Lecture 19 – Post-Exilic Revelation (Part 1)

“But if you return to me and obey my commands, then even if your exiled people are at the farthest horizon, I will gather them from there and bring them to the place I have chosen as a dwelling for my Name.” Nehemiah 1:9

Key Terms
Rebuilding, temple worship, covenant

Objective
To evaluate the events and prophets of the post-exilic era in the context of Israel’s covenant relationship with God

Post-Exilic Revelation (Part 1)
I. Introductory Comments
   A. Time: 520 B.C. (Esther) to 420 B.C. (Malachi)
   B. Events
      1. Jewish communities in three areas – Palestine, Babylon/Persia, Egypt
      2. Jerusalem and temple rebuilding
   C. Literature
      1. Biblical: Eight books written
II. The Historical Accounts
   A. Prophets give some details (Haggai and Zechariah 1-8)
   B. Esther
      1. Divine sovereignty over Persia
      2. Divine preservation of covenantal community/anti-parasite kingdom
      3. Roles of unexpected kingdom agents: Xerxes, Haman, Esther, Mordecai
      4. Three central concepts not explicitly developed, but implicitly controlling
   C. Ezra
      1. Two languages, two communities
      2. His message
         a. Return from exile (Ezra 1:1; 2:8, 64)
         b. Rebuilding of altar, temple (Ezra 3; 4; 6:13ff)
         c. Parasite kingdom opposition (Ezra 4-6:15)
         d. Ezra’s role
            i. Devoted to Torah (Ezra 7:10)
            ii. Artaxerxes’ commission (Ezra 7:12)
            iii. Temple worship (Ezra 7:6)
            iv. Ethical matters and repentance (Ezra 8-10; Nehemiah 7:73-10:38)
            v. Mediatorial role: Shepherd
   D. Nehemiah
      1. Administrator
         a. Dealing with King Artaxerxes
         b. Leader in rebuilding walls and defense
         c. Awareness of people – builders, residents, priests
         d. Community organizer, helper of poor (Nehemiah 5)
      2. A man of prayer
         a. Previous great prayers
         b. Read (Nehemiah 1:5-11; 2:4; 4:4; 5:19; 6:9; 14; 9:5-37; 13:14, 22b, 29,
30c)

3. Aware of past
   a. From Abraham to Moses to prophets (Nehemiah 9)
   b. Instructions by Moses for priests and Levites (Nehemiah 12:44)
   c. David’s and Solomon’s temple provisions (Nehemiah 10:35-39; 12:45)

4. Aware of Yahweh’s covenant faithfulness
   a. Creator (Nehemiah 9:6)
   b. Righteous (Nehemiah 9:8)
   c. Provider (Nehemiah 9:14)
   d. Virtues (Nehemiah 9:17, 18, 32-34; 9:31)
   e. Faithful to promises regarding land (Nehemiah 9:22-25)

5. Conclusion: Read Nehemiah 9:32-35