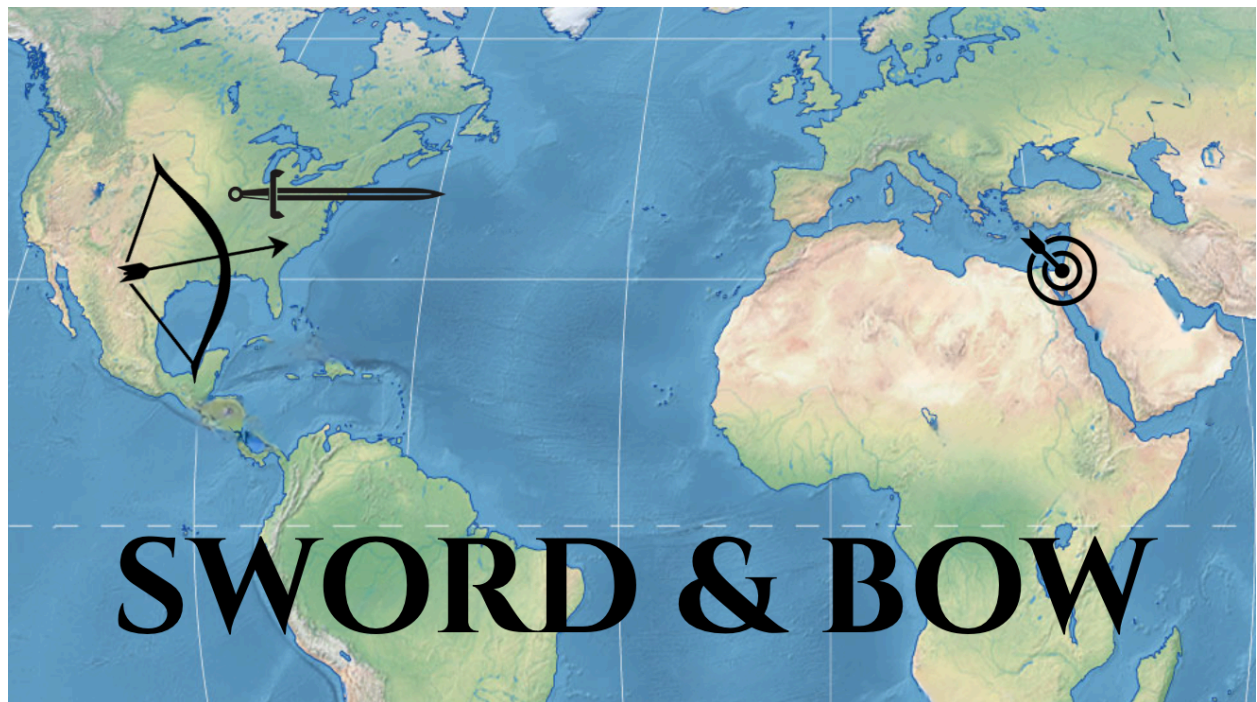


Good Morning Arising Church,

We are currently embarking on the greatest expansion of the Gospel in our day!
We wanted to get a few important announcements out of the way before we jump into our message:

Mohammed was a pedophile. Islam is evil, and Allah is the devil. There is no two-state solution and we are proud to be unapologetic Zionists. We hate Islam, but we love Muslims and want to see them saved and reconciled to the Promised Son of Abraham. We want to see Palestinians and Muslims call on the name of Adonai and declare that Israel belongs to the Jews so that God's chosen Nation can say "how did our enemy fall in love with the King of the Jews?".

Our message today is titled: Sword & Bow



Something incredible is happening in our midst. In just a few weeks we will end 2025, perhaps the greatest year in our church's history. We have recently ended a series surveying the terrestrial and celestial battlefield. Since that series and the

OA Conference, the Lord has continued to give us vision and direction. Take a look at this slide of the last four messages:



These messages have not been part of a pre-planned sermon series. They were done during and immediately following long international trips, but now looking in the rearview mirror we see God was intentionally guiding us all along the way.

It may seem to some of you that these messages all had widely different topics:

- **Clear as Day:** Uniting to do the work God has given to us together!
- **Rome to Jerusalem:** Testimonies from Europe and the Middles East / the vision God has given us is working!
- **A memorial and a name:** Confronting the Christian perspective of Israel and the Jewish people.
- **In the face of my enemies:** God's divine strategy of displaying his Power in the face of the enemy and the present reality of our Church's vision for this region.

The reality is, God is leading us in extraordinary ways, do you know what the sermon was exactly one year ago last week?



We are still in the season of the splitting sea, we are more than ever developing a faith that does not wait for the seas to part, but instead walks on ahead into the deep, trusting God will set you on dry ground. The vision the Lord has given us is going to take a parting of the sea. It's going to take daring faith in Adonai and his servant Yeshua. It's going to take families that would rather drown in the sea than stand at the shore refusing to step out in faith. The chapter after this incredible event is perhaps the greatest summary of these last several messages:

- **Exodus 15:27 (NIV)**

²⁷ Then they came to Elim, where there were twelve springs and seventy palm trees, and they camped there near the water.

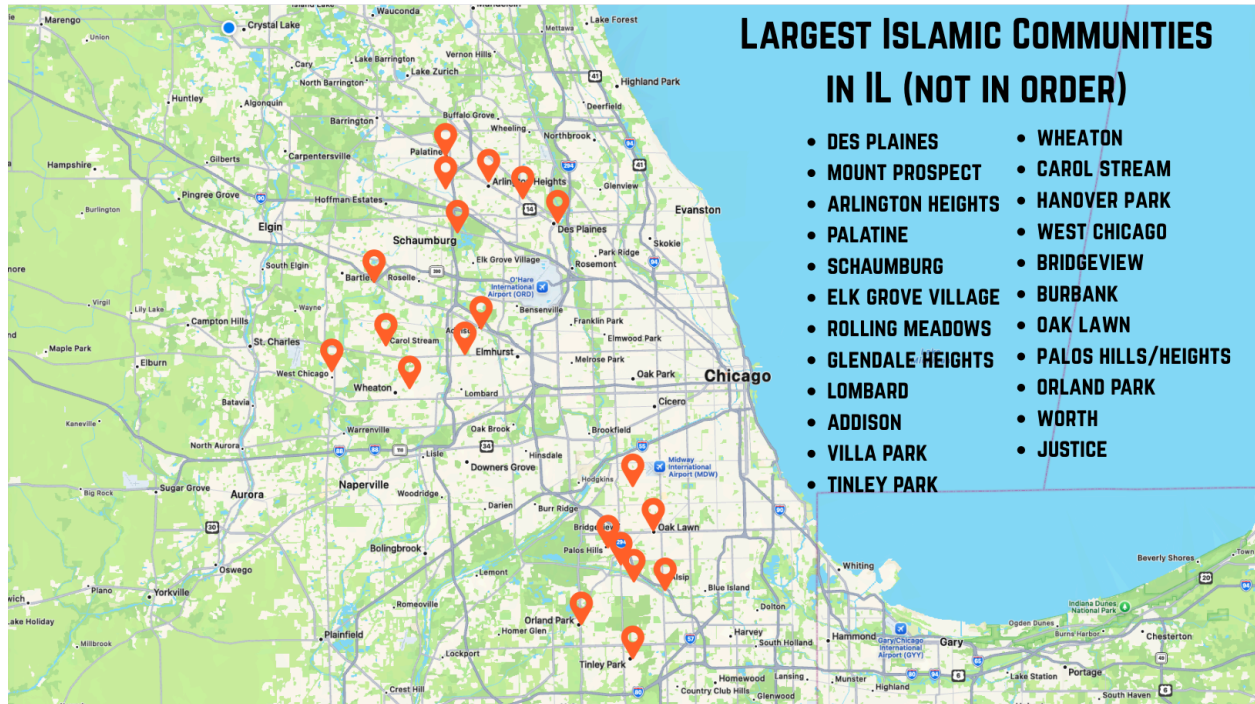
Our eyes are set on the middle east and the vision of the OAC that is the Balkan Bow. And, we know that to complete that mission, to water those palm trees, its going to takes 12 springs here stateside.

These message and visions are in no way separate, they are the purpose of the OAC, twelve springs flowing into seventy palm trees. Let's look at these last few weeks in another way:



This is one battle we are engaged in. This is merely two fronts of the same campaign—two weapons but one battle. Every army needs soldiers with bows and swords. Sometimes your enemy is at a longer distance, so you need a bow/ other times your enemy is right in front of you and you need a sword.

We have been talking to you about the Bow for awhile, we even have a bow team! The Lord is helping us so we also have a sword because while the battle rages across the world, it is also right in our backyard.



We are going to see Muslims from this area turn to Yeshua! Doesn't that sound incredible and almost too amazing to be true?!? The public success of that mission, begins here with private devotion.

We are the SWORD and BOW of Adonai. God is perpetually a warrior who fights with two kinds of weapons!

SWORD & BOW:

GENESIS 48:22 (NIV)

22 AND TO YOU I GIVE ONE MORE RIDGE OF LAND THAN TO YOUR BROTHERS, THE RIDGE I TOOK FROM THE AMORITES WITH **MY SWORD AND MY BOW.**"

ZECHARIAH 9:13 (NIV)

13 I WILL BEND JUDAH AS I **BEND MY BOW** AND FILL IT WITH EPHRAIM. I WILL ROUSE YOUR SONS, ZION, AGAINST YOUR SONS, GREECE, AND MAKE **YOU LIKE A WARRIOR'S SWORD.**

PSALM 7:10-12 (NIV)

10 MY SHIELD IS GOD MOST HIGH, WHO SAVES THE UPRIGHT IN HEART. 11 GOD IS A RIGHTEOUS JUDGE, A GOD WHO DISPLAYS HIS WRATH EVERY DAY. 12 IF HE DOES NOT RELENT, **HE WILL SHARPEN HIS SWORD; HE WILL BEND AND STRING HIS BOW.**

This brings us to our message today and how it fits into what the Lord has been doing the last several weeks. It actually almost forms a chiastic structure of sorts :)



The Kingdom Expands through unified devotion to godly leaders and willing sacrificial work!

Today, we are going to talk about how we can expand the Kingdom of God in light of the VISION the Lord has been giving this church for the last decade!



Rome to Jerusalem and In the face of my enemies both outlined different aspects of the vision of the OAC and The Arising Church. Rome to Jerusalem was all about the Balkan Bow and the INTERNATIONAL VISION and how this vision actually is working on the field and learning more about our role as Gentiles in this region of the World. In the face of my enemies was all about the LOCAL VISION of this body in the presence of real enemies—Islam that is surrounding our region and how confronting this enemy head on is how God always takes out his enemies!

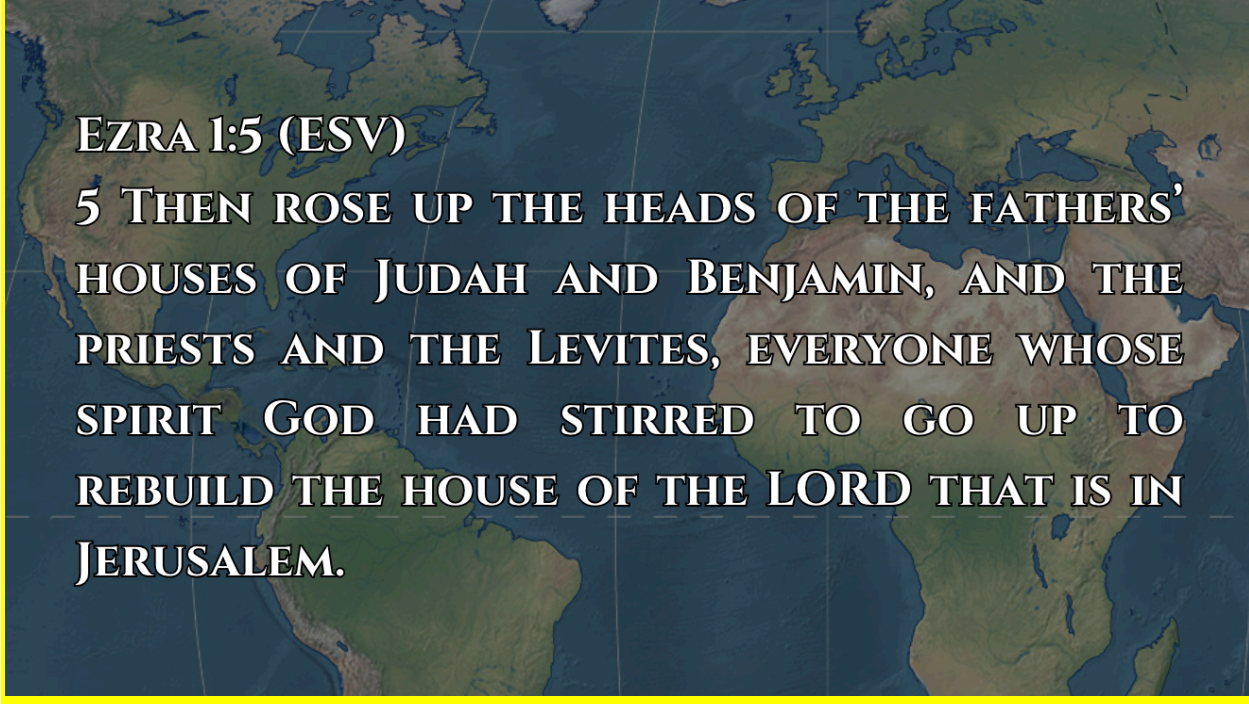


Then, the center of the chiasm is of course Israel, and our perspective on Israel is what shapes our faith and mission here and abroad.

Our point in doing this unique recap is to hopefully cement in your mind how deeply connected these visions and directives truly are.

Let's look at this same principle in Scripture. After Israel had spent many years in exile, the LORD made a way for a group of exiles to return to Jerusalem and rebuild the Temple. Turn with us to Ezra 1:5.

(READ SLIDE)



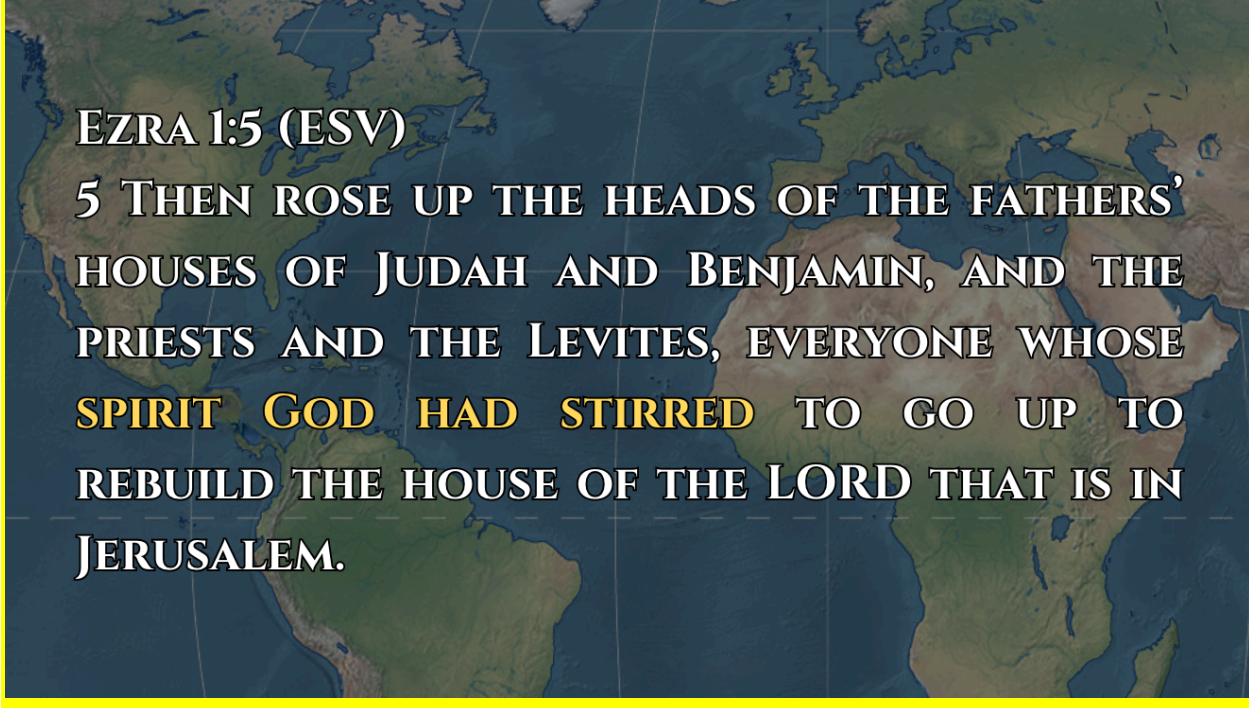
EZRA 1:5 (ESV)

**5 THEN ROSE UP THE HEADS OF THE FATHERS'
HOUSES OF JUDAH AND BENJAMIN, AND THE
PRIESTS AND THE LEVITES, EVERYONE WHOSE
SPIRIT GOD HAD STIRRED TO GO UP TO
REBUILD THE HOUSE OF THE LORD THAT IS IN
JERUSALEM.**

Did you notice that there is an open invite to return to Israel and build the house of God?

Who stayed back from building the temple? Why did their hearts not stir them? Shouldn't everyone's heart have been stirred to go rebuild the house of the LORD? The answer to these questions is in the text we just read;

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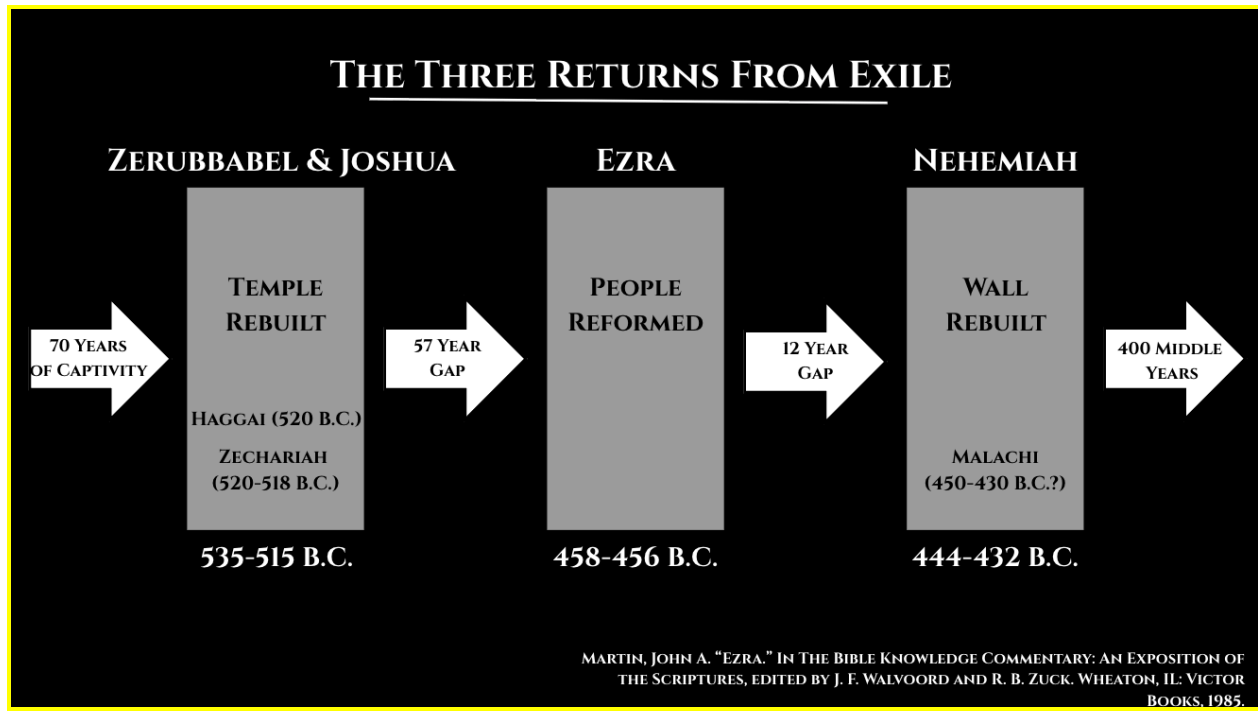


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JERUSALEM.

You see, EVERYONE who God stirred went, but there were some that God didn't stir, because he was doing work both in Israel and in Babylon at the same time. Look at this timeline.

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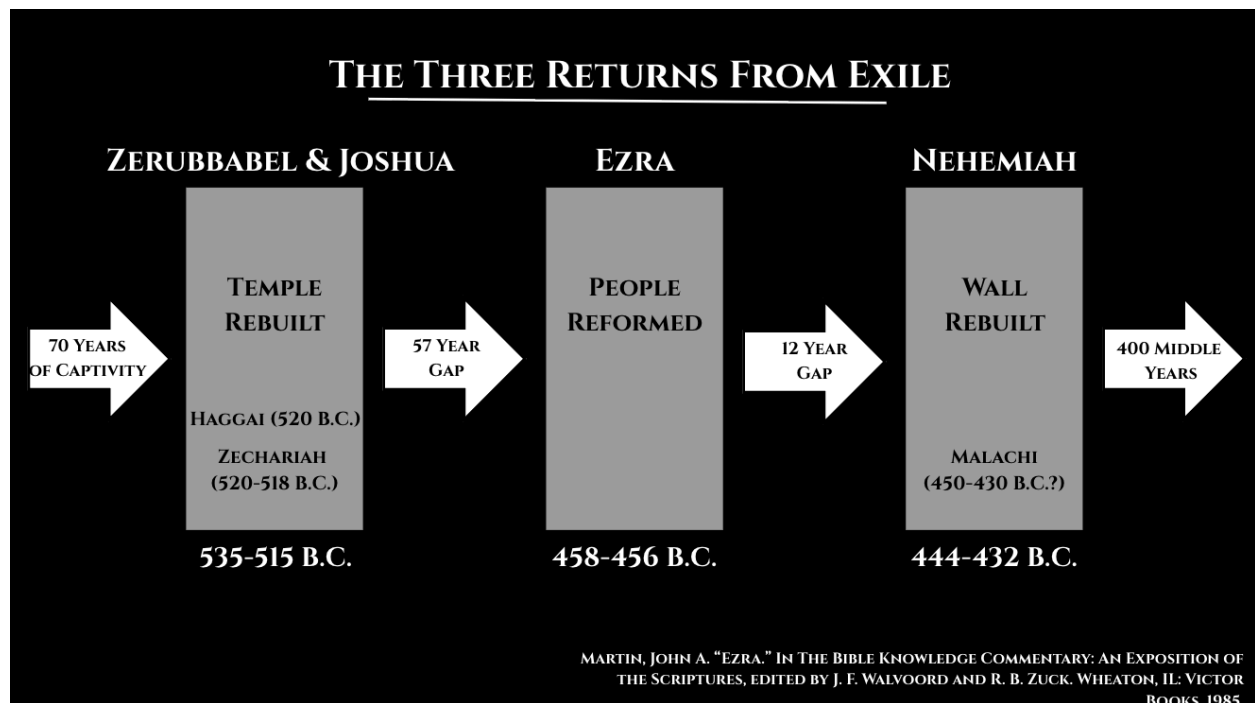


Grey box 1 (First Wave)

- Joshua and Zerubbabel led all whose heart stirred them to rebuild the temple
- Many went and many stayed back
- They endured great opposition from governing authorities, but through faithfulness and conviction they were able to see the task through to the end.

Grey box 2 (Second Wave)

- **Ezra 7:10 (ESV)**
10 For Ezra **had** set his heart to study the Law of the LORD, and to do it and to teach his statutes and rules in Israel.



Ezra did not come with the first return of exiles. While staying in Babylonia he studied and applied the word of God in preparation for what God would do when he finally made it to Israel. Staying in Babylonia was not a setback, it was a necessary step of preparation! The study of the law, and development of character that reflects the law is what was preparing Ezra for the time where he eventually would leave his home and join the mission abroad, back in Israel!

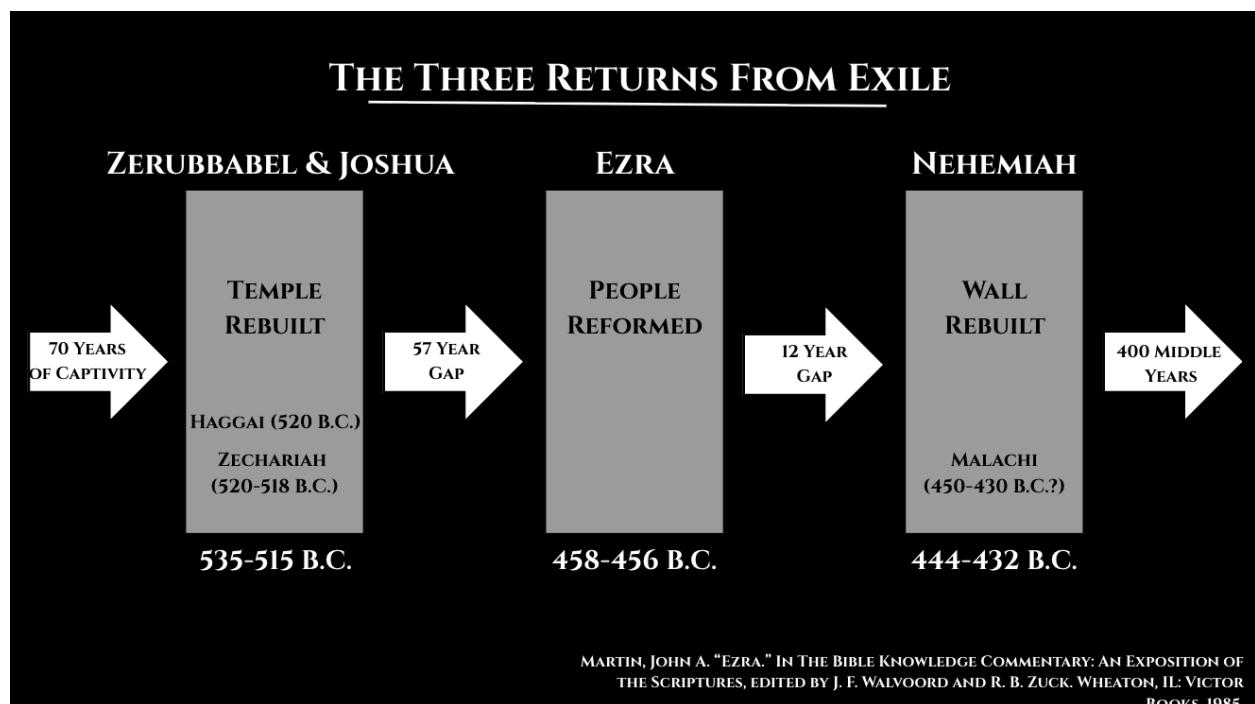
When the LORD called him to return, he embarked on one of the most remarkable revivals of scripture the world has ever witnessed!

Grey box 3 (Third Wave)

- Nehemiah did not come in the first or second return of exiles.
- During the time he was in Babylonia he devoted himself to prayer and supplication and when he finally went, he built a wall around Jerusalem to defend God's city! Consider the importance of the walls of Jerusalem:
- **Psalm 48:12–13 (ESV)**
12 Walk about Zion, go around her,

number her towers,
13 consider well her ramparts, *[or walls]*
go through her citadels,
that you may tell the next generation

The walls of Jerusalem are so important there is a Psalm that instructs us to consider their walls so that we may tell it to the next generation! This is what Nehemiah rebuilt!



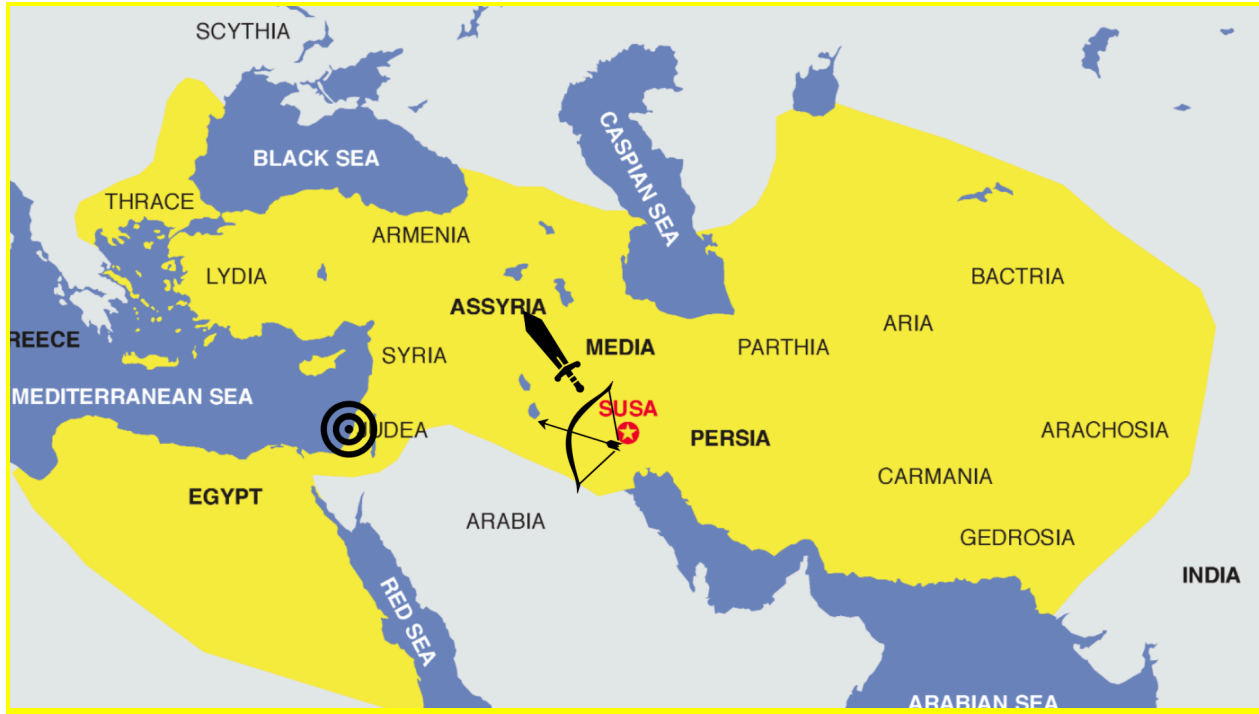
To summarize, although each of them returned at different times and their preparation all looked different, they were working for a unified purpose to restore the Kingdom of Israel! They all had the same mission, yet operated in different fronts at different times! Here is a summary of what these men achieved in this process.

(READ SLIDE)



These are incredible accomplishments that only God himself could orchestrate. They didn't plan out who would go where or when each would return, but they each showed faithfulness to God and acted when they heard his call! It is almost as though they formed a bow and a sword to this accomplish mission in Babylonia while each waited for their time to be shot out to Jerusalem.

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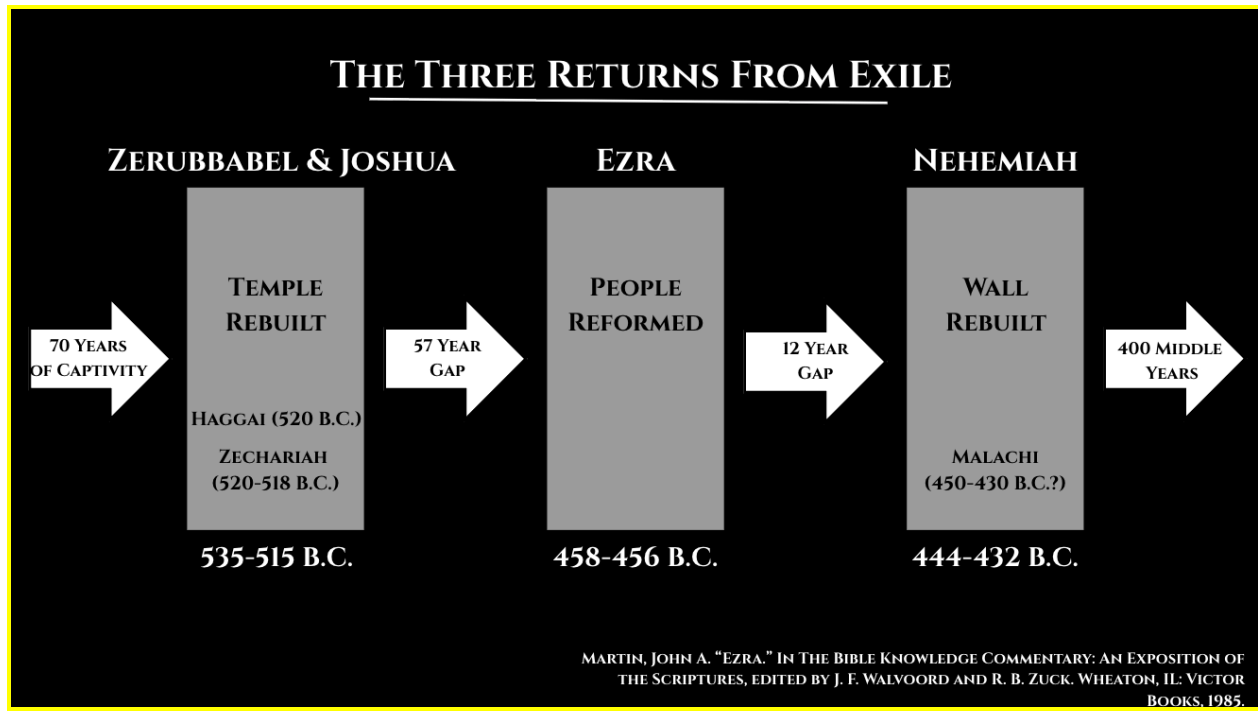


The yellow on this slide represents the Persian empire with Susa as the capital. These men all came from around the region of the bow and sword and had different tasks to accomplish in Judea.

However, God did not see fit to send them all at once, but each in turn worked in their hometown as a sword proving faithful until the LORD send them back to their native land Jerusalem.

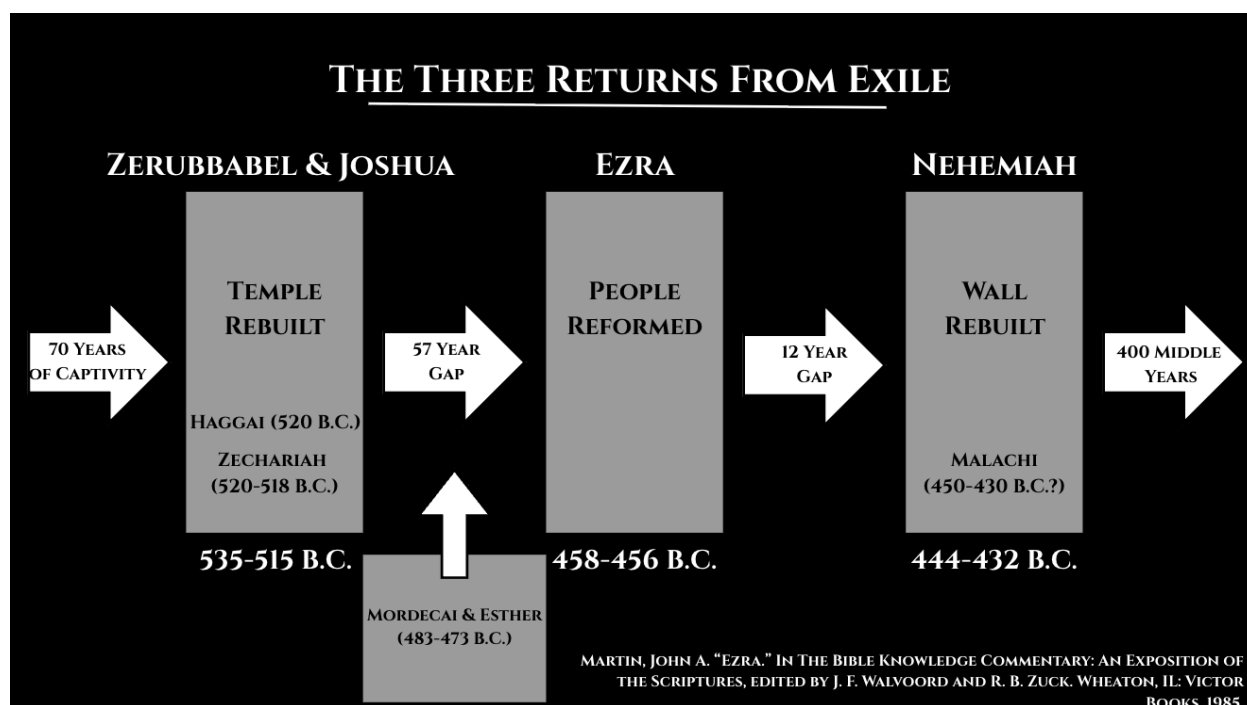
Pull that timeline back up.

(DO NOT READ)



The Lord had a specific purpose for each of these groups to fulfill in His timing. Who stayed behind and who went wasn't a matter of personal preference; each man had to wrestle with God's calling on his life and trust the Lord with the timing. These men weren't waiting for others to define their calling—rather, as they were faithful where God had placed them, the Lord expanded their calling beyond the place where they had grown up.

Now that you have seen how Joshua and Zerubbabel, Ezra and Nehemiah formed a sword and a bow, we want to show you one more example that was a part of the sword and bow. This dynamic duo never made it to Jerusalem but showed a radical faithfulness in Babylonia that resulted in salvation of all the Jewish people! Have you guessed who it is?



That's right, we are talking about Mordechai and Esther! Even while Joshua and Zerubbabel, Ezra and Nehemiah were forming a bow and a sword in Babylonia sending people to work in Jerusalem, Mordecai and Esther were busy saving the entire Jewish race on the Babylonian front!

As we described in the intro to this message, we are all right now fighting on the domestic front of our mission, fighting with the sword. As such, we are in a similar position to Mordecai and would do well to learn from his example.

Consider the historical context of the book of Esther. This is after the Temple is rebuilt, Jews have already returned to Jerusalem. Ezra and Nehemiah are most likely in Babylonia at this time. Xerxes is the king over the Persian Empire. This is not simply a random story, but a pivotal moment in the return of the Exiles to Israel.

Let's dive into the book of Esther.

- **Esther 3:1–2 (NIV)**

3 After these events, King Xerxes honored Haman son of Hammedatha, the Agagite, elevating him and giving him a seat of honor higher than that of all the other nobles.² All the royal officials at the king's gate knelt down and paid honor to Haman, for the king had commanded this concerning him. **But Mordecai would not kneel down or pay him honor.**

Even in exile, Mordecai's character could not be defiled. While all those around him were folding one after another to bow before a man, Mordecai refused. The truth is, if you want to be used by God, play a part in his kingdom, your character is what matters, and character is not formed overnight, it must be developed over decades of faithfulness.

- **Esther 3:3-4**

³ Then the royal officials at the king's gate asked Mordecai, "Why do you disobey the king's command?"⁴ **Day after day they spoke to him but he refused to comply.** Therefore they told Haman about it to see whether Mordecai's behavior would be tolerated, for **he had told them he was a Jew.**

Notice the text says day after day. Mordecai was not defined by one righteous action, or a singular moment of zeal, but rather a consistent, tested, faithfulness to his God that displayed his character.

This is what gave him the confidence to tell them he was a Jew. He was confident in his Identity. He had no reason to hide who he was. Even amidst direct questioning and opposition, Mordecai refused to give way to fear and compromise, and instead displayed an unbreakable character and confidence.

When considering the great work God has assigned for our body to complete, whether it be here in Crystal Lake, elsewhere on the Domestic front, or

internationally, you are going to need the type of inward character that removes compromise so you can abound in confidence.

Mordecai did not limp between two opinions. He did not bow on some days when the pressure was higher, nor did he hide his heritage in situations where it may have adverse consequences. Mordecai was a man of NO COMPROMISE, and it developed in him a Godly confidence that could stand in such difficult settings such as this.

How many times have you been in a scenario where everyone else is bowing the knee to the world and there is literally NO ONE standing in righteousness? Do you have this level of confidence to act righteously when no one else around you is? Mordecai did! And so will we.

- **Proverbs 14:26 (ESV)**

26 In the fear of the Lord one has strong confidence,
and his children will have a refuge.

The fear of the Lord is the beginning of confidence in ministry. **Put another way, your public success begins with private devotion.** The more you limp between two opinions, sin and righteousness, the less confidence you will actually have. The line between sin and righteousness at times is obvious and other times our faithlessness can blur it. For example, choosing not to fall into sexual sin or lash out in a fit of rage is obviously the right decision. For Mordecai however, it would have been a line that was easy to blur. He could have made excuses as to why it was okay to bow, or why it wasn't blatant sin, however, he knew what God had revealed to him and would not fold on it!

We need men like Mordecai to rise up in this body. Men whose private devotion and consecration is what fuels their confidence and ministry. Men who amidst intense pressure from others, will not fold.

- **Esther 3:5-6, 8 (ESV)**

⁵ When Haman saw that Mordecai would not kneel down or pay him honor, he was enraged. ⁶ Yet having learned who Mordecai's people were, he scorned the idea of killing only Mordecai. Instead Haman looked for a way to destroy all Mordecai's people, the Jews, throughout the whole kingdom of Xerxes.

⁸ Then Haman said to King Xerxes, "There is a certain people dispersed among the peoples in all the provinces of your kingdom who keep themselves separate. Their customs are different from those of all other people, and they do not obey the king's laws; it is not in the king's best interest to tolerate them.

Mordecai's daily refusal led to a growing demonic hatred toward him and his people. His faithfulness and distinction was met with a response of death. Yet as the story goes on, Mordecai never changes. He doesn't back down or give in. Is this the kind of character that you have? That even at the threat of death of you and your family, you'll never compromise? When you're with your family, do you hold back sharing the undeniable truths of scripture? When no one is watching, do you give way to fleshly desires? As we learn not to compromise even in the smallest most insignificant matters we will be given a supernatural confidence to stand for God! We cannot pretend we are ready to take on the demonic forces of Islam when personal compromise is present. We must remain distinct and consecrated in our personal lives. Righteousness is all that matters.

- **Esther 2:21–23 (NIV)**

²¹ During the time Mordecai was sitting at the king's gate, Bigthana and Teresh, two of the king's officers who guarded the doorway, became angry and conspired to assassinate King Xerxes. ²² But Mordecai found

out about the plot and told Queen Esther, who in turn reported it to the king, giving credit to Mordecai.²³ And when the report was investigated and found to be true, the two officials were impaled on poles. All this was recorded in the book of the annals in the presence of the king.

We know from this last Wednesday that many Rabbi's summarize the Torah as being aimed at the preservation of Life. Mordecai's life demonstrates this in that even when his own life is not at risk, his compassion and allegiance to Torah drives him to preserve life wherever he goes. Even in captivity under a gentile king, his focus is on preserving life.

This led Mordecai to save the king when he discovered the plot of Bigthana and Teresh. Yet he did not do this motivated by recognition or reward. It was not until much later, that the king happened to be reading the Book of the Annals that Mordecai was rewarded and recognized. His faithfulness was not motivated by anything other than the display of righteousness from the Torah in his life.

What is your faithfulness motivated by? Do you act righteously only when others can see? Is your calling motivated by your own personal recognition? Before you answer, its imperative to examine your own life. If your efforts in studying the word are only when others are around, you have your answer. If lofty thoughts of ministry are what excites you more than the ministry right in front of you, you have your answer.

When compromise is removed from your life, your confidence can grow and be consecrated to the Work of the Lord.

Mordecai was motivated solely by righteousness and the lives of others, herein lies an essential truth for anyone desiring to minister with the sword or the bow. If you desire anything other than righteousness and the call of God, you cannot be on the battlefield. Consider Deuteronomy 20 in light of Mordecai and our present mission.

- **Deuteronomy 20:2–9 (NIV)**

² When you are about to go into battle, the priest shall come forward and address the army. ³ He shall say: “Hear, Israel: Today you are going into battle against your enemies. Do not be fainthearted or afraid; do not panic or be terrified by them. ⁴ For the Lord your God is the one who goes with you to fight for you against your enemies to give you victory.” ⁵ The officers shall say to the army: “Has anyone built a new house and not yet begun to live in it? Let him go home, or he may die in battle and someone else may begin to live in it. ⁶ Has anyone planted a vineyard and not begun to enjoy it? Let him go home, or he may die in battle and someone else enjoy it. ⁷ Has anyone become pledged to a woman and not married her? Let him go home, or he may die in battle and someone else marry her.” ⁸ Then the officers shall add, “Is anyone afraid or fainthearted? Let him go home so that his fellow soldiers will not become disheartened too.” ⁹ When the officers have finished speaking to the army, they shall appoint commanders over it.

Men and women who desire to be a part of our vision - you cannot desire anything else in this life other than God's will and the mission.

In the perfect law that always promotes life, Moses lays what qualifies soldiers for war—and it is wholehearted devotion.

The men who were chosen to go to war were not the ones who had the most money, not the ones who had the best skills, and not the ones who had the most experience! No, the ones who were chosen to go to war were the ones who:

- ...desired the mission over their own comfort and living location.
- Those who longed to fight more than build their own personal vineyard/wealth.
- Those who would rather die on the battlefield God has called them to, than idolize a comfortable life with their family.

Those who desire anything other than God's mission for them are not fit for the field; either foreign, domestic or right in front of you!!!

Each of these battlefield mindsets are daily mindsets! You must daily discern the battle and show great conviction and confidence forgoing all else to accomplish God's purpose for your life! This is what it means to be fully consecrated to the work of the Lord. It starts with a confidence from heaven that comes when compromise is removed, then it progresses to ever growing levels of consecration as all distractions are eliminated.

Mordecai exemplifies this very thing. He has shown an uncompromising confidence to do the will of the LORD, and as we move on we will see him and those around him become increasingly consecrated for their divine mission.

- **Esther 4:13-14 (NIV)**

“Do not think that because you are in the king’s house you alone of all the Jews will escape. **14** For if you remain silent at this time, relief and deliverance for the Jews will arise from another place, but you and your father’s family will perish. And who knows but that you have come to your royal position for such a time as this?”

For Mordecai, as he lived a confident and consecrated life, the response was increasingly hostile. Haman's hatred only grew to a point where he influenced the king to issue a decree for the total annihilation of the Jews. As you live with boldness toward the will of God for your life, you should not expect life to get

easier. But rather expect to stand firm through increasing levels of resistance from the world.

Now we all love the what was said to Esther about coming to a time such as this. But notice the surety of Mordecai in the first part of verse 14. He says, if you don't do this, God is still going to deliver the Jews! What confidence! He lived a life of private devotion. His character was developed as he lived by the Word and was tested with oppression, and this is what grew his confidence! Amidst a nationwide decree from a king concerning the annihilation of the Jews, Mordecai was confident deliverance would come. His trust in God and His promises was unwavering.

Remember, Mordecai's goal was never personal recognition. He had no compromise and desired righteousness above all else and it led him to taking part in the salvation of the entire Jewish race! Anytime you faithfully stand in confidence, seeking God's righteousness you will be given opportunity to take bold stands for your faith!

When Mordecai and Esther spoke up and the King issued an edict to save the Jewish people, look at what it produces in all around.

- **Esther 8:17 (NIV)**

¹⁷ In every province and in every city to which the edict of the king came, there was joy and gladness among the Jews, with feasting and celebrating. And many people of other nationalities became Jews because fear of the Jews had seized them.

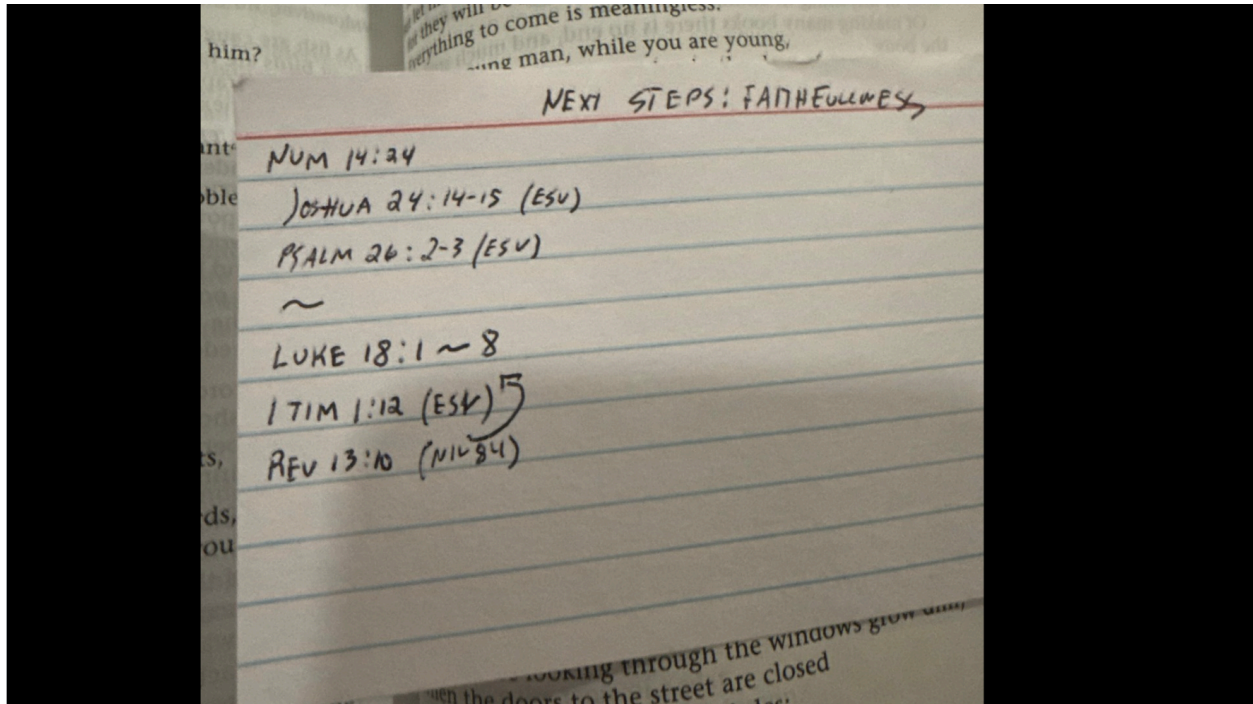
We know the end of the story, Esther stands before the king, and he grants her request, Mordechai is honored, and the Jews are delivered. And it all started with one man refusing to bow to the world and living faithfully by the word of God over time.

This leads to deliverance not only for the Jews, but people from other nationalities saw the favor on them and sided with them! One might say: his faith caused others to be like him. Does that possibly sound a little like discipleship? This is exactly what we will accomplish in places both domestically and abroad, and it starts with a personal commitment to holiness, displayed overtime, that leads to an unbreakable confidence and consecration.

What's also essential to point out is that Mordecai elevated the next generation above himself. He raised Esther since the time of her youth and he gave her direction at the risk of his own life (and hers). Not only that but whose name is on the cover page of this story? Not his.

We are nearing a close, we just have a few more passages to encourage you with. It is evident God has given this church an incredible vision that He is going to accomplish in this region. We are the Sword and Bow of Adonai. What this message was intended to do was inspire you to right action RIGHT NOW. God will speak to us concerning who, when, where and all of those details. We can only stand on what God has specifically told us. Until that time, your mission is growing confidence and consecration that will solidify your calling. In essence, to be able to demonstrate great faith on the field, you must first demonstrate consistent faith here.

This is a life-long message we all need to perpetually bind to our foreheads and hands. We want to give you six scriptures on the heart of this message:



- **Numbers 14:23–24 (NIV)**

²⁴ But because my servant Caleb has a different spirit and follows me wholeheartedly, I will bring him into the land he went to, and his descendants will inherit it.

Caleb faithfully waited to receive his inheritance for decades longer than he expected. This was because he stayed faithful to helping his brothers receive what God had promised them. Although this looked like a setback, it in no way hindered his inheritance, because our timeline is not what matters, faithfulness and conviction is what guarantees our inheritance.

- **Joshua 24:14–15 (NIV)**

¹⁴ “Now fear the Lord and serve him with all faithfulness. Throw away the gods your ancestors worshiped beyond the Euphrates River and in Egypt, and serve the Lord. ¹⁵ But if serving the Lord seems undesirable to you, then choose for yourselves this day whom you will serve,

whether the gods your ancestors served beyond the Euphrates, or the gods of the Amorites, in whose land you are living. But as for me and my household, we will serve the Lord.”

The parting words from the leader of Israel whose name is Salvation is to serve the Lord in ALL FAITHFULNESS. This is the key to serving the Lord in the land and calling God has set apart for you.

- **Psalm 26:1–3 (NIV)**

¹ Vindicate me, Lord,
for I have led a blameless life;
I have trusted in the Lord
and have not faltered.
² Test me, Lord, and try me,
examine my heart and my mind;
³ for I have always been mindful of your unfailing love
and have lived in reliance on your faithfulness.

David's mentality was not stuck in the past, he knew he had been redeemed and was confident in His God given vision, he knew he was destined to serve His master and thus he asked to be tested. He wanted to be examined and tried. Do you desire the call of God so high that you desire testing and further consecration for the sake of development?

- **Luke 18:1 (NIV)**

18 Then Jesus told his disciples a parable to show them that they should always pray and not give up.

In your own time, read the parable in Luke 18. Verse one tells us that the entire point of the parable is to pray and not give up. What a simple yet profound topic

Jesus tells an entire story to display. In the story, the widow receives what she asked for because she was persistent. This same mentality is required. If you are going to be a minister and plant a work, your conviction must be to never quit, regardless of circumstance and situation until your work is complete.

- **Luke 18:8 (NIV)**

⁸ I tell you, he will see that they get justice, and quickly. However, when the Son of Man comes, will he find faith on the earth?"

The coming of the son of man will not be marked with questions concerning personal success, wealth, or skills acquired. What Jesus is looking for in his return—faithfulness.

- **Revelation 13:8–10 (NIV)**

⁸ All inhabitants of the earth will worship the beast—all whose names have not been written in the Lamb's book of life, the Lamb who was slain from the creation of the world.

⁹ Whoever has ears, let them hear.

¹⁰ "If anyone is to go into captivity,
into captivity they will go.
If anyone is to be killed with the sword,
with the sword they will be killed."

This calls for **patient endurance and faithfulness** on the part of God's people.

Those who live a godly life will be persecuted. **The regions we want to plant churches in, here in the states are not easier.** The mentality required is: either I die or my enemy dies!"

The idea that this will be easy or cheap or the enemy will let us do this is juvenile!!! It will take every ounce of energy and funds but it will be worth it! Thus, patient endurance and faithfulness is what is required to develop families who can succeed on the field.

- **1 Timothy 1:12 (ESV)**

12 I thank him who has given me strength, Christ Jesus our Lord,
because he judged me faithful, appointing me to his service

It was not Paul's scholastic reputation that caused him to be appointed for ministry— It was not the amount of money he had when he was sent out. It was his faithfulness.

We are going to read you once last passage.

- **Psalms 68:15–18 (NIV)**

15 Mount Bashan, majestic mountain, (*lit. mountain of the gods*)

Mount Bashan, rugged mountain,

16 why gaze in envy, you rugged mountain,
at the mountain where God chooses to reign,
where the Lord himself will dwell forever?

17 The chariots of God are tens of thousands
and thousands of thousands;
the Lord has come from Sinai into his sanctuary.

18 When you ascended on high,
you took many captives;
you received gifts from people,
even from the rebellious—
that you, Lord God, might dwell there.

- 5 fold
- Seed of rebellion and demonic defection
- We are called to go to ground zero and take those farthest from Adonai to be his gifts to the nations
- This is the mission and the kind of character required