

"Houses and fields and vineyards shall yet again be bought in this land" (Jer. 32:15)

Judean Kings

Study the chart and answer the following questions:

1. How many years transpired between the destruction of Samaria and the destruction of the Temple?
2. How long did Hizkiyahu, Menashe, and Yoshiyahu reign over Yehuda? How long were the reigns of the final kings of Yehuda – Yehoahaz, Yehoyakim, Yehoyakhin, and Tzidkiyahu?
3. What might the difference in these spans teach us?
4. The prophets compared the destruction of Yehuda with the destruction of the Kingdom of Israel (Jer. 3:6-11; Ez. 16:46). What is the connection between the behavior of the two kingdoms?

Dominating Empires

What role did dominating empires play in the significant events of the kingdoms of Yehuda and Israel? Find answers to the following questions in the diagram:

5. Who destroyed the Kingdom of Israel? (II kings 18: 9-12)
6. How did Yishayahu relate to the role of the Assyrian empire in these events (Is. 10:5)?
7. Who destroyed the Kingdom of Yehuda? (II kings 25; Jer. 52).
8. Who enabled the Return to Zion and restoration of the Temple?

Special Dates in the Final Days of Yehuda

Note the bottom of the chart, which focuses on Tzidkiyahu, and find answers to the following questions:

9. How much time transpired from the start of the siege on Jerusalem, on the 10th of Tevet, until the destruction of the Temple in the month of Av?
10. On what date was the Temple destroyed according to II Kings 25? What was the date according to Jeremiah 52?

Destruction to Restoration

11. Study the final verses of II Kings, Jeremiah, and II Chronicles. What do they have in common? In what way do the final verses in each chapter differ from the atmosphere described earlier in each of the chapters?
12. Study the diagram. What are the final events described in II Kings and II Chronicles (and paralleled in the last chapter of Jeremiah)? What is the purpose of the author's decision to end with these descriptions?
13. Read the final verses of the Book of Eikha (Lamentation). How does the book end? How does the public reading on Tisha B'Av end? Why?
14. Read the first verse in the Book of Ezra, and compare to II Chronicles 36:20-21. Which prophet is referenced in Ezra? In which context?
15. Read the first verse of the Book of Ezra. In what way does Cyrus, King of Persia, dramatically change the aggressive policy enacted by his predecessors? How does his action affect the title he is given by Yishayahu in Is. 45:1?
16. What event in Jewish history parallels the movement from destruction to restoration described from the destruction of the First Temple to the rebuilding of the Second Temple?