

OT-OV

Lesson 98

1. Earlier I taught the book of 1st Kings by way of the Doctrine of Solomon, Jeroboam and Rehoboam.

2. Last week we continued our study of 2nd Kings and 1st and 2nd Chronicles by way of a review of the reigns of the 19 Kings of Israel in the north and the 20 Kings of Judah in the south.

3. Let's review some of that learned and then pick up with new material at point 5.18.

4. Israel

4.1 Jeroboam I c. 931-910

4.2 Nadab c. 910 - 909

4.3 Baasha c. 909-886

4.4 Ellah c. 886-885

4.5 Zimri c. 885

4.6 Omri c. 885-874

4.7 Ahab c. 874-853

4.8 Ahaziah c. 853-852

4.9 Joram c. 852-841

4.10 Jehu c. 841-814

4.11 Jehoahaz c. 814-798

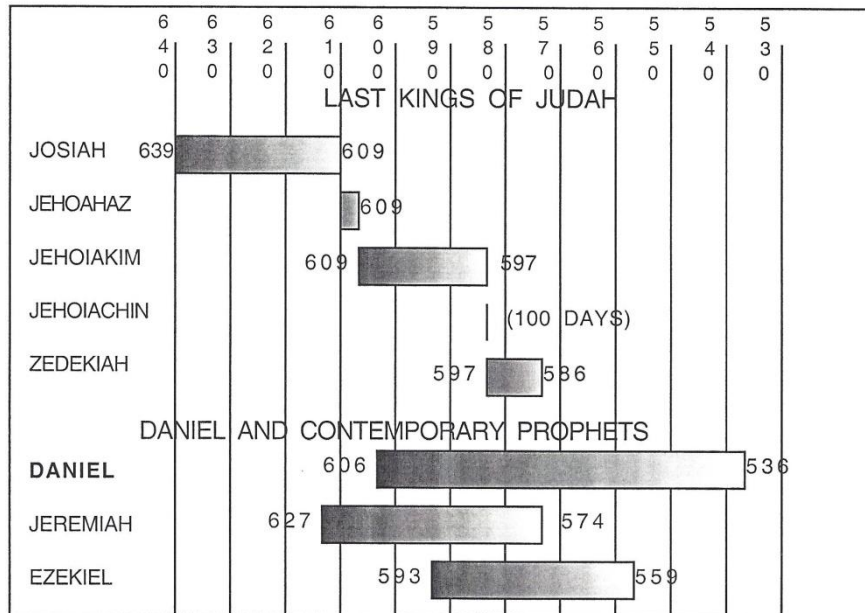
4.12 Jehoash c. 798-782

4.13 Jeroboam II c. 782-753

4.14 Zechariah c. 753-752

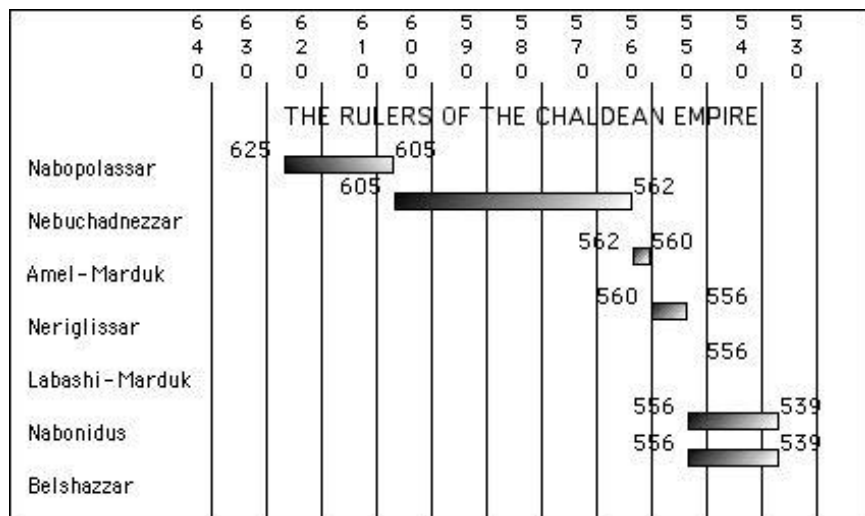
4.15 Shallum c. 752

- 4.16 Menahem c. 752-742
- 4.17 Pekahiah c. 742-740
- 4.18 Pekah c. 740-732
- 4.19 Hoshea c. 732-721
- 5. Judah
 - 5.1 Rehoboam c. 931-913
 - 5.2 Abijah c. 913-911
 - 5.3 Asa c. 911-870
 - 5.4 Jehoshaphat c. 870-848 (co-regency c. 873-870)
 - 5.5 Jehoram c. 848-841 (co-regency c. 853-838)
 - 5.6 Ahaziah c. 841
 - 5.7 Athaliah c. 841-835
 - 5.8 Joash c. 835-796
 - 5.9 Amaziah c. 796-767
 - 5.10 Uzziah c. 767-740 (co-regency c. 791-765)
 - 5.11 Jotham c. 740-732 (co-regency c. 750-740)
 - 5.12 Ahaz c. 732-716
 - 5.13 Hezekiah c. 716-687
 - 5.14 Manasseh c. 687-642 (co-regency c. 696-687)
 - 5.15 Amon c. 642-640
 - 5.16 Josiah c. 640-608
 - 5.17 Jehoahaz c. 608
 - 5.18 Jehoiakim c. 608-597



5.18.1 Jehoiakim was also a son of Josiah. He was first called Eliakim however after deposing Jehoiahaz Pharaoh-Necho set him on the throne of Judah and changed his name to Jehoiakim. He was subject to Egypt for four years and required to exact heavy tribute from his people.

5.18.2 The battle of Carchemish in 605 B.C. ended the despotic influence of Egypt over Judah. Nebuchadnezzar entered Jerusalem and received the submission of Jehoiakim. He took several captives including Daniel and his three friends and the golden vessels from the temple of Babylon (also called Chaldea).



5.18.3 During his reign Baal and Ashtoreth were worshiped in the very gates of the temple and sacrifices were resumed in the valley of Hinnom. Cruelty, corruption and oppression were commonplace in the city. Jeremiah wrote on a scroll in protest, telling how divine judgment would surely come to Judah, but the king, after reading a few leaves, took his knife and cut them in strips and then burned them.

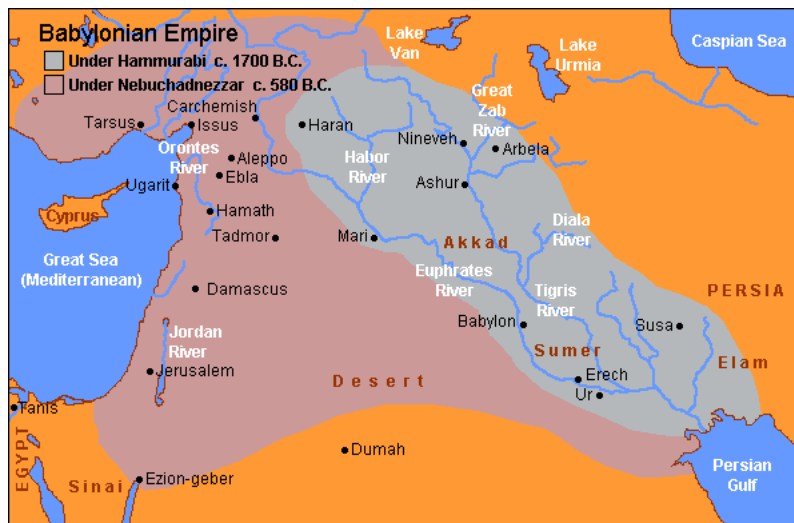
5.18.4 After three years Jehoiakim rashly rebelled against Babylonia. His young son Jehoiachin inherited his throne with all the unsolved problems.

5.19 Jehoiachin c. 597

5.19.1 Jehoiachin is also called Jeconiah and Coniah. In the Greek he is called Jechonias. He was the son of Jehoiakim, Jehoiachin became king of Judah in December, 597 B.C. He was 18 years old when he began his reign, which lasted three months and ten days.

5.19.2 He came on the throne when Judah was suffering from raids by neighboring people which had been incited by Nebuchadnezzar to punish Jehoiakim's rebellion against Babylon. Jehoiachin's short rule gave little chance to tell what sort of king he would have made, but he is charged with doing evil as his father had done.

5.19.3 When Nebuchadnezzar finished his war with Egypt, he mobilized his army to invade Judah, and Jehoiachin was forced to capitulate. He was exiled to Babylon, along with 10,000 others including his mother, the leading men and women of Judah such as Ezekiel the prophet, and the royal treasures.



5.19.4 There was only a poor and feeble remnant left behind, with no leadership or protection. Jehoiachin was the last of Solomon's line as predicted by Jeremiah (Jer 22:30), and the succession passed to the line of Nathan.

Jer 22:30 Thus saith the LORD, Write ye this man childless, a man that shall not prosper in his days: for no man of his seed shall prosper, sitting upon the throne of David, and ruling any more in Judah.

5.20 Zedekiah c. 597-586

5.20.1 Zedekiah was the last king of Judah. Twenty-one years of age when he became king, Zedekiah was the third son of Josiah to come to the throne. He was the younger brother of Jehoahaz and Jehoiakim and the uncle of Jehoiachin. Zedekiah was made king over the remnant left behind in 597 B.C., and his previous name, Mattaniah, was changed to Zedekiah.

5.20.2 The situation he inherited was a tenuous one and in fact too difficult for Zedekiah to control. At the outset of his reign Zedekiah gave some signs of intention to obey the Mosaic law and to heed the advice of Jeremiah with respect to foreign policies.

HELPFUL CHRONOLOGIES

625 B.C.	Babylonia established as power by Nebuchadnezzar's father, Nabopolassar, an Assyrian
612 B.C.	Babylon (under Nebuchadnezzar) defeats Egypt and Assyria at Carchemish
606 B.C.	Judah is defeated by Babylon, two major deportations follow in 597 and 586 when the Temple and city are destroyed
539 B.C.	Cyrus conquers Babylon (the end of the Babylonian Empire)
538 B.C.	Edict of Cyrus the Great permits Jewish repatriation of Judah
536 B.C.	Return of 49,897 Jews to the land, book of Daniel written Daniel dies soon thereafter
334 B.C.	Alexander begins his conquest of Persia
323 B.C.	Alexander's conquest is complete-Alexander dies
323-147 B.C.	Hellenistic Empires (Cassander, Lysimachus, Ptolemy and Seleucus)
200 B.C.-476	Roman Empire
Tribulation	Revived Roman Empire established

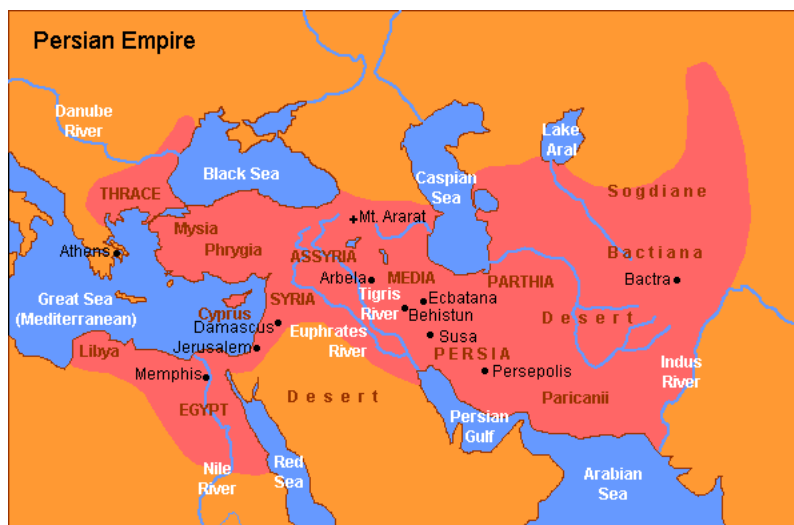
5.20.3 He sent an embassy to Babylon to advise the Jews there to settle down to normal living and seek the peace of the city and to pray for it. The court of Zedekiah was a center of intrigue and plotting against Babylon. In the fourth year of Zedekiah, ambassadors gathered at Jerusalem from the surrounding nations of Edom, Moab, Ammon, Tyre, and Sidon urging the king of Judah to join them in a rebellion against Babylon.

5.20.4 Jeremiah opposed this foolish scheme, and appeared before the envoys bearing upon his shoulders a yoke of wood to dramatize his declaration that God had given the nations into the hands of Nebuchadnezzar. Those who submitted would be allowed to live, but those who rebelled and refused submission to the yoke would perish.

5.20.5 The next step toward overt rebellion was taken when Zedekiah leagued with Egypt--a treacherous and defiant move in the eyes of Nebuchadnezzar, the result of which was an invasion of Palestine.

5.20.6 Nebuchadnezzar, as a result attacked Judah, conquered Jerusalem and destroyed both the city and the Temple. The sons of Zedekiah were slain before him, after which his eyes were put out and he himself was taken in chains to Babylon, where he later died. Thus were fulfilled the prophecies of Jeremiah.

6. Ezra was written by Ezra sometime between c. 450 B.C. and c. 430 B.C. from the land of Persia. It is a history of the remnants of Judah from their dispersion and return to the land after the Babylonian captivity.



6.1 The Book of Ezra records the fulfillment of God's promise to the nation of Israel through Jeremiah to bring them back to their land after seventy years of captivity.

Jer 25:11 And this whole land shall be a desolation, and an astonishment; and these nations shall serve the king of Babylon seventy years.

6.2 The first six chapters of the book cover events during the first two or three years of the reign of Cyrus (538-530 B.C.) and the first six years of the reign of Darius I (521-486 B.C.).

6.3 Ezra was both a priest and scribe who led a group of exiles back to Jerusalem. He is best known from the book which bears his name. Ezr 7:1

Ezr 7:1 After these things, during the reign of Artaxerxes king of Persia, Ezra son of Seraiah, the son of Azariah, the son of Hilkiah,

6.4 Ezra was designated in several ways: as priest in Ezz 10:10, 16 and Neh 8:2, as a scribe in Ezz 7:6; and Neh 12:36, and as priest and scribe in Ezz 7:11-12, 21 and Neh 8:9; 12:26.

Ezz 10:10 Then Ezra the priest stood up and said to them, "You have been unfaithful; you have married foreign women, adding to Israel's guilt.

Ezz 10:16 So the exiles did as was proposed. Ezra the priest selected men who were family heads, one from each family division, and all of them designated by name. On the first day of the tenth month they sat down to investigate the cases,

Neh 8:2 So on the first day of the seventh month Ezra the priest brought the Law before the assembly, which was made up of men and women and all who were able to understand.

Ezz 7:6 this Ezra came up from Babylon. He was a teacher and scribe well versed in the Law of Moses, which the LORD, the God of Israel, had given. The king had granted him everything he asked, for the hand of the LORD his God was on him.

King Artaxerxes' Letter to Ezra

Ezz 7:11 This is a copy of the letter King Artaxerxes had given to Ezra the priest and teacher, a man learned in matters concerning the commands and decrees of the LORD for Israel:

Ezz 7:12 Artaxerxes, king of kings, To Ezra the priest, a teacher of the Law of the God of heaven: Greetings.

Neh 12:36 and his associates--Shemaiah, Azarel, Milalai, Gilalai, Maai, Nethanel, Judah and Hanani-- with musical instruments prescribed by David the man of God. Ezra the scribe led the procession.

Ezz 7:21 Now I, King Artaxerxes, order all the treasurers of Trans-Euphrates to provide with diligence whatever Ezra the priest, a teacher of the Law of the God of heaven, may ask of you--

Neh 8:9 Then Nehemiah the governor, Ezra the priest and scribe, and the Levites who were instructing the people said to them all, "This day is sacred to the LORD your God. Do not mourn or weep." For all the people had been weeping as they listened to the words of the Law.

Neh 12:26 They served in the days of Joiakim son of Jeshua, the son of Jozadak, and in the days of Nehemiah the governor and of Ezra the priest and scribe.

6.5 Although his work as scribe is well known, many fail to recognize the claim that his priestly lineage could be traced back through Zadok and Phinehas to Aaron. Ezz 7:1-6

Ezr 7:1 After these things, during the reign of Artaxerxes king of Persia, Ezra son of Seraiah, the son of Azariah, the son of Hilkiah,
Ezr 7:2 the son of Shallum, the son of Zadok, the son of Ahitub,
Ezr 7:3 the son of Amariah, the son of Azariah, the son of Meraioth,
Ezr 7:4 the son of Zerariah, the son of Uzzi, the son of Bukki,
Ezr 7:5 the son of Abishua, the son of Phinehas, the son of Eleazar, the son of Aaron the chief priest--
Ezr 7:6 this Ezra came up from Babylon. He was a teacher well versed in the Law of Moses, which the LORD, the God of Israel, had given. The king had granted him everything he asked, for the hand of the LORD his God was on him.

6.6 Ezra was commissioned by royal decree to go to Jerusalem for the purpose of evaluating the civil and religious conditions of the Judean community and instituting necessary corrective measures.

6.7 He was given authority both in terms of money and goods for the temple and exemptions from taxation of the temple officials.

6.8 Many have questioned the historicity of the sweeping authority given Ezra. Even though the powers are extensive, the king of Persia could well have needed the support of the provinces.

6.9 He could gain gratitude without any risk to his empire by patronizing the needs of such neglected groups.

6.10 Ezra's commission also authorized him to gather a company of exiles who desired to return with him to Jerusalem. After mustering the group, fasting, and offering prayer, Ezra led them out on their journey.

6.11 Reaching Jerusalem four months later, he presented his orders to the neighboring governors and turned over the temple vessels to the priestly officials.

6.12 The community at Jerusalem was poor and backward compared with the culture of the Jewish group in Babylonia. It is difficult to estimate how much the arrival of Ezra meant to the struggling community at Jerusalem.

6.13 A reading of the books of Ezra and Nehemiah leave little doubt as to the chronological order of Ezra and Nehemiah. It would seem Ezra was the High Priest who served with Nehemiah in c. 444 B.C.

6.14 On the basis of the Biblical text, Ezra appears to have arrived in c. 458 B.C., the seventh year of Artaxerxes I Longimanus (465-424 B.C.).

6.15 Ezra may have returned to the Persian court and then made a second visit to Jerusalem. Ezra's original commission may well have been a temporary appointment as in the case of Nehemiah.

6.16 Ezra was a diligent student of the law, a leading figure in the new order of scribes which had grown up during the Exile.

6.17 Much in Ezra reminds us of Nehemiah. They both demonstrated outstanding leadership qualities, unbounded energy, intense faith, and similar spiritual aims.

6.18 However, Ezra's supreme work lay in his abilities as teacher, historian, critic, and linguist. While he was rigorous and narrow in matters of law, he was able to achieve lasting success.

6.19 He gave determination and stubbornness to Judaism which made it able to resist the inroads of foreign influence. He was passionate and emotional but always exhibited strong faith in God.

6.20 His asceticism was severe as he emphasized fasting and disciplined himself. Yet his interest in bringing back the temple vessels and treasures classifies him as a patron of sacred art.

6.21 As a scribe, Ezra has always been remembered for his important editorial work on parts of the Old Testament Scriptures. While much tradition has grown up around his name, he certainly was representative of those who helped in the collecting, arranging, and editing of the law.

6.22 As a religious leader, Ezra has a unique place in Jewish tradition, being often described as the true founder of Judaism, the second founder of the Jewish state, or the founder of the Great Synagogue.

6.23 His work in renewing the spiritual power and vitality of Israel was indeed significant. Much of the work in adapting the pre-Exilic liturgical practices to post-Exilic Jewish worship can be credited to his spiritual leadership. As a reformer, Ezra's name will always be linked with enforced divorces.

End Lesson