 - Chapters 1-6**

1:1-4 - Cyrus' decree

1:5-11 - _____ from Babylon

ch 2 - List of _____

3:1-7 - _____ erected and _____ offered on it

3:8-13 - Foundation _____ laid

ch 4 - Opposition - work _____

ch 5 - Work resumes with _____ and _____ support

6:1-12 - _____ decrees

6:13-18 - Temple _____ and _____

6:19-22 - _____ observed

- **Part 2 - Chapters 7-10**

7:1-10 - Summary of Ezra's return

7:11-28 - _____ decree

8:1-14 - List of _____

8:15-36 - The return

ch 9 - _____ discovered, Ezra's _____

10:1-17 - _____ from foreign wives

10:18-44 - Those involved in _____

Chapter 1

1. Review your synopsis (in lesson one) of chapter one.
1:7-11 is a subsection of the second part of chapter one. How would you label this subsection? _____
2. What do you observe by comparing **2Ch 36:22-23** with **Ezra 1:1-3**?
 _____ Ezra and Nehemiah are combined in the Hebrew Old Testament arrangement.
 “It thus appears that in every case from the Pentateuchal history to the post-Exilic writings a historical book is given a colophon or footnote that unites it in continuous narrative fashion to the succeeding book.” R. Laird Harris, *Inspiration and Canonicity of the Bible*, pp. 168-169.
3. Read **Isa 44:24-45:13**. What ruler did Isaiah prophesy would set the exiles free to return to Jerusalem and rebuild their city and temple?
 _____ Isaiah prophesied c. 700 B.C. When did this ruler conquer Babylon and issue the decree to allow the exiles to return to their homeland? (see dates in 1st lesson) _____ How many years between Isaiah’s prophesy and it’s fulfillment? _____ See **Dt 18:21,22; 2Pt 1:20,21**.
4. What is another name for Sheshbazzar, **v8**? Compare **5:16** with **Zech 4:9**. _____ To what office was he appointed? **5:14; Hag 1:1** _____

Chapter 2

1. Review your synopsis (in lesson one) of chapter two. Read chapter two and complete the information below. This will give a brief synopsis of its contents.
 - **2:1-2a** - Introductory statement regarding the list
 - **2:2b-63** - The list
 - **2:2** - Leaders
 - **2:3-35** - Families
 - **2:36-39** - _____
 - **2:40-42** - _____
 Divided into three classes:
 - Assistants of priests in divine worship, **v40**

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- _____ - **v41**
 - _____ - **v42**
 - **2:43-54** - _____ (NASB, ESV)
(Nethinim, KJV, NKJV, ASV). See **8:20**.
 - **2:55-58** - Solomon's servants
 - **2:59-63** - Those of lost genealogy
 - families - **vv59-60**
 - priests - **vv61-63**
 - **2:64-69** - sum totals
 - **2:64-65** - people
 - **2:66-67** - _____
 - **2:68-69** - _____
 - **2:70** - summary statement
2. If "Jeshua" of **v2** is the same as the person in **Hag 1:1**, what is he called there and what office did he hold? _____
 3. Nehemiah is not the Nehemiah of the book of Nehemiah - that Nehemiah came *later* to Jerusalem (see dates in 1st lesson).
 4. If Mordecai is the Mordecai of **Esther 2:5**, then he later returned to Babylon—see dates in 1st lesson. It is not certain whether this is the same person.
 5. The "Urim and Thummim," **v63**, are first mentioned in **Ex 28:30**. Including our text here in **Ez 2:63**, read **Num 27:21** and **1Sam 28:6**—what were they used for? _____

 6. If the priests could not serve if they could not prove their genealogy (**vv62-63**), and if the genealogical records were destroyed in the destruction of Jerusalem, what does that mean so far as the possibility of a Levitical priesthood and a national Israel like in the Old Testament?

Chapter 3

1. Review your synopsis (in lesson one) of chapter three. This will give a brief synopsis of its contents.
2. The seventh month was a special month. Read **Lev 23:23-44; 16:29,30; Num 29**. What happened on the the following days?
 1st _____
 10th _____
 15th _____
3. What was the pattern, or blueprint, for their worship, **vv2,4**? _____

4. Where is it written (**v3**) that they must offer their offerings on the altar at the place God chose? (See reference in your Bible.) _____
5. What year was the foundation of the temple laid (**v10**)? (See lesson one)
6. Though some rejoiced, some wept, **v12**. Why did they weep? See **Hag 2:1-4; Zach 4:9-10** _____

Chapter 4

1. Review your synopsis (in lesson one) of chapter four. What is this chapter about? _____
2. When the people got discouraged, what happened? _____
3. **4:6-23** can be viewed as an interruption in the chronological sequence to give an account of the opposition they faced until the time of Nehemiah. **4:24** picks up where **4:5** left off. It would be good to note this in your Bible in some way. Assign the period these kings reigned (see lesson one):
4:5, Cyrus _____ **4:6**, Ahasuerus _____
4:7, Artaxerxes _____ **4:24**, Darius _____
 In the letter, mention is made of the Jews finishing the building of what (**vv12,13,16**) _____ It is not certain if this charge in this letter is reliable, just as other charges in the letter (e.g., **vv12,16**).

Chapter 5

1. Review your synopsis (in lesson one) of chapter five. What is this chapter about? _____
2. Who motivated the people to resume the work of building the temple? _____
3. Read Haggai (two chapters) and Zechariah chapter one. (Note the dates in these chapters.) What did Haggai point to that exposed their excuses for not completing the temple? (**Hag 1:2,4,9**) _____

4. What did governor and officials' letter request of King Darius? _____

Chapter 6

1. Review your synopsis (in lesson one) of chapter four. This will give a brief synopsis of its contents.
2. Sum up Darius' decree (**vv1-12**). _____

3. When was the temple finished? _____
How many years had it been since the foundation was laid? (See question #5 on chapter three.) _____
4. How many male goats were offered? (**v17**) _____ Why that number? _____
5. Who chose to seek the Lord and eat the Passover? (**v20**) _____

6. How would you describe the last part of **v22**? Compare **Pro 21:1; Dan 1:2,9; 2:36,37; 4:17,25; Acs 17:26; 24:2**. _____
7. What event of extreme importance happened in the time period after chapter six and before the time period of chapter seven? (See lesson one.) _____

Chapter 7

1. Review your synopsis (in lesson one) of chapter seven. This will give a brief synopsis of its contents.
2. Ezra is described as a “scribe,” **v6**. How is his role as a scribe further defined in this verse? _____
3. When did Ezra return to Jerusalem, **v8**? _____
_____ What year was this? (see lesson one.) _____
4. Why did Ezra return, **v10**? _____

5. Summarize Artaxerxes’ decree. _____

Chapter 8

1. Review your synopsis (in lesson one) of chapter eight. This will give a brief synopsis of its contents.
2. Before Ezra proceeded on the return, who did he request to accompany him in the return, **vv15-20**? _____
3. What did Ezra do with the gifts both before he left and after he arrived?

_____ Compare **2Co 8:18-21**.
4. How many bulls were offered and for whom, **v35**? _____
Compare **6:17**. How many goats for a sin offering and for whom were they offered? _____
5. The following scriptures relate to a time *after* the fall of the northern kingdom. This question relates to question #4.
Where did Hezekiah send couriers? **2Ch 30:6-9**? _____
Where was money collected from for the repair of the temple? **2Ch 34:9**

Who participated in the Passover celebrated in the reign of Josiah?
2Ch 35:18 _____

Chapter 9

1. Review your synopsis (in lesson one) of chapter nine. What is this chapter about? _____

2. Who was involved in the unlawful marriages, **vv1,2**? _____

3. What was Ezra's reaction upon finding out about this? _____

4. Who joined him in concern about this matter, **v4**? _____

5. What did Ezra focus on in the first half of his prayer? _____

6. How did he portray the nation, and God, in the his prayer? _____

Chapter 10

1. Review your synopsis (in lesson one) of chapter ten. What is this chapter about? _____

2. What attitude motivated those who cooperated in dealing with this very difficult situation according to God's will? **vv3,9,14** _____

3. Were these people really married? _____ Were their marriages lawful? _____ What did they do about their marriages?

What was wrong with their marriages? _____
Did any of them have children by these marriages? _____
4. How long did it take them to investigate the matter? **v16,17** _____

5. Reconcile **Mal 2:16** with this chapter. _____
