

# When & Where

## Broad overview of ruling powers in the Eastern Mediterranean and Persian Gulf Region



### Assyrian Empire (721 BCE)

The Assyrians conquered the northern kingdom, known as Israel and its capital city of "Samaria." Warnings about their rise to power are echoed by many prophets in the Bible.



### Babylonian Empire (586 BCE)

Babylon takes over Assyrian regions and expands some. The biggest difference is that they took the city of Jerusalem, ending the southern kingdom's independence. Bible stories of exile take place in this time period.



### Persian Empire (539 BCE)

Cyrus leads the Persian army to conquer huge areas and invited previous conquered peoples to return "home." This triggers the return of Babylonia exiles to Jerusalem, who rebuild the Temple and city walls.



### Greek Empire (332 BCE)

Alexander the Great marched all the way towards modern India, and after his three sons settled some territory disputes, Jewish culture was allowed to thrive (although under Greek rule) for a while. Eventually things deteriorated for everyone.



### Roman Empire (63 BCE)

Much of Rome's early conquest was by diplomacy. Their power was undeniable so many just signed up. Jewish leaders formed alliances with Rome that were helpful but later ignored as the empire asserted its dominance over the region.

*\*Dates based on the empires' impact on Israel and Judah*

How does history intersecting our faith story complicate our reading of scripture?

# *Violence: When and Where*

## Reflection Questions on War and Violence

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What comes to mind when you hear the words, “holy war”?

How do we decide if violence is a necessary step to defend human life?

How do we evaluate history when we have benefited from the result?

When do we determine if violence is racial or based on bias?

How do you think Jesus would evaluate modern world history?

Where are your personal boundaries on committing physical violence?

**How does history intersecting our faith story complicate our reading of scripture?**