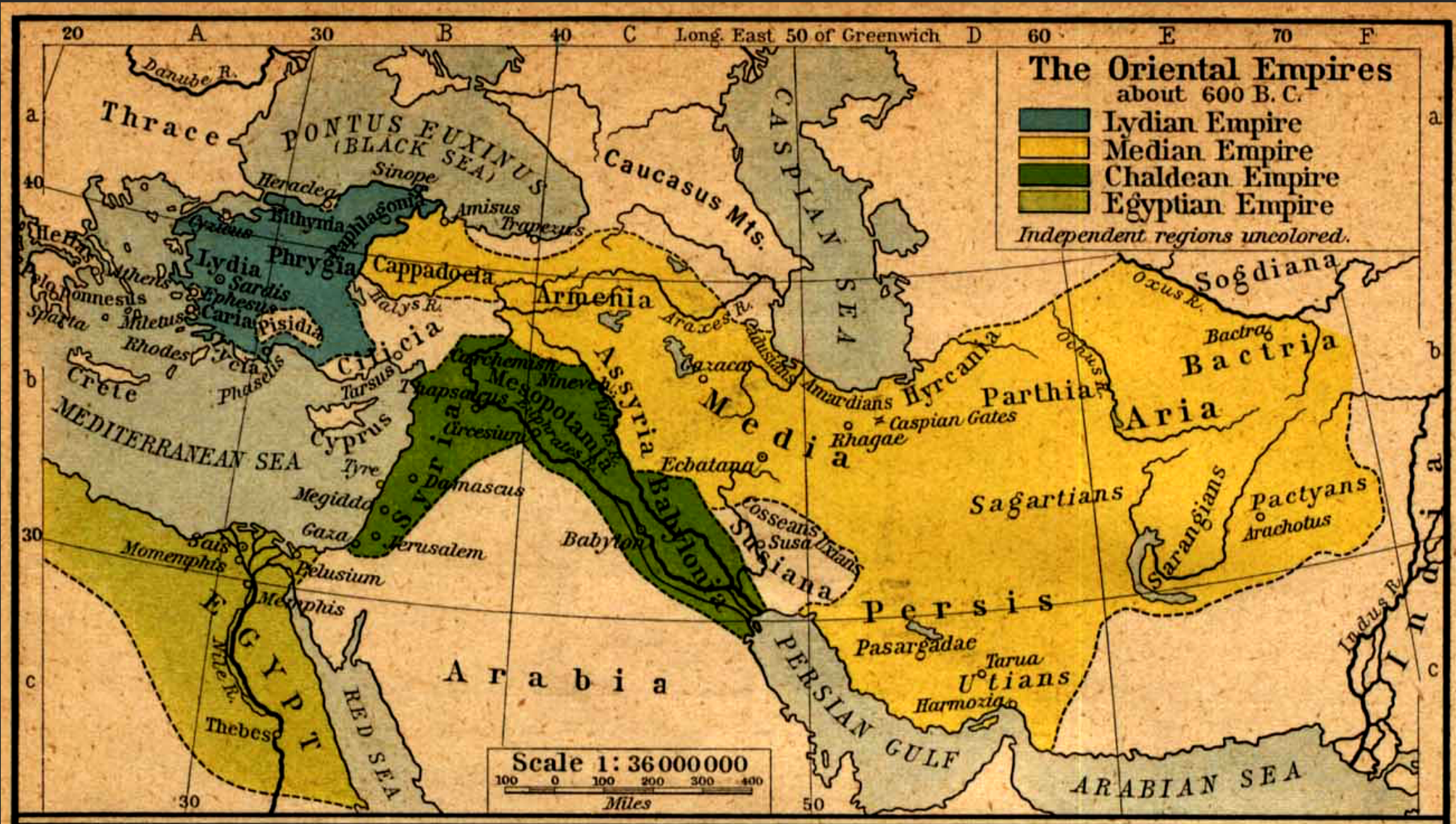




Fall of Judah to the Chaldeans (Neo-Babylonians) 6th Century B.C

BILL CROSBY
PRAISE AND WORSHIP
HISTORY GEEK



Kings of Judah...

Kings of Judah (Southern Kingdom)			
Kings	Yrs. of Reign	Dates B.C.	Biblical Reference
Rehoboam	17	976-959	1 Kings 11:42 - 14:31
Abijah	3	959-956	1 Kings 14:31 - 15:8
Asa	41	956-915	1 Kings 15:8-24
Jehoshaphat	25	915-893	1 Kings 22:41-50
Jehoram (Joram)	8	893-886	2 Kings 8:16-24
Ahaziah	1	886-885	2 Kings 8:24 - 9:29
Athaliah (Queen)	6	885-879	2 Kings 11:1-20
Joash (Jehoash)	40	879-840	2 Kings 11:1 - 12:21
Amaziah	29	840-811	2 Kings 14:1-20
Uzziah (Azariah)	52	811-759	2 Kings 15:1-7
Jotham	18	759-743	2 Kings 15:32-38
Ahaz	19	743-727	2 Kings 16:1-20
Hezekiah	29	727-698	2 Kings 18:1 - 20:21
Manasseh	55	698-643	2 Kings 21:1-18
Amon	2	643-640	2 Kings 21:19-26
Josiah (Josias)	31	640-609	2 Kings 22:1 - 23:30
Jehoahaz (Joahaz)	(3 months)	609	2 Kings 23:31-33
Jehoiakim	11	609-597	2 Kings 23:34 - 24:5
Jehoiachin	(3 months)	597	2 Kings 24:6-16
Zedekiah	11	597-586	2 Kings 24:17 - 25:30

Hezekiah was King of Judah when Israel fell in 722 B.C.

- **2 Kings 18:1-4, 9-11** ¹In the third year of Hoshea son of Elah king of Israel, Hezekiah son of Ahaz king of Judah began to reign. ²He was twenty-five years old when he became king, and he reigned in Jerusalem twenty-nine years. His mother's name was Abijah daughter of Zechariah. ³He did what was right in the eyes of the LORD, just as his father David had done. ⁴He removed the high places, smashed the sacred stones and cut down the Asherah poles. He broke into pieces the bronze snake Moses had made, for up to that time the Israelites had been burning incense to it. (It was called Nehushtan.)
 - ⁹In the fourth year of King Hezekiah, which was the seventh year of Hoshea son of Elah, king of Israel, Shalmaneser king of Assyria came up against Samaria and besieged it, ¹⁰and at the end of three years he took it. In the sixth year of Hezekiah, which was the ninth year of Hoshea king of Israel, Samaria was taken. ¹¹The king of Assyria carried the Israelites away to Assyria and put them in Halah, and on the Habor, the river of Gozan, and in the cities of the Medes
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7 Kings later Zedekiah becomes the last King of Judah

- [2 Kings 24:18-19](#) ¹⁸Zedekiah was twenty-one years old when he became king, and he reigned in Jerusalem eleven years. His mother's name was Hamutal daughter of Jeremiah; she was from Libnah. ¹⁹He did evil in the eyes of the LORD, just as Jehoiakim had done.
 - [2 Kings 25:1](#) ¹So in the ninth year of Zedekiah's reign, on the tenth day of the tenth month, Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon marched against Jerusalem with his whole army. He encamped outside the city and built siege works all around it.
 - [2 Kings 25:8-12](#) ⁸On the seventh day of the fifth month, in the nineteenth year of Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon, Nebuzaradan commander of the imperial guard, an official of the king of Babylon, came to Jerusalem. ⁹He set fire to the temple of the LORD, the royal palace and all the houses of Jerusalem. Every important building, he burned down. ¹⁰The whole Babylonian army under the commander of the imperial guard broke down the walls around Jerusalem. ¹¹Nebuzaradan the commander of the guard carried into exile the people who remained in the city, along with the rest of the populace and those who had deserted to the king of Babylon. ¹²But the commander left behind some of the poorest people of the land to work the vineyards and fields.
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Nebuchadnezzar II reigns in Babylon 605-562 B.C.

The destruction of Jerusalem led to the Babylonian captivity as the city's population, and people from the surrounding lands, were deported to Babylonia. The Jews thereafter referred to Nebuchadnezzar, the greatest enemy they had faced until that point, as a "destroyer of nations". The Biblical Book of Jeremiah paints Nebuchadnezzar as a cruel enemy, but also as God's appointed ruler of the world and a divine instrument to punish disobedience.



The Jews Begin Exile c. 597-586 B.C.

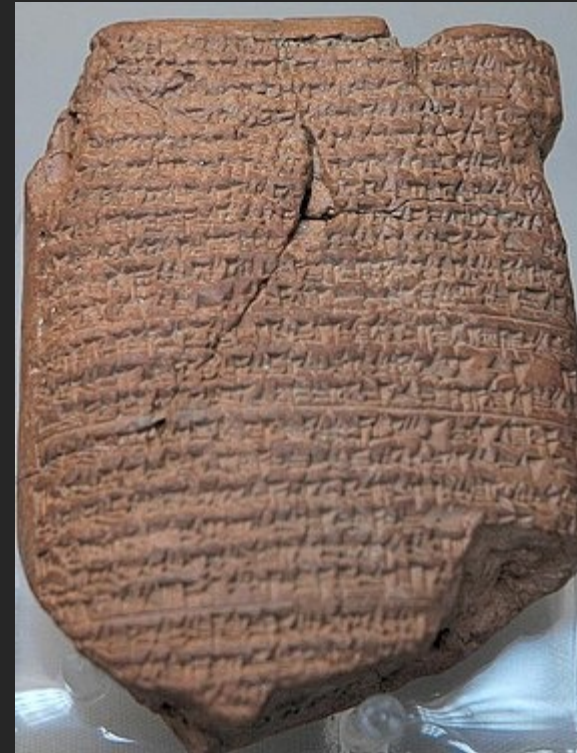
- How many Jews go into Exile?
 - Moore, Megan Bishop; Kelle, Brad E. (2011). *Biblical History and Israel's Past: The Changing Study of the Bible and History*. Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing. pp. 357–58.
"Overall, the difficulty in calculation arises because the biblical texts provide varying numbers for the different deportations. The HB/OT's conflicting figures for the dates, number and victims of the Babylonian deportations become even more of a problem for historical reconstruction because, other than the brief reference to the first capture of Jerusalem (597) in the Babylonian Chronicle, historians have only the biblical sources with which to work."
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What do the sources tell us?

- 2 Kings 24:14-16 ¹⁴He carried all Jerusalem into exile: all the officers and fighting men, and all the skilled workers and artisans—a total of ten thousand. Only the poorest people of the land were left.

¹⁵Nebuchadnezzar took Jehoiachin captive to Babylon. He also took from Jerusalem to Babylon the king's mother, his wives, his officials and the prominent people of the land. ¹⁶The king of Babylon also deported to Babylon the entire force of seven thousand fighting men, strong and fit for war, and a thousand skilled workers and artisans.

- Babylonian Chronicle



Nebuchadnezzar II

- Nebuchadnezzar controlled a large empire that extended to Lydia
- He defeated the Egyptian Pharaoh, Necho II at Carchemish in 605B.C.
- In 597 the Neo-Babylonians captured Jerusalem
- In 586 B.C. Nebuchadnezzar Conquered Western Syria and destroyed Jerusalem, including the Temple of Solomon

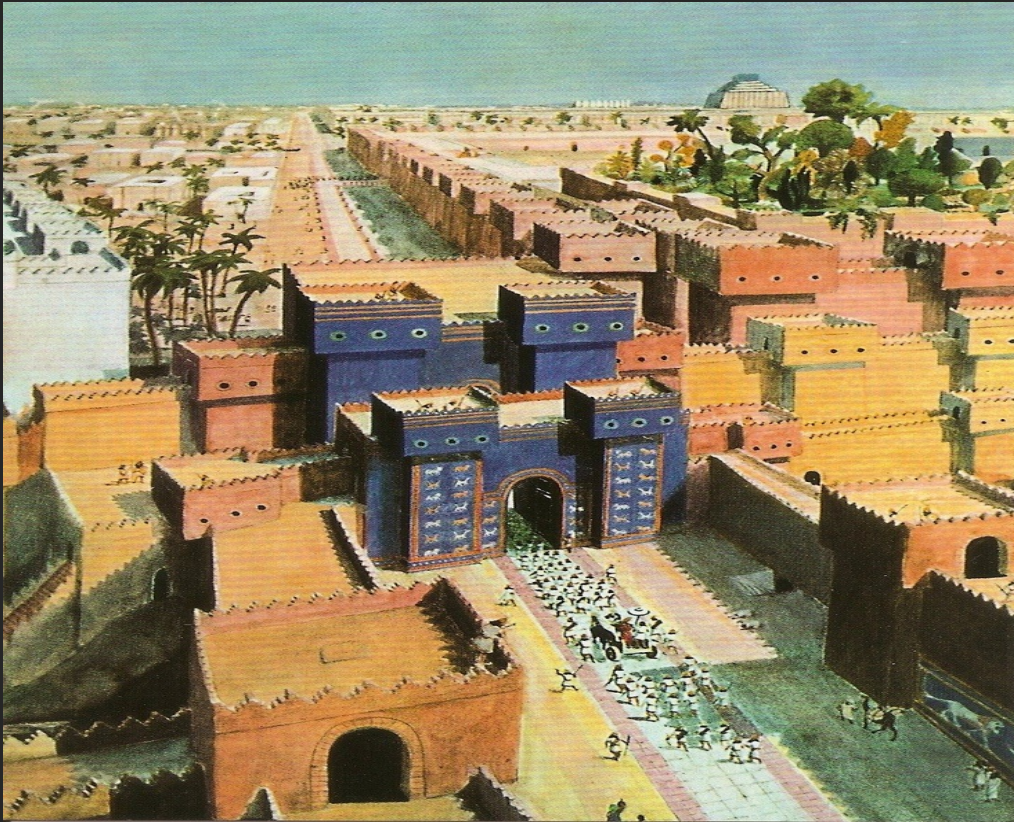


Nebuchadnezzar II

- Nebuchadnezzar restored Babylon and old religious monuments
- He improved structures such as canals
- The most famous structure built by Nebuchadnezzar II was the Hanging Gardens of Babylon, which is considered to one of the seven wonders of the ancient world



City of Babylon, Ishtar Gate



Significance of the destruction of the temple

- Who wanted the temple?
 - Who wanted to be like the Canaanites?
 - Same people who wanted a king.
 - What does the destruction of the temple say about God? Perhaps that He didn't want to be like a Canaanite god? Perhaps that He did not want to be put into a box? Perhaps that He did not want to be so unapproachable?
 - God is beginning to change the way he is to be seen but would do so more profoundly at the time of Jesus' death at calvary.
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What happened during the exile?

- The salient feature of the exile, however, was that the Jews were settled in a single place by Nebuchadnezzar. While the Assyrian deportation of Israelites in 722 BC resulted in the complete disappearance of the Israelites, the deported Jews formed their own community in Babylon and retained their religion, practices, and philosophies. Some, it would seem, adopted the Chaldean religion (for they name their offspring after Chaldean gods), but for the most part, the community remained united in its common faith in Yahweh.
 - They called themselves the "gola," ("exiles"), or the "bene gola" ("the children of the exiles"), and within the crucible of despair and hopelessness, they forged a new national identity and a new religion. The exile was unexplainable; Hebrew history was built on the promise of Yahweh to protect the Hebrews and use them for his purposes in human history. Their defeat and the loss of the land promised to them by Yahweh seemed to imply that their faith in this promise was misplaced. This crisis, a form of cognitive dissonance (when your view of reality and reality itself do not match one another), can precipitate the most profound despair or the most profound reworking of a world view. For the Jews in Babylon, it did both.
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How did the exile impact Judaism?

- From texts such as *Lamentations*, which was probably written in [Jerusalem](#), and *Job*, written after the exile, as well as many of the *Psalms*, Hebrew literature takes on a despairing quality. The subject of *Job* is human suffering itself. Undeserving of suffering, Job, an upright man, is made to suffer the worst series of calamities possible because of an arbitrary test. When he finally despairs that there is no cosmic justice, the only answer he receives is that humans shouldn't question God's will. Many of the psalms written in this period betray an equal hopelessness.
 - But the Jews in Babylon also creatively remade themselves and their world view. In particular, they blamed the disaster of the Exile on their own impurity. They had betrayed Yahweh and allowed the Mosaic laws and cultic practices to become corrupt; the Babylonian Exile was proof of Yahweh's displeasure. During this period, Jewish leaders no longer spoke about a theology of judgment, but a theology of salvation. In texts such as [Ezekiel](#) and [Isaiah](#), there is talk that the Israelites would be gathered together once more, their society and religion purified, and the unified Davidic kingdom be re-established.
 - So, this period is marked by a resurgence in Jewish tradition, as the exiles looked back to their Mosaic origins in an effort to revive their original religion. It is most likely that the [Torah](#) took its final shape during this period or shortly afterward, and that it became the central text of the Jewish faith at this time as well. This fervent revival of religious tradition was aided by another accident in history: when Cyrus the Persian conquered Mesopotamia, he allowed the Jews to return home. This was no ordinary event, though. Cyrus sent them home *specifically* to worship Yahweh—what was once only a kingdom would become a nation of Yahweh.
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Daniel

- One of the Jews taken into exile by Nebuchadnezzar II
 - The Babylonian policy of treatment of their enemies differed from the Assyrians (who killed the men, raped the women). Babylonian took “prisoners” of the best and the brightest of those they captured.
 - They put those who excelled into “magistrate councils”
 - Daniel is given the gift of oneiromancy (the ability to see and interpret others dreams) and he correctly interprets Nebuchadnezzar’s dream prophesizing the four kingdoms (Neo-Babylonians, Persians, Greeks and Romans) and that a new king would come during the fourth kingdom (Rome).
 - Daniel is given praise, wealth and position by Nebuchadnezzar
 - The Magi would be established as a council of “wise men” and a model that the Persians would adopt when they conquered the Chaldeans as would the Parthians after them. By the time of the Parthians, the Magi are known as “king makers”. Phraates IV near death in 2 B.C. and the Magi were beginning the search for a new king and they saw a light in the West and followed it to Jerusalem!
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How does context help us understand the Bible?

Matthew 2:1-2 ¹After Jesus was born in **Bethlehem** in Judea, during the time of King Herod, **Magi** from the east came to Jerusalem ²and asked, "Where is the one who has been born **king** of the Jews? We saw his **star** when it rose and have come to worship him."

- Bethlehem: known for its perfect lambs for sacrifice
 - Magi and king: date back to the exile and morph over time in various empires into "king makers"
 - Star: Usually translated "light" more accurately (God is often symbolized as "light") would certainly have been seen by these expert astronomers.
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