

Babylonian Captivity

Major Dates

586 B.C.

537 B.C.

Major Events

Babylonians conquer Jerusalem

Israelites in Babylon are permitted to return to Palestine

Major Characters

Ezekiel
(*wkbbk* pg. 149-153)

Second Isaiah

Daniel

Other Important Events

- 11 years before the fall of Jerusalem, Ezekiel was deported with other Jewish captives to a settlement in Babylon where he received vision and was called to preach to his fellow exiles, a task he pursued faithfully for 25 years
- Ezekiel was a man of stern and inflexible energy of will and character, and his work not only consisted of sermons but also in prophetic behavior, such as sleeping on one side, not mourning the death of his wife and eating a book
- 3 divisions of his prophecy: a warning to his people to repent or perish; judgments of doom directed against seven surrounding nations; and, after the fall of Jerusalem, prophecies of restoration and return, as in the valley of the dry bones
- his book explicitly revoked the principle that the sins of the father are visited on the children and stresses the idea of personal responsibility to God

- The Second Isaiah predicted the coming of King Cyrus, who would free the Hebrews from their Babylonian exile
- oracles known as the song of the Servant predict the coming of a Messiah

- 2 Themes faced by Daniel and his friends during Babylonian exile:

(1) the religious challenge arising from their hostile, foreign environment. Will they remain loyal to the Levitical laws or Kosher diet? Will they pray to a new king? Will they worship the idols? Because they are faithful in these matters, defying their captors, they are sentenced to death, by fire or being eaten alive.

(2) Daniel's wisdom. As a sage and interpreter of dreams, he proves far superior to all the wise men of Babylon, especially in the incident in "the handwriting on the wall." The book ends with a series of dream visions granted to Daniel, visions full of dense symbolism. Most scholars hold that the book was compiled during the persecution (168-165 B.C.) of the Jewish people by Antiochus Epiphanes. It encourages the reader to be faithful to God and his law, and to trust that he is Lord of the secrets of world history.

Where is this in the Bible?

Ezekiel 1,1-48,35

Isaiah 40,1-55,13

Key Themes or Ideas

Imagination, God is the Good Shepherd

the coming of the Messiah