Understanding Old Testament History

» Is it a failed experiment?

  Creation – dashed expectations
  A new beginning – after the flood
  Abraham’s hope – a great nation and a great blessing
  The Law of Moses – An impossible standard
  A king from the briar patch
  The Old Testament God!

» Our exalted God

  Nebuchadnezzar’s testimony: Daniel 4:34-35
  Jeremiah’s testimony: Lamentations 3:20-22

» The end of the Kingdom

  The dominance of sin
  The wrath of God
  The hope of Israel
Superpowers in the Middle East

Assyria (740-640 B.C.)

Capitol – Nineveh

Battled with Syria for dominance of Palestine

High water mark in 722 B.C.
  - Captured Samaria
  - Surrounded Jerusalem
  - Isaiah 8:5-8

Dominated the middle east from Jotham to Amon
  - Locked up Hezekiah “like a bird in a cage”
  - Took Manasseh into captivity for a time
  - Failed to capture Judah

Decline during the reign of Josiah (640-609 B.C.)
  - Fall of Nineveh in 612 B.C.
  - Egypt/Assyria alliance in 609 B.C.
    Josiah killed trying to intervene
  - Battle of Carchemish in 605 B.C.
Superpowers in the Middle East

Babylon (605-539 B.C.)

After Carchemish – Nebuchadnezzar in Palestine (605)

- *First captivity* – Daniel and his three friends
- Death of Nabopolassar

Nebuchadnezzar returned to Jerusalem in (597 B.C.)

- Jehoiakim had just died in 12/598.
- *Second captivity*
  - Jehoiachin, queen mother, princes, servants
  - 10,000 leading citizens, craftsmen/smiths
  - Ezekiel
  - Installed Mattaniah as king – renamed Zedekiah

Nebuchadnezzar returned to quell rebellion of Zedekiah (586 B.C.)

- Jerusalem fell after 19 months siege in 586 B.C.
- *Third captivity* – termination of the nation
The final days of the Davidic dynasty

Jehoiakim (609-597 B.C.)

- Eldest son of Josiah – Eliakim
- Appointed by Pharaoh Necho – renamed Jehoiakim
- 11 year reign – did evil before the LORD
- Three phases of his reign.
  1. Vassal of Egypt (609-605 B.C.)
     2 Kings 23:34-37
  2. Vassal of Nebuchadnezzar (605-602 B.C.)
     2 Kings 24:1
     Rebelled after 3 years
     Command of God to submit to Babylon
  3. Rebellion against Nebuchadnezzar (602-597 B.C.)
     2 Kings 24:2-7
     Raiders from Chaldea, Syria, Moab, Ammon
     Died – probably in battle – 12/598 B.C.
- See Jeremiah 22:18-23 (Jer. 27:1-11; 36:1-32)

Jehoiachin (597 B.C. – 3 months)

- Reigned 3 months – March, 597
- Captured and taken to Babylon
  - 10,000 – with Ezekiel + Queen mother, wives
  - Leadership and wealthy (7,000)
  - Craftsmen and smiths (1,000)
  - A poor remnant
- See Jeremiah 22:24-30
The End of the Nation

Zedekiah (597-586 B.C.)

- Age 21 – ruled for 11 years
- Appointed by Nebuchadnezzar
- Did evil – 2 Chronicles 36:12
- Rebelled against Nebuchadnezzar – Jeremiah 38:17-18
- 9th year – Nebuchadnezzar returns
  - Jeremiah 52 = 2 Kings 24:17-25:30
  - 19 month siege
  - City wall broken down (Jeremiah 52)
  - Zedekiah captured
    - sons killed before his eyes
    - Taken captive – see Jeremiah 52:11
- Jerusalem destroyed
  - House of the LORD burned
  - Palace burned
  - Houses of the great were burned
  - Walls broken down
  - Inhabitants carried away into captivity
  - Bronze of pillars and Sea were recovered
  - Chief Priest and other officers taken captive
Two Part Epilogue

Gedaliah
- Jeremiah 40:1-41:18
- Son of Ahikam and grandson of Shaphan
  (Jeremiah 26:24; 2 Kings 22:3, 14)
- Appointed Governor by Nebuchadnezzar
- Took oath of allegiance to Babylon
- Executed by Ishmael
- Return to Egypt – Jeremiah 42-45

Jehoiachin
- 2 Samuel 7:14-15
- 37th year of captivity
- A token of hope for the nation
CONCLUDING OBSERVATIONS

Three perspectives in history
  ▶ The Godless
  ▶ The Godly
  ▶ God

The lessons of history
  ▶ Habakkuk
    – “How long will you tolerate evil in Israel?”
    – “How can you use a wicked instrument to judge?”
    – Answer: “The just shall live by faith.” (2:4)
  ▶ Zechariah
    – Zechariah 9:9-10 – Your King is coming
    – Zechariah 10:3-8 – . . . not cast them aside.
  ▶ Paul
    – Romans 11:33-36 – the wisdom of God