

THE PERIOD BETWEEN THE TESTAMENTS—INTRODUCTION

I. INTRODUCTION.

a. Completed study of Minor Prophets (Approx. 845—432 B.C.)

b. Question: What about the years 432 B.C. until birth of Christ?

- i. End of Malachi, Chapter 4:5— “Behold I will send you Elijah the prophet...”
- ii. Matthew says John the Baptist came in fulfillment of this prophesy. (Matt. 11:11ff)

iii. Galatians 4:4—“But when the fullness of time was come, God sent forth...”

c. Dramatic historical changes took place in this 400 year period.

- i. New world powers come to dominate homeland of the Jews.
- ii. New language comes to the forefront of the region.
- iii. Social, political and economic conditions change.

II. LESSON—REVIEW AND BACKGROUND INFORMATION.

a. THE JEWS UNDER BABYLONIAN CONTROL—BRIEF SURVEY.

- i. 930 B.C.—death of Solomon and end of United Kingdom.
- ii. 721 B.C.—fall of Samarian to Assyria—N. Kingdom is exiled.
- iii. 606 B.C.—Babylon becomes dominant power.
- iv. By 606 B.C., only S. Kingdom remains.
 1. 606 B.C.—Daniel and friends taken to Babylon (Daniel 1:1-7)
 2. 597 and 586 B.C.—2 additional deportations of captives from Judah to Babylon.
- v. 70 years of exile follows for Judah. (606-536 B.C.)
 1. Synagogue becomes dominant “institution”.
 2. “Scribes” become important.
 3. The “dispersion”.

b. THE PERSIAN PERIOD OF OLD TESTAMENT HISTORY.

- i. Babylon conquered by Persia in 539 B.C.
- ii. Decree by Cyrus in 536 B.C. permits some Jews to return home.
- iii. Esther marries Persian King and secures Judah’s future.
- iv. Ezra leads second group home from exile in 458 B.C.
- v. During this time, great hostility grows between returning exiles and those who settled there during the period of Judah’s exile.
- vi. Here, Old Testament History ends and 400 “silent” years begin.
- vii. Persia remains the dominant force for another 100 years.

III. CONCLUSION.

a. NEXT, BRIEF LOOK AT:

- i. Rise & fall of Greek Empire.
- ii. Palestine in period of uncertainty.
- iii. The Maccabean Period.
- iv. Roman domination of Palestine.
- v. Synagogues, scribes, Septuagint and sects of the Jews.