

# Overview of the Bible - Exile and Return

## God's (has foreknowledge of man's failure) but His purpose is not thwarted

- **820 yrs from death of Moses to Babylon exile** --- Deu 31:20-21 ESV For when I have brought them into the land flowing with milk and honey, which I swore to give to their fathers, and they have eaten and are full and grown fat, **they will turn to other gods and serve them, and despise me and break my covenant.** 21 And when many evils and troubles have come upon them, this song shall confront them as a witness (for it will live unforgotten in the mouths of their offspring). For **I know what they are inclined to do even today, before I have brought them into the land that I swore to give."**

## [slide] ISRAEL / SAMARIA was carried away to Assyria in 722 BC

- 2Ki 17:6-7 ESV In the ninth year of Hoshea, the king of Assyria captured Samaria, and **he carried the Israelites away to Assyria** and placed them in Halah, and on the Habor, the river of Gozan, and in the cities of the Medes. 7 And this occurred because **the people of Israel had sinned against the LORD their God**, who had brought them up out of the land of Egypt from under the hand of Pharaoh king of Egypt, and had **feared** other gods
- 2Ki 17:20-24 .....So Israel was **exiled** from their own land to Assyria until this day. 24 And the king of Assyria **brought people** from Babylon, Cuthah, Avva, Hamath, and Sepharvaim, and placed them in the cities of Samaria instead of the people of Israel.....

## Even if things seem out of control, God is STILL in control - His plan never fails

The Assyrians were feared for their military might (iron weapons, armor and chariots, and siege towers), and their cruelty. **Yet they were not more powerful than the LORD.** After defeating Israel at Samaria and some of the cities near Jerusalem, they set their sights on attacking Jerusalem itself...King Hezekiah received a letter written by one of the Assyrian captains taunting him, and saying that **"no god could deliver him out of his hand"** and he asked the Lord for help...Isaiah came and prophesied the following...

- Isa 37:33-38 ESV "Therefore thus says the LORD concerning the king of Assyria: He **shall not come into this city** or shoot an arrow there or come before it with a shield or cast up a siege mound against it. 34 By the way that he came, by the same he shall return, and he shall not come into this city, declares the LORD. 35 For ***I will defend this city to save it, for my own sake and for the sake of my servant David.***" 36 And **the angel of the LORD went out and struck down 185,000** in the camp of the Assyrians. And when people arose early in the morning, behold, these were all dead bodies.

## (135 yrs later) slide →JUDAH / JERUSALEM exiled into Babylon in 587-586 BC

- 2Ch 36:11-21 ESV Zedekiah was twenty-one years old when he began to reign, and he reigned eleven years in Jerusalem. 12 **He did what was evil** in the sight of the LORD his God. **He did not humble himself** before Jeremiah the prophet, who spoke from the mouth of the LORD.....20 **He took into exile in Babylon** those who had escaped from the sword, and they became servants to him and to his sons until the establishment of the kingdom of Persia, 21 **to fulfill the word of the LORD by the mouth of Jeremiah, until the land had enjoyed its Sabbaths. All the days that it lay desolate it kept Sabbath, to fulfill seventy years.**

## Even if things seem out of control, God is STILL in control - His plan never fails

### **Shadrach, Meshach and Abednego - stood for the LORD - delivered from fiery furnace**

- Dan 3:28-29 ESV **Nebuchadnezzar** answered and said, "Blessed be the God of Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego, who has sent his angel and delivered his servants, who trusted in him, and set aside the king's command, and yielded up their bodies rather than serve and worship any god except their own God. 29 Therefore I make a decree: Any people, nation, or language that speaks anything against the God of Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego shall be torn limb from limb, and their houses laid in ruins, for there is no other god who is able to rescue in this way."

## **Daniel in the lion's den - stood for the Lord - delivered from the mouth of the lions**

- Dan 6:25-27 ESV Then **King Darius** wrote to all the peoples, nations, and languages that dwell in all the earth: "Peace be multiplied to you. 26 I make a decree, that in all my royal dominion people are to tremble and fear before the God of Daniel, for he is the living God, enduring forever; his kingdom shall never be destroyed, and his dominion shall be to the end. 27 He delivers and rescues; he works signs and wonders in heaven and on earth, he who has saved Daniel from the power of the lions."

## **Esther was among the exiles in Persia - used to deliver the people of God**

## God brings them back from Babylon to Jerusalem as He purposed

### **He prophesied through Jeremiah about the return**

- Jer 29:10-11 ESV "For thus says the LORD: When seventy years are completed for Babylon, I will visit you, and I will fulfill to you my promise and bring you back to this place. 11 **For I know the plans I have for you**, declares the LORD, plans for welfare and not for evil, to give you a future and a hope.

### **He moved the heart of Cyrus - king of the Persians - to fulfill his plan**

- Ezr 1:1-4 ESV In the first year of Cyrus king of Persia, that the word of the LORD by the mouth of Jeremiah might be fulfilled, the LORD stirred up the spirit of Cyrus king of Persia, so that he made a proclamation throughout all his kingdom and also put it in writing: 2 "Thus says Cyrus king of Persia: The LORD, the God of heaven, has given me all the kingdoms of the earth, and he has charged me to build him a house at Jerusalem, which is in Judah.

### **Isaiah predicted this 150 years before Cyrus's time.**

- Isa 44:28 ESV who says of Cyrus, 'He is my shepherd, and he shall fulfill all my purpose'; saying of Jerusalem, 'She shall be built,' and of the temple, 'Your foundation shall be laid.'"

## The return & still intermarriage

### **Ezra and Neh last books of Hebrew OT → hopeless??? → Chronicles is basically a repeat of Kings**

- Ezr 9:1-3 ESV After these things had been done, the officials approached me and said, "The people of Israel and the priests and the Levites have not separated themselves from the peoples of the lands with their abominations, from the Canaanites, the Hittites, the Perizzites, the Jebusites, the Ammonites, the Moabites, the Egyptians, and the Amorites. 2 For they have taken some of their daughters to be wives for themselves and for their sons, so that the holy race has mixed itself with the peoples of the lands. And in this faithlessness the hand of the officials and chief men has been foremost." 3 As soon as I heard this, I tore my garment and my cloak and pulled hair from my head and beard and sat appalled.

## His purpose was never hindered -- to bring forth Messiah to reach the world

- **Regarding the exile to Babylon** → Isa 6:13 ESV And though a tenth remain in it, it will be burned again, like a terebinth or an oak, whose stump remains when it is felled." **The holy seed is its stump.**
- Isa 11:1-3 ESV There shall come forth a shoot from the stump of Jesse, and a branch from his roots shall bear fruit. 2 And the **Spirit of the LORD shall rest upon him**, the Spirit of wisdom and understanding, the Spirit of counsel and might, the Spirit of knowledge and the fear of the LORD. 3 And his delight shall be in the fear of the LORD. He shall not judge by what his eyes see, or decide disputes by what his ears hear,

## Summary

- God has never and will never lose control, nor will His purpose fail
- There are things that happen among nations that we cannot control, rather than walk in fear, recognize that somehow they fit into God's big picture of **how he will reach the world**
- There are times we are caught in the crossfire of these events, yet in the midst of them God sees, and has power to provide, protect and influence the hearts of kings

