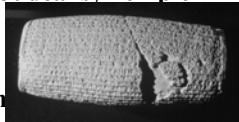


RE 24 THE BIBLE

The Babylonian Exile

History of the Exile

- 597 BCE: exile of king & upper class
- 587 BCE: exile of more Judeans; Temple destroyed
- 539/538 BCE: Persian Cyrus conquers Babylon
- 538-520: returns led by Davidic heirs
- 520-515 BCE: Jerusalem temple rebuilt
- 5th cent BCE: returns led by Ezra & Nehemiah



Religious Developments 6th-5th century BCE

- Synagogues
 - Local, lay worship
 - Model for church & mosque
- Books
 - Jeremiah & Ezekiel
 - Deuteronomistic History
 - P source & Pentateuch



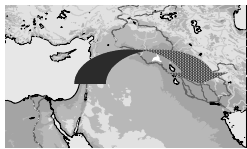
Synagogue at Masada



Ezekiel: structure

- Chs. 1-24: Judgment against Jerusalem (597-587 BCE)
- Chs. 25-32: Judgment against nations (597-587)
- Chs. 33-48: Hope for restoration of Jerusalem & Israel (after 587)

Ezekiel: message



- Jerusalem priest
- Temple imagery shapes visions (ch. 1)
 - E.g. Cherubim throne
- God appears in Babylon, with exiles
- God leaves Temple
- Hope: restored Temple & priesthood

Isaiah: structure

- Isaiah = 8th cent. BCE Jerusalem prophet
- Chs. 1-39: pre-exilic
- Chs. 40-55: exilic
 - Mentions Cyrus
 - Addresses exiles
- Chs. 56-66: post-exilic

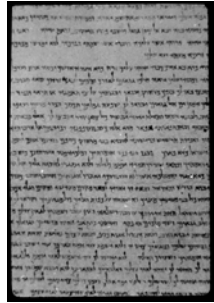


“Isaiah” by Michelangelo

Who wrote Isaiah? When?

Two theories:

1. Isaiah *forsaw* exile from 8th cent.
 - But no other prophet *addresses* the future
2. 3 “Isaiahs”: 8th cent., 6th cent., 5th cent.
 - Supported by different styles & emphases
 - But book still unified by major themes



Isaiah scroll, Qumran
2nd-1st cents. BCE



Isaiah 40-55: message

- God still cares for Israel
 - Punishment over, sins forgiven
 - Restoration in new Exodus
- “Servant Songs” in chs. 42, 49, 50, 52-53
 - Is the servant Israel? The Persian emperor? A Judean leader?
- Vision: Jerusalem as pilgrimage community *within* the empire



Political visions

1. Davidic kingdom & new covenant
 - Jer 31:31-34, Ezek 36:26-28
2. Religious community in pluralistic empire (2 Isaiah)
 - Israel’s kings did not rule well
 - God rules through emperors too
- Tension throughout Second Temple period (515 BCE–70 CE)