

# Three Steps to Destruction Answer Key

*Discuss the information below after students have completed the activity in their Student Guides.*

King Josiah died in 610 BC in a battle with Pharaoh Necho (23:29). He had reigned for 31 years (22:1–2) and was a good king, seeking to restore right worship in Judah.

Jehoahaz was the son of Josiah (23:30) and only reigned for three months (23:31). He was an evil king and was put in prison by Pharaoh Necho (23:33). He eventually died in Egypt (23:34). These events all occurred in 610 BC.

Jehoiakim, formerly named Eliakim (23:34), was put in place by Pharaoh Necho. He was the son of Josiah (23:34) and paid tribute to Necho (23:33). He reigned for 11 years (22:36) and did evil in the sight of the Lord (22:37). He also became a vassal of Nebuchadnezzar and the first phase of the captivity began in the third year of his reign (24:1). *Students may find the cross reference to Daniel 1:1 which makes this clear.* Since his reign began in 610, the beginning of the Babylonian captivity was 607 BC, but he remained on the throne for eight more years. Nebuchadnezzar carried away some of the nobles and the people to Babylon (Daniel 1:1).

Jehoiachin was the son of Jehoiakim, grandson of Josiah (24:6), and began his reign in 599 BC (610–11=599). He only reigned three months and did evil in the sight of the Lord (24:8–9). Nebuchadnezzar's servants besieged Jerusalem and carried away all of the skilled workers, nobles, and the articles from the Temple along with Jehoiachin and his family (24:13–16). So 599 BC marks the second phase of the captivity as Nebuchadnezzar carried away much of the nation into Babylon.

Zedekiah was put in place as king by Nebuchadnezzar in 599 BC. He was an uncle of Jehoiachin, one of Josiah's sons (24:18). He was also a wicked king (24:19) and reigned for 11 years (24:18). In his ninth year, he rebelled against Nebuchadnezzar (25:1). Nebuchadnezzar began a siege of Jerusalem that ended within 2 years (25:1–3). The city fell in the eleventh year of Zedekiah, so the year is 588 BC, nineteen years after the first captivity (25:8). Zedekiah was captured, his sons were killed, and his eyes were put out before he was taken captive to Babylon (25:4–7). After this, the Temple was torn down and burned (25:9) and the walls of Jerusalem were torn down and the city was burned (25:10). Only the poor were left in the land while the rest were carried away to Babylon or killed (25:11–12).

As a quick summary, the first phase of the Babylonian captivity was in 607 in the reign of Jehoiakim. The second phase came in 599 when his son Jehoiachin was taken captive to Babylon along with others. The final phase came in 588 when Zedekiah was captured and the Temple and Jerusalem burned. *Refer to the History of Israel poster to recap the events.*

God's judgment had been delivered to Judah at the hands of the Babylonians. In the three phases of captivity, the leaders and nobles were carried away. Verses 24:14 and 25:12 make it clear that only the poorest of the land were left to serve those who came from other areas of the Babylonian Empire. Everyone else was either killed, starved to death, or taken captive to Babylon.