

Session 7
The Return
The Maccabean Revolt

Judah Returns to the Promised Land
Faithful Jews Fight to Preserve their Identity

NOTES

I. The Exiles Return to the Land

- 537 BC – Zerubbabel returns and rebuilds the Temple

- 458 BC – Ezra returns and teaches

- 444 BC – Nehemiah returns and rebuilds the Jerusalem walls

2. Obstacles to Rebuilding

3. The Rise of Greek Influence

4. The Jews Revolt

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. What color is used to characterize the Return, and why?
2. What unlikely person did God use to return His people to the Promised Land, and how?
3. What three kinds of rebuilding were necessary when the Jews returned?
4. What kinds of opposition did they face, and how did they overcome them?
5. What kind of crisis confronted the Jews at the beginning of the Maccabean period, when Greece became the world power?
6. Based on the story of the Maccabees, what evidence do you see that Israel is learning to trust God?

7. Why is the color orange used to represent the period of the Maccabean Revolt?

8. What have you learned from these two periods that you can apply to your own life?

9. We have completed the Old Testament story. What positive progress has been made in God's plan to restore His children to Himself?

10. What is left to be done?

Sample

CLOSING PRAYER

God's plan unfolded through history and gives us the Story for our lives. Let us pray in the name of Jesus:

You brought the exiles home; they rebuilt the Temple and Jerusalem and were taught once more from your law:

–Rebuild our broken hearts and lives as we return to you.

The Maccabees stood up against the threats of Hellenization:

–Help us resist worldliness in our culture and follow only you.

Our Father...

HOME STUDY: LOOKING AHEAD

The Old Testament is finished, and the time for fulfillment of God's promises has come! God's people have been waiting for the Messiah for centuries and the long years of spiritual exile end at last in the period of Messianic Fulfillment. Will the Jews recognize the Son of Man and the Kingdom He has come to establish on Earth?

At the close of His earthly ministry Jesus commissions His apostles to spread the message of salvation to the ends of the earth. The seed of Abraham, bearing fruit in the Church, will now become a blessing to the world.

- Use your chart to fill in the following information about these time periods:

Period name: Messianic Fulfillment Time period: _____

Period color: _____ Color meaning: _____

Narrative book: _____ Supplemental books: _____

(Note: The four Gospels are of equal importance; the narrative book was chosen from among the synoptics because it includes the infancy narrative and therefore provides a more complete story of the history covered in the Bible Timeline.)

Period name: The Church Time period: _____

Period color: _____ Color meaning: _____

Name the three "waves of witness" that form the structure of this period:

- You may already be familiar with the Gospels and Acts of the Apostles, which tell the story of the two final periods in the Bible Timeline. It is difficult to pull just a few representative passages from them. To prepare for the lesson on Messianic Fulfillment and the Church, you might choose from among the following readings.

Messianic Fulfillment:

| | |
|--------------|--|
| Luke 1–4 | The announcement and birth and temptation of the Messiah |
| Luke 6:12–36 | The Twelve Apostles; “Sermon on the Plain” |
| Luke 9:1–36 | Sending out the Twelve; feeding the 5,000; Peter’s confession of Christ; the Transfiguration |
| Luke 22–24 | Last Supper, Passion, Resurrection |

The Church:

| | |
|-----------|---|
| Acts 2 | Pentecost |
| Acts 7–8 | Stephen’s martyrdom; the message begins to spread |
| Acts 9–11 | Saul’s conversion; Peter’s vision |

Please turn the page for *Home Study: Review*.

HOME STUDY: REVIEW

- Using your memory bead wristband, review once more the names and color meanings of the Old Testament periods. Have you memorized the colors yet? Complete the list that you started on page 28:

| | Period Name | Color | Meaning | Phrase |
|----|-------------|-------|---------|--------|
| 7 | | | | |
| 8 | | | | |
| 9 | | | | |
| 10 | | | | |
| 11 | | | | |
| 12 | | | | |

Sample