

THE BEAST STRUCTURE

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SCRIPTURES CONCERNING THE FIRST BEAST

609-539 BC

In the year 612 BCE, the Assyrian capital Nineveh fell to the Babylonians. Ashur-uballit II was the last king of the Assyrian Empire. After Nineveh fell he escaped and reigned in the capital city of Harran from 612 BC to somewhere between 609 and 605 BC. The Assyrian army defending Harran was defeated by the Babylonians and Harran was sacked in 609 BC thus ending the Assyrian empire.

The Babylonian Empire then reigned from 609 BC to 539 BC when conquered by the Persians under Cyrus. 609 to 539 BC was a period of exactly seventy years that the first Beast reigned over the nations. This is one of the theories of when the prophetic seventy years began and ended.

Jer 25:11 And this whole land shall be a desolation, [and] an astonishment; and these nations shall serve the king of Babylon seventy years.

These scriptures show that Nebuchadnezzar and the Kingdom of Babylon was the First Beast. Nebuchadnezzar reigned 605-562 BC.

THE GREAT IMAGE

Dan 2:32 This image's head was of fine gold...

Dan 2:37 Thou, O king (Nebuchadnezzar) art a king of kings: for the God of heaven hath given thee a kingdom, power, and strength, and glory.

Dan 2:38 And wheresoever the children of men dwell, the beasts of the field and the fowls of the heaven hath he given into thine hand, and hath made thee ruler over them all. Thou art this head of gold.

Note: The entire structure of the Beast is likened to a great image. The Kingdom of Babylon was the head of gold on this image.

THE BEAST

Dan 7:4 The first (of the four great beasts) was like a lion, and had eagle's wings: I beheld till the wings thereof were plucked, and it was lifted up from the earth, and made stand upon the feet as a man, and a man's heart was given to it.

Note: The entire Beast structure is composed of four great Beasts. Nebuchadnezzar of the Kingdom of Babylon was the First Beast. This scripture has to do with the punishment that the Lord brought upon Nebuchadnezzar in taking away his human spirit and making him to think and live like a beast for seven years. (Dan 4) After this his senses and his kingdom were restored to him.

THE LAST THREE KINGS OF JUDAH AND THE TAKING INTO CAPTIVITY OF JUDAH BY THE FIRST BEAST

JEHOIACHIM reigned 11 years 608 BC to 598 BC

Note: Of the last three kings who reigned in Judah, the first was Jehoiakim son of Josiah. Josiah had gone up against Pharaoh Necho of Egypt at Megiddo and was slain. The people made his son Jehoahaz king, but he reigned only three months when Pharaoh took him to Egypt where he died. Pharaoh then made Jehoiachim king. (608 BC) Jehoiachim taxed the land and gave the tribute to Pharaoh.

2Ki 23:34 And Pharaohnechoh made Eliakim the son of Josiah king in the room of Josiah his father, and turned his name to Jehoiakim, and took Jehoahaz away: and he came to Egypt, and died there.

2Ki 23:35 And Jehoiakim gave the silver and the gold to Pharaoh; but he taxed the land to give the money according to the commandment of Pharaoh: he exacted the silver and the gold of the people of the land, of every one according to his taxation, to give [it] unto Pharaohnechoh.

In 605 BC Egypt and part of the former Assyrian army was defeated by Nebuchadnezzar at Carchemish. He then came against Judah at that time. **605 BC was the first deportation to Babylon.** At this time Daniel was taken. The first deportation is only mentioned in the book of Daniel and not in the book of Kings. Therefore it is often disregarded. Secular evidence, however, supports Daniel's testimony. Josephus quotes Berossus, a Babylonian historian in Against Apion 1:19 saying that when Nabopolassar heard that the governor he had appointed over the west had rebelled against him, he sent his young son Nebuchadnezzar who conquered him, and restored the country to the dominion of Babylon. During this war, Nebuchadnezzar received news that his father had died. He charged the Jewish, Syrian and other captives to his officers and hurried back to Babylon to assume the kingship. The last two cuneiform tablets of the life of Nabopolassar are dated May and August 605 BC, and the first two of Nebuchadnezzar dated August and September the same year.

Dan 1:1 In the third year of the reign of Jehoiakim king of Judah came Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon unto Jerusalem, and besieged it.

Dan 1:2 And the Lord gave Jehoiakim king of Judah into his hand, with part of the vessels of the house of God: which he carried into the land of Shinar to the house of his god; and he brought the vessels into the treasure house of his god.

Dan 1:3 And the king spake unto Ashpenaz the master of his eunuchs, that he should bring [certain] of the children of Israel, and of the king's seed, and of the princes;

Nebuchadnezzar allowed Jehoiachim to continue being king. Jehoiachim changed allegiance from Egypt and paid tribute to Nebuchadnezzar of Babylon for three years, but then rebelled, switched allegiance back to Egypt and stopped paying tribute to Babylon..

2Ki 24:1 In his days Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon came up, and Jehoiakim became his servant three years: then he turned and rebelled against him.

In December 598 BC, Jehoiakim died when he was bound with fetters and carried to Babylon

2Ch 36:5 Jehoiakim [was] twenty and five years old when he began to reign, and he reigned eleven years in Jerusalem: and he did [that which was] evil in the sight of the Lord his God.
2Ch 36:6 Against him came up Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon, and bound him in fetters, to carry him to Babylon.

JEHOIACHIN reigned three months and ten days, from December, 598 to March, 597 BC. In 597 BC, in the eighth year of Nebuchadnezzar he captured Jerusalem. Jehoiachin, who was now reigning instead of his father, immediately surrendered to Nebuchadnezzar and thus saved the city from destruction, but he along with his family, high-class officials and thousands of citizens including Ezekiel, were taken to Babylon. **597 BC was the second deportation to Babylon.**

2Ki 24:10 At that time the servants of Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon came up against Jerusalem, and the city was besieged.

2Ki 24:12 And Jehoiachin the king of Judah went out to the king of Babylon, he, and his mother, and his servants, and his princes, and his officers: and the king of Babylon took him in the eighth year of his reign.

2Ki 24:14 And he carried away all Jerusalem, and all the princes, and all the mighty men of valour, [even] ten thousand captives, and all the craftsmen and smiths: none remained, save the poorest sort of the people of the land.

2Ki 24:15 And he carried away Jehoiachin to Babylon, and the king's mother, and the king's wives, and his officers, and the mighty of the land, [those] carried he into captivity from Jerusalem to Babylon.

Jehoiachin was imprisoned in Babylon for thirty-seven years. He was finally released by Nebuchadnezzar's successor Evil-merodach who gave him honor and a daily allowance of food for the rest of his life.

2Ki 25:27 And it came to pass in the seven and thirtieth year of the captivity of Jehoiachin king of Judah, in the twelfth month, on the seven and twentieth [day] of the month, [that] Evilmerodach king of Babylon in the year that he began to reign did lift up the head of Jehoiachin king of Judah out of prison;

2Ki 25:28 And he spake kindly to him, and set his throne above the throne of the kings that [were] with him in Babylon;

2Ki 25:29 And changed his prison garments: and he did eat bread continually before him all the days of his life.

ZEDEKIAH reigned 597 – 587 BC

Nebuchadnezzar appointed Zedekiah king over Judah in place of Jehoiachin. Zedekiah secured his throne by swearing a public oath of allegiance to Nebuchadnezzar.

2Ch 36:11 Zedekiah [was] one and twenty years old when he began to reign, and reigned eleven years in Jerusalem.

2Ch 36:12 And he did [that which was] evil in the sight of the Lord his God, [and] humbled not himself before Jeremiah the prophet [speaking] from the mouth of the Lord.

2Ch 36:13 And he also rebelled against king Nebuchadnezzar, who had made him swear by God: but he stiffened his neck, and hardened his heart from turning unto the Lord God of Israel.

In Ezekiel 17:1-11 we find the parable of the two eagles and it is explained in verses 12-21.

Zedekiah's kingdom was the high cedar in the beginning of Ezekiel 17. Nebuchadnezzar 'lowered' him by making him a vassal kingdom through this oath of allegiance.

Eze 17:12 Say now to the rebellious house, Know ye not what these [things mean]? tell [them], Behold, the king of Babylon is come to Jerusalem, and hath taken the king thereof, and the princes thereof, and led them with him to Babylon;

Eze 17:13 And hath taken of the king's seed, and made a covenant with him, and hath taken an oath of him: he hath also taken the mighty of the land:

Eze 17:14 That the kingdom might be base, that it might not lift itself up, [but] that by keeping of his covenant it might stand.

Zedekiah would have continued to reign had he been satisfied with this humble situation under Nebuchadnezzar. But he later rejected Jeremiah's advice, exalted himself and revolted against Babylon. He broke his oath by entering into an alliance with Pharaoh Hophra of Egypt (the second eagle in Ezek 17).

Eze 17:15 But he rebelled against him in sending his ambassadors into Egypt, that they might give him horses and much people. Shall he prosper? shall he escape that doeth such [things]? or shall he break the covenant, and be delivered?

In God's view, Zedekiah's oath was broken against God himself.

Eze 17:18 Seeing he despised the oath by breaking the covenant, when, lo, he had given his hand, and hath done all these [things], he shall not escape.

Eze 17:19 Therefore thus saith the Lord God; [As] I live, surely mine oath that he hath despised, and my covenant that he hath broken, even it will I recompense upon his own head.

In retaliation Nebuchadnezzar besieged Jerusalem. He began the siege of Jerusalem in January 589 BC and it lasted about eighteen months.

2Ki 24:20 For through the anger of the Lord it came to pass in Jerusalem and Judah, until he had cast them out from his presence, that Zedekiah rebelled against the king of Babylon.

2Ki 25:1 And it came to pass in the ninth year of his reign, in the tenth month, in the tenth [day] of the month, [that] Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon came, he, and all his host, against Jerusalem, and pitched against it; and they built forts against it round about.

2Ki 25:2 And the city was besieged unto the eleventh year of king Zedekiah.

By 587 BC Jerusalem was broken up and in famine.

2Ki 25:3 And on the ninth [day] of the [fourth] month the famine prevailed in the city, and there was no bread for the people of the land.

2Ki 25:4 And the city was broken up, and all the men of war [fled] by night by the way of the gate between two walls, which [is] by the king's garden: (now the Chaldees [were] against the city round about:) and [the king] went the way toward the plain.

Zedekiah tried to escape, but was captured; all his sons were put to death; he was blinded and taken to Babylon where he died.

2Ki 25:5 And the army of the Chaldees pursued after the king, and overtook him in the plains of Jericho: and all his army were scattered from him.

2Ki 25:6 So they took the king, and brought him up to the king of Babylon to Riblah; and they gave judgment upon him.

2Ki 25:7 And they slew the sons of Zedekiah before his eyes, and put out the eyes of Zedekiah, and bound him with fetters of brass, and carried him to Babylon.

After the fall of Jerusalem, Nebuzaradan was sent to destroy it. The city was plundered and razed to the ground. Solomon's Temple was destroyed. The rest of the people were carried away to Babylon. **586 BC was the third deportation to Babylon.** Only a small number of vinedressers and husbandmen were permitted to remain in the land.

2Ki 25:8 And in the fifth month, on the seventh [day] of the month, which [is] the nineteenth year of king Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon, came Nebuzaradan, captain of the guard, a servant of the king of Babylon, unto Jerusalem:

2Ki 25:9 And he burnt the house of the Lord, and the king's house, and all the houses of Jerusalem, and every great [man's] house burnt he with fire.

2Ki 25:10 And all the army of the Chaldees, that [were with] the captain of the guard, brake down the walls of Jerusalem round about.

2Ki 25:11 Now the rest of the people [that were] left in the city, and the fugitives that fell away to the king of Babylon, with the remnant of the multitude, did Nebuzaradan the captain of the guard carry away.

2Ki 25:12 But the captain of the guard left of the poor of the land [to be] vinedressers and husbandmen.

Nebuchadnezzar died in 562 BC. He had four successors, his son Evil-merodach; Neriglissar, his daughter's husband; his son Labosodarchod; and Nabonidus, son of Evil-merodach, with whom his son Belshazzar was joint king. In 539 BC, Belshazzar was killed and his father, Nabonidus, was captured by the Persian invasion.