

ST. JOHN THE BELOVED
2020 SUMMER BIBLE STUDY

“Babylonian Exile”



Updated 5 July 2020

These notes accompany the five (5) different hour-long Bible Study discussions that are available online:

Session 1: Israel in Exile

II Kings 17

<https://livestream.com/stjohnmclean/events/9195384/videos/208085876>

Session 2: Judah in Exile

II Kings 18-25

<https://livestream.com/stjohnmclean/events/9196786>

Session 3: First Return from Exile (Zerubbabel)

Book of Tobit

Book of Judith

Book of Ezra, chapters 1-6

<https://livestream.com/stjohnmclean/events/9198094>

Session 4: Second Return from Exile (Ezra)

Book of Esther

Book of Ezra, chapters 7-10

<https://livestream.com/stjohnmclean/events/9198985>

Session 5: Third Return from Exile (Nehemiah)

Book of Nehemiah

<https://livestream.com/stjohnmclean/events/9201370>

Kindly send corrections and suggestions to Fr.Pollard@StJohnCatholicMcLean.org

Senses of Scripture

Catechism of the Catholic Church par. 115: “two senses of Scripture: literal and the spiritual, latter subdivided into allegorical, moral and anagogical senses. The profound concordance of the four senses guarantees all its richness to the living reading of Scripture in the Church.”

Typology

Role of the Historical-Critical Method

Dei Verbum, the Dogmatic Constitution on Divine Revelation of the Second Vatican Council

New is Hidden in the Old and the Old is revealed in the New. Paradoxical?

Overview of Old Testament History

12 Time Periods of the Bible Timeline

- 1: Early World (-2000 BC)
- 2: Patriarchs (2000-1700 BC)
- 3: Egypt (1700-1280 BC)
- 4: Desert (1280-1240 BC)
- 5: Judges (1240-1050 BC)
- 6: United Kingdom (1050-930 BC)
- 7: Divided Kingdom (930-722 BC)
- 8: Exile (722-540 BC)
- 8: Return (540-167 BC)
- 10: Maccabean Revolt (167 BC-0)
- 11: Messiah (0-33 AD)
- 12: The Church (33AD-)

BIBLICAL BANISHMENTS

Exile from the Garden of Eden

Cain

Noah

Egypt

The Desert

Review of the Divided Kingdom (930-586 BC)

WATCH “Overview: 1-2 Kings” BibleProject 8:50
(<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=bVFW3wbi9pk>)

The reign of **Rehoboam** caused the northern 10 tribes to separate as the Kingdom of Israel.

20 kings in the north, all of them bad. Capital was Samaria.

20 kings in the southern Kingdom of Judah, 12 of whom were bad. Capital was Jerusalem.

Kings of Judah after King Solomon

Name	Reign	Scripture	Death
King Rehoboam	931/922-915 BC 17 years		natural causes
King Abijah	915–913/911 BC 3 years		natural causes
King Asa	913/911–873/870 BC 41 years		severe foot disease

King Jehoshaphat	873/870–849/845 BC 25 years		natural causes
King Jehoram	851/889–843/841 BC 8 years		severe stomach disease
King Ahaziah	843/841–842/841 BC 1 year		killed by Jehu, who usurped the throne of Israel
Queen Athaliah widow of Jehoram and mother of Ahaziah	842/841–837/835 BC 6 years		killed by the troops assigned by Jehoiada the Priest to protect Joash.
King Jehoash (Joash)	837/835–802/796 BC 40 years		killed by his officials namely: Zabad, son of Shimeath, an Ammonite Woman, and Jehozabad, son of Shimrith, a Moabite Woman.
King Amaziah	805/796–783/767 BC 29 years		killed in Lachish by the men sent by his officials who conspired against him.
King Uzziah (Azariah)	788/767–742/736 BC 52 years		Killed by Tzaraath
King Jotham	758/742–735/730 BC 16 years		natural causes
King Ahaz	735/732–726/715 BC 16 years	cf. 2 Kings 16:7-9	natural causes

King Hezekiah	726/715–697/687 BC 29 years		Natural Causes
King Manasseh	697/687–643/642 BC 55 years		natural causes
King Amon	643/642–641/640 BC 2 years		killed by his officials, who were killed later on by the people of Judah.
King Josiah	641/640–609 BC 31 years		shot by archers during the battle against Neco of Egypt. died upon his arrival on Jerusalem.
King Jehoahaz	609 BC 3 months		Necho II, king of Egypt, dethroned him, and Jehoahaz was replaced by his brother, Eliakim. Carried off to Egypt, where he died.
King Jehoiakim	609–598 BC 11 years		Natural Causes
King Jehoiachin (Jeconiah)	598 BC 3 months & 10 days		King Nebuchadnezzar II of Babylon sent for him and brought him to Babylon, where he lived and died. Jerusalem was captured by the Babylonians and Jehoiachin deposed on 16 March, 597 BC. Called “Jeconiah” in Jeremiah and Esther. 8 eighteen years old when he became king, and he reigned three months in Jerusalem. His

			mother's name was Nehush' ta the daughter of Elna' than of Jerusalem. 9 And he did what was evil in the sight of the Lord, according to all that his father had done.
King Zedekiah	597–587/586 BC 11 years		Died in prison. His reign saw the second rebellion against Nebuchadnezzar (588–586 BC). Jerusalem was captured after a lengthy siege, the temple burnt, Zedekiah blinded and taken into exile, and Judah reduced to a province.

Lament of the Divided Kingdom and the infidelity of Israel and Judah

READ Isaiah 5-6 *Parable of vineyard. Worship of foreign gods yielded wild grapes.*

The Assyrians enter the story in the 15th Chapter of II Kings:

17 In the thirty-ninth year of Azari' ah [=Uzziah, who reigned 788-737 BC] king of Judah Men' ahem [748-738 BC] the son of Gadi began to reign over Israel, and he reigned ten years in Samar' ia. 18 And he did what was evil in the sight of the Lord; he did not depart all his days from all the sins of Jerobo' am the son of Nebat, which he made Israel to sin. 19 Pul [Tiglath-Pileser III, who reigned 754-727 BC] the king of Assyria came against the land; and Men' ahem gave Pul a thousand talents of silver, that he might help him to confirm his hold of the royal power. 20 Men' ahem exacted the money from Israel, that is, from all the wealthy men, fifty shekels of silver from every man, to give to the king of Assyria. So the king of Assyria turned back, and did not stay there in the land. (II Kings 15,17-20)

About the Assyrian Empire

“Assyria” is mentioned three times in the Book of Genesis:

Genesis 2:14

10 A river flowed out of Eden to water the garden, and there it divided and became four rivers. 11 The name of the first is Pishon; it is the one which flows around the whole land of Hav' ilah, where there is gold; 12 and the gold of that land is good; bdellium and onyx stone are there. 13 The name of the second river is Gihon; it is the one which flows around the whole land of Cush. 14 And the name of the third river is Tigris, which flows east of Assyria. And the fourth river is the Euphra' tes. (Genesis 2,10-14)

Genesis 10:11

Genesis 6,10 And Noah had three sons, Shem, Ham, and Japheth.

6 The sons of Ham: Cush, Egypt, Put, and Canaan. 7 The sons of Cush: Seba, Hav' ilah, Sabtah, Ra' amah, and Sab' tecca. The sons of Ra' amah: Sheba and Dedan. 8 Cush became the father of **Nimrod**; he was the first on earth to be a mighty man. 9 He was a mighty hunter before the Lord; therefore it is said, “Like Nimrod a mighty hunter before the Lord.” 10 The beginning of his kingdom was Babel, Erech, and Accad, all of them in the land of Shinar. 11 From that land he went into Assyria, and built Nin' eveh, Reho' both-Ir, Calah, and 12 Resen between Nin' eveh and Calah; that is the great city. 13 Egypt became the father of Ludim, An' amim, Leha' bim, Naph-tu' him, 14 Pathru' sim, Caslu' him (whence came the Philistines), and Caph' torim. (Genesis 10,6-14)

More on Nimrod from *The Jewish Encyclopedia*

(<http://www.jewishencyclopedia.com/articles/11548-nimrod>)

Genesis 25:18

12 These are the descendants of Ish' mael, Abraham's son, whom Hagar the Egyptian, Sarah's maid, bore to Abraham. 13 These are the names of the sons of Ish' mael, named in the order of their birth: Neba' ioth, the first-born of Ish' mael; and Kedar, Adbeel, Mibsam, 14 Mishma, Dumah, Massa, 15 Hadad, Tema, Jetur, Naphish, and Ked' emah. 16 These are the sons of Ish' mael and these are their names, by their villages and by their encampments, twelve princes according to their tribes. 17 (These are the years of the life of Ish' mael, a hundred and thirty-seven years; he breathed his last and died, and was gathered to his kindred.) 18 They dwelt from Hav' ilah to Shur, which is opposite Egypt in the direction of Assyria; he settled over against all his people.

WATCH "The Rise and Fall of the Assyrian Empire" TED-Ed 5:16
(<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=7pa54hWROpQ>)

Assyria conquers more of Israel

READ II Kings 15,29

29 In the days of Pekah [750-722 BC] king of Israel Tig' lath-pile' ser king of Assyria came and captured I' jon, A' bel-beth-ma' acah, Jan-o' ah, Kedesh, Hazor, Gilead, and Galilee, all the land of Naph' tali; and he carried the people captive to Assyria.

Ahaz King of Judah capitulates to Assyria

READ II Kings 16,5-10

5 Then Rezin king of Syria and Pekah the son of Remali' ah, king of Israel, came up to wage war on Jerusalem, and they besieged Ahaz but could not conquer him. 6 At that time the king of Edom recovered Elath for Edom, and drove the men of Judah from Elath; and the E' domites came to Elath, where they dwell to this day. 7 So Ahaz sent messengers to Tig' lath-pile' ser king of Assyria, saying, "I am your servant and your son. Come up, and rescue me from the hand of the king of Syria and from the hand of the king of Israel, who are attacking me." 8 Ahaz also took the silver and gold that was found in the house of the Lord and in the treasures of the king's house, and sent a present to the king of Assyria. 9 And the king of Assyria hearkened to him; the king of Assyria marched up against Damascus, and took it, carrying its people captive to Kir, and he killed Rezin.

10 When King Ahaz went to Damascus to meet Tig' lath-pile' ser king of Assyria, he saw the altar that was at Damascus. And King Ahaz sent to Uri' ah the priest a model of the altar, and its pattern, exact in all its details.

Israel goes into exile (722 BC)

READ II Kings 17

In the twelfth year of Ahaz king of Judah Hoshe' a the son of Elah began to reign in Samar' ia over Israel, and he reigned nine years. 2 And he did what was evil in the sight of the Lord, yet not as the kings of Israel who were before him. 3 Against him came up Shalmane' ser king of Assyria; and Hoshe' a became his vassal, and paid him tribute. 4 But the king of Assyria found treachery in Hoshe' a; for he had sent messengers to So, king of Egypt, and offered no tribute to the king of Assyria, as he had done year by year; therefore the king of Assyria shut him up, and bound him in prison. 5 Then the king of Assyria invaded all the land and came to Samar' ia, and for three years he besieged it. 6 In the ninth year of Hoshe' a the king of Assyria captured Samar' ia, and he carried the Israelites away to Assyria, and placed them in Halah, and on the Habor, the river of Gozan, and in the cities of the Medes.

7 And this was so, because the people of Israel had sinned against the Lord their God, who had brought them up out of the land of Egypt from under the hand of Pharaoh king of Egypt, and had feared other gods 8 and walked in the customs of the nations whom the Lord drove out before the people of Israel, and in the customs which the kings of Israel had introduced. 9 And the people of Israel did secretly against the Lord their God things that were not right. They built for themselves high places at all their towns, from watchtower to fortified city; 10 they set up for themselves pillars and Ashe´rim on every high hill and under every green tree; 11 and there they burned incense on all the high places, as the nations did whom the Lord carried away before them. And they did wicked things, provoking the Lord to anger, 12 and they served idols, of which the Lord had said to them, "You shall not do this." 13 Yet the Lord warned Israel and Judah by every prophet and every seer, saying, "Turn from your evil ways and keep my commandments and my statutes, in accordance with all the law which I commanded your fathers, and which I sent to you by my servants the prophets." 14 But they would not listen, but were stubborn, as their fathers had been, who did not believe in the Lord their God. 15 They despised his statutes, and his covenant that he made with their fathers, and the warnings which he gave them. They went after false idols, and became false, and they followed the nations that were round about them, concerning whom the Lord had commanded them that they should not do like them. 16 And they forsook all the commandments of the Lord their God, and made for themselves molten images of two calves; and they made an Ashe´rah, and worshiped all the host of heaven, and served Ba´al. 17 And they burned their sons and their daughters as offerings, and used divination and sorcery, and sold themselves to do evil in the sight of the Lord, provoking him to anger. 18 Therefore the Lord was very angry with Israel, and removed them out of his sight; none was left but the tribe of Judah only.

19 Judah also did not keep the commandments of the Lord their God, but walked in the customs which Israel had introduced. 20 And the Lord rejected all the descendants of Israel, and afflicted them, and gave them into the hand of spoilers, until he had cast them out of his sight. (II Kings 17,1-20)

Session 2: EXILE OF JUDAH (722 BC-540 BC)

II Kings 18-25

King Hezekiah (King of Judah 726-697 BC)

READ II Kings 18,1-7

In the third year of Hoshea son of Elah, king of Israel, Hezekiah the son of Ahaz, king of Judah, began to reign. 2 He was twenty-five years old when he began to reign, and he reigned twenty-nine years in Jerusalem. His mother's name was Abi the daughter of Zechariah. 3 And he did what was right in the eyes of the Lord, according to all that David his father had done. 4 He removed the high places, and broke the pillars, and cut down the Asherah. And he broke in pieces the bronze serpent that Moses had made, for until those days the people of Israel had burned incense to it; it was called Nehushtan. 5 He trusted in the Lord the God of Israel; so that there was none like him among all the kings of Judah after him, nor among those who were before him. 6 For he held fast to the Lord; he did not depart from following him, but kept the commandments which the Lord commanded Moses. 7 And the Lord was with him; wherever he went forth, he prospered. He rebelled against the king of Assyria, and would not serve him.

Assyria attacks Judah

READ II Kings 18,13-16

13 In the fourteenth year of King Hezekiah Sennacherib king of Assyria came up against all the fortified cities of Judah and took them. 14 And Hezekiah king of Judah sent to the king of Assyria at Lachish, saying, "I have done wrong; withdraw from me; whatever you impose on me I will bear." And the king of Assyria required of Hezekiah king of Judah three hundred talents of silver and thirty talents of gold. 15 And Hezekiah gave him all the silver that was found in the house of the Lord, and in the treasuries of the king's house. 16 At that time Hezekiah stripped the gold from the doors of the temple of the Lord, and from the doorposts which Hezekiah king of Judah had overlaid and gave it to the king of Assyria. (II Kings 18, 13-16)

II Kings 18,28-35 **Sennacherib 705–703 BC (via the Rabshakeh) offers Judah (speaking to Eliakim, Shebna, Joah, who were representing King Hezekiah) an offer of land**

28 Then the Rabshakeh stood and called out in a loud voice in the language of Judah: "Hear the word of the great king, the king of Assyria! 29 Thus says the king: 'Do not let Hezekiah deceive you, for he will not be able to deliver you out of my hand. 30 Do not let Hezekiah make

you to rely on the Lord by saying, The Lord will surely deliver us, and this city will not be given into the hand of the king of Assyria.’ 31 Do not listen to Hezeki’ ah; for thus says the king of Assyria: ‘Make your peace with me and come out to me; then every one of you will eat of his own vine, and every one of his own fig tree, and every one of you will drink the water of his own cistern; 32 until I come and take you away to a land like your own land, a land of grain and wine, a land of bread and vineyards, a land of olive trees and honey, that you may live, and not die. And do not listen to Hezeki’ ah when he misleads you by saying, The Lord will deliver us. 33 Has any of the gods of the nations ever delivered his land out of the hand of the king of Assyria? 34 Where are the gods of Hamath and Arpad? Where are the gods of Sepharva’ im, Hena, and Ivvah? Have they delivered Samar’ ia out of my hand? 35 Who among all the gods of the countries have delivered their countries out of my hand, that the Lord should deliver Jerusalem out of my hand?’”

The repeated exhortation, “do not listen to Hezekiah” parallels the insistent voice of temptation.

Contrast this with God’s Offer to Abraham

READ Deuteronomy 30,15-20

15 “See, I have set before you this day life and good, death and evil. 16 If you obey the commandments of the Lord your God[a] which I command you this day, by loving the Lord your God, by walking in his ways, and by keeping his commandments and his statutes and his ordinances, then you shall live and multiply, and the Lord your God will bless you in the land which you are entering to take possession of it. 17 But if your heart turns away, and you will not hear, but are drawn away to worship other gods and serve them, 18 I declare to you this day, that you shall perish; you shall not live long in the land which you are going over the Jordan to enter and possess. 19 I call heaven and earth to witness against you this day, that I have set before you life and death, blessing and curse; therefore choose life, that you and your descendants may live, 20 loving the Lord your God, obeying his voice, and cleaving to him; for that means life to you and length of days, that you may dwell in the land which the Lord swore to your fathers, to Abraham, to Isaac, and to Jacob, to give them.”

Vs. 19: The pro-life movement’s simplest, perhaps most effective slogan is, no surprise, Scripture: “...choose life...”

King Hezekiah consults with the Prophet Isaiah

READ II Kings 19,1-7

When King Hezeki’ ah heard it, he rent his clothes, and covered himself with sackcloth, and went into the house of the Lord. 2 And he sent Eli’ akim, who was over the household, and Shebna the secretary, and the senior priests, covered with sackcloth, to the prophet Isaiah the

son of Amoz. 3 They said to him, "Thus says Hezeki' ah, This day is a day of distress, of rebuke, and of disgrace; children have come to the birth, and there is no strength to bring them forth. 4 It may be that the Lord your God heard all the words of the Rab' shakeh, whom his master the king of Assyria has sent to mock the living God, and will rebuke the words which the Lord your God has heard; therefore lift up your prayer for the remnant that is left." 5 When the servants of King Hezeki' ah came to Isaiah, 6 Isaiah said to them, "Say to your master, 'Thus says the Lord: Do not be afraid because of the words that you have heard, with which the servants of the king of Assyria have reviled me. 7 Behold, I will put a spirit in him, so that he shall hear a rumor and return to his own land; and I will cause him to fall by the sword in his own land.'"

Response of King Hezekiah (2 Kings 19)

Hezekiah does not heed the taunts of Sennacherib, but tears his clothes over the insult to God. Bolstered by a report from the prophet Isaiah. Hezekiah spread out Sennacherib's letter before god and asked him to vindicate his name. That night an angel of the Lord put to death 185,000 Assyrian soldiers, and Sennacherib withdrew his army." TBT

READ II Kings 19,35-37

35 And that night the angel of the Lord went forth, and slew a hundred and eighty-five thousand in the camp of the Assyrians; and when men arose early in the morning, behold, these were all dead bodies. 36 Then Sennach' erib king of Assyria departed, and went home, and dwelt at Nin' eveh. 37 And as he was worshipping in the house of Nisroch his god, Adram' melech and Share' zer, his sons, slew him with the sword, and escaped into the land of Ar' arat. And Esarhad' don his son reigned in his stead.

Death of Sennacherib

In 681 BC, Sennacherib was assassinated by **Esarhaddon**, his 3rd oldest son.

Esarhaddon ruled with success.

In 669 BC his rule passed over peacefully to his sons, **Ashurbanapal** (died in 631 BC) and Shamash-Shum-Ukin.

Isaiah tells King Hezekiah of ruin and desolation

READ 2 Kings 20,16-18

16 Then Isaiah said to Hezeki' ah, "Hear the word of the Lord: 17 Behold, the days are coming, when all that is in your house, and that which your fathers have stored up till this day, shall be

carried to Babylon; nothing shall be left, says the Lord. 18 And some of your own sons, who are born to you, shall be taken away; and they shall be eunuchs in the palace of the king of Babylon.”

Vs. 19 Could again contrast with Abraham, who is motivated to go on his journey (at least in part) in order to obtain good/blessing for his children, whereas Hezekiah is content so long as nothing bad happens to himself

Death of King Hezekiah

II Kings 20,21

And Hezeki' ah slept with his fathers; and Manas' seh his son reigned in his stead.

Rise of King Manasseh (II Kings 20,21 - II Kings 21,18)

[Manasseh was] a boy of twelve at his father's death. His reign of fifty-three years is the longest recorded in the annals of Judah.

Idolatry of King Manasseh

READ 2 Kings 21,1-18

Manas' seh was twelve years old when he began to reign, and he reigned fifty-five years in Jerusalem. His mother's name was Heph' zibah. 2 And he did what was evil in the sight of the Lord, according to the abominable practices of the nations whom the Lord drove out before the people of Israel. 3 For he rebuilt the high places which Hezeki' ah his father had destroyed; and he erected altars for Ba' al, and made an Ashe' rah, as Ahab king of Israel had done, and worshiped all the host of heaven, and served them. 4 And he built altars in the house of the Lord, of which the Lord had said, "In Jerusalem will I put my name." 5 And he built altars for all the host of heaven in the two courts of the house of the Lord. 6 And he burned his son as an offering, and practiced soothsaying and augury, and dealt with mediums and with wizards. He did much evil in the sight of the Lord, provoking him to anger. 7 And the graven image of Ashe' rah that he had made he set in the house of which the Lord said to David and to Solomon his son, "In this house, and in Jerusalem, which I have chosen out of all the tribes of Israel, I will put my name for ever; 8 and I will not cause the feet of Israel to wander any more out of the land which I gave to their fathers, if only they will be careful to do according to all that I have commanded them, and according to all the law that my servant Moses commanded them." 9 But they did not listen, and Manas' seh seduced them to do more evil than the nations had done whom the Lord destroyed before the people of Israel.

10 And the Lord said by his servants the prophets, 11 "Because Manas' seh king of Judah has committed these abominations, and has done things more wicked than all that the Amorites did, who were before him, and has made Judah also to sin with his idols; 12 therefore thus says the Lord, the God of Israel, Behold, I am bringing upon Jerusalem and Judah such evil that the ears of every one who hears of it will tingle. 13 And I will stretch over Jerusalem the measuring line of Samar' ia, and the plummet of the house of Ahab; and I will wipe Jerusalem as one wipes a dish, wiping it and turning it upside down. 14 And I will cast off the remnant of my heritage, and give them into the hand of their enemies, and they shall become a prey and a spoil to all their enemies, 15 because they have done what is evil in my sight and have provoked me to anger, since the day their fathers came out of Egypt, even to this day."

16 Moreover Manas' seh shed very much innocent blood, till he had filled Jerusalem from one end to another, besides the sin which he made Judah to sin so that they did what was evil in the sight of the Lord.

The name "Manas' seh" comes from the verb "to forget" which may be contrasted with Mary who "pondered all these things in her heart".

The Chronicler, however, declares (II Chron. xxxiii. 11) that in consequence of the deliberate unfaithfulness of Judah God brought upon the nation "the captains of the host of the King of Assyria," who took Manasseh in chains to Babylon. Thence, having truly repented, he was restored to his throne, where he demonstrated the genuineness of his change of heart by giving himself to measures of defense, administration, and religious reform. (Jewish Encyclopedia)

King Amon (II Kings 21,19-26)

King Josiah (II Kings 21,26-II King 23,30)

Reforms of King Josiah

READ II Kings 23,24-25

Josi' ah put away the mediums and the wizards and the teraphim and the idols and all the abominations that were seen in the land of Judah and in Jerusalem, that he might establish the words of the law which were written in the book that Hilki' ah the priest found in the house of the Lord. 25 Before him there was no king like him, who turned to the Lord with all his heart and with all his soul and with all his might, according to all the law of Moses; nor did any like him arise after him.

READ II Kings 23,26-27

26 Still the Lord did not turn from the fierceness of his great wrath, by which his anger was kindled against Judah, because of all the provocations with which Manas' seh had provoked him. 27 And the Lord said, "I will remove Judah also out of my sight, as I have removed Israel, and I will cast off this city which I have chosen, Jerusalem, and the house of which I said, My name shall be there."

King Jehoahaz (II Kings 23,30-37)

READ II Kings 23,30-37

30 And his servants carried him dead in a chariot from Megid' do, and brought him to Jerusalem, and buried him in his own tomb. And the people of the land took Jeho' ahaz the son of Josi' ah, and anointed him, and made him king in his father's stead.

Reign and Captivity of Jehoahaz

31 Jeho' ahaz was twenty-three years old when he began to reign, and he reigned three months in Jerusalem. His mother's name was Hamu' tal the daughter of Jeremiah of Libnah. 32 And he did what was evil in the sight of the Lord, according to all that his fathers had done. 33 And Pharaoh Neco put him in bonds at Riblah in the land of Hamath, that he might not reign in Jerusalem, and laid upon the land a tribute of a hundred talents of silver and a talent of gold. 34 And Pharaoh Neco made Eli' akim the son of Josi' ah king in the place of Josi' ah his father, and changed his name to Jehoi' akim. But he took Jeho' ahaz away; and he came to Egypt, and died there. 35 And Jehoi' akim gave the silver and the gold to Pharaoh, but he taxed the land to give the money according to the command of Pharaoh. He exacted the silver and the gold of the people of the land, from every one according to his assessment, to give it to Pharaoh Neco.

King Jehoiakim (II Kings 24,1-6)

READ 2 Kings 24,1-7

In his days Nebuchadnezz' zar king of Babylon came up, and Jehoi' akim became his servant three years; then he turned and rebelled against him. 2 And the Lord sent against him bands of the Chalde' ans, and bands of the Syrians, and bands of the Moabites, and bands of the Ammonites, and sent them against Judah to destroy it, according to the word of the Lord which he spoke by his servants the prophets. 3 Surely this came upon Judah at the command of the Lord, to remove them out of his sight, for the sins of Manas' seh, according to all that he had done, 4 and also for the innocent blood that he had shed; for he filled Jerusalem with innocent blood, and the Lord would not pardon. 5 Now the rest of the deeds of Jehoi' akim, and all that he did, are they not written in the Book of the Chronicles of the Kings of Judah? 6 So Jehoi' akim

slept with his fathers, and Jehoi' achin his son reigned in his stead. 7 And the king of Egypt did not come again out of his land, for the king of Babylon had taken all that belonged to the king of Egypt from the Brook of Egypt to the river Euphra' tes.

Emergence of the Chaldean Dynasty, having overthrown the Assyrian (Sargonid Dynasty)

Nabopolassar (626-605 BC) was the first King of the Chaldean Empire. He is not mentioned in the Bible. The Chaldeans had been part of the Assyrian Empire. The Chaldeans having defeated the Assyrians, the Chaldeans then are known in the Bible as the Babylonian Empire.

In **612 BC**, the Assyrian capital of Ninevah fell to the Babylonians (Chaldeans), who pressed down southward to meet hostile advances from Egypt.

Nebuchadnezzar (605-562 BC) Second King of the Chaldean Babylonian Empire

Belshazzar (562-539 BC) "Son of Nebuchadnezzar" was actually son of Nabonidus, the last King of the Neo-Babylonian Empire who reigned **556-539 BC**.

First Deportation (605 BC) under King Jehoiachin

II Kings 24,12-16

Bergsma p. 407

King Jehoiachin (II Kings 24,6-17; II Kings 25,27-30)

Taken to Babylon. Eventually capitulates. Dines at the King's table every day as long as he lived.

When he is exiled Nebuchadnezzar appoints his uncle to rule.

Prophet Daniel

Daniel had gone to Babylon in the First Deportation in the 3rd year of Jehoiachin's reign.

Dreams and prophecies took place "until the first year of **King Cyrus (539 BC)**" (Daniel 1,21)

READ Daniel 1,1-7

1 In the third year of the reign of Jehoi' akim king of Judah, Nebuchadnezz' zar king of Babylon came to Jerusalem and besieged it. 2 And the Lord gave Jehoi' akim king of Judah into his hand, with some of the vessels of the house of God; and he brought them to the land of Shinar, to the

house of his god, and placed the vessels in the treasury of his god. 3 Then the king commanded Ashpenaz, his chief eunuch, to bring some of the people of Israel, both of the royal family and of the nobility, 4 youths without blemish, handsome and skilful in all wisdom, endowed with knowledge, understanding learning, and competent to serve in the king's palace, and to teach them the letters and language of the Chaldeans. 5 The king assigned them a daily portion of the rich food which the king ate, and of the wine which he drank. They were to be educated for three years, and at the end of that time they were to stand before the king. 6 Among these were Daniel, Hananiah, Mishael, and Azariah of the tribe of Judah. 7 And the chief of the eunuchs gave them names: Daniel he called Belteshazzar, Hananiah he called Shadrach, Mishael he called Meshach, and Azariah he called Abednego.

WATCH "Daniel" BibleProject 8:53 (<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=9cSC9uobtPM>)

READ Daniel 7,1-14 Dream of Daniel during "reign" of Belshazzar

Prophet Jeremiah

WATCH "Jeremiah" BibleProject 7:14 (<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=RSK36cHbrk0>)

Jeremiah began to prophesy during the reign of Josiah and continued through the three deportations, finally fleeing with other to Egypt after the murder of Gedaliah (2 Kings 25). He was a fiery preacher and a prophet of judgement who announced the pending destruction of Judah and the fulfillment of the covenant curses. But God also gave him a message of hope that his mercy would ultimately triumph. TBT

READ Jeremiah 31,1-40 A message of hope and prophesy of a New Covenant.

Second Deportation in Response to Zedekiah's Rebellion (597 BC)

II Kings 25,1-7

READ II Kings 25,1-7

King Zedekiah (II Kings 24,17 - II Kings 25,7)

1 And in the ninth year of his reign, in the tenth month, on the tenth day of the month, Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon came with all his army against Jerusalem, and laid siege to it;

and they built siegeworks against it round about. 2 So the city was besieged till the eleventh year of King Zedeki' ah. 3 On the ninth day of the fourth month the famine was so severe in the city that there was no food for the people of the land. 4 Then a breach was made in the city; the king with all the men of war fled by night by the way of the gate between the two walls, by the king's garden, though the Chalde' ans were around the city. And they went in the direction of the Arabah. 5 But the army of the Chalde' ans pursued the king, and overtook him in the plains of Jericho; and all his army was scattered from him. 6 Then they captured the king, and brought him up to the king of Babylon at Riblah, who passed sentence upon him. 7 They slew the sons of Zedeki' ah before his eyes, and put out the eyes of Zedeki' ah, and bound him in fetters, and took him to Babylon.

King Zedekiah, uncle of Jehoiachin appointed King by Nebuchadnezzar

youngest son of Josiah and full brother of Jehoahaz
Born **618 BC** in Jerusalem, Israel
Died **561 BC** in Babylon
Reigned **597–586 BC**

His real name was "Mattaniah" (II Kings 24,17- means "gift of God"), but Nebuchadrezzar, who enthroned him (in **597 BC**) in the place of the rebellious and captive Jehoiachin, his nephew, changed it to "Zedekiah" (means "God is righteousness"- an attempt to reduce Jewish faith to moral prescriptions?).

Prophet Jeremiah (born in 650 BC)

READ Jeremiah 34,2-5 *The Lord speaks to Jeremiah*

READ Jeremiah 34,18-22 *Final Warning to King Zedekiah before Exile of Judah*

Vs. 13- 17, especially 16 The Jews may have been meeting the letter of the law, but were not in accord with its spirit (releasing slaves on the sevens, but then immediately re-enslaving them against their will); it takes serious work, self-sacrificial love manifested in works (means at some point, we have to do something for GOD's sake, aka in Christian *charity*), to 'get (or keep) someone on their feet.' "Love until it hurts" -Mo. Teresa

Third Deportation and Destruction of the First Temple of Jerusalem (587 BC**)**

II Kings 24,8-21

Judah Falls

Desecration of the Temple

READ II Kings 25,8-21

8 In the fifth month, on the seventh day of the month—which was the nineteenth year of King Nebuchadnezzar, king of Babylon—Nebuzaradan, the captain of the bodyguard, a servant of the king of Babylon, came to Jerusalem. **9** And he burned the house of the Lord, and the king's house and all the houses of Jerusalem; every great house he burned down. **10** And all the army of the Chaldeans, who were with the captain of the guard, broke down the walls around Jerusalem. **11** And the rest of the people who were left in the city and the deserters who had deserted to the king of Babylon, together with the rest of the multitude, Nebuzaradan the captain of the guard carried into exile. **12** But the captain of the guard left some of the poorest of the land to be vinedressers and plowmen.

13 And the pillars of bronze that were in the house of the Lord, and the stands and the bronze sea that were in the house of the Lord, the Chaldeans broke in pieces, and carried the bronze to Babylon. **14** And they took away the pots, and the shovels, and the snuffers, and the dishes for incense and all the vessels of bronze used in the temple service, **15** the firepans also, and the bowls. What was of gold the captain of the guard took away as gold, and what was of silver, as silver. **16** As for the two pillars, the one sea, and the stands, which Solomon had made for the house of the Lord, the bronze of all these vessels was beyond weight. **17** The height of the one pillar was eighteen cubits, and upon it was a capital of bronze; the height of the capital was three cubits; a network and pomegranates, all of bronze, were upon the capital round about. And the second pillar had the like, with the network.

18 And the captain of the guard took Seraiah the chief priest, and Zephaniah the second priest, and the three keepers of the threshold; **19** and from the city he took an officer who had been in command of the men of war, and five men of the king's council who were found in the city; and the secretary of the commander of the army who mustered the people of the land; and sixty men of the people of the land who were found in the city. **20** And Nebuzaradan the captain of the guard took them, and brought them to the king of Babylon at Riblah. **21** And the king of Babylon smote them, and put them to death at Riblah in the land of Hamath. So Judah was taken into exile out of its land.

Gedaliah, Governor of those who remained in Jerusalem (II Kings 25,22-25; Jeremiah 40,1-41,2)

READ Jeremiah 40,1-12

1 The word that came to Jeremiah from the Lord after Nebuzaradan the captain of the guard had let him go from Ramah, when he took him bound in chains along with all the captives of Jerusalem and Judah who were being exiled to Babylon. **2** The captain of the guard took Jeremiah and said to him, "The Lord your God pronounced this evil against this place; **3** the Lord has brought it about, and has done as he said. Because you sinned against the Lord, and did not obey his voice, this thing has come upon you. **4** Now, behold, I release you today from the chains on your hands. If it seems good to you to come with me to Babylon, come, and I will look after

you well; but if it seems wrong to you to come with me to Babylon, do not come. See, the whole land is before you; go wherever you think it good and right to go. **5** If you remain, then return to Gedali' ah the son of Ahi' kam, son of Shaphan, whom the king of Babylon appointed governor of the cities of Judah, and dwell with him among the people; or go wherever you think it right to go." So the captain of the guard gave him an allowance of food and a present, and let him go. **6** Then Jeremiah went to Gedali' ah the son of Ahi' kam, at Mizpah, and dwelt with him among the people who were left in the land.

7 When all the captains of the forces in the open country and their men heard that the king of Babylon had appointed Gedali' ah the son of Ahi' kam governor in the land, and had committed to him men, women, and children, those of the poorest of the land who had not been taken into exile to Babylon, **8** they went to Gedali' ah at Mizpah—Ish' mael the son of Nethani' ah, Joha' nan the son of Kare' ah, Serai' ah the son of Tanhu' meth, the sons of Ephai the Netoph' athite, Jezani' ah the son of the Ma-ac' athite, they and their men. **9** Gedali' ah the son of Ahi' kam, son of Shaphan, swore to them and their men, saying, "Do not be afraid to serve the Chalde' ans. Dwell in the land, and serve the king of Babylon, and it shall be well with you. **10** As for me, I will dwell at Mizpah, to stand for you before the Chalde' ans who will come to us; but as for you, gather wine and summer fruits and oil, and store them in your vessels, and dwell in your cities that you have taken." **11** Likewise, when all the Jews who were in Moab and among the Ammonites and in Edom and in other lands heard that the king of Babylon had left a remnant in Judah and had appointed Gedali' ah the son of Ahi' kam, son of Shaphan, as governor over them, **12** then all the Jews returned from all the places to which they had been driven and came to the land of Judah, to Gedali' ah at Mizpah; and they gathered wine and summer fruits in great abundance.

Insurrection against Gedaliah (II Kings 25,25-26; Jeremiah 41,1-18)

Murder of Gedaliah (582 BC)

Prophet Ezekiel (5th year of the exile of King Jehoiachin Ez 1,2)

Ezekiel was part of the Deportation from Jerusalem after the first Attack of the Babylonians

"According to the Bible, Ezekiel (622-580 BC) and his wife lived during the Babylonian captivity on the banks of the Chebar River, in Tel Abib, with other exiles from Judah." Wikipedia

The work of Ezekiel overlapped with the end of Jeremiah. Bergsma

WATCH "Ezekiel 1-33" BibleProject 7:23 (<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=R-CIPu1nko8>)

WATCH "Ezekiel 34-48" BibleProject 7:13 (https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=SDeCWW_Bnyw)

READ Ezekiel 33 Ezekiel's message at hearing the news of the Fall of Jerusalem.

33 The word of the Lord came to me: 2 “Son of man, speak to your people and say to them, If I bring the sword upon a land, and the people of the land take a man from among them, and make him their watchman; 3 and if he sees the sword coming upon the land and blows the trumpet and warns the people; 4 then if any one who hears the sound of the trumpet does not take warning, and the sword comes and takes him away, his blood shall be upon his own head. 5 He heard the sound of the trumpet, and did not take warning; his blood shall be upon himself. But if he had taken warning, he would have saved his life. 6 But if the watchman sees the sword coming and does not blow the trumpet, so that the people are not warned, and the sword comes, and takes any one of them; that man is taken away in his iniquity, but his blood I will require at the watchman’s hand.

7 “So you, son of man, I have made a watchman for the house of Israel; whenever you hear a word from my mouth, you shall give them warning from me. 8 If I say to the wicked, O wicked man, you shall surely die, and you do not speak to warn the wicked to turn from his way, that wicked man shall die in his iniquity, but his blood I will require at your hand. 9 But if you warn the wicked to turn from his way, and he does not turn from his way; he shall die in his iniquity, but you will have saved your life.

10 “And you, son of man, say to the house of Israel, Thus have you said: ‘Our transgressions and our sins are upon us, and we waste away because of them; how then can we live?’ 11 Say to them, As I live, says the Lord God, I have no pleasure in the death of the wicked, but that the wicked turn from his way and live; turn back, turn back from your evil ways; for why will you die, O house of Israel? 12 And you, son of man, say to your people, The righteousness of the righteous shall not deliver him when he transgresses; and as for the wickedness of the wicked, he shall not fall by it when he turns from his wickedness; and the righteous shall not be able to live by his righteousness when he sins. 13 Though I say to the righteous that he shall surely live, yet if he trusts in his righteousness and commits iniquity, none of his righteous deeds shall be remembered; but in the iniquity that he has committed he shall die. 14 Again, though I say to the wicked, ‘You shall surely die,’ yet if he turns from his sin and does what is lawful and right, 15 if the wicked restores the pledge, gives back what he has taken by robbery, and walks in the statutes of life, committing no iniquity; he shall surely live, he shall not die. 16 None of the sins that he has committed shall be remembered against him; he has done what is lawful and right, he shall surely live.

17 “Yet your people say, ‘The way of the Lord is not just’; when it is their own way that is not just. 18 When the righteous turns from his righteousness, and commits iniquity, he shall die for it. 19 And when the wicked turns from his wickedness, and does what is lawful and right, he shall live by it. 20 Yet you say, ‘The way of the Lord is not just.’ O house of Israel, I will judge each of you according to his ways.”

21 *In the twelfth year of our exile, in the tenth month, on the fifth day of the month, a man who had escaped from Jerusalem came to me and said, "The city has fallen."* **22** *Now the hand of the Lord had been upon me the evening before the fugitive came; and he had opened my mouth by the time the man came to me in the morning; so my mouth was opened, and I was no longer dumb.*

The Survivors in Judah

23 *The word of the Lord came to me: **24** "Son of man, the inhabitants of these waste places in the land of Israel keep saying, 'Abraham was only one man, yet he got possession of the land; but we are many; the land is surely given us to possess.' **25** Therefore say to them, Thus says the Lord God: You eat flesh with the blood, and lift up your eyes to your idols, and shed blood; shall you then possess the land? **26** You resort to the sword, you commit abominations and each of you defiles his neighbor's wife; shall you then possess the land? **27** Say this to them, Thus says the Lord God: As I live, surely those who are in the waste places shall fall by the sword; and him that is in the open field I will give to the beasts to be devoured; and those who are in strongholds and in caves shall die by pestilence. **28** And I will make the land a desolation and a waste; and her proud might shall come to an end; and the mountains of Israel shall be so desolate that none will pass through. **29** Then they will know that I am the Lord, when I have made the land a desolation and a waste because of all their abominations which they have committed.*

30 *"As for you, son of man, your people who talk together about you by the walls and at the doors of the houses, say to one another, each to his brother, 'Come, and hear what the word is that comes forth from the Lord.' **31** And they come to you as people come, and they sit before you as my people, and they hear what you say but they will not do it; for with their lips they show much love, but their heart is set on their gain. **32** And lo, you are to them like one who sings love songs with a beautiful voice and plays well on an instrument, for they hear what you say, but they will not do it. **33** When this comes—and come it will!—then they will know that a prophet has been among them."*

Israel's False Shepherds

34 *The word of the Lord came to me: **2** "Son of man, prophesy against the shepherds of Israel, prophesy, and say to them, even to the shepherds, Thus says the Lord God: Ho, shepherds of Israel who have been feeding yourselves! Should not shepherds feed the sheep? **3** You eat the fat, you clothe yourselves with the wool, you slaughter the fatlings; but you do not feed the sheep. **4** The weak you have not strengthened, the sick you have not healed, the crippled you have not bound up, the strayed you have not brought back, the lost you have not sought, and with force and harshness you have ruled them. **5** So they were scattered, because there was no shepherd; and they became food for all the wild beasts. **6** My sheep were scattered, they wandered over all the mountains and on every high hill; my sheep were scattered over all the face of the earth, with none to search or seek for them.*

7 “Therefore, you shepherds, hear the word of the Lord: **8** As I live, says the Lord God, because my sheep have become a prey, and my sheep have become food for all the wild beasts, since there was no shepherd; and because my shepherds have not searched for my sheep, but the shepherds have fed themselves, and have not fed my sheep; **9** therefore, you shepherds, hear the word of the Lord: **10** Thus says the Lord God, Behold, I am against the shepherds; and I will require my sheep at their hand, and put a stop to their feeding the sheep; no longer shall the shepherds feed themselves. I will rescue my sheep from their mouths, that they may not be food for them.

God, the True Shepherd

11 “For thus says the Lord God: Behold, I, I myself will search for my sheep, and will seek them out. **12** As a shepherd seeks out his flock when some of his sheep[b] have been scattered abroad, so will I seek out my sheep; and I will rescue them from all places where they have been scattered on a day of clouds and thick darkness. **13** And I will bring them out from the peoples, and gather them from the countries, and will bring them into their own land; and I will feed them on the mountains of Israel, by the fountains, and in all the inhabited places of the country. **14** I will feed them with good pasture, and upon the mountain heights of Israel shall be their pasture; there they shall lie down in good grazing land, and on fat pasture they shall feed on the mountains of Israel. **15** I myself will be the shepherd of my sheep, and I will make them lie down, says the Lord God. **16** I will seek the lost, and I will bring back the strayed, and I will bind up the crippled, and I will strengthen the weak, and the fat and the strong I will watch over; I will feed them in justice.

17 “As for you, my flock, thus says the Lord God: Behold, I judge between sheep and sheep, rams and he-goats. **18** Is it not enough for you to feed on the good pasture, that you must tread down with your feet the rest of your pasture; and to drink of clear water, that you must foul the rest with your feet? **19** And must my sheep eat what you have trodden with your feet, and drink what you have fouled with your feet?

20 “Therefore, thus says the Lord God to them: Behold, I, I myself will judge between the fat sheep and the lean sheep. **21** Because you push with side and shoulder, and thrust at all the weak with your horns, till you have scattered them abroad, **22** I will save my flock, they shall no longer be a prey; and I will judge between sheep and sheep. **23** And I will set up over them one shepherd, my servant David, and he shall feed them: he shall feed them and be their shepherd. **24** And I, the Lord, will be their God, and my servant David shall be prince among them; I, the Lord, have spoken.

25 “I will make with them a covenant of peace and banish wild beasts from the land, so that they may dwell securely in the wilderness and sleep in the woods. **26** And I will make them and the places round about my hill a blessing; and I will send down the showers in their season; they shall be showers of blessing. **27** And the trees of the field shall yield their fruit, and the earth shall yield its increase, and they shall be secure in their land; and they shall know that I am the Lord,

when I break the bars of their yoke, and deliver them from the hand of those who enslaved them. **28** They shall no more be a prey to the nations, nor shall the beasts of the land devour them; they shall dwell securely, and none shall make them afraid. **29** And I will provide for them prosperous plantations so that they shall no more be consumed with hunger in the land, and no longer suffer the reproach of the nations. **30** And they shall know that I, the Lord their God, am with them, and that they, the house of Israel, are my people, says the Lord God. **31** And you are my sheep, the sheep of my pasture, [f] and I am your God, says the Lord God.”

Jeremiah instructs the survivors not to leave Jerusalem (Jeremiah 42)

READ Jeremiah 42,4-6,7-22

4 Jeremiah the prophet said to them, **“I have heard you; behold, I will pray to the Lord your God according to your request, and whatever the Lord answers you I will tell you; I will keep nothing back from you.”** **5** Then they said to Jeremiah, **“May the Lord be a true and faithful witness against us if we do not act according to all the word with which the Lord your God sends you to us. 6 Whether it is good or evil, we will obey the voice of the Lord our God to whom we are sending you, that it may be well with us when we obey the voice of the Lord our God.”**

7 At the end of ten days the word of the Lord came to Jeremiah. **8** Then he summoned Joha´nan the son of Kare´ah and all the commanders of the forces who were with him, and all the people from the least to the greatest, **9** and said to them, **“Thus says the Lord, the God of Israel, to whom you sent me to present your supplication before him: 10 If you will remain in this land, then I will build you up and not pull you down; I will plant you, and not pluck you up; for I repent of the evil which I did to you. 11 Do not fear the king of Babylon, of whom you are afraid; do not fear him, says the Lord, for I am with you, to save you and to deliver you from his hand. 12 I will grant you mercy, that he may have mercy on you and let you remain in your own land. 13 But if you say, ‘We will not remain in this land,’ disobeying the voice of the Lord your God 14 and saying, ‘No, we will go to the land of Egypt, where we shall not see war, or hear the sound of the trumpet, or be hungry for bread, and we will dwell there,’ 15 then hear the word of the Lord, O remnant of Judah. Thus says the Lord of hosts, the God of Israel: If you set your faces to enter Egypt and go to live there, 16 then the sword which you fear shall overtake you there in the land of Egypt; and the famine of which you are afraid shall follow hard after you to Egypt; and there you shall die. 17 All the men who set their faces to go to Egypt to live there shall die by the sword, by famine, and by pestilence; they shall have no remnant or survivor from the evil which I will bring upon them.**

18 “For thus says the Lord of hosts, the God of Israel: As my anger and my wrath were poured out on the inhabitants of Jerusalem, so my wrath will be poured out on you when you go to Egypt. You shall become an execration, a horror, a curse, and a taunt. You shall see this place no more. 19 The Lord has said to you, O remnant of Judah, ‘Do not go to Egypt.’ Know for a certainty that I have warned you this day 20 that you have gone astray at the cost of your

lives. For you sent me to the Lord your God, saying, 'Pray for us to the Lord our God, and whatever the Lord our God says declare to us and we will do it.' 21 And I have this day declared it to you, but you have not obeyed the voice of the Lord your God in anything that he sent me to tell you. 22 Now therefore know for a certainty that you shall die by the sword, by famine, and by pestilence in the place where you desire to go to live."

Jeremiah is taken to Egypt

Jehoiachin enjoys Exile

READ II Kings 25,27-30

27 And in the thirty-seventh year of the exile of Jehoi' achin king of Judah, in the twelfth month, on the twenty-seventh day of the month, Evil-mer' odach king of Babylon, in the year that he began to reign, graciously freed Jehoi' achin king of Judah from prison; 28 and he spoke kindly to him, and gave him a seat above the seats of the kings who were with him in Babylon. 29 So Jehoi' achin put off his prison garments. And every day of his life he dined regularly at the king's table; 30 and for his allowance, a regular allowance was given him by the king, every day a portion, as long as he lived.

Kings of Babylon

Sargonid Dynasty (729–626 BC)

The Tenth dynasty refers to the period of Assyrian rule over Babylon. The kings [Sargon](#), [Sennacherib](#), [Ashur-nadin-shumi](#), [Esarhaddon](#), [Ashurbanipal](#), [Shamash-shum-ukin](#) and [Sinsharishkun](#) were part of the contemporary Assyrian royal family (many of them also being the kings of Assyria), the [Sargonid dynasty](#).

King	Reign	Succession	Notes
Tiglath-Pileser <i>Tukultī-apil-Ešarra</i>	729–722 BC (7 years)	King of Assyria, conquered Babylon	Neo-Assyrian King who conquered Babylon and was proclaimed as Babylonian king. Enumerated as Tiglath-Pileser III as King of Assyria.
Shalmaneser <i>Šulmanu-ašaridu</i>	727–722 BC (5 years)	Son of Tiglath-Pileser III	Continued the policies of Tiglath-Pileser III but was not as effective militarily, appears to have been a poor administrator who overtaxed the citizens of the empire. Probably assassinated in a <i>coup d'état</i> by his younger brother Sargon II, who took the throne. Enumerated as Shalmaneser V as King of Assyria.
Marduk-apla-iddina II <i>Marduk-apla-iddina</i>	722–710 BC (12 years)	Babylonian rebel	Rebellng against the Assyrians, Marduk-apla-iddina successfully maintained Babylonian independence for more than a decade before being defeated by the Neo-Assyrian king Sargon II in 710 BC. He briefly regained power in 703 BC.

<p>Sargon</p> <p><i>Šarru-kīn</i></p>	<p>710–705 BC</p> <p>(5 years)</p>	<p>Son of Tiglath-Pileser III, reconquered Babylon</p>	<p>Sargon was a brilliant administrator and military leader who expanded the empire to its greatest extent yet. Sargon's successful campaigns saw the treasury of Assyria grow and he eventually founded a new capital, Dur-Sharrukin ("fortress of Sargon"). He was killed in battle by the Tabal people in Anatolia. Enumerated as Sargon II as King of Assyria.</p>
<p>Sennacherib</p> <p><i>Sîn-ahhe-erība</i></p>	<p>705–703 BC</p> <p>(2 years)</p>	<p>Son of Sargon</p>	<p>Sennacherib is most famous for conquering Israel, Judah and many Greek-speaking parts of Anatolia. Sennacherib moved the Assyrian capital to Nineveh, which he expanded with great gardens and architecture. Sennacherib plundered and desecrated Babylon, seen as great sacrilege, and was assassinated in a conspiracy by two of his sons.</p>
<p>Marduk-zakir-shumi II</p> <p><i>Marduk-zâkir-šumi</i></p>	<p>703 BC</p> <p>(a few months)</p>	<p>Babylonian rebel</p>	<p>Rebelling against Sennacherib, Marduk-zakir-shumi II's reign was brief and he was soon replaced by Marduk-apla-iddina II, who returned to the throne.</p>
<p>Marduk-apla-iddina II briefly regained power in 703 BC, ruling for nine months before fleeing and later dying in exile.</p>			

<p>Bel-ibni</p> <p><i>Bel-ibni</i></p>	<p>703–700 BC</p> <p>(3 years)</p>	<p>Appointed as vassal king by Sennacherib</p>	<p>Appointed by Sennacherib after the Babylonian revolt was defeated in the belief that direct control of Babylon was infeasible, Bel-ibni soon conspired with Assyria's enemies to overthrow Sennacherib, after which he was deposed.</p>
<p>Ashur-nadin-shumi</p> <p><i>Aššur-nādin-šumi</i></p>	<p>700–694 BC</p> <p>(6 years)</p>	<p>Son of Sennacherib, appointed vassal king</p>	<p>Bel-ibni was replaced as king by Ashur-nadin-shumi, Sennacherib's son and heir. A few years thereafter, the Elamites attacked Babylon, capturing and executing Ashur-nadin-shumi.</p>
<p>Nergal-ushezib</p> <p><i>Nergal-ushezib</i></p>	<p>694–693 BC</p> <p>(1 year)</p>	<p>Babylonian rebel</p>	<p>Appointed by the Elamites, Nergal-ushezib was soon defeated in battle near Nippur by Sennacherib, who wished to avenge the death of his son.</p>
<p>Mushezib-Marduk</p> <p><i>Mushezib-Marduk</i></p>	<p>693–689 BC</p> <p>(4 years)</p>	<p>Babylonian rebel</p>	<p>Babylonian resistance against Sennacherib continued under Mushezib-Marduk, who was defeated after a brief war and a nine-month siege of Babylon.</p>
<p>Sennacherib destroyed Babylon in 689 BC, hoping to destroy Babylonia as a political entity. The city's reconstruction was announced by his son and successor Esarhaddon in 680 BC.</p>			

<p>Esarhaddon</p> <p><i>Aššur-aḫa-iddina</i></p>	<p>680–669 BC</p> <p>(11 years)</p>	<p>Son of Sennacherib</p>	<p>Esarhaddon defeated his brother in a civil war and rebuilt Babylon, declaring that the previous destruction of the city was the will of the gods. Esarhaddon invaded Africa, conquering both Egypt and Kush. His reign saw advancement in medicine, literacy, mathematics, architecture and astronomy.</p>
<p>Shamash-shum-ukin</p> <p><i>Šamaš-šuma-ukin</i></p>	<p>668–648 BC</p> <p>(20 years)</p>	<p>Son of Esarhaddon, vassal king under Ashurbanipal</p>	<p>Named heir to the Babylonian throne by Esarhaddon, Shamash-shum-ukin resented the overbearing control of his younger brother Ashurbanipal, who was king of Assyria and took care of most of Shamash-shum-ukin's traditional duties as Babylonian king. He revolted against Ashurbanipal in 652 BC and was defeated after a two-year siege of Babylon.</p>
<p>Kandalanu</p> <p><i>Kandalānu</i></p>	<p>648–627 BC</p> <p>(21 years)</p>	<p>Appointed as vassal king by Ashurbanipal</p>	<p>One of Ashurbanipal's vassals, Kandalanu was placed on the Babylonian throne as his vassal after Shamash-shum-ukin's revolt was defeated.</p>
<p>After Kandalanu's death in 627 BC, Babylonia experienced a brief interregnum. The Neo-Assyrian king Sinsharishkun briefly controlled the city, as did the usurper Sin-shumu-lishir, but both only officially claimed the title "King of Assyria", not "King of Babylon".</p>			

Chaldean Dynasty (626–539 BC)

The 11th Dynasty is also called the *Neo-Babylonian dynasty*, the *Dynasty of Nebuchadnezzar* or the *Chaldean dynasty*, liberated Babylon from Assyrian rule.

King	Reign	Succession	Notes
<p>Nabopolassar <i>Nabû-apla-ušur</i></p>	<p>626–605 BC (21 years)</p>	<p>Rebel, liberated Babylon from Assyrian rule</p>	<p>Leader of the Chaldean tribe and an accomplished general, Nabopolassar revolted against Sinsharishkun of the Neo-Assyrian Empire and successfully restored Babylonian independence. Through a series of wars Nabopolassar and his allies, the Medes, destroyed the Neo-Assyrian Empire and in its place he founded the Neo-Babylonian Empire.</p>
<p>Nebuchadnezzar II <i>Nabû-kudurri-ušur</i></p>	<p>605–562 BC (43 years)</p>	<p>Son of Nabopolassar</p>	<p>Waged numerous wars in the Levant, many of them against Egypt. Famous for the biblical portrayals of his sieges of Jerusalem and for his impressive building projects in Babylon (for instance, the Ishtar Gate).</p>
<p>Amel-Marduk <i>Amēl-Marduk</i></p>	<p>562–560 BC (2 years)</p>	<p>Son of Nebuchadnezzar II</p>	<p>Unpopular with the priests of Marduk at Babylon, Amel-Marduk's reign was very brief.</p>
<p>Neriglissar <i>Nergal-šar-ušur</i></p>	<p>560–556 BC (4 years)</p>	<p>Usurper, son-in-law of Amel-Marduk</p>	<p>A prominent general, recorded as having campaigned in Cilicia in 557 BC, possibly against the Medes.</p>

<p>Labashi-Marduk</p> <p><i>Labaši-Marduk</i></p>	<p>556 BC</p> <p>(9 months)</p>	<p>Son of Nerglissar</p>	<p>A minor when he became king, Labashi-Marduk was deposed and killed after just nine months on the throne.</p>
<p>Nabonidus</p> <p><i>Nabû-na`id</i></p>	<p>556–539 BC</p> <p>(17 years)</p>	<p>Usurper, unrelated to previous kings</p>	<p>A prominent official of Assyrian background (hailing from Harran), Nabonidus was the last native king to rule Babylon. He alienated the priesthood in Babylon and left the city to reside in Tayma in 552 BC, leaving rule in Babylon itself to his son and designated heir, Belshazzar. Defeated by Cyrus of the Achaemenid Empire in 539 BC, ending the Neo-Babylonian Empire.</p>

Achaemenid dynasty (539–331 BC)

The Post-Neo-Babylonian kings: Babylonia was conquered by Cyrus the Great of the Achaemenid Empire in 539 BC, to never again successfully regain independence. The monarchs of the Achaemenid Empire, and those of succeeding empires, continued to title themselves (and be titled by the inhabitants of Babylon) as *Kings of Babylon* for centuries. The Akkadian names of the monarchs listed after Nabonidus follow the renderings of the names of these monarchs in the *Uruk King List* (also known as "King List 5") and the *Babylonian King List of the Hellenistic Period* (also known as BKLHP or "King List 6"). These lists records rulers, identifying them as "Kings of Babylon" until the end of [Seleucid](#) rule in Mesopotamia.

King	Reign	Succession	Notes
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<p>Cyrus the Great</p> <p><i>Kur-aš</i></p>	<p>539–530 BC</p> <p>(9 years)</p>	<p>King of Persia, conquered Babylon</p>	<p>The first king of the Achaemenid Empire, Cyrus the Great captured Babylon in 539 BC. In Babylon he left the famous Cyrus Cylinder. Enumerated as Cyrus II as King of Persia.</p>
<p>Cambyzes</p> <p><i>Kambu-zī</i></p>	<p>530–522 BC</p> <p>(8 years)</p>	<p>Son of Cyrus the Great</p>	<p>Famous for conquering Egypt and for the unpopular policies he conducted in the country (looting temples and ridiculing the local gods). Had served as governor in Babylonia under Cyrus for some years. Enumerated as Cambyses II as King of Persia.</p>
<p>Darius I the Great</p> <p><i>Daria-muš</i></p>	<p>522–486 BC</p> <p>(36 years)</p>	<p>Son of Hystaspes, a third cousin of Cyrus the Great.</p>	<p>Darius was briefly preceded as Achaemenid king by Bardiya, who was not recorded as king by the Babylonians. His early reign saw rebellions against his rule by the Babylonians, perhaps inspired by the recent political turmoil in the empire.</p>
<p>Nebuchadnezzar III</p> <p>Nabû-kudurri-ušur</p>	<p>522 BC</p> <p>(less than a year)</p>	<p>Babylonian rebel, claimed to be the son of Nabonidus</p>	<p>Rebelled against Darius I. Originally called Nidintu-Bêl, Nebuchadnezzar claimed to be the son of Nabonidus and was probably connected to Babylonian royalty in some form. Was defeated and executed after Darius besieged Babylon.</p>

<p><u>Nebuchadnezzar IV</u></p> <p>Nabû-kudurri-ušur</p>	<p>521–520 BC</p> <p>(1 year)</p>	<p>Babylonian rebel, claimed to be the son of Nabonidus</p>	<p>Rebelled against Darius I. Originally an Armenian by the name Arakha, Nebuchadnezzar IV also claimed to be the son of Nabonidus. Darius's second siege of Babylon lasted more than a year and seven months before he successfully regained control of the city.</p>
<p>Xerxes the Great</p> <p>[Full name in Akkadian not preserved]</p>	<p>486–465 BC</p> <p>(23 years)</p>	<p>Son of Darius I</p>	<p>Up until Xerxes's time, the Achaemenid rulers had regarded Babylon as a separate entity united with their own kingdom in a personal union, but in response to the second Babylonian revolt against him, Xerxes removed the statue of Marduk in the Esagila and divided the Babylonian satrapy (previously composing almost all of the Neo-Babylonian Empire's territory) into smaller satrapies. Enumerated as Xerxes I as King of Persia.</p>
<p>Bel-shimanni</p> <p><i>Bêl-šimânni</i></p>	<p>484 BC</p> <p>(2 weeks)</p>	<p>Babylonian rebel</p>	<p>Rebelled against Xerxes in June or July 484 BC. Bel-shimanni's revolt was probably short-lived as Babylonian documents relating to his rule only cover a period of about two weeks.</p>

<p>Shamash-eriba</p> <p><i>Šamaš-eriba</i></p>	<p>482–481 BC</p> <p>(c. 8 months)</p>	<p>Babylonian rebel</p>	<p>Rebelled against Xerxes in the summer of 482 BC. Shamash-eriba's rebellion lasted longer than that of Bel-shimmani and Babylon was successfully retaken by Xerxes in March 481 BC, after which the city was reprimanded through a destruction of its fortifications and possible devastation done to its temples. Because Xerxes's vengeance, Shamash-eriba was the last person to be crowned in the traditional Babylonian manner; receiving the Babylonian crown out of the hands of Marduk at the Esagila temple during the New Year's Festival.</p>
<p>Artaxerxes I</p> <p>Longimanus</p> <p>[Full name in Akkadian not preserved]</p>	<p>465–424 BC</p> <p>(41 years)</p>	<p>Son of Xerxes</p>	<p>Because Xerxes' attempt to end Babylonia as a separate entity, kings from Artaxerxes I onwards (other than rebel leaders) didn't use the title King of Babylon themselves, though Babylonian scribes continued to refer to them as such.</p>
<p>Darius II</p> <p><i>Daria-muš</i></p>	<p>423–404 BC</p> <p>(19 years)</p>	<p>Son of Artaxerxes I</p>	<p>Darius II was briefly preceded as Achaemenid king by Xerxes II, who was only recognized in Persia itself, and Sogdianus, who was only recognized in Persia and Elam (neither was recognized in Babylon).</p>

<p>Artaxerxes II Mnemnon [Full name in Akkadian not preserved]</p>	<p>404–358 BC (46 years)</p>	<p>Son of Darius II</p>	<p>Was faced with the revolt of his brother Cyrus the Younger, which he defeated, wars with the Greeks and the Great Satraps' Revolt.</p>
<p>Artaxerxes III Ochus [Full name in Akkadian not preserved]</p>	<p>358–338 BC (20 years)</p>	<p>Son of Artaxerxes II</p>	<p>Successfully regained Egypt after it had revolted against Persian rule after the death of Darius II. Also had to deal with revolts from numerous satrapies and vassal states.</p>
<p>Artaxerxes IV Arses [Full name in Akkadian not preserved]</p>	<p>338–336 BC (2 years)</p>	<p>Son of Artaxerxes III</p>	<p>Poisoned and killed by the eunuch Bagoas, who also killed the entirety of his family and put Darius III on the throne of the Achaemenid Empire.</p>
<p>Nidin-Bel <i>Nidin-Bêl</i></p>	<p>c. 336 BC (less than a year)</p>	<p>Babylonian rebel</p>	<p>Mentioned only in the Uruk King List, Nidin-Bel was likely a local rebel who seized control in the chaotic aftermath of Artaxerxes IV's death, only to later be defeated by Darius III.</p>

Darius III <i>Daria-muš</i>	336–331 BC (6 years)	Great-grandson of Darius II	Darius III was the last (or penultimate if one counts Artaxerxes V) king of the Achaemenid Empire and was defeated by Alexander the Great of Macedon after reigning only six years.
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Argead dynasty (331–309 BC) of the *Macedonian Empire*

King	Reign	Succession	Notes
Alexander I the Great <i>AliksāNDAR</i>	331–323 BC (8 years)	King of Macedon, conquered Babylon	Alexander captured most of the territory of the Achaemenid Empire in his famous wars . Under Alexander, Babylon once more became an imperial capital, being the main capital of his large empire. Enumerated as Alexander III as King of Macedon.

Session 3: First Return from Exile (538 BC)

Life in Exile

Those exiled from Samaria

BOOK OF TOBIT

Tobit 1-14

A Deuterocanonical Book

Bergsma pp. 462-476

Tobit

Northerner

Faithful to the Davidic Covenant.

He did not go along with the religious rebellion against Rehoboam.

Captured by the Assyrian and exiled to Nineveh before the definitive fall of Samaria (722 BC)

Faithful Jew in Nineveh

Works of Mercy

Falls ill/blind because of a work of mercy.

Spurned by his wife.

Prays for death.

Meanwhile kinswoman Sarah has been married seven times, each time ending in death of her husband.

Prays for death.

God responds through the Archangel Raphael.

Tobit sends his son Tobias to fetch the family treasure, accompanied by Azarias (the Archangel Raphael)

Almost eaten by fish, the heart, liver and gall he saves.

...

Those who remained in Samaria

Those who were under siege in Jerusalem

BOOK OF JUDITH

Judith 1-16

A Deuterocanonical Book

Bergsma pp. 477-485

12th year of Nebuchadnezzar (593 BC)

Review the Three (3) Deportations

First Deportation (605 BC) under King Jehoiachin II Kings 24,12-16

Second Deportation in Response to Zedekiah's Rebellion (597 BC) II Kings 25,1-7

Third Deportation and Destruction of the First Temple of Jerusalem (587 BC) II Kings 24,8-21

Review of Assyrians, Chaldeans, Persians

Fall of Babylonian Empire (539 BC)

The Books of Chronicles

Written later. Retell the history of salvation up through the Fall of Jerusalem in 587 BC

READ *Pergsma* p. 447

Conclude the Hebrew Scriptures.

Placed elsewhere in Septuagint.

Given name 1 & 2 Paraleipomenon. "Extra things".

READ II CHRON 36,23 (see below)

Messianic significance, especially when it is the last verse of the Old Testament.

READ II CHRON 36,22-23 + EZRA 1,1-4 form a literary unit. (see below)

READ II CHRON 36,15-23

An even more hopeful restatement of the history recounted in detail in *II Kings* and *Ezra*.

15 *The Lord, the God of their fathers, sent persistently to them by his messengers, because he had compassion on his people and on his dwelling place; 16 but they kept mocking the messengers of God, despising his words, and scoffing at his prophets, till the wrath of the Lord rose against his people, till there was no remedy.*

17 *Therefore he brought up against them the king of the Chaldeans, who slew their young men with the sword in the house of their sanctuary, and had no compassion on young man or virgin, old man or aged; he gave them all into his hand. 18 And all the vessels of the house of God, great and small, and the treasures of the house of the Lord, and the treasures of the king and of his princes, all these he brought to Babylon. 19 And they burned the house of God, and broke down the wall of Jerusalem, and burned all its palaces with fire, and destroyed all its precious vessels. 20 He took into exile in Babylon those who had escaped from the sword, and they became servants to him and to his sons until the establishment of the kingdom of Persia,*

21 *to fulfil the word of the Lord by the mouth of Jeremiah, until the land had enjoyed its sabbaths. All the days that it lay desolate it kept sabbath, to fulfil seventy years.*

Cyrus Proclaims Liberty for the Exiles

22 *Now in the first year of Cyrus king of Persia, that the word of the Lord by the mouth of Jeremiah might be accomplished, the Lord stirred up the spirit of Cyrus king of Persia so that he made a proclamation throughout all his kingdom and also put it in writing: 23 "Thus says Cyrus king of Persia, 'The Lord, the God of heaven, has given me all the kingdoms of the earth, and he has charged me to build him a house at Jerusalem, which is in Judah. Whoever is among you of all his people, may the Lord his God be with him. Let him go up.'"*

II Chronicles 10,1-36,23 retells the story of the Kingdom of Judah up until the Return from Babylon

READ Ezra 1,1-4

1 In the first year of Cyrus king of Persia, that the word of the Lord by the mouth of Jeremiah might be accomplished, the Lord stirred up the spirit of Cyrus king of Persia so that he made a proclamation throughout all his kingdom and also put it in writing:

2 “Thus says Cyrus king of Persia: The Lord, the God of heaven, has given me all the kingdoms of the earth, and he has charged me to build him a house at Jerusalem, which is in Judah. 3 Whoever is among you of all his people, may his God be with him, and let him go up to Jerusalem, which is in Judah, and rebuild the house of the Lord, the God of Israel—he is the God who is in Jerusalem; 4 and let each survivor, in whatever place he sojourns, be assisted by the men of his place with silver and gold, with goods and with beasts, besides freewill offerings for the house of God which is in Jerusalem.”

Fulfilling Jeremiah's prophecy, Persian King Cyrus allows the exiled Jews to return home. Zerubbabel, Nehemiah, and later Ezra travel to Jerusalem. Rebuilding Israel begins.

READ Jeremiah 29,10-14

10 “For thus says the Lord: When seventy years are completed for Babylon, I will visit you, and I will fulfil to you my promise and bring you back to this place. 11 For I know the plans I have for you, says the Lord, plans for welfare and not for evil, to give you a future and a hope. 12 Then you will call upon me and come and pray to me, and I will hear you. 13 You will seek me and find me; when you seek me with all your heart, 14 I will be found by you, says the Lord, and I will restore your fortunes and gather you from all the nations and all the places where I have driven you, says the Lord, and I will bring you back to the place from which I sent you into exile.

See also Isaiah 44,24-28; 45,1-6; 45,13

First Return from Exile (538 BC)

EZRA 1-6

READ Ezra 2,1-2 *Return to Jerusalem led by Zerubbabel*

Census of the Returnees (Ezra 2,2-70)

Temple Restoration Begins under Zerubbabel (537 BC)

EZRA 3,7-6,18

READ Ezra 3,1-7 *Rebuilding of Altar*

READ Ezra 4,1-5 *Obstacles to Building. Jewish returnees rebuff "Samaritans"*

"Samaritans" convince Persians to stop the Temple Reconstruction (Ezra 4,6-24)

Ezra 4,5 The complainers write a letter to King Darius (522-486 BC)

Ezra 4,6 Their complaining will continue on into the reign of Ahasuerus = Xerxes (486-465 BC). That is long after the completion of the Temple. Yes?

Even during the reign of Artaxerxes 1 (465-424 BC) they write a letter. Is this a time warp... or?

[Is the Darius mentioned in Ezra 4,24 Darius I or Darius II? If the former, I don't understand why Artaxerxes is mentioned because I have been led to believe that the Temple is finished in 516 BC, the sixth year of the reign of King Darius I. If the latter, then the Temple having been finished in the sixth year of his reign would date the completion of the Temple at 416. Which is it?]

READ Ezra 5,1 *Prophets Haggai and Zechariah*

READ Haggai 1,1-15

Haggai's preaching in 520 BC

WATCH "Haggai" by BibleProject (https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=juPvv_xcX-U)

Prophet Zechariah

Preaching toward the end of the 70 years of exile.

One of the Minor Prophets, to whom is attributed the collection of prophecies and apocalyptic visions constituting the book bearing his name. He was a son of Berechiah and a grandson of Iddo (Zech. i. 1), and was loosely called the son of Iddo (Ezra v. 1, vi. 14); the latter was possibly

identical with the Iddo mentioned as high priest in Neh. xii. 4, which would make the prophet himself the high priest named in Neh. xii. 16. Zechariah was probably born during the Captivity, but was brought back early to Palestine. He began his prophetic ministry in the second year of King Darius Hystaspes, a little later than Haggai (Zech. i. 1; Hag. i. 1), his preoccupation being the rebuilding of the Temple.

Zechariah, however, proves himself to be an uncompromising critic of the ritual substitutes for true piety, such as fasting and mourning (vii. 5); and he reiterates the admonitions for mercy and righteousness, which according to the Prophets constitute the essence of the service of YHWH (vii. 8, 9). For neglect of this service Israel was visited with the sufferings that befell it (vii. 13, 14). Jerusalem is to be called the city of truth (viii. 3), and shall dwell in peace, so that old men and old women shall be found in its streets (verse 4), together with boys and girls (verse 5), and prosperity shall abound in the land (verses 7 et seq.). (The Jewish Encyclopedia)

WATCH “Zechariah” by BibleProject 8:10 (https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=_106IfO6Kc0)

READ Zechariah 9,9-10

Thus says the LORD:

Rejoice heartily, O daughter Zion, shout for joy, O daughter Jerusalem! See, your king shall come to you; a just savior is he, meek, and riding on an ass, on a colt, the foal of an ass. He shall banish the chariot from Ephraim, and the horse from Jerusalem; the warrior’s bow shall be banished, and he shall proclaim peace to the nations. His dominion shall be from sea to sea, and from the River to the ends of the earth.

READ 6,13-18 Temple Restoration Completed (516 BC)

Despite local opposition, Zerubbabel and the Jews successfully rebuild the Altar and God's Temple.

Ark of the Covenant

Notice that the Temple is described as rebuilt but no mention is made of the Ark of the Covenant. Where is it and what has happened to it?

It is last mentioned in II Samuel, I Kings and II Chronicles.

READ 2 Samuel 15:24

And Abi' athar came up, and lo, Zadok came also, with all the Levites, bearing the ark of the covenant of God; and they set down the ark of God, until the people had all passed out of the city.

READ 2 Chronicles 6:11

And there I have set the ark, in which is the covenant of the Lord which he made with the people of Israel.”

The Book of Jeremiah mentions it (Jeremiah 3,16).

The Ark of the Covenant is presumed lost in the destruction of Jerusalem at the hands of the Chaldeans in **586 BC** (II Kings).

The Bible next mentions it in *Hebrews* 9,4 and then at last in the *Apocalypse*:

READ Revelation 11,19

Then God's temple in heaven was opened, and the ark of his covenant was seen within his temple; and there were flashes of lightning, loud noises, peals of thunder, an earthquake, and heavy hail.

WATCH “Temple” by BibleProject 4:40 (<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=wTnq6I3vUbU>)

Not for what it says but for what it leaves out, namely any mention of Ark of the Covenant, altar, and sacrifice.

READ 6,19-22 *They officially celebrate the Passover the first time in 70 years.*

19 On the fourteenth day of the first month the returned exiles kept the passover. 20 For the priests and the Levites had purified themselves together; all of them were clean. So they killed the passover lamb for all the returned exiles, for their fellow priests, and for themselves; 21 it was eaten by the people of Israel who had returned from exile, and also by every one who had joined them and separated himself from the pollutions of the peoples of the land to worship the Lord, the God of Israel. 22 And they kept the feast of unleavened bread seven days with joy; for the Lord had made them joyful, and had turned the heart of the king of Assyria to them, so that he aided them in the work of the house of God, the God of Israel.

Evocative of the Exodus from Egypt.

Indicative of the Paschal Mystery and the purpose of the Temple which is Christ's body.

Session 4: Second Return from Exile (525-457 BC?)

So... "The Bible Timeline" lists the Second Return as happening 525-457 BC.

It also specifies that Ezra returns in the Seventh Year of Artaxerxes (458 BC).

Between the Restoration of the Temple in 516 BC and 458 BC, there is another 50 years!

What happened during those years?

Well... more complaining by the "Samaritans" about the Second Temple in Jerusalem.

BOOK OF ESTHER

ESTHER 1-11

WATCH "Esther" BibleProject 9:13

(<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=JydNSlufRIs>)

WATCH "The Bible Collection: Esther" FORMED.org 1:27:08

<https://watch.formed.org/the-bible-collection-esther>

Ahasuerus or Xerxes, King of Babylon 486-465 BC ruling from Susa over one hundred and twenty-seven provinces—"from India, even unto Ethiopia" (Esther 1,1), who in the third year of his reign made a feast to show his riches and splendor; "the power of Persia and Media, the nobles and princes of the provinces, being before him" (Esther 1,3)

"Many of the Jews did not return to Israel [during the first return with Zerubbabel]. Esther gives us a window into the lives of those who chose to remain in Persia." TBT

"The Jews established an annual feast, the feast of Purim, in memory of their deliverance. Haman set the date of the thirteenth of Adar to commence his campaign against the Jews. This determined the date of the festival of Purim" Wikipedia

SECOND RETURN

EZRA 7-10

Ezra was granted permission to lead a band of exiles back to Jerusalem (Ezra 7,12-26). This edict was issued in the seventh year of King Artaxerxes, corresponding to 458 BC

READ Ezra 7,1-9 *Ezra's geneology*

Ray Goin's favorite verse:

READ Ezra 7,10 *set heart to study, do, and teach*

Discovery of the Torah

Intermarriage [Ezr 9:8 the infidelity of the remnant threatens the survival of the people](#)

Previous instruction of Jeremiah to marry others

Contrast with Christian distinction between natural and sacramental marriages (1 Cor 7,10-15)

READ Ezra 9,1-10,17

Spiritual Renewal

Truth is revealed to the new Jewish generation as Ezra and Nehemiah teach them the Torah. Ezra and Nehemiah reform their community to practice holiness.

Session 5: Third Return from Exile (444 BC)

NEHEMIAH 1-13

READ Nehemiah 1,1-11

The words of Nehemi' ah the son of Hacali' ah.

Now it happened in the month of Chislev, in the twentieth year, as I was in Susa the capital, 2 that Hana' ni, one of my brethren, came with certain men out of Judah; and I asked them concerning the Jews that survived, who had escaped exile, and concerning Jerusalem. 3 And they said to me, "The survivors there in the province who escaped exile are in great trouble and shame; the wall of Jerusalem is broken down, and its gates are destroyed by fire."

4 When I heard these words I sat down and wept, and mourned for days; and I continued fasting and praying before the God of heaven. 5 And I said, "O Lord God of heaven, the great and terrible God who keeps covenant and steadfast love with those who love him and keep his commandments; 6 let thy ear be attentive, and thy eyes open, to hear the prayer of thy servant which I now pray before thee day and night for the people of Israel thy servants, confessing the sins of the people of Israel, which we have sinned against thee. Yea, I and my father's house have sinned. 7 We have acted very corruptly against thee, and have not kept the commandments, the statutes, and the ordinances which thou didst command thy servant Moses. 8 Remember the word which thou didst command thy servant Moses, saying, 'If you are unfaithful, I will scatter you among the peoples; 9 but if you return to me and keep my commandments and do them, though your dispersed be under the farthest skies, I will gather them thence and bring them to the place which I have chosen, to make my name dwell there.' 10 They are thy servants and thy people, whom thou hast redeemed by thy great power and by thy strong hand. 11 O Lord, let thy ear be attentive to the prayer of thy servant, and to the prayer of thy servants who delight to fear thy name; and give success to thy servant today, and grant him mercy in the sight of this man."

Now I was cupbearer to the king.

MONTHS IN THE JEWISH CALENDAR

Biblical	Civil	Hebrew name	Length	Gregorian
1	7	Nisan	30	Mar-Apr
2	8	Iyar	29	Apr-May
3	9	Sivan	30	May-Jun
4	10	Tammuz	29	Jun-Jul
5	11	Av	30	Jul-Aug

6	12	Elul	29	Aug-Sep
7	1	Tishrei	30	Sep-Oct
8	2	Cheshvan (or Marcheshvan)	29/30	Oct-Nov
9	3	Kislev	30/29	Nov-Dec
10	4	Tevet	29	Dec-Jan
11	5	Shevat	30	Jan-Feb
12	6	Adar	29	Feb-Mar

Total 353, 354 or 355

Verse 1 “Twentieth year”

20th year of Artaxerxes?

Almost certainly yes. Verse 1 of Chapter begins “In the month of Nisan, in the twentieth year of King Ar-ta-xerx’ es”

That would be **445 BC**.

Verses 8-9 quote from the Torah?

'If you are unfaithful, I will scatter you among the peoples; but if you return to me and keep my commandments and do them, though your dispersed be under the farthest skies, I will gather them thence and bring them to the place which I have chosen, to make my name dwell there.'

READ Deuteronomy 4,25-31

25 “When you beget children and children’s children, and have grown old in the land, if you act corruptly by making a graven image in the form of anything, and by doing what is evil in the sight of the Lord your God, so as to provoke him to anger, 26 I call heaven and earth to witness against you this day, that you will soon utterly perish from the land which you are going over the Jordan to possess; you will not live long upon it, but will be utterly destroyed. 27 And the Lord will scatter you among the peoples, and you will be left few in number among the nations where the Lord will drive you. 28 And there you will serve gods of wood and stone, the work of men’s hands, that neither see, nor hear, nor eat, nor smell. 29 But from there you will seek the Lord your God, and you will find him, if you search after him with all your heart and with all your soul. 30 When you are in tribulation, and all these things come upon you in the latter days, you will return to the Lord your God and obey his voice, 31 for the Lord your God is a merciful God; he will not fail you or destroy you or forget the covenant with your fathers which he swore to th

See also Leviticus 26,33-46

27 *“And if in spite of this you will not hearken to me, but walk contrary to me, 28 then I will walk contrary to you in fury, and chastise you myself sevenfold for your sins. 29 You shall eat the flesh of your sons, and you shall eat the flesh of your daughters. 30 And I will destroy your high places, and cut down your incense altars, and cast your dead bodies upon the dead bodies of your idols; and my soul will abhor you. 31 And I will lay your cities waste, and will make your sanctuaries desolate, and I will not smell your pleasing odors. 32 And I will devastate the land, so that your enemies who settle in it shall be astonished at it. 33 And I will scatter you among the nations, and I will unsheathe the sword after you; and your land shall be a desolation, and your cities shall be a waste.*

34 *“Then the land shall enjoy[a] its sabbaths as long as it lies desolate, while you are in your enemies’ land; then the land shall rest, and enjoy[b] its sabbaths. 35 As long as it lies desolate it shall have rest, the rest which it had not in your sabbaths when you dwelt upon it. 36 And as for those of you that are left, I will send faintness into their hearts in the lands of their enemies; the sound of a driven leaf shall put them to flight, and they shall flee as one flees from the sword, and they shall fall when none pursues. 37 They shall stumble over one another, as if to escape a sword, though none pursues; and you shall have no power to stand before your enemies. 38 And you shall perish among the nations, and the land of your enemies shall eat you up. 39 And those of you that are left shall pine away in your enemies’ lands because of their iniquity; and also because of the iniquities of their fathers they shall pine away like them.*

40 *“But if they confess their iniquity and the iniquity of their fathers in their treachery which they committed against me, and also in walking contrary to me, 41 so that I walked contrary to them and brought them into the land of their enemies; if then their uncircumcised heart is humbled and they make amends for their iniquity; 42 then I will remember my covenant with Jacob, and I will remember my covenant with Isaac and my covenant with Abraham, and I will remember the land. 43 But the land shall be left by them, and enjoy[c] its sabbaths while it lies desolate without them; and they shall make amends for their iniquity, because they spurned my ordinances, and their soul abhorred my statutes. 44 Yet for all that, when they are in the land of their enemies, I will not spurn them, neither will I abhor them so as to destroy them utterly and break my covenant with them; for I am the Lord their God; 45 but I will for their sake remember the covenant with their forefathers, whom I brought forth out of the land of Egypt in the sight of the nations, that I might be their God: I am the Lord.”*

READ Nehemiah 2,5-6

5 *And I said to the king, “If it pleases the king, and if your servant has found favor in your sight, that you send me to Judah, to the city of my fathers’ sepulchres, that I may rebuild it.” 6 And the*

king said to me (the queen sitting beside him), "How long will you be gone, and when will you return?"

Nehemiah surveys Jerusalem

READ Nehemiah 2,11-16

11 So I came to Jerusalem and was there three days. 12 Then I arose in the night, I and a few men with me; and I told no one what my God had put into my heart to do for Jerusalem. There was no beast with me but the beast on which I rode. 13 I went out by night by the Valley Gate to the Jackal's Well and to the Dung Gate, and I inspected the walls of Jerusalem which were broken down and its gates which had been destroyed by fire. 14 Then I went on to the Fountain Gate and to the King's Pool; but there was no place for the beast that was under me to pass. 15 Then I went up in the night by the valley and inspected the wall; and I turned back and entered by the Valley Gate, and so returned. 16 And the officials did not know where I had gone or what I was doing; and I had not yet told the Jews, the priests, the nobles, the officials, and the rest that were to do the work.

Verse 11 "there three days"

But he seems to have remained there at least until the Wall was finished and then even quite a few years after that.

Perhaps by Nehemiah 2,17 three days had passed. His inspection was complete and he announced his plan.

17 Then I said to them, "You see the trouble we are in, how Jerusalem lies in ruins with its gates burned. Come, let us build the wall of Jerusalem, that we may no longer suffer disgrace."

Opposition in the Form of Derision

READ Nehemiah 2,19-20

19 But when Sanbal'lat the Hor' onite and Tobiah the servant, the Ammonite, and Geshem the Arab heard of it, they derided us and despised us and said, "What is this thing that you are doing? Are you rebelling against the king?" 20 Then I replied to them, "The God of heaven will make us prosper, and we his servants will arise and build; but you have no portion or right or memorial in Jerusalem."

Sanbal'lat

Name = "Sin has vivified"

Tobiah

Tobiah was an Ammonite official (Neh 2,10) (possibly a governor of Ammon, possibly also of Jewish descent). He incited the Ammonites to hinder Nehemiah's efforts to rebuild Jerusalem. (Neh 2; 4,1-8)

Wikipedia

Ammonites

READ Genesis 19,36-38

36 Thus both the daughters of Lot were with child by their father. 37 The first-born bore a son, and called his name Moab; he is the father of the Moabites to this day. 38 The younger also bore a son, and called his name Ben-ammi; he is the father of the Ammonites to this day.

Rebuilding of the Wall (Nehemiah 3,1 - 6,15)

Even Eliashib the Priest is the first name mentioned.

And then a long list of names and the parts of the Wall on which they worked.

More Opposition in the Form of Fighting (Nehemiah 4,1-8)

Nehemiah prays to God to set a guard. (Neh 4,9)

So a permanent guard is established. (Nem 4,13)

And half the workers at any given time had to be on guard duty as well. (Neh 4,16-20)

READ Nehemiah 4,23

23 So neither I nor my brethren nor my servants nor the men of the guard who followed me, none of us took off our clothes; each kept his weapon in his hand.

Unrest among the Jews (Nehemiah 5)

Needing to borrow money and even sell their own children into slavery

Nehemiah denounces usury

Nehemiah nor his brethren ate the food allowance of the governor.

Yet More Opposition in the Form of a Trap and a Threat to send a Report to the King

READ 6,1-2

Now when it was reported to Sanbal'lat and Tobi'ah and to Geshem the Arab and to the rest of our enemies that I had built the wall and that there was no breach left in it (although up to that time I had not set up the doors in the gates), Sanbal'lat and Geshem sent to me, saying, "Come and let us meet together in one of the villages in the plain of Ono." But they intended to do me harm.

Tobiah again with Sanbal'lat and Geshem

Four times they made the request, and every time Nehemiah refused to come. Their object was to frighten him from completing the restoration of Jerusalem's walls and to do him some kind of harm. (Neh 6)

Wikipedia

Shemaiah

Hired to prophesy against Nehemiah.

Response of Nehemiah

READ Nehemiah 6,11

Wall Finished (Nehemiah 6,15)

25th Day of the month Elul

52 days

More on Tobiah

Tobiah also had married a daughter of Shecaniah, a Judahite leader, and had given his son, Jehohanan, in marriage to the daughter of Meshullam, another Judahite leader, (Ezra 8,16) for

ostensibly political purposes. Because of this, he somehow gained enough of a Judahite coalition to use the Judahites themselves to send letters to Nehemiah, telling him of Tobiah's "good deeds" in an apparent attempt to weaken Nehemiah's resolve to keep Tobiah out of the rebuilding effort. Tobiah meanwhile sent intimidating letters directly to Nehemiah. (Neh 6,15-19)

Wikipedia

Gives charge of Jerusalem to his brother Hanani and Hanania the governor of the castle

But later on Nehemiah is still described as the governor of Judah.

Assembles the people. (Nehemiah 7)

Finding of the Book of the Genealogy

42,360 Jews plus their servants

Celebration with the Feast of Tabernacles

“When the 7th month had come (Neh 7,73b) and all the people gathers as one man into the square” (Neh 7,1a)

Reading of the Law

Seems to be a separate act, but it actually is part of the observance of the Feast of Tabernacles.

Moses’ Instructions for the Feast of Booths / Tabernacles

READ Deuteronomy 31,10-13

9 And **Moses wrote this law**, and gave it to the priests the sons of Levi, who carried the ark of the covenant of the Lord, and to all the elders of Israel. **10** And Moses commanded them, “At the end of every seven years, at the set time of the year of release, at the feast of booths, **11 when all Israel comes to appear before the Lord your God at the place which he will choose, you shall read this law before all Israel in their hearing. 12** Assemble the people, men, women, and little ones, and the sojourner within your towns, that they may hear and learn to fear the Lord your God, and be careful to do all the words of this law, **13** and that their children, who have not

known it, may hear and learn to fear the Lord your God, as long as you live in the land which you are going over the Jordan to possess.”

What is “the law” that was to be read, according to Moses?

Deuteronomy 1-3? Moses summarizing History

Deuteronomy 4-30!

“And now, O Israel, give heed to the statutes and the ordinances which I teach you, and do them; that you may live, and go in and take possession of the land which the Lord, the God of your fathers, gives you....”

24th day of the month they were fasting.

Prayer of Ezra (Nehemiah 9,6-37)

This might remind one of Christ’s “Priestly Prayer” at the Last Supper (John 17?) in which he prays out loud to God for the Apostles within their hearing.

They set their seal (Nehemiah 10)

Nehemiah the governor is listed first.

Interestingly enough, Eliashib’s name is not mentioned.

Nehemiah 10,28-29 Exhortation

Nehemiah 10,31-39 Communal Proclamation

One tenth of the people live in the city (Nehemiah 11,1-12,26)

A tithe.

It is made to sound like a sacrifice.

READ I Chronicles 9,1-3

So all Israel was enrolled by genealogies; and these are written in the Book of the Kings of Israel. And Judah was taken into exile in Babylon because of their unfaithfulness. 2 Now the first to dwell again in their possessions in their cities were Israel, the priests, the Levites, and the temple servants. 3 And some of the people of Judah, Benjamin, E´ phraim, and Manas´ seh dwelt in Jerusalem:

Dedication of the Wall (Nehemiah 12,27-13,3)

Evil of Eliashib (Nehemiah 13,4-5) with Tobiah yet again...

Acquisition of the temple storerooms

Additionally, Tobiah exploited his relationship with High Priest Eliashib, whose grandson had married the daughter of Sanballat. He persuaded Eliashib to lease the storerooms of the temple to him, so that he could conduct business in the newly constructed temple. These storerooms had been intended for the Israelites' grain offerings, incense, temple articles, and the tithes of grain, new wine and oil meant for the work of the temple and the temple workers themselves. Upon hearing this, Nehemiah, who was then in Babylon serving Artaxerxes I of Persia, requested permission to return to Judah. After returning, he promptly threw all of Tobiah's belongings out of the temple room, purified the room, and put back all that had originally been there. (Neh 13,1-9)

Wikipedia

Repentance

After hearing the Torah, the Jewish people realize the sins they committed and immediately address them. They repent, swearing an oath to follow God's laws.

Nehemiah's Return

READ Neh 13:6

While this was taking place I was not in Jerusalem, for in the thirty-second year of Artaxerxes king of Babylon I went to the king.

32nd Year of Artaxerxes = 432/433 BC.

And after some time I asked leave of the king and came to Jerusalem.

When he returned we don't know.

Discovery of Evil

What Eliashib had done for Tobiah

Levites had abandoned the Temple because they were not being sustained by the people.

Nehemiah remonstrates with them.

Working on the Sabbath. (Neh 13,15-16)

Nehemiah remonstrates with them. (Neh 13,17-18)

Sets a guard on the Gates. (Neh 13,19)

Merchants lodging outside Jerusalem. (Neh 13,20)

Nehemiah warns them and from then on they did not come on the Sabbath. (Neh 13,21)

Intermarriage with Ashdodites, Moabites, Ammonites such that half of their children could no longer speak the language of Judah.

Nehemiah makes them take an oath.

And one last indignity from the family of Eliashib. One of his grandsons married a daughter of Sanbal'lat:

28 And one of the sons of Jehoi'ada, the son of Eli'ashib the high priest, was the son-in-law of Sanbal'lat the Hor'onite; therefore I chased him from me

Conclusion

READ Nehemiah 13,30-31

30 Thus I cleansed them from everything foreign, and I established the duties of the priests and Levites, each in his work; 31 and I provided for the wood offering, at appointed times, and for the first fruits. Remember me, O my God, for good.

Post Script

Prophet Malachi (432-420 BC?)

Preached contemporaneously with or subsequent to Nehemiah.

WATCH “Malachi” BibleProject video 7:09
(<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=HPGShWZ4Jvk>)

Biblical Texts

II Kings
I Chronicles
Tobit
Isaiah
Hosea
Zephaniah
Nahum
Jeremiah
Habakkuk
Daniel
Baruch
Ezekiel
Judith
Lamentations
Ezra
Zechariah
Haggai
Esther
Nehemiah
Malachi

THEMES

Punishment for Sin
Fidelity under Persecution
Divine Action through Secondary Causes
Need for being Governed
Renewal of the Covenant

ONLINE RESOURCES

Bible Gateway RSVCE

The Jewish Encyclopedia

Open Bible (www.openbible.info)

ONLINE GUIDES

“The Babylonian Exile of Israel” by Robert I. Bradshaw

https://biblicalstudies.org.uk/article_exile.html

VIDEO RESOURCES

From FORMED.org

Overview of the Historical Books (5 min. 25 sec. FORMED.org video by Mark Hart)

<https://watch.formed.org/videos/the-old-testament-the-historical-books>

“The Bible Collection: Esther” FORMED.org (1 hr. 27 min. full-length movie)

<https://watch.formed.org/the-bible-collection-esther>

From BibleProject.org

“Overview: 1-2 Kings” (8 min. 50 sec. BibleProject animated video)

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=bVFW3wbi9pk>

“Overview: Ezra-Nehemiah” (8 min. 37 sec. BibleProject animated video)

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=MkETkRv9tG8>

“Overview: Daniel” (8 min. 53 sec. BibleProject animated video)

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=9cSC9uobtPM>

“Overview: Jeremiah” (7 min. 14 sec. BibleProject animated video)
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=RSK36cHbrk0>

“Overview: Ezekiel 1-33” (7 min. 23 sec. BibleProject animated video)
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=R-CIPu1nko8>

“Overview: Ezekiel 34-48” (7 min. 13 sec. BibleProject animated video)
(https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=SDeCWW_Bnyw)

“Overview: Haggai” (8 min. 37 sec. BibleProject animated video)
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=juPvv_xcX-U

“Overview: Zechariah” (8 min. 10 sec. BibleProject animated video)
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=_106fO6Kc0

“Temple” (4 min. 40 sec. BibleProject animated video)
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=wTng6l3vUbU>

“Overview: Esther” (9 min. 13 sec. BibleProject animated video)
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=JydNSlufRIs>

Ezra-Nehemiah - Tim Mackie (4 hr. 25 min. BibleProject video lecture)
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=P1ded0rng0U&t=186s>

ARTICLES

“Captivity, or Exile, Babylonian”

The Jewish Encyclopedia

<http://www.jewishencyclopedia.com/articles/4012-captivity>

By "exile" is meant any form of forced emigration in which the selection of his new habitation is left to the choice of the person banished. In a particular sense the word is used to designate the enforced emigration of larger communities, such as tribes and nations; in which case, however, any choice of domicile seems to be withheld. The specific term for this species of exile is "deportation." In antiquity, deportation was employed on an extensive scale for political purposes, either to annihilate the power of a conquered people, or to cultivate new and unsettled districts by populating them, or to fuse together various nationalities—more widely separated in ancient times than they are to-day—and occasionally to subserve several of these various ends at once.

The Deportation of Israel.

The earliest deportation of Israelites mentioned in the Old Testament was that of Tiglath-pileser III. This king, either in 734 B.C., upon the march against Philistia, mentioned in a fragment of the eponym list, or (in the event that the march against Hano of Gaza [734] did not concern the affairs of Israel and Judah) in 733, took the field against Pekah of Israel and Rezin of Damascus, who were warring against his vassal, King Ahaz of Judah, and punished them by annexing the northern and eastern borderlands (II Kings xvi. 7-9). While he annexed these borderlands of the tribes of Zebulon, Asher, and Naphtali, together with such of the eastern territory of the Jordan as belonged to Israel, he led the inhabitants of these provinces into Assyria, and established them there (II Kings xv. 29). The second deportation took place after the conquest of Samaria in 722 B.C., which conquest was followed by the demolition of the northern kingdom. The last king of that country, Hoshea, had renounced allegiance to Shalmaneser IV. (II Kings xvii. 4), whereupon the latter besieged the city of Samaria for three years (724-722). It was reserved for his successor, Sargon, however, to capture the hostile capital, as is evident from the cuneiform inscriptions (in contradiction to II Kings xvii. 3 et seq., according to which the conquest was made by Shalmaneser himself). On that occasion 27,280 people were taken captive and deported, partly to the Assyrian province of Gozan in Mesopotamia and partly to Media, where they were established as royal charges; while, at the same time, colonists of other nationalities were settled in Samaria and the surrounding territory to take the place of those deported. In this way not only was a conquered and hostile people thoroughly disrupted, but it was at once replaced by subjects loyal to the crown, among whom the vacated territory was distributed, and who obtained special prerogatives, in order to strengthen their allegiance. The first people to be sent thither (721 B.C.) from Babylon as settlers were Arameans. Upon the close of the Babylonian insurrection, however (647 B.C.), Assurbanipal sent further

contingents from Babylon, Cuthah, Sippara (Sepharvaim), Susa, and Elam (II Kings xvii. 24, xviii. 11; Ezra iv. 4-10).

Deportation of Judah.

The inhabitants of the southern kingdom, Judea, were in their turn subjected to two deportations. The first of these took place in the year 597 in connection with the first conquest of Jerusalem by Nebuchadnezzar. On that occasion Nebuchadnezzar appeared before the walls of Jerusalem with his army for the purpose of punishing Josiah's son Jehoiakim, because the latter, relying upon the assistance of Egypt, had renounced his allegiance to Babylonia. As soon as Jehoiachin or Jaconiah, who had meanwhile succeeded his father, Jehoiakim, as king, had, after a short defense, surrendered to the leaders of the Babylonian army, Nebuchadnezzar ordered him, together with the most distinguished men of the land, and the most valuable treasures of the Temple and the palace, to be sent to Babylonia (II Kings xxiv. 1-16). Thus began the Babylonian Exile (597), from which year the prophet Ezekiel, who was among the captives, dates his calculations. Another deportation took place upon the downfall of the kingdom of Judah (586 B.C.). The new king, Zedekiah, a son of Josiah, whose original name was Mattaniah, had taken the oath of fealty to the Babylonian sovereign (Ezek. xvii. 13). But as early as 593 he had planned an insurrection against Nebuchadnezzar, to which end he had summoned the ambassadors of the disaffected Syrian states tributary to Babylon; namely, Edom, Moab, Ammon, Tyre, and Sidon. Psammetichus II. (594-588), the new king of Egypt, was probably the soul of the undertaking. Although peace still reigned in Syria, and Zedekiah himself appeared before Nebuchadnezzar to vindicate his good faith (Jer. li. 59 et seq.), it soon thereafter became possible for the Egyptian king Hophra to tempt Zedekiah into a breach of faith. Nebuchadnezzar was now compelled to step in, and repaired to Riblah on the Orontes, in order to conduct a campaign against Jerusalem directly from his headquarters. The siege began Jan. 10, 587, and lasted for a year and a half. As the city, partly because of its inaccessible position, and partly because of its strong fortifications, was almost impregnable to assault, Nebuchadnezzar endeavored to starve out the inhabitants by encircling Jerusalem with a wall. The approaching army of Hophra now compelled the Babylonians temporarily to abandon the siege and stand battle. The Egyptians, however, were beaten; and the siege began anew, and was continued until July 9, 586, when the beleaguers penetrated into the city through a breach made in the protective wall built in the days of Hezekiah (II Chron. xxxii. 5; II Kings xxii. 14). An attempt at flight by Zedekiah and his retinue was frustrated; he and his armed followers being intercepted before they could cross the Jordan. The retinue were dispersed, while Zedekiah was captured and brought before Nebuchadnezzar at Riblah. Here he witnessed the death of his sons, who were murdered in his presence. His eyes were then put out, and he was taken in chains to Babylon. On Aug. 7 of the same year Nebuzaradan, captain of Nebuchadnezzar's body-guard, ordered that the Temple, the royal palace, and all dwellings in the city of Jerusalem be set on fire, and that the surviving inhabitants be taken captive to Babylon. This was also the fate of all those who, after the capitulation of the city, had sought refuge in the camp of the Babylonians. Seventy or eighty distinguished Jews, however, among them the high priest Seraiah, were sent to Riblah, where, by the order of Nebuchadnezzar, they were put to death (II Kings xxv. 1 et seq.; Jer. xxxix. 1 et seq., lii. 1 et seq.). Yet a third deportation of the Jews was ordered by Nebuchadnezzar.

During the futile siege of Tyre, which lasted thirteen years (585-573 B.C.) and compelled Nebuchadnezzar to keep a standing army in Syria, probably a rebellion broke out among the population, which, since the murder of Judah's Jewish governor, Gedaliah, had been heavily oppressed (Jer. lii. 30). In consequence of this, there was ordered, either in 582 or 581 B.C., another partial deportation to Babylon.

Number of Babylonian Exiles.

As regards the number of Jews deported by Nebuchadnezzar, there are two divergent reports. According to the statements in Jer. lii. 28-30, which must be accepted as the more reliable, as they certainly are the more complete, 3,023 Jews were deported in 597 B.C., 832 inhabitants of Jerusalem in 586, and 745 Jews in 582, making 4,600 persons in all. But in Biblical times, as to-day in Oriental countries, only the men were counted. Hence it follows that from 14,000 to 18,000 souls must have been deported to Babylon. The other statements, given in II Kings xxiv. 14, 16, refer only to the deportation of the year 597 B.C. Verse 14 states that 10,000 men were sent into exile; while according to verse 16 the number was 8,000. As the former verse is part of an addition to the original text, it will be necessary to adhere to the second, the figures in which, however, are more than twice as high as those given in Jeremiah. Now, if the figures as given in Jeremiah for the years 597, 586, and 582 be accepted as correct, the total number of exiles, taking into consideration II Kings xxiv. 16, will be 12,000 men, or in all 36,000 to 48,000 souls. Furthermore, if it be assumed that the total population of the kingdom of Judah was about 120,000 (the figures should probably be somewhat higher, as the country was at that time more densely populated than it is to-day), about one-fourth of the population (according to II Kings xxiv. 16) or, perhaps more correctly, one-eighth (according to Jer. lii. 28-30) was led captive into Babylonia.

Condition of the Exiles.

The Israelites who were deported in 597 at first hoped for a speedy return to their homes. As they belonged without exception to the leading families, they had given credence to the sayings of the false prophets who had flattered them (Jer. xxvii.-xxix.; Ezek. xii. 21, xiii. 23); and in contradistinction to those who had remained at home, they came to regard themselves as the true Israel, although they themselves by no means conformed to the standard which the true prophets had pictured of an ideal Israel (Jer. xxiv.; Ezek. xi. 1-21), nor did they betray any evidence of a "new heart." When, therefore, contrary to their expectations, Jerusalem was destroyed in 586, they were, after all, compelled to follow the advice of Jeremiah (xxix. 4-9) and accommodate themselves to the conditions of a protracted exile.

As exiles, under royal protection, and consequently enjoying special prerogatives in their new home, their personal lot was undoubtedly a happier one than that of their brethren who had remained behind.

Their habitation was in the province of Babylon. It is not known, however, whether they lived together in considerable numbers or were scattered throughout the country. The places where they dwelt were known by various names; thus, "Tel Abib," according to the Hebrew etymology, signified "hill of corn-ears," whereas its Babylonian signification was "the deluge," or "hill of the stream"—the valley of the rivers Chebar (one of the numerous canals of the Euphrates), Casiphia, and Ahava (Ezek. i. 3; Ezra viii. 15, 17). A number of western Semitic proper names, discovered upon inscriptions found in Nippur, have led Hilprecht to believe that many of the exiles were settled in that place (see, for example, "Palestine Exploration Fund, Quarterly Statement," Jan., 1898, p. 54; April, 1898, p. 137). They not only preserved their old tribal distinction, but kept special genealogical records (Ezra viii. 17; Ezek. xiii. 9); and the heads of the tribes or elders were the leaders of the separate communities (Ezra viii. 1 et seq., 16 et seq.; Ezek. viii. 1, xiv. 1, xx. 1).

Their outward condition was also by no means unsatisfactory. Jeremiah, in his exhortations (xxix. 5-7; compare Ezek. xiii. 2 et seq., xiv. 9-11), states that the Israelites were permitted to till the soil, to cultivate the family life, and, by thrift and diligence, to accumulate wealth. Perhaps, being permitted to administer their internal affairs through their elders, they were allowed the undisturbed exercise of their religion; and nowhere are bloody persecutions heard of, designed to alienate forcibly the people from their ancestral religion, and to coerce them into accepting that of the conquerors. All the misery, want, imprisonment, and ill-treatment, frequently described as suffered in Babylonia, must be explained by the fact that the Prophets, whenever they gazed back upon the national catastrophe, felt anew all the pangs of homelessness and servitude. Consequently, the description of the people as a helpless worm (Isa. xli. 14), and of the violence and spoliation which had reduced Israel to the condition of those who suffer in chains and bondage (ib. xlii. 20-24), is not ascribable to actual sufferings inflicted in the land of exile. The chains and bonds are not such as have been forged for them in the land of their exile: they are figurative of the condition of homelessness and servitude into which the exiled Israelites have fallen; and they have lost their home, they have been despoiled, and the fetters of the foreign rule weigh heavily upon them. The Prophets also deplore the deep humiliation to which God has subjected His people by consigning them to ruin, and they bewail the circumstance that even the religious leaders, the priests and the Prophets themselves, have been delivered up to the profanation of a pagan people, instead of being permitted to serve the Lord in His holy Temple according to the divine mission appointed to them (Isa. xliii. 28, xlvii. 6). The source of the most poignant grief on the part of the pious devotees of Yhwh was the ridicule cast by the idolaters upon their religion, their God, and His power; for, as the pagans could not trace the downfall of the people to its true cause—the sins of the people themselves—they beheld in the fall of Jerusalem and its Temple a proof of the weakness of Israel's God (Isa. lii. 3).

Religious Conditions.

In consequence of the favorable external circumstances of the exiles, and particularly of such of them as were engaged in the diversified commerce in the Babylonian metropolis, the longing for home gradually

disappeared, and they learned to content themselves with material prosperity. Most of these indifferent persons were lost to their people; for, in their anxiety to retain the wealth they had acquired, they learned to conform to the manners and customs of the country, thus sacrificing not only their national but also their religious independence and individuality. Hence the denunciation by the Prophets of the various forms of idolatry practised among the people. Even if the description of the idolatry mentioned in Isa. lvi. 9-lvii. 13a belongs to pre-exilic times, many other passages so graphically describe the idolatrous practises of the exiles that the relation between these and the Babylonian cult can not be mistaken (Isa. lxxv. 3 et seq.; compare ib. lxxvi. 17). Despite all this indifference and impiety on the part of the masses, there was nevertheless an element that remained true to the service of Yhwh. These "servants of Yhwh," who humbly submitted ("the meek") to His will, gathered about the few Prophets who remained faithful to the Lord, but whose voice and influence were lost amid the general depravity, and who, in addition to the pain caused by base ingratitude and faithlessness toward the God of their fathers, were also compelled to endure all the shafts of scorn and ridicule. While some, though without obeying the prophet's exhortations (Ezek. xxxiii. 31), listened to his words—either because they appreciated his eloquence, or because they were entertained and pleased by the holy enthusiasm of the man of God—others ridiculed this faith in the Lord and the fond hope of the devotees of Yhwh of a future salvation and a redemption from pagan captivity (Isa. lxxiv. 5). Indeed, in their delusion they proceeded even to open hostility and oppression; and a reference to a species of excommunication or, at least, an open declaration of ostracism, is contained in the above-mentioned passage. These sad experiences of all true Israelites tended to separate them more and more from their recreant brethren. The more the pious exiles felt themselves repelled by their pagan environment and their disloyal fellow-Israelites (Ps. cxxxvii. 3 et seq.,) the closer became the union among themselves, and the stronger their allegiance to their Prophets and the Law.

Religious Observances.

What they had re-established almost immediately of the religion of their fathers was the sacred observances. True, a festive celebration of the high festivals was out of the question, in view of the unfavorable conditions and of the mood of the people. Such a celebration was, therefore, supplanted by solemn days of penance and prayer to commemorate the catastrophe which had befallen the people (Zech. vii. 3, viii. 19). The fasts of the fathers were also observed, although in so superficial and thoughtless a manner that the prophet was compelled to condemn the mode of observance, and to censure fasting when accompanied by the ordinary business pursuits of every-day (Isa. lxxviii. 3).

The Sabbath.

As the faithful could not honor Yhwh by sacrifices in a foreign land, nothing remained to them of all their ceremonial but the observance of the Sabbath (Hosea ix. 3-5) and such other customs as were connected with a certain independence of action. Such, for example, were the act of circumcision, which, together with the observance of the Sabbath, constituted a distinguishing mark of Israel; regular

prayer, performed with the face turned toward Jerusalem (I Kings viii. 48); and fasting, already mentioned. When the Prophets of the Exile spoke of the conditions under which the divine prophecies would be fulfilled, they always emphasized the observance of the Sabbath as the foremost obligation, as the force which should unite and preserve the Jewish community (Isa. lvi. 2, 6 et seq.; lviii. 13; Jer. xvii. 19 et seq.; Ezek. xx. 12 et seq.; xxii. 8, 26). On the other hand, it is evident from the demands and exhortations of the Prophets that they were now willing to dispense with the ceremonial, as the more external form of religious observance, in order to emphasize the exemplification of the essential religious spirit in works of morality and charity.

At the same time the idea found acceptance that the submission of the personal will to that of the Lord would prove the most acceptable sacrifice in His sight (Ezek. xi. 19, xviii. 31, xxxvi. 26; Isa. lxi. 1-3). Ezekiel also establishes the new principle that the essence of religion must be sought in individual morality: "The righteousness of the righteous shall be upon him, and the wickedness of the wicked shall be upon him" (Ezek. xviii. 20-32; compare Deut. xxiv. 16; Num. xxvi. 11); wherefore he, also, in contrast with the present disposition of the exiles, predicts a new heart and a new spirit (Ezek. xxxvi. 26). The new religious conviction was confirmed by the contemplation of the pagan idols with the attendant immoral cult, which reacted to strengthen and to purify the conception of the monotheistic idea, so that in the Deutero-Isaiah the certain conviction is already expressed of the ultimate recognition of Yhwh by all pagan peoples.

Cultivation of Literature.

Particular attention was now paid to the ancestral literature; and thus there arose during the Babylonian Exile the profession of the "scribes," those learned in the Law who set the standard of piety and devotion, and who transmitted their precepts both to their successors and to the people at large, while at the same time extending the body of the laws by means of revision and amplification (see Pentateuch). Historical writings also were now revised in accordance with the standard of the Law, establishing as a basis the historical conception of Deuteronomy. All the calamities which had befallen Israel were accepted by these exiles as a punishment for transgressions, and particularly for idol-worship. The sin of Jeroboam had ruined Israel, and the transgressions of Manasseh, despite his subsequent thorough reformation, were only atoned for by the downfall of Judah. Therefore the history of the past was to serve both as a warning and as a guide for the future. This explains the purpose of the compilation of the various older historical works into a historical entity: the new Israel, risen from the grave of exile, must avoid the sins and errors which caused the ruin of its fathers. And indeed the Psalms which were composed after the Exile reveal a keener introspection, a deeper sense of contrition, and a more frank avowal of sin than the earlier ones.

Termination of the Exile.

The first indication of a change for the better was the liberation of King Jehoiachin from his captivity, with regal honors which distinguished him above all other kings at the court of Babylon. According to II Kings xxv. 27-30, he was liberated by Evil-Merodach (562-560 B.C.); and though this passage mentions the liberation as occurring in the thirty-seventh year of the captivity of Jehoiachin, the event must be ascribed to Neriglissar (568-556). The first permanent change was brought about by the Persian king Cyrus. As the Deutero-Isaiah already desired and predicted after the first inroad of Cyrus into the Babylonian kingdom (545), a conquest of the city of Babylon took place (539 B.C.) after the decisive defeat of the army at Sippara. This conquest, however, was not accompanied by spoliation or destruction, and was followed by an order to rebuild the Temple of Yhwh in Jerusalem. This duty was assigned to Sheshbazzar, himself a Jew (according to I Chron. iii. 18, Shenazar, perhaps a Davidite), who had been sent by Cyrus as governor to Jerusalem, the king himself having previously laid the corner-stone of the Temple. The work of building, however, was soon arrested (Ezra v. 13-16). Sheshbazzar probably did not go to Jerusalem alone, being in all likelihood accompanied by distinguished Jews, such as the Davidite Zerubbabel, the priest Joshua, less prominent ones, and a troop of soldiers. But a general permission for the Jews to return was probably not given by Cyrus, as no mention of it occurs in any of the older records.

The actual return of the exiles was consummated by Ezra, who assembled at the river Ahava all those desirous of returning. These consisted of about 1,800 men, or 5,500 to 6,000 souls (Ezra viii.), besides 38 Levites and 220 slaves of the Temple from Casiphia. With this body, which was invested with royal powers, Ezra and Nehemiah succeeded, after great difficulties, in establishing the post-exilic Jewish community. From the list given in Neh. vii. 6-73 (= Ezra ii.), which the chronicler erroneously supposed to be an enumeration of those who had returned under Cyrus, it appears that the whole Jewish community at this time comprised 42,360 men, or 125,000 to 130,000 souls.

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—Traditional Data:

Various causes are assigned in the Haggadah for the Babylonian Exile. Some authorities mention general unworthiness (*Lam. R. proem 19*); others give specific sins, as idolatry, licentiousness, and bloodshed (*Tosef., Men. xiii. 22*), incontinency in the drinking of wine (*Gen. R. xxxvi. 4*), too great indulgence to one another and failure to reprove those who sinned (*Shab. 119b*), and non-observance of the year of release and of the Sabbath, and neglecting the study of the Torah (*Yer. Ta'an. iv. 69b*).

Causes of Exile.

Israel was exiled to Babylonia because the language of the Babylonians is akin to that of the Torah. According to another opinion, God had therefore exiled Israel to Babylonia because the latter is a low-lying country, like the nether world; as it is said (*Hosea xiii. 14*): "From the power of the nether world I will ransom them." Another authority says that God exiled Israel to Babylonia, because it was the land from which they had come, as a husband that is angry with his wife sends her home to her mother (*Pes. 87b*). Babylonia was Israel's home. Israel and Judah were exiled to different places in order that each might find consolation in the other's misery (*Pesiḳ. R. xxxiii.*).

Incidents Connected with the Exile.

Forty years before Israel went into exile date-palms were planted in Babylonia, because Israel was eager for the sweetness of the date, by which the tongue gets accustomed to the sweetness of the Torah (*Yer. Ta'an. l.c.*). According to one opinion the Ark was carried to Babylonia. With the destruction of the First Temple ceased the Davidic dynasty, the Urim and Tummim, and the Levitical cities (*Tosef., Soṭah, xiii. 1, 2*). For fifty-two years after the destruction of the Temple no bird was seen to fly in Palestine. This is inferred from *Jer. ix. 9*, having the numerical value of 52. Seven hundred kinds of clean fishes, 800 kinds of clean locusts, and innumerable fowl followed the exiles to Babylonia (*Yer. Ta'an. l.c.; Lam. R. proem 34*). As Nebuzaradan entered the Temple court he found the blood of the prophet Zechariah boiling. To his question, "Whose blood is that?" the people answered that it was the blood of sacrificial animals. He slaughtered a multitude of animals, but the prophet's blood did not cease boiling. Threatened with execution, the people admitted that it was the blood of the murdered prophet. Nebuzaradan thereupon slaughtered 80,000 priestly youths, but the blood still would not cease boiling. Turning in anger to it, he

said, "Dost thou want me to kill thy whole people?" Then God felt mercy with His children and caused the blood to cease boiling (Yer. Ta'an. l.c.; Giṭ. 57b). Eighty thousand priestly youths hid themselves in the cells of the Temple, where they were all burned, with the exception of Joshua b. Jehozadak, the high priest, the "brand plucked out of the fire" (Yer. Ta'an. l.c.). Eighty thousand priestly youths fled to the Ishmaelites. When they asked the latter for a drink, they gave them various salted foods, and leather bottles filled with air, and invited them to eat and drink. When one attempted to drink, the air from the bottle entered his lungs and choked him to death (ib.).

Nebuzaradan is identical with Arioch (Dan. ii. 14). This name suggests that Nebuzaradan, when leading the Jewish exiles, raged against them like a lion () until they had reached the Euphrates. On arriving there he said to his troops: "Let them rest here, for from this time forward their God will not care for them." Therefore it is said, "By the rivers of Babylon we sat" (Ps. cxxxvii. 1), only then, not before (Lam. R. v. 5). By the rivers of Babylon they sat and wept over the dead who had fallen by the sword of Nebuchadnezzar and by the waters of the Euphrates, which had proved fatal to those used to the rain-water and the spring-water of Palestine. But the tyrant sat in a ship, surrounded by all his nobles in the midst of all kinds of music (Isa. xliii. 14), while on the bank passed the princes of Judah naked and in iron chains. "Why do these people go without burdens on their shoulders?" he asked as he caught sight of them. Then heavy burdens were put upon them.

The longing after the soil of the Holy Land turned the heart of Israel to repentance. As long as they were in their own land Jeremiah exhorted them in vain to repentance; but when led into exile they regarded even the sacred vessels as holy, and hung up their harps on the willows (Pesik. R. xxviii.).

God's Attitude to Exiles.

God regretted having exiled Israel (Suk. 52b). He hastened the Exile two years, otherwise the people would have been utterly destroyed (Sanh. 38a). God's anger subsided after they had gone into exile (Lam. R. ii. 16). The divine glory did not leave the Sanctuary even after its destruction, according to the assurance given in I Kings ix. 3; and so we read (Ps. iii. 5) "from His holy mount," holy even when a bare mount. Cyrus speaks (Ezra i. 3)—while the Temple was destroyed—of "the God who is in Jerusalem" (Tan., ed. Buber, Shemot, 10). God's attitude is illustrated by the following two parables: A king had two sons. He grew angry with the first, punished him, and sent him into exile, exclaiming, "Wo unto him; from what happy state must he be banished!" But having also grown angry with the second, and sent him likewise into exile, he exclaimed, "It is I whose method of education was wrong." Likewise, when God sent the Ten Tribes into exile, He exclaimed, "Wo unto them! for they have wandered from me" (Hosea vii. 13); but when Benjamin and Judah also went into exile, He said, "Wo unto me for my hurt" (Jer. x. 19). Again, a king had two sons. Angered by the first, he smote him so that he died; then he mourned for him. When also the second one died of his punishment, the king said, "I have no more

strength to mourn; call the mourning women that they bewail him." Similarly, God, when the Ten Tribes went into exile, bewailed them (Amos v. 1); but when also Judah and Benjamin were exiled, He said (Jer. ix. 16), "Call the mourning women" (Pesiḳ. xv. 120a, b).

In three passages of Scripture God complains of Nebuchadnezzar the Wicked: in Jeremiah, Kings, and Chronicles. Just as one complains to his neighbor, saying, "Behold what that cursed N. N. has done me!" so speaks God, "Behold what that Babylonian dwarf has done: he has exiled My children, destroyed My house, and burned My Temple" (ib. xiii. 112a, b).

Duration of Exile.

The expression "because, even because" (Lev. xxvi. 43) has the same sense as the saying "measure for measure," and points to the fact that the duration of the Exile was commensurate with the duration of Israel's sinfulness (Lam. R. proem 21). Hananiah b. Azzur was a true prophet, but a plagiarist. Whatever he heard Jeremiah proclaim in the upper market-place he proclaimed in the lower market-place. Also his announcement that within two years the sacred vessels would be brought back (Jer. xxviii. 3) rests upon Jeremiah's prophecy of the seventy years (ib. xxxv. 12), which, however, Hananiah had miscalculated, assuming a wrong period for its beginning, and therefore an incorrect period for its end (Yer. Sanh. xi. 30b).

Return from Exile.

"The lion went up" (Jer. iv. 7)—this is Nebuchadnezzar in the constellation of the lion ("the fifth month," Jer. i. 3)—and destroyed the lion of God ("Jerusalem," Isa. xxix. 1). Accordingly will also come the lion ("God," Amos iii. 8) in the constellation of the lion, in the same month in which Jerusalem was destroyed (compare Jer. xxxi. 12: "I shall change her mourning into joy"), and He will rebuild the lion of God (Ps. cxlvii. 2; Pesiḳ. xiii. 116a). That Israel had found no rest (Lam. i. 3) as he went into exile assured his return home; for Noah's dove returned also because she had found no rest for her feet (Gen. viii. 9); and with the same words is also predicted Israel's restlessness in exile (Deut. xxviii. 65; Lam. R. i. 3). When in consequence of the sins of Israel the enemy had entered Jerusalem, captured his heroes and tied their hands behind them, God said: "With him am I in distress" (Ps. xci. 15); "My children are in distress, shall I be in freedom?" Then He drew His right hand back from before the enemy (Lam. ii. 3). This was revealed to Daniel by the expression (Dan. xii. 13, the real meaning "at the end of days"), "till the end of the right hand," that right hand which was in subjection. "With the redemption of My sons have I also redeemed My right hand" (Pesiḳ. xvii. 131b).

“Babylonian Captivity”

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Babylonian Captivity, also called Babylonian Exile, the forced detention of Jews in Babylonia following the latter's conquest of the kingdom of Judah in 598/7 and 587/6 BCE. The captivity formally ended in 538 BCE, when the Persian conqueror of Babylonia, Cyrus the Great, gave the Jews permission to return to Palestine. Historians agree that several deportations took place (each the result of uprisings in Palestine), that not all Jews were forced to leave their homeland, that returning Jews left Babylonia at various times, and that some Jews chose to remain in Babylonia—thus constituting the first of numerous Jewish communities living permanently in the Diaspora.

Many scholars cite 597 BCE as the date of the first deportation, for in that year King Jehoiachin was deposed and apparently sent into exile with his family, his court, and thousands of workers. Others say the first deportation followed the destruction of Jerusalem by Nebuchadnezzar in 586; if so, the Jews were held in Babylonian captivity for 48 years. Among those who accept a tradition (Jeremiah 29:10) that the exile lasted 70 years, some choose the dates 608 to 538, others 586 to about 516 (the year when the rebuilt Temple was dedicated in Jerusalem).

Although the Jews suffered greatly and faced powerful cultural pressures in a foreign land, they maintained their national spirit and religious identity. Elders supervised the Jewish communities, and Ezekiel was one of several prophets who kept alive the hope of one day returning home. This was possibly also the period when synagogues were first established, for the Jews observed the Sabbath and religious holidays, practiced circumcision, and substituted prayers for former ritual sacrifices in the Temple. The degree to which the Jews looked upon Cyrus the Great as their benefactor and a servant of their God is reflected at several points in the Hebrew Bible—e.g., at Isaiah 45:1–3, where he is actually called God's anointed.

“Babylonian Captivity”

Wikipedia

https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Babylonian_captivity

The Babylonian captivity or Babylonian exile is the period in [Jewish history](#) during which a number of people from the ancient [Kingdom of Judah](#) were captives in [Babylon](#), the capital of the [Neo-Babylonian Empire](#). After the [Battle of Carchemish](#) in 605 BCE, [King Nebuchadnezzar](#) of Babylon besieged [Jerusalem](#), resulting in tribute being paid by King [Jehoiakim](#).^[1] Jehoiakim refused to pay tribute in Nebuchadnezzar's fourth year, which led to another siege in Nebuchadnezzar's seventh year, culminating with the death of Jehoiakim and the exile to Babylonia of King [Jeconiah](#), his court and many others; Jeconiah's successor

[Zedekiah](#) and others were exiled in Nebuchadnezzar's eighteenth year; a later deportation occurred in Nebuchadnezzar's twenty-third year. The dates, numbers of deportations, and numbers of deportees given in the biblical accounts vary.^[2] These deportations are dated to 597 BCE for the first, with others dated at 587/586 BCE, and 582/581 BCE respectively.^[3]

After the fall of Babylon to the Persian king [Cyrus the Great](#) in 539 BCE, exiled Judeans were permitted to [return to Judah](#).^{[4][5]} According to the biblical [book of Ezra](#), construction of the [Second Temple](#) in Jerusalem began around 537 BCE. All these events are considered significant in Jewish history and culture, and had a far-reaching impact on the development of Judaism.

Archaeological studies have revealed that not all of the population of Judah was deported, and that, although [Jerusalem](#) was utterly destroyed, other parts of Judah continued to be inhabited during the period of the exile.^[6] The return of the exiles was a gradual process rather than a single event, and many of the deportees or their descendants did not return, becoming the ancestors of the [Iraqi Jews](#).

Biblical accounts of the exile

In the late 7th century BCE, the [Kingdom of Judah](#) was a [client state](#) of the [Assyrian](#) empire. In the last decades of the century, Assyria was overthrown by Babylon, an Assyrian province. [Egypt](#), fearing the sudden rise of the [Neo-Babylonian empire](#), seized control of Assyrian territory up to the [Euphrates river](#) in Syria, but Babylon counter-attacked. In the process [Josiah](#), the king of Judah, was killed in a battle with the Egyptians at the [Battle of Megiddo \(609 BCE\)](#).

After the defeat of [Pharaoh Necho's](#) army by the Babylonians at [Carchemish](#) in 605 BCE, Jehoiakim began paying tribute to [Nebuchadnezzar II](#) of Babylon. Some of the young nobility of Judah were taken to Babylon.

In the following years, the court of Jerusalem was divided into two parties, one supporting Egypt, the other Babylon. After Nebuchadnezzar was defeated in battle in 601 BCE by Egypt, Judah revolted against Babylon, culminating in a [three-month siege of Jerusalem](#) beginning in late 598 BCE.^[7] [Jehoiakim](#), the king of Judah, died during the siege^[8] and was succeeded by his son Jehoiachin (also called [Jeconiah](#)) at the age of eighteen.^[9] The city fell on 2 [Adar](#) (March 16) 597 BCE,^[10] and Nebuchadnezzar pillaged Jerusalem and its [Temple](#) and took Jeconiah, his court and other prominent citizens (including the prophet [Ezekiel](#)) back to Babylon.^[11] Jehoiakim's uncle [Zedekiah](#) was appointed king in his place, but the exiles in Babylon continued to consider Jeconiah as their [Exilarch](#), or rightful ruler.

Despite warnings by [Jeremiah](#) and others of the pro-Babylonian party, Zedekiah revolted against Babylon and entered into an alliance with Pharaoh [Hophra](#). Nebuchadnezzar returned, defeated the Egyptians, and again [besieged Jerusalem](#), resulting in the city's destruction in 587 BCE. Nebuchadnezzar destroyed the city wall and the Temple, together with the houses of the most important citizens. Zedekiah and his sons were captured and the sons were executed in front of Zedekiah, who was then blinded and taken to Babylon with many others (Jer 52:10–11). Judah became a Babylonian province, called [Yehud](#), putting an end to the independent Kingdom of Judah. (Because of the [missing years in the](#)

[Jewish calendar](#), rabbinic sources place the date of the destruction of the First Temple at 3338 [HC](#) (423 BCE)^[12] or 3358 [HC](#) (403 BCE).^[13]

The first governor appointed by Babylon was [Gedaliah](#), a native Judahite; he encouraged the many Jews who had fled to surrounding countries such as [Moab](#), [Ammon](#) and [Edom](#) to return, and he took steps to return the country to prosperity. Some time later, a surviving member of the royal family assassinated Gedaliah and his Babylonian advisors, prompting many refugees to seek safety in Egypt. By the end of the second decade of the 6th century, in addition to those who remained in Judah, there were significant Jewish communities in Babylon and in Egypt; this was the beginning of the later numerous Jewish communities living permanently outside Judah in the [Jewish Diaspora](#).

According to the [book of Ezra](#), the Persian [Cyrus the Great](#) ended the exile in 538 BCE,^[14] the year after he captured Babylon.^[15] The exile ended with the return under [Zerubbabel](#) the Prince (so-called because he was a descendant of the royal line of [David](#)) and Joshua the Priest (a descendant of the line of the former High Priests of the Temple) and their construction of the [Second Temple](#) in the period 521–516 BCE.^[14]

Archaeological and other non-Biblical evidence

Nebuchadnezzar's siege of Jerusalem, his capture of King Jeconiah, his appointment of Zedekiah in his place, and the plundering of the city in 597 BCE are corroborated by a passage in the [Babylonian Chronicles](#).^{[16]:293}

In the seventh year, in the month of Kislev, the king of Akkad mustered his troops, marched to the Hatti-land, and encamped against the City of Judah and on the ninth day of the month of Adar he seized the city and captured the king. He appointed there a king of his own choice and taking heavy tribute brought it back to Babylon.

[Jehoiachin's Rations Tablets](#), describing ration orders for a captive King of Judah, identified with King Jeconiah, have been discovered during excavations in Babylon, in the royal archives of Nebuchadnezzar.^{[17][18]} One of the tablets refers to food rations for "Ya'u-kīnu, king of the land of Yahudu" and five royal princes, his sons.^[19]

Nebuchadnezzar and the Babylonian forces returned in 588/586 BCE and rampaged through Judah, leaving clear archaeological evidence of destruction in many towns and settlements there.^{[16]:294} Clay [ostraca](#) from this period, referred to as the [Lachish letters](#), were discovered during excavations; one, which was probably written to the commander at [Lachish](#) from an outlying base, describes how the signal fires from nearby towns were disappearing: "And may (my lord) be apprised that we are watching for the fire signals of Lachish according to all the signs which my lord has given, because we cannot see Azeqah."^[20] Archaeological finds from Jerusalem testify that virtually the whole city within the walls was burnt to rubble in 587 BCE and utterly destroyed.^{[16]:295}

Archaeological excavations and surveys have enabled the population of Judah before the Babylonian destruction to be calculated with a high degree of confidence to have been approximately 75,000.

Taking the different biblical numbers of exiles at their highest, 20,000, this would mean that at most 25% of the population had been deported to Babylon, with the remaining 75% staying in Judah.^{[16]:306} Although Jerusalem was destroyed and depopulated, with large parts of the city remaining in ruins for 150 years, numerous other settlements in Judah continued to be inhabited, with no signs of disruption visible in archaeological studies.^{[16]:307}

The [Cyrus Cylinder](#), an ancient tablet on which is written a declaration in the name of Cyrus referring to restoration of temples and repatriation of exiled peoples, has often been taken as corroboration of the authenticity of the biblical decrees attributed to Cyrus,^[21] but other scholars point out that the cylinder's text is specific to Babylon and Mesopotamia and makes no mention of Judah or Jerusalem.^[21] [Professor Lester L. Grabbe](#) asserted that the "alleged decree of Cyrus" regarding Judah, "cannot be considered authentic", but that there was a "general policy of allowing deportees to return and to re-establish cult sites". He also stated that archaeology suggests that the return was a "trickle" taking place over decades, rather than a single event.^[22]

As part of the [Persian Empire](#), the former Kingdom of Judah became the province of Judah ([Yehud Medinata](#)^[23]) with different borders, covering a smaller territory.^[22] The population of the province was greatly reduced from that of the kingdom, archaeological surveys showing a population of around 30,000 people in the 5th to 4th centuries BCE.^{[16]:308}

A 2017 exhibition in Jerusalem displayed over 100 cuneiform tablets detailing trade in fruits and other commodities, taxes, debts, and credits accumulated between Jews driven from, or convinced to move from Jerusalem by King Nebuchadnezzar around 600 BCE. The tablets included details on one exiled Judean family over four generations, all with Hebrew names.^{[24][25]}

Exilic literature

The exilic period was a rich one for Hebrew literature. Biblical depictions of the exile include [Book of Jeremiah](#) 39–43 (which saw the exile as a lost opportunity); the final section of [2 Kings](#) (which portrays it as the temporary end of history); [2 Chronicles](#) (in which the exile is the "Sabbath of the land"); and the opening chapters of [Ezra](#), which records its end. Other works from or about the exile include the stories in [Daniel](#) 1–6, [Susanna](#), [Bel and the Dragon](#), the "Story of the Three Youths" ([1 Esdras](#) 3:1–5:6), and the books of [Tobit](#) and [Book of Judith](#).^[26] The [Book of Lamentations](#) arose from the Babylonian captivity. The final redaction of the [Pentateuch](#) took place in the Persian period following the exile,^{[16]:310} and the [Priestly source](#), one of its main sources, is primarily a product of the [post-exilic period](#) when the former Kingdom of Judah had become the Persian province of Yehud.^[27]

Significance in Jewish history

In the Hebrew Bible, the captivity in Babylon is presented as a punishment for idolatry and disobedience to [Yahweh](#) in a similar way to the presentation of Israelite [slavery in Egypt](#) followed by deliverance. The Babylonian Captivity had a number of serious effects on Judaism and Jewish culture. For example, the current [Hebrew alphabet](#) was adopted during this period, replacing the [Paleo-Hebrew alphabet](#).^[citation needed]

This period saw the last high-point of [biblical prophecy](#) in the person of [Ezekiel](#), followed by the emergence of the central role of the [Torah](#) in Jewish life. According to many [historical-critical](#) scholars, the Torah was [redacted](#) during this time, and began to be [regarded as the authoritative text](#) for Jews. This period saw their transformation into an ethno-religious group who could survive without a central Temple.^[28] Israeli philosopher and Biblical scholar [Yehezkel Kaufmann](#) said “The exile is the watershed. With the exile, the religion of Israel comes to an end and Judaism begins.”^[29]

This process coincided with the emergence of scribes and sages as Jewish leaders (see [Ezra](#)). Prior to exile, the people of Israel had been organized according to tribe. Afterwards, they were organized by smaller family groups. Only the tribe of [Levi](#) continued in its temple role after the return. After this time, there were always sizable numbers of Jews living outside [Eretz Israel](#); thus, it also marks the beginning of the "[Jewish diaspora](#)", unless this is considered to have begun with the [Assyrian captivity of Israel](#).^[citation needed]

In [Rabbinic literature](#), Babylon was one of a number of metaphors for the Jewish diaspora. Most frequently the term "Babylon" meant the diaspora prior to the destruction of the [Second Temple](#). The post-destruction term for the Jewish Diaspora was "[Rome](#)", or "[Edom](#)".^[citation needed]

Chronology

The following table is based on Rainer Albertz's work on *Israel in exile*.^[30] (Alternative dates are possible.)

Year	Event
609 BC	Death of Josiah
609–598 BC	Reign of Jehoiakim (succeeded Jehoahaz , who replaced Josiah but reigned only 3 months) Began giving tribute to Nebuchadnezzar in 605 BC. First deportation, purportedly including Daniel .
598/7 BC	Reign of Jehoiachin (reigned 3 months). Siege and fall of Jerusalem . Second deportation, 16 March 597
597 BC	Zedekiah made king of Judah by Nebuchadnezzar II of Babylon
594 BC	Anti-Babylonian conspiracy
588 BC	Siege and fall of Jerusalem . Solomon's Temple destroyed. Third deportation July/August 587

583 BC	Gedaliah the Babylonian-appointed governor of Yehud Province assassinated. Many Jews flee to Egypt and a possible fourth deportation to Babylon
562 BC	Release of Jehoiachin after 37 years in a Babylonian prison. ^[31] He remains in Babylon
539 BC	Persians conquer Babylon (October)
538 BC	Decree of Cyrus allows Jews to return to Jerusalem
520–515 BC	Return by many Jews to Yehud under Zerubbabel and Joshua the High Priest. Foundations of Second Temple laid