

Babylonian Captivity

2 Kings 23-25; 2 Chronicles 34-36; Jeremiah 34-39



Judah is taken to Babylon because of idol worship, but some faithful believers are preserved in Judah and Babylon.



The Story

Josiah was eight years old when he became king of Judah. He would serve as the king for 31 years. Josiah loved God and kept His laws.

When Josiah was 26-years-old, a wonderful thing happened. A priest in the temple found a book. That book was God's Law. It had been lost for many years, and the people of Judah had been worshiping false gods.

When Josiah heard the words of the Book of the Law, he tore his clothes in sadness because He was sorry for all his sins.

Josiah went up to the temple with all his people, both young and old. He read all the words of the Book of the Law, which had been found in the temple.

The king made a promise to the LORD. He promised to follow the LORD and to keep His commandments with all his heart. All the people of Judah also promised to obey God's laws.

King Josiah commanded that all idols be destroyed. Anything that was used to worship false gods was to be burned.

Then, Josiah commanded all the people saying, "Keep the Passover to the LORD your God, as it is written in this Book of the Covenant." That same year, this Passover was held before the LORD in Jerusalem.

King Josiah loved the LORD with all his heart. God had a plan for Josiah. The LORD sent Josiah away to an enemy land because the people worshiped false gods.

King Josiah fought in a war against Egypt and was killed. All the people of Judah and Jerusalem were sad about the king's death.

The people of the land took Jehoahaz, the son of Josiah, and made him king in his father's place. Jehoahaz was 23-years-old when he became king, and he was king only three months. Jehoahaz did evil in the sight of the LORD.

The King of Egypt put Jehoahaz in his prison, and Jehoahaz died there in Egypt. Then, the Egyptian pharaoh declared Jehoiakim, another son of Josiah, king. In return, Jehoiakim gave the pharaoh silver and gold.

Jehoiakim was 25-years-old when he became king. He ruled eleven years, but he was not a good king. He did evil in the sight of the LORD, and did not obey the words of Jeremiah, God's prophet. Jehoiakim burned a message Jeremiah sent which warned the king and people of Jerusalem to repent of their evil ways.

Nebuchadnezzar, who was king of Babylon, came up, and carried Jehoiakim off to Babylon for three years. Jehoiakim died there

and Jehoiachin, his son, reigned in his father's place. Jehoiachin was 18-years-old when he became king, and he only reigned in Jerusalem for three months. He also did evil in the sight of the LORD.

Nebuchadnezzar's army attacked Jerusalem and everyone was forced to stay inside the walls of the city. They could not go in or out of Jerusalem. Then Jehoiachin king of Judah, surrendered to Nebuchadnezzar. He was taken prisoner to Babylon along with the treasures from the temple and from his palace. Also, King Nebuchadnezzar carried into captivity all of Jerusalem, (which was many thousands of people). No one remained except the poorest people of the land.

Next, King Nebuchadnezzar made Zedekiah king in Judah. Zedekiah was 21-years-old when he became king, and he ruled 11 years in Jerusalem. He also did evil in the sight of the LORD. Zedekiah did not listen to the prophet Jeremiah, either. Jeremiah warned Zedekiah to turn away from false gods and worship the true God. Zedekiah continued his worship of these false gods. He put Jeremiah first into prison and then had him put in a muddy pit. Jeremiah was later freed.

Zedekiah rebelled against Babylonian rule. Nebuchadnezzar sent all his army against Jerusalem and set up camp near the city. They built a siege wall around the whole city of Jerusalem. After many months, there was no food for the people of the land. Finally, the army of Babylon broke through the city wall and stormed into the city. King Zedekiah tried to escape, but was captured. He was blinded and taken to Babylon.

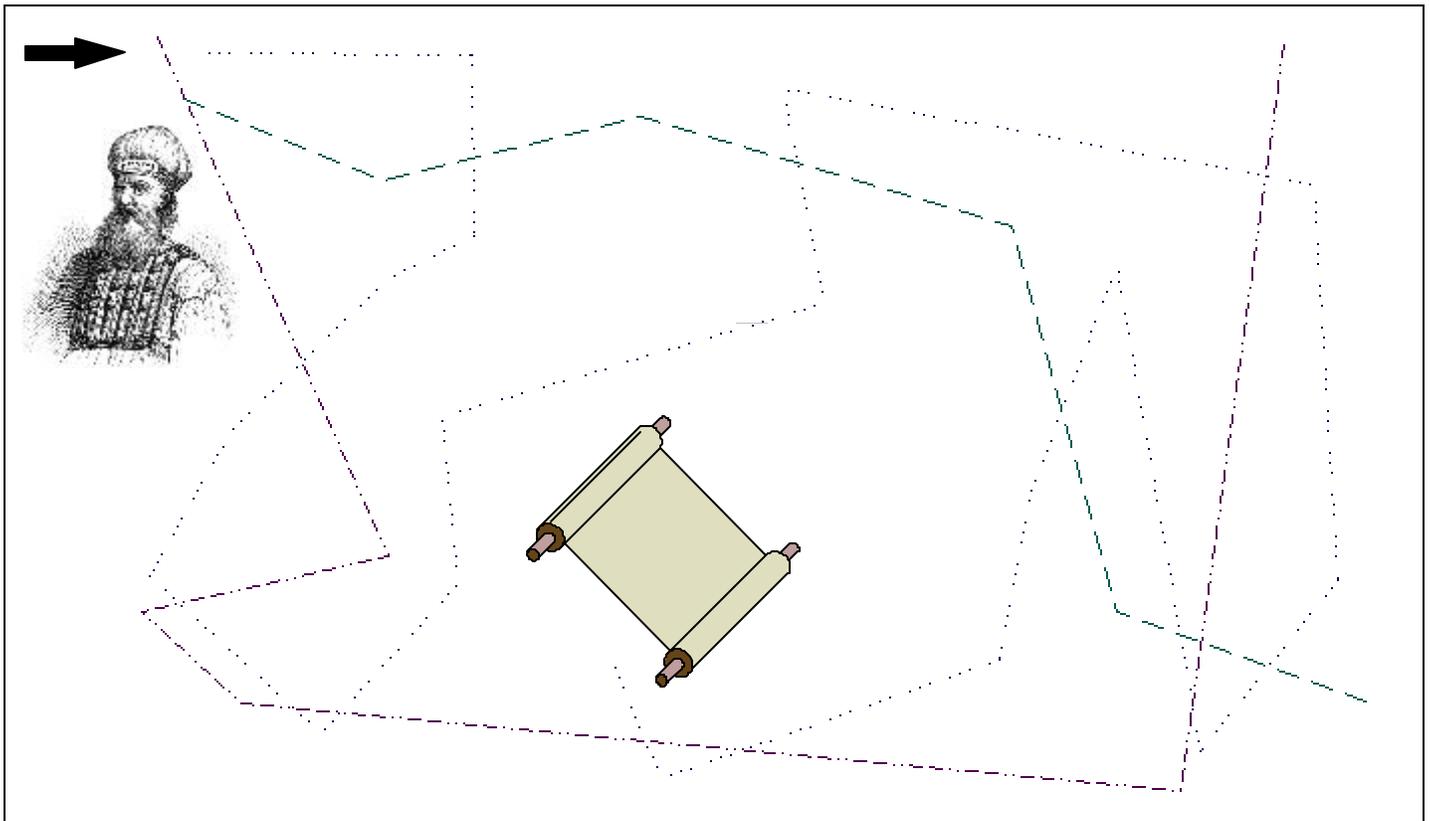
Most of those in Judah who were left from the first captivity were taken captive to Babylon. The temple, palace and all the houses were destroyed by fire after all the valuables that were left were taken away.

But the captain of the guard let some of the poor of the land remain to care for the grapes and farm the land. The rest of the people of Judah were carried away captive from their own land.

After Nebuchadnezzar died, Evil-Merodach became king of Babylon. He released Jehoiachin from prison. He spoke kindly to him, and gave him a more special place than those of the captured kings who were with him in Babylon.

Though God punishes those who reject Him, He preserves His children and keeps His promises.

Activity One - Start at the arrow and follow the right path to help the priest find the scroll with God's Law written on it. Only one path leads to the scroll.



Activity Two - Color the boxes with God's Word from 2 Timothy 2:19 written in them. Then write your name below the boxes since you are one of God's children.

"The	Lord	knows	those	who	are	His."
purple	red	orange	yellow	green	blue	light blue

(name) _____ is God's child.

Passages

Psalm 124:8 - Our help is in the name of the LORD, Who made heaven and earth.

2 Timothy 2:19 - The Lord knows those who are His.

Hymn - Worship Supplement #800 v. 1, 4

Go, My children, with My blessing, never alone.
Waking, sleeping, I am with you; you are My own.
In My love's baptismal river
I have made you Mine forever.
Go, My children, with My blessing - You are My own.

I the Lord will bless and keep you and give you peace;
I the Lord will smile upon you and give you peace:
I the Lord will be your Father,
Savior, Comforter, and Brother.
Go, My children; I will keep you and give you peace.

Prayer

Dear Heavenly Father,

You have told us to love You above all other things. Please help us to love and serve You all our lives. Thank You for sending the Holy Spirit into our hearts to make us love and trust in Jesus as our Savior. Keep us always as Your dear children. Amen.