

## September 15 Answers

- 1) The arrival of the exiles in Jerusalem. There were three different times the Jews were taken into captivity in Babylon: one in **604** BC (Daniel), one in **597** BC (Jehoiachin and Ezekiel), and one in **587** BC (Zedekiah). There were also three different returns by the Jews to their homeland of Judah: one in **537** BC (under Zerubbabel), one in **457** BC (under Ezra), and one in **444** BC (under Nehemiah). Under Zerubbabel, the **temple** was rebuilt; under Ezra, the people were **reformed**; under Nehemiah, the **walls** of Jerusalem were rebuilt. The return of the exiles fulfilled Jeremiah's prophecy of **70** years of captivity. This can be seen in two ways: from the first deportation (604) to the laying of the temple's foundation (536), and from the destruction of the temple (587) to the completion of the temple (515). In the first case, 604 and 536 are included in the total; in the second, 587 and 515 are not included in the total. Ezra records that some of the people who returned were not able to **prove** that they were Israelites. Also, some of the "sons of the priests" could not be found in the ancestral registration lists. Because of this, they were considered **unclean** and **excluded** from the priesthood until their status was decided with the Urim and Thummim (cf. 1 Sam 14:41). This shows how important the genealogies were in following God's covenant law, and it teaches us that God is serious about the requirements he places on his people. The Christian life is not only about matters of the **heart**; it's also about holiness in **word** and **deed**.