

JERUSALEM | CITY OF GOLD

SESSION 3: JERUSALEM PRIOR TO THE TIME OF JESUS

AN OUTLINE OF OUR JOURNEY

- Session 1: Jerusalem the Eternal Capital
- Session 2: Jerusalem at the time of Jesus
- Session 3: Jerusalem prior to the time of Jesus
- Session 4: Jerusalem in battles of the ages
- Session 5: Jerusalem spiritualized.
- Session 6: The Location of the Temple

JERUSALEM PRIOR TO THE TIME OF JESUS

THE FIRST MENTIONS OF JERUSALEM

- Melchizedek was the *King of Salem*. Josephus notes that Salem was later called Jerusalem.
- The Gibeonites lived near Jerusalem (according to Josephus), and made a pact with Joshua in order to avoid the fate of Jericho and Ai (Joshua 9:3 and following). When the King of Jerusalem heard about this pact, he made war against the Gibeonites, which drew Joshua and the Israelites in to fight the battle. The sun was made to stand still, and Joshua won the battle against the King of Jerusalem and the four other kings in the attack.
- Before Joshua died, he instructed 12 tribes to finish the work, but they never did so, and the Jebusite city of Jerusalem was not conquered (Joshua 15:63).
- In Judges 1, after the death of Joshua, the city was at least partially conquered, but the tribe of Benjamin allowed the inhabitants to remain, and charged them tribute (Antiquities of the Jews 5:129)

THE CONQUEST OF JERUSALEM

- The conquest of Jerusalem is found in 2 Samuel 5:6 and following.
- After the death of Ishbosheth, son of Saul, the people of all the tribes recognized David as King. When they did so, he moved from Hebron to Jerusalem to take it as his new capital.
- The Jebusite inhabitants of Jerusalem were convinced that their city could not be conquered. In arrogance, they put their blind and maim on the walls as “guards,” taunting David with shouts of strength, “even our blind and lame can keep you away.”
- To encourage the conquest of the city, David gave incentive that the one who conquered the city would be made captain of the King’s armies.
- Josephus said, “Now the whole time from the warfare under Joshua our general against the Canaanites, and from that war in which he overcame them, and distributed the land among the Hebrews (nor could the Israelites ever cast the Canaanites out of Jerusalem until this time, when David took it by siege), this whole time was five hundred and fifteen years.” (Antiquities, 7:68)

THE DEVELOPMENT OF JERUSALEM

- David built a royal palace in Jerusalem, with the help of Hiram, King of Tyre.
- David brought the Ark of the Covenant back to Jerusalem, rescuing it from the Philistines.
- David desired to build a temple on the threshing floor of his friend, Araunah the Jebusite, but God would not allow him.
- Solomon began to build the temple after David’s death. Josephus says it was 592 years after the exodus and 1,020 years after Abraham left Mesopotamia, and 1,440 years after the flood, and 3,102 since Adam’s creation. (Antiquities 8:60).

THE DESTRUCTION OF THE FIRST TEMPLE

- According to Josephus, Nebuchadnezzar built towers around the city walls, and used the towers to send darts and to repel soldiers unto the walls of Jerusalem. (Ant. 10:131)
- The siege of Jerusalem took 18 months, and famine is the greatest cause of the defeat of those within Jerusalem.
- The city was taken “about midnight” on the 9th day of Ab, 586 BC. King Zedekiah and his family fled through “the fortified ditch” and was captured the next day near Jericho. (Ant. 10:136ff)
- Nebuchadnezzar had Zedekiah’s sons slain before his eyes, then gouged his eyes out so that the death of his sons would be the last thing he ever saw (see Ezek. 12:13).
- Josephus says that the monarchy lasted 514 years, six months, and 10 days (Ant. 10:143).
- After the siege of Jerusalem, the temple and the palace were totally destroyed.
 - Age of the temple: 470 years, six months, 10 days
 - From the exodus to the destruction: 1,062, six months, 10 days
 - From the flood: 1,957, six months, 10 days
 - From Adam, 3,513, six months, 10 days
- Nebuchadnezzar pillaged the temple and dedicated the utensils of the temple to his own gods.
- Josephus records the names of the priests from the dedication of the temple to its destruction.

THE TEMPLE REBUILT

- 140 years before the destruction of the Temple, Isaiah prophesied that a man named Cyrus would authorize the rebuilding.
- Cyrus the Great of Persia allowed the Jewish exiles to return, provided gold and materials for reconstruction of the Temple, and returned the Temple treasures pillaged by Nebuchadnezzar.
- 42,462 exiled Jews returned to Jerusalem for the rebuilding project.
- At the time of Cyrus’ death, only the foundations of the Temple had been laid. Cyrus’ successors slowed the project and/or stopped it altogether. Cambyses, immediate successor to Cyrus, declared, “I give order, that the Jews shall not be permitted to build that city, lest such mischief as they used to bring upon kings be greatly augmented.” (Ant. 11:28)
- The work resumed under King Darius. Zerubbabel, who was of royal blood from the line of David, was a servant of Darius, and won a speech contest among the other advisors. In gaining his prize, Zerubbabel asked for permission to continue construction, and was given such permission. The altar of the Temple was rebuilt in the same spot as the previous altar. Josephus says, “But while they did this they did not please the neighboring nations, who all of them bare an ill will to them” (Ant. 11:76).

THE GRECO-ROMAN PERIOD

- Alexander the Great spared Jerusalem and allowed the Jews to live in freedom due to a vision he had previously seen and the Jewish High Priest showing him the prophecies of Daniel and showing his part in it.
- Alexander’s successors were not so kind to the Jews, and Antiochus Euphron IV desecrated the Temple.
- The Maccabees restored the Temple and worship within it, and began a Jewish dynasty of priestly kings that lasted from 165-64BC.
- Internal feuds within the Maccabean kings led to Rome’s almost bloodless coup of Jerusalem and Judea in 64BC.
- From 64BC to the days of Jesus, Judea was under Roman rule. The Romans placed Herod as King in 39BC.