

Temple Beth-El and St. Mark's Episcopal Church Interfaith Study & Dialogue
The second Temple Period, the Roman Period, the time of Jesus:
All of the above and more.

Session 1- Destruction, Exile and Return: When does the period really begin?

Cheat sheet- names, dates, excerpts

PREAMBLE:

1. Iron Age II= The Israelite Period/ First Temple Period
2. United Kingdom: Saul, David, Solomon/ 1020-928 BCE
3. Divided Kingdom: 1. Israel: 928-720 BCE
2. Judah: 928-586 BCE (actually 598 BCE)
4. First temple Period enemies in region:
 - Egypt in the south
 - Phoenicians in north west and along the coast
 - Arameans in the north northeast
 - Ammonites in the northeast
 - Moabites in the east
 - Edomites in the southeast
 - Assyrians and Babylonians as later major empires.
5. Divided Kingdom intrigue in the 9th century BCE:
 - **Players act 1:** King Ahab of Israel, Jezebel, his wife, Navot the vineyard owner and Elijah the prophet.
 - **Players act 2:** Ahab's son Yehoram, now king of Israel; Yehu, a general in Yehoram's army, soon to be renegade; the prophet Elisha; and collateral damage, Achazia, the king of Judah.
 - **Regional puppet master:** Aramean king Haza'el who also leaves us Tel Dan Stele.
6. Early conquest of Kingdom of Israel:
 - 732 BCE by Assyrian Tiglat Pileser
 - 722 BCE by Shalmanesser and completed by Sargon II in 720
 - 10 lost tribes are born.
7. Judean king Hezekiah hold off Assyrian siege of Jerusalem in 701, but most of Judah conquered.

MAIN EVENT:

8. New superpower on the rise, sets sights on Assyria: Babylon in 609 BCE.
9. Babylon and Egypt go at it at the end of the 7th century BCE:
 - King Josiah of Judah stands up to Egyptian Pharaoh Necho and is killed for his troubles in the Jezereh Valley.
 - King Nebuchadnezzar of Babylon pushes Egyptians back and along the way, conquers Judah in 598 BCE.
10. First Babylonian Exile 598 BCE:
 - During the initial siege, King Jehoiakim bets wrong on Egypt and is killed.
 - His son, King Jehoiachin is taken into exile in 598 at head of first wave.
 - King Zedekiah, the uncle, now king- will rebel even though warned by Jeremiah the prophet not to and Babylonians return with a vengeance.
11. 586BCE: Siege and then destruction of First Temple
12. Gedaliah (also Gedalyahu): Jewish governor appointed by Babylonians.
13. Prophets of the post First Temple and early Second Temple Period:
 - Ezekiel
 - Jeremiah
 - Haggai
 - Zechariah
 - Malachi
14. Scribes of the Second Temple Period: Ezra (arrives in second wave of returnees in 458 BCE)
15. Highest ranking Jewish cup bearers on sabbatical as local governor and all-around reformer and enforcer: Nehemiah (who arrives in Judah in 445 or 444 BCE)
16. Meanwhile, back in Babylon: Al Yahudu
 - Al Yahudu=Little Judah or Judah town and the Al Yahudu archives.
17. Enter the Persians: Cyrus the Great (actually, Cyrus II)
 - Conquers Babylon in 539
 - Cyrus Cylinder: for everyone
 - Edict of Cyrus: for the Jews
 - Return to Zin/Shivat Zion: First wave of returnees begins in 538 BCE
18. Yehud=Persian name for the Judah and specifically for the local region or as it was called by the Persians, a *Pachva*.

19. 516 BCE: The Second temple is completed in the days of Persian King Darius I.
20. Dr. Eilat Mazar: One of the archeologists who provides concrete information (or at least rock-solid information). – would this be considered an archeological dad joke? My daughters are rolling their eyes right now, wherever they are, and they don't know why.
21. New rules and regulations instituted by Ezra and Nehemiah in order to solidify and strengthen the return and restoration of the Jews in Judah.
22. The Great Assembly/ HaKneset HaG'dolah: While not clear exactly when it began, this was to be a central facet of Jewish leadership- 120 members of leadership (later to overlap with and then replaced by the 71 member Sanhedrin- although the dates for the moments of establishment and change are not exact).
23. Rise of the Macedonians and fall of the Persians: 330 BCE

READINGS:

Tel Dan Stele: <https://www.biblicalarchaeology.org/daily/biblical-artifacts/the-tel-dan-inscription-the-first-historical-evidence-of-the-king-david-bible-story/>

Jeremiah, Chapters 40-41

Ezekiel, Chapters 1,3,18

Al Yahudu Archives:

https://www.academia.edu/1383485/The_Reconstruction_of_Jewish_Communities_in_the_Persian_Empire_The_%C4%80I_Yah%C5%ABdu_Clay_Tablets

Cyrus Cylinder: https://www.caissoas.com/CAIS/History/hakhamaneshian/Cyrus-the-great/cyrus_cylinder_complete.htm

Ezra, Chapters 1:2-3, 2:64, 3, 7

Nehemiah, Chapters 1- 8, 13 (no need to read it all but here is a good description of who he was and what he initially did)

Haggai, Chapter 1

MUSICAL CONCLUSION:

Omer Adam/ Forgive Me (Timchal Li)

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=BwrojtyHms8>

Forgive Me/ Omer Adam

Words: Moshe Ben Avraham and Maor Titon

Forgive me
In a complicated world
I am given yet another chance
And again, I am lost

I am far from You and at times I feel close
So, please do not hide your face
As I cry out, don't leave, don't leave.

So come to me, God of Awesome deeds (El Norah Alila)
Will you hear my voice, and forgive me when the gates close (Mechila, b'Shaat haNeila)
Have mercy master of forgiveness
Because my legs have failed me and I have lost my strength.
In you I will find comfort
Please, save me. Save me.

Forgive me
Don't remember my failings
Don't leave doors closed in my way
Who will console my failings?

Forgive me
Don't leave me outside
Pull me towards You
I am tired of running

I am far from You and at times I feel close
So, please do not hide your face
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To be continued...