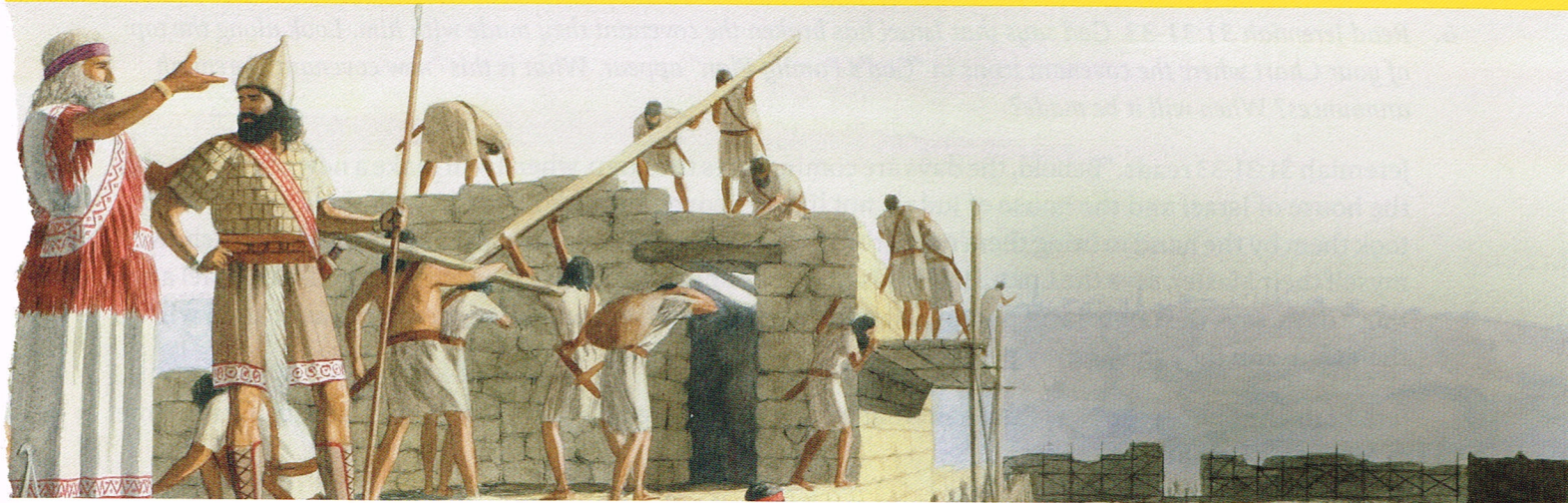


EXILE

and RETURN



1. *Shortly after Solomon's death, the glorious Royal Kingdom splits in two. (Look at the map on page 40. The line of division is just north of Jerusalem.) What precipitates this division? (See 1 Kings 12:6-11.)*

Solomon's son Rehoboam follows the advice of his fellows instead of his father's advisors and refuses to lighten the heavy load Solomon has laid on his subjects. In response, the ten tribes to the North denounce David's line and form their own kingdom.

2. *What are the two resulting kingdoms called?*

Northern Kingdom: Israel; Southern Kingdom: Judah

3. *What grave sin does King Jeroboam commit soon after the Northern Kingdom is formed? (See 1 Kings 12:26-30.) Why does he do this?*

Worried that the people will return to Judah to worship at the Temple in Jerusalem, Jeroboam sets up golden calves at two cities and announces that these are the gods that brought Israel out of Egypt. He also appoints priests who are not Levites to serve at these altars. In effect, he starts his own religion. It is not long before the people fall into idolatry and follow the wicked practices of their neighbors.

4. *Think About It: In what sense is Israel and Judah's punishment for their sin a physical reflection of their spiritual state?*

By rejecting God's rule and following other gods, the people of Israel and Judah choose to remove themselves from God's presence. This spiritual exile is manifested physically when God removes them from the Promised Land.

5. *The dark period of the Divided Kingdom is represented by the color black. What color is used to help recall the period of the Exile, and why?*

Baby blue recalls the sorrow of the exiles as Judah spends seventy years “singing the blues” in “Babylon.”

6. *Read Jeremiah 31:31-33. God says that Israel has broken the covenant they made with him. Look along the top of your Chart where the covenant icons in “God’s Family Plan” appear. What is this “new covenant” Jeremiah announces? When will it be made?*

Jeremiah 31:31-33 reads, “Behold, the days are coming, says the LORD, when I will make a new covenant with the house of Israel and the house of Judah, not like the covenant which I made with their fathers when I took them by the hand to bring them out of the land of Egypt, my covenant which they broke, and I showed myself their Master, says the LORD. But this is the covenant which I will make with the house of Israel after those days, says the LORD: I will put my law within them, and I will write it upon their hearts; and I will be their God, and they shall be my people.”

Jeremiah announces the New Covenant that will be made in Jesus Christ. It will be made during the time of Messianic Fulfillment.

7. *How might looking to “other gods” in our culture result in a spiritual exile from God? Search your heart to see if you have any idolatrous attachments in your life.*

Answers will vary.

8. *What color is used to characterize the period of Return? Why?*

The Return is characterized by the color yellow, representing brighter days as Judah returns to the land of Canaan after seventy years of exile.

9. *What unlikely person does God use to return his people to the Promised Land? How is the Return accomplished? (See Ezra 1:1-4 for help with this question.)*

God calls on a foreign king, Cyrus of Persia, and he is “stirred up by the LORD” to send back to Judah those who wish to return and rebuild the Temple. Those who stay behind are told to help with silver, gold, and other freewill offerings. Cyrus provides building materials and returns the Temple treasures taken by Nebuchadnezzar to Babylon. The prophet Isaiah foretold this very event many years before, including Cyrus’ name.

10. *What three kinds of rebuilding are necessary when the Jews return?*

Everything has been destroyed. So the returning exiles have to rebuild the Temple, the city itself, and their lives. Rebuilding their lives includes instruction in God’s Law. Each “return” tackles a different aspect of this rebuilding (see the numbered events on The Bible Timeline Chart).

Home Preparation: Looking Ahead

The answers to the Home Preparation questions about this time period are listed below:

Period name: **MACCABEAN REVOLT** Approximate dates: 167 BC - AD 1

Period color: Orange Color meaning: Fire in the oil lamps in the purified Temple

List two main events: Antiochus desecrates the Temple Purification of the Temple

Name the new world power: Rome

Period name: **MESSIANIC FULFILLMENT** Approximate dates: AD 1-33

Period color: Gold Color meaning: The gifts of the Magi

Narrative book: Luke Supplemental books: Matthew, Mark, and John