

Bible Study #13

12/14/21

John 18 (Cont)

- Another significant issue in this section is the fact that three times in **John 18 and 19**, *Pilate* declared Jesus to be innocent of the charges presented by the Jews:
 - John 18:38
 - John 19:4
 - John 19:6
- Again, the importance of three being the number for completion (perfection)
- According to Roman law, the Jews could not put a man to death
- Unfortunately, according to *Matthew*, *Pilate* did not follow Roman law

John 18 (Cont)

- Further, the Jews could not seek the death penalty unless the individual had broken the Mosaic law, but they had not been able to find sufficient grounds (so they also violated their Law)
- John indicated that Jesus was not just killed by the Jews, but He was also killed by the Gentile Romans
- This may have been stressed by John when writing this gospel in the 90s to a predominantly Gentile Church
- This prevented each side of accusing the other for the killing of Jesus

John 18 (Cont)

- This was most significant in *Pilate's* discussion with Jesus as His being a king (which could be a threat against *Caesar*), and thus making him a rebel
- Jesus responded that His kingdom was not of this world
- Thus, *Pilate* told the Jews that he wanted to move on as he had more important things to do

John 18 (Cont)

- **John 18:30** *“They answered him, ‘If this man were not an evildoer, we would not have handed him over’”*
 - An “evildoer” was someone who broke the Law of *Moses*
 - This means that the Jews were accusing Jesus of breaking the Law
 - This led *Pilate* to tell them to take Jesus and judge Him according to their Law, as He had not broken *Roman* law
 - But, they responded that according to *Roman* law, they could not put a person to death who broke the *Mosaic* Law
 - This led *Pilate* to interview Jesus since the only way he could put Jesus to death was if he accused him of being a political rebel against *Caesar* (again, three times *Pilate* finds Him not guilty)

John 19

John 19

- **John 19:7** *“The Jews answered him, ‘We have a law, and by that law he ought to die, because he has made himself the Son of God’”*
 - The Jews were accusing Jesus of making Himself out to be the Messiah (when he was not the Messiah)
 - Father asked: “How could his proclaiming Himself to be the Messiah break the Mosaic Law?”
 - We must look at **Deuteronomy 17:14*** carefully (This is the only place in the law where a king is discussed) It says that God will set a king over them
 - The Messiah is to be chosen by God (from on high as *Samuel* anointed *David*), and not self-appointed

John 19 (Cont)

- Furthermore, a person may not be declared the Messiah unless he was anointed by a prophet
- Yet, if we go back to the baptism of Jesus (**John 1:33***), He met these conditions, but most of the Jewish leadership were not present so they did not know these things
- Thus, Jesus had not broken the law of Moses as He was anointed by the Holy Spirit (just like the rest of the Old Testament kings)

John 19 (Cont)

- **John 19:12-16** *“Upon this Pilate sought to release him...Then he handed him over to them to be crucified”*
 - Father pointed out that the Jews said: “Whoever makes himself king sets himself against Caesar”
 - The day of preparation of the Passover for the *Sadducees* (as discussed earlier) was Friday as the Passover would begin right after sundown on that Friday evening
 - John points out that it was about the 6th hour (12 noon), the time that the priest began sacrificing the Passover lambs in the temple (they finished by the 9th hour) (3 PM) at which time a member of every household would pick up their lamb for the Passover meal

John 19 (Cont)

- This means that the 6th hour was the beginning of the crucifixion of Jesus
- Then, Pilate told the Jews “here is your king” causing them to respond that they have no king but Caesar (while demanding that Jesus be crucified) thus breaking the Mosaic Law which prohibited anyone being their king who was not of the Jewish bloodline (**Deuteronomy 17:15**)
- John is showing us that the very law (**Deuteronomy 17**) they were accusing Jesus of breaking, they themselves were in fact breaking, thus they were the ones deserving death!

John 19 (Cont)

- **John 19:17-18** *“So, they took Jesus, and he went out, bearing his own cross,...and Jesus between them”*
 - Father reminded us of the sign written by *Pilate* mounted at the top of the cross in four languages proclaiming Jesus as the King of the Jews
 - We also can see the reference here to **Psalm 22:16*** concerning the parting of his garments and the piercing of His hands and feet

John 19 (Cont)

- **John 19:25-30** *“But standing by the cross... Woman behold your son...and he bowed his head and gave up his spirit”*
 - At this point, we hear about the Blessed Mother standing at the foot of the cross with the young apostle John
 - It is obvious that Jesus was entrusting the care of His mother to John
 - Father asked, why does John relate this fact to us?
 - Many commentators point out that it was to show how Mary became our mother and the mother of the disciples
 - Also, it clearly points out that Mary did not have any other children or she would not have been entrusted to John in this manner

John 19 (Cont)

- No one in the 1st Century church proposed that Mary had other children after the birth of Jesus (a modern Protestant idea)
- This is therefore not the purpose of this text
- Our Catholic devotion to the Blessed Mother comes from the beginning for she was understood to be the queen mother of Jesus the king
- Father said this is what John hopes when we hear this passage
- A clue to this fact is what we see in his climax of the passion narrative (which is the blood and water flowing from the pierced side of Jesus)

John 19 (Cont)

- The two texts (Mary being given to John because He was an only son) and (the blood and water flowing from His side) were related, and both point to the Old Testament
- John tells us this because this was not simply a random little detail, but something of importance to John within the context of the story
- After the end of this section, Jesus gave us His spirit
- This is similar to the story in the synoptics, but then John follows with something new

John 19 (Cont)

- **John 19:31-34** *“Since it was the day of Preparation,...and at once there came blood and water”*
 - The next day was not an ordinary Sabbath
 - In fact, it was the greatest Sabbath of the year, a Sabbath of Sabbaths, because the Passover fell on the Sabbath
 - For this reason, the Jews did not want the bodies to remain on the crosses after sunset, as that was forbidden by the Law, and dead bodies were considered to be unclean (thus making the land unclean)
 - Therefore, they had to take the bodies down before sunset on Friday

John 19 (Cont)

- To expedite the death of those on the crosses, they would break their legs causing them to suffocate more quickly
- As Jesus appeared to already be dead, the centurion thrust his lance into Jesus' side
- When he did this, according to John, blood and water flowed out
- Father asked, "Why did these things happen?"

John 19 (Cont)

- **John 19:35-36** *“He who saw it has borne witness- his testimony is true,...Not a bone of him shall be broken”*
 - There is nothing strange about the fact that blood and water flowed out of His side, but John is telling us something that is very important (he even said trust me this is very important)
 - He said that *these things took place so that the scriptures might be fulfilled that not a bone of him shall be broken*
 - He is proclaiming that Jesus is the Passover Lamb
 - In fact, there are two Old Testament passages being fulfilled here
 - *The Lamb of God (Isaiah)*
 - *Who takes away the sins of the world*

John 19 (Cont)

- Jesus is the righteous Messiah who takes upon his shoulders the sins of the people (**Isaiah 53:11***, the Suffering Servant psalm)
- He is the Lamb of God (who takes away the sins of the world), the Passover Lamb, the one whose flesh and blood when consumed will keep the angel of death from entering into your house
- His death gives you life like the Passover Lamb of the Old Testament Law
- The Law further required that not a bone of the Passover Lamb be broken

John 19 (Cont)

- The **Psalms** also say that the righteous man will be protected by God so that not even a bone of His body will be broken
- John hopes that we will see this imagery of Jesus being the righteous man, protected by God from death, and be raised from the dead
 - Not only were His legs not broken because He was the Passover Lamb, but also because blood and water flowed out of His side, which fulfilled the passage that says that they looked on who they had pierced
- He was the Passover Lamb that will save His people by His death giving life to the world
- Thus, the soldiers did not to break His legs in the fulfillment of these prophecies

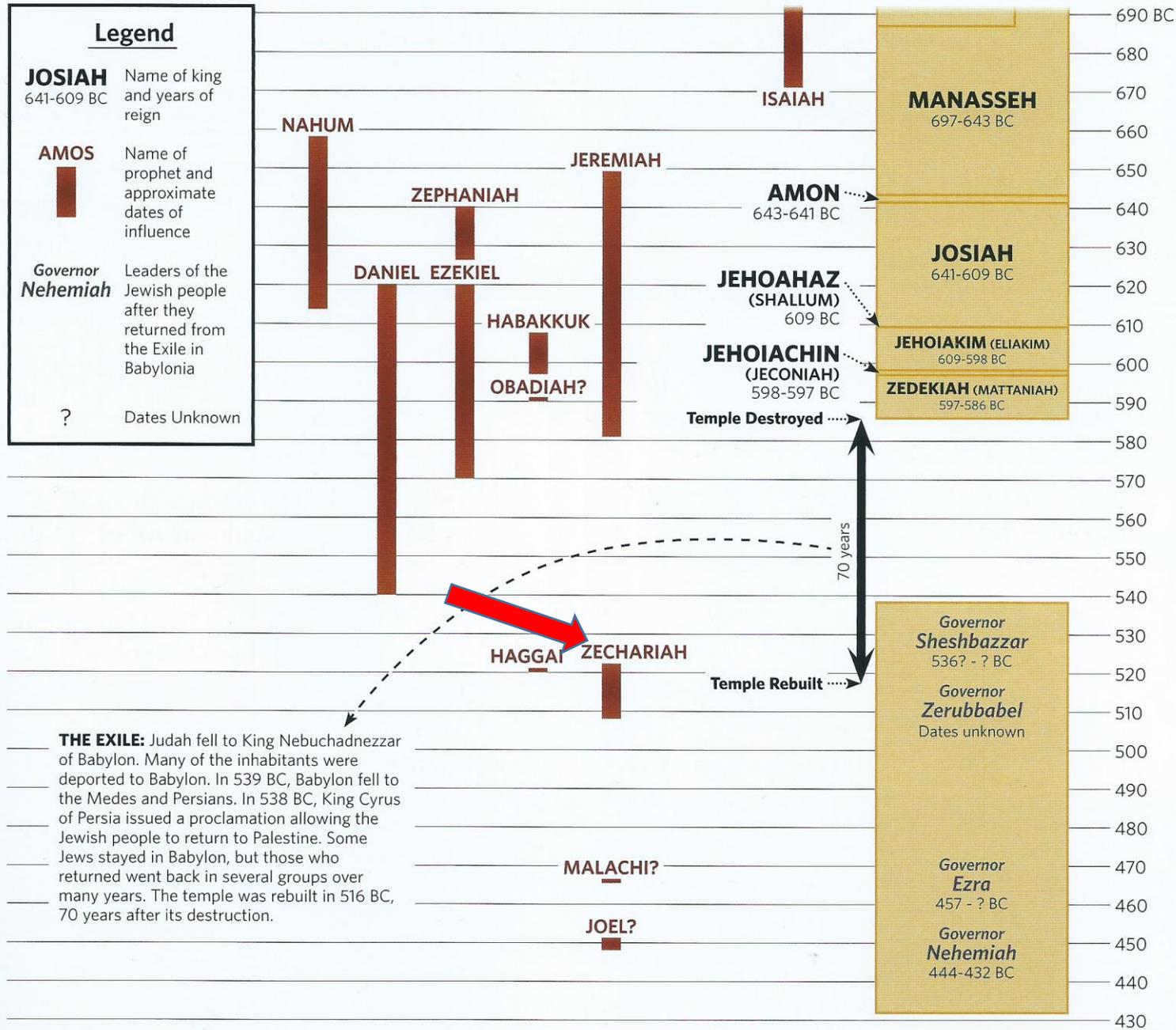
Legend

JOSIAH Name of king and years of reign
641-609 BC

AMOS Name of prophet and approximate dates of influence

Governor Nehemiah Leaders of the Jewish people after they returned from the Exile in Babylonia

? Dates Unknown



18 Zachariah 520-480 BC Post Ex

- Zachariah

- The son of *Iddo* who returned from exile with *Zerubbabel* and Joshua
- United his efforts with Haggai to encourage the restoration of the temple
- Was a priest who had roots in Babylon
- Depicts a king coming triumphant and victorious riding on an ass

Zachariah

- Communicated his message via visions under the Ezekiel tradition
- Preached the coming of God's kingdom preceded by the building of the Temple
- His book had two major parts:
 - The first part deals with the years 520-518 BC
 - The second part comes at the end of the prophetic tradition with few historical indicators

Zachariah

- Received the word from God in the 2nd year of Darius
- The measuring line is linked to the one described by Ezekiel when he predicted the destruction of Jerusalem

Zechariah

- The people are again being told that they are poor because they have not rebuilt the Temple first so that the Glory of God might appear
- God promises the return of a Messiah who will come humbly riding on an ass
 - At that time the people had no anointed king ruling over them since Zerubbabel, though from the line of David, was only a governor

John 19 (Cont)

- John was counting on his listeners being familiar with the **Book of Zechariah**
- **Zechariah 9:9** (which we saw earlier), states that the Messiah would come into Jerusalem riding on a donkey
- **Zechariah 12:10-11*** speaks of a Messiah, a son of David, who died, causing national mourning over the death of an “only son” (John often refers to Jesus as an “only son”)
- **Zechariah 13:1** presents the image of blood (sacrifices) being the source of one being cleansed from sin (**Leviticus 17:11***)

John 19 (Cont)

- Father expanded on the impact of the death of an only son
 - The woman of *Nain* in Luke
 - The righteous king Josiah's death at Megiddo:
 - Opened a fountain to cleanse the people for their sins
 - Was seen to comply with the Law where blood and water were used to purify a person from sin (Leviticus 17)
 - **Zechariah 14:8-16** discusses how the living water (discussed by John) was used to cleanse the temple during the Feast of Booths
 - This ties directly into the imagery of blood and water and the Eucharist