

badly in BC 586. The king and a good number of Jews were taken as slaves to Babylon. The temple at Jerusalem was destroyed completely. All the silver and gold utensils were taken to Babylon by King Nebuchadnezzar. Jerusalem and the land of Judah, which was once ruled by mighty kings, became nearly non-existent in the 6th century.

Questions:

- ① How did God miraculously look after the Israelites during their journey through the desert? *Gave them manna, Quails*
2. Explain the circumstances by which the rule of kings started in Israel.
- ③ Explain the circumstances by which David wrote Psalms 51. *past para, pg 5*
4. How did Jerusalem and Judea come into non-existence by 6th century BC? *Repenting
Nebuchadnezzar att.*

Fill in the blanks:

1. Capital of Israel was Samaria.
2. Capital of Judea was Jerusalem.

Memory Verse:

Isaiah 11:1 And there shall come forth a rod out of the stem of Jesse, and a Branch shall grow out of his roots:

LESSON 3

YAHWEH THE TRUE GOD (CONTINUATION) PERIOD OF EXILE (BC 586-516)

Most of the people who were taken as prisoners by the enemy kings from the land of Canaan to Babylon engaged themselves in farming and business. One group of people was attracted to idol worship and they rejected the true faith. Few people like Daniel were favored by the king and held offices in the government. Most of the people lived a life of unhappiness and despair. Prophet Ezekiel lived amongst such people comforting and encouraging them to lead a pious life. Under the shade of trees and riverbanks, they used to get together to worship and pray.

In the history of the Babylonian empire, the rule of king Nebuchadnezzar is known as the golden period. But his successors were not efficient or strong like him. So, Persian king Cyrus invaded Babylon in 538 BC by defeating them. That was the end of Babylon Empire and beginning of Persian Empire. He allowed the Jews to go back to Palestine and to re-establish the Jerusalem temple. Under the leadership of Zerubbabel, Most of the exiled people returned to Judah. King Cyrus allowed them to take back the sacred vessels of the temple.

After returning to Palestine, they started rebuilding the temple of Jerusalem. By asking "My people, why should you be living in well-built houses while God's Temple lies in ruins?" Prophet Haggai revived them. Another prophet who encouraged them was Zechariah. Despite the protests from Samaritans, in B.C. 516, they renovated the temple of Jerusalem and held the big festival of Passover there. Arrangements were also made for regular worship. Thus, the 70 years of exile which prophet Jeremiah prophesized was fulfilled.

In BC 458, under the leadership of priest Ezra, and in BC 445, under the leadership of Nehemiah, the cupbearer of King Ataxxes, exiled people returned to Palestine from Babylon. Nehemiah gave leadership to rebuild the walls of Jerusalem. Along with Ezra, Nehemiah abolished many evil practices among the Jews. They re started the practice of observing the Sabbath Day. They also tried to bring up the social status of the poor people.

Reign of the Greeks - BC 333

Emperor Alexander the Great conquered countries like Persia, Syria, Palestine and Egypt in BC 333. Therefore, Greek language and Greek culture spread to these countries. Alexander was kind to the Jews. When he died in BC 323, his empire was divided amongst his army leaders. Egypt and Palestine came to be ruled by Ptolemy and Syria under Selukas Nicator. Ptolemy II translated Septuagint Old Testament into Greek language. One of the successors of Selukas called Antiochus III defeated Ptolemy in BC 198. Thus, land of Canaan came to be ruled by Antiochus. Greek culture spread to Jerusalem also. In BC 168, Antiochus IV invaded the temple of Jerusalem, made it unholy and installed a Greek God in it. He persecuted the Jews. The family who protested strongly against this persecution belonged to Mathathias. Later they came to be known as Macabees.

Macabees (B. C. 167 –63)

When Syrian king Antiochus Epiphanus forced the worship of idol gods, the family which preferred martyrdom belonged to Marthashmuni. Priest Mathathias protested against the Syrian government and destroyed the alters of heathen gods and encouraged his own people. When he died in BC 166, his son Judah maccabi became the leader. From him the clan name Macabees originated.

Judah Maccabi defeated the Greeks. In BC 165 he consecrated the temple and restarted worship. Festival of the Dedication of the Temple was celebrated. When he died, brothers Jonathan and Simon ruled successively. Simon was a strong ruler. Later his third son, John Hirkanus, son of John Hirkanus, Aristobulus, brother of Aristobulus, Alexander Janius, respectively took up leadership.

Sons of Alexander Janius, Aristobulus and Hirkanus, had arguments regarding right to the throne. That time, both asked the help of Roman General, Pompeii, who was ruling Damascus to intervene. In BC 63, Pompeii conquered Jerusalem. He made Hirkanus Governor and chief Priest. He sent Aristobulus the other son of Alexander Janius in exile to Rome. Thus, the Jews, who were free for many years, came to be ruled by the Roman Empire due to their own civil wars and riots.

Roman reign B.C. 63

Hirkanus was a namesake ruler. The country was really ruled by an Edomian called Antipather. He was the governor of Judea. He was assassinated by the Jews in B.C. 43. With the help of Roman government, Herod son of Antipather became the ruler of Judea in B.C. 37. He tried to please the Jews. Building the temple of Jerusalem was his great achievement. Ruins of the wall he built still exist in Jerusalem and is known as the Wailing Wall. Though he respected Jewish rituals Herod was hard hearted. History calls him Herod the Great. During his reign Jesus Christ savior of the world was born in Bethlehem. Related to the birth of Jesus Christ he got many children killed in and around Bethlehem[Matthew 2-16]. Herod died in B.C. 4.

Due to internal riots and fights Jews were ridiculed among others. When they forgot the true god, and disobeyed his commandments, God's chosen people had to live as exiles. When they were ridiculed and mocked at, they

called upon God and heard the comforting voice, "Jacob, I will not forsake you." They repented and turned towards God. They returned to their own land and restarted worshiping Yahweh. The Jews had always lived anticipating the birth of a Savior. Living under Roman leadership, they were unable to recognize the arrival of that Savior. Their eyes were on palaces of kings and mansions of lords for him. But the sound of salvation was first heard by the poor and humble shepherds. The redeemer of sinners, the Savior of the world, thus came into the hearts of people.

Questions:

1. Which Persian king allowed the Jews to return to Palestine?
- ② Name the prophets who encouraged the people to build the temple of Jerusalem. Haggi and ~~Isaiah~~ Zachariah
3. What service was done by Mathathias the priest? How did his clan get the name Macabees?
4. Describe how Jews came under Roman rule.
- ⑤ Herod the Great was hard-hearted. What was the evidence for that?
order all newborn male 2 and under to be killed.

Memory Verse:

Titus 2:11 - .

For the grace of God that bringeth salvation hath appeared to all men,

LESSON 4

YAHWEH THE TRUE GOD -CONTINUATION

After the death of Herod, Palestine was divided into three and ruled by his sons. Judea was ruled by Archelaus (Matthew 2:22). He was ousted in AD 6 and Judea came under the direct rule of the Roman Governor. The Territory of Iturea and Traconitis that lay on the northeast of Sea of Galilee came under the rule of Philip (Luke 3: 1). Caesarea Philippi is the capital, which he built.

Herod Antipas ruler of Galilee was keeping his brother's wife Herodias as his wife. (Mat 14:3). He beheaded John the Baptist who objected to this (Matthew 14.6-12). Jesus referred to Herod Antipas as 'fox'. Pilate sent bounded Jesus, to this Herod for trial (Luke 23:6). Herod was exiled in AD