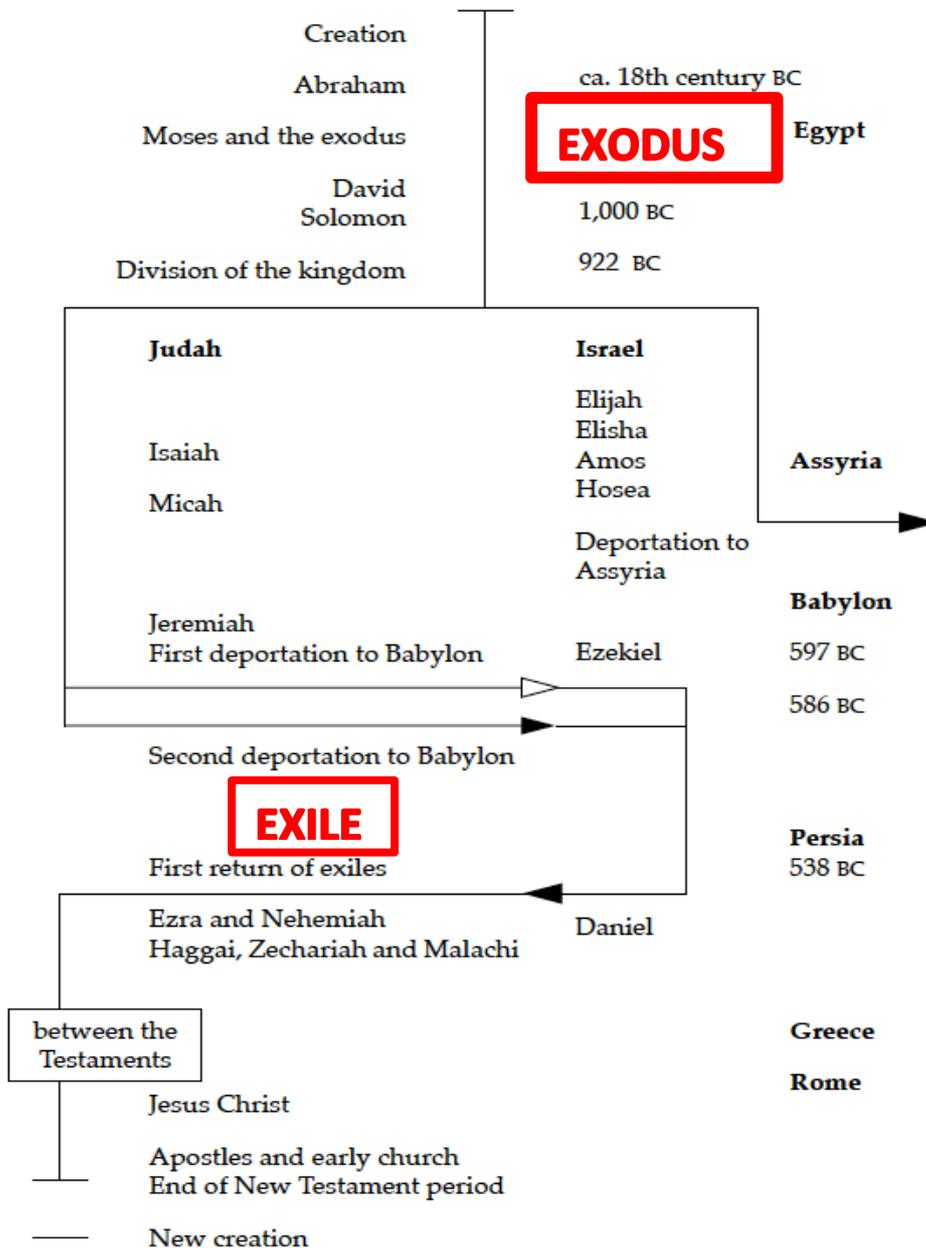


Bible Overview 5: The Exile

Outline of biblical history



- Split of the Kingdom into 2 after Solomon – 10 Tribes in North, 2 South – Judah/Benjamin
- Disappearance of the North around 721 BC conquered by Assyria – 2 Kings 17
- Judah – Exile in Babylon 597-586 BC
- Return 538 BC but never free nation – always ruled by different Kingdoms

READ John 3:1-15

1. What according to Jesus are the conditions for entering the Kingdom of God? (v3,5)
2. What is Nicodemus' response to this? (v7,9)
3. What is the tone of Jesus' reply to Nicodemus in v10? (ie – complement, rebuke, surprise, etc). As 'Israel's teacher' – what is it that Nicodemus would teach?
4. What is the implication of what Jesus is saying to Nicodemus in v10, about what he has been saying to him in v3-8?

1 Kings:

- The people of Israel are in the Promised Land and enjoying its blessings (4v20-21,8v66)
- The Son of David is on the throne (3v6)
- The people of Israel are too numerous to count (3v8,4v20)
- The King is a wise and godly king (3v10-13, 4v29-33)
- Under Solomon, Israel was a blessing to the nations (4v34, visit of queen of Sheba 1 Kings 10v1, 6-9,23-24)
- The greatest blessing of all – God was in their midst (6v13)
- The temple was built – the dwelling place of God (1 Kings 8:10-11)

However....! 1 Kings 11

1 Kings 11:1 'however'

- Solomon 'loved many foreign women' v1
- He broke the express command of God v2
- The terrible 'action' was the doorway to the 'turning of his heart'. V4,6
- His love of foreign wives led him to worship idols, including the 'detestable' god Molech (v5,7) (this included child sacrifice)
- Note the 'deceitfulness of sin' (It moves us from A-Z, by tempting us to move from A-B)
- Solomon provoked the wrath of God (v9)
- God's judgment decreed that the 'Kingdom' would be 'torn away from him (v11)
- Judgment tempered with mercy because of David (v12-13)

Following the death of Solomon, the kingdom is divided into 2, never to be reunited:

- Israel – the Northern Kingdom, under Jeroboam
- Judah – the Southern Kingdom under Rehoboam (1 Kings 11:13)

Northern Kingdom defeated by Assyria in 721 BC

Southern Kingdom (Judah) defeated and Exiled by Babylon 597-586 BC

The Prophets:

Elijah and Elisha – Northern Kingdom

Elijah appears 1 Kings 17:1 during reign of Ahab, Elisha died during reign of Jehoash 2 Kings 13:20.

The role of the prophet was to speak God's Word to God's people, in particular to call the King back to covenant faithfulness with Yahweh. "Covenant Watchdogs"

The Mark of the False Prophet:

"From the least to the greatest all are greedy for gain; prophets and priests alike all practise deceit. They dress the wound of my people as though it were not serious. **'Peace, peace, they say, when there is no peace'**" Jeremiah 6:13-14

"This is what the Lord Almighty says: **'Do not listen to what the prophets are prophesying to you, they fill you with false hopes.** They speak visions from their own minds not from mouth of the Lord. They keep saying to those who despise me, 'The Lord says you will have peace'" Jeremiah 23:16-17

The True Prophet - A Watchman

If the 'watchman... "sees the sword coming against the land and blows the trumpet to warn the people, then if anyone hears the trumpet but does not heed the warning and the sword comes and takes their life, their blood will be on their own head....but if the watchman sees the sword coming and does not blow the trumpet to warn the people...that person's life will be taken because of their sin but I will hold the watchman accountable for their blood"
Ezekiel 33:2-6

- The True Prophet warns of God's coming judgment – that people might repent and be saved
- The False Prophet (the majority) gives false assurance of peace
- God will hold to account 'teachers of God's Word' who speak falsely
- OT Shadow = NT Reality so too with the Exile = Judgment of God

Devastating: Because of all the covenant promises of God:

- He had promised them the Land
- The Temple was his dwelling place – where sinful men and women could meet with a holy God – now destroyed
- Instead of being a blessing to all the nations, they were conquered by a hostile nation
- The promise of the ‘Davidic King’ and his everlasting Kingdom – no King on the throne, no Kingdom – now living under enemy occupation

The Exile is a period of utter despair and hopelessness.

“The hand of the Lord was on me and he brought me out by the Spirit of the Lord and set me in the middle of a valley; it was full of bones. He led me to and fro among them and I saw a great many bones on the floor of the valley, bones that were very dry” Ezekiel 37:2

Words of Hope

“Comfort, comfort my people says your God. Speak tenderly to Jerusalem and proclaim to her that her hard service has been completed, that her sin has been paid for...” Isaiah 40:1

However! **Two great problems:**

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“The days are coming,’ declares the Lord, ‘when I will make a new covenant with the people of Israel and with the people of Judah. It will not be like the covenant I made with their ancestors....I will put my law in their minds and write it on their hearts. I will be their God and they will be my people” Jeremiah 31:31-34 (see also Jeremiah 33)

“I will take you out of the nations; I will gather you from all the countries and bring you back into your own land. I will sprinkle clean water on you and you will be clean; I will cleanse you from all your impurities and from all your idols. I will give you a new heart and put a new spirit in you; I will remove from you your heart of stone and give you a heart of flesh. And I will put my Spirit in you and move you to follow my decrees and be careful to keep my laws. Then you will live in the land I gave your ancestors; you will be my people and I will be your God” Ezekiel 36:24-28

“Nicodemus: “You are Israel’s teacher and do you not understand these things?” !!!