



STAGE 7

EXILE FROM THE LAND



PERSONAL PREPARATION DAY 1—DESTRUCTION OF JERUSALEM

Read 2 Kings 24:18-25:21

List some of the events that happen as part of the destruction of Jerusalem:

Who is responsible for this terrible thing taking place? 24:18—25:1

How is the exile described in 24:20? What perspective does this give to the Israelites time in the promised land?



PERSONAL PREPARATION DAY 2—LAMENTATIONS

Read Lamentations 1:1-22

Lamentations is a book written at the time of the Exile, that is during the period when the remaining Israelites were living in the foreign land of Babylon. What reasons are given for the Exile?

What emotional effects did the Exile have on the people of Judah? Why do you think it had such an impact?

Read Lamentations 3:19-33

In the midst of great despair what is the writer's basis for hope?

Recall a time when things have not gone well for you. What thoughts did you have and how did you feel towards God? What do you think is the Christian basis for hope in those situations?

GROUP DISCUSSION QUESTIONS - EXILE FROM THE LAND

Review: Have someone in the group give a review of what we've learnt so far as we've traced the history of the Old Testament. We didn't do 'Stage 6' in growth group last week, but the 'Idol Picture' is supplied so that you can use it in the review. The Big Idea for Stage 6 is: Soon after King David, the high hopes for Israel crumble. Solomon worship other gods and nearly all the other kings follow his pattern. Just like Adam & Eve, these Kings ignores God's warning and disobey.



Stage 7 Big Idea: Israel disobeys God and so God removes the nation from the promised land as he warned. This is similar to the removal of Adam and Eve when they rejected God's rule in the Garden. But in the midst of despair there is hope. God promises a future time of restoration and forgiveness - a time when his people will perfectly live under his rule.

1. The words 'Exodus' and 'Exile' appear to be quite similar. The events are very different! From what you already know of the Exile, list as many differences as you can between the two events of the Exodus and the Exile.

As we have discovered, Judah has been punished for her sinfulness by being conquered by the Babylonians. Jerusalem and the Temple have been destroyed and thousands of prisoners have been dragged back to Babylon to live as exiles. The Israelites are in utter despair and confusion.

How could it be that God would do something like this? What about all God's promises to Abraham—promises that they'd be a blessed nation in their own land? Now they are exiles in a foreign land. It's a complete disaster. This is as big a disaster as the Fall. Did you notice in Personal Preparation—the exile is described as 'being thrust from God's presence' - just like what happened when Adam & Eve were expelled from the Garden. It seems that history is repeating itself. God's special people rebel against his rule and are thrust out of the special land as punishment.

The big question is: has God totally given up on Israel, or does he plan to restore it? The answer can be found in the words of the prophets who proclaim God's Word in the time leading up to the Exile, and even continued through it. eg. Jeremiah, Ezekiel & Isaiah.

2. According to the prophets, what will happen after the Exile:

Jeremiah 16:14-15
Jeremiah 31:31-34

Ezekiel 36:24-30
Ezekiel 37:21-28

Isaiah 65:17-25

3. Within these future plans for God's people, two specific individuals will play an important role. Who are they and what do they do?

Person 1—Jeremiah 33:14-16; Isaiah 11:1-5

Person 2—Isaiah 52:13-53:12

Read Romans 8:18-39; 2 Thessalonians 1:5–10

4. The modern Christian’s position shares some strong similarities with that of exiles in Babylon. We are aliens in a land which is not our ultimate home. How does the promise of our heavenly home help us to deal with life?

5. What pressures do we face to compromise our faith in Christ? What words of advice does 1 Peter 2:11-12 have to offer? What specific things can we do to put these verses into practice?

6. Christ is both the anointed Messiah and suffering servant of God. How do these two aspects of Christ’s role spur us on to greater obedience?

God put Adam and Eve in the garden but their sin destroyed it.
God brought Israel into the promised land but their sin destroyed it....

BUT NOW, the prophets announce that God is faithful to his promises:

-a new covenant is coming where sin will be forgiven
-a new rescue is coming that’s bigger even than the Exodus
-a new heaven and a new earth is coming: recapturing Eden’s peace & perfection.

AND ALL THIS will happen through a Davidic King and a Suffering Servant
- who will establish God’s Kingdom once and for all:

God’s People in God’s Place under God’s Rule

The Kingdom of God	God’s People	God’s Place	God’s Rule
Established at Creation, Genesis 1 & 2	Adam & Eve	The Garden	God’s Word.
Lost at The Fall, Genesis 3			
Promised in Genesis 12	Abraham	Canaan	Covenant
Foreshadowed in 2 Samuel 7	David-Solomon	Land, Jerusalem, Temple	Sinai Covenant
Propheesied in the Prophets	Remnant of Israel	Restored Land, Jerusalem, Temple	New Covenant written on Hearts

What can you pray about—arising from this study?