

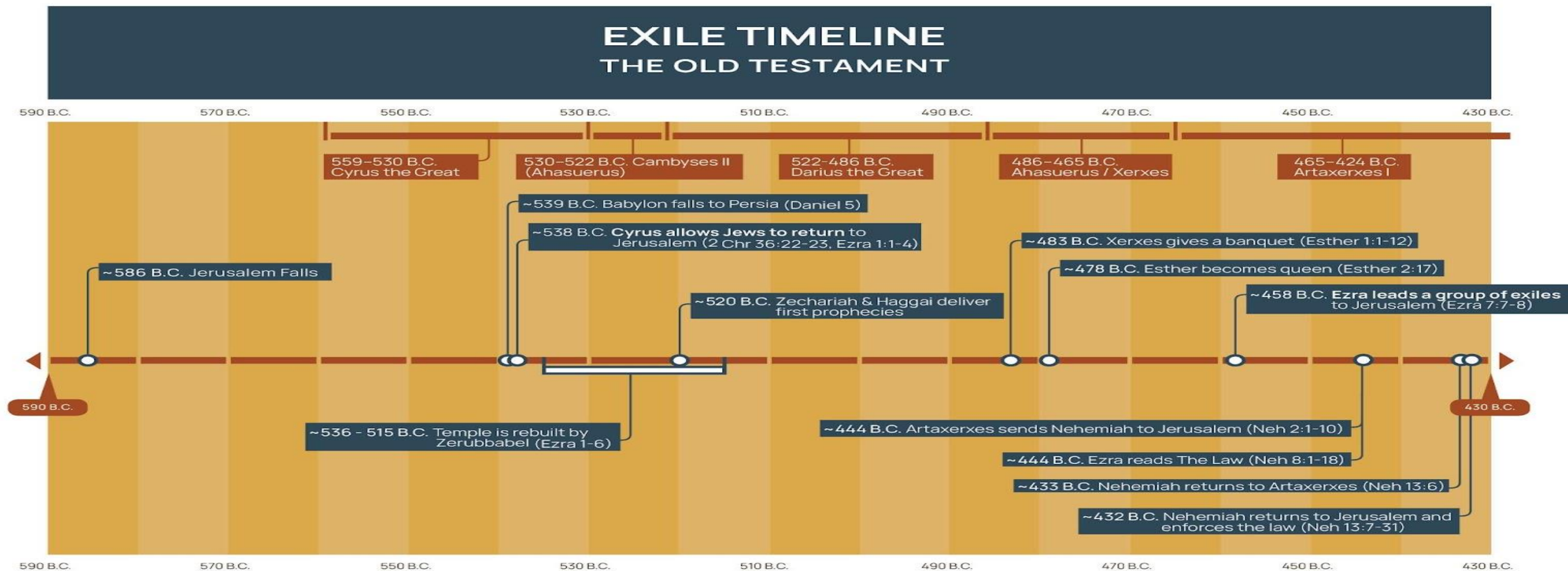


A SERMON SERIES ABOUT
COMING HOME



ESTHER WHEN GOD IS SILENT

HISTORICAL CONTEXT



OVERVIEW OF STORY: USING CHIASTIC STRUCTURE

CHIASM

- ❖ A chiasm is a literary technique designed with a symmetrical pattern that highlights specific themes and points of detail as being significant.
- ❖ “Chiasm” comes from a letter in the Greek Alphabet, “chi,” which is identical in shape to the modern English letter “X.”
- ❖ The shape of the letter illustrates the idea: two separate lines meet together in the middle



OVERVIEW OF STORY: USING CHIASTIC STRUCTURE

CHIASM

- A The splendor of the Persian king + Two banquets [1:1-8]
- B Esther becomes Queen + Mordecai saves the king [1:9-2:20 + 2:21-23]
- C Haman elevated to power [3:1-6]
- D Haman's decree to destroy the Jewish people [3:7-15]
- E Esther and Mordecai's plan to reverse the decree [4:1-17]
- F Esther's 1st banquet + Haman plans Mordecai's execution [5:1-8 + 5:9-14]



OVERVIEW OF STORY: USING CHIASTIC STRUCTURE

CHIASM

X - PIVOT: Haman humiliated & Mordecai exalted [6:1-14]



OVERVIEW OF STORY: USING CHIASTIC STRUCTURE

CHIASM

- F Esther's 2nd banquet + Haman executed instead of Mordecai [7:1-10]
- E Esther and Mordecai plan to reverse the decree [8:1-8]
- D Mordecai's counter-decree to save the Jewish people [8:9-14]
- C Mordecai elevated to power [8:15-17]
- B Queen Esther and Mordecai save the Jewish people [9:1-19]
- A Two feasts + The splendor of Mordecai [9:20-32 + 10:1-3]



OVERVIEW OF STORY: USING CHIASTIC STRUCTURE

CHIASM: Pattern

A-F display a dark, ominous negative pattern moving progressively towards the demise of the Jewish people

X - PIVOT: Haman humiliated & Mordecai exalted [6:1-14]

F-A offer a positive counterpart for the previous events, correcting every crisis and deficiency leading to the exaltation of Mordecai and the Jewish people.



WHEN HEAVEN WHISPERS: GOD'S STILLNESS IS NOT SILENCE

- ❖ Esther never heard a voice from the clouds. There were no burning bushes, no parting seas—just quiet decisions made in faith and trembling courage.
- ❖ But silence does not mean absence. When heaven whispers, it often implies history is about to shift.



WHEN HEAVEN WHISPERS: GOD'S STILLNESS IS NOT SILENCE

❖ Esther 2:11; 21-23

“A father’s routine uncovers a royal plot.”

❖ Esther 6:1-10

“A sleepless king uncovers this plot and sets the stage for God’s divine reversal.



THE QUIET YES: GOD MOVES THROUGH WILLING HEARTS

- ❖ God could have saved His people in a thousand different ways. But He chose Esther. And He still chooses ordinary, uncertain, willing people to carry out extraordinary plans.
- ❖ Esther didn't need to know everything; she just needed to say yes. Her agency wasn't in understanding the future, but in trusting God with her present.
- ❖ Like her, we are not passive in God's plan but partners in His providence.



THE QUIET YES: GOD MOVES THROUGH WILLING HEARTS

Two common ideas expressed in the character of Esther...

1. She did what was asked.

Esther 2:10 – *“Esther had not made known her people or kindred, for Mordecai had commanded her not to make it known.”*

Esther 2:20 – *“Esther obeyed Mordecai just as when she was brought up by him.”*

Esther 2:15 – *“She asked for nothing except what Hegai... advised.”*

What does biblical obedience look like in a culture that values independence?



THE QUIET YES: GOD MOVES THROUGH WILLING HEARTS

Two common ideas expressed in the character of Esther

2. She found favour with those around her.

Esther 2:9 – *“She won his favour, and he quickly provided her with... her portion...”*

Esther 2:15 – *“Esther was winning favour in the eyes of all who saw her.”*

Esther 2:17 – *“She won grace and favour in his sight more than all the virgins...”*

❖ How does humility and wisdom attract divine favour?



CONCLUSION:

“...O God, **turn your Spirit loose here**, and me with it,
That I may go to where the silence is to face with you the utter mystery
of questions without answers, pain without balm, sorrow without
comfort, and fears without relief, which hound my days and haunt my
sleep.

Facing the mystery, Lord, grant me the grace to wrestle with it until I
name the fears and force them to set me free to move on with whatever
limp I’m left with; to wrestle with it until the pain teach me and I
befriend it, until the silence subdues me into an awareness that is holy
and I am healed by it; to wrestle with it until I go deeper in it to
gratitude for all the shapes of wholeness and of hope that bless
me....O God, turn your Spirit loose now, that I may go to where the
darkness is, to face with you the terrible uncertainty of tomorrow...”

Dr. Ted Loder, “Guerrillas of Grace”

