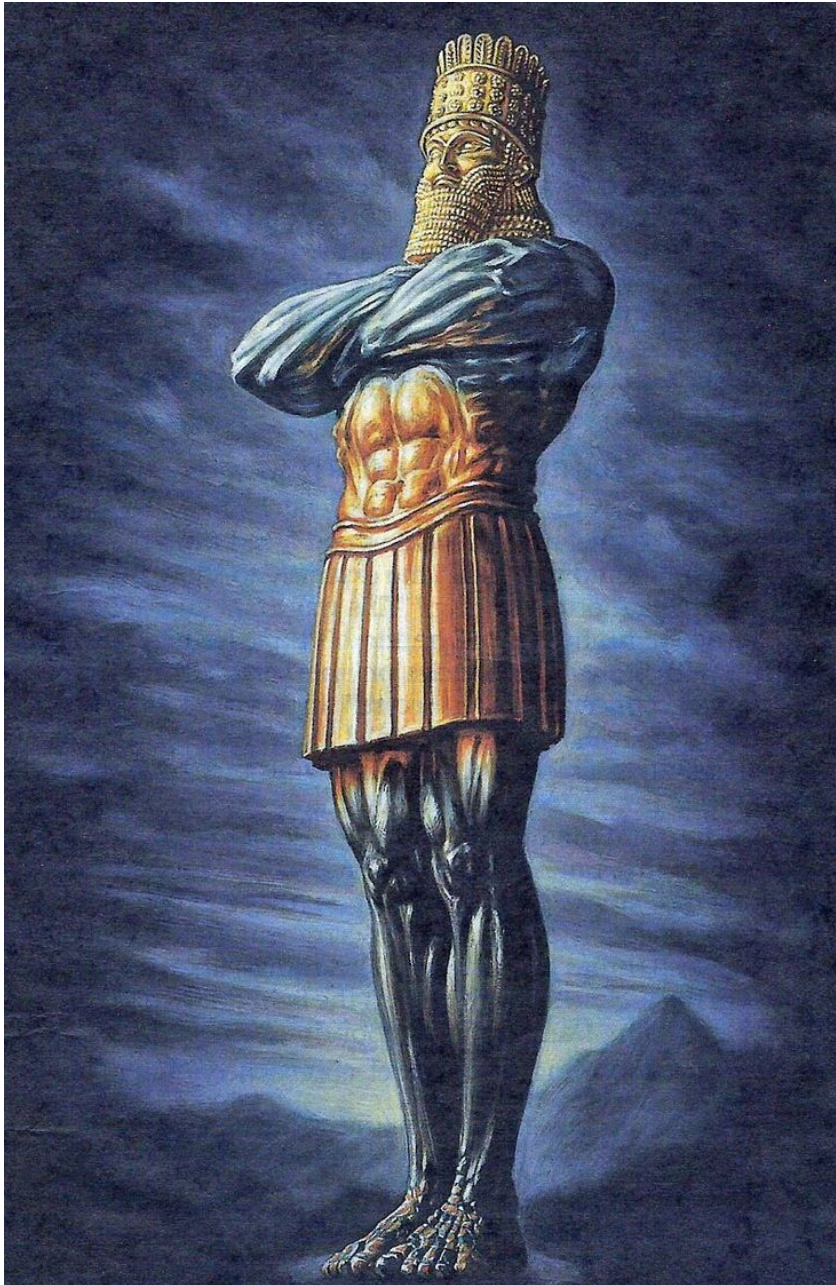


# The Bible Project

Week 31

## *Babylon Births Judaism*



**Gold**

**Silver**

**Bronze**

**Iron**

**Iron and Clay**

**Daniel 2**

## HOMEWORK *from week 30*

2 K 24.18-25.22

2 CHR 36.11-21

Lamentations 5.22: ... unless you have utterly rejected us, and are angry with us beyond measure.

Is 46.1-13 'My purpose shall stand and I will fulfill my intention...'

'I have spoken and I will bring it to pass ...'

I bring near my deliverance, it is not far off, and my salvation will not tarry. I will put salvation in Zion, for Israel my glory.

Ezek 18. 2-3 What do you mean...the parents have eaten sour grapes and the children's teeth are set on edge? As I live, says the Lord God, this proverb shall no more be used... it is only the person who sins who shall die.

Lam 3.21-24 Great is your faithfulness....

Is 4. 2-6 On that day the branch of the Lord shall be beautiful and glorious ... once the Lord has washed away the filth ...

Jer 24. 1-8 Good figs – the exiles who have a heart to know that I am the Lord and they shall return with a whole heart; BAD FIGS: Zedekiah and company who are in Jerusalem and Egypt.

Jer 29. 1-7: To Exiles: Build houses and live in them...Seek the welfare of the city where I have sent you, for in its welfare you will find your welfare.

Jer 1.1-3 13<sup>th</sup> year of Josiah to 11<sup>th</sup> year of Zedekiah when Jerusalem went into exile.

Ezek 1.1-3 5<sup>th</sup> year of the exile of Jehoiachin, Word came to Ezekiel by the Kebar River in Babylon

Ps 137. By the rivers of Babylon we sat and wept....

Amos 5.14 Seek good and not evil that you may live...; Deut 16.20 Follow justice and justice alone that you may live and possess the land...; Ps 82.3 defend the poor; Mic 6.8 do justice, love mercy, walk humbly  
Amos 8. 4-8 corrupt Sabbath to sell the poor—judgment comes; Zech 7.8-14 And the word of the Lord came again to Zechariah: <sup>9</sup>“This is what the Lord Almighty said: ‘Administer true justice; show mercy and compassion to one another. <sup>10</sup>Do not oppress the widow or the fatherless, the foreigner or the poor. Do not plot evil against each other.’ <sup>11</sup>“But they refused to pay attention; stubbornly they turned their backs and covered their ears. <sup>12</sup>They made their hearts as hard as flint and would not listen to the law or to the words that the Lord Almighty had sent by his Spirit through the earlier prophets. So the Lord Almighty was very angry. <sup>13</sup>“‘When I called, they did not listen; so when they called, I would not listen,’ says the Lord Almighty. <sup>14</sup>‘I scattered them with a whirlwind among all the nations, where they were strangers. The land they left behind them was so desolate that no one traveled through it. This is how they made the pleasant land desolate.’”; Is 10.1-4 To those who do not do justice, nothing is left but to cringe...

## BIG IDEA 1: Jerusalem is pillaged and destroyed

Not much left in Palestine

Judah carried into exile by Babylonian hordes

Represented the cream of the political, ecclesiastical and intellectual leadership – that's the reason they were selected for deportation

Jeremiah 52.28-30 gives precise totals for 3 deportations – 597, 587, 582 = 4600 adult males; grand total is not more than 3 or 4 X that.

Though few in number – these would shape Israel's future

- new faith direction
- impulse for restoration

Exiles endured hardships of internment,

but not unduly severe: build houses, earned their living

Jehoiachin lived as pensioner until after 592 sometime—still considered King of Judah

Life in Babylon opened opportunities that would not have been available in Palestine.

See 1 Chronicles 3: 17-24

Also Egypt

1. Tahpanhes just within the frontier – Jeremiah and the party that fled there after the assassination of Gedeliah Jer 43.7



2. Other groups remained in other cities of Lower Egypt – Jeremiah 44.1. to remain there throughout the
3. Persian period –
  - to be joined later by that “flow of immigrants which in the days of the Ptolemies made Egypt a center of world Jewry”

Elephantine – first cataract of the Nile – Jewish military colony – there when Persians conquered Egypt in 525 BC – established 589-70 – relation to destruction of Jer is

uncertain; nature of the religion they practiced seems to bear resemblance to Bethel which was eradicated by Josiah, but which later revived and flourished there.

3. Other places in Moab, Edom, Ammon, where Jews also fled – no real dispersion through the whole world yet, but a trend began that has never been reversed that more Judaism is practiced outside of Judea than inside it.

## **BIG IDEA 2: LOSS OF FAITH** Destruction of Jerusalem and exile brings despair to Judah.

Exile tested Israel's faith to the utmost.

Dogma on which state and *revisionist* religion had been founded was DEAD.

That faith was

- the assurance of God's eternal choice of Zion as his earthly presence
- unconditional promises to David of Dynasty without end.

Sheltered by this dogma, Judah had rejected prophets' warnings as total heresy awaited God's intervention and ideal future of the Kingdom of God

Nebuchadnezzar's battering rams shattered that false faith. Note Lament. 2.11, 3.1-19; 5.1-3.

Doubts:

1. Very status of Israel's God—Are the gods of Babylon "no gods"? Are they not very mighty?  
See Jeremiah 44. 15-19; Ezek 20.32
  2. Others question God's justice Ezek. 18.2, 25, Lam 5.7
  3. Sin theory – mortal sin had cut Israel off and canceled her destiny.
- Loss of faith: made worse by contact for the first time with the great centers of world culture  
Jerusalem seemed poor and plain  
Severity of the temptation is shown by Isa 40-48 strong persuasion otherwise unnecessary.

Israel's faith on trial for its life—clarify its faith or cease to exist

EZEKIEL & JEREMIAH—prophets who identify with events immediately prior to & during Exile

## **BIG IDEA 3: REMNANT:** Prophets renew hope in this time of crisis by proclaiming that "remnant shall return."

Faith reconstructed

Adequate theological explanation for disaster & hope for future provided by Jeremiah and Ezek  
God's righteous judgment on nation's sin  
Tragedy was not contradiction but confirmation of Israel's historic faith.  
Thus demolished false hope to provide redemptive purpose of God as true hope.

Exile seen as

1. merited punishment – discipline?
2. purge preparing Israel to renew its divine mandate
3. prepared way for new community in asserting that God had not left them,.
4. Correction, not destruction

## **BIG IDEA 4: JUDAISM HAS NEW FOUNDATIONS**

New community emerges not marked by nationalism & ceremony

But by adherence to tradition and law

Prophets explained calamity as breach in their obedience  
Therefore, LAW grew in importance

### Sabbath and circumcision

Sabbath crucial sign of exilic obedience to covenant

Jer. 17.19-27; Is 56.1-8, 58.13f

Circumcision – practiced by ancient Semites except Phils.

Apparently not by Babylonians.

Ritual Cleanness Ezek 4.12-15; 22.26; ch 44f. **SEE DANIEL**

Records of past were now preserved in writing

Many think this is the time the Pentateuch came together to provide a theological history of the world – and a valid model of the past and for all time.

### Hope of restoration

Some resigned themselves to life in Babylon

A hard core refused to take this as God's final destiny – therefore, status is provisional –

Prophets not only pronounced judgment but also hope – Jeremiah 32.6-15; Ezek 37

Thus says the Lord, "Houses and fields shall again be bought in the land."

Probably a mixed vision – simple restoration—repeat of Davidic glory?

But notable is Ezek. vision of the new city centered around Temple EZ 40-48; Zadokite priesthood Ezek. 45-46;

Waited for the judgment of God which, if it fell on Israel, would surely fall on Babylon.

### ***Jeremiah Buys a Field—Jeremiah 32***

**32** This is the word that came to Jeremiah from the Lord in the tenth year of Zedekiah king of Judah, which was the eighteenth year of Nebuchadnezzar. <sup>2</sup> The army of the king of Babylon was then besieging Jerusalem, and Jeremiah the prophet was confined in the courtyard of the guard in the royal palace of Judah.

<sup>3</sup> Now Zedekiah king of Judah had imprisoned him there, saying, "Why do you prophesy as you do? You say, 'This is what the Lord says: I am about to give this city into the hands of the king of Babylon, and he will capture it.' <sup>4</sup> Zedekiah king of Judah will not escape the Babylonians<sup>[a]</sup> but will certainly be given into the hands of the king of Babylon, and will speak with him face to face and see him with his own eyes. <sup>5</sup> He will take Zedekiah to Babylon, where he will remain until I deal with him, declares the Lord. If you fight against the Babylonians, you will not succeed.'"

<sup>6</sup> Jeremiah said, "The word of the Lord came to me: <sup>7</sup> Hanamel son of Shallum your uncle is going to come to you and say, 'Buy my field at Anathoth, because as nearest relative it is your right and duty to buy it.'

<sup>8</sup> "Then, just as the Lord had said, my cousin Hanamel came to me in the courtyard of the guard and said, 'Buy my field at Anathoth in the territory of Benjamin. Since it is your right to redeem it and possess it, buy it for yourself.'

"I knew that this was the word of the Lord; <sup>9</sup> so I bought the field at Anathoth from my cousin Hanamel and weighed out for him seventeen shekels<sup>[b]</sup> of silver. <sup>10</sup> I signed and sealed the deed, had it witnessed, and weighed out the silver on the scales. <sup>11</sup> I took the deed of purchase—the sealed copy containing the terms and conditions, as well as the unsealed copy—<sup>12</sup> and I gave this deed to Baruch son of Neriah, the son of Mahseiah, in the presence of my cousin Hanamel and of the witnesses who had signed the deed and of all the Jews sitting in the courtyard of the guard.

<sup>13</sup> "In their presence I gave Baruch these instructions: <sup>14</sup> 'This is what the Lord Almighty, the God of Israel, says: Take these documents, both the sealed and unsealed copies of the deed of purchase, and put them in a clay jar so they will last a long time. <sup>15</sup> For this is what the Lord Almighty, the God of Israel, says: Houses, fields and vineyards will again be bought in this land.'

<sup>16</sup> "After I had given the deed of purchase to Baruch son of Neriah, I prayed to the Lord:



<sup>17</sup> “Ah, Sovereign Lord, you have made the heavens and the earth by your great power and outstretched arm. **Nothing is too hard for you.**” <sup>18</sup> You show love to thousands but bring the punishment for the parents’ sins into the laps of their children after them. Great and mighty God, whose name is the Lord Almighty, <sup>19</sup> **great are your purposes and mighty are your deeds.** Your eyes are open to the ways of all mankind; you reward each person according to their conduct and as their deeds deserve. <sup>20</sup> You performed **signs and wonders in Egypt** and have continued them to this day, in Israel and among all mankind, and have gained the renown that is still yours. <sup>21</sup> **You brought your people Israel out of Egypt with signs and wonders,** by a mighty hand and an outstretched arm and with great terror. <sup>22</sup> You gave them this land you had sworn to give their ancestors, a land flowing with milk and honey. <sup>23</sup> They came in and took possession of it, but they **did not obey you or follow your law; they did not do what you commanded them to do. So you brought all this disaster on them.**

<sup>24</sup> “See how the siege ramps are built up to take the city. Because of the sword, famine and plague, the city will be given into the hands of the Babylonians who are attacking it. What you said has happened, as you now see. <sup>25</sup> And though the city will be given into the hands of the Babylonians, you, Sovereign Lord, say to me, ‘Buy the field with silver and have the transaction witnessed.’”

<sup>26</sup> Then the word of the Lord came to Jeremiah: <sup>27</sup> “I am the Lord, the God of all mankind. ***Is anything too hard for me?***” <sup>28</sup> Therefore this is what the Lord says: I am about to give this city into the hands of the Babylonians and to Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon, who will capture it. <sup>29</sup> The Babylonians who are attacking this city will come in and set it on fire; they will burn it down, along with the houses where the people aroused my anger by burning incense on the roofs to Baal and by pouring out drink offerings to other gods.

<sup>30</sup> “The people of Israel and Judah have done nothing but evil in my sight from their youth; indeed, the people of Israel have done nothing but arouse my anger with what their hands have made, declares the Lord. <sup>31</sup> From the day it was built until now, this city has so aroused my anger and wrath that I must remove it from my sight. <sup>32</sup> The people of Israel and Judah have provoked me by all the evil they have done—they, their kings and officials, their priests and prophets, the people of Judah and those living in Jerusalem. <sup>33</sup> They turned their backs to me and not their faces; though I taught them again and again, they would not listen or respond to discipline. <sup>34</sup> They set up their vile images in the house that bears my Name and defiled it. <sup>35</sup> They built high places for Baal in the Valley of Ben Hinnom to sacrifice their sons and daughters to Molek, though I never commanded—nor did it enter my mind—that they should do such a detestable thing and so make Judah sin.

<sup>36</sup> “You are saying about this city, ‘By the sword, famine and plague it will be given into the hands of the king of Babylon’; but this is what the Lord, the God of Israel, says: <sup>37</sup> **I will surely gather them from all the lands where I banish them in my furious anger and great wrath; I will bring them back to this place and let them live in safety.**” <sup>38</sup> They will be my people, and I will be their God. <sup>39</sup> I will give them singleness of heart and action, so that they will always fear me and that all will then go well for them and for their children after them. <sup>40</sup> I will make an everlasting covenant with them: I will never stop doing good to them, and I will inspire them to fear me, so that they will never turn away from me. <sup>41</sup> **I will rejoice in doing them good and will assuredly plant them in this land with all my heart and soul.**

Last days of the Babylon Empire

Nebuchadnezzar. d. 562

Medean king Cyaxares built Ectabana; eventually defeated and made peace with Egypt

Succeeded by Evil-merodach his son who released Johoiachin from prison [2 K 25]

Succeeded violently by brother-in-law Neriglissar/Nergal-Sharezer of Jer 39.3, 13.

Died after 4 years left minor son

Succeeded immediately by Nabonidus – not Marduk devotee, but moon god Sin, and tried to force Sin on Babylonians  
Caused dissension within Babylon. – transferred his residence from Bab to Edom; left affairs of Babylon in hands of crown prince Belshazzar.  
Jews served in Nabonidus army  
settlements in the Arabian peninsula may date from this time.  
Dissension in Babylon weakened it at a crucial moment  
Cyrus arises—from southern Iran to revolt against the Medes; Nabonidus makes treaty with Egypt and with [Croesus] Lydia [central Asia Minor] and that does not help.

**BIG IDEA 5:** Prophets reinterpret the ISRAELITE FAITH on the eve of release from Babylon

Isaiah 40-66

Yahweh the ONE God, Sovereign Lord of History – **read end of 40.**

Entire prophecy dominated by the God who comes to redeem his people – through the meteoric rise of Cyrus.

Isaiah imagines a heavenly judgment scene in which the gods of the nations are summoned to present themselves and show some evidence of a purpose in history, and thus, of ability to guide events, which might support their claim to be gods –IS 41. 1-4; 43.9.

Not able to do, they stand trembling before Cyrus whose coming they could neither predict nor prevent. – no gods at all Isaiah 41.21-24, 28f.

Isaiah hails Cyrus as the unwitting tool of God's purpose whom God summons for the reestablishment of his kingdom.

Sums up Israel's faith—all things take place within the purpose and by the power of Yahweh, who alone is God.

Great stress is laid upon God's reestablishment of **COVENANT**. As he once called an unworthy people out of Egypt, so he now redeems an utterly blind deaf and revolting people from this new bondage and accord to them his eternal covenant of peace [Is 54.9f] Jeremiah calls this a new covenant. Isaiah insisted the bond had never been broken. - Exile not a divorce but a period of estrangement.

Note of a promise native to Israel's faith receives clear reaffirmation in Isaiah.

Israel's mission and Destiny: the servant of Yahweh.

**BIG IDEA 6:**

## HISTORY ITSELF IS THE JUDGMENT OF GOD

2 Cor 5.10 We must appear before the judgment seat of Christ...; Rom 14.10-12 Everyone will stand before the judgment seat...; Heb 9.27 Man is destined to die once and after that to face judgment; Rev 20.11-12 judgment; 1 Cor 3.11-15 Everyone's work will be tested....

Is 3.9-11 Tell the righteous they will be okay; Woe to the wicked; Jer 4.18 Your own conduct and actions have brought this upon you...

Is 5.26-30 the attack from afar; 7. 18-25 **Assyrian judgment** **What land is left for Grazing**; Jer 5. 15-17 I am bringing a nation against you, 6.22-26 I am bringing an army from the north; 51.11 "Sharpen the

arrows, take up the shields! The Lord has stirred up the kings of the Medes, because his purpose is to destroy Babylon. The Lord will take vengeance, vengeance for his temple.

Deut 28.47-50 because you did not serve the Lord in time of prosperity; Judg 3.12 because you did evil, God gave them over; 1 Kings 11.14 Because of Solomon's sin...; Lk 19.41-44 correction Jesus weeps for the judgment of Jerusalem in his time...

Num 12.1-15 Judgment on Miriam and Aaron, 16.1-50 Korah, Dathan and Abiram; Mt 23.13-36 Jesus on judgment

Is 1.25-27 I will turn my hand against you; I will thoroughly purge away your dross... afterward I will restore your leaders... 4.2-6 The Lord will wash away the filth of the women of Zion; he will cleanse the bloodstains from Jerusalem by a spirit of judgment and a spirit of fire. <sup>5</sup> Then the Lord will create over all of Mount Zion and over those who assemble there a cloud of smoke by day and a glow of flaming fire by night. 26.9b When judgments come people learn righteousness, 30. 19-36 The Lord comes to judge the earth; Ps 76.8-9 From heaven you pronounced judgment,  
and the land feared and was quiet—  
<sup>9</sup> when you, God, rose up to judge,  
to save all the afflicted of the land

Ezek 37. 1-28 Then the nations will know that I the Lord make Israel holy, when my sanctuary is among them forever;

Heb 12.5-11 "My son, do not make light of the Lord's discipline,

and do not lose heart when he rebukes you,

<sup>6</sup> because the Lord disciplines the one he loves,  
and he chastens everyone he accepts as his son."<sup>[a]</sup>

<sup>7</sup> Endure hardship as discipline; God is treating you as his children. For what children are not disciplined by their father? <sup>8</sup> If you are not disciplined—and everyone undergoes discipline—then you are not legitimate,



# THE BIBLE PROJECT

## WEEK 32 ASSIGNMENT

Read:

1 Chronicles 3: 17-24

Ezra,  
Nehemiah  
Haggai  
Zechariah

Not to get confused there are three Persian rulers named Artaxerxes:

Artaxerxes I	465-425 BC
Artaxerxes II	404-358 BC
Artaxerxes III	358-338 BC

As you read, please make note in writing of the passages which refer to

1. REBUILDING THE TEMPLE
2. REBUILDING THE CITY WALL
3. LAW REFORM
4. JEWISH DISTINCTIVES—Marks of Exceptionalism

Optional but interesting: Find a copy of the *Apocrypha* and consider reading *1 & 2 Maccabees*.

Josephus is also an interesting Jewish writer: Two books by him have a bearing on this next period:

*Antiquities of the Jews*—later sections  
*The Jewish War*