

THE SEED WARS
(Israel in God's Redemption Plan)
PART 3 Babylon To Rome

I. Babylon

A. The Siege of Jerusalem

Babylon conquered Judah in 597 B.C. during Jehoiakim's reign but did not take the people captive.

Between 589 to 587 BC King Jehoiakim rebelled against Babylon, so the Babylonians laid siege to Jerusalem. (2 Kings 25)

Lamentations 1 – Siege was so bad Jeremiah described Jerusalem as a widow.

Lamentations 4:10 – Women had to eat their own children.

B. The Ark of The Covenant

Jeremiah hid the Ark of The Covenant and the Golden Incense Altar:

It was also in the same document that the prophet, having received an oracle, ordered that the tent and the ark should follow with him, and that he went out to the mountain where Moses had gone up and had seen the inheritance of God (Mt Nebo). Jeremiah came and found a cave-dwelling, and he brought there the tent and the ark and the altar of incense; then he sealed up the entrance. Some of those who followed him came up intending to mark the way but could not find it. When Jeremiah learned of it, he rebuked them and declared: "The place shall remain unknown until God gathers his people together again and shows his mercy. (2 Maccabees 2:4-7)

C. The Remnant

Finally, between 587 - 585 B.C. Babylonians destroyed the Temple and took the people captive.

A small number of poor people were left by the Babylonians (2 Kings 25:12)

God kept a remnant in His land to stake his claim on it (Ezra 9:8 NKJV)

D. Judah In Exile

1. Significant events during the exile:

- i. Satan attempted to change the identities of the Jewish people and disconnect them from God: Daniel, Hananiah, Mishael and Azariah changed to Belteshazzar, Shadrach, Mishach and Abed-nego.

Ah & El = God, Yah & El

This was an Anti-Semitic spirit.



- ii. Daniel 3, they tried to force the Jews to bow to a golden idol, most did except Hananiah, Mishael and Azariah. They were thrown into the furnace yet God saved them.
- iii. Rise of Synagogues – replaced the temple; it is mainly a place of teaching
- iv. Rise of religious Judaism; Temple = Biblical Judaism, traditions of men religious Judaism.

Pharisees (Pharushtim i.e. set apart) became more prominent.

They developed the “halacha” (the way to walk) – all the traditions.

Developed the idea of an “oral Torah” – Moses wrote all the words of God (Exodus 24:4)

Human religion replaced true worship of God. Although God used it to preserve the Jewish people.

II. Persian Empire

- A. Persians conquer the Babylonians in 538 BC. – Jews come under Persian rule.
- B. Daniel 6, leaders influenced King Xerxes to force people to pray only to the king – Daniel ended up in the Lion’s den, yet God saved him. (work of demons)
- C. Another attempt to destroy the seed – book of Esther; Satan caused Haman to desire to kill all the Jews because Mordechai refused to bow.

God foreknew that this was going to happen and placed Esther in the palace for this purpose. (Esther 4:14)

- D. Daniel realizes that their time of exile was coming to an end, according to Jeremiah 29:10
 - 1. In the days of King Cyrus Daniel prays to God and we see the clearest picture of spiritual warfare in the Bible.
 - 2. An angel describes the confrontation between the angels of God and the Prince of Persia, a spiritual force that controlled the nation. (Daniel 10)
 - 3. Prince of Persia wanted to stop the angel of God from releasing the people of the Seed to return to Judea.
- E. Around 536 BC God moves upon Cyrus and he allows the Jews to return and rebuild Jerusalem. (Ezra 1:1)
- F. They return in 3 waves: 536 BC – Sheshbazar, 516 BC – Joshua and Zerubabel (Haggai & Zechariah), 450 BC – Ezra and Nehemiah.
- G. Satan sent his emissaries to oppose the rebuilding of the temple and the walls.

1. Compromise



Enemies (Samaritans) tried to make them compromise, saying they too worshipped God, so they wanted to be a part of it. (Ezra 4:1-3) – possibly they would have used a different design.

Samaritans worshipped differently even considered a different place as to where worship was to take place. (John 4:20)

We also see this happening in the book of Nehemiah. (Nehemiah 2:20)

2. Intimidation

They sent a letter to King Artaxerxes claiming that the Jews would start a rebellion if they were allowed to build the Temple. The King ordered them to stop, thus the work was delayed.

Later the Jewish leaders wrote to King Darius who searched the archives and had approved the Jews to return and rebuild the city.

Satan failed again, it was like a chess game between God and Satan.

Second temple completed in 439 BC.

- Persians ruled for Israel for 200 years until the Greek period.

Although they were back in the land – they were still subject to a foreign power

- This posed a problem for Satan, he thought he was rid of the people of the Seed but now they were back in the land and the Temple had been rebuilt.

III. The Greek Empire

Alexander the Great and the Greek army conquered the Middle east and Judea in 332 BC.

- A. Alexander's vision – Hellenize* the conquered nations, make them all "Greek"; culture, politics and religion.

*Greeks are called Hellenists because their land before Alexander was called Hela.

- i. Alexander used seduction to try to influence the Jews.

He built Greek towns called "polis" near Jewish towns to show case Greek culture and lifestyle.

These included theatres, gymnasiums and places for philosophical debates.

Some Jews were very attracted to this lifestyle, particularly the debates – Pharisees.

One of the things they developed was the minyan – decision by quorum. They said "one the council (Sanhedrin) has decided even God cannot change it.



In Greek and later Roman culture truth is what the majority says it is, there is no “black and white”. In God’s way truth is revealed by God. Pilate asked Yeshua “what is truth”

Another attempt by Satan to pollute the Seed and change the identity of the Jews.

Alexander died in 323 BC and was succeeded by four of his Generals: Cassander, Antigonus, Ptolemies and Seleucius.

ii. Antiochus Epiphanes

The Seleucid Kingdom conquered Judea in 200 BC.

Antiochus Epiphanes ascends the throne in 174 BC.

He too wanted to Hellenize the Jews but his method was force.

His reign was marked by:

- Installing a statue of Zeus in the Temple
- Sacrificing unclean animals on the altar and all over the land forcing the people to sacrifice to Greek gods.
- Forbade the study of Torah and circumcision
- Forbade the observance of Shabbat and the Feasts of the Lord

iii. Maccabees

In Modi'in Matisyahu – started a rebellion called the Maccabean Revolt (Maccabees means “hammer”)

- Guerilla war against Greece for 3 years and defeated them.
- They wanted to rededicate the temple but had only enough oil for the Menorah for one day and it would take eight days to make new oil from the Galilee. They poured the oil in the Menorah and lighted it and the lamp stayed lit for eight days. This is the miracle the Jews celebrate every year around December, it’s called Hanukkah.

Three miracles:

- A rag-tag army of common people defeated the best equipped and trained army of the day.
- One days worth of oil lasted for eight days
- Israel became an independent nation again after approximately 400 years under the control of foreigners.

The Maccabees, also known as the Hasmoneans brought Israel back to Torah and made education (Torah study) a priority. Israel lived at peace for about 100 years.

iv. Rome

63 BC Roman general Pompeii conquers Judea, Israel comes under Roman rule.



The Romans appointed their own kings, people who were friendly towards them, to rule over the different regions. In Judea the appointed king was Herod the Great.

A. Herod The Great

1. Born in the 70s BC in Idumea, he was not a Jew or not a pure Jew
2. Began his rule around 37 BC
3. He was a great builder, he renovated the temple, it took forty-six years (John 2:20)
4. He built Masada as his winter fortress near the Dead Sea
5. He wanted Judea to be a shining example of Roman rule, so he built the city of Tiberias in honour of Caesar and the great port of Caesarea Maritima for Roman ships to berth.
6. He appointed his own priests who were beholden to him.
7. He was paranoid – killed his wife and son because he suspected them of plotting against him.
8. He died in 4 BC – Kingdom divided by his 3 sons; Herod Antipas, Philip and Archelaus.

B. Yeshua (The Seed)

1. His Birth

- i. Yeshua was born between 7 & 4 BC, Herod the Great was still alive.
- ii. Born at God's set time (Galatians 4). Not just a "coincidence".
- iii. Magi came and informed Herod that they had seen a star indicating the birth of a king. (Satan gets angry)
- iv. Herod's priests informed him where Messiah was to be born (Matthew 2:1-5)
- v. Satan puts it in Herod's heart to kill all babies below age 2 (Matthew 2:16-18)
- vi. It was another attempt to destroy the Seed.
- vii. God saved the family by telling them to flee to Egypt, they returned just after Herod died.

2. Yeshua & Israel

Through His life He relived the History of Israel

- i. Miracle birth – Israel born of a miracle (Abraham & Sarah)
- ii. Born in Bethlehem – just as King David
- iii. Exiled in Egypt as a child – Israel enslaved in Egypt



- iv. 40 days in the wilderness – Israel 40 years in the wilderness
- v. Died at Feast of Passover – Passover Lamb of Israel (Rose at the Feast of Firstfruits)

3. His Ministry

Yeshua began ministry around the age of 30 and ministered for 3 -3.5 years.

- i. He was preceded by John the Baptist, both called Israel to repentance. (Matthew 3:2, 4:7)
- ii. He did not come to start a new religion or movement; He came to bring Israel back to God (Matthew 5:17-18).
- iii. Israel had strayed from God and depended on works given through rabbinic traditions.
- iv. During His ministry He also prophesied about the destruction of Jerusalem:
 - The parable of the barren fig tree (Luke 13:6 – 9)
 - From the Mount of Olives (Matthew 23:37-38)
 - “Not one stone will be left upon another” (Luke 19:41-44, 21:5 – 6)
- v. Yeshua died, resurrected & ascended around 33 AD
- vi. Pilate’s sign meant as an insult but was actually a prophetic proclamation.
- vii. Satan thought he had won when Yeshua died but he was badly mistaken. (1 Corinthians 2:6-8)
- vi. The Yom Kippur mystery

Red cloth tied to the scapegoat’s horn used to turn white after it died but after around 30 A.D. it no longer did.

C. Destruction of Jerusalem

- 1. 70 AD – The Great Revolt, zealots rebelled against Rome.
- 2. Jewish believers were accepted into Jewish society by that time (Acts 2:46-47). They were known as Nazarenes.
- 3. Rebellion is crushed; temple is destroyed, Jews were expelled from Jerusalem.
- 4. During the siege, the Nazarenes fled remembering Yeshua’s command in Luke 21:20-24, considered cowards by others.
- 5. The rift between Christians and Jews began
- 6. 135 AD – Bar Kochbah Revolt led by Shimon Bar Kochbah.



7. Pharisees considered him to be Messiah but believers rejected this idea – rift widens.
8. Crushed by Rome – Jews expelled from the whole land and dispersed throughout the world.
9. Jerusalem is renamed “Aelia Capitolina”
10. Judea is renamed “Syria-Philistina” (Palestine)

