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Chronological Bible Plan

August



AUGUST

**“Every day I will bless you and praise
your name forever and ever” (Ps 145:2)**

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Habakkuk's Prophecy to Judah—The Rise of the Chaldeans [Babylonians] (c. 650 BC)

Habakkuk 1–3

Title

1:1 The oracle that Habakkuk the prophet saw.

Habakkuk's First Question—How Long Will You Let Judah's Wickedness Continue?

- 2 O Yahweh, how long shall I cry for help
and you will not listen?
How long will I cry out to you, "Violence!"
and you will not save?
- 3 Why do you cause me to see evil
while you look at trouble?
Destruction and violence happen before me;
contention and strife arise.
- 4 Therefore the law is paralyzed,
and justice does not go forth perpetually.
For the wicked surround the righteous;
therefore justice goes forth perverted.

God's Answer—Be Amazed: I Am About to Use the Babylonians to Judge Judah

- 5 "Look among the nations and see;
be astonished and astounded.
For a work *is about to* be done in your days
that you will not believe if it is told. [[Acts 13:41](#)]
- 6 For look! I am raising up the Chaldeans,
the bitter and impetuous nation,
the one who walks through the spacious places of earth
to take possession of dwellings not belonging to it.
- 7 They *are* dreadful and awesome;
their justice and their dignity proceed from themselves.
- 8 Their horses *are* more swift than leopards;
they are more menacing than wolves *at* dusk.
Their horsemen gallop; their horsemen come from afar;
they fly like an eagle *that is* swift to devour.
- 9 All of them come for violence,
their faces pressing forward.
They gather captives like the sand.
- 10 And they themselves scoff at kings
and rulers *are* a joke to them.
They laugh at every fortification,
and they heap up earth and take it.
- 11 Then they sweep *like the* wind and pass on;
they become guilty, whose might *is* their god!"

Habakkuk's Second Question—How Could You Use the Wicked Babylonians to Judge Judah?

- 12 Are you not from of old,
O Yahweh my God, my Holy One?
You shall not die.
O Yahweh, you have marked them for judgment;
O Rock, you have established them for reproof.
- 13 Your eyes *are* too pure to see evil,
and you are not able to look at wrongdoing.
Why do you look at the treacherous?
Why are you silent when the wicked swallows up
someone more righteous than him?
- 14 You make humankind like fish of the sea,
like crawling creatures that have no ruler among them.
- 15 He brings up all of them with a fishhook;

he drags them up with a fishnet;

he gathers them in his dragnet.

Therefore, he rejoices and exults.

16 Therefore he sacrifices to his fishnet
and makes offerings to his dragnet,
for by them he makes a good living
and his food *is* rich.

17 Will he therefore empty his fishnet
and continually kill nations without showing mercy?

Habakkuk Awaits God's Answer

2:1 I will stand at my post,
and station myself on *the* rampart.
And I will keep watch to see what he will say to me,
and what he will answer concerning my complaint.

God's Answer—I Will Use Babylon and Then It Too Will Be Judged

2 Then Yahweh answered me and said,
“Write *the* vision and make *it* plain on the tablet
so that it might be read quickly.

3 For *there is* yet a vision for the appointed time;
it will give witness to the end, and it will not lie.
If it tarries, wait for it,
for it will surely come and not delay. [[Heb 10:37](#)]

4 Look! His spirit within him is puffed up;
it is not upright.
But the righteous shall live by his faithfulness. [[Rom 1:17](#); [Gal 3:11](#); [Heb 10:38](#)]

5 How much less the defiant;
the arrogant, treacherous man?
He who broadens his throat like Sheol,
and who, like death, is not satisfied,
and who gathers to himself all the nations,
and harvested for himself all the peoples,
will not succeed.

6 Shall not all of these take up a taunt against him,
with ridicule and riddles against him, saying,
‘Woe to him who heaps up what is not his’?
For how long?
And, ‘*Woe to him* who makes himself heavy with pledges’?

7 Will not your creditors suddenly rise up
and awaken those who make you tremble?
Then you shall be as plunder for them.

8 Because you plundered many nations,
all the remaining nations will plunder you
on account of the blood of humanity
and violence *against the* land,
and against cities and all who live in them.

9 Woe to *him who* obtains profit *from* evil gain for his house,
to set his nest on high,
to be saved from the hand of misfortune!

10 You have plotted shame for your house,
cutting off many peoples
and sinning against your life.

11 For the stone will cry out from the wall,
and *the* plaster from *the* wood will answer it.

12 Woe to *him who* builds a city by bloodguilt,
and *who* founds a city by wickedness!

13 Look! *Is it* not from Yahweh of hosts

- that people labor for mere fire,
and nations exhaust themselves for mere vanity?
- 14 For the earth will be filled
with the knowledge of the glory of Yahweh,
like the waters covering the sea. [\[Isa 11:9\]](#)
- 15 Woe to *him who* gives a drink to his neighbors,
pouring out your wrath and also making *them* drunk
in order to see their nakedness!
- 16 You will be sated with shame rather than glory.
Drink also yourself, and expose yourself!
The cup of the right hand of Yahweh
will come around upon you
and disgrace upon your glory.
- 17 For *the* violence of Lebanon will cover you,
and *the* destruction of wild animals will shatter them
on account of the blood of humanity,
and *the* violence *against the* land,
against a city and all the inhabitants in it.
- 18 What value *is* an idol
when its carver has fashioned it,
a molten idol, a teacher of lies?
For *he who* fashioned his creation trusts in it,
though making mute idols!
- 19 Woe to *him who* says to the wood, 'Wake up!'
And to a lifeless stone, 'Arise!'
Can he teach?
Look, it is covered *with* gold and silver,
and there is no breath within it.
- 20 But Yahweh *is* in his holy temple.
Let all the earth be silent before him."

Habakkuk's Prayer (arranged for singing)

- 3:1 A prayer of Habakkuk the prophet, according to Shigionoth.
- 2 O Yahweh, I have heard the report of you;
O Yahweh, I stand in awe of your works.
In the midst of the years, revive it!
In the midst of the years, make *it* known!
In wrath, may you remember to show compassion.
- 3 God came from Teman;
the Holy One from Mount Paran. Selah
His splendor covers the heavens,
and his praise fills the earth.
- 4 And his brightness was like *the* light;
flashing rays *came* from his hand for him;
And there *is* the covering of his strength.
- 5 Before him went Disease,
and Pestilence went out at his feet.
- 6 He stood and measured the earth;
he looked and made the nations tremble.
Then the mountains of old were shattered;
the hills of old collapsed.
The ways of old belong to him.
- 7 Under affliction I saw the tents of Cushan;
the tent curtains of the land of Midian trembled.
- 8 Was the anger of Yahweh against the rivers?
Was your wrath against the rivers,
or your fury against the sea,
when you mounted upon your horses,

- upon your victory chariot?
- 9 You laid bare the nakedness of your bow,
swearing oaths *with the* arrows of *your* word.
You split the earth *with* rivers.
- 10 *When the* mountains saw you they writhed;
a torrent of waters swept by;
the deep gave its voice;
it raised its hands on high.
- 11 Sun *and* moon stood still in *their* place;
at the light of your arrows they moved about;
at the gleam of the flashing of your spear.
- 12 In fury you marched through *the* earth;
in anger you trampled the nations.
- 13 You went forth for the salvation of your people,
for the salvation of your anointed.
You crushed the head of the house of wickedness,
laying bare *from the* foundation to the top.
- 14 You pierced the head of his warriors with his own arrows;
they came like a whirlwind to scatter me,
their exultation like *one who* devours the afflicted in ambush.
- 15 You trampled upon the sea *with* your horses,
the churning of many waters.
- 16 I hear and my stomach shakes;
my lips quiver at the sound;
infection enters my bones;
that which *is* beneath me trembles;
I wait quietly for the day of trouble
to come upon the people attacking us.
- 17 Though the fig tree *does* not blossom,
nor there be fruit on the vines;
the yield of *the* olive tree fails,
and the cultivated fields do not yield food;
the flock is cut off from the animal pen,
and there is no cattle in the stalls,
- 18 Yet I will rejoice in Yahweh;
I will exult in the God of my salvation.
- 19 Yahweh, my Lord, *is* my strength;
he makes my feet like the deer;
he causes me to walk on my high places.
To the choirmaster with stringed instruments.

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Chronological Notes

1) Habakkuk.

- A) The reference in Habakkuk 1:6 to the “Chaldeans” (*kasdim*) is generally accepted as evidence for a date in the 7th century BC.¹ Attempts to assign a more precise date have fallen into three time periods: Manasseh’s reign (697t–643t), Josiah’s reign (641t–610t) and Jehoiakim’s reign (609t–598t).

- (1) Currently, the majority view is that Habakkuk was written during Jehoiakim’s reign (e.g., Archer, Freeman, Hailey, Harrison, Hummel, Young, Robertson, and Blue).

¹ For a good survey of arguments for later dating among non-evangelical scholars, see R. K. Harrison, *Introduction to the Old Testament*, pp. 932–36.

(2) Others (e.g., Bullock, Laetsch, Pusey, Unger) propose a date in the reign of Josiah before the finding of a copy of the law in 621. They argue that the desperate moral conditions denounced by Habakkuk could well be reflective of that period (cf. Jer 1–6) and relate Habakkuk’s prediction of the coming Chaldeans to the transitional nature of the period near the end of the Neo-Assyrian era.

(3) Still others (e.g., Keil, Patterson, Couch) defend a date in the time of Judah’s most wicked king, Manasseh.² They cite the degraded moral and spiritual level of that time (2 Kgs 21:1–16; 2 Chr 33:1–10), an era whose debauchery was so pronounced that it drew God’s declaration that He would effect a total “disaster on Jerusalem and Judah” (2 Kgs 21:12).

B) Internal evidence.

(1) God tells Habakkuk that he will be amazed at what God plans to do—he would not believe it unless God told him (1:5).

(2) God tells Habakkuk that at some point in the future He is going to use the Babylonians to judge Judah (1:6).

(3) God’s judgment will fall on Judah in Habakkuk’s “days,” that is, within his lifetime (1:5).³

(4) The condition in Judah at the time of the prophecy was: “destruction and violence confront me; conflict is present and one must endure strife. For this reason the law lacks power, and justice is never carried out. Indeed, the wicked intimidate the innocent. For this reason justice is perverted” (1:3b–4, NET).

C) External evidence.

(1) The Jewish historical treatise *Seder ‘Olam Rabbah*, written in the 2nd–3rd century AD, dates Habakkuk to the reign of Manasseh.⁴

(2) Some scholars feel that both Zephaniah and Jeremiah knew and utilized Habakkuk’s prophecy (cf. Hab 1:8 with Jer 4:13; 5:6; Hab 2:10 with Jer 51:58; Hab 2:12 with Jer 22:13–17; Hab. 2:20 with Zeph. 1:7).⁵ Since Zephaniah and Jeremiah both ministered during Josiah’s reign, Habakkuk should be dated earlier in Amon’s or Manasseh’s reign.

(3) The first prominent king of Babylon, Nabopolassar, rose to power in 626. Nineveh, the Assyrian capital, fell to the Chaldeans and the Medes in 612. Prior to this, during Manasseh’s reign, Assyria was the preeminent power in the Middle East under the rule of Ashurbanipal.

D) My personal view at this time is that an early date has the most explanatory power—that is, it can best answer all of the internal and external evidence. Thus I have chosen to place Habakkuk within the reign of Manasseh.

² Mal Couch, “Inerrancy and the Minor Prophets,” *CTJ* 03:10 (Dec 1999): 380.

³ This seems to imply that God’s judgment was not going to happen immediately but at some unspecified time in the future. If Habakkuk was 20 at the time of this prophecy (c. 650), he would have been 65 at the time of Nebuchadnezzar’s first siege of Jerusalem (605), 73 at the second siege (597) and 81 at the third and last siege (589)—thus placing Habakkuk within Manasseh’s reign does not preclude his being able to witness the fulfillment of the prophecy (contra Blue).

⁴ *Seder ‘Olam Rabbah*, 20.

⁵ C. F. Keil & F. Delitzsch, “Minor Prophets,” *Commentary on the Old Testament*, Vol. 10, pp. 387–390; Patterson, pp. 110–111.

Manasseh Repents (c. 648–645 BC)

2 Chronicles 33:11–17

11 So Yahweh brought the commanders of the army of the king of Assyria upon them, and they took Manasseh captive with hooks, and they bound him with bronze fetters and brought him to Babylon.

12 And when he was in distress he entreated Yahweh his God and greatly humbled himself before the God of his ancestors

13 and prayed to him. And God responded to him and heard his plea and let him return to Jerusalem to his kingdom. And Manasseh knew that Yahweh was God.

14 Then afterward he built an outer wall for the city of David west of the Gihon in the valley, and for the entrance into the Gate of the Fishes. And it encircled the Ophel and raised it very high. Then he placed strong commanders in all the fortified cities of Judah.

15 And he removed the foreign gods and the carved image from the house of Yahweh and all the altars which he built on the mountain of the house of Yahweh and in Jerusalem, and he threw them outside the city.

16 And he restored the altar of Yahweh and offered sacrifices of peace offerings and thank offerings upon it. And he commanded Judah to serve Yahweh, the God of Israel.

17 Nevertheless, the people offered at the high places, but only to Yahweh their God.

The Death of Manasseh (643t BC)

2 Kings 21:17–18

2 Chronicles 33:18–20

17 The remainder of the acts of Manasseh and all that he did and his sin that he committed,

are they not written on the scroll of the events of the days of the kings of Judah?

18 Then Manasseh slept with his ancestors and was buried in the garden of his palace, in the garden of Uzza. Amon his son became king in his place.

18 Now the remainder of the words of Manasseh

and his prayer to his God and the words of the seers who spoke to him in the name of Yahweh, the God of Israel,

behold, they *are* in the words of the kings of Israel.

19 And his prayer, and *how* he responded to him, all his sin and his unfaithful acts, and the places where he built the high places and set up Asherahs and idols before he humbled himself, behold, they are written in the words of the seers.

20 And Manasseh slept with his ancestors, and they buried him in his house.

And Amon his son became king in his place.

Amon, Manasseh's Son, Assumes the Throne of Judah (643t BC)

2 Kings 21:19–22

2 Chronicles 33:21–23

19 Amon was twenty-two years old when he began to reign, and he reigned two years in Jerusalem. The name of his mother *was* Meshullemeth the daughter of Haruz from Jotbah.

20 He did evil in the eyes of Yahweh as Manasseh his father had done.

21 He walked in all of the way which his father had walked, and he served the idols which his father had served and bowed down to them.

22 He abandoned Yahweh the God of his ancestors and did not walk in the way of Yahweh.

21 Amon *was* twenty-two years old when he began to reign, and he reigned two years in Jerusalem.

22 And he did what *was* evil in the eyes of Yahweh as Manasseh his father had done.

And Amon sacrificed to all the idols that Manasseh his father had made, and he served them.

23 And he did not humble himself before Yahweh, as Manasseh his father humbled himself, but Amon himself multiplied *his* guilt.

Amon is Assassinated by His Servants (641t BC)

2 Kings 21:23–26

2 Chronicles 33:24–25

23 The servants of Amon conspired against him and killed the king in his palace.

24 But the people of the land killed all who conspired against the king and made Josiah his son king in his place.

24 And his servants conspired against him and killed him in his house.

25 But the people of the land struck down all who conspired against King Amon.

And the people of the land made his son Josiah king in his place.

25 The remainder of the acts of Amon that he did, *are* they not written on the scroll of the events of the days of the kings of Judah?
 26 They buried him in his tomb in the garden of Uzza, and Josiah his son became king in place of him.

Josiah, Amon's Son, Assumes the Throne of Judah (641t BC)

2 Kings 22:1–2

2 Chronicles 34:1–2

1 Josiah was eight years old when he began to reign, and he reigned thirty-one years in Jerusalem. The name of his mother *was* Jedidah the daughter of Adaiah from Bozkath.
 2 He did right in the eyes of Yahweh, and he walked in all of the way of David his ancestor and did not turn aside to the right or to the left.

1 Josiah *was* eight years old when he became king, and he reigned thirty-one years in Jerusalem.
 2 And he did what was right in the eyes of Yahweh, and he walked in the ways of David his ancestor and did not deviate *to* the right or *to* the left.

Zephaniah's Prophecy to Judah – The Day of the Lord (c. 635–630 BC)

Zephaniah 1–3

1:1 The word of Yahweh that came to Zephaniah the son of Cushi, the son of Gedaliah, the son of Amariah, the son of Hezekiah, in the days of Josiah son of Amon, king of Judah.

Judgment on the Entire Earth

2 “I will surely destroy everything from the face of the earth”—a declaration of Yahweh.
 3 “I will destroy humanity and beast; I will destroy the birds of the sky and the fish of the sea, and the stumbling blocks with the wicked. And I will cut off humankind from the face of the earth”—a declaration of Yahweh.

Judgment on Judah and Jerusalem

4 “And I will stretch out my hand against Judah and against all the inhabitants of Jerusalem. And I will cut off from this place the remnant of Baal, and the name of idolatrous priests with the priests, and those who bow down on the rooftops to the host of heaven, and those who bow down, swearing to Yahweh but *also* swearing by Milkom, and those who turned back from following Yahweh, and who did not seek Yahweh, and did not inquire of him.”
 7 Be silent before the Lord Yahweh, for the day of Yahweh draws near, for Yahweh has provided a sacrifice and has consecrated his guests.
 8 And it shall be *that* on the day of the sacrifice of Yahweh, I will punish the officials and the sons of the king and those who dress in foreign clothing.
 9 And on that day I will punish all who leap over the threshold, who fill up the house of their master *with* violence and deceit.
 10 “And there shall be on that day”—a declaration of Yahweh—

“a loud outcry from the Fish Gate,
and a wailing from the Second District,
and a loud crashing from the hills.

- 11 The inhabitants of the Mortar shall wail,
for all the traders have perished;
all who trade with silver have been cut off.
- 12 And it shall be *that* at that time
I will search Jerusalem with lamps,
and I will punish the men
whose senses are dulled from drinking,
who say in their hearts,
‘Yahweh will not do good, nor will he do evil.’
- 13 Then their wealth shall be as plunder,
and their homes as desolation.
And they shall build their houses and not inhabit them,
and they shall plant vineyards and not drink their wine.”

Judgment at the Great Day of the Lord

- 14 The great day of Yahweh draws near;
it is near and *coming* very swiftly.
The sound of the day of Yahweh *is* bitterness;
there, a warrior cries out!
- 15 That day *will be* a day of wrath,
a day of trouble and distress,
a day of disaster and ruination,
a day of darkness and deep gloom,
a day of clouds and thick clouds, [[Joel 2:1–2](#)]
- 16 a day of trumpet and *trumpet* blast
against the fortified cities
and against the high corner towers.
- 17 And I will bring distress to all humankind,
and they shall walk about like the blind,
for they sinned against Yahweh;
their blood shall be poured out like dust
and their entrails like dung.
- 18 Moreover, their silver and their gold
will not be able to save them
on the day of the wrath of Yahweh.
And in the fire of his zeal,
the whole land shall be consumed,
for a terrifying end he shall make
for all the inhabitants of the land.
- 2:1 Gather yourselves together! Now gather together,
O nation having no shame!
- 2 Before the birth of the decree,
the day flies away like chaff;
before the fierce anger of Yahweh overtakes you;
before the day of the anger of Yahweh overtakes you.
- 3 Seek Yahweh, all you afflicted of the land
who have fulfilled his law;
seek righteousness;
seek humility.
Perhaps you will be concealed
on the day of the anger of Yahweh.

Judgment on Philistia

- 4 For Gaza will be abandoned,
and Ashkelon as a desolation.
As for Ashdod, at noon they will drive her away,

and Ekron shall be uprooted.

- 5 Woe *to you*, inhabitants of the region of the sea,
people of the Kerethites!
The word of Yahweh *is* against you,
O Canaan, land of the Philistines.
I will destroy you until there is no inhabitant.
- 6 And you, O region of the sea, shall become
pastures *and* meadows *for* shepherds
and sheep pens *for the* flocks.
- 7 And it shall become a region
for the remnant of the house of Judah;
upon them they shall graze,
and in the houses of Ashkelon
they shall lie down in the evening.
For Yahweh their God shall be mindful of them,
and he will restore their fortunes.

Judgment on Moab and Ammon

- 8 I have heard the reproaches of Moab
and the scorning of the Ammonites,
with which they have taunted my nation
and made boasts against their territory.
- 9 “Therefore, as I live”—a declaration of Yahweh of hosts,
the God of Israel—
“Moab shall be as Sodom,
and the Ammonites like Gomorrah,
a place of weeds and salt pits
and a desolation forever.
The remnant of my people shall plunder them,
and the remainder of my nation shall possess them.”
- 10 This *shall be* for them in place of their pride
because they mocked and boasted
against the people of Yahweh of hosts.
- 11 Yahweh *will be* awesome against them,
for he will destroy all the gods of the earth
and all the lands of the nations;
each in its place will bow down to him.

Judgment on Cush

- 12 You also, O Cushites,
they shall be killed by my sword.

Judgment on Assyria and Nineveh

- 13 And he will stretch out his hand against the north,
and he will destroy Assyria
and will make Nineveh a desolation,
a dry wasteland like the desert.
- 14 Herds shall lie down in her midst,
every wild animal of a nation;
even the desert owl and the screech owl
shall lodge on her capitals.
A voice shall hoot in the window;
rubble on the threshold;
for the cedar *is* laid bare.
- 15 This *is* the city of rejoicing
that lived securely;
the one saying in her heart,
“I am, and there is none besides me.”
How she has become a desolation,

a lair for wild animals!
Everyone who passes by her hisses and shakes his fist.

Jerusalem's Future—Destruction of the Rebellious

- 3:1 Woe *to you*, O rebellious and defiled one!
The oppressing city!
- 2 She listens to no voice;
she does not accept correction.
In Yahweh she does not trust;
to her God she does not draw near.
- 3 Her officials in her midst *are* roaring lions;
her judges *are* evening wolves;
they leave nothing until the morning.
- 4 Her prophets *are* arrogant men of treachery;
her priests have defiled *that which is* holy;
they do violence to *the* law.
- 5 Yahweh *is* righteous in her midst;
he does not do wickedness.
Morning by morning he renders his judgment;
at dawn he does not fail,
but an evil one knows no shame.
- 6 "I have cut off nations;
their strongholds are deserted.
I have laid waste their streets,
so that none pass through.
Their cities have been destroyed
and are without a man, without an inhabitant.
- 7 I have said, 'Surely she will fear me;
she will accept discipline.
Then her dwelling place will not be cut down,
nor all that I have brought upon her.'
Surely they rise early;
they make all their deeds corrupt.
- 8 "Therefore, wait for me"—a declaration of Yahweh—
"for the day of my rising as a witness.
For my decision *is* to gather nations,
to assemble kingdoms,
to pour out my wrath upon them, all my burning anger.
For by the fire of my anger all the land shall be consumed.

Jerusalem's Future—Deliverance of the Righteous

- 9 Because then I will make the speech of the nations pure;
that all of them might call on the name of Yahweh,
to serve him in unison.
- 10 From beyond the rivers of Cush
my worshipers and the daughter of my scattered ones
shall bring my offering.
- 11 On that day you shall not be humiliated
on account of all your deeds
by which you have rebelled against me.
For then I shall remove from your midst
those exulting in your pride,
and you shall no longer be haughty
in my holy mountain.
- 12 And I will leave in your midst
a people afflicted and poor,
and they shall take refuge
in the name of Yahweh.
- 13 The remnant of Israel

shall not do wickedness;
 they shall not speak deception,
 nor shall a deceitful tongue be found in their mouth. [[Rev 14:5](#)]
 For they shall graze and lie down,
 and none shall frighten *them*.”

Jerusalem’s Future—Millennial Joy

- 14 Shout for joy, O daughter of Zion!
 Cry aloud, O Israel!
 Rejoice and be jubilant with all your heart,
 O daughter of Jerusalem!
- 15 Yahweh has annulled your judgments;
 he has turned away your enemies.
 The king of Israel, Yahweh, *is* in your midst;
 you shall no longer fear misfortune.
- 16 On that day it shall be said to Jerusalem,
 “Fear not, O Zion;
 your hands shall not hang limp.
- 17 Yahweh your God *is* in your midst;
 a mighty warrior who saves.
 He shall rejoice over you with joy;
 he renews you in his love;
 he will exult over you with singing.
- 18 I will gather those of you grieving on account of the feast;
 they were raising against her a reproach.
- 19 Behold, at that time I will deal with all your oppressors;
 I will save the lame and gather the outcast.
 I will change them from shame
 to glory and renown throughout the whole world.
- 20 At that time I will bring you *in*;
 at the time of my gathering you *together*.
 For I will make you renowned and praised
 among all the nations of the earth
 when I restore your fortunes before your eyes,”
 says Yahweh.

Josiah Begins to Seek After God (633t BC)

2 Chronicles 34:3a

3a In the eighth year of his reign, while he *was* still a boy, he began to seek the God of David his ancestor.

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Chronological Notes

- 1) Manasseh’s repentance.
 - A) The Assyrian ruler responsible for deporting Manasseh to Babylon was Ashurbanipal (668–627). The reference to Babylon provides a helpful chronological clue since Ashurbanipal did not bring Babylon under his control until 648.¹ Thus Manasseh’s repentance can be placed c. 648–645 BC.

¹ Eugene H. Merrill, *Kingdom of Priests*, p. 435.

2) Zephaniah.²

- A) The superscription of Zephaniah specifies that the prophecy was given during the reign of Josiah (641t–610t) and there has been little debate to the contrary. Rather, discussion concerning the date and background of the book has centered chiefly on the specific period within Josiah’s reign.
- (1) The moral and spiritual conditions mentioned by Zephaniah have been taken by many to refer to Judah’s persistent apostasy and immorality despite the Josianic reform that began in earnest after the finding of the Book of the Law (2 Kgs 22:8) in 621 B.C. (e.g., Fausset, Feinberg, Hannah, Keil, Reid, and Walker).
 - (2) Others, however, believe that such matters as Zephaniah denounces could only be true of the earlier portion of Josiah’s reign, either when the boy king was yet unable to deal with the longstanding effects of the wickedness of Judah’s two previous kings, Manasseh and Amon, or when his reformation had only recently got underway (e.g., Bewer, Bullock, Craigie, Eiselen, Eissfeldt, Freeman, Hailey, Harrison, Hummel, Kapelrud, Laetsch, Larue, Pusey, Robinson, Smith, and von Orelli).³
- B) With capable scholars on both sides of the question, one is tempted to conclude with D. A. Schneider that “the evidence is insufficient to decide this debate.”⁴ In examining the internal data, however, several items seem to favor the earlier period in Josiah’s reign: (1) religious practices in Judah were still plagued with Canaanite syncretistic rites such as characterized the era of Manasseh (1:4–5, 9); (2) many failed to worship Yahweh at all (1:6); (3) royalty were enamored with wearing the clothing of foreign merchants (1:8) who had extensive business enterprises in Jerusalem (1:10–11); and (4) Judahite society was beset by socio-economic ills (1:12–13, 18) and political and religious corruption (3:1–4, 7, 11). Moreover, several of the specific sins (e.g., 1:4–5, 9; 3:4) would likely have been corrected in Josiah’s reforms. “Accordingly, I am inclined to side with those who prefer a date before 621 bc.”⁵
- C) But how much before? Some have suggested that the political situation brought about by a Scythian raid (c. 630 bc) occasioned both Zephaniah’s response to God’s call and his urgent message concerning God’s impending judgment of the world. However, because the evidence of such an invasion is now considered to be tenuous at best, “the Scythian hypothesis has now been almost universally abandoned.”⁶ Thus the search for a precise date for Zephaniah cannot be pressed too far. Nevertheless, when one considers that Josiah was only eight years old when he ascended the throne in 641t and was dependent upon royal officials of questionable integrity (cf. 3:3), the cause for Zephaniah’s alarm is apparent. Further, that Josiah’s reforms were not instituted until the twelfth year of his reign (629t), a few years after his initial spiritual awakening (2 Chr 34:3), suggests that Zephaniah’s prophetic activities may have had a salutary effect in the reformation of that era. Thus a date of 635–630 bc is not unlikely.

² Richard D. Patterson, *Nahum, Habakkuk, Zephaniah: An Exegetical Commentary*, pp. 249–250. Note that Patterson favors a date for Habakkuk of sometime in Manasseh’s reign.

³ A good discussion of the setting of the book is given by F. C. Fensham, “Book of Zephaniah,” *IDBSup*, pp. 983–84. Fensham also favors a date for Zephaniah early in Josiah’s reign.

⁴ D. A. Schneider, “Book of Zephaniah,” *ISBE* 4:1189.

⁵ Patterson, 250.

⁶ Fensham, “Zephaniah,” p. 983. For a defense of the Scythian hypothesis, see CAH 3:295 where the somewhat fantastic elements of Herodotus’s account are duly recognized as well as the probability that the supposed Scythian sack of Ashdod was as much an Egyptian enterprise as Scythian. See also R. K. Harrison, *Introduction to the Old Testament* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1971), p. 940.

Jeremiah Begins His Prophetic Ministry to Judah (629t BC)

Jeremiah 1

Superscription

- 1 The words of Jeremiah, the son of Hilkiah, among the priests who *were* in Anathoth, in the land of Benjamin,
 2 to whom the word of Yahweh came in the days of Josiah the son of Amon, the king of Judah, in the thirteenth year [*the 12th year in 2 Chr 34:3b*] of his reign.
 3 It came also in the days of Jehoiakim, the son of Josiah, the king of Judah, until the end of the eleventh year of Zedekiah, the son of Josiah, the king of Judah, until the exile of Jerusalem in the fifth month.

Jeremiah's Call and Commission

- 4 And the word of Yahweh came to me, saying,
- 5 “Before I formed you in the womb I knew you,
 and before you came out from *the* womb I consecrated you;
 I appointed you *as* a prophet to the nations.”
- 6 Then I said, “Ah, Lord Yahweh! Look, I do not know *how* to speak, for I *am* a youth.”
 7 But Yahweh said to me, “You must not say, ‘I *am* a youth,’ for to whomever I send you, you will go, and whatever I command you, you will speak.
 8 Do not be afraid of them, for I *am* with you to deliver you,” declares Yahweh.
 9 Then Yahweh stretched out his hand and he touched my mouth, and Yahweh said to me,
- “Look, I have put my words in your mouth.
- 10 See, I appoint you this day over the nations
 and over the kingdoms,
 to pluck up and to pull down,
 and to destroy and to tear down,
 to build and to plant.”

Vision of the Branch of an Almond Tree

- 11 And the word of Yahweh came to me, saying, “What *are* you seeing, Jeremiah?” And I said, “I *am* seeing a branch of an almond tree.”
 12 Then Yahweh said to me, “You did well to see, for I *am* watching over my word to perform it.”

Vision of a Boiling Pot

- 13 And the word of Yahweh came to me a second *time*, saying, “What *are* you seeing?” And I said, “I *am* seeing a boiling pot, and its face *is* from *the* face of *the* north.”
 14 Then Yahweh said to me, “From *the* north disaster will be unleashed on all the inhabitants of the land.
 15 For, look, I *am* calling to all *the* clans of *the* kingdoms of *the* north,” declares Yahweh, “and they will come and set each one his throne *at* the entrance of the gates of Jerusalem, and against all its surrounding walls, and against all the cities of Judah.
 16 And I will pass my judgments on them because of all their wickedness *in* that they have forsaken me, and they made sacrifices to other gods, and they bowed in worship to the works of their hands.

A Divine Challenge and Promise

- 17 But you, you must gird your loins, and stand, and speak to them all that I command you. Do not be afraid of them, or I will shatter you before them.
 18 Now look, I have made you today as a fortified city and as an iron pillar and a bronze wall against all the land, against the kings of Judah, against its princes, against its priests, and against the people of the land.
 19 And they will fight against you but they will not prevail against you, for I *am* with you,” declares Yahweh, “to deliver you.”

Jeremiah's Prophecy to Judah—God's Case Against Israel (c. 629t BC)

Jeremiah 2

God's Fond Memories of Israel's Youth

- 1 And the word of Yahweh came to me, saying,
 2 “Go and proclaim in the ears of Jerusalem, saying, ‘Thus says Yahweh,

 “I remember *concerning* you the loyal love of your childhood,

the love of your betrothal-time,
your going after me in the desert,
in *the* land not sown.

- 3 Israel *was* holy to Yahweh,
the first fruit of his produce.
All *those who* ate it were held guilty;
disaster came to them,” declares Yahweh.”

Israel's Current Apostasy

4 Hear the word of Yahweh, *O* house of Jacob, and all the clans of the house of Israel.

5 Thus says Yahweh:

“What injustice did your ancestors find in me
that they were far from me,
and they went after the vanity,
and they became vain?

- 6 And they did not say,
‘Where *is* Yahweh,
the one who brought us up from the land of Egypt,
the one who led us in the desert,
in a land of desert plains and gorges,
in a land of dryness and deep darkness,
in a land that no one passes through,
and no human lives there?’
- 7 And I brought you to the land of the orchard,
to eat its fruit, and its good things.
But you entered and defiled my land,
and my inheritance you made a detestable thing.
- 8 The priests did not say, ‘Where *is* Yahweh?’
and those who handle the law did not know me,
and the shepherds have rebelled against me,
and the prophets prophesied by Baal,
and they went after *things which* do not profit.
- 9 Therefore I again bring a lawsuit against you,” declares Yahweh,
“and with your children I bring a lawsuit.
- 10 For go over *to* the coasts of Cyprus and look,
and send *to* Kedar and consider very closely,
and see if there has been *a thing* like this:
- 11 Has a nation exchanged gods? And they *are* not gods!
But my people have exchanged their glory for that which does not profit.
- 12 Be appalled, *O* heavens, at this, and shudder;
be utterly desolate,” declares Yahweh.
- 13 “For my people have committed two evils:
they have forsaken me, *the* source of living water,
to hew out for themselves cisterns, cracked cisterns that can hold no water.

The Consequences of Israel's Apostasy

- 14 *Is* Israel a slave? Or a slave born in a house?
Why has he become plunder?
- 15 *The* young lions have roared against him,
they have raised their voices.
And they have made his land as horror;
his cities are destroyed, without an inhabitant.
- 16 Moreover, people of Memphis and Tahpanhes
will shave your skull.
- 17 Did you not do this to yourself,
by forsaking Yahweh, your God,
at the time of your leading in the way?

- 18 And now why do you go the way of Egypt
to drink the waters of the Shihor?
And why do you go the way of Assyria
to drink the waters of the Euphrates?
- 19 Your wickedness will chastise you,
and your apostasies will reprove you.
Therefore know and see that *it is* evil and bitter,
your forsaking of Yahweh, your God,
and fear of me *is* not in you,”
declares the Lord, Yahweh of hosts.

The Strange Fascination With and Futility of Idolatry

- 20 “For from long ago you have broken your yoke,
you tore to pieces your bonds.
And you said, ‘I will not serve!’
But on every high hill and under every leafy tree
you *were* lying down *as* a prostitute.
- 21 Yet I planted you *as* a choice vine,
all of it a seed of trustworthiness.
How then have you altered before me
into something that is degenerate, the foreign vine?
- 22 For if you wash with natron,
and you use much soap,
your guilt *is* sticking as a stain before me,”
declares the Lord Yahweh.
- 23 “How can you say, ‘I have not defiled myself,
I have not gone after the Baals?’
Look at your way in the valley,
know what you have done.
You are a young she-camel,
interweaving her ways.
- 24 A wild ass accustomed to *the* desert,
in the desire of her soul.
She gasps *for* wind *in* her rutting time.
Who can quell her *lust*?
All *those who* seek her will not grow weary,
in her month they will find her.
- 25 Restrain your foot from *being* barefoot,
and your throat from thirst.
But you said, ‘*It is* hopeless.
No! For I have loved strangers,
and after them I will go.’
- 26 As *the* shame of a thief when he is caught in the act,
so the house of Israel will be ashamed.
They, their kings, their officials,
and their priests, and their prophets.
- 27 *Those who* say to the tree, ‘*You are* my father,’
and to the stone, ‘*You gave birth to me.*’
For they have turned *their* backs to me, and not *their* faces.
But in the time of their trouble they say, ‘Arise and save us.’
- 28 But where *are* your gods that you made for yourself?
Let them arise if they can save you in the time of your trouble.
For *according to* the number of your towns
are your gods, O Judah.

Israel Deserves Judgment

- 29 Why do you complain to me?
All of you have rebelled against me,” declares Yahweh.

- 30 “For in vain I have struck your children.
They accepted no discipline.
Your sword devoured your prophets,
like a ravaging lion.
- 31 O generation, you see the word of Yahweh.
Have I been a desert to Israel? Or a land of great darkness?
Why do my people say, ‘We roam about freely,
we will not come again to you’?
- 32 Can a young woman forget her ornaments? Or a bride her sashes?
Yet my people have forgotten me days without number.
- 33 How well you do *on* your way to seek love!
Therefore even *to* the wicked *woman* you can teach your ways.
- 34 Also on your skirts is found
the blood of *the* life of *the* innocent, *the* poor.
You did not find them in the act of breaking into a house.
But in spite of all these *things*,
- 35 yet you say, ‘But I am innocent,
surely his anger has turned away from me.’
Look, I *am* entering into judgment with you
because of your saying, ‘I have not sinned.’
- 36 How you go about so much changing your way!
Also by Egypt you will be put to shame,
just as you were put to shame by Assyria.
- 37 Also from there you will come out
with your hands on your head,
for Yahweh has rejected those in whom you trust,
and you will not prosper through them.

Jeremiah’s Prophecy to Judah—An Appeal to Return to God (c. 629t BC)

Jeremiah 3:1–4:4

A Faithless Wife

- 3:1 A saying: ‘Look, *if* a man divorces his wife,
and she goes from him and she becomes another man’s wife,
will he return to her again?’
Will not that land be greatly defiled? [cf. [Deut 24:1–4](#)]
And you have prostituted *yourself with* many lovers,
would you now return to me?” declares Yahweh.
- 2 “Lift up your eyes at *the* barren heights,
and see where you have not been ravished.
Beside the roads you sat for them like an Arab in the desert,
and you have defiled *the* land
with your fornication
and with your wickedness.
- 3 Therefore rain showers have been withheld,
and the spring rain has not come.
Yet you have *the* forehead of a woman prostitute,
you refuse to be ashamed.
- 4 Have you not just now called to me,
‘My father, you *are* the close friend of my youth?’
- 5 Will he be angry forever?
Will he maintain *it* always’?
Look, you have spoken,
but you have done all the evil that you could.”

Judah More Guilty Than Israel

6 Then Yahweh said to me in the days of Josiah, the king, “Have you seen what apostate Israel has done? She has gone on every high hill and under every leafy tree and she has prostituted *herself* there.

7 And I thought, ‘After her doing all these *things* to me she will return,’ but she did not return. And her treacherous sister Judah saw *it*.

8 And I saw that for this very reason, that on account of apostate Israel committing adultery I divorced her and gave the letter of divorce to her. Yet her treacherous sister Judah was not afraid and she went and prostituted *herself* also.

9 And it was because of the frivolity of her fornication that she defiled the land and committed adultery with the stone and with the tree.

10 Yet even in all this her treacherous sister Judah did not return to me with all her heart, but only in pretense,” declares Yahweh.

11 Then Yahweh said to me, “Apostate Israel has proved herself more upright than treacherous Judah.

A Call for Repentance

12 Go, and proclaim these words toward the north, and say,

‘Return, apostate Israel,’ declares Yahweh.

‘I will not cause my anger to fall on you.

For I *am* loyal,’ declares Yahweh.

‘I will not be angry forever.

13 Only acknowledge your guilt,
that against Yahweh your God you have rebelled,
and have scattered your ways to the strangers under every leafy tree,
and you have not obeyed my voice,’ declares Yahweh.”

14a “Return, apostate children,” declares Yahweh. “For I am your master,

Millennial Blessings

14b and I will take you one from a city and two from a clan, and I will bring you *to* Zion.

15 Then I will give you shepherds after my own heart and they will feed you knowledge and insight.

16 And it will be when you have multiplied and become fruitful in the land in those days,” declares Yahweh, “they will no longer say, ‘The ark of the covenant of Yahweh.’ And it will not come to mind, nor will they remember it, nor will they miss *it*, nor will it be made again.

17 At that time they will call Jerusalem ‘The Throne of Yahweh,’ and all the nations will be gathered to it, to the name of Yahweh, to Jerusalem, and they will no longer go after the stubbornness of their evil heart.

18 In those days the house of Judah will walk along with the house of Israel and they will come together from *the* land of *the* north to the land that I gave as an inheritance *to* your ancestors.

God Describes the True Repentance He Desires

19 Then I thought, ‘How I would set you among the children,
and I would give you a land of desire,
an inheritance of *the* glory of *the* hosts of nations.’
And I thought, ‘You would call me, “My father,”
and you would not turn back from behind me.’

20 However, as a wife departs treacherously from her lover,
so you have dealt treacherously with me,
O house of Israel,” declares Yahweh.

21 “A voice *is* heard on *the* barren heights,
the weeping of the pleas for mercy of the children of Israel,
because they have perverted their way,
they have forgotten Yahweh their God.

22 Return, *O* apostate children,
I will heal your backsliding.
‘Look, we come to you,
for you are Yahweh our God.

23 Surely, an illusion *comes* from *the* hills,
the turmoil *on* the mountains.
Surely, in Yahweh our God
is the salvation of Israel.

24 But the shameful thing has devoured
the labor of our ancestors from our youth,
their flocks, and their cattle,

- their sons and their daughters.
- 25 Let us lie down in our shame,
and let our disgrace cover us.
For against Yahweh our God we have sinned,
we and our ancestors,
from our youth and until this day,
and we have not obeyed the voice of Yahweh our God.’
- 4:1 If you return, *O Israel*,” declares Yahweh,
“you return to me.
And if you remove your abominations from my presence,
and you do not wander,
2 and you swear, ‘As Yahweh lives,’
in truth, in justice, and in righteousness,
then nations will be blessed by him,
and in him they will boast.”
- 3 For thus says Yahweh
to the men of Judah and to Jerusalem,
“Break up for yourselves prepared virgin soil,
and you must not sow among thornbushes.
- 4 Circumcise yourselves to Yahweh,
and remove the foreskins of your hearts,
men of Judah and inhabitants of Jerusalem,
lest my wrath goes forth like the fire and burns,
and there is no *one who* extinguishes it,
because of the evil of your deeds.”

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Chronological Notes

1) Jeremiah.

A) Josiah’s 13th Year.

- (1) In Jeremiah 25:3, the prophet counted 23 years from the 13th year of Josiah to the 4th year of Jehoiakim, 606t. The cardinal number 23 is given without any preposition or modifier and must be taken in an absolute (accession) sense; this puts the 13th year of Josiah in 606t + 23 = 629t. By Jeremiah’s non-accession reckoning, Josiah’s beginning year can be calculated as 629t + 12 (acc.) = 641t. This date for the accession of Josiah provides the means of determining if the 31 years for his reign given in 2 Kings 22:1 is an accession or non-accession figure. The Babylonian Chronicles allow the date of his death to be calculated as the fourth month of 609 BC, which was in the year 610t. This was 31 years after the beginning of Josiah’s reign in 641t, so the reign length as given in 2 Kings 22:1 is by accession reckoning, showing, incidentally, that somewhere between 2 Kings 22:1 and 24:1 the counting system changed from accession to non-accession (*Important: Josiah’s 13th year in Jer 1:2 = Josiah’s 12th year in 2 Chr 34:3).¹

B) Chronological Arrangement of Jeremiah.

- (1) Jeremiah’s ministry spanned the reigns of Josiah, Jehoahaz, Jehoiakim, Jehoiachin, Zedekiah and the governorship of Gedaliah (cf. Jer 1:1–3; 40:7). The book of Jeremiah contains many chronological references which date the various events and prophecies:
- Jeremiah 1:1–3 — the 13th year of Josiah’s reign.
 - Jeremiah 3:6 — during Josiah’s reign.
 - Jeremiah 21:1 — during Nebuchadnezzar’s siege of Jerusalem in Zedekiah’s reign.
 - Jeremiah 22:10–13 — just after Josiah’s death, Jehoahaz’s (Shallum’s) exile and Jehoiakim’s accession.

¹ Rodger C. Young, “When Did Jerusalem Fall?” *JETS* 47.1 (Mar 2004): 35.

- Jeremiah 24:1 — after Nebuchadnezzar deported Jehoiachin to Babylon.
- Jeremiah 25:1 — the 4th year of Jehoiakim's reign.
- Jeremiah 25:3 — marks 23 years of ministry between Josiah's 13th year and Jehoiakim's 4th year.
- Jeremiah 26:1 — the beginning of Jehoiakim's reign.
- Jeremiah 27:1 — early in Zedekiah's reign.
- Jeremiah 28:1 — the 5th month of the 4th year of Zedekiah's reign.
- Jeremiah 29:1–2 — after Nebuchadnezzar deported Jehoiachin to Babylon.
- Jeremiah 32:1 — the 10th year of Zedekiah's reign (Nebuchadnezzar's 18th year).
- Jeremiah 32:2, 8 — when Jeremiah was confined in the courtyard of the guardhouse during Zedekiah's reign.
- Jeremiah 33:1 — when Jeremiah was confined in the courtyard of the guardhouse during Zedekiah's reign.
- Jeremiah 34:1–10 — during Nebuchadnezzar's siege of Jerusalem during Zedekiah's reign.
- Jeremiah 36:1–8 — the 4th year of Jehoiakim's reign.
- Jeremiah 36:9–32 — the 9th month of the 5th year of Jehoiakim's reign
- Jeremiah 37:1–5 — the brief respite in Nebuchadnezzar's siege of Jerusalem during Zedekiah's reign.
- Jeremiah 37:21 — Jeremiah is committed to the courtyard of the guardhouse during Zedekiah's reign.
- Jeremiah 39:1 — the 10th month of the 9th year of Zedekiah's reign.
- Jeremiah 39:15 — when Jeremiah was confined in the courtyard of the guardhouse during Zedekiah's reign.
- Jeremiah 41:1 — the 7th month of 587.
- Jeremiah 45:1 — the 4th year of Jehoiakim's reign.
- Jeremiah 46:1 — the 4th year of Jehoiakim's reign.
- Jeremiah 47:1 — before Pharaoh attacked Gaza.
- Jeremiah 49:34 — early in the reign of Zedekiah.
- Jeremiah 51:59 — the 4th year of Zedekiah's reign.

- (2) The chronological data above makes it clear that the canonical order of Jeremiah does not follow the historical order. This has given rise to various attempts to organize Jeremiah chronologically.² For the most part, I will be following the arrangement of J. Barton Payne.

² Charles H. Dyer, "Jeremiah," *Bible Knowledge Commentary*, chart on p. 1126; J. Barton Payne, "The Arrangement of Jeremiah's Prophecies," *JETS* 7.4 (Fall 1964), chart on p. 125; Charles L. Feinberg, "Jeremiah," *EBC*, Vol. 6, 358.

Jeremiah's Prophecy to Judah—Invasion from the North (c. 629t BC)

Jeremiah 4:5–31

The Alarm—Invasion is Threatened

- 5 Declare in Judah and proclaim in Jerusalem and say,
 “Blow a horn through the land,
 call with a loud voice and say,
 ‘Be gathered and let us go into the fortified cities.’
- 6 Lift up a signal toward Zion,
 bring yourselves to safety; you must not remain standing,
 for I *am* bringing evil from *the* north,
 and a great destruction.
- 7 A lion has gone up from his thicket,
 and a destroyer of nations has set out.
 He has gone out from his place to make your land as a horror,
 your cities will go to ruin without inhabitant.
- 8 Because of this gird yourselves *with* sackcloth, lament and wail,
 for the burning anger of Yahweh has not turned back from us.
- 9 And then on that day,” declares Yahweh,
 “the heart of the king and the heart of the officials will be destroyed,
 and the priests will be appalled,
 and the prophets will be astonished.”

10 Then I said, “Ah, Lord Yahweh, surely you have utterly deceived this people and Jerusalem, saying, ‘It will be peace for you,’ while the sword reaches up to the throat.”

The Scorching Hot Wind of Judgment

- 11 At that time it will be said to this people and to Jerusalem,
 “A hot wind from the barren heights in the desert,
 in the direction of the daughter of my people,
 not to winnow and not to cleanse,
 a wind too strong for these will come for me,
 now also I speak judgments against them.”
- 12 Look, he comes up like the clouds,
 and his chariots *are* like the whirlwind,
 his horses are swifter than eagles,
 woe to us, for we are devastated.
- 13 Cleanse your heart from wickedness, O Jerusalem,
 so that you may be saved.
 How long will your thoughts of mischief
 dwell in your inner part?
- 14 For a voice *is* declaring from Dan,
 and *is* proclaiming disaster from the mountain of Ephraim.
- 15 “Report to the nations, ‘Here they are!’
 Proclaim against Jerusalem,
 ‘Besiegers *are* coming from a distant land,
 and they raise their voice against the cities of Judah.’
- 16 Like watchers of a field they were against her from all around,
 because she has rebelled against me,” declares Yahweh.
- 17 “You obtained this for yourself
because of your way and your deeds.
 This *is* your doom, for *it is* bitter,
 yes, it has reached up to your heart.”

Jeremiah's Anguished Cry

- 19 My bowels, my bowels! I writhe!
 The walls of my heart!
 My heart is restless within me, I cannot keep silent,
 for I hear *in* my inner self the sound of a horn, *the* alarm of war.

- 20 Destruction on destruction is proclaimed,
for all of the land is devastated.
Suddenly my tents are devastated,
my tent curtains in a moment.
- 21 How long must I see *the* banner,
and hear *the* sound of a horn?
- 22 “For my people *are* foolish,
they have not known me.
They *are* foolish children,
and they do not have insight.
They *are* skillful at doing evil,
and they do not know *how* to do good.”

A Vision and an Oracle about the Coming Destruction

- 23 I looked at the earth, and behold, it was wasteland and emptiness,
and to the heavens, and *they were* without their light.
- 24 I looked at the mountains, and behold, they were quaking,
and all of the hills were jolted to and fro.
- 25 I looked and behold, there was no person,
and all of the birds of the sky had fled.
- 26 I looked and behold, the fruitful land *was* a desert,
and all of its cities were ruined before Yahweh,
before the face of his burning anger.
- 27 For thus says Yahweh, “All of the land will be a desolation,
yet I will not make a complete desolation.
- 28 Because of this the earth will mourn,
and the heavens above will become dark.
Because I have spoken, I have planned,
and I have not relented, and I will not turn back from it.”

The Death Agony of Zion

- 29 From the sound of a horseman and an archer every town flees,
they enter in the thickets and among the rocks they climb.
Every town *is* forsaken,
and there is no person *who* lives in them.
- 30 And you, *O* devastated one, what *do* you do,
that you put on crimson,
that you adorn yourself *with* ornaments of gold,
that you make your eyes look bigger with the eye make-up?
In vain you beautify yourself.
Your lovers reject you;
they seek your life.
- 31 For I heard a voice like an ill woman,
anxiety like *a woman who* bears her first child,
the voice of the daughter of Zion.
She is gasping for breath,
she is spreading out her hands:
“Woe is me, for I am becoming tired before killers.”

Jeremiah's Prophecy to Judah—Total Sinfulness of Judah (c. 629t BC)

Jeremiah 5

Jeremiah's Vain Search for a Righteous Person

- 1 “Roam about through the streets of Jerusalem,
and look please, and take note,
and search at its public squares,
if you can find a person *who* does justice,
who seeks honesty,

so that I may forgive it.

- 2 And though they say, 'As Yahweh lives,'
therefore they swear falsely."
- 3 O Yahweh, do not your eyes *look* for honesty?
You have struck them, but they felt no pain,
you have destroyed them, they refused to take discipline.
They have hardened their faces more than rock,
they have refused to turn back.
- 4 Then I said, "*They are* just simple people,
they are foolish,
for they know not the way of Yahweh,
the law of their God.
- 5 Let me go to the great,
and let me speak with them,
for they know the way of Yahweh,
the law of their God."
However, they together have broken *the* yoke,
they have torn to pieces *the* bonds.
- 6 Therefore a lion from *the* forest will kill them,
A wolf *from the* desert plains will devastate them.
A leopard *is* watching their cities,
everyone *who* goes out from there will be torn,
because their transgressions are many,
their apostasies are numerous.

God's Justification for Judah's Punishment

- 7 "How can I forgive you?
Your children have forsaken me,
and they have sworn by *those who are* not gods.
But I fed them to the full,
and they committed adultery,
and flocked *to* the house of a prostitute.
- 8 They were well-fed lusty horses,
they neighed each to the wife of his neighbor.
- 9 Because of these *things* shall I not punish?" declares Yahweh,
"and on a nation *who is* like this, shall I not take revenge?
- 10 Go up through her vineyards and destroy,
but you must not make complete destruction.
Remove her branches,
for they *are* not to Yahweh.
- 11 For the house of Israel and the house of Judah
have dealt utterly treacherously with me," declares Yahweh.
- 12 "They have denied Yahweh, and have said,
'Not he, for evil will not come on us,
we will see neither sword nor famine.
- 13 And the prophets are like wind,
and the word *is* not in them.'
Thus it will be done to them."

The Coming of a Distant Nation against Judah

- 14 Therefore thus says Yahweh, the God of hosts,
"Because you have spoken this word,
look, I *am* making my words in your mouth like a fire,
and this people wood, and it will devour them.
- 15 Look, I *am* about to bring on you a nation from afar,
O house of Israel," declares Yahweh.
"It *is* an enduring nation, it *is* an ancient nation.
A nation whose language you do not know,

and you cannot understand what they speak.

- 16 Their quiver *is* like an open tomb,
all of them *are* warriors.
- 17 And they will eat your harvest and your food,
they will eat your sons and your daughters,
they will eat your flock and your herd,
they will eat your vine and your fig tree,
they will smash with the sword your fortified cities,
in which you trust.

18 “But even in those days,” declares Yahweh, “I will not make you a complete destruction.

19 And then, when you *people* say, ‘Why has Yahweh our God done all of these *things* to us?’ Then you will say to them, ‘As you have forsaken me and have served gods of a foreign land in your land, so will you serve strangers in a land that does not belong to you.’

Warning to a Foolish and Rebellious People

- 20 “Declare this in the house of Jacob,
and proclaim it in Judah, saying,
- 21 ‘Hear this please, *O* foolish and senseless people,
who have eyes but do not see,
who have ears but do not hear.’ [\[Mark 8:18\]](#)
- 22 Do you not revere me?” declares Yahweh,
“Do you not tremble before me?
For I have placed *the* sand *as* a boundary for the sea,
as an everlasting limit, and it cannot pass over it,
and they rise and fall loudly, but they cannot prevail,
and its waves roar, but they cannot pass over it.
- 23 But for this people is a stubborn and rebellious heart,
they have turned aside and have gone *away*.
- 24 And they do not say in their hearts,
‘Let us fear please Yahweh our God,
the *one who* gives *the* autumn rain and *the* spring rain in its season,
the set times of the harvest he keeps for us.’
- 25 Your iniquities have disturbed these,
and your sins have kept away the good from you.
- 26 For wicked people are found among my people,
they lie in wait like the hiding of fowlers,
they set up a trap,
they catch humans.
- 27 Like a cage full of birds,
so their houses *are* full of fraud.
Therefore they have become great,
and they have become rich.
- 28 They have grown fat,
they have grown sleek,
also, their evil deeds have no limit.
They do not judge *with* justice,
the legal cause of *the* orphan,
or allow it to succeed,
and *the* legal case of *the* poor,
they do not defend.
- 29 Because of these *things* shall I not punish?” declares Yahweh,
“and on a nation who *is* like this, shall I not take revenge?
- 30 A horrific event and something horrible has happened in the land.
- 31 The prophets prophesy falsely,
and the priests rule by their own authority,
and my people love *it* so much.
But what will you do when the end comes?

Jeremiah's Prophecy to Judah—The Coming Siege and Fall of Jerusalem (c. 629t BC)

Jeremiah 6

An Appeal to Flee the Coming Siege

- 1 Flee for safety, *O* children of Benjamin,
from the midst of Jerusalem.
And in Tekoa blow a horn,
and on Beth-haccherem lift up a signal,
for evil looks down from *the* north,
and a great destruction.
- 2 The lovely and the delicate,
the daughter of Jerusalem, I will destroy.
- 3 Shepherds and their flocks will come against her,
they will pitch *their* tents against her all around,
they will pasture, each his portion.
- 4 Sanctify war against her.
Arise, and let us attack at noon.
Woe to us, for the day turns,
for *the* shadows of evening are lengthened.
- 5 Arise, and let us attack by night,
and let us destroy her citadel fortresses.”
- 6 For thus says Yahweh of hosts,
“Cut down trees and heap up a siege ramp against Jerusalem.
This *is* the city that must be punished,
its oppression *is* in its midst.
- 7 As a water well keeps its water cool,
so she keeps cool her wickedness.
Violence and destruction are heard within her,
sickness and wounds *are* continually before me.
- 8 Be warned, *O* Jerusalem,
lest I turn away from you in disgust,
lest I make you a desolation,
a land that is not inhabited.”

Punishment of a Shameless People

- 9 Thus says Yahweh of hosts:
“They will thoroughly glean the remnant of Israel as a vine,
turn back your hand over *the* branches like a grape-gatherer.
- 10 To whom shall I speak and admonish,
that they may hear?
Look, their ears *are* closed,
and they are not able to listen attentively.
Look, the word of Yahweh is to them an object of scorn,
they do not delight in it.
- 11 But I am full with the wrath of Yahweh,
I struggle to hold *it* in.
Pour *it* out on *the* children in the street,
and on the assemblies of young men at the same time.
For even husband with wife will get trapped,
the old with *him who is* full of days.
- 12 And their houses will be turned over to others,
their fields and *their* wives together.
For I will stretch out my hand
against the inhabitants of the land,” declares Yahweh.
- 13 “For from the smallest of them to the greatest of them,
everyone makes profit for unlawful gain.
And from the prophet to the priest,
everyone practices deceit.
- 14 And they have treated the wound of my people lightly,

saying, 'Peace, peace,' but there is no peace.

- 15 Have they acted ashamed, for they have committed a detestable thing?
Not at all, nor were they ashamed; they did not know to feel humiliated.
Therefore they will fall among *those who* fall at the time I punish them,
they will stumble," says Yahweh.

Refusal to Heed God's Warnings

- 16 Thus says Yahweh: "Stand at *the* roads and look,
and ask for *the* ancient paths, where the way of the good *is*,
and walk in it, and find rest for your inner selves.
But they said, 'We will not walk *in it*.'
17 And I raised up watchmen over you:
'Listen attentively to *the* sound of a horn.'
But they said, 'We will not listen attentively.'
18 Therefore hear, O nations, and know, O community,
what will happen to them.
19 Hear, O earth,
look, I *am* about to bring disaster to this people,
the fruit of their plans,
because they have not listened attentively to my words,
and my teaching, they have rejected it also.
20 What *is* this to me?
Frankincense comes from Sheba,
and the precious spice reed from a distant land.
Your burnt offerings *are* not acceptable,
your sacrifices are not pleasing to me."

The Terrors of the Approaching Enemy

- 21 Therefore thus says Yahweh:
"Look, I *am* about to put before this people stumbling blocks,
and they will stumble against them,
fathers and children together,
neighbor and his friend will perish."
22 Thus says Yahweh:
"Look, a people *is* coming from *the* land of *the* north,
a great nation is woken up from *the* farthest part of *the* earth.
23 *The* bow and *the* short sword they grasp *are* cruel,
and they show no mercy.
Their sound roars like the sea, and on horses they ride,
drawn up like a man for battle against you, O daughter of Zion."
24 We have heard news of it,
our hands grow slack,
anxiety has grasped us,
pain as a *woman who* gives birth.
25 You must not go out *into* the field,
and you must not walk on the road,
for the enemy has a sword,
terror *is* all around.
26 O daughter of my people,
gird yourself *with* sackcloth,
and roll about in the ashes in mourning,
a mourning ceremony *as for* an only child.
Make for yourself wailing of bitterness,
for suddenly the destroyer will come upon us.

God Commissions Jeremiah to Test His People

- 27 "I have made you an assayer among my people, a fortification,
so that you may know and put to the test their ways.

- 28 All of them *are* stubborn rebels,
going about *talking* slander.
They are bronze and iron,
they *are* all behaving corruptly.
- 29 *The* bellows are burned up,
lead is consumed by fire.
In vain he keeps on refining,
but *the* wicked are not torn apart.
- 30 They are called rejected silver,
For Yahweh has rejected them.”

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Jeremiah's Prophecy to Judah—The Temple Sermon (c. 629t BC)

Jeremiah 7:1–8:3

The Temple Sermon

7:1 The word that came to Jeremiah from Yahweh, saying,

2 “Stand in the gate of the house of Yahweh and proclaim there this word, and say, ‘Hear the word of Yahweh, all of Judah, *those who* enter through these gates to bow in worship to Yahweh.

3 Thus says Yahweh of hosts, the God of Israel, “Make your ways and your deeds good and let me dwell with you in this place.

4 Do not trust in the deceitful words, saying, ‘The temple of Yahweh, the temple of Yahweh, they *are* the temple of Yahweh.’

5 For if you truly make your ways and your deeds good, if you truly do justice between a man and his neighbor,

6 you do not oppress *the* alien, *the* orphan, and *the* widow, you do not shed innocent blood in this place, and you do not go after other gods to your harm,

7 then I will let you dwell in this place, in the land that I gave to your ancestors forever and ever.

8 Look, you *are* relying for yourselves on deceitful words without benefiting.

9 Will you steal? Will you murder? And will you commit adultery? And will you swear falsely? And will you make a smoke offering to the Baal? And will you go after other gods whom you have not known?

10 And then you come and you stand before me in this house, which is called by my name, and you say, ‘we are safe to go on doing all of these detestable things.’

11 Has this house, which is called by my name, become a cave of robbers in your eyes? Look, I, even I, have seen *it*,” declares Yahweh. [[Matt 21:13](#); [Mark 11:17](#); [Luke 19:46](#)]

12 “For go now to my place that *was* in Shiloh, where I caused my name to dwell in the beginning, and see what I did to it because of the wickedness of my people Israel.

13 And now, because of your doing all these things,” declares Yahweh, “and I have spoken to you over and over again, and you have not listened, and I called you, and you have not answered,

14 therefore I will do to the house that is called by my name, in which you *are* trusting, and to the place that I gave to you and to your ancestors what I did to Shiloh.

15 And I will cast you out of my sight just as I cast out all of your blood relatives, all of the offspring of Ephraim.”

Worship of the Queen of Heaven

16 “And you, you must not pray for this people, and you must not lift up for them a cry of entreaty or a prayer, and you must not plead with me, for I *will* not hear you.

17 *Do* you not see what they *are* doing in the towns of Judah and in the streets of Jerusalem?

18 The children *are* gathering wood, and the fathers *are* kindling the fire, and the women *are* kneading dough to make sacrificial cakes for the queen of heaven, and they pour out libations to other gods for the sake of provoking me to anger.

19 *Are* they provoking me to anger? “ declares Yahweh, “*Is it* not themselves *they hurt*, for the sake of the shame of their faces?”

20 Therefore thus says the Lord Yahweh, “Look, my anger and my wrath will be poured out on this place, on the humankind, and on the animal, and on the tree of the field, and on the fruit of the ground, and it will not be extinguished.”

A Disobedient Nation

21 Thus says Yahweh of hosts, the God of Israel, “Add your burnt offerings to your sacrifices, and eat *the* flesh.

22 For I did not speak with your ancestors, nor did I command them in the day of bringing them out from the land of Egypt, concerning the matter of burnt offering and sacrifice.

23 But I only commanded them this word, saying, ‘Obey my voice, and I will be to you God, and you will be to me people, and you must walk in all of the way that I command you, so that it goes well with you.’

24 Yet they did not obey, and they did not incline their ear, but they walked in *their own* plans, in the stubbornness of their evil heart, and they became worse instead of better.

25 From the day that your ancestors came out from the land of Egypt until this day I have sent to you all my servants the prophets, day after day, sending again and again.

26 Yet they have not listened to me and they have not inclined their ear, but they have hardened their neck, they did more evil than their ancestors.

27 So you shall speak to them all these words, but they will not listen to you, and you shall call to them, but they will not answer you.

28 “And you shall say to them, ‘This *is* the nation that has not obeyed the voice of Yahweh their God, and they have not accepted discipline. The truth has perished, and it is cut off from their mouths.

29 Shear your hair and throw *it* away, and lift up a lament on the barren heights, for Yahweh has rejected and forsaken the generation of his wrath.’

Coming Judgment of Human Sacrifice

30 For the people of Judah have done evil in my eyes,” declares Yahweh, “They have set their abominations in the house that is

called by my name, to defile it.

31 And they built the high place of Topheth, which *is* in *the* Valley of Ben Hinnom, to burn their sons and their daughters in the fire, which I have not commanded, and it did not come into my mind.

32 Therefore look, days *are* about to come,” declares Yahweh, “and it will no longer be called Topheth or *the* Valley of Ben Hinnom, but the Valley of the Slaughter, and they will bury in Topheth until there is no more place.

33 And the dead bodies of this people *will be* as food for the birds of the heavens, and for the animals of the earth, without anyone to scare *them* away.

34 And I will cause to disappear from the towns of Judah and from the streets of Jerusalem *the* sound of jubilation, and *the* sound of joy, *the* voice of *the* bridegroom, and *the* voice of *the* bride, for the land will become a site of ruins.

Desecration of Graves by the Enemy

8:1 “At that time,” declares Yahweh, “they shall bring out the bones of the kings of Judah, and the bones of its officials, and the bones of the priests, and the bones of the prophets, and the bones of the inhabitants of Judah from their graves.

2 And they shall spread them out before the sun, and before the moon, and before all the host of heaven, which they have loved, and which they have served, and which they have gone after, and which they have inquired about, and to which they have bowed in worship. They shall not be gathered, and they shall not be buried; they will be like dung on the surface of the ground.

3 And death will be preferred to life by all the remaining of this evil clan in all the remaining places where I have driven them away,” declares Yahweh.

Jeremiah’s Prophecy to Judah—A Depraved and Incurable People (c. 629t BC)

Jeremiah 8:4–9:6

Stubborn Refusal to Return to God

8:4 “And you shall say to them, ‘Thus asks Yahweh:

“Do men fall and not stand up?

If one turns away does he not return?

5 Why has this people, Jerusalem, turned away *in* enduring apostasy?

They have kept hold of deceit, they have refused to return.

6 I have listened attentively,

and I have listened.

They do not speak honestly,

there is no man *who* regrets his wickedness, saying, ‘What have I done?’

All of them *are* turning to their ways of running,

like a horse plunging into battle.

7 Even *the* stork in heaven knows its appointed time,
and *the* turtledove, and *the* swallow, and *the* song bird,
they observe the time of their coming.

But my people do not know the ordinance of Yahweh.

8 How can you say, ‘*We are* wise and the law of Yahweh *is* with us’?

Look, surely the lying stylus of the scribes has made it a lie.

9 *The* wise will be put to shame,

they will be dismayed,

and they will get taken.

Look, they have rejected the word of Yahweh,

and what *is* wisdom to them?

10 Therefore I will give their wives to others,

their fields to conquerors,

because from *the* smallest to *the* greatest,

all of them make profit *for* unlawful gain,

from prophet to priest,

all of them practice deceit.

11 And they have treated the wound of the daughter of my people lightly,
saying, ‘Peace, peace,’ but there is no peace.

12 Were they ashamed, for they had committed a detestable thing?

What’s worse, they were not ashamed at all,

and they did not know to feel humiliated.

Therefore they will fall among *those who* fall;

at the time of their punishment they will stumble,” says Yahweh.

13 “I will take away their harvest,” declares Yahweh.

“There are no grapes on the vine,
and there are no figs on the fig tree,
and the leaves wither,
and *what* I gave to them passed over them.” ”

The People’s Resignation to the Coming Invasion

14 Why *are* we sitting?

Gather, and let us go into the fortified cities,
and let us perish there,
for Yahweh our God has caused us to perish,
and has provided drink for us, water of poison,
because we have sinned against Yahweh.

15 We hope for peace,
but there is no good,
for a time of healing,
but there is terror.

16 “From Dan is heard the snorting of their horses,
from the sound of the neighing of their stallions all the land quakes,
for they come and devour the land,
and that which fills *the* city,
and *those who* live in it.

17 For look, I *am* letting loose among you snakes,
adders for which there is no incantation,
and they will bite you,” declares Yahweh.

Lament for a Stricken People

18 “My comfort *is gone* from me,
sorrow *is* on me,
my heart *is* sick.

19 Look, the sound of the cry for help of the daughter of my people
from a distant land,
‘Is Yahweh not in Zion?
Is her king not in her?’
Why have they provoked me to anger with their images,
with idols of a foreign land?”

20 *The* harvest has passed,
the summer has come to an end,
and we have not received help.

21 “Because of the wound of the daughter of my people I am broken down,
I mourn, horror has seized me.

22 Is there no balm in Gilead?
Is there no healer there?
Why, then, has the healing of the daughter of my people not been restored?

9:1 Oh that my head were waters,
and my eyes a fountain of tears,
so that I might weep day and night,
for the slain of the daughter of my people.

2 Oh that I had in the desert a place of overnight lodging for travelers,
that I may leave my people and go from them,
for all of them *are* adulterers,
a band of traitors.

3 And they bend their tongue *like* their bow,
for falsehood and not truth is superior in the land,
for they go forth from evil to evil,
and they do not know me,” declares Yahweh.

4 “Let everyone be on your guard against his neighbor,

- and you must not trust in any brother,
for everyone surely betrays,
and every neighbor goes about *with* slander.
- 5 And everyone deceives his neighbor,
and they do not speak *the* truth,
they have taught their tongues to speak lies,
they are tired *from* going astray.
- 6 Your dwelling *is* in the midst of deceit,
upon deceit they refuse to know me,” declares Yahweh.

Jeremiah's Prophecy to Judah—Jerusalem's Coming Ruin (c. 629t BC)

Jeremiah 9:7–26

God's Justification for the Coming Punishment

7 Therefore, thus says Yahweh of hosts:

- “Look, I *am* about to refine them,
and I will test them,
for what else can I do,
because of the presence of the daughter of my people?
- 8 Their tongue *is* a murderous arrow,
it speaks deceit.
With his mouth he speaks peace with his neighbor,
but in his inner parts he sets up his ambush.
- 9 Because of these *things* shall I not punish them?” declares Yahweh,
“On a nation that *is* like this shall I not take revenge?
- 10 For the mountains I lift up weeping and wailing,
and for *the* pastures of *the* desert a lament,
because they are laid waste so that no man passes through.
And *the* sounds of cattle are not heard,
from *the* birds of heaven to *the* animals
they have fled, they are gone.
- 11 And I will make Jerusalem as heaps *of ruins*, a lair of jackals,
and the towns of Judah I will make a desolation, without inhabitants.
- 12 Who *is* the wise man that can understand this?
And to whom has the mouth of Yahweh spoken, so that he may declare it?
Why is the land destroyed?
It is laid waste like the desert so that no one passes through.”
- 13 And Yahweh said, “Because of their forsaking my law that I set before them, and they have not obeyed my voice, and have not walked in it,
14 but they went after the stubbornness of their heart, and after the Baals, which their ancestors taught them.”
15 Therefore thus says Yahweh of hosts, the God of Israel, “Look, I *am* feeding this people wormwood, and providing drink for them,
water of poison,
16 and I will scatter them among the nations that they have not known, they and their ancestors, and I will send the sword after them until I bring them to an end.”

A Lament over Jerusalem's Destruction

17 Thus says Yahweh of hosts:

- “Consider closely, and call for the wailing women, so that they come,
and for the skillful women, so that they come.
- 18 And let them hasten,
and let them lift up wailing over us,
so that our eyes may melt *with* tears,
and our eyelids may flow *with* water.
- 19 For a sound of wailing is heard from Zion,
‘How we are devastated!

We are very ashamed because we have left the land,
because they have overthrown our dwelling places.’

20 For hear, *O* women, the word of Yahweh,
and let your ear receive the word of his mouth,
and teach your daughters a lamentation,
and each woman her neighbor a lament.

21 For death has come into our windows,
it has entered into our fortresses,
to cut off *the* children from *the* streets,
the young men from *the* public squares.

22 Speak, ‘thus declares Yahweh:

“The dead body of the human will fall
like dung upon the surface of the field,
and like cut grain behind the reaper,
and there is no *one who* gathers.” ”

The Only Basis for Boasting

23 Thus says Yahweh,

“*The* wise man must not boast in his wisdom,
and the warrior must not boast in his might,
the wealthy man must not boast in his wealth.

24 But only in this must the one who boasts boast,
that he has insight,
and *that* he knows me,
that I *am* Yahweh, [[1 Cor 1:31](#); [2 Cor 10:17](#)]
showing loyal love, justice, and righteousness on the earth,
for in these *things* I delight,” declares Yahweh.

Circumcision Will Not Save You—Circumcise Your Hearts!

25 “Look, days *are* coming,” declares Yahweh, “and I will call into account all those who are circumcised in *the* foreskin:

26 Egypt, Judah, and Edom, and the Ammonites, and Moab, and all those who are trimmed to *the* side, those who live in the desert,
for all the nations *are* uncircumcised, and all the house of Israel *are* uncircumcised of heart.”

Jeremiah’s Prophecy to Judah—Idolatry and the Coming Exile (c. 629t BC)

Jeremiah 10

The Foolishness of Idolatry

1 Hear the word that Yahweh speaks to you, *O* house of Israel.

2 Thus says Yahweh:

“You must not learn the way of the nations,
and you must not be dismayed by the signs of the heavens,
for the nations are dismayed by them.

3 For the statutes of the peoples *are* vanity,
for it *is* a tree cut down from *the* forest,
the work of *the* hands of a craftsman with the tool.

4 He decorates it with silver and gold,
they strengthen it with nails and hammers,
so that it does not stagger.

5 They *are* like scarecrows in a cucumber field,
they cannot speak.

Indeed, they must be carried,
for they cannot march.
You must not be afraid of them,
for they cannot do evil;

furthermore, to do good *is* not in them.”

- 6 There is none like you, O Yahweh,
you *are* great and your name *is* great in might.
- 7 Who would not revere you, O king of the nations?
For you it is fitting.
For among all the wise men of the nations,
and in all their kingdoms,
there is none like you.
- 8 At the same time they are stupid and foolish,
in the instruction of idols, it *is* wood.
- 9 Silver beaten from Tarshish is brought,
and gold from Uphaz,
the work of *the* craftsman and *the* hands of the goldsmith.
Blue and purple *are* their clothing,
all of them *are* the work of skillful people.
- 10 But Yahweh *is* the true God,
he *is* the living God,
and an everlasting king.
Because of his wrath the earth quakes,
and *the* nations cannot endure his anger.

11 “Thus you shall say to them,

‘Gods who did not make the heavens and the earth
will perish from the earth and from under these heavens.

- 12 *He is* the maker of *the* earth by his power,
who created the world by his wisdom,
and by his understanding he stretched out heaven.
- 13 When he utters his voice *there is* a noise of water in the heavens,
and he causes *the* mist to rise from *the* ends of the earth.
He makes lightning for the rain,
and he causes *the* wind to go out from his storehouses.
- 14 Everyone is stupid, without knowledge,
every goldsmith is ashamed by *his* divine image,
for his cast image *is* an illusion,
and *there is* no breath in them.
- 15 They *are* vanity, a work of mockery,
at the time of their punishment, they will perish.
- 16 The portion of Jacob *is* not like these,
for he *is* the creator of everything,
and Israel *is* the tribe of his inheritance,
Yahweh of hosts *is* his name.

Announcement of Exile

- 17 Gather your bundle from *the* ground,
you who live under the siege.”

18 For thus says Yahweh,

“Look, I *am* about to sling out the inhabitants of the land at this time,
and I will bring distress to them, so that they may feel it.”

- 19 Woe to me, because of my wound.
My wound *is* incurable.
But I said, “Surely this *is* my sickness,
and I must bear it.”
- 20 My tent is devastated,
and all my tent cords are torn.
My children have gone out *from* me,

and they are not.

There is no *one who* pitches my tent again,
or *one who* puts up my tent curtains.

21 For the shepherds have become stupid,
they do not seek Yahweh.

Therefore they do not have insight,
and all of their flock are scattered.

22 Listen, news:

Look, *it is* coming,
a great roar from *the* land of *the* north,
to make the cities of Judah a desolation,
a lair of jackals.

Jeremiah's Prayer

23 I know, *O* Yahweh, that to the human *is* not his *own* way,
nor to a person *is the* walking and the directing of his *own* step.

24 Chastise me, *O* Yahweh, but in moderation,
not in your anger, lest you eradicate me.

25 Pour out your wrath on the nations that do not know you,
and on *the* peoples that do not call on your name,
for they have devoured Jacob,
they have devoured and consumed him,
and they have caused his settlement to be desolate.

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Chronological Notes

- 1) The current majority view is that the "Temple Speech" recorded in Jeremiah 7 belongs to the time of Jehoiakim and should be harmonized with Jeremiah 26 (e.g., Lalleman, Harrison, Thompson, Craigie-Kelley-Drinkard, Feinberg, and Brown). However, Laetsch is not convinced: "The reasons advanced for this identification do not seem convincing. 1) The same demand for a change of conduct. Yet that was the subject and purpose of all the preaching of Jeremiah. 2) The same occasion, a festival. Yet these festivals gave an opportunity to preach to all the people and were quite generally used by the prophets. 3) The same place. Yet Jeremiah and others spoke in the gates and courts of the Temple, cp. ch. 19:14; 35:2, 4; 36:5–10; also 28:1, 5. 4) In ch. 26 only the main thoughts of ch. 7 are repeated. That does not prove identity! 5) The reference to Shiloh. Why should not Shiloh have been repeatedly mentioned as a warning example of the folly of relying on external possession of God's house? A warning like this was not only possible, but quite to be expected in the days of Josiah, when the Lord announced His readiness to fulfill all the threats contained in the rediscovered Book of the Law (2 Kgs 22:16–20). One of these threats referred to the overturning of Jerusalem 'as Sodom and Gomorrah' (Deut 29:23), involving the destruction of the Temple. Linking up with Huldah's message, Jeremiah may have reminded the Jews of the destruction of the Tabernacle at Shiloh as a warning against misplaced trust in the Temple. In ch. 7 there is not the slightest indication of opposition. That also would fit well into the time of Josiah's reform."¹
- 2) Given the speculation involved in identifying Jeremiah 7 with Jeremiah 26, I have decided to go against the majority view and place Jeremiah 7–10 just prior to the discovery of the Book of the Law (solidly within Josiah's reign).

¹ Theo. Laetsch, *Jeremiah*, pp. 93–94. See also F. B. Huey, Jr., "Jeremiah, Lamentations," *NAC*, pp. 103–104 and J. Barton Paine, "The Arrangement of Jeremiah's Prophecies," *JETS* 07:4 (Fall 1964), pp. 121–128.

Josiah's National Religious Reform (629t BC)

2 Kings 23:4–20

2 Chronicles 34:3b–7

4 Then the king commanded Hilkiah the high priest, the second priests, and the keepers of the threshold, to bring out of the temple of Yahweh all of the objects made for Baal and for the Asherah and for all the host of heaven,

and he burned them outside of Jerusalem in the fields of the Kidron, and then he carried their ashes to Bethel.

5 He removed the priests whom the kings of Judah had ordained to burn incense on the high places at the cities of Judah and around Jerusalem and who offered incense to, to the sun, to the moon, to the constellations, and to all the host of heaven.

6 He brought out the Asherah image from the temple of Yahweh outside of Jerusalem to the Wadi of the Kidron and burnt it there; then he pulverized *it* to dust and threw its dust upon the tombs of the children of the people.

7 He tore down the shrines of the male shrine prostitutes which were in the temple of Yahweh, where the women were weaving shrines for the Asherah.

8 Then he brought all of the priests from the cities of Judah and defiled the high places where the priests from Geba up to Beersheba burned incense. He tore down the high places of the gates which were at the entrance of the gate of Joshua, the governor of the city, which were on the left of each gate of the city.

9 However, the priests of the high places did not come up to the altar of Yahweh in Jerusalem, but they ate unleavened bread in the midst of their relatives.

10 He defiled the Topheth which *is* in the Valley of Ben-Hinnom, to prevent anyone causing his sons or his daughters to pass through the fire for Molech.

11 He kept the horses that the kings of Judah had dedicated to the sun from coming to the temple of Yahweh at the side room of Nathan-Melech the eunuch, which *was* in the court; and the chariots of the sun he burned with fire.

12 The altars which *were* on the roof of the upper room of Ahaz, which the kings of Judah had made, and the altars which Manasseh had made in the two courtyards of the temple of Yahweh, the king tore down and ran from there and threw their ashes into the Wadi Kidron.

13 The high places which *were* east of Jerusalem, which *were* on the south of the Mountain of Destruction which Solomon king of Israel had built for Ashtoreth the abomination of the Sidonians and for Chemosh the abomination of Moab and for Molech the detestable thing of the Ammonites, the king defiled.

14 He also broke into pieces the stone pillars and cut down the Asherah poles and covered their sites *with* human bones.

15 Moreover, the altar which *was* in Bethel, the high place which Jeroboam the son of Nebat, who had caused Israel to sin, had built, even that altar and the high place, *Josiah* tore down. Then he burned down the high place and crushed *the* pole of Asherah worship to dust and burned it with fire.

16 When Josiah turned and saw the tombs which *were* there on

3b And in the twelfth year he began to cleanse Judah and Jerusalem of the high places, the Asherahs, the idols, and the images.

4 And he

destroyed before him the altars for the Baals, and he cut down the incense stands above them.

And the Asherahs, the idols, and the images he smashed.

And he ground *them* to powder and sprinkled *the dust* over the burial sites of those who sacrificed to them.

the hill, he sent and took the bones from the tombs and burned *them* on the altar. *Thus* he defiled them according to the word of Yahweh that the man of God had proclaimed who had proclaimed these things. [[1 Kgs 13:1-3](#)]

17 Then he said, “What *is* this gravestone that I *am* seeing?” The men of the city said to him, “*This is the* tomb of the man of God who came from Judah and proclaimed these things which you have done against the altar of Bethel.”

18 So Josiah said, “Let him rest and let no man move his bones.” So they left his bones undisturbed with the bones of the prophet who had come from Samaria.

19 Moreover, all of the shrines of the high places which *were* in the towns of Samaria which the kings of Israel had made to provoke *Yahweh*, Josiah removed, and he did to them like all of the deeds he had done in Bethel.

20 Then he slaughtered all of the priests of the high places who *were* there, on the altars, and he burned the bones of the humans on them.

Then he returned *to* Jerusalem.

6 And in the cities of Manasseh, Ephraim, Simeon, and as far as Naphtali, in their ruins all around,
7a he broke down the altars and the Asherahs and crushed the idols, grinding *them* to dust, and he cut down all the incense stands in all the land of Israel.

5 And he burned the bones of the priests on the altars and cleansed Judah and Jerusalem.

7b Then he returned to Jerusalem.

Josiah Orders Repairs to the Temple (Tishri [October] 623 – Nisan [April] 622 BC)

2 Kings 22:3-7

3 It happened in the eighteenth year of King Josiah, the king sent *word* to Shaphan the son of Azaliah the son of Meshullam, the secretary of the temple of Yahweh, saying,

4 “Go up to Hilkiah the high priest, and let them count the money being brought to the temple of Yahweh which the keepers of the threshold have collected from the people,
5 and let them give it into the hand of those appointed doers of the work at the temple of Yahweh. Let them give it to the doers of the work who *are* at the temple of Yahweh to repair the breach of the temple:

6 to the skilled craftsmen, to the builders, to the masons, and to buy timber and hewing stones to repair the temple.

7 Only the money being given to them is not to be accounted for by them, for they *are* dealing with honesty.”

2 Chronicles 34:8-14

8 Now in the eighteenth year of his reign *after* he purged the land and the house, he sent Shaphan the son of Azaliah,

Maaseiah the commander of the city, and Joah the son of Joahaz, the recorder, to repair the house of Yahweh his God.

9 And they came to Hilkiah the high priest and gave the money that was brought for the house of God, which the Levites, the guardians of the threshold, had gathered from the hand of Manasseh, Ephraim, and from the whole remnant of Israel, and from all Judah and Benjamin and the inhabitants of Jerusalem.
10 And they delivered *it* into the hand of the workmen who were appointed in the house of Yahweh, and they *in turn* gave it to those doing the work who *were* at work in the house of Yahweh, to repair *and* restore the house.

11 And they dispensed *it* to the skilled craftsmen and the builders to buy stone *for* hewing and timber for the seams and for binding the houses that the kings of Judah had destroyed.

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| | <p>12 And the men did the work faithfully. Over them as supervisors <i>were</i> appointed Jahath and Obadiah, the Levites from the Merarites, and Zechariah and Meshullam from the Kohathites. And <i>other</i> Levites, all who were skilled in instruments of song,</p> <p>13 <i>were</i> over the porters and were directing all who worked on each task. And some of the Levites <i>were</i> scribes, officials, and gatekeepers.</p> <p>14 And when they brought out the money that had been brought to the house of Yahweh, Hilkiah the priest found a scroll of the law of Yahweh by the hand of Moses.</p> |
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Hilkiah the High Priest Discovers a Copy of the Torah (c. Nisan [April] 622 BC)

| 2 Kings 22:8–20 | 2 Chronicles 34:15–28 |
|--|---|
| <p>8 Then Hilkiah the high priest said to Shaphan the secretary, “I have found the scroll of the Torah in the temple of Yahweh,” and Hilkiah gave the scroll to Shaphan and he read it.</p> <p>9 Shaphan the secretary came to the king and returned the king a word, and he said, “Your servant poured out the money found in the temple, and they have given it into the hand of the doers of the work appointed <i>over</i> the temple of Yahweh.”</p> <p>10 Then Shaphan the secretary informed the king saying, “Hilkiah the priest has given me a scroll.” Then Shaphan read before the king.</p> <p>11 When the king heard the words of the scroll of the Torah, he tore his clothes.</p> <p>12 Then the king commanded Hilkiah the priest, Ahikam the son of Shaphan, Acbor the son of Micaiah, Shaphan the secretary, and Asaiah the servant of the king, saying,</p> <p>13 “Go, inquire of Yahweh for me and for the people and for all of Judah concerning the words of this scroll <i>that was</i> found. For the wrath of Yahweh that is kindled against us <i>is</i> great because our ancestors did not listen to the words of this scroll to do according to all that is written concerning us!”</p> <p>14 So Hilkiah the priest, Ahikam, Acbor, Shaphan, and Asaiah went to Huldah the prophetess, the wife of Shallum the son of Tikvah the son of Harhas, the keeper of the robes. Now she <i>was</i> living in Jerusalem in the second district. Then they spoke to her,</p> <p>15 and she said to them, “Thus says Yahweh the God of Israel, ‘Say to the man who sent you to me,</p> <p>16 “Thus says Yahweh, ‘Look I am bringing evil to this place and upon its inhabitants, <i>according to</i> all of the words of that scroll that the king of Judah has read [cf. Deut 28:15–68]</p> <p>17 because they have abandoned me and they have burned incense to other gods, provoking me to anger with all of the works of their hands. My wrath shall be kindled against this place and not be quenched.”</p> <p>18 And to the king of Judah who sent all of you to inquire of Yahweh, thus you shall say to him, “Thus says Yahweh the God of Israel, ‘Concerning the words that you have heard,</p> <p>19 because you have a responsive heart, and you humbled</p> | <p>15 And Hilkiah answered and said to Shaphan the scribe, “I have found a scroll of the law in the house of Yahweh!” Then Hilkiah gave the scroll to Shaphan.</p> <p>16 And Shaphan brought the scroll to the king and also informed the king, saying, “All that was put into the hand of your servants they are doing.</p> <p>17 They have dispensed the money which was found in the house of Yahweh and have put it into the hand of the overseers and those doing the work.”</p> <p>18 Then Shaphan the scribe reported to the king, “Hilkiah the priest gave to me a scroll.” Then Shaphan read from it before the king.</p> <p>19 And when the king heard the words of the law, he tore his garments,</p> <p>20 and the king commanded Hilkiah, Ahikam the son of Shaphan, Abdon the son of Micah, Shaphan the scribe, and Asaiah the servant of the king, saying,</p> <p>21 “Go! Seek Yahweh on my behalf and on behalf of those remaining in Israel and Judah concerning the words of the scroll that was found, for the anger of Yahweh that <i>was</i> poured out on us <i>is</i> great, because our ancestors have not kept the word of Yahweh, to do all that is written in this scroll.”</p> <p>22 Then Hilkiah and those whom the king <i>had sent</i> went to Huldah the prophetess, the wife of Shallum, son of Tikvath, son of Hasrah, keeper of the garments. (Now she was living in Jerusalem in the second district.) And they spoke to her concerning this.</p> <p>23 And she said to them, “Thus says Yahweh, the God of Israel: ‘Say to the man who sent you all to me:</p> <p>24 “Thus says Yahweh: ‘Behold, I am bringing disaster upon this place and upon its inhabitants—all the curses written in the scroll that were read before the king of Judah—</p> <p>25 because they have abandoned me and burned incense to other gods so as to provoke me to anger with all the works of their hands. And my wrath will be poured out on this place and it will not be quenched.’</p> <p>26 But to the king of Judah who sent you to seek Yahweh, thus shall you say to him: ‘Thus says Yahweh, the God of Israel: As <i>for</i> the words which you heard,</p> <p>27 because your heart was responsive and you humbled</p> |

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| <p>yourself before Yahweh when you heard how I spoke against this place and against its inhabitants to become a desolation and a curse,</p> <p>and you have torn your clothes and wept before my face, I have also heard, declares Yahweh.</p> <p>20 Therefore look, I am gathering you to your ancestors, and you shall be gathered to your tombs in peace. Your eyes will not see all of the disaster that I am bringing onto this place.” ” Then they reported the word to the king.</p> | <p>yourself before God when you heard his words against this place and against its inhabitants</p> <p>and you humbled yourself before me and tore your garments and wept before me, now I also have heard,’ declares Yahweh.</p> <p>28 ‘Behold, I will gather you to your ancestors, and you will be gathered to your grave in peace. Your eyes will not see any of the disaster that I am bringing upon this place.” ”</p> |
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Chronological Notes

- 1) The account of Josiah’s religious reforms in Chronicles differs from that found in Kings. According to 2 Kings 22:3ff., the reform is a one-time, all-embracing event, which took place at Josiah’s eighteenth year as a result of the discovery of the Book of the Law. In Chronicles, the reform is seen as a prolonged process, beginning in the eighth year of Josiah’s reign, with the main phase of the purge of the land belonging to the twelfth year of his reign. These stages of the reform predated the finding of the Law and may be seen, along with Jeremiah’s preaching, as its cause. The reform is concluded by the events of the eighteenth year: the renewing of the covenant and the celebration of the Passover.¹ My opinion at this time is that Kings contains a compressed account of Josiah’s reforms and that Chronicles expands that account giving the hidden chronology. Thus I have re-ordered Kings and harmonized it with Chronicles.

¹ Sara Japhet, “I & II Chronicles,” *The Old Testament Library*, pp. 1017-1018.

Jeremiah's Prophecy to Judah—The Broken Covenant (c. Nisan [April] 622 BC)

Jeremiah 11–12

The Broken Covenant

11:1 The word that came to Jeremiah from Yahweh, saying,

2 “Hear the words of this covenant, and speak to the people of Judah and to the inhabitants of Jerusalem,

3 and say to them, ‘Thus says Yahweh, the God of Israel: “The man is cursed who does not obey the words of this covenant,

4 which I commanded your ancestors in the day of my bringing them from the land of Egypt, from the furnace of iron, saying, ‘Listen to my voice and do according to all that I command you, so will you be my people, and I will be your God.’

5 in order to keep the oath that I swore to your ancestors, to give them a land flowing with milk and honey, as *it is this day.*”’ Then I answered and said, “Let it be so, O Yahweh.”

6 And Yahweh said to me, “Proclaim all these words in the cities of Judah and in the streets of Jerusalem, saying, ‘Hear the words of this covenant and do them,

7 for I solemnly admonished your ancestors in the day of my leading them out from the land of Egypt and up to this day, admonishing persistently, saying, “Obey my voice.”

8 But they did not obey and they did not incline their ear. Instead each one walked in the stubbornness of his evil heart. Therefore, I brought on them all the words of this covenant which I commanded *them* to do, and they did not *do it.*”

Inescapable Punishment of the Covenant Breakers

9 And Yahweh said to me, “A conspiracy is found among the people of Judah and among the inhabitants of Jerusalem.

10 They have turned back to the iniquities of their former ancestors, who refused to obey my words, and they have gone after other gods, to serve them. The house of Israel and the house of Judah have broken my covenant that I made with their ancestors.”

11 Therefore thus says Yahweh, “I *am* about to bring on them disaster from which they will not be able to escape. Though they cry out to me, yet I will not listen to them.

12 Then the cities of Judah and the inhabitants of Jerusalem will go and cry out to the gods *to* whom they *are* making smoke offerings, but they will certainly not save them in the time of their trouble.

13 For the number of your towns are your gods, *O* Judah, and the number of the streets of Jerusalem *are the* altars you have set up to the shameful things, to make smoke offerings to Baal.

Jeremiah Forbidden to Pray for the People

14 Therefore you must not pray for this people, and you must not lift up for them a cry of entreaty, or a prayer, for I *will* not listen in the time of their calling to me, in the time of their trouble.

15 What rights has my beloved in my house
when she has done many wicked things?

Can the flesh of holiness pass over you?

For you engage in your wickedness, then you exult.

16 Yahweh called your name, ‘A leafy olive tree, beautiful with fine fruit.’

With the sound of a great storm he will set fire to it,
and its branches will be good for nothing.

17 And Yahweh of hosts, the *one who* planted you,

has spoken evil against you,
because of the evil of the house of Israel and the house of Judah,
that they have done to themselves,
to provoke me to anger by making smoke offerings to Baal.”

A Plot against Jeremiah's Life

18 Moreover, Yahweh let *it be* made known to me, and I knew.

Then you showed me their deeds.

19 And I *was* like a gentle ram-lamb that is brought to slaughter,

and I did not know that they planned plans against me, *saying*,
“Let us destroy the tree with its fruit,
and let us cut him off from *the* land of *the* living,
so that his name will no longer be remembered.”

20 But *O* Yahweh of hosts, who judges *in* righteousness,

who tests *the* inmost being, and *the* mind,
let me see your retribution upon them,
for to you I have revealed my legal case.

God's Assurance of Punishment of the Conspirators

21 Therefore thus says Yahweh concerning the people of Anathoth who seek your life, saying, "You shall not prophesy in the name of Yahweh or you will die by our hand."

22 Therefore thus says Yahweh of hosts: "Look, I *am about to* punish them. The young men will die by the sword. Their sons and their daughters will die by the famine.

23 And a remnant will not be *left* for them, for I will bring disaster to the people of Anathoth, the year of their punishment."

Jeremiah's Question about the Prosperity of the Wicked

12:1 You *will be* in the right, O Yahweh, when I complain to you.

Even so, let me speak *my* claims with you.

Why does *the* way of *the* wicked succeed?

All those who deal treacherously with treachery are at ease.

2 Not only do you plant them, they take root.

They grow, but also they produce fruit.

You *are* near in their mouths,

but far from their inmost beings.

3 But you, O Yahweh, you know me,

you see me, and you test *that* my heart *is* with you.

Tear them apart like sheep for *the* slaughtering,

and set them apart for *the* day of slaughter.

4 How long will the land mourn, and the vegetation of every field dry up, because of the wickedness of those who live in it?

The animals and *the* birds are swept away,

because they have said, "He does not see our future."

God's Answer

5 "If you run with foot soldiers and they have made you weary, then how will you compete with horses?

If you have fallen in a peaceful land,

then how will you do in the thickets of the Jordan?

6 For even your relatives, and the house of your father, even they have dealt treacherously with you, even they call loudly after you.

You must not trust in them, though they speak kindly to you.

God's Rejection of His Inheritance

7 I have forsaken my house, I have abandoned my inheritance.

I have given the beloved one of my heart into the hand of her enemies.

8 My inheritance has become to me like a lion in the forest.

She has lifted up against me her voice; therefore I hate her.

9 The lair of *the* hyena *is* my inheritance to me,

the birds of prey *are* all around her.

Go, gather all of the animals of the field,

bring *them* to come and devour.

10 Many shepherds have destroyed my vineyard,

they have trampled down my plot of land.

They have made my pleasant field

like the desert of desolation.

11 They have made it a desolation.

Desolate, it mourns to me.

All the land is made desolate,

but there is no person taking *it* to heart.

12 Upon all *the* barren heights in the desert destroyers have come,

for *the* sword of Yahweh devours,

from *one* end of *the* land to the *other* end of the land,

there is no peace for all flesh.

13 They have sown wheat and they have reaped thorns.

They are exhausted, they do not profit.

And they will be ashamed of your produce,
because of the burning anger of Yahweh.”

A Conditional Promise for Israel’s Neighbors

14 Thus says Yahweh concerning all of the evil neighbors who touch the inheritance that I gave as an inheritance *to* my people Israel: “Look, I *am* about to drive them out from their land, and the house of Judah I will drive out from among them.

15 And then after my driving them out, I will once again have compassion on them, and I will bring them back, each one to his inheritance, and each one to his land.

16 And then, if they diligently learn the ways of my people, to swear by my name, ‘as Yahweh lives,’ even as they taught my people to swear by Baal, then they will live in the midst of my people.

17 But if they do not listen, then I will completely uproot and destroy that nation.” declares Yahweh.

Josiah Renews the Covenant (c. Nisan [April] 622 BC)

2 Kings 23:1–3

2 Chronicles 34:29–32

1 So the king sent *word*,
and all of the elders of Judah and Jerusalem gathered to him.
2 Then the king went up *to* the temple of Yahweh, and all of the men of Judah and all of the inhabitants of Jerusalem *were* with him, *including* the priests, the prophets, and all of the people from smallest to greatest; and in their hearing he read all of the words of the scroll of the covenant that had been found in the temple of Yahweh.
3 Then the king stood by the pillar, and he made a covenant before Yahweh, to go after Yahweh and to keep his commands and his warnings and his statutes, with all of *his* heart and with his all of his soul, to keep the words of this covenant written on this scroll.
Then all of the people joined in the covenant.

29 Then they sent *word* to the king,
and he gathered all the elders of Judah and Jerusalem.
30 And the king went up to the house of Yahweh with all the men of Judah and the inhabitants of Jerusalem, with the priests and the Levites —all the people from great to small— and they read in their ears all the words of the scroll of the covenant that was found in the house of Yahweh.
31 And the king stood at his position. And he made the covenant before Yahweh, to walk after Yahweh and to keep his commands and statutes and regulations with all his heart and with all his soul, to do the words of the covenant that *were* written on this scroll.
32 Then he obligated all who were found in Jerusalem and in Benjamin, that the inhabitants of Jerusalem would do according to the covenant of God, the God of their ancestors.

Josiah Celebrates the Passover (14–21 Nisan [April] 622 BC)

2 Kings 23:21–23

2 Chronicles 35:1–19

21 Then the king commanded all of the people, saying, “Keep the Passover to Yahweh your God, as has been written on the scroll of this covenant.”

1 Josiah kept the Passover to Yahweh in Jerusalem.

And they slaughtered the Passover *sacrifice* on the fourteenth day of the first month.
2 And he set the priests at their posts and encouraged them in the service of the house of Yahweh.
3 And he said to the Levites who *were* teaching all Israel, who were sanctified to Yahweh, “Put the holy ark in the house which Solomon the son of David, king of Israel, built. There is no *need* to carry it on *your* shoulders. Now serve Yahweh your God and his people Israel.
4 And prepare yourselves according to your families, according to your working groups, according to the decree of David king of Israel and according to the decree of Solomon his son.
5 And stand in the sanctuary according to the clans of your families for your brothers, the lay people, and a part of the family of the Levites.
6 And slaughter the Passover *lamb* and consecrate yourself and prepare for your brothers to do according to the word of Yahweh by the hand of Moses.
7 Then Josiah provided for the lay people sheep, lambs, and young goats, all for the Passover for all who were found *there*,

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| <p>22 For they had not kept this Passover from the days of the judges who had judged over Israel or <i>during</i> the days of the kings of Israel and the kings of Judah.</p> <p>23 But in the eighteenth year of King Josiah, this Passover was kept for Yahweh in Jerusalem.</p> | <p>to the sum of thirty thousand, along with three thousand bulls. These <i>were</i> the possession of the king.</p> <p>8 And his officials contributed a freewill offering to the people, to the priests, and to the Levites. Hilkiah, Zechariah, and Jehiel, commanders of the house of God, gave to the priests two thousand six hundred Passover <i>lambs</i> and three hundred bulls.</p> <p>9 Conaniah also, and Shemaiah and Nethanel his brothers, and Hashabiah and Jeiel and Jehozabad, commanders of the Levites, contributed to the Levites five thousand Passover <i>lambs</i> and five hundred bulls.</p> <p>10 And when the work had been completed, the priests stood at their positions and the Levites in their working groups according to the command of the king.</p> <p>11 And they slaughtered the Passover <i>lamb</i>, and the priests sprinkled <i>the blood</i> from their hand, and the Levites flayed <i>the sacrifices</i>.</p> <p>12 And they set aside the burnt offerings to give them to the clans of the families for the lay people, to offer to Yahweh according to what is written in the scroll of Moses. And thus they did with the bulls.</p> <p>13 Then they roasted the Passover <i>lamb</i> in the fire according to the ordinance. And they boiled the holy offerings in pots, in kettles, and in dishes and brought it quickly to the lay people.</p> <p>14 And afterward they prepared for themselves and for the priests, since the priests, the descendants of Aaron, <i>were busy</i> with offering the burnt offerings and the fat until night. So the Levites prepared for themselves and for the priests, the descendants of Aaron.</p> <p>15 And the singers, the descendants of Asaph, <i>were</i> at their stations according to the decree of David and Asaph and Heman and Jeduthun, the seer of the king. And the gatekeepers <i>were</i> at each gate. They did not need to depart from their service, for their brothers the Levites had made preparations for them.</p> <p>16 So all the service of Yahweh was prepared on that day to keep the Passover and to sacrifice burnt offerings on the altar of Yahweh, according to the command of King Josiah.</p> <p>17 And the Israelites who were present kept the Passover at that time, and the Feast of Unleavened Bread seven days.</p> <p>18 And there was no Passover like it kept in Israel since the days of Samuel the prophet. And none of the kings of Israel kept a Passover like that which Josiah and the priests and the Levites, and all of Judah and Israel who were present, and the inhabitants of Jerusalem, kept.</p> <p>19 In the eighteenth year of the reign of Josiah this Passover was kept.</p> |
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Josiah Removes Idolatry That Had Appeared Since His Twelfth Year (c. Iyyar [May] 622 BC)

| 2 Kings 23:24–27 | 2 Chronicles 34:33 |
|---|---|
| <p>24 Moreover, the mediums and the spiritists, the household gods and the idols, and all of the abominations that were seen in the land of Judah and in Jerusalem, Josiah removed</p> <p>in order to establish the words of the law written on the scroll that Hilkiah the priest had found <i>in</i> the temple of Yahweh.</p> <p>25 There was not a king like him before him, who turned to Yahweh with all of his heart and with all of his soul and with all</p> | <p>33 And Josiah removed</p> <p>all the detestable things from the whole land that belonged to the Israelites and obligated all who were found in Israel to serve Yahweh their God.</p> |

of his might according to the law of Moses, nor did one arise like him afterwards.

26 However, Yahweh did not turn from the fierceness of his great anger which was kindled against Judah because of all of the provocations *with* which Manasseh had provoked him.

27 Yahweh had said, “Even Judah I will remove from my face, as I have removed Israel; I will reject this city that I have chosen, even Jerusalem and the house *of* which I said, ‘My name shall be there!’”

All his days they did not turn aside from following Yahweh, the God of their ancestors.

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Jeremiah's Prophecy to Judah—A Corrupt People and Their Punishment (c. 620–609 BC)

Jeremiah 13:1–14

The Ruined Linen Garment

- 1 Thus Yahweh said to me: "Go and buy for yourself a loincloth of linen and put it on your loins, but you must not place it in water."
 2 So I bought the loincloth according to the word of Yahweh and I put *it* on my loins.
 3 Now the word of Yahweh came to me a second *time*, saying,
 4 "Take the loincloth that you bought, that *is* on your loins, and stand up, go *to the* Euphrates and hide it there in the cleft of the rock."
 5 So I went and hid it by *the* Euphrates just as Yahweh had commanded me.
 6 And then, after a long time, then Yahweh said to me, "Stand up, go *to the* Euphrates and take from there the loincloth that I commanded you to hide there."
 7 Then I went *to the* Euphrates and I dug, and I took the loincloth from the place where I had hidden it, and look, the loincloth was ruined; it was not good for anything.
 8 And then the word of Yahweh came to me, saying,
 9 "Thus says Yahweh: 'So I will ruin the pride of Judah and the great pride of Jerusalem.
 10 This evil people, who refuse to listen to my words, who go in the stubbornness of their hearts, and have gone after other gods, to serve them, and to bow in worship to them, let them be like this loincloth which is not good for anything.
 11 For as the loincloth clings to *the* loins of a person, so I caused to cling to me all the house of Israel and all the house of Judah,' declares Yahweh, 'to be for me a people, and a name, and a praise, and a glory, but they would not listen.'

The Smashed Wineskins

- 12 "Therefore, you shall say to them this word, 'Thus says Yahweh, the God of Israel: "Every jar must be filled with wine." ' And they will say to you, 'Do we not certainly know that every jar should be filled with wine?'
 13 Then you shall say to them, 'Thus says Yahweh: "Look, I *am* about to fill all the inhabitants of this land, and the kings who sit on David's throne, and the priests, and the prophets, and all the inhabitants of Jerusalem *with* drunkenness.
 14 And I will smash them, each one against his brother, and the fathers and the sons together," declares Yahweh. "I will not have compassion, and I will not take pity, and I will not show compassion from destroying them."'"

Jeremiah's Prophecy to Judah—Catastrophes That Cannot Be Averted (c. 620–609 BC)

Jeremiah 14:1–15:9

A Severe Drought

14:1 *That* which came *as* the word of Yahweh to Jeremiah concerning the matter of the severe drought.

- 2 "Judah mourns, and her gates languish,
 they are in mourning on the ground,
 and the cry of lament of Jerusalem goes up.
 3 And their nobles send their servants for water.
 They come to *the* pits, they find no water.
 They return *with* their vessels empty.
 They are ashamed, and they are confounded,
 and they cover their heads.
 4 Because of the ground, *which* is cracked
 because there was no rain on the ground.
The farmers are ashamed,
 they cover their heads.
 5 For even *the* doe in the field gives birth and forsakes *her* young,
 because there is no green growth.
 6 And wild asses stand on *the* barren heights,
 they gasp *for* breath like the jackals.
 Their eyes fail
 because there is no vegetation."

Jeremiah Intercedes for the People

- 7 Although our iniquities testify against us, *O* Yahweh,
 act for the sake of your name.
 Yes, our apostasies are many;
 we have sinned against you.

- 8 *You are* the hope of Israel,
its savior in time of distress.
Why should you be like an alien in the land,
or like a traveler who spreads out *his tent* to spend the night?
- 9 Why should you be like a confused man,
like a warrior *who* is not able to help?
Yet you *are* in our midst, *O Yahweh*,
and your name is called upon us.
You must not leave us!

God Commands Jeremiah to Stop Praying

10 Thus says Yahweh concerning this people:

“They have loved so much to wander,
they have not spared their feet.
Therefore Yahweh is not favorable to them,
now he will remember their iniquity and punish their sins.”

11 So Yahweh said to me, “You must not pray for this people, for *their* happiness.

12 Although they fast, I *am* not listening to their cry of entreaty. And although they present burnt offering and grain offering, I *am* not favorable to them. But by the sword, and by the famine, and by the plague, I *am* about to destroy them.”

Jeremiah Blames False Prophets

13 Then I said, “Ah, Lord Yahweh, look, the prophets *are* saying to them, ‘You will not see *the* sword, and famine will not be yours, but reliable peace I will give to you in this place.’”

God’s Judgment on the False Prophets

14 And Yahweh said to me, “The prophets *are* prophesying lies in my name. I have not sent them, and I have not commanded them, and I have not spoken to them. They are prophesying to you a lying vision, and a divination, worthless, and the deceitfulness of their minds.”

15 Therefore thus says Yahweh concerning the prophets who prophecy in my name though I have not sent them, yet they *are* saying, “Sword and famine will not be in this land.” “By the sword and by the famine those prophets will perish.

16 And the people *to* whom they *are* prophesying will be cast out into the streets of Jerusalem because of the famine and the sword. And there will be no *one who* buries them, their wives, or their sons, or their daughters. And I will pour out on them their wickedness.

Jeremiah’s Lament and Supplication

17 “And you shall say to them this word,

‘Let my eyes melt *with* tears night and day,
and let them not cease,
for *with* a great wound the virgin daughter of my people is broken,
with a very incurable wound.

- 18 If I go out *into* the field,
then look, those slain by *the* sword.
And if I enter the city,
then look, the sickness of *the* famine.
For both prophet and priest wander around through the land,
they do not know what is going on.”

- 19 Have you completely rejected Judah?
Or has your soul loathed Zion?
Why have you struck us
so that there is no healing for us?
We hope for peace, but there is no good,
and for a time of healing, but look, there is terror.

- 20 We know, *O Yahweh*, our wickedness,
the iniquity of our ancestors,
for we have sinned against you.

- 21 You must not spurn *us* for the sake of your name,
you must not dishonor your glorious throne.
Remember *us*!
You must not break your covenant with us.
- 22 Are there *any* among the idols of the nation *who* cause rain to pour?
Or can the heavens give showers?
Is it not you, O Yahweh our God?
Therefore, we hope in you, for you do all these *things*.

The Futility of Intercession

15:1 Then Yahweh said to me, “*Even* if Moses and Samuel stood before me, my heart *would* not *be* to this people. Send *them* away from my sight, and let them go out.

2 And then if they say to you, ‘Where shall we go?’ Then you shall say to them, ‘Thus says Yahweh,

“*Those who are destined* for the plague, to the plague,
and *those who are destined* for the sword, to the sword,
and *those who are destined* for the famine, to the famine,
and *those who are destined* for the captivity, to the captivity.”

3 “And I will summon over them four types of calamity,” declares Yahweh, “the sword to kill, and the dogs to drag away, and the birds of the air and the wild animals of the earth to devour and to destroy.

4 And I will make them a terror to all of the kingdoms of the earth because of Manasseh, the son of Hezekiah, the king of Judah, because of what he did in Jerusalem.

The End of God’s Pity

- 5 “For who will have compassion on you, O Jerusalem,
or who will show sympathy to you,
or who will turn aside to ask about your welfare?
- 6 You have forsaken me,” declares Yahweh.
“You go backward, so I have stretched my hand against you,
and I have destroyed you.
I am tired of becoming remorseful.
- 7 And I have winnowed them with a winnowing fork in the gates of the land.
I am bereaved.
I have destroyed my people.
They did not turn back from their ways.
- 8 Their widows will be more numerous before me than *the* sand of *the* seas.
I have brought to them, against *the* mothers of young men,
a destroyer at noon.
I will suddenly drop on her anguish and horror.
- 9 She who gave birth to seven has withered away.
She gasps her breath.
Her sun set while still day.
She has been put to shame and disgraced.
And the remainder of them I will give to the sword
before their enemies,” declares Yahweh.

Jeremiah’s Prophecy to Judah—Jeremiah’s Complaint and God’s Rebuke (c. 620–609 BC)

Jeremiah 15:10–21

Jeremiah Feels Sorry for Himself

- 10 Woe to me, O my mother, that you gave birth to me,
a man of contention and quarreling to the whole land.
I have not lent out and I have not borrowed.
All of them *are* cursing me.

11 Yahweh said,

“Surely I will set you free to be good for you,
surely I will cause the enemy to intercede with you
in a time of trouble,
and in a time of distress.

- 12 Can anyone break iron,
iron from the north, or bronze?
- 13 I will give your wealth and your treasures
as plunder without price,
even because of all your sins,
and throughout all your territories.
- 14 And I will make you serve your enemies
in a land *that* you *do* not know,
for a fire will kindle in my anger.
Upon you it will be kindled.”
- 15 You who know, *O* Yahweh, remember me, and attend to me,
and take revenge for me against my persecutors in your forbearance.
You must take me away.
Know *that I am* carrying disgrace because of you.
- 16 Your words were found and I ate them,
and your words became to me as jubilation,
even as the joy of my heart,
for your name is called on me, *O* Yahweh God of hosts.
- 17 I sat not in the assembly of jokers,
nor did I exult.
Because of the presence of your hand I sat alone,
for you filled me *with* indignation.
- 18 Why is my pain endless, and my wound incurable?
It refuses to become healed.
Truly you are to me like a deceitful *brook*,
waters *that* are not trustworthy.

God Rebukes Jeremiah

19 Therefore thus says Yahweh,

“If you turn back, then I will take you back.
You will stand before me.
And if you utter *what is* precious and not *what is* worthless,
you will be as my mouth.
They will turn back to you,
and you will not turn back to them.

- 20 And I will make you to this people
a wall of fortified bronze,
and they will fight against you,
but they will not prevail over you,
for *I am* with you, to save you,
and to deliver you,” declares Yahweh.
- 21 “And I will deliver you from the hand of the wicked,
and I will redeem you from *the* hand of *the* tyrant.”

Jeremiah's Prophecy to Judah—Threats and Promises (c. 620–609 BC)

Jeremiah 16

Jeremiah Forbidden to Marry

- 1 And the word of Yahweh came to me, saying,
2 “You shall not take for yourself a wife, there shall not be for you sons and daughters in this place.”
3 For thus says Yahweh concerning the sons and concerning the daughters born in this place, and concerning their mothers who gave birth to them, and concerning their fathers who fathered them in this land:
4 “They will die by diseases, they will not be mourned, and they will not be buried. They will be as dung on the face of the earth. And

they will perish by the sword and they will perish by the famine. And their dead bodies will become food for the birds of the air, and for the wild animals of the earth.”

Jeremiah Forbidden to Mourn or Feast

5 For thus says Yahweh, “You must not enter *the* house of *the* funeral meal, and you must not go to lament, and you must not show sympathy for them, for I have taken away my peace from this people,” declares Yahweh, “the loyal love and the compassion.

6 Both the great and small will die in this land. They will not be buried, and they will not mourn for them, and no one will cut himself with a blade, and no one will shave himself for them.

7 And they will not break bread for *the* mourning ceremony for them, to comfort him because of *the* dead. And they will not give drink to them, *the* cup of desolation, for their fathers, or for their mothers.

8 And you shall not enter *the* house of *the* banquet, to sit with them, to eat and drink.”

Judah’s Coming Punishment

9 For thus says Yahweh of hosts, the God of Israel, “Look, I *am* about to cause to disappear from this place, before your eyes and in your days, *the* voice of jubilation, and *the* voice of joy, and *the* voice of *the* bridegroom, and *the* voice of *the* bride.

10 And then when you tell this people all these words and they ask you, ‘Why has Yahweh pronounced against us all this great evil, and what *is* our iniquity, and what *is* our sin that we have sinned against Yahweh our God?’

11 Then you shall say to them, ‘Because your ancestors have forsaken me,’ declares Yahweh, ‘and they have gone after other gods, and they have served them, and they have bowed down in worship to them, and they have forsaken me, and they have not kept my laws.

12 And you have behaved badly more than your ancestors, and look, you *are* going each one after the stubbornness of his evil heart, without listening to me.

13 So I will throw you from this land to the land that you have not known, you or your ancestors, and there you will serve other gods day and night, for I will not show you favor.

God Foresees a Future Restoration

14 Therefore look, days *are* coming,’ declares Yahweh, ‘and it will no longer be said, “As Yahweh lives, who led up the Israelites from the land of Egypt,”

15 but only “As Yahweh lives, who led up the Israelites from *the* land of *the* north, and from all the lands where he had driven them,” for I will bring them back to their ground that I gave to their ancestors.

Futility of Hiding from God

16 Look, I *am* sending for many fishermen,’ declares Yahweh, ‘and they will fish them out, and afterward I will send for many hunters, and they will hunt them from every mountain, and from every hill, and from the clefts of the cliffs.

17 For my eyes *are* on all their ways, they are not hidden from before me, and their iniquity is not concealed from before my eyes.

18 And I will first doubly repay their iniquity and their sin because of their profaning my land with the dead bodies of their abhorrences, and *with* their abominations they have filled up my inheritance.”

All Nations Will One Day Acknowledge the Lord

19 O Yahweh, my strength, and my stronghold,
and my refuge in *the* day of distress,
to you *the* nations will come from the ends of *the* earth,
and they will say, “Our ancestors have inherited only lies,
vanity, and there is no profit in them.

20 Can a human make for himself gods?
Yet they *are* not gods!”

21 “Therefore look, I *am* about to let them know,
this time I am going to let them know
my power and my might,
and they will know that my name *is* Yahweh.”

Jeremiah's Prophecy to Judah—Further Warnings and Exhortations (c. 620–609 BC)

Jeremiah 17

Judah's Indelible Sin

- 1 “The sin of Judah *is* written with an iron stylus,
with a point of diamond *it is* engraved
on the tablet of their heart,
and on the horns of their altars.
- 2 As the remembering of their children,
so is the remembering of their altars
and their poles of Asherah worship
beside *the* leafy trees on *the* high hills.
- 3 O my mountain in the open country,
I will give your wealth, all your treasures, for spoil,
your high places, because of *your* sin,
throughout all your territories.
- 4 And you will let go your hand from your inheritance
that I gave to you,
and I will make you serve your enemies
in the land that you do not know,
for you kindled a fire in my anger,
until eternity it will be kindled.”

A Choice of Curse or Blessing

5 Thus says Yahweh,

- “Cursed *is* the person who trusts in humankind
and makes flesh his strength,
and turns aside his heart from Yahweh.
- 6 And he will be like a juniper in the wilderness,
and he will not see when good comes,
and he will dwell *in the* parched places in the desert,
in a land of salt flats, where no one lives.
 - 7 Blessed be the person who trusts in Yahweh,
and Yahweh is his trust.
 - 8 For he will be like a tree planted by water,
and to *the* stream it sends its roots,
and it will not fear when heat comes,
and its leaves will be luxuriant,
and in *the* year of drought it will not be anxious,
and it will not cease from the bearing of fruit. [cf. [Ps 1:3](#)]

The Incurable Condition of the Human Heart

- 9 The heart *is* deceitful more than anything else,
and it *is* disastrous. Who can understand it?
- 10 I, Yahweh, examine *the* mind,
I test *the* heart,
and give to each one according to his way,
according to the fruit of his deeds.
- 11 *Like* a partridge that hatches eggs it did not lay
is one who amasses wealth without justice.
In the middle of his days it will leave him,
and at his end he will *prove to* be a fool.”

Jeremiah's Appeal for Vindication

- 12 A lofty throne of glory from the beginning
is the place of our sanctuary.
- 13 O Yahweh, the hope of Israel,
all *those who* forsake you will be put to shame,

and *those who* turn aside from you in the earth will be recorded,
for they have forsaken the fountain of living water, Yahweh.

- 14 Heal me, O Yahweh, and I will be healed,
save me, and I will be saved,
for you *are* my praise.
- 15 Look, they *are* saying to me,
“Where *is* the word of Yahweh?
Please let it come.”
- 16 But I, I have not run away from being a shepherd who follows you,
and I have not desired the disastrous day.
You, you know the pronouncement of my lips,
it was before your face.
- 17 You must not become to me a terror,
you *are* my refuge in *the* day of disaster.
- 18 Let my persecutors be put to shame,
but as for me, *do* not let me be put to shame.
Let them be dismayed,
but as for me, *do* not let me be dismayed.
Bring on them the day of disaster,
and *with* double destruction, destroy them.

Warning About Sabbath Observance

- 19 Thus said Yahweh to me, “Go, and you must stand in the People’s Gate through which the kings of Judah enter, and through which they go out, and in all the gates of Jerusalem.
- 20 And you must say to them, ‘Hear the word of Yahweh, kings of Judah, and all Judah, and all the inhabitants of Jerusalem who enter through these gates.
- 21 Thus says Yahweh, “Be on your guard for the sake of yourselves, that you must not carry a burden on the day of the Sabbath, and you must *not* bring *it* through the gates of Jerusalem.
- 22 And you must not carry a burden from your houses on the day of the Sabbath, and you must not do any work. But you must declare holy the day of Sabbath, just as I commanded your ancestors.
- 23 Yet they did not listen, and they did not incline their ear, and they hardened their neck *so as* to not hear, nor to receive discipline.
- 24 “And it will happen, if you carefully listen to me,” declares Yahweh, “to bring no burden through the gates of this city on the day of the Sabbath, but to declare holy the day of Sabbath, not to do on it any work,
- 25 then kings and officials who sit on the throne of David will enter through the gates of this city riding in chariots and on horses, they, and their officials, the people of Judah, and the inhabitants of Jerusalem, and this city will be inhabited forever.
- 26 And they will come from the towns of Judah, and from all around Jerusalem, and from the land of Benjamin, and from the Shephelah, and from the hill country, and from the Negev, bringing burnt offerings, and sacrifices, and grain offerings, and frankincense, and bringing thank offerings *to* the house of Yahweh.
- 27 But if you do not listen to me, to declare holy the day of the Sabbath, and to not carry a burden and enter through the gates of Jerusalem on the day of the Sabbath, then I will kindle a fire in its gates, and it will devour the palaces of Jerusalem, and it will not be quenched.” ”

Jeremiah’s Prophecy to Judah—The Visit to the Potter (c. 620–609 BC)

Jeremiah 18

The Message of the Potter

- 1 The word that came to Jeremiah from Yahweh, saying,
2 “Stand up and go down *to* the house of the potter, and there I will let you hear my words.”
3 So I went down *to* the house of the potter and look, there he was doing work at the potter’s wheels.
4 And the vessel that he *was* making with the clay was spoiled in the hand of the potter, so he made again another vessel, as it was right in the eyes of the potter to make.
5 And the word of Yahweh came to me, saying,
6 “Like this potter, am I not able to do to you, O house of Israel?” declares Yahweh. “Look, like the clay in the hand of the potter, so *are* you in my hand, O house of Israel.
7 One moment I speak concerning a nation or concerning a kingdom, to uproot, and to tear down, and to destroy *it*.
8 But *if* that nation turns back from its evil that I have threatened against it, then I will relent concerning the disaster that I planned to do to it.
9 And the *next* moment I speak concerning a nation or concerning a kingdom, to build, and to plant *it*.”

10 But *if* it does evil in my sight, to not listen to my voice, then I will relent concerning the good that I said I would do *to* it.

11 “So now then, say, please, to the people of Judah and to the inhabitants of Jerusalem, saying, ‘Thus says Yahweh, “Look, I *am* preparing evil against you, and I *am* planning a plan against you. Please turn back, each one from his evil way, and walk rightly *in* your ways and your deeds.”’

12 But they will say, ‘*It is* hopeless, for we will go after our *own* plans, and each one of us will act *according to* the stubbornness of his evil heart.’

Punishment of a Forgetful People

13 “Therefore thus says Yahweh,

‘Please ask among the nations, “Who has heard the like of this?”

The virgin of Israel has done something very horrible.

14 Does the snow of Lebanon leave from *the* crags of Sirion?

Or are *the* cold waters flowing from distant mountains dried up?

15 But my people have forgotten me.

They make smoke offerings to the idols,

and they caused them to stumble in their ways, *the* ancient ways,
to go *into* bypaths, not *one that* is built up.

16 To make their land a horror,

an object of whistling for eternity.

All *who* pass by it will be appalled,

and he will shake his head.

17 Like the wind from the east

I will scatter them before *the* enemy.

I will show them *my* back and not *my* face

in the day of their disaster.”

A Plot against Jeremiah

18 Then they said, “Come and let us plan plans against Jeremiah, for instruction will not be lost from *the* priest, nor advice from *the* wise man, nor *the* word from *the* prophet. Come and let us bring charges against him, and let us not listen attentively to any of his words.”

19 Listen attentively to me, O Yahweh,
and listen to *the* voice of my opponents.

20 Should good be repaid in place of evil?

Yet they have dug a pit for me.

Remember my standing before you to speak good for them,
to avert your wrath from them.

21 Therefore give their children to the famine,

and hand them over to *the* power of *the* sword,

and let their wives be bereaved and widows,

and let their men be killed by death,

their young men struck dead

by the sword in the battle.

22 Let a cry for help be heard from their houses

when you suddenly bring upon them *the* raiding band,

for they have dug a pit to catch me,

and they have fixed secretly a trap for my feet.

23 But you, O Yahweh, you know

all their plans of assassination against me.

You must not make atonement for their iniquity,

and you must not cause their sin to be blotted out from before you.

But let them be overthrown before you.

Deal with them in the time of your anger.

Jeremiah's Prophecy to Judah—Lessons from a Broken Clay Jar (c. 620–609 BC)

Jeremiah 19

Assembling at the Valley of Ben Hinnom

- 1 Thus said Yahweh, "Go and buy a potter's earthenware jar, and *take* some of the elders of the people, and some of the leaders of the priests,
- 2 and go out to the Valley of Ben Hinnom, which *is at* the entrance of the Gate of the Potsherd, and proclaim there the words that I speak to you.
- 3 And you shall say, 'Hear the word of Yahweh, O kings of Judah and inhabitants of Jerusalem. Thus says Yahweh of hosts, the God of Israel: "Look, I *am* about to bring disaster upon this place so that everyone who hears it, his ears will ring.
- 4 Because they have forsaken me, and they have defaced this place, and they have made smoke offerings in it to other gods whom they have not known, they, nor their ancestors, nor the kings of Judah, and they have filled up this place *with the blood of the* innocent,
- 5 and they have built the high places of Baal, to burn their children in the fire, burnt offerings to Baal, which I commanded not, and I ordered not, and it did not come to my mind.
- 6 "Therefore look, days *are* about to come," declares Yahweh, "when this place will no longer be called Topheth or the Valley of Ben Hinnom, but the Valley of the Slaughter.
- 7 And I will lay waste the plans of Judah and Jerusalem in this place, and I will bring them to ruin by the sword before their enemies, and by the hand of those who seek their life, and I will give their dead bodies as food to the birds of heaven and to the animals of the earth.
- 8 And I will make this city a horror, and *an object of* hissing, everyone *who* passes by it will be appalled, and will hiss because of all its wounds.
- 9 And I will cause them to eat the flesh of their sons, and the flesh of their daughters, and each one will eat the flesh of his neighbor in *the* siege and in *the* distress which their enemies and those who seek their life inflict on them."

The Broken Jar and Its Symbolic Meaning

- 10 "Then you shall break the jar before the eyes of the men who go with you.
- 11 And you shall say to them, 'Thus says Yahweh of hosts: "So I will break this people and this city as one breaks the vessel of the potter, so that it is not able to be repaired again. And in Topheth they will bury until there is no room to bury.
- 12 Thus will I do to this place," declares Yahweh, "and to its inhabitants, to make this city like Topheth.
- 13 And the houses of Jerusalem and the houses of the kings of Judah will be unclean like the place of Topheth, all the houses where they made smoke offerings upon their roofs to all the host of heaven, and *where* they poured out libations to other gods." "'
- 14 Then Jeremiah came from Topheth, where Yahweh had sent him to prophesy, and he stood in the courtyard of the house of Yahweh and said to all the people,
- 15 "Thus says Yahweh of hosts, the God of Israel, 'Look, I *am* about to bring to this city and upon all its towns all the disaster that I have pronounced against it, because they have hardened their neck to not hear my words.'"

Jeremiah's Prophecy to Judah—Jeremiah's Humiliation and Despair (c. 620–609 BC)

Jeremiah 20

Pashhur's Punishment of Jeremiah

- 1 Now Pashhur, the son of Immer, the priest *who was* officer in charge in the temple of Yahweh, heard Jeremiah prophesying these things.
- 2 Then Pashhur struck Jeremiah the prophet and put him in the stocks that *were* in the upper Gate of Benjamin, which *was* by the temple of Yahweh.
- 3 And then on the next day, when Pashhur brought Jeremiah out from the stocks, Jeremiah said to him, "Yahweh will not call your name Pashhur, but Terror From All Around.
- 4 For thus says Yahweh, 'Look, I *am* making you a terror to yourself and to all your friends, and they will fall by the sword of their enemies, and your eyes *will be* seeing *it*. And all Judah I will give into the hand of the king of Babylon, and he will deport them *to* Babylon, and he will strike them with the sword.
- 5 And I will give all the wealth of this city, and all its acquisitions, and all its precious items, and all of the treasures of the kings of Judah I will give into the hand of their enemies, and they will plunder them, and they will seize them, and they will bring them *to* Babylon.
- 6 And you, Pashhur, and all *those who* live *in* your house will go into captivity, and you will go *to* Babylon, and there you will die, and there you will be buried, you, and all your friends to whom you have prophesied falsely.'"

Jeremiah Bemoans His Lot

- 7 You have persuaded me, O Yahweh, and I was persuaded.
You have overpowered me, and you have prevailed.

I have become a laughingstock all day *long*.

Everyone *is* mocking me.

8 For as often as I speak,
I must cry out violence and destruction.
I must shout, for the word of Yahweh has become for me
a disgrace and derision all day *long*.

9 But *if* I say, "I will not mention him
and I will no longer speak in his name,"
then it becomes in my heart like a fire burning,
locked up in my bones,
and I struggle to contain *it*,
and I am not able.

10 For I hear the rumor of many,
"Terror *is* from all around, denounce *him*,
yes, let us denounce him!"
All my close friends *are* watchers of my stumbling,
saying, "perhaps he can be persuaded,
and we can prevail over him,
and we can take our revenge on him."

Jeremiah Prays for Vengeance

11 But Yahweh *is* with me like a powerful warrior.
Therefore my persecutors will stumble and will not prevail.
They will be very ashamed, for they will not achieve success.
Their everlasting insult will not be forgotten.

12 Yet, O Yahweh of hosts, who tests *the* righteous,
who sees *the* heart and *the* mind,
let me see your retribution upon them,
for to you I have revealed my legal case.

13 Sing to Yahweh, praise Yahweh,
for he has delivered *the* life of *the* poor from *the* hand of evildoers.

Jeremiah's Curses the Day of His Birth (Echoes of Job)

14 Cursed be *the* day *on* which I was born,
let not the day *on* which my mother gave birth to me be blessed.

15 Cursed be the man who brought the news *to* my father,
saying, "A child is born to you, a son!"
and he made him very glad.

16 And let that man be like the cities
that Yahweh demolished without regret,
and let him hear a cry for help in the morning,
and an alarm at the time of noon.

17 Because he did not kill me in *the* womb,
so that my mother would have been for me my grave,
and *her* womb *would be* pregnant forever.

18 Why did I come out from *the* womb,
to see toil, and sorrow, and *to* end my days in shame?

The Death of Josiah (Tammuz [July] 609 BC)

| 2 Kings 23:28–30 | 2 Chronicles 35:20–36:1 |
|---|---|
| <p>29 In his days, Pharaoh Neco, king of Egypt, went up against the king of Assyria at the Euphrates River. King Josiah went to meet him,</p> <p>and he killed him at Megiddo as soon as he saw him.</p> <p>30a So his servants drove him dead in a chariot from Megiddo, and they brought him to Jerusalem and buried him in his tomb.</p> <p>28 The remainder of the acts of Josiah and all that he did, <i>are</i> they not written on the scroll of the events of the days of the kings of Judah?</p> <p>30b Then the people of the land took Jehoahaz the son of Josiah and anointed him and made him king in place of his father.</p> | <p>35:20 After all of this that Josiah had prepared <i>for</i> the temple, Neco the king of Egypt went up to make war at Carchemish on the Euphrates, and Josiah went up to meet him.</p> <p>21 And he sent messengers to him, saying, “What is there between us, O king of Judah? <i>I am</i> not against you yourself this day, but against the house making war against me. And God has commanded me to make haste. Stop <i>opposing</i> God, who <i>is</i> with me that he will not destroy you.”</p> <p>22 But Josiah did not turn his face from him, but he disguised himself to fight with him. He did not listen to the words of Neco from the mouth of God, and he went out to fight in the plain of Megiddo.</p> <p>23 And the archers shot King Josiah, and the king said to his servants, “Take me away, for I am badly wounded.”</p> <p>24 So his servants took him out of the chariot and transported him in his second chariot and brought him to Jerusalem. And he died and was buried in the burial sites of his ancestors. And all Judah and Jerusalem mourned over Josiah.</p> <p>25 And Jeremiah uttered a lament for Josiah, and all the male and female singers have spoken in their laments about Josiah to this day. And they made them a requirement in Israel, and behold, they are written in the laments.</p> <p>26 Now the remainder of the words of Josiah and his loyal love <i>for</i> what is written in the law of Yahweh</p> <p>27 and his words, <i>from</i> the first <i>to</i> the last, behold, they are written in the scroll of the kings of Israel and Judah.</p> <p>36:1 And the people of the land took Jehoahaz the son of Josiah and made him king in place of his father in Jerusalem.</p> |

Jehoahaz, Josiah’s Son, Assumes the Throne of Judah (Tammuz [July] 609 BC)

| 2 Kings 23:31–32 | 2 Chronicles 36:2 |
|---|---|
| <p>31 Jehoahaz was twenty-three years old when he became king, and he reigned three months in Jerusalem. The name of his mother <i>was</i> Hamutal the daughter of Jeremiah from Libnah.</p> <p>32 He did evil in the eyes of Yahweh according to all his ancestors had done.</p> | <p>2 Jehoahaz <i>was</i> twenty-three years old when he began to reign, and he reigned three months in Jerusalem.</p> |

Pharaoh Necho II Exiles Jehoahaz to Egypt (Tishri [October] 609 BC)

| 2 Kings 23:33–35 | 2 Chronicles 36:3–4 |
|--|---|
| <p>33 Then Pharaoh Neco confined him at Riblah in the land of Hamath, from reigning in Jerusalem, and imposed a levy on the land of a hundred talents of silver and a talent of gold.</p> <p>34 Then Pharaoh Neco made Eliakim the son of Josiah king in place of Josiah his father, and he changed his name to Jehoiakim. Then he took Jehoahaz and brought <i>him</i> to Egypt, and he died there.</p> | <p>3 Then the king of Egypt deposed him in Jerusalem and laid a tribute upon the land <i>of</i> one hundred talents of silver and one talent of gold.</p> <p>4 And the king of Egypt made Eliakim his brother king over Judah and Jerusalem, and he changed his name to Jehoiakim. But Neco took Jehoahaz his brother and brought him to Egypt.</p> |

35 The silver and the gold Jehoiakim gave to Pharaoh; however, he taxed the land to give the silver to meet the demands of Pharaoh. Each according to assessment, he exacted *payment* of the silver and the gold from the people of the land to give to Pharaoh Neco.

Jehoiakim, Jehoahaz's Brother, Assumes the Throne of Judah (Tishri [October] 609 BC)

2 Kings 23:36–37

2 Chronicles 36:5

36 Jehoiakim was twenty-five years old when he became king, and he reigned eleven years in Jerusalem.
The name of his mother *was* Zebudah, the daughter of Pedaiah from Rumah.
37 He did evil in the eyes of Yahweh according to all that his ancestors had done.

5 Jehoiakim *was* twenty-five years old when he began to reign, and he reigned eleven years in Jerusalem.

And he did evil in the eyes of Yahweh his God.

Jeremiah's Prophecy to Judah—A Tale of Three Kings (609/608 BC)

Jeremiah 22

A Message for King Jehoiakim and Jerusalem

1 Thus says Yahweh: "Go down *to* the house of the king of Judah and you must speak this word there.

2 And you must say, 'Hear the word of Yahweh, O king of Judah, who sits on the throne of David, you, and your servants, and your people who enter through these gates.

3 Thus says Yahweh, "Act *with* justice and righteousness, and deliver *the* one who has been seized from the hand of *the* oppressor. And you must not oppress *the* immigrant, *the* orphan, and *the* widow. And you must not shed innocent blood in this place.

4 And if you indeed obey this word, then kings who sit for David on his throne will enter through the gates of this house, riding in chariots and on horses, he, and his servants, and his people.

5 But if you do not obey these words, I swear by myself," declares Yahweh, "that this house will become a site of ruins." "

6 For thus says Yahweh concerning the house of the king of Judah,

"You *are like* Gilead to me,
like the head of the Lebanon.
Surely I will make you a desert,
like cities *that* are not inhabited.

7 And I will consecrate against you destroyers,
everyone with his weapons,
and they will cut down your choicest cedars,
and cast *them* on the fire.

8 And many nations will pass by this city and they will say each one to his neighbor, 'Why has Yahweh done in this manner to this great city?'

9 Then they will answer, 'Because they abandoned the covenant of Yahweh their God, and bowed down in worship to other gods, and served them.'"

Judgment on Shallum (Jehoahaz)

10 You must not weep for *the* dead person [Josiah],
and you must not show sympathy for him.
Weep bitterly for the one who goes away, [Jehoahaz].
for he will not return, or see the land of his birth again.

11 For thus says Yahweh concerning Shallum, the son of Josiah, the king of Judah, who reigned as king in place of Josiah his father, who went out from this place: "He will not return here again.

12 But in *the* place where they have deported him, there he will die, and he will not see this land again.

Judgment on Jehoiakim

13 Woe *to the one who* builds his house without righteousness,
and his upper rooms without justice.
His fellow countryman, he works for nothing,

- and he does not give to him his wages.
- 14 Who says 'I will build for myself
a spacious house with large upper rooms,'
and he cuts windows for it,
and *it is* paneled with cedar,
and he paints *it* with vermilion.
- 15 Do you reign as king because you *are* competing in cedar?
Did not your father eat and drink,
and he did justice and righteousness,
then it was well with him?
- 16 He judged *the* legal cause of *the* needy and *the* poor,
and then it was well.
Is that not what it means to know me?" declares Yahweh.
- 17 "But there is nothing *in* your eyes and your heart
except your unlawful gain,
and on shedding the blood of the innocent,
and on committing oppression and extortion."
- 18 Therefore thus says Yahweh concerning Jehoiakim, the son of Josiah, the king of Judah:

"They will not lament for him,
'Alas, my brother,' or 'Alas, sister.'
They will not lament for him,
'Alas, lord,' or 'alas, his majesty.'

- 19 He will be buried *with* the burial of a donkey.
He will be dragged away and thrown outside the gates of Jerusalem.

The Consequences of Jerusalem's Disobedience

- 20 Go up *to* Lebanon and cry out,
and in Bashan lift up your voice,
and cry out from Abarim,
for all your lovers are shattered.
- 21 I spoke to you in the times you were secure,
and you said, 'I will not listen!'
This *was* your way from your youth,
for you have not obeyed my voice.
- 22 All your shepherds will shepherd *the* wind,
and your lovers will go into captivity.
Yes, then you will be ashamed and humiliated
because of all your wickedness.
- 23 Inhabitants of Lebanon,
nestled among the cedars,
how you will groan when labor pains come to you,
fear and pain as the *woman who* gives birth.

The Future Fate of Jeconiah (Jehoiachin)

- 24 "As I live," declares Yahweh, "surely if Coniah, the son of Jehoiakim, the king of Judah, were *the* seal on my right hand, surely from there I would wrench you off.
- 25 And I would give you into the hand of those who seek your life, and into the hand of those from whom you *are* frightened by their presence, and into the hand of Nebuchadnezzar, the king of Babylon, and into the hand of the Chaldeans.
- 26 And I will throw you and your mother who gave birth to you to another country where you were not born, and there you will die.
- 27 As for the land to which they are longing to return, they will not return.
- 28 *Is* this man Coniah a despised, shattered vessel?
Or a vessel *in which* there is no delight?
Why are he and his offspring thrown far,
and cast away to the land that they do not know?"

29 O land, land, land, hear the word of Yahweh.

30 Thus says Yahweh:

“Record this man *as* childless,
a man *who* will not succeed in his days,
for no man from his offspring will succeed *him*,
sitting on the throne of David and ruling again in Judah.”

Jeremiah’s Prophecy to Judah—Promise of a Better Day (609/608 BC)

Jeremiah 23:1–8

Wicked Shepherds and Their Fate

1 “Woe *to the* shepherds who destroy and scatter the flock of my pasture,” declares Yahweh.

2 Therefore thus says Yahweh, the God of Israel concerning the shepherds who shepherd my people, “You yourselves have scattered my flock, and you have driven them away, and you do not attend to them. Look, I *will* punish you *for* the evil of your deeds,” declares Yahweh.

The Coming Righteous King—Jesus

3 “Then I myself will gather together the remnant of my flock from all the lands where I have driven them, and I will bring them back to their grazing place, and they will be fruitful, and they will become numerous.

4 And I will raise up over them shepherds, and they will shepherd them, and they will no longer fear, and they will not be dismayed, and they will not be missing,” declares Yahweh.

5 “Look, days *are* coming,” declares Yahweh,
“when I will raise up for David a righteous branch,
and he will reign *as* king, and he will achieve success,
and he will do justice and righteousness in the land.

6 In his days Judah will be saved,
and Israel will dwell in safety,
and this *is* his name *by* which he will be called:
‘Yahweh *is* our righteousness.’

7 “Therefore look, days *are* coming,” declares Yahweh, “when they will no longer say, ‘As Yahweh lives, who led up the Israelites from the land of Egypt,’

8 but ‘As Yahweh lives, who led up, and who brought the offspring of the house of Israel from *the* land *of the* north and from all the lands where he had driven them.’ Then they will live in their land.”

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Jeremiah's Prophecy to Judah—Condemnation of False Prophets (609/608 BC)

Jeremiah 23:9–40

Condemnation of Godless Prophets and Priests

9 Concerning the prophets:

My heart is broken in my midst.

All my bones tremble.

I have become like a drunken man,
even like a man over whom wine has passed,
because of Yahweh,
and because of his holy words.

10 For the land is full *of* adulterers;
for the land mourns because of a curse.

The pastures of *the* desert are dry,
and their evil has been their way of running,
and their power *is* not right.

11 “For both prophet as well as priest are godless,
even in my temple I have found their wickedness,” declares Yahweh.

12 “Therefore their way will be to them like the slippery places,
they will be pushed in the darkness,
and they will fall into it,
for I will bring disaster on them *in* the year of their punishment,” declares Yahweh.

Evil Prophets of Samaria Compared to Prophets of Jerusalem

13 “Now in the prophets of Samaria I saw a disgusting thing.
They prophesied by Baal and they caused my people Israel to err.

14 And in the prophets of Jerusalem I have seen something horrible.
They commit adultery, and they walk in lies,
and they make strong *the* hands of evildoers,
so that they have not turned back each from his wickedness.
All of them have become to me like Sodom,
and its inhabitants like Gomorrah.”

15 Therefore thus says Yahweh concerning the prophets,

“Look, I *am* going to let them eat wormwood
and I will give them water of poison to drink,
for from the prophets of Jerusalem
went out ungodliness to all the land.”

God Warns Judah to Reject the Message of the False Prophets

16 Thus says Yahweh of hosts,

“You must not listen to the words of the prophets who prophesy to you.
They *are* deluding you *with* visions of their mind,
They do not speak from the mouth of Yahweh.

17 *They are* continually saying to those who disregard the word of Yahweh,
‘Peace it will be to you,’
and *to* each one who walks in the stubbornness of his heart they say,
‘Calamity will not come upon you.’

18 For who has stood in the council of Yahweh,
that he has seen and heard his word?
Who has listened attentively *to* his word and heard *it*?

19 Look, the storm of Yahweh has gone forth *in* wrath,
even a whirling tempest.
It will whirl upon *the* head of *the* wicked.

20 The anger of Yahweh will not turn back
until his doing and until his keeping the plans of his mind.

In latter days you will look closely at it *with* understanding.

- 21 I have not sent the prophets, yet they ran.
I have not spoken to them, yet they prophesied.
- 22 But if they had stood in my council,
then they would have proclaimed my words *to* my people,
and they would have caused them to turn from their evil way,
and from the evil of their deeds.
- 23 *Am* I a God from near," declares Yahweh,
"and not a God from far?
- 24 Or can a person hide himself in secret places
and I cannot see him?" declares Yahweh.
"*Do* I not fill up the heaven and the earth?" declares Yahweh.

God's Rejection of the Lying Prophets

- 25 "I have heard what the prophets who prophesy lies have said in my name, saying, 'I have dreamed! I have dreamed!'
26 How long *will* this be in the hearts of the prophets who prophesy lies, even the prophets of the deceitfulness of their hearts,
27 who plan to make my people forget my name by their dreams that they tell each one to his neighbor, just as their ancestors
forgot my name through Baal?
28 The prophet who *has* with him a dream, let him tell *the* dream. But *the prophet* who *has* my word with him, let him speak my
word faithfully. What is straw compared to wheat?" declares Yahweh.
- 29 "*Is* not my word like fire?" declares Yahweh, "and like a blacksmith's hammer *that* breaks a rock into pieces?
30 "Therefore look, I *am* against the prophets," declares Yahweh, "who steal my words each one from his neighbor.
31 Look, I *am* against the prophets," declares Yahweh, "who take their tongues and declare as prophets, '*Yahweh* declares.'
32 Look, I *am* against those who prophesy dreams of lies," declares Yahweh, "and tell them, and they caused my people to err
through their lies, and in their recklessness, when I myself have not sent them nor commanded them, so they profit not this people
at all," declares Yahweh.

The Burden of the Lord

- 33 "Now when this people, or a prophet, or a priest, ask you, 'What *is* the burden of Yahweh?' then you shall say to them,
'You are the burden, and I will forsake you,'" declares Yahweh.
- 34 "And the prophet, and the priest, and the people who say, 'The burden of Yahweh,' I will punish that man and his house.
35 Thus you shall say, each one to his neighbor and each one to his brother: 'What has Yahweh answered?' or, 'What has Yahweh
spoken?'
36 But you shall not mention the burden of Yahweh, for the burden is to each one his word, and so you twist the words of *the* living
God, Yahweh of hosts, our God.
37 Thus you shall say to that prophet, 'What has Yahweh answered you?' or, 'What has Yahweh spoken?'
38 But if you say, 'The burden of Yahweh,' therefore thus says Yahweh, 'because of your saying these words, "The burden of
Yahweh," then I will send to you, saying, "You shall not say, 'The burden of Yahweh.''"'
39 Therefore look, here I am, and I will surely lift you up and forsake you and the city that I gave to you and to your ancestors from
my presence,
40 and I will bring upon you an everlasting disgrace and an everlasting shame that will not be forgotten."

Jeremiah Calls on Jehoiakim and Judah to Repent (609/608 BC)

Jeremiah 26

Another Temple Sermon (see Jeremiah 7–10)

- 1 At the beginning of the reign of Jehoiakim the son of Josiah, the king of Judah, this word came from Yahweh, saying,
2 "Thus says Yahweh: 'Stand in the courtyard of the house of Yahweh, and you must speak to all the cities of Judah that come to
bow in worship *in* the house of Yahweh all the words that I command you to speak to them. You must not omit a word.
3 Perhaps they will listen and turn back each from his evil way, and I will relent of the disaster that I *am* planning to do to them
because of their evil deeds.
4 And you shall say to them, "Thus says Yahweh: 'If you will not listen to me, to walk in my law that I have set before you,
5 to listen to the words of my servants the prophets whom I have sent to you, over and over again, though you have not listened,
6 then I will make this house like Shiloh, and this city I will make a curse for all the nations of the earth.'" "

Arrest and Trial of Jeremiah

- 7 And the priests and the prophets and all the people heard Jeremiah speaking these words in the temple of Yahweh.
8 And then as Jeremiah finished speaking all that Yahweh had commanded *him* to speak to all the people, then the priests and the

prophets and all the people laid hold of him, saying, “You will die!

9 Why have you prophesied in the name of Yahweh, saying, ‘This house will be like Shiloh, and this city will be in ruins, without inhabitant?’” And all the people gathered around Jeremiah in the temple of Yahweh.

10 When the officials of Judah heard these things, they came up from the house of the king to the temple of Yahweh, and they sat in the entrance of the New Gate of Yahweh’s temple.

11 Then the priests and the prophets said to the officials and to all the people, saying, “This man deserves the death sentence, because he has prophesied against this city as that *which* you have heard with your ears.”

12 Then Jeremiah said to all the officials and to all the people, saying, “Yahweh sent me to prophesy against this house and against this city all the words that you have heard.

13 Now therefore amend your ways and your deeds, and obey the voice of Yahweh your God, and Yahweh will relent of the disaster that he has spoken over you.

14 But *as for* me, look, I *am* in your hand, do to me what *is* good and right in your eyes.

15 Only you must certainly know that if you put me to death, you will bring on yourselves innocent blood, and on this city and on its inhabitants, for truly Yahweh sent me to you to speak all these words in your ears.”

16 Then the officials and all the people said to the priests and to the prophets, “This man does not deserve a sentence of death, for in the name of Yahweh our God, he has spoken to us.”

17 Then men from the elders of the land arose and said to all the assembly of the people, saying,

18 “Micah the Morashtite was prophesying in the days of Hezekiah, the king of Judah, and he said to all the people of Judah, saying:

‘Thus says Yahweh of hosts,

“Zion will be plowed as a field,

and Jerusalem will become a heap of ruins,

and the mountain of the temple as high places of wood.”’ [\[Mic 3:12\]](#)

19 *Did* Hezekiah, the king of Judah, and all Judah actually put him to death? *Was he* not in fear of Yahweh? And he entreated the face of Yahweh, and Yahweh relented of the disaster that he had spoken against them. But we *are* about to do great disaster to ourselves.”

Arrest and Slaying of Uriah the Prophet

20 Indeed, there also was a man prophesying in the name of Yahweh, Uriah, the son of Shemaiah, from Kiriath-Jearim, and he prophesied against this city and against this land like all the words of Jeremiah.

21 And when King Jehoiakim, and all his warriors, and all the officials heard his words, then the king sought to put him to death. But Uriah heard, and he was afraid, and he fled and went to Egypt.

22 Then King Jehoiakim sent men to Egypt. Elnathan, the son of Achbor, and men with him went to Egypt.

23 And they brought out Uriah from Egypt and they brought him to King Jehoiakim, and he struck him down with the sword, and he threw his dead body into the burial sites of the sons of the people.

Jeremiah is Released

24 However, the hand of Ahikam the son of Shaphan was with Jeremiah, so that he was not given into the hand of the people to put him to death.

Jeremiah Warns Judah About the Coming Babylonian Attack (early 605 BC)

Jeremiah 25

Judah’s Refusal to Listen to the Prophets

1 The word that came to Jeremiah concerning all the people of Judah in the fourth year of Jehoiakim the son of Josiah, the king of Judah, that *was* the first year of Nebuchadnezzar the king of Babylon,

2 which Jeremiah the prophet spoke to all the people of Judah and to all the inhabitants of Jerusalem, saying,

3 “From *the* thirteenth year of Josiah, the son of Amon, the king of Judah, even up to this day, these twenty-three years the word of Yahweh has come to me, and I have spoken to you over and over again, but you have not listened.

4 And *though* Yahweh has sent all his servants the prophets to you over and over again you have not listened, and you have not inclined your ear to hear,

5 saying, ‘Turn back please, each one from his evil way, and from the evil of your deeds, and live on the land that Yahweh has given to you and to your ancestors from a long time back and until forever,

6 and you must not go after other gods to serve them, and to bow in worship to them, and you must not provoke me to anger with the work of your hands, then I will not do something bad to you.’

7 ‘Yet you have not listened to me,’ declares Yahweh, ‘so that you have provoked me to anger with the work of your hands for your own harm.’

Seventy Years of Punishment

8 Therefore thus says Yahweh of hosts, 'Because you have not obeyed my words,
 9 look, I *am* going to send and take all *the* clans of *the* north,' declares Yahweh, 'and I *will send* to Nebuchadnezzar the king of Babylon, my servant, and I will bring them against this land, and against its inhabitants, and against all these nations all around, and I will destroy them, and I will make them a horror, and *an object of hissing*, and everlasting ruins.
 10 And I will exterminate from them the sound of jubilation, and the sound of joy, *the voice of the bridegroom*, and *the voice of the bride*, *the sound of the millstones*, and *the light of the lamp*.
 11 And all this land will become a site of ruins, a desolation, and these nations will serve the king of Babylon seventy years.
 12 And then when *the* seventy years *are* fulfilled, I will punish the king of Babylon and that nation,' declares Yahweh, 'for their iniquity, and *the* land of *the* Chaldeans, and I will make it an everlasting waste.
 13 And I will bring upon that land all my words that I have spoken against it, everything that is written in this scroll which Jeremiah prophesied against all the nations.
 14 For many nations and great kings will let them work, even them, and I will repay them according to their deeds, and according to the work of their hands.'"

The Cup of God's Wrath

15 For thus said Yahweh, the God of Israel, to me, "Take this cup of the wine *of* wrath from my hand, and you must give it *to* all the nations to whom I *am* sending you to drink.
 16 And they will drink, and they will stagger, and they will act like madmen because of the presence of the sword that I *am* sending among them."
 17 So I took the cup from the hand of Yahweh and I gave *it to* all the nations to whom Yahweh sent me to drink:
 18 Jerusalem and the towns of Judah, and its kings, *and* its officials, to make them a site of ruins, a horror, an *object of hissing*, and a curse, as *it is* this day;
 19 Pharaoh, the king of Egypt, and his servants, and his officials, and all his people;
 20 and all the other people; and all the kings of the land of Uz; and all the kings of the land of *the* Philistines—Ashkelon, and Gaza, and Ekron, and the remnant of Ashdod;
 21 Edom, and Moab, and the Ammonites;
 22 and all the kings of Tyre, and all the kings of Sidon, and the kings of the coastland that *is* across the sea;
 23 and Dedan, and Tema, and Buz, and all those who are trimmed to *the* side;
 24 and all the kings of Arabia, and all the kings of the other people who dwell in the desert;
 25 and all the kings of Zimri, and all the kings of Elam, and all the kings of Media;
 26 and all the kings of the north, near and far, each one to his brother, and all the kingdoms of the world that *are* on the face of the earth; and the king of Sheshach, he will drink after them.
 27 "And you shall say to them, 'Thus says Yahweh of hosts, the God of Israel, "Drink and become drunk, and vomit, and fall, and you must not rise because of the presence of the sword that I *am* sending among you."
 28 And it will happen, if they refuse to take the cup from your hand to drink, then you shall say to them, 'Thus says Yahweh of hosts, "You must certainly drink!
 29 For look, on the city that is called by my name I *am* beginning to inflict harm, and you indeed, will you go unpunished? You will not go unpunished, for I *am* summoning a sword against all the inhabitants of the earth," declares Yahweh of hosts.'

God's Coming Judgment on All Nations

30 And you yourself shall prophesy against them all these words, and you shall say to them:

'Yahweh will roar from *on* high,
 and from his holy dwelling place he will give his voice.
 He will roar mightily against his settlement,
 a jubilant shout like those who tread *grapes*,
 he will answer against all the inhabitants of the earth.

31 *The* rage of battle will resound to the end of the earth,
 for *there is* a lawsuit of Yahweh against the nations.
 He *is* entering into judgment with all wicked flesh,
 he will give them to the sword,' declares Yahweh."

32 Thus says Yahweh of hosts,

"Look, disaster *is* going out from nation to nation,

- and a great tempest is stirred up from the farthest parts of *the* earth.
- 33 And the slain *ones* of Yahweh will be on that day
from *one* end of the earth to the *other* end of the earth,
and they will not be mourned,
and they will not be gathered,
and they will not be buried.
They will become like dung on the surface of the ground.
- 34 Wail, you shepherds, and cry out.
And roll about in mourning *in the dust*, O leaders of the flock.
For your days of slaughter and your dispersions have arrived,
and you will fall like a vessel of desire.
- 35 And flight will perish from the shepherds,
and escape from the leaders of the flock.
- 36 A sound, the cry of distress of the shepherds
and the wailing of the leaders of the flock,
for Yahweh *is* despoiling their pasture.
- 37 And the peaceful settlements are devastated
because of the burning anger of Yahweh.
- 38 He has left his den like a lion,
for their land has become a horror,
because of the anger of the oppressors,
and because of his burning anger.”

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Jeremiah's Prophecy Concerning the Nations: Egypt (early 605 BC)

Jeremiah 46

Introduction to Jeremiah's Messages Concerning the Nations

1 The word of Yahweh that came to Jeremiah the prophet concerning the nations.

Egypt's Defeat at Carchemish (605 BC)

2 Concerning Egypt: Concerning the army of Pharaoh Neco, the king of Egypt, which was by the Euphrates River at Carchemish, which Nebuchadnezzar the king of Babylon defeated in the fourth year of Jehoiakim the son of Josiah, the king of Judah.

- 3 "Prepare small shield and shield,
and approach for the battle!
- 4 Harness the horses and mount the steeds!
And take your stand with helmets!
Polish the spears!
Put on the body armor!
- 5 Why do I see them terrified?
They are turning back
and their warriors are beaten down.
And they have fled *to* a place of refuge
and they do not turn *back*.
Terror *is* from all around," declares Yahweh.
- 6 The swift cannot flee,
and the warrior cannot escape.
They have stumbled and they have fallen,
by the bank of the Euphrates River.
- 7 Who *is* this that rises like the Nile,
like the rivers whose waters surge?
- 8 Egypt rises like the Nile,
even like the rivers *whose* waters surge.
And he says, "Let me rise,
let me cover *the* earth,
let me destroy cities,
and the inhabitants in them."
- 9 Go up, O horses,
and drive madly, O chariots,
and let the warriors go forth;
Cush and Put, who wield *the* small shield,
and Lud, who wield *and* bend *the* bow.
- 10 For that day *is* to the Lord Yahweh of hosts
a day of retribution,
to take revenge on his foes.
And *the* sword will devour and be satisfied,
and it will drink its fill of their blood,
for a sacrifice *is* for the Lord Yahweh of hosts
in the land of *the* north by the Euphrates River.
- 11 Go up *to* Gilead and take balm,
O virgin of the daughter of Egypt.
In vain you make use of many medicines;
there is no healing for you.
- 12 *The* nations have heard your shame,
and your cry of lament fills the earth.
For warrior has stumbled against warrior,
together they have fallen, the two of them.

Nebuchadnezzar's Future Invasion of Egypt (568/7 BC)

13 The word that Yahweh spoke to Jeremiah the prophet about the coming of Nebuchadnezzar the king of Babylon to attack the land of Egypt:

- 14 “Declare in Egypt, and proclaim in Migdol,
and proclaim in Memphis and in Tahpanhes,
say, ‘Take your stand and be prepared,
for *the* sword will devour *those* all around you.’
- 15 Why are your bulls defeated?
He did not stand because Yahweh thrust him down.
- 16 He multiplied *the* ones stumbling.
Furthermore, each one fell to his neighbor,
and said, ‘Stand up, and let us return to our people
and to the land of our birth,
because of the presence of the sword of the oppressor.’
- 17 They will call there,
‘Pharaoh [Amasis], the king of Egypt *is but* a roar,
he missed the opportunity.’
- 18 As I live,” declares the king,
Yahweh of hosts *is* his name,
“one will come like Tabor among the mountains
and like Carmel by the sea.
- 19 Pack *your* baggage for exile,
O inhabitants of the daughter of Egypt,
for Memphis will become as a horror,
and it will be destroyed, without inhabitant.
- 20 Egypt *is* a beautiful heifer,
but a gadfly from *the* north *will* come against her.
- 21 Even her mercenaries in her midst *are* like calves of fattening,
for they also have turned away,
they have fled together.
They stand not,
for the day of their calamity has come,
the time of their punishment.
- 22 Her sound *is* like a snake *that* glides away,
for they march in force.
And with axes they come to her
like those who chop trees.
- 23 They will cut down her forest,” declares Yahweh,
“for it is impenetrable.
Yes, they are more numerous than locusts,
and they are without number.
- 24 The daughter of Egypt will be ashamed,
she will be given into the hand of *the* people of *the* north.”

A Word of Hope to Egypt

25 Yahweh of hosts, the God of Israel, said, “Look, I *am* going to punish Amon of Thebes, and Pharaoh, and Egypt, and her gods, and her kings, even Pharaoh and those who trust in him.

26 And I will give them into the hand of the seekers of their lives, and into the hand of Nebuchadnezzar the king of Babylon, and into the hand of his troops. But afterward it will *be* inhabited, as *in* days of old,” declares Yahweh.

Words of Assurance to Israel

- 27 “But *as for* you, my servant Jacob, you must not be afraid,
and Israel, you must not be dismayed,
for look, I *am* going to save you from far,
and your offspring from the land of their captivity.
And Jacob will return,
and he will be quiet,
and he will be at ease,
and without *one who* makes *him* afraid.
- 28 You must not be afraid, my servant Jacob,” declares Yahweh,
“for I *am* with you.

For I will make a complete destruction in all the nations where I scattered you,
but you I will not make a complete destruction,
though I will chastise you to the measure,
and I will certainly not leave you unpunished.”

Jeremiah's Prophecy Concerning the Nations: Philistia (early 605 BC)

Jeremiah 47

1 The word of Yahweh that came to Jeremiah the prophet concerning *the* Philistines before Pharaoh attacked Gaza.

2 Thus says Yahweh:

“Look, waters *are* rising from *the* north,
and they will become as a raging torrent,
and they will overflow *the* land,
and that which fills it,
the city and those who live in it.

And the people will cry out,
and every inhabitant of the land will wail,

3 from the sound of the stamping of the hoofs of his stallions,
from the clattering of his chariots,
the noise of their wheels.

Fathers do not turn to *their* children
because of *the* slackness of *their* hands.

4 Because of the day that is coming
to destroy all *the* Philistines,
to cut off from Tyre and from Sidon
every survivor *who could* help,
for Yahweh *is* destroying *the* Philistines,
the remnant of the coastland of Caphtor.

5 Baldness has come upon Gaza,
Ashkelon is destroyed.
O remnant of their valley,
how long will you cut yourself with a blade?

6 Ah, sword of Yahweh,
how long will you not be quiet?
Gather to your sheath,
keep quiet and stand still.

7 How can you be quiet
when Yahweh has given an order to it?
Against Ashkelon and against the shore of the sea,
there he has appointed it.”

Jeremiah's Prophecy Concerning the Nations: Moab (early 605 BC)

Jeremiah 48

The Destruction of Moab

1 Concerning Moab, thus says Yahweh of hosts, the God of Israel:

“Woe to Nebo,
for it is devastated.
It is ashamed,
Kiriathaim is captured.
Misgab is ashamed,
and it is filled with terror.

2 The glory of Moab is no longer.
In Heshbon they planned evil against her.
Come and let us cut her off from *being* a nation.

Also, Madmen, you will be silent.

After you will go *the* sword.

- 3 *The* sound of a cry of distress *arises* from Horonaim,
devastation and great destruction.
- 4 Moab is broken,
her little ones make heard a cry for help.
- 5 For the ascent of Luhith,
in weeping they go weeping,
For on the slope of Horonaim they have heard
the distresses of *the* cry of distress of *the* destruction.
- 6 Flee! Save your life!
For you must not be like the juniper tree in the desert.
- 7 For because of your trusting in your works and in your treasures,
even you yourselves will be taken,
and Chemosh will go out into the exile,
his priests and his officials together.
- 8 And *the* destroyer will come to every town,
and a town will not escape.
And the valley will be destroyed,
and the plain will be destroyed, as Yahweh has spoken.
- 9 Give salt for Moab,
for certainly she will go to ruin,
and her towns will become as a desolation,
without an inhabitant in them.
- 10 *The one who* does the work of Yahweh *with* slackness *is* cursed,
and *the one who* keeps away blood from his sword *is* cursed.

The Humbling of a Complacent Nation

- 11 Moab has been at ease from his youth,
and he has been quiet on his dregs,
and he has not been poured out from vessel to vessel,
and he has not gone into exile.
Therefore his taste has remained unchanged,
and his fragrance has not changed.
- 12 Therefore look, days *are* coming," declares Yahweh,
"and I will send to him decanters,
and they will decant him,
and his vessels they will empty out,
and their jars they will smash.
- 13 Then Moab will be ashamed of Chemosh,
just as the house of Israel were ashamed of Bethel, their trust.
- 14 How can you say, 'we *are* warriors,
and men of might for the battle.'
- 15 Moab is destroyed,
and his towns have gone up,
and the choice of his young men have gone down to the slaughtering,"
declares the King, Yahweh of hosts *is* his name.
- 16 "The disaster of Moab *is* near to come,
and his disaster approaches very quickly.
- 17 Mourn for him, all his surroundings,
and all those who knew his name.
Say, 'How *the* staff of might is broken,
the staff of glory.'

Judgment on Moab's Cities

- 18 Come down from glory and sit on the parched ground,
O inhabitant, daughter of Dibon,
for the destroyer of Moab has come up against you,

he has destroyed your fortifications.

- 19 Stand by *the* road and watch,
O inhabitant of Aroer.
Ask *the man who is fleeing* and *the woman who is escaping*,
say, 'What has happened?'
- 20 Moab is ashamed,
for it is filled with terror.
Wail and cry out,
tell *it* by Arnon that Moab is devastated.

- 21 Judgment has also come to the land of the plain, to Holon, and to Jahaz, and on Mephaath,
22 and on Dibon, and on Nebo, and on Beth-diblathaim,
23 and on Kiriathaim, and on Beth-gamul, and on Beth-meon,
24 and on Kerioth, and on Bozrah, and on all the towns of the land of Moab, the far and the near.
25 The horn of Moab is cut off and his arm is broken," declares Yahweh.

The Futility of Moab's Insolence

- 26 "Make him drunk,
because he magnified himself against Yahweh,
and let Moab wallow in his vomit.
And he also will become a laughingstock.
- 27 Now *was* not Israel the laughingstock to you?
Or was he found among thieves?
For as often as you spoke over him
you shook *your head*.
- 28 Leave *the* towns and dwell on the rock,
O inhabitants of Moab,
and be like *the dove*,
it nests on *the* sides of *the* mouth of a ravine.
- 29 We have heard *of* the pride of Moab
—*he is very proud*—
his height, and his pride, and his arrogance,
and the haughtiness of his heart.
- 30 I know his insolence," declares Yahweh,
"and his boastings *are false*;
they act falsely.

Lament for Moab

- 31 Therefore over Moab I wail,
and for all of Moab I cry out,
for the people of Kir-heres I moan.
- 32 More than the weeping of Jazer
I weep for you, O vine Sibmah.
Your branches cross over *the* sea,
up to the sea of Jazer they reach.
Upon your summer fruit and upon your vintage
the destroyer has fallen.
- 33 And joy and rejoicing have been taken away from *the* fruitful land,
even from the land of Moab.
And *the* wine from *the* wine presses
I have caused to disappear.
He will not tread *with* exuberant shouts.
Exuberant shouts *will not be* exuberant shouts.
- 34 From the cry for help of Heshbon, up to Elealeh,
up to Jahaz, they give their voice,
from Zoar up to Horonaim, *up to* Eglath-shelishiyah,
for even the waters of Nimrim have become as a desolation.
- 35 And I will cause to disappear for Moab," declares Yahweh,

“*the one who presents a sacrifice at a high place,*
and *the one who* burns a smoke offering to his gods.

- 36 Therefore my heart moans for Moab like the flute.
It moans for the people of Kir-heres like the flute.
Therefore *the* wealth they gained has perished.
- 37 For *on* every head *is* baldness,
and every beard is trimmed.
On all *the* hands, slashes,
and on *the* loins, sackcloth.
- 38 On all the roofs of Moab, and in its public squares,
there is wailing everywhere.
For I have broken Moab like a vessel,
there is no delight in it,” declares Yahweh.
- 39 “How it is filled with terror! *How* they wail!
How Moab has turned *his* back! He is disgraced!
So Moab has become as a derision,
and as a terror for all his surrounding *peoples*.”

Moab’s Punishment and Restoration

40 For thus says Yahweh,

“Look, like an eagle he will swoop down,
and he will spread out his wings against Moab.

- 41 Kerioth will be taken,
and the strongholds will be conquered,
and the hearts of the warriors of Moab will be on that day
like *the* heart of a woman *who* is in labor.
- 42 And Moab will be destroyed from *being* a people,
because against Yahweh he magnified himself.
- 43 Dread, and pit, and a trapping net *are* against you,
O inhabitant of Moab,” declares Yahweh.
- 44 “He *who* flees before the dread
will fall into the pit,
and the *one who* climbs up from the pit
will be caught in the trapping net,
for I will bring on Moab
the year of their punishment,” declares Yahweh.
- 45 “In the shadow of Heshbon
fugitives stand without strength,
for a fire has gone out from Heshbon,
and a flame from Sihon.
And it has eaten the forehead of Moab,
and the skulls of the people of tumult.
- 46 Woe to you, Moab!
The people of Chemosh have perished.
For your sons have been taken into captivity,
and your daughters into captivity.
- 47 Yet I will restore the fortunes of Moab
in the last of the days,” declares Yahweh.

Thus far *is* the judgment of Moab.

Jeremiah’s Prophecy Concerning the Nations: Ammon (early 605 BC)

Jeremiah 49:1–6

1 Concerning the Ammonites: Thus says Yahweh,

“Are there no sons for Israel?

- Or is there no heir for him?
Why has Milcom taken possession of Gad,
and his people dwelled in its towns?
- 2 Therefore look, days *are* coming,” declares Yahweh,
“and I will sound against Rabbah, the Ammonites,
the alarm of *the* war,
and it will become as a mound of desolation,
and its daughters will burn in the fire.
Then Israel will dispossess his dispossessors,” says Yahweh.
- 3 “Wail, Heshbon, for Ai is devastated.
Cry out, O daughters of Rabbah, put on sackcloth.
Lament and run back and forth among the walls.
For Milcom will go into exile,
his priests and his officials together.
- 4 Why do you boast in *your* valleys?
Your valleys *are* ebbing.
O unfaithful daughter, who trusted in her treasures,
who said, ‘Who will come against me?’
- 5 Look, I *am* going to bring dread on you,”
declares Lord Yahweh of hosts,
“from all your surrounding *neighbors*.
And you will be scattered,
each one before it,
and there is no *one who* gathers the fugitives.
- 6 Yet afterward I will restore
the fortunes of the Ammonites,” declares Yahweh.

Jeremiah’s Prophecy Concerning the Nations: Edom (early 605 BC)

Jeremiah 49:7–22

7 Concerning Edom, thus says Yahweh of hosts:

- “Is there no longer wisdom in Teman?
Has counsel become lost from *those who* understand?
Is their wisdom rotting?
- 8 Flee! Turn back! Get down low!
O inhabitants of Dedan.
For I will bring upon him the disaster of Esau
at the time when I will punish him.
- 9 If grape-gatherers come to you,
would they not leave gleanings?
If thieves in the night,
they destroy *only* enough for them.
- 10 But I have stripped Esau bare.
I have uncovered his hiding places,
and he is not able to hide himself.
His offspring are devastated, along with his brothers,
and his neighbors, and he is no more.
- 11 Leave your orphans. I will let *them* live.
And your widows, let them trust in me.”

12 For thus says Yahweh, “Look, those who are not condemned to drink the cup must certainly drink *it*. And *are* you the one who will go entirely unpunished? You will not go unpunished, for you must certainly drink *it*.”

13 For I have sworn by myself,” declares Yahweh, “that Bozrah will become as a horror, as a disgrace, as a waste, and as a curse. And all her towns will be everlasting sites of ruins.”

- 14 I have heard a message from Yahweh,
and a messenger has been sent among the nations.

- “Gather and come against her,
and rise for the battle.”
- 15 “For look, I will make you small among the nations,
despised by the humankind.
- 16 Your terror has deceived you,
the pride of your heart,
*O you who dwell in the clefts of the rock,
you who seize the height of the hill.*
Though you make your nest high like the eagle,
from there I will bring you down,” declares Yahweh.
- 17 “And Edom will become as a horror,
everyone who passes by it will be appalled,
and will hiss because of all its blows.
- 18 As the overthrow of Sodom and Gomorrah
and their neighbors,” says Yahweh,
“no one will live there,
and the son of humankind will not dwell as an alien in it.
- 19 Look, like a lion he comes up from the thickets of the Jordan
to a pastureland by a constantly flowing stream.
So I will chase him away hurriedly from it.
And whoever *is* chosen I will appoint over it.
For who *is* like me, and who can summon me?
And who *is* this, *the* shepherd who can stand before me?”
- 20 Therefore hear the plan of Yahweh that he has planned against Edom,
and his plans that he has planned against the inhabitants of Teman.
Surely they will drag them away,
the little *ones* of the flock.
Surely he will cause to be desolated over them
their grazing place.
- 21 The earth will quake from the sound of their falling.
A cry of distress! Their voice will be heard at the Red Sea.
- 22 Look, like an eagle he will go up and he will swoop down,
and he will spread out his wings against Bozrah.
And the heart of the warriors of Edom will be in that day
like *the* heart of a woman *who* is in labor.

Jeremiah's Prophecy Concerning the Nations: Damascus (early 605 BC)

Jeremiah 49:23–27

23 Concerning Damascus:

- “Hamath and Arpad are ashamed,
for they have heard bad news;
they melt.
There is concern in the sea.
It is not able to keep quiet.
- 24 Damascus has grown slack.
She has turned away to flee and panic.
Anxiety has seized *her*,
and labor pains have grasped her,
like a woman in labor.
- 25 How *the* city of praise has not been abandoned!
The city of my joy!
- 26 Therefore her young men will fall in her public squares,
and all the soldiers will perish in that day,” declares Yahweh of hosts.
- 27 “And I will kindle a fire at the wall of Damascus,
and it will devour the citadel fortresses of Ben-hadad.”

Jeremiah's Prophecy Concerning the Nations: Kedar and Hazor (early 605 BC)

Jeremiah 49:28–33

28 Concerning Kedar and concerning the kingdoms of Hazor that Nebuchadnezzar the king of Babylon defeated. Thus says Yahweh:

“Rise up, go up against Kedar
and destroy *the* people of *the* east.

29 They will take their tents, and their flocks,
their tent curtains, and all their equipment,
and their camels they will carry away for themselves,
and they will call to them, ‘Terror *is* from all around.’

30 Flee! Wander far away! Get down low!
O inhabitants of Hazor,” declares Yahweh.
“For Nebuchadnezzar, the king of Babylon, has planned a plan against you.
And he has schemed a scheme against you.

31 Rise up, go up against a nation *which is* at ease,
living securely,” declares Yahweh.
“*There are* no gates and *there are* no bars for them,
they dwell alone.

32 And their camels will become as plunder,
and the multitude of their livestock as spoil.
And I will scatter to every wind *those who* are trimmed to *the* side,
and from every side I will bring their disaster,” declares Yahweh.

33 “And Hazor will become as a lair of jackals,
a waste forever;
no one will live there,
and no son of humankind will dwell as an alien in it.”

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God Tells Jeremiah to Write the Prophecies on a Scroll (early 605 BC)

Jeremiah 36:1–8

1 And then in the fourth year of Jehoiakim the son of Josiah, the king of Judah, this word came to Jeremiah from Yahweh, saying,
 2 “Take for yourself a scroll and you must write on it all the words that I have spoken to you against Israel, and against Judah, and against all the nations, from *the day that* I spoke to you, from the days of Josiah, and until this day.
 3 Perhaps *when* the house of Judah hears all the disasters that I *am* planning to do to them, then they may turn back each one from his evil way, and I will forgive their guilt and their sin.”
 4 Then Jeremiah called Baruch the son of Neriah, and Baruch wrote from the mouth of Jeremiah all the words of Yahweh that he had spoken to him on a scroll.
 5 And Jeremiah instructed Baruch, saying, “I *am* held back, I am not able to enter the temple of Yahweh.
 6 So you must go and you shall read aloud from the scroll that you have written from my mouth the words of Yahweh in the hearing of the people *in* the temple of Yahweh on a day of fast, and also you shall read aloud in the hearing of all those of Judah who came from their towns.
 7 Perhaps their plea will fall before Yahweh and each one will turn away from his evil way, for great *is* the anger and wrath that Yahweh pronounced against this people.”
 8 And Baruch the son of Neriah did all that Jeremiah the prophet instructed him, to read aloud from the scroll the words of Yahweh *in* the temple of Yahweh.

Jeremiah Gives Baruch a Message from God (early 605 BC)

Jeremiah 45

Baruch’s Complaint

1 The word that Jeremiah the prophet spoke to Baruch, the son of Neriah, at his writing these words on a scroll from the mouth of Jeremiah, in the fourth year of Jehoiakim, the son of Josiah, the king of Judah, saying,
 2 “Thus says Yahweh, the God of Israel, to you, *O* Baruch:
 3 ‘You said, “Woe please to me, for Yahweh has added sorrow to my pain. I am weary in my groaning and I do not find rest.”’

The Lord’s Assurance

4 Thus you will say to him: ‘Thus says Yahweh, “Look, what I have built I *am* about to tear down, and what I have planted I *am* about to pluck up, it *is* all the land.
 5 And you, *do* you seek great *things* for yourself? *Do* not seek *great things*, for look, I *am* about to bring disaster upon all flesh,” declares Yahweh, “but to you I will give your life as booty in all the places where you may go.”’”

Nebuchadnezzar’s [Babylon] First Siege of Jerusalem (June 605–January 604 BC)

2 Kings 24:1a

2 Chronicles 36:6a

Daniel 1:1

| | | |
|--|--|--|
| 1a In his days, Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon came up <i>because</i> Jehoiakim had become his servant <i>for</i> three years; | 6a Nebuchadnezzar the king of Babylon went up against him, | 1 In <i>the</i> third year [<i>accession reckoning</i>] of the reign of Jehoiakim king of Judah, Nebuchadnezzar the king of Babylon came to Jerusalem and besieged it. |
|--|--|--|

Jehoiakim Burns Jeremiah’s Scroll (December 605 BC)

Jeremiah 36:9–32

Baruch Reads the Scroll at the Temple

9 And then in the fifth year of Jehoiakim, the son of Josiah, the king of Judah, in the ninth month, all the people in Jerusalem and all the people who came from the towns of Judah to Jerusalem proclaimed a fast before Yahweh.
 10 Then Baruch read aloud from the scroll the words of Jeremiah *in* the temple of Yahweh, in the chamber of Gemariah, the son of Shaphan, the secretary, in the upper courtyard *at* the entrance of the New Gate of the temple of Yahweh in the hearing of all the people.

Baruch Reads the Scroll to the Officials

11 When Micaiah, the son of Gemariah, the son of Shaphan, heard all the words of Yahweh from the scroll,
 12 he went down *to* the house of the king, to the chamber of the secretary, and look, all the officials *were* sitting there: Elishama the secretary, and Delaiah, the son of Shemaiah, and Elnathan, the son of Achbor, and Gemariah, the son of Shaphan, and Zedekiah, the

son of Hananiah, and all the *other* officials.

13 And Micaiah told them all the words that he had heard at the reading aloud of Baruch from the scroll in the hearing of the people.

14 Then all the officials sent Jehudi, the son of Nethaniah, the son of Shelemiah, the son of Cushi, to Baruch, saying, “The scroll that you read aloud from in the hearing of the people, take it in your hand and come.” And Baruch the son of Neriah took the scroll in his hand and he came to them.

15 And they said to him, “Sit please and read it aloud in our hearing.” So Baruch read aloud in their hearing.

16 And then, the moment of their hearing all the words, they turned to one another in alarm and they said to Baruch, “We must certainly report all these words to the king!”

17 Then they asked Baruch, saying, “Tell us please, how did you write all these words, from his mouth?”

18 And Baruch said to them, “From his mouth. He dictated to me all these words and I *was* writing on the scroll with the ink.”

19 Then the officials said to Baruch, “Go, hide yourself, you and Jeremiah, and let not a man know where you *are*.”

Jehudi Reads the Scroll to Jehoiakim

20 And they went to the king, *to the* courtyard, and they put the scroll for safe-keeping in the chamber of Elishama the secretary, and they reported all the words in the hearing of the king.

21 Then the king sent Jehudi to take the scroll, and he took it from the chamber of Elishama the secretary, and Jehudi read it aloud in the hearing of the king, and in the hearing of all the officials who stood next to the king.

22 Now the king *was* sitting *in* the quarters of the winter in the ninth month, and a fire-pot *was* burning before him.

23 And then, as Jehudi read three or four columns, he would cut it up in pieces with the knife of the scribe, and he would throw *it* into the fire that *was* in the fire-pot until the whole of the scroll *was* consumed in the fire that was in the fire-pot.

24 And the king and any of his servants who heard all these words were not startled, and they did not tear their garments.

25 And even *when* Elnathan, and Delaiah, and Gemariah urged the king not to burn the scroll, he would not listen to them.

26 And the king commanded Jerahmeel, the son of the king, and Seraiah, the son of Azriel, and Shelemiah, the son of Abdeel, to arrest Baruch the secretary and Jeremiah the prophet, but Yahweh hid them.

Baruch Rewrites the Scroll

27 And the word of Yahweh came to Jeremiah after the king burned the scroll and the words that Baruch wrote from the mouth of Jeremiah, saying,

28 “Take again for yourself another scroll and write on it all the former words that were in the first scroll which Jehoiakim, the king of Judah, has burned.

29 And concerning Jehoiakim, the king of Judah, you shall say, ‘Thus says Yahweh, “You have burned this scroll, saying, ‘Why have you written in it, saying, “The king of Babylon will certainly come and he will destroy this land, and he will cause to disappear from it humankind and animals?”’”

30 Therefore thus says Yahweh concerning Jehoiakim, the king of Judah, “There will not be for him *one who* sits on the throne of David. And his dead body will be thrown out to the heat in the day and to the frost in the night.

31 And I will punish him, and his offspring, and his servants for their guilt, and I will bring on them, and on the inhabitants of Jerusalem, and on the people of Judah all the disaster with which I have threatened them, but they would not listen.” ”

32 Then Jeremiah took another scroll and gave it to Baruch the son of Neriah, the secretary, and he wrote on it from the mouth of Jeremiah all the words of the scroll that Jehoiakim, the king of Judah, had burned in the fire, and furthermore was added to them many words like these.

Jehoiakim Taken to Babylon (February 604 BC)

2 Chronicles 36:6b–7

Daniel 1:2

6b and he bound him with bronze fetters to bring him to Babylon.

7 And Nebuchadnezzar brought to Babylon the objects of the house of Yahweh

and put them into the temple in Babylon.

2 And the Lord gave Jehoiakim the king of Judah into his hand

and some of the utensils of the temple of God, and he brought them *to* the land of Shinar *to* the temple of his gods, and he brought the utensils to the treasury of his gods.

Daniel and His Friends are Exiled to Babylon (February 604 BC)

Daniel 1:3–17

Daniel and His Three Friends

3 And the king ordered Ashpenaz, the commander of his court officials, to bring some of the Israelites from the royal family and from

the lords,

4 youths who have no physical defect, and *who are* handsome, and *who are* prudent in all wisdom and endowed with knowledge, and *who* understand insight, and *who have* the ability in them to serve in the palace of the king. *And the king ordered him* to teach them the literature and the language of *the* Chaldeans.

5 And the king assigned to them his daily portion from the fine food of the king, and from the wine that he drank, and *instructed that* they were to be educated for three years. And at the end *of their training*, they were to be stationed before the king.

6 Now there was among them from the Judeans, Daniel, Hananiah, Mishael and Azariah.

7 And the commander of the court officials gave them names, and he called Daniel, Belteshazzar; and Hananiah, Shadrach; and Mishael, Meshach; and Azariah, Abednego.

Daniel's Example of Appealing to Authority

8 Now Daniel resolved that he would not defile himself with the fine food of the king, and with the wine that he drank, and *so* he requested from the commander of the court officials *permission so* that he would not defile himself.

9 And God gave Daniel favor and compassion before the commander of the court officials,

10 and the commander of the court officials said to Daniel, "*I am* afraid *of* my lord, the king, who has determined your food and your drink, for why should he see your face having a worse appearance than the young men who are your age? Then you will endanger my head with the king."

The Test

11 Then Daniel asked the guard whom the commander of the court officials *had* appointed over Daniel, Hananiah, Mishael, and Azariah,

12 "Please test your servants *for* ten days, and let them give us some of the vegetables, and let us eat and let us drink water.

13 Then let our appearances and the appearance of the young men who are eating the fine food of the king be compared before you, and *then* deal with your servants according to what you see."

14 So he agreed to this proposal with them, and he tested them *for* ten days.

15 And at the end of ten days their appearances appeared better and *they were* healthier of body than all the young men who were eating the fine food of the king.

16 So the guard continued to withhold their fine food and the wine of their drink, and he gave them vegetables.

God Blesses Daniel With Wisdom

17 And as for these four young men, God gave to them knowledge and insight into all literature and wisdom, and Daniel had insight into all visions and dreams.

Daniel Enters Nebuchadnezzar's Service (c. Fall 603 BC)

Daniel 1:18–21

18 And at the end of the time the king had set to bring them, the commander of the court officials brought them in before Nebuchadnezzar.

19 And the king spoke with them, and among all of them no one was found like Daniel, Hananiah, Mishael, and Azariah; then they stood before the king.

20 And in every matter of wisdom *and* understanding *about* which the king inquired from them, he found them ten times better *than* all *of* the magicians *and* conjurers that were in his entire kingdom.

21 And Daniel was *there* until the first year of Cyrus the king.

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Chronological Notes

- 1) "The first phrase of Daniel 1:1, 'in the third year' of Jehoiakim, has been a historical problem for interpreters because Jeremiah 25:1 equates the fourth year of Jehoiakim with Nebuchadnezzar's first year. The problem is easily solved, however, when it is noted that Jeremiah employs the nonaccession-year system for counting the years of a king's reign. Under this system, if a king began his reign in the middle of a year, this first, partial year was counted as his first year. Daniel, however, uses the accession-year system that was current in Babylon under the Babylonian and Persian kings. This system did not count the partial year at the beginning of a king's reign. Thus under the nonaccession-year system used by Jeremiah, this was Jehoiakim's fourth year, counting his partial first (accession) year as his first year. However, under the accession-year system used by Daniel, this was

Jehoiakim's third year, with his accession year not counted in the total."¹

- 2) Jehoiakim's fifth year began on Tishri 1 in the fall of 605 BC and ended on the last day of Elul in the fall of 604 BC. When Jeremiah 36:9 says that the fast took place in the "ninth month of the fifth year," this means that the fast took place in Kislev of 605 BC—months were always counted from Nisan, whether or not the regnal year started in Tishri and Nisan.²
- 3) Daniel's Training.³
 - A) Critical scholars often point to the date notice at the beginning of chapter 2 as an inaccuracy in Daniel and a sign that the author was confused over the sequence of the historical events. That confusion allegedly created another contradiction between chapters 1 and 2. The second year of Nebuchadnezzar (2:1), they argue, would occur before the end of the three-year period (1:5) prescribed before the young Judean men would complete their training (1:18). Their promotion to positions of prominence in Babylon (2:48–49) would then come before their interview with Nebuchadnezzar, which completed their training (1:18–19).
 - B) However, there is no conflict here. Nebuchadnezzar's second regnal year is actually the third year in the Daniel narratives. The Babylonian system of reckoning the years of a king's reign did not count his first partial (accession) year. Nebuchadnezzar's accession year lasted from 1 Elul 605 BC to the end of Adar 604 (September 7, 605–April 1, 604). His first (full) regnal year was from 1 Nisan 604 to the end of Adar 603 (April 2, 604–March 21, 603). His second regnal year lasted from 1 Nisan 603 to the end of Adar 602 (March 22, 603–April 9, 602). Since it was normal for people in the ancient Near East to count partial years when reckoning time spans, the Judeans would have been in training during the last part of Nebuchadnezzar's accession year, his entire first year, and part of his second year, making three years according to Hebrew count, fulfilling the "three years" in 1:5. Thus the notice that the events of chapter 2 took place in Nebuchadnezzar's second year (2:1) implies that it was shortly after Daniel and his companions had completed their training (1:18). Therefore, chapter 2 immediately illustrates the statement in 1:20 that Daniel was superior in every way to Nebuchadnezzar's other wise men.
 - C) Thus the time notices in Daniel 1 and 2 imply this sequence of events:
 - (1) Nebuchadnezzar's Accession Year (First Year of Training).
 - (a) Sometime between June 605 and January 604, Jerusalem capitulates to Nebuchadnezzar (Dan 1:1–2). (Nebuchadnezzar assumes the throne in September 605.)
 - (b) In February 604, captives from the Judean nobility (1:3) are taken to Babylon.
 - (c) Sometime between February 604 and April 1, 604, Daniel, Hananiah, Azariah, and Mishael begin their training (1:3–7). This is year 1 of that training.
 - (2) Nebuchadnezzar's First Year (Second Year of Training).
 - (a) From April 2, 604, to March 21, 603, Nebuchadnezzar's first regnal year, the Judeans are in training to serve in Nebuchadnezzar's court (1:8–17). This is year 2 of their training.
 - (3) Nebuchadnezzar's Second Year (Third Year of Training).
 - (a) Sometime between March 22, 603, and fall 603, during Nebuchadnezzar's second regnal year, the Judeans complete their training (1:18–19, fulfilling 1:5). This is year 3 of their training.
 - (b) Also during his second regnal year, in fall 603 or winter 603–602, Nebuchadnezzar dreams the dream recorded in Daniel 2; God reveals the dream and its interpretation to Daniel; and the Judeans are promoted (2:48–49).

¹ Andrew E. Steinmann, "Daniel," *Concordia Commentary*, (Concordia Publishing House, 2008), p. 81.

² Rodger C. Young, "Tables of Reign Lengths from the Hebrew Court Recorders," *JETS* 48.2 (June 2005): 225.

³ Steinmann, p. 111–113.

Nebuchadnezzar's Dream (603/602 BC)

Daniel 2

Circumstances of the Dream

1 Now in the second [*regnal*] year of the reign of Nebuchadnezzar, Nebuchadnezzar dreamed dreams; and his spirit was troubled and his sleep left him.

The Futility of Pagan Interpreters

2 So the king said to call the magicians and the conjurers and the sorcerers and the astrologers to tell to the king his dreams. And they came in and they stood before the king.

3 And the king said to them, "I have had a dream and my spirit is anxious to know the dream."

4 And the astrologers said to the king *in* Aramaic, "O king, live forever! Tell the dream to your servants and we will reveal the explanation."

5 The king answered and said to the astrologers, "The command from me is firm: if you *do* not make known to me the dream and its explanation, *then* you will be broken into pieces and your houses will be laid in ruins.

6 But if you tell me the dream and its explanation, you will receive gifts and rewards and great honor from me. Therefore, tell me the dream and its explanation."

7 They answered once more and said, "Let the king tell the dream to his servants and we will make the explanation known."

8 The king answered and said, "Certainly I know that you are trying to gain time because you have seen that this matter is firmly decreed by me,

9 for if you *do* not make the dream known to me, your verdict is fixed, and you have conspired to say *a* lying and deceitful word to me until the circumstances will change. Therefore, tell me the dream, and I will know that you can tell me its explanation."

10 The astrologers answered the king and said, "There is not a man on earth that is able to reveal the word of the king; in fact, no great and powerful king has *ever* asked a thing like this of any magician or conjurer or astrologer.

11 And the thing that the king is asking *is too* difficult and there is no one who can reveal it to the king except *the* gods whose dwelling is not with mortals."

12 Because of this the king became angry, and he became very much enraged, and he said *that* all the wise men of Babylon *are* to be destroyed.

13 And the decree was issued, and the wise men were on the verge of being executed, and they searched for Daniel and his companions to be executed.

Daniel's Intervention

14 Then Daniel responded prudently and discretely to Arioch, the commander of the imperial guard of the king, who had gone out to execute the wise men of Babylon.

15 He asked and said to Arioch, the royal official of the king, "Why is the decree from the king so severe?" Then Arioch explained the matter to Daniel.

16 And Daniel went in and requested from the king that he would give him time, and he would tell the king the explanation.

17 Then Daniel went to his home, and he made the matter known to Hananiah, Mishael and Azariah, his companions,

18 and *told them* to seek mercy from the God of heaven concerning this mystery, so that Daniel and his companions, along with the remainder of the wise men of Babylon, would not be killed.

19 Then in a vision of the night the mystery was revealed to Daniel; then Daniel blessed the God of heaven.

20 Daniel said:

"Let his name, *the name* of God, be blessed throughout the ages,
for the wisdom and the power are his.

21 And he changes the times and the seasons,
and he deposes kings and he sets up kings;
he gives wisdom to wise men
and knowledge to *men who* know understanding.

22 He reveals the deep and the hidden things;
he knows what *is* in the darkness,
and the light dwells with him.

23 To you, O God of my ancestors,
I give thanks and I give praises,
for the wisdom and the power you gave to me,
and now you have made known to me
what we have asked from you,
for you have made known to us the matter of the king."

24 Therefore Daniel went to Arioch, whom the king had appointed to destroy the wise men of Babylon; he went and thus he said to him: “You must not destroy the wise men of Babylon; take me in before the king and I will give the explanation to the king.”

25 Then Arioch quickly brought Daniel in before the king and thus he said to him: “I have found a man among the exiles of Judah who can relate the explanation to the king.

26 The king then asked and said to Daniel, whose name *was* Belteshazzar, “Are you able to make known to me the dream that I have seen and its explanation?”

27 Daniel answered the king and said, “The mystery that the king asks, no wise men, conjurers, magicians, *or* diviners are able to make known to the king.

28 But there is a God in heaven *who* reveals mysteries, and he has made known to King Nebuchadnezzar what *it is* that will be at the end of days. This *is* your dream and the visions of your head on your bed.

29 “*As for you*, king, your thoughts on your bed turned to what *it was* that would be in the future, and the revealer of mysteries has made known to you what that would be.

30 And as for me, *it is* not because of wisdom that is in me more than any other living person *that* this mystery is revealed to me, but in order that the explanation may be made known to the king and you will understand the thoughts of your mind.

The Dream Revealed

31 “You, O king, were looking and, look, there was one great statue. This statue *was* huge and its brilliance extraordinary, standing *there* before you, and its appearance *was* frightening.

32 The head of this statue *was* of fine gold, its chest and its arms of silver, its belly and its thighs of bronze,

33 its legs of iron, its feet, part of them of iron and part of them of clay.

34 You were looking on until a stone was chiseled out—that not by hands—and it struck the statue on its feet of iron and clay, and it broke them in pieces.

35 Then the iron, the clay, the bronze, the silver and the gold all at once broke into pieces and they became like chaff from the summer threshing floor, and the wind carried them away and any trace of them could not be found. But the stone that struck the statue became a great mountain and it filled the whole earth.

The Interpretation of the Dream

36 “This *was* the dream, and *now* we will tell its interpretation to the king.

37 You, O king, the king of kings, to whom the God of heaven has given the kingdom, the power and the might and the glory,

38 and *also* human beings wherever they dwell, the animals of the field and the birds of heaven—he has given into your hand and made you ruler over all of them—you are the head of gold.

39 And after you another kingdom inferior to yours will arise, and another third *kingdom* of bronze that will rule over the whole earth.

40 And *a* fourth kingdom will be strong as iron, *and* just as iron crushes and smashes everything, and as iron shatters all of these *other metals*, so it will crush and it will shatter *these nations*.

41 And just as you saw the feet and the toes, partly potter’s clay and partly iron, it will be a divided kingdom; and some hardness of the iron will be *in it*, just as you have seen the iron mixed with the wet clay.

42 And *as* the toes of the feet *were* partly iron and partly clay, so part of the kingdom will be strong and partly brittle.

43 And *in* that you saw the iron was mixed with wet clay, so they will mix in marriage and they will not cling to one another, just as iron *does* not mix with clay.

44 And in the day of those kings, the God of heaven will set up a kingdom that will never be destroyed, and the kingdom will not be left for another nation, and it will bring an end to all these kingdoms, but it will stand forever.

45 Inasmuch as you saw that a stone from the mountain was chiseled out *but* not by hands, and *that* it crushed the iron, the bronze, the clay, the silver and the gold, *thereby* the great God made known to the king what will be in the future, and the dream is certain and its explanation trustworthy.”

Nebuchadnezzar’s Response

46 Then the king, Nebuchadnezzar, fell on his face and he paid homage to Daniel; and he commanded *them* to offer *a* grain offering and incense offering to him.

47 The king answered Daniel and said, “Truly your God *is* the God of gods and the Lord of kings, and he reveals mysteries, for you are able to reveal this mystery.”

48 Then the king promoted Daniel and gave him many great gifts, and made him ruler over the whole province of Babylon and the chief prefect over all the wise men of Babylon.

49 And Daniel made a request from the king, and he appointed Shadrach, Meshach and Abednego over the affairs of the province of Babylon, while Daniel *remained* in the court of the king.

Jehoiakim Rebels Against Nebuchadnezzar (c. 601/600 BC)

2 Kings 24:1b–4

1b then he [Jehoiakim] turned and rebelled against him [Nebuchadnezzar].

2 So Yahweh sent against him raiding bands of Chaldeans, raiding bands of Aram, raiding bands of Moab, and raiding bands of the Ammonites. He had sent them against Judah to destroy it, according to the word of Yahweh that he had spoken by the hand of his servants the prophets.

3 Surely, it was on the command of Yahweh against Judah to remove them from his sight because of the sins of Manasseh, according to all that he had done.

4 Also, *for* the blood of the innocent that he had shed—and he filled Jerusalem *with* innocent blood—Yahweh was not willing to forgive.

Jeremiah and the Rechabites (c. 600/599 BC)

Jeremiah 35

Jeremiah's Test of the Rechabites' Loyalty

1 The word that came to Jeremiah from Yahweh in the days of Jehoiakim, the son of Josiah, the king of Judah, saying,

2 "Go to the house of the Rechabites, and speak with them, and bring them *to* the house of Yahweh into one of the chambers, and give them wine to drink."

3 So I took Jaazaniah, the son of Jeremiah, the son of Habazziniah, and his brothers, and all his sons, and the whole of the house of the Rechabites,

4 and I brought them *to* the house of Yahweh, into the chamber of the sons of Hanan, the son of Igdaliah, the man of God, which *was* beside the chamber of the officials, which *was* above the chamber of Maaseiah, the son of Shallum, the keeper of the threshold.

5 Then I set before the house of the Rechabites bowls full of wine and cups, and I said to them, "Drink wine."

Refusal to Break Jonadab's Vow

6 But they answered, "We will not drink wine, for Jonadab, the son of Rechab, our ancestor, commanded us, saying, 'You shall not drink wine, you or your children, forever.

7 And you shall not build a house, and you shall not sow seed, and you shall not plant a vineyard, and it shall not be for you, but in tents you shall live all your days, so that you may live many days on the surface of the land where you *are* dwelling as aliens.'

8 And we obeyed the voice of Jonadab, the son of Rechab, our ancestor, in all that he commanded us, not to drink wine all our days, ourselves, our wives, our sons, or our daughters,

9 and not to build houses *for* our living, and there is not vineyard, or field, or seed for us.

10 But we have lived in tents, and we have obeyed, and we have done all that Jehonadab, our ancestor, commanded us. [[2 Kgs 10:15–28](#)]

11 But then at the coming up against the land of Nebuchadnezzar the king of Babylon, then we said, 'Come and let us go *to* Jerusalem before the army of the Chaldeans, and before the army of the Arameans.' That is why we are living in Jerusalem."

The Lesson for Judah

12 And the word of Yahweh came to Jeremiah, saying,

13 "Thus says Yahweh of hosts, the God of Israel: 'Go and say to the people of Judah and to the inhabitants of Jerusalem, "Can you not learn a lesson to listen to my words?" declares Yahweh.

14 "The words of Jonadab, the son of Rechab, that he commanded his descendants to not drink, have been carried out, and they have not drunk until this day, for they have obeyed the command of their ancestor. But I have spoken to you over and over again, and you have not listened to me.

15 And I have sent to you all my servants the prophets, I have sent them over and over again, saying, 'Turn back please each one from his evil way, and amend your deeds, and you must not go after other gods to serve them, so that you may live on the land that I gave to you and to your ancestors.' But you did not incline your ear and you did not listen to me.

16 For the descendants of Jonadab, the son of Rechab, have carried out the command of their ancestor that he commanded them, but this people did not listen to me."

17 Therefore thus says Yahweh, the God of hosts, the God of Israel, "Look, I *am* going to bring to Judah and to all the inhabitants of Jerusalem every disaster that I have spoken against them, because I have spoken to them and they have not listened, and I have called to them and they have not answered." "'

God's Blessing on the Rechabites

18 But to the house of the Rechabites Jeremiah said, "Thus says Yahweh of hosts, the God of Israel, 'Because you have listened to the command of Jonadab your ancestor, and you have kept all his commands, and you have done all that he commanded you,'

19 therefore thus says Yahweh of hosts, the God of Israel: 'A man will not be cut off for Jonadab, the son of Rechab, to stand before me always.'"

The Death of Jehoiakim (c. December 7, 598 BC)

| 2 Kings 24:5–7 | 2 Chronicles 36:8 |
|--|---|
| <p>5 The remainder of the acts of Jehoiakim and all that he did,</p> <p><i>are</i> they not written on the scroll of the events of the days of the kings of Judah?</p> <p>6 So Jehoiakim slept with his ancestors, and Jehoiachin his son became king in his place.</p> <p>7 The king of Egypt did not again come out from his land, for the king of Babylon had taken <i>territory</i> from the Wadi of Egypt to the Euphrates River.</p> | <p>8 Now the remainder of the words of Jehoiakim and the detestable things that he did and what was found against him, behold, they are written in the scroll of the kings of Israel and Judah.</p> <p>And Jehoiachin his son reigned in his place.</p> |

Jehoiachin, Jehoiakim's Son, Assumes the Throne of Judah (c. December 7, 598 BC)

| 2 Kings 24:8–9 | 2 Chronicles 36:9 |
|--|---|
| <p>8 Jehoiachin was eighteen years old when he began to reign, and he reigned three months in Jerusalem. The name of his mother <i>was</i> Nehushta daughter of Elnathan from Jerusalem.</p> <p>9 He did evil in the eyes of Yahweh according to all that his father had done.</p> | <p>9 Jehoiachin <i>was</i> eighteen years old when he became king, and he reigned three months and ten days in Jerusalem.</p> <p>And he did evil in the eyes of Yahweh.</p> |

Jeremiah's Prophecy to Judah—A Last Warning (c. January 597 BC)

Jeremiah 13:15–27

The Threat of Captivity

- 15 Listen, and pay attention, you must not be haughty, for Yahweh has spoken.
- 16 Give glory to Yahweh your God before he brings darkness, and before your feet stumble on the mountains at twilight. And you will hope for light, but he makes it as gloom, he makes *it* as thick darkness.
- 17 But if you will not listen to it, my inner self will weep in secret places, because of the presence of *your* pride. And my eyes will weep bitterly, and they will melt *in* tears, because the flock of Yahweh has been taken captive.
- 18 "Say to the king and to the queen mother, 'Take a lower seat, for your beautiful crown has come down from your head.'
- 19 The towns of the Negev are shut up, and there is no *one who* opens *them*. All of Judah is deported; it is deported *in* completeness.

The Humiliation of an Unclean People

- 20 Lift up your eyes and see those coming from *the* north. Where *is* the flock that was given to you, your magnificent flock?
- 21 What will you say when he sets over you—and you have taught them—allies as head over you? Will not labor pains take hold of you, like a woman giving birth?
- 22 And if you say in your heart, 'Why have these *things* happened to me?'

Because of the greatness of your iniquity your skirts are uncovered;
 your heels have endured violence.

23 Can a Cushite change his skin,
 or a leopard his spots?
Then you also will be able to do good,
who are accustomed to doing evil.

24 And I will scatter them
 like stubble scattered by *the* wind of *the* desert.

25 This *is* your lot,
 the portion of your measure from me,” declares Yahweh,
 “because you have forgotten me,
 and you have trusted in the lie.

26 So in turn I will bare your skirts over your face,
 and your shame will become visible.

27 Your adulteries, and your neighings,
 the shameful behavior of your fornications
 on *the* hills in the countryside,
 I have seen your abominations.
 Woe to you, *O* Jerusalem!
 How long will you continue to be unclean?”

Nebuchadnezzar’s Second Siege of Jerusalem (March 16, 597 BC)

| 2 Kings 24:10–17 | 2 Chronicles 36:10 | Jeremiah 37:1 | Jeremiah 52:28 |
|--|--|---------------|--|
| <p>10 At that time, the servants of Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon came to Jerusalem, and the city came under the siege.</p> <p>11 Then Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon came against the city <i>while</i> his servants were besieging it.</p> <p>12 Jehoiachin king of Judah went out to the king of Babylon, he, his mother, his servants, his commanders, and his court officials.</p> <p>The king of Babylon took him</p> <p>in the eighth year of his reign.</p> <p>13 Then he took from there all of the treasures of the temple of Yahweh and the treasures of the palace of the king. He cut up all of the vessels of gold which Solomon the king of Israel had made in the temple of Yahweh, as Yahweh had foretold.</p> <p>14 He deported all of Jerusalem: all of the commanders, ten thousand of the skilled warriors, and the artisans; no one was left over except the poorest of the</p> | <p>10 And at the turn of the year</p> <p>King Nebuchadnezzar</p> <p>sent and brought him to Babylon,</p> <p>with objects of the treasure of the house of Yahweh.</p> | | <p>28 This <i>is the number of</i> the people whom Nebuchadnezzar deported:</p> <p>in <i>the</i> seventh year,</p> <p>three thousand twenty-three Judeans;</p> |

| | | | |
|--|---|--|--|
| <p>people of the land. 15 He deported Jehoiachin to Babylon; the mother of the king, the wives of the king, his court officials, and the citizenry of the land he caused to go into exile from Jerusalem to Babylon: 16 of all of the skilled men, seven thousand, and <i>of</i> the skilled craftsmen and the artisans, one thousand. All of the mighty warriors fit for war the king of Babylon brought captive to Babylon. 17 Then the king of Babylon made Mattaniah his uncle king in his place and changed his name <i>to</i> Zedekiah.</p> | <p>And he made Zedekiah his brother king</p> <p>in Judah and Jerusalem.</p> | <p>1 And king Zedekiah, the son of Josiah, whom Nebuchadnezzar, the king of Babylon, had made king, reigned as king in the land of Judah in place of Coniah, the son of Jehoiakim.</p> | |
|--|---|--|--|

Zedekiah, Jehoiachin's Uncle, Appointed King of Judah (March 16, 597 BC)

| 2 Kings 24:18–19 | Jeremiah 37:2 | Jeremiah 52:1–2 | 2 Chronicles 36:11–12 |
|---|--|---|--|
| <p>18 Zedekiah was twenty-one years old when he became king, and he reigned eleven years in Jerusalem. The name of his mother <i>was</i> Hamutal daughter of Jeremiah from Libnah. 19 He did evil in the eyes of Yahweh <i>just</i> like all that Jehoiakim had done.</p> | <p>2 But he and his servants and the people of the land did not listen to the words of Yahweh that he spoke by the hand of Jeremiah the prophet.</p> | <p>1 Zedekiah <i>was</i> twenty-one years old at his beginning to reign, and he reigned eleven years in Jerusalem. And the name of his mother <i>was</i> Hamutal, the daughter of Jeremiah of Libnah. 2 And he did evil in the eyes of Yahweh like all that Jehoiakim had done.</p> | <p>11 Zedekiah <i>was</i> twenty-one years old when he began to reign, and he reigned eleven years in Jerusalem. 12 And he did evil in the eyes of Yahweh his God. He did not humble himself before Jeremiah the prophet who spoke for Yahweh.</p> |

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Jeremiah's Vision of Two Baskets of Figs (597 BC)

Jeremiah 24

Description of the Figs

1 Yahweh showed me, and look, there were two baskets of figs placed before the temple of Yahweh—after Nebuchadnezzar the king of Babylon had deported Jeconiah the son of Jehoiakim, the king of Judah, with the officials of Judah, and the craftsmen, and the smiths, from Jerusalem and had brought them *to* Babylon.

2 The one basket *had* very good figs, like early figs, and the other basket *had* very bad figs that could not be eaten because of *their* bad quality.

3 And Yahweh asked me, “What *are* you seeing, Jeremiah?” And I said, “Figs—the good figs, very good, and the bad *figs*, very bad, that cannot be eaten because of *their* bad quality.”

Meaning of the Good Figs

4 Then the word of Yahweh came to me, saying,

5 “Thus says Yahweh, the God of Israel, ‘Like these good figs, so I will regard as good the exiles of Judah whom I have sent away from this place *to the* land of *the* Chaldeans.

6 For I will set my eyes on them for good, and I will bring them back to this land. And I will build them and not annihilate *them*, and I will plant them and not uproot *them*.

7 And I will give to them a heart to know me, that I *am* Yahweh, and they will be my people, and I will be their God, for they will return to me with the whole of their heart.

Meaning of the Bad Figs

8 But like the bad figs that cannot be eaten because of *their* bad quality—for thus says Yahweh—so I will treat Zedekiah the king of Judah, and his officials, and the remnant of Jerusalem who remain in this land, and those who live in the land of Egypt.

9 And I will make them as a terror, an evil to all the kingdoms of the earth, as a disgrace and a proverb, as a taunt and a curse, in all the places where I will drive them.

10 And I will send among them the sword, the famine, and the plague, until they perish from the land that I gave to them and their ancestors.”

Jeremiah's Letter to the Exiles in Babylon (597 BC)

Jeremiah 29

Sending of the Letter

1 And these *are* the words of the letter that Jeremiah the prophet sent from Jerusalem to the remainder of the exiles, and to the priests, and to the prophets, and to all the people whom Nebuchadnezzar had deported from Jerusalem *to* Babylon,

2 after the going out of Jeconiah the king, and the queen mother, and the court officials, the leaders of Judah and Jerusalem, and the artisans, and the smiths from Jerusalem,

3 by the hand of Elasah, the son of Shaphan, and Gemariah, the son of Hilkiyah, whom Zedekiah, the king of Judah, sent to Nebuchadnezzar, the king of Babylon, *to* Babylon, saying,

Settle Down in Babylon

4 “Thus says Yahweh of hosts, the God of Israel, to all the exiles whom I have deported from Jerusalem *to* Babylon,

5 ‘Build houses and live *in them*, and plant gardens and eat their fruit.

6 Take wives and father sons and daughters, and take for your sons wives, and give your daughters to men that they may bear sons and daughters, and multiply there, and you must not be few.

7 And seek the prosperity of the city where I have deported you, and pray on behalf of it to Yahweh, for in its prosperity you will have prosperity.’

Warning against False Prophets

8 For thus says Yahweh of hosts, the God of Israel, ‘Do not let your prophets who *are* in your midst, and your diviners, deceive you, and you must not listen to your dreams that you *are* causing *them* to dream.

9 For they *are* prophesying falsely to you in my name; I have not sent them,’ declares Yahweh.

10 For thus says Yahweh, ‘As soon as the time has passed, seventy years for Babylon, I will attend to you, and I will fulfill my good word to you, to bring you back to this place.

11 For I know the plans that I *am* planning concerning you,’ declares Yahweh, ‘plans for prosperity and not for harm, to give to you a future and a hope.

12 Then *when* you call me, and you come and pray to me, then I will listen to you.

13 When you search for me, then you will find *me*, if you seek me with all your heart.

14 And I will let myself be found by you,’ declares Yahweh, ‘and I will restore your fortunes, and I will gather you from all the nations

and from all the places to which I have driven you,' declares Yahweh, 'and I will bring you back to the place from which I deported you.'

15 Because you have said, 'Yahweh has raised up prophets for us *in* Babylon'—

16 for thus says Yahweh concerning the king who sits on the throne of David and concerning all the people who live in this city, your fellow kinsmen who did not go with you into the exile—

17 thus says Yahweh of hosts, 'Look, I *am* going to send among them the sword, the famine, and the plague, and I will make them like rotten figs that cannot be eaten because of *their* bad quality.

18 And I will pursue them with the sword, with the famine, and with the plague, and I will make them a terror to all the kingdoms of the earth, a curse, and a horror, and *an object of* hissing, and a disgrace among all the nations to which I have driven them,

19 because they did not listen to my words,' declares Yahweh, 'when I sent to them my servants the prophets, sending over and over again, and they would not listen,' declares Yahweh.

20 And you, hear the word of Yahweh, all *you* exiles whom I sent away from Jerusalem to Babylon.

21 Thus says Yahweh of hosts, the God of Israel, concerning Ahab, the son of Kolaiah, and concerning Zedekiah, the son of Maaseiah, who are prophesying to you in my name a lie, 'Look, I *am* going to give them into the hand of Nebuchadnezzar the king of Babylon, and he will strike them before your eyes.

22 And a curse will be taken *up* because of them by all the exiles of Judah who *are* in Babylon, saying, "May Yahweh make you like Zedekiah and like Ahab, whom the king of Babylon roasted in the fire,"

23 because they have done a disgraceful thing in Israel, and they have committed adultery with the wives of their neighbors, and they have spoken words in my name, lies that I have not commanded them, and I *am* he who knows, and I *am* a witness,' declares Yahweh."

Shemaiah Resists Jeremiah's Message

24 And to Shemaiah the Nehelamite you shall say, saying,

25 "Thus says Yahweh of hosts, the God of Israel, saying, 'Because you yourself sent *a* letter in your name to all the people who *are* in Jerusalem, and to Zephaniah, the son of Maaseiah, the priest, and to all the priests, saying,

26 "Yahweh made you priest instead of Jehoiada the priest, so that there are overseers *in* the house of Yahweh over any mad man *who* exhibits the behavior of a prophet, and you must put him into the stocks and into the neck iron,

27 and so then why have you not rebuked Jeremiah the Anathothite who exhibits the behavior of a prophet for you?

28 Because he has sent to us *in* Babylon, saying, 'It *will be* a long time, build houses and live *in them*, and plant gardens and eat their fruit.'" "

God's Message to the Exiles About Shemaiah

29 And Zephaniah the priest read this letter in the hearing of Jeremiah the prophet.

30 And the word of Yahweh came to Jeremiah, saying,

31 "Send to all the exiles, saying, 'Thus says Yahweh concerning Shemaiah the Nehelamite: "Because Shemaiah prophesied to you, though I have not sent him, and he has made you trust in a lie,"

32 therefore thus says Yahweh, "Look, I *am* going to punish Shemaiah the Nehelamite and his offspring. There will not be for him a man who lives in the midst of this people, and he will not see the good that I *am* going to do to my people," declares Yahweh, "For he has spoken rebellion against Yahweh." "

Jeremiah's Prophecy to Judah—Promises of Restoration (c. 597 BC)

Jeremiah 30

Introduction

1 The word that came to Jeremiah from Yahweh, saying,

2 "Thus says Yahweh, the God of Israel, saying, 'Write for yourself all the words that I have spoken to you in a scroll.

3 For look, days *are* coming,' declares Yahweh, 'when I will restore the fortunes of my people Israel and Judah,' says Yahweh, 'and I will bring them back to the land that I gave to their ancestors and they will take possession of it.'"

Promise of Restoration for Israel

4 Now these *are* the words that Yahweh spoke concerning Israel and concerning Judah.

5 "For thus says Yahweh:

'We have heard a sound of trembling,
terror, and there is no peace.

6 Ask please and see whether a male can bear a child.
Why *do* I see every strong man
with his hands on his loins like a woman giving birth?

- And *why* are all *their* faces changed to paleness?
- 7 Alas! For that day *is* great,
there is none like it.
And it *is* a time of distress for Jacob,
yet from it he will be delivered.
- 8 And it will happen on that day,' declares Yahweh of hosts,
'I will break his yoke from your neck
and your bonds I will tear to pieces.
And strangers will no longer let him work as a slave.
- 9 But they will serve Yahweh their God,
and David their king, whom I will raise up for them.
- 10 But you must not fear, my servant Jacob,' declares Yahweh,
'and you must not be dismayed, Israel,
for look, I *am* going to save you from far,
and your offspring from the land of their captivity.
And Jacob will return,
and he will be at rest,
and he will be at ease,
and there will be no *one who* makes *him* afraid.
- 11 For I am with you,' declares Yahweh, 'to save you.
For I will make a complete destruction
of all the nations to which I scattered you,
but you I will not make a complete destruction.
And I will chastise you to the measure,
and I will not leave you entirely unpunished.'

Promise of Healing for an Incurable Wound

- 12 For thus says Yahweh,

'Your injury *is* incurable,
your wound *is* overcome by sickness.
- 13 There is no *one who* pleads your cause,
for *your* boil there is no healing for you.
- 14 All your lovers have forgotten you,
they do not care for you.
I have struck you *with the* blow of an enemy,
the punishment of *the* cruel,
because of the greatness of your guilt,
your sins are numerous.
- 15 Why do you cry because of your wound?
Your pain *is* incurable.
Because of the greatness of your guilt—your sins are vast—
I have done these *things* to you.
- 16 Therefore all *those who* devour you will be devoured,
and all your foes, all of them will go into captivity,
and *those who* plunder you will be as plunder,
and all *those who* plunder you I will make as plunder.
- 17 For I will present healing to you,
and I will heal you of your wounds,' declares Yahweh.
'Because they have called you an outcast, *saying*,
"It is Zion, there is no *one who* cares for her."

Promise of Restoration of the Fortunes of Israel

- 18 Thus says Yahweh:

'Look, I *will* restore the fortunes of the tents of Jacob,
and I will have compassion on his dwellings,
and *the* city will be rebuilt upon its mound,

- and *the* citadel fortress will stand on its rightful site.
- 19 And thanksgiving and *the* sound of merry-makers will come out from them, and I will make them numerous, and they will not be few. And I will make them honored, and they will not be lowly.
- 20 And their children will be as of old, and their community will be established before me. And I will punish all their oppressors.
- 21 And their noble will be from them, and their ruler will come out from their midst. And I will bring him near and he will approach me. For who *is* he that would pledge his heart to approach me?' declares Yahweh.
- 22 'And you will be to me a people, and I will be to you God.'"

The Fierce Anger of the Lord

- 23 Look, the storm of Yahweh! Wrath has gone forth, a whirling tempest. It will whirl upon *the* head of *the* wicked.
- 24 The burning anger of Yahweh will not turn back until his doing, and until his accomplishing the plans of his mind. In the last of the days you will understand it.

Jeremiah's Prophecy to Judah—The New Covenant (c. 597 BC)

Jeremiah 31

The Rebuilding of Israel

- 1 "At that time," declares Yahweh,
- "I will be the God of all the clans of Israel, and they will be to me a people."
- 2 Thus says Yahweh:
- "*The* people of *the* survivors of the sword found grace in the desert; Israel going to find their rest."
- 3 From afar Yahweh appeared to me, *saying*, "I have loved you *with* an everlasting love. Therefore I have drawn you *with* loyal love.
- 4 I will again build you, and you will be built, O virgin Israel. You will again adorn yourself *with* your tambourines, and you will go forth in *the* dancing in a ring of *the* merry-makers.
- 5 You will again plant vineyards on the mountains of Samaria. *The* planters will plant, and they will enjoy *it*.
- 6 For there will be a day *when* watchmen will call in the hill country of Ephraim, 'Stand up, and let us go up *to* Zion, to Yahweh our God.'"

Return of the Scattered People

- 7 For thus says Yahweh,
- "Sing for joy for Jacob *with* gladness, and shout out for the head of the nations. Proclaim, praise, and say, 'Save, O Yahweh, your people, the remnant of Israel.'

- 8 Look, I *am* going to bring them from *the* land of *the* north,
and I will gather them from *the* remotest part of *the* earth.
Among them *the* blind, and *the* lame,
those who are pregnant, and *those who* give birth,
together, a great assembly,
they will return here.
- 9 With weeping they will come,
and with pleas for mercy I will bring them;
I will let them walk by streams of water in a straight path.
They will not stumble in it,
for I have become to Israel a father,
and Ephraim, he *is* my firstborn.”
- 10 Hear the word of Yahweh, *O* nations,
and declare in the coastlands from afar, and say,
“The scatterer of Israel will gather him,
and he will keep him as a shepherd his flock.
- 11 For Yahweh has ransomed Jacob,
and he has redeemed him from *the* hand of *the* person stronger than he.
- 12 And they will come,
and they will sing for joy on the height of Zion,
and they will be radiant over the goodness of Yahweh,
over *the* grain, and over *the* wine, and over *the* olive oil,
and over *the* young ones of *the* flock, and over *the* cattle.
And their life will become like a well-watered garden,
and they will never languish again.”
- 13 “Then *the* young woman will rejoice in *the* dancing in a ring,
and *the* young men and *the* old men together.
And I will turn their mourning to jubilation,
and I will comfort them,
and I will gladden them from their sorrow.
- 14 And I will saturate the appetite of the priests *with* fatness,
and my people will be satisfied with my goodness,” declares Yahweh.

The End of Rachel’s Weeping for Her Children

- 15 Thus says Yahweh,
“A voice *is* heard in Ramah,
lamentation, *the* weeping of bitterness.
Rachel *is* weeping for her children;
she refuses to be comforted because of her children,
for they are no *more*.” [\[Matt 2:17–18\]](#)
- 16 Thus says Yahweh:
- “Restrain your voice from weeping,
and your eyes from tears,
for there is a reward for your work,” declares Yahweh,
“and they will return from *the* land of *the* enemy.
- 17 And there is hope for your future,” declares Yahweh,
“and *your* children will return to their territory.
- 18 Indeed I heard Ephraim pitying themselves,
‘You disciplined me, and I was disciplined,
like a calf that is not trained.
Bring me back and let me return,
for you *are* Yahweh my God.
- 19 For after my turning back I repented,
and after coming to understand I struck *my* thigh.
I was ashamed and also humiliated,
because I bore the disgrace of my youth.’

- 20 *Is Ephraim my dear son,
or the child of my delight?*
For as often as I have earnestly spoken against him,
I still remember him.
Therefore my bowels are turbulent for him,
surely I will have compassion on him," declares Yahweh.
- 21 "Set up for yourself road markers,
make for yourself signposts,
set your mind to the main road,
the road by which you went.
Return, O virgin of Israel,
return to these your cities.
- 22 How long will you waver, O unfaithful daughter?
For Yahweh has created a new *thing* on the earth,
a woman, she shelters a man."

Description of Future Blessing

23 Thus says Yahweh of hosts, the God of Israel, "They will again say these words in the land of Judah and in its towns at my restoring their fortunes,

'Yahweh bless you, O settlement of righteousness,
O hill of holiness.'

- 24 And Judah and all of its towns together will live in it,
farmers and those who travel with the flocks.
- 25 For I will saturate *the* thirst of *the* weary,
and every person *who* languishes I will replenish."
- 26 At this I awoke and looked,
and my sleep was pleasant to me.

27 "Look, *the days are* coming," declares Yahweh, "and I will sow the house of Israel and the house of Judah *with the* seed of humankind, and *with the* seed of animals.

28 And then as I have watched over them to pull up, and to tear down, and to annihilate, and to destroy, and to do evil, so I will watch over them to build and to plant," declares Yahweh.

Repudiation of a Popular Saying

- 29 "In those days they will say no longer, 'Parents have eaten unripe fruit, and *the* teeth of *the* children are set on edge.'
- 30 But each will die because of his iniquity, everyone who eats the unripe fruit, their teeth will be set on edge.

Announcement of a New Covenant

- 31 Look, *the days are* coming," declares Yahweh, "and I will make a new covenant with the house of Israel and with the house of Judah,
32 not like the covenant that I made with their ancestors on the day of my grasping *them* by their hand, bringing them out from the land of Egypt, my covenant that they themselves broke, though I myself was a master over them," declares Yahweh.
33 "But this *is* the covenant that I will make with the house of Israel after those days," declares Yahweh: "I will put my law in their inward parts and on their hearts I will write it, and I will be to them God, and they themselves will be to me people.
34 And they will no longer teach each one his neighbor, or each one his brother, saying, 'Know Yahweh,' for all of them will know me, from their smallest and up to their greatest," declares Yahweh, "for I will forgive their iniquity and their sin I will no longer remember." [[Heb 8:8-12; 10:16-17](#)]

God's Assurance of Israel's Eternal Duration

- 35 Thus says Yahweh, who gives *the* sun for light by day, the regulations of *the* moon and *the* stars for light *by* night, who stirs up the sea and its waves roar—Yahweh of hosts *is* his name.
36 "If these rules would cease from before me," declares Yahweh, "also the offspring of Israel would cease from being a nation before me forever."
37 Thus says Yahweh, "If *the* heavens above can be measured, and *the* foundations of *the* earth below can be explored, also I will reject all the offspring of Israel because of all that they have done," declares Yahweh.

God's Promise that Jerusalem Will be Rebuilt

38 "Look, days *are* coming," declares Yahweh, "and the city will be rebuilt for Yahweh, from the Tower of Hananel *to* the Corner Gate.

39 And the measuring line will still go out immediately in front *of* it to the hill of Gareb, and it will turn *to* Goah.

40 And the whole of the valley *of* the corpses, and the ashes, and all the cultivated fields up to the wadi of Kidron, up to the corner of the Gate of the Horses *toward the east will be* holy to Yahweh. It will not be uprooted, and it will not be overthrown again forever."

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Jeremiah's Prophecy Concerning the Nations: Elam (c. 597–596 BC)

Jeremiah 49:34–39

34 The word of Yahweh that came to Jeremiah the prophet concerning Elam at the beginning of the reign of Zedekiah the king of Judah, saying,

35 “Thus says Yahweh of hosts:

‘Look, I *am* going to break the bow of Elam,
the first and best of their might.

36 And I will bring to Elam four winds,
from the four corners of heaven,
and I will scatter them to all these winds,
and there will not be a nation
where the scattered people of Elam will not go.

37 So I will shatter Elam before their enemies,
and before the seekers of their life.
And I will bring disaster upon them,
my burning anger,’ declares Yahweh.
‘And I will send after them the sword
until I have destroyed them.

38 And I will set my throne in Elam
and I will destroy from there king and officials,’ declares Yahweh.

39 ‘And then in the last of the days
I will restore the fortunes of Elam,’ declares Yahweh.”

Jeremiah's Prophecy Concerning the Nations: Babylon's Doom (c. 597–596 BC)

Jeremiah 50

Announcement of Babylon's Doom

1 The word that Yahweh spoke concerning Babylon, concerning the land of *the* Chaldeans, by the hand of Jeremiah the prophet:

2 “Declare among the nations and proclaim,
and lift up a banner.
Proclaim, you must not conceal *it*.
Say, ‘Babylon is captured,
Bel is ashamed,
Merodach is filled with terror,
her idols are ashamed,
her idols are filled with terror.

3 For a nation will come up against her from *the* north.
It will make her land as a horror,
and an inhabitant will not be in her.
From humans to animals they *all* will wander *off*.
They will go *away*.

4 In those days and in that time,” declares Yahweh,
“the people of Israel will come,
they and the people of Judah together.
Weeping as they go, they will go,
and Yahweh their God they will seek.

5 They will ask *the* way to Zion,
turning their faces there.
They will come and join themselves to Yahweh
by an everlasting covenant *that* will not be forgotten.

6 My people have become lost sheep,
their shepherds have caused them to go astray.
They led them away *to the* mountains.
From mountain to hill they have gone,
they have forgotten their resting place.

7 All *those who* found them have devoured them.

And their foes have said, ‘We are not guilty,
because they have sinned against Yahweh, the true pasture,
even Yahweh, the hope of their ancestors.’

- 8 Flee from the midst of Babylon,
and from the land of *the* Chaldeans.
Go out and be like he-goats
before *the* flock.
- 9 For look, I *am* going to stir up,
and I *am* going to bring against Babylon
a contingent of great nations
from *the* land of *the* north.
And they will draw up a battle formation against her,
from there she will be captured.
Their arrows *are* like a warrior *who has* achieved success,
he does not return without success.
- 10 And Chaldea will be as booty,
all *those who* plunder her will be satisfied,” declares Yahweh.

Explanation for Its Punishment

- 11 “Though you rejoice, though you exult,
O plunderers of my inheritance,
though you frisk about like a heifer on the grass,
and you neigh like the powerful stallions,
12 your mother will be very ashamed.
She who gave birth to you will be humiliated.
Look, *she will be the* least of *the* nations,
a desert, dry land, and wilderness.
- 13 Because of the anger of Yahweh she will not be inhabited,
but she will be a wasteland, all of her.
Everyone *who* passes by Babylon will be appalled
and will hiss because of all her wounds.
- 14 Draw up a battle formation at Babylon all around,
all those who bend *the* bow, shoot at her.
You must not spare arrows,
for she has sinned against Yahweh.
- 15 Raise a war cry against her on all sides.
She has surrendered.
Her towers have fallen,
her walls are ruined.
For this *is* the vengeance of Yahweh.
Take revenge on her.
As she has done to *others*,
so do to her.
- 16 Cut off *the* sower from Babylon,
and *the* one who uses *the* sickle in *the* time of harvest.
Because of the sword of the oppressor
each one will turn to their people,
and each one will flee to their land.
- 17 Israel *is* a sheep scattered,
lions drove *them* away.
The first who devoured it *was* the king of Assyria,
and now *at* the end Nebuchadnezzar, the king of Babylon, gnawed its bones.”

The Restoration of Israel

- 18 Therefore thus says Yahweh of hosts, the God of Israel,

“Look, I *am* going to punish the king of Babylon and his land
just as I punished the king of Assyria.

- 19 And I will restore Israel to its pasture,

and it will feed *on* Carmel, and *in* Bashan,
and on the hills of Ephraim, and *in* Gilead
its hunger will be satisfied.

- 20 In those days and at that time," declares Yahweh,
"the guilt of Israel will be sought, but there *is* none,
and the sins of Judah, but they will not be found,
for I will forgive those I left behind.

God's Wrath against Babylon

- 21 To the land of Merathaim,
go up against her,
and against the inhabitants of Pekod,
massacre and destroy them," declares Yahweh,
"and do according to all that I have commanded you.
- 22 *The* sound of battle *is* in the land,
and great destruction.
- 23 How the blacksmith's hammer of all the earth is cut down and broken!
How Babylon has become as a horror among the nations!
- 24 I laid a bird snare for you, and you were caught, *O* Babylon.
But you yourself *did* not know.
You were discovered and seized,
because with Yahweh you measured yourself.
- 25 Yahweh has opened his armory,
and he has brought out the weapons of his wrath,
for it *is* a word for my Lord Yahweh of hosts
in the land of *the* Chaldeans.
- 26 Come against her from *the* end,
open her granaries.
Pile her up like heaps and destroy her.
Let there be no remnant for her.
- 27 Massacre all her bulls,
let them go down to the slaughtering.
Woe to them, for *their* day has come,
the time of their punishment.
- 28 *There is the* sound of fugitives and survivors
from the land of Babylon,
to declare in Zion the vengeance of Yahweh our God,
the vengeance for his temple.
- 29 Summon archers against Babylon,
all those who bend *the* bow.
Encamp all around her,
there must not be for her an escape.
Take revenge on her according to her deeds.
According to all that she has done, *so* do to her.
For against Yahweh she has behaved insolently,
against the Holy One of Israel.
- 30 Therefore her young men will fall in her public squares,
and all her soldiers will perish on that day," declares Yahweh.
- 31 "Look, I *am* against you, *O* arrogant *one*,"
declares Lord Yahweh of hosts,
"for your day has come,
the time *when* I will punish you.
- 32 And *the* arrogant *one* will stumble and fall,
and there is no *one who* raises *him* up.
And I will kindle a fire in his cities,
and it will devour everything around him."

The Desolation of Babylon

- 33 Thus says Yahweh of hosts:

- “The people of Israel *are* oppressed,
and the people of Judah likewise,
for all their captors have seized them,
they refuse to let them go free.
- 34 Their redeemer *is* strong,
his name *is* Yahweh of hosts.
Surely he will plead their case,
in order to make peace *for* the earth,
but to cause unrest to the inhabitants of Babylon.
- 35 A sword against *the* Chaldeans,” declares Yahweh,
“and against the inhabitants of Babylon,
and against her officials,
and against her wise men.
- 36 A sword against the oracle priests,
and they will become foolish.
A sword against her warriors,
and they will be filled with terror.
- 37 A sword against his horses,
and against his chariots,
and against all the foreign troops who *are* in the midst of her,
so that they may become as women.
A sword against her treasures,
so that they may be plundered.
- 38 A drought *will come* against her waters,
and they will dry up,
for it *is* a land of images,
and because of the frightful *objects*, they act like madmen.
- 39 Therefore desert creatures will live *there* with jackals,
and daughters of ostriches will inhabit her.
And she will not be inhabited again forever,
and she will not be dwelt in for all generations.
- 40 As *when* God overthrew Sodom and Gomorrah
and their neighbors,” declares Yahweh,
“no one will live there,
and *the* son of humankind will not dwell as an alien in her.

Babylon’s Helplessness

- 41 Look, a people *is* about to come
from *the* north,
and a great nation and many kings are woken up
from *the* remotest part of *the* earth.
- 42 They keep hold of bow and short sword.
They *are* cruel and they have no mercy.
Their sound *is* like the sea, it roars,
and upon horses they ride.
Drawn up for battle as a man for the battle,
against you, O daughter of Babylon.
- 43 The king of Babylon heard their report
and his hands grew slack.
Anxiety has seized him,
fear and pain like the *woman who* gives birth.
- 44 Look, like a lion he comes up from the thickets of the Jordan
against a pastureland by a constantly flowing stream,
so I will chase them away quickly from her,
and I will appoint whoever *is* chosen over her.
For who *is* like me, and who can summon me,
and who *is* this shepherd who can stand before me?
- 45 Therefore hear the plan of Yahweh

that he has planned against Babylon,
and his plans
that he has planned against the land of *the* Chaldeans.
Surely they will drag them away,
the little *ones* of the flock.
Surely he will cause *their* grazing place
to be desolate over them.

46 At *the* sound, 'Babylon has been captured,'
the earth will quake,
and a cry for help among the nations
will be heard."

Jeremiah's Prophecy Concerning the Nations: Babylon's Coming Fall (c. 597–596 BC)

Jeremiah 51:1–58

The Lord's Vengeance on Babylon

1 Thus says Yahweh:

"Look, I *am* going to stir up against Babylon
and against the inhabitants of Leb-qamai a destructive wind.

2 And I will send winnowers to Babylon,
and they will winnow her,
and they will lay waste her land,
for they will be against her from all sides on *the* day of disaster.

3 Let not him who bends the bow shoot his bow,
and let him not rise high in his body armor.
And you must not spare her young men;
destroy her whole army.

4 And they will fall slain in the land of *the* Chaldeans,
and pierced through in her streets.

5 For neither Israel nor Judah *is* a widower from their God,
from Yahweh of hosts,
though their land is full of guilt
against the Holy One of Israel."

6 Flee from the midst of Babylon and save each one his life.
You must not perish because of her guilt.
For this *is the* time of vengeance for Yahweh,
he *will* repay her what is deserved.

7 Babylon *was* a cup of gold in the hand of Yahweh,
making drunk all the earth.
The nations drank of her wine.
Therefore *the* nations acted like madmen.

8 Suddenly Babylon has fallen and she is shattered.
Wail over her!
Take balm for her wounds,
perhaps she may be healed.

9 We tried to heal Babylon, and she was not healed.
Forsake her and let us go each one to his country,
for her judgment has reached to the heavens,
and it has been lifted up to *the* skies.

10 Yahweh has brought forth our vindication.
Come and let us make known in Zion the work of Yahweh our God.

11 Sharpen the arrows, fill the quivers!
Yahweh has stirred up the spirit of the kings of the Medes.
Because his plan concerning Babylon *is* to destroy it,
for that is the vengeance of Yahweh,
the vengeance for his temple.

12 Against the walls of Babylon raise a banner;
post a strong watch, post watchmen, prepare the ambushes,

for Yahweh has both planned as well as performed what he has spoken concerning the inhabitants of Babylon.

- 13 *O you who* live by mighty waters, rich in treasures,
your end has come, the measure of your life.
- 14 Yahweh of hosts has sworn by himself,
“Surely I will fill you *with* troops like the creeping locusts,
and they will sing over you a war cry.”

A Hymn of Praise to the Lord

- 15 *He is the one who* made *the* earth by his power,
the one who created *the* world by his wisdom,
and by his understanding he stretched out *the* heavens.
- 16 At the giving of his voice
there is a roar of waters in the heavens,
and he causes *the* patches of mist
to go up from *the* end of *the* earth.
He makes lightning for the rain,
and he brings out *the* wind from his storehouses.
- 17 All humankind turns out to be stupid,
without knowledge.
Every goldsmith is put to shame
by *the* divine image.
For his cast image *is* a lie,
and *there is* no breath in them.
- 18 They *are* worthless,
a work of mockery.
At the time of their punishment,
they will perish.
- 19 The portion of Jacob *is* not like these,
for he *is* the creator of everything,
and the tribe of his inheritance.
Yahweh of hosts *is* his name.

God's Power against Enemies

- 20 *He says,* “You *are* a war club for me,
a weapon of battle,
and I smash nations with you,
and I destroy kingdoms with you.
- 21 And I smash *the* horse with you,
and its rider,
and I smash *the* chariot with you,
and its rider.
- 22 And I smash man and woman with you,
and I smash *the* old man and *the* boy with you,
and I smash *the* young man and *the* young woman with you.
- 23 And I smash *the* shepherd and his flock with you,
and I smash *the* farmer and his team with you,
and I smash *the* governors and *the* officials with you.
- 24 And I will repay Babylon,
and all the inhabitants of Chaldea,
all their wickedness that they have done in Zion
before your eyes,” declares Yahweh.
- 25 “Look, I *am* against you,
O mountain of the destruction,” declares Yahweh,
“*the one* that destroys the whole earth.
And I will stretch out my hand against you,
and I will roll you down from the cliffs,
and I will make you as a mountain burned away.
- 26 They will not take from you

a stone for a corner,
and a stone for a foundation,
for you will be an everlasting desolation,” declares Yahweh.

Nations Summoned against Babylon

- 27 Raise a banner in the land;
blow a horn among the nations;
prepare for holy war against her;
summon *the* nations against her,
the kingdoms of Ararat, Minni, and Ashkenaz;
summon against her an official;
bring up horses like bristling creeping locusts.
- 28 Prepare *the* nations for holy war against her,
the kings of the Medes,
with their governors and all their officials,
and every land of their dominion.
- 29 And the land quakes and writhes,
for the plans of Yahweh against Babylon stand,
to make the land of Babylon as a horror,
without inhabitant.
- 30 The warriors of Babylon have ceased to fight,
they remain in the strongholds,
their power has dried up,
they have become as women.
Her dwelling places are set on fire,
her bars are broken.
- 31 *one* runner runs to meet *another* runner,
and *one* messenger to meet *another* messenger,
to tell the king of Babylon that his city has been captured,
from end to end.
- 32 And the fords have been seized,
and the reed marshes have been burned with fire,
and the soldiers are horrified.

A Call for Retribution

- 33 For thus says Yahweh of hosts, the God of Israel,
- “The daughter of Babylon *is* like a threshing floor
at the time it *is* trodden down,
just a little while
and the time of the harvest will come for her.”
- 34 Nebuchadnezzar the king of Babylon
has devoured me *and* sucked me dry;
he has made me an empty vessel;
he has swallowed me like the sea monster;
he has filled his belly with my delicacies;
he has rinsed me.
- 35 “*May* the violence done to me and to my flesh *be* on Babylon,”
the inhabitants of Zion will say;
and “My blood *be* upon the inhabitants of Chaldea,”
Jerusalem will say.

God Answers the Call—Payback Time!

- 36 Therefore thus says Yahweh,
- “Look, I *am* going to contend your case,
and I will avenge your vengeance,
and I will cause her sea to dry up,
and I will cause her fountain to dry up.

- 37 And Babylon will become as a heap of stones,
a lair of jackals,
an object of horror, and *an object of hissing*,
without inhabitants.
- 38 They will roar together like the young lions,
they will growl like the cubs of lions.
- 39 At their becoming hot I will set their banquets,
and I will make them drunk,
so that they will fall into a swoon,
and they will sleep an everlasting sleep,
and they will not wake up," declares Yahweh.
- 40 "I will bring them down like young rams to slaughter,
like rams and goats.
- 41 How Sheshach is captured,
and the glory of all the earth is seized!
How Babylon has become as an *object of horror*
among the nations!
- 42 The sea has risen over Babylon,
she has been covered by the roar of its waves.
- 43 Her cities have become as an *object of horror*,
a dry land and a wilderness,
a land in which no person lives,
nor does a son of humankind pass through it.
- 44 And I will punish Bel in Babylon,
and I will wrench out from his mouth what he has swallowed.
And *the* nations will not stream towards him *any* longer
what's worse, the wall of Babylon has fallen.

An Appeal to Flee from Babylon

- 45 Come out from her midst, my people,
and save each one his life
from the burning anger of Yahweh.
- 46 Now so that you are not fainthearted,
and you are afraid at the rumors that are heard in the land—
and in the year the rumor comes,
and in the year after it the rumor,
and violence *is* in the land,
with ruler against ruler—
- 47 therefore look, days *are* coming,
and I will punish the images of Babylon,
and all her land will be put to shame,
and all her slain ones will fall in the midst of her.
- 48 Then *the* heaven and *the* earth and all that *is* in them
will shout for joy over Babylon,
for from *the* north
the destroyers will come to it," declares Yahweh.

Another Warning of Babylon's Coming Destruction

- 49 Babylon must fall not only *because of* the slain ones of Israel,
but also because of Babylon the slain ones of all the earth have fallen.
- 50 Survivors of *the* sword, go!
You must not linger!
Remember Yahweh from far *away*,
and let Jerusalem come to your mind.
- 51 We are ashamed,
for we have heard taunts,
disgrace covers our faces,
for strangers have come to the holy places of the house of Yahweh.
- 52 "Therefore look, days *are* coming," declares Yahweh,

- “and I will punish her images,
and *the* fatally wounded will sigh through all her land.
- 53 Though Babylon goes up *to* the heavens,
and though she fortifies the high place of her strength,
from me destroyers will come to her,” declares Yahweh.
- 54 *The* sound of a cry for help from Babylon,
and a great collapse from the land of *the* Chaldeans.
- 55 For Yahweh *is* devastating Babylon,
and he obliterates *her* loud noise from her.
Their waves roar like mighty waters,
the roar of their voices resounds.
- 56 For a destroyer *is* coming against her, against Babylon,
and her warriors are captured.
Their bows are broken;
for Yahweh *is* a God of recompense,
certainly he will repay.
- 57 “And I will make drunk her officials, and her wise men,
her governors, and her officials, and her warriors,
and they will sleep an everlasting sleep,
and they will not wake up,”
declares the King, Yahweh of hosts *is* his name.

58 Thus says Yahweh of hosts:

“The broad walls of Babylon will be utterly demolished,
and her high gates will burn with fire,
and *the* peoples will labor for nothing,
and *the* nations for fire,
and they will grow weary.”

Zedekiah Travels to Babylon / Jeremiah Sends the Babylon Prophecy (Tishri [October] 595–Adar [March] 594 BC)

Jeremiah 51:59–64

- 59 The word that Jeremiah the prophet commanded Seraiah, the son of Neriah, the son of Mahseiah, at his going with Zedekiah, the king of Judah, *to* Babylon in the fourth year of his reign. Now Seraiah *was the* quartermaster.
- 60 And Jeremiah wrote all the disasters that would come on Babylon in one scroll, all these words that are written concerning Babylon.
- 61 And Jeremiah said to Seraiah, “At your coming *to* Babylon, then you must see *that* you read aloud all these words.
- 62 And you must say, ‘Yahweh, you yourself spoke against this place, to destroy it, so that *there will* not be in it *anything* living, from humankind to animals, for it will be an everlasting desolation.’
- 63 And then when you finish reading aloud this scroll, you must tie a stone on it, and you must throw it into the middle of *the* Euphrates.
- 64 And you must say, ‘Babylon will sink, and she will not rise, because of the face of the disasters that I *am* bringing on her, and they will grow weary.’” Thus far the words of Jeremiah.

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Chronological Notes

- 1) The historical context of Jeremiah 50–51 is the early years of the reign of Zedekiah (cf. Jer 51:59–64). Jeremiah’s prophecies against Babylon were written on one scroll and taken to Babylon itself so they could be read aloud (51:60–61).

Nebuchadnezzar's Golden Image and the Fiery Furnace (Tishri [October] 595–Adar [March] 594 BC)

Daniel 3

The Golden Image

1 Nebuchadnezzar the king made a statue of gold. Its height *was* sixty cubits *and* its width *was* six cubits; he set it up in the valley of Dura in the province of Babylon.

2 Then Nebuchadnezzar the king sent *directions* to assemble the satraps, the prefects, and the governors, the counselors, the treasurers, the judges, the magistrates and all of the officials of the provinces to come to the dedication of the statue that Nebuchadnezzar the king *had* set up.

3 Then the satraps, the prefects, the governors, the counselors, the treasurers, the judges, the magistrates, and all the officials of the province *were* assembled for the dedication of the statue that Nebuchadnezzar the king *had* set up, and *were* standing before the statue that Nebuchadnezzar had set up.

4 Then the herald proclaimed aloud, "To you it is commanded, O peoples, nations and people of all languages,

5 *that* at the time that you hear the sound of the horn, the flute, *the* lyre, *the* trigon, *the* harp, *the* drum and all kinds of music, you must fall down and you must worship the statue of gold that Nebuchadnezzar the king *has* set up.

6 And whoever does not fall down and worship will be thrown immediately into the midst of the furnace of blazing fire."

7 Therefore, at that time, as soon as all the peoples heard the sound of the horn, the flute, *the* lyre, *the* trigon, *the* harp and all kinds of music, all the peoples, the nations and people of all languages *were* falling down *and* were worshipping the statue of gold that Nebuchadnezzar the king had set up.

Daniel's Friends Refuse to Worship

8 Therefore at this time *some* astrologers came forward and they denounced the Jews.

9 They responded and said to Nebuchadnezzar the king, "O king, may *you* live forever!

10 You, O king, have made a decree that everyone who hears the sound of the horn, the flute, *the* lyre, *the* trigon, *the* harp and *the* drum and all kinds of music, he shall fall down and shall worship the statue of gold.

11 And whoever does not fall down and worship shall be thrown into the midst of the furnace of blazing fire.

12 *However* there are Judean men whom you have appointed over the affairs of the province of Babylon—Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego—these men, O king, pay you no heed *and were* not serving your god, and the statue of gold that you set up they are not worshipping."

Nebuchadnezzar Confronts Shadrach, Meshach and Abednego

13 Then Nebuchadnezzar said in rage and anger to bring in Shadrach, Meshach and Abednego; then they brought in these men before the king.

14 Nebuchadnezzar answered and said to them, "*Is it true*, Shadrach, Meshach and Abednego, *that* you are not serving my god, and *you are* not worshipping the statue of gold that I have set up?

15 Now if you are ready so that when you hear the sound of the horn, the flute, the lyre, *the* trigon, *the* harp and *the* drum and all kinds of music, you fall down and you worship the statue that I have made, *that will be good*. But if you do not worship it, immediately you will be thrown into the midst of the furnace of blazing fire, and who is the god who will rescue you from my hands?"

16 Shadrach, Meshach and Abednego answered and said to the king, Nebuchadnezzar, "We have no need on this matter to present a defense to you.

17 If it is so, our God, whom we serve, is able to rescue us from the furnace of blazing fire. And from your hand, O king, let him rescue us.

18 And if not, let it be known to you, O king, that we will not serve your gods, and the statue of gold that you have set up we will not worship."

The Fiery Furnace

19 Then Nebuchadnezzar was filled with anger and the image of his face was changed toward Shadrach, Meshach and Abednego, so *he* ordered and said to heat up the one furnace seven times what was usual to heat *it* up.

20 And he commanded the strongest men of the guards who *were* in his army to bind Shadrach, Meshach and Abednego and to throw *them* into the furnace of blazing fire.

21 Then these men were bound with their garments, their trousers and their turbans and their *other* clothing, and they were thrown into the midst of the furnace of blazing fire.

22 Therefore because the word of the king was severe and the furnace was exceedingly hot, the flame of the fire killed these men who lifted up Shadrach, Meshach and Abednego.

23 But these men, the three of them, Shadrach, Meshach and Abednego, fell down into the midst of the furnace of blazing fire, *and they were* bound.

24 Then Nebuchadnezzar the king was astonished, and he rose up in haste *and* he asked, saying to his advisers, "*Did* we not throw three men, bound, into the midst of the fire? They answered, saying to the king, "Certainly, O king!"

25 He answered, saying, “Look, I see four men unbound walking in the midst of the fire and there is no damage to them, and the appearance of the fourth *man* resembles the son of a god.”

26 Then Nebuchadnezzar approached the door of the furnace of blazing fire, *and* he called out, saying, “Shadrach, Meshach and Abednego, servants of the Most High God, come out and come here!”

27 And the satraps, the prefects, the governors and the advisors of the king *were* assembling, *and* they saw these men, that the fire had no power over their bodies, and the hair of their heads was not singed, and their garments were not harmed, and the smell of fire did not come from them.

Nebuchadnezzar Honors God

28 Nebuchadnezzar responded, saying, “Blessed be their God, *the God* of Shadrach, Meshach and Abednego, who sent his angel and rescued his servants who trusted in him, and the command of the king they disobeyed, and they gave their bodies so that they *did* not serve and *did* not worship any god except their God.

29 And from me is set forth a decree that any people, nation, or language that *may* utter criticism against their God—*the God* of Shadrach, Meshach and Abednego—will be broken into pieces and their house will be made like ruins. For there is not another God who is able to rescue like this *God*.”

30 Then the king promoted Shadrach, Meshach and Abednego in the province of Babylon.

Jeremiah Urges Submission to Babylon (Ab [August] 594 BC)

Jeremiah 27

Jeremiah Warns the Nations to Submit to and Serve Nebuchadnezzar

1 In the beginning of the reign of Jehoiakim, the son of Josiah, the king of Judah, this word came to Jeremiah from Yahweh, saying—
2 thus said Yahweh to me—“Make for yourself fetters and yokes and put them on your neck,

3 and send them to the king of Edom, and to the king of Moab, and to the king of the Ammonites, and to the king of Tyre, and to the king of Sidon in *the* hand of *the* envoys who have come to Jerusalem, to Zedekiah, the king of Judah.

4 And you must command them for their masters, saying, ‘Thus says Yahweh of hosts, the God of Israel, this you shall say to your masters:

5 “I have made the earth with humankind and animals that *are* on the face of the earth by my great power and by my outstretched arm, and I give it to whomever is right in my eyes.

6 And now I myself have given all these lands into the hand of Nebuchadnezzar the king of Babylon, my servant, and also the animals of the field I have given to him to serve him.

7 And all the nations will serve him, and his son, and his grandson, until the coming of the time of his own land. Then many nations and great kings will let him work.

8 “But it will be *that* the nation or kingdom that will not serve him, Nebuchadnezzar the king of Babylon, and that will not put his neck under the yoke of the king of Babylon, I will punish that nation with the sword, and with the famine, and with the plague,” declares Yahweh, “until I have destroyed it with my hand.

9 And you, you must not listen to your prophets, and to your diviners, and to your dreamers, and to your interpreters of signs, and to your sorcerers who are saying, ‘You will not serve the king of Babylon.’

10 For they *are* prophesying to you a lie, so that you *will be* removed from your land, and I will drive you away, and you will perish.

11 But the nation that will bring its neck under the yoke of the king of Babylon and will serve him, yet will I leave it on its land,” declares Yahweh, “and they will till it, and they will live in it.” ”

Jeremiah Warns Zedekiah to Submit to Babylon and Not to Listen to False Prophets

12 And I spoke words like these to Zedekiah, the king of Judah, saying, “Bring your necks under the yoke of the king of Babylon, and serve him and his people, and live.

13 Why should you die—you and your people—by the sword, by the famine, and by the plague, as Yahweh has spoken concerning the nation that will not serve the king of Babylon?

14 And you must not listen to the words of the prophets who are speaking to you, saying, ‘You must not serve the king of Babylon,’ for they *are* prophesying a lie to you.

15 For I have not sent them,” declares Yahweh, “but they *are* prophesying in my name falsely, so that I will drive them away. And you will perish—you and the prophets who are prophesying to you.”

Jeremiah Warns the Priests and all the People to Ignore the False Prophets

16 Then I spoke to the priests and to all this people, saying, “Thus says Yahweh, ‘You must not listen to the words of your prophets who are prophesying to you, saying, “Look, the vessels of the house of Yahweh *are* about to be quickly brought back from Babylon”, for they *are* prophesying a lie to you.

17 And you must not listen to them; serve the king of Babylon and live. Why should this city become a site of ruins?

18 But if they *are* prophets, and if there is with them the word of Yahweh, let them please plead with Yahweh of hosts, that the

vessels that are left over in the temple of Yahweh, and the house of the king of Judah, and in Jerusalem, must not go *to* Babylon.’
 19 For thus says Yahweh of hosts concerning the pillars, and concerning the sea, and concerning the stands, and concerning the rest of the vessels that are left in this city,
 20 which Nebuchadnezzar the king of Babylon, did not take when he deported Jeconiah, the son of Jehoiakim, the king of Judah, from Jerusalem *to* Babylon, along with all the nobles of Judah and Jerusalem.
 21 For thus says Yahweh of hosts, the God of Israel, concerning the vessels that are left *in* the house of Yahweh, and *in* the house of the king of Judah, and *in* Jerusalem:
 22 ‘They will be brought *to* Babylon, and there they will stay until the day of my attending to them,’ declares Yahweh. ‘Then I will bring them up and restore them to this place.’”

Conflict between Jeremiah and Hananiah (Ab [August] 594 BC)

Jeremiah 28

Hananiah’s False Prophecy

1 And it was in that *same* year, at the beginning of the reign of Zedekiah, the king of Judah, in the fourth year, in the fifth month, that Hananiah, the son of Azzur, the prophet who *was* from Gibeon, said to me in the house of Yahweh before the eyes of the priests and all the people, saying,
 2 “Thus says Yahweh of hosts, the God of Israel, saying, ‘I have broken the yoke of the king of Babylon.
 3 Within two years I *will* bring back to this place all the vessels of the house of Yahweh which Nebuchadnezzar the king of Babylon took away from this place and brought *to* Babylon.
 4 And Jeconiah the son of Jehoiakim, the king of Judah, and all the exiles from Judah who went *to* Babylon, I *will* bring back to this place,’ declares Yahweh, ‘For I will break the yoke of the king of Babylon.’”

Jeremiah’s Response to Hananiah

5 Then Jeremiah the prophet said to Hananiah the prophet before the eyes of the priests and before the eyes of all the people who were standing in the house of Yahweh,
 6 and Jeremiah the prophet said, “Amen! May Yahweh do so; may Yahweh fulfill your words that you have prophesied, to bring back the vessels of the house of Yahweh and all the exiles from Babylon to this place.
 7 Nevertheless listen please *to* this word that I *am* speaking in your hearing and in the hearing of all the people,
 8 The prophets who were before me and before you from ancient *times* prophesied against many countries and against great kingdoms of war, and of disaster, and of plague.
 9 The prophet who prophesies peace, at the coming of the word of the prophet, will become known *as* the prophet that Yahweh has truly sent.”

Hananiah’s Symbolic Act

10 Then Hananiah the prophet took the yoke from the neck of Jeremiah the prophet and broke it.
 11 Then Hananiah said before the eyes of all the people, saying, “Thus says Yahweh, ‘This is how I will break the yoke of Nebuchadnezzar the king of Babylon, within two years, from the neck of all the nations.’” And Jeremiah the prophet went on his way.

Jeremiah Denounces Hananiah

12 And the word of Yahweh came to Jeremiah after Hananiah the prophet broke the yoke from the neck of Jeremiah the prophet, saying,
 13 “Go, and you must say to Hananiah, saying, ‘Thus says Yahweh, “You have broken yoke bars of wood, but you have made in place of them yoke bars of iron.”
 14 For thus says Yahweh of hosts, the God of Israel, “I have put a yoke of iron on the neck of all these nations, to serve Nebuchadnezzar, the king of Babylon, and they will serve him, and I have even given the animals of the open field to him.” “
 15 Then Jeremiah the prophet said to Hananiah the prophet, “Please listen, Hananiah, Yahweh has not sent you, and you have made this people trust in a lie.
 16 Therefore thus says Yahweh, ‘Look, I *am* going to send you from the face of the earth. This year you *will* die because you have spoken rebellion against Yahweh.’”
 17 And Hananiah the prophet died in that *same* year in the seventh month [*two months later*].

Chronological Notes

- 1) A Possible Historical Setting for Daniel 3.¹
- A) Unlike most of the major sections of Daniel, chapter 3 contains no chronological notice for the setting of the events it relates.² However, a careful investigation into the book of Jeremiah and into the surviving chronicles of Nebuchadnezzar's reign suggests a date of late December 594 or January 593 BC for the convocation to dedicate the golden statue.³
- B) The Babylonian Chronicle states that a rebellion took place in Babylon from the month of Kislev (December 15, 595–January 12, 594) to the month of Tebeth (January 13–February 11, 594) in the tenth year of Nebuchadnezzar's reign.⁴ Nebuchadnezzar suppressed the rebellion and also purged his army of those he suspected of supporting the uprising.⁵ At the end of that year (the Babylonian year ended on April 11, 594), Nebuchadnezzar made a trip to his western provinces to collect tribute from his vassals.⁶ This trip was probably to enforce his authority in light of the rebellion that he recently suppressed. Moreover, he returned to those western provinces with his army in the month of Kislev the next year (December 4, 594–January 1, 593).⁷
- C) Early in Zedekiah's fourth year as king of Judah (which corresponds to the last six months of Nebuchadnezzar's eleventh year and the first six months of his twelfth year),⁸ Zedekiah made a trip to Babylon (Jer 51:59–64). Zedekiah's trip most likely took place upon the return of Nebuchadnezzar to Babylon, perhaps in late Kislev 594 (late December 594) or more likely in Tebeth 593 (January 593). Zedekiah probably was asked to make this trip to profess his loyalty to Nebuchadnezzar. However, it appears to have had the opposite effect, since later that year, before the end of month of Shebat (February 1–March 1, 593),⁹ Zedekiah, having returned to Jerusalem, plotted with emissaries from Edom, Moab, Ammon, Tyre, and Sidon to rebel against Nebuchadnezzar, even though Jeremiah advised against this rebellion (Jer 27:1–22).
- D) This sequence of events would yield a date of late December 594 or January 593 for Zedekiah's trip to Babylon and his return. The convocation in Daniel 3 is a likely setting for the destination of Zedekiah's trip, since the trip probably was for the purpose of ensuring his loyalty to Nebuchadnezzar. Zedekiah would have been one of a number of vassals who were brought to Babylon to demonstrate their loyalty to Nebuchadnezzar by worshiping the huge statue he erected. Most commentators believe that the presupposition in the narrative of Daniel 3 is that willingness to bow down to the golden image was equated with loyalty to Nebuchadnezzar.¹⁰

¹ Sourced from Andrew E. Steinmann, "Daniel," *Concordia Commentary*, (Concordia Publishing House, 2008), 167–170. The footnotes that follow are also from Steinmann.

² Both the Old Greek and Theodotion prefix the words ἑνδεκάτου ἔτους to the start of 3:1 to indicate that the convocation took place in Nebuchadnezzar's "eighteenth year." However, these words probably are a secondary addition based on Jer 52:29.

³ The specific chronicle is preserved on tablet BM 21946. See Wiseman, *Chronicles of Chaldean Kings*, 66–75. The identification of the chronological sequence that includes the convocation was first proposed by Shea, "Daniel 3," *AUSS* 20.1 (Spring 1982): 29–52. It has been favored by Dyer, "The Musical Instruments in Daniel 3," 426–27. Goldingay, *Daniel*, 69, notes Shea's work without comment. However, Miller, *Daniel*, 112, n. 24, and Collins, *Daniel*, 183, n. 47, reject this identification first proposed by Shea. Miller states that the events probably occurred earlier in Nebuchadnezzar's reign, and Collins calls the identification "unwarranted," but neither Miller nor Collins gives any reason for his position. More controversial and much less certain is Shea's identification of three officials of Nebuchadnezzar listed on a clay prism as Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego (Shea, "Daniel 3," 37–41, 46–50).

⁴ BM 21946, reverse, line 21 (Wiseman, *Chronicles of Chaldean Kings*, 72–73).

⁵ BM 21946, reverse, line 22 (Wiseman, *Chronicles of Chaldean Kings*, 72–73).

⁶ BM 21946, reverse, lines 23–24 (Wiseman, *Chronicles of Chaldean Kings*, 72–73).

⁷ BM 21946, reverse, line 25 (Wiseman, *Chronicles of Chaldean Kings*, 74–75).

⁸ Official years of Judean kings were reckoned as beginning in the fall with the beginning of the month of Tishri. Thus Zedekiah's fourth year began on 1 Tishri 594 (October 6, 594), six months after the beginning of Nebuchadnezzar's eleventh year on 1 Nisan 594 (April 12, 594).

⁹ Jer 28:1 dates the false prophet Hananiah's prophecy recorded in Jeremiah 28 to the fifth month (Shebat) of the same year as the events recorded in Jeremiah 27.

¹⁰ Commentators who believe this include Archer, "Daniel," 50; Baldwin, *Daniel*, 99; Collins, *Daniel*, 183; Goldingay, *Daniel*, 73; Gowan, *Daniel*, 65; Leupold, *Daniel*, 135; Lucas, *Daniel*, 93; Miller, *Daniel*, 112; Montgomery, *Daniel*, 195; Walvoord, *Daniel*, 82; Young, *Daniel*, 88.

Ezekiel's Vision of God (July 31, 593 BC)

Ezekiel 1:1–3:14

Introduction

1:1 And it was in *the* thirtieth year, in the fourth *month*, on the fifth *day* of the month, and I *was* in the midst of the exiles by the Kebar River. The heavens were opened, and I saw visions of God.

2 On the fifth *day* of the month—it was the fifth year of the exile of the king Jehoiachin—

3 the word of Yahweh came clearly to Ezekiel the son of Buzi, the priest, in the land of *the* Chaldeans at the Kebar River, and the hand of Yahweh was on him there.

The Windstorm

4 And I looked, and look! A storm wind *was* coming from the north, a great cloud, and fire flashing back and forth, and brightness around *and* within it, and from its midst *it was* like *the* outward appearance of amber stone from the midst of the fire.

The Four Living Creatures

5 And from its midst *was* the likeness of four living creatures, and this *was* their appearance: a human form,

6 and each had four faces, and each of them had four wings.

7 And their legs *were* straight legs, and the sole of their feet *was* like the sole of *the* foot of a calf, and *they were* sparkling like the outward appearance of polished bronze.

8 And under their wings *were* human hands on their four sides. And their faces and their wings for the four of them *were as follows*:

9 their wings were touching one another; each of them went straight forward, without turning right or left.

10 The likeness of their faces *was the* face of a human *in front*, and *the* face of a lion on the right of each of them, and the face of an ox on the left of each of them, and *the* face of an eagle for each of them.

11 So *were* their faces; their wings *were* spread out upward; each *had* two touching one another and two covering their bodies.

12 And each went straight forward; wherever the spirit went they went, *and* they did not turn as they went.

13 As for the likeness of the living creatures, their appearance *was* like burning coals of fire, like the appearance of torches. *It was* moving to and fro between the living creatures, and the fire was very bright and lightning *was* going out from the fire.

14 And the living creatures were speeding to and fro like the appearance of lightning.

The Wheels

15 And I saw the living creatures, and look! A wheel was on the earth beside each of the living creatures that had four faces.

16 The appearance of the wheels and their construction *was* like *the* appearance of beryl, and they all looked alike, and their appearance and their construction *was* like a wheel within a wheel.

17 When they moved, they went toward their four sides; they did not veer at all as they went.

18 And their rims were high and awesome, and all four of their rims *were* full of eyes *all* around.

19 And at the going of the living creatures, the wheels next to them *also* went, and when the creatures were lifted from the ground the wheels *also* rose.

20 Wherever the spirit went they would go there, and the wheels rose, for the spirit of the living creatures *was* in the wheels.

21 At their going, they go, and at their standing, they stood, and at their being lifted up from on the earth, the wheels rose, for the spirit of the living creatures *was* in the wheels.

The Platform

22 Now *the* likeness above the heads of the living creatures *was* an expanse like the outward appearance of awesome ice spread out above their heads upward.

23 And under the expanse their wings *were stretched out* straight one toward the other; each had two *wings* covering them, and each had two *wings* covering their bodies.

24 And I heard the sound of their wings like *the* sound of many waters, like the voice of Shaddai, *and* when they moved *there was* a sound of tumult like *the* sound of an army; when they stood still they lowered their wings.

25 And there was a sound from above the expanse that *was* above their heads, and when they stood they lowered their wings.

The Throne

26 And from above the expanse that *was* above their heads *there was* the likeness of a throne, looking like a sapphire, and above the likeness of the throne *was* a likeness similar to *the* appearance of a human on it, *but* above it.

27 And I saw *something* like *the* outward appearance of amber, *something* like *the* appearance of fire, *with* a covering around it, from the likeness of his loins and upward. And from the likeness of his loins and downward I saw *something* like *the* appearance of fire, and it was radiant all around.

28 Like the appearance of a bow that is in the cloud on a rainy day, such *was* the radiance around it; *thus was* the appearance of the likeness of the glory of Yahweh. And I saw, and I fell on my face, and I heard a voice speaking.

God Sends Ezekiel to be His Prophet to the Exiles

2:1 And he said to me, “Son of man, stand on your feet, so that I can speak with you.”

2 And *the* Spirit came into me as he was speaking to me, and it set me on my feet, and I heard the one speaking to me.

3 And he said to me, “Son of man, I am sending you to the Israelites, to nations *who are* rebelling, who rebelled against me, they and their ancestors, they transgressed against me until this very day.

4 And the children *are* impudent and stubborn, *and so* I am sending you to them, and you must say to them, ‘Thus says the Lord Yahweh!’

5 And they, whether they listen or whether they fail *to listen*, for they *are* a rebellious house, they will know that a prophet was in their midst.

6 And you, son of man, you must not be afraid of them, and you must not be afraid of their words, because briars and thorns *are* with you, and you *are* sitting among scorpions. You must not be afraid of their words, and you must not be dismayed because of their looks, for they *are* a rebellious house.

7 And you must speak my words to them whether they listen or whether they fail *to listen*, for they *are* rebellious.

8 And you, son of man, hear what I *am* speaking to you: you must not be rebellious like *the* house of rebellion. Open your mouth and eat what I *am* giving to you.”

9 And I looked, and look! There was a hand stretched out to me, and look! In it *was* a scroll with writing.

10 And he rolled it out before me, and it *was* written *on the* front and back, and there *were* written on it laments and mourning and wailing.

Ezekiel and the Scroll

3:1 And he said to me, “Son of man, what you find, eat! Eat this scroll, and go, speak to the house of Israel.”

2 And I opened my mouth, and he gave me this scroll to eat,

3 and he said to me, “Son of man, you must give your stomach *this* to eat, and you must fill your belly *with* this scroll that I *am* giving to you.” And I ate, and it became like sweet honey in my mouth.

4 And he said to me, “Son of man, come! Go to the house of Israel, and you must speak to them with my words.

5 For you are sent to the house of Israel, not to a people of obscure speech and of a difficult language,

6 *and* not to many nations of obscure speech and a difficult language whose words you do not understand, *for* if I had sent you to them they would have listened to you.

7 And the house of Israel, they are not willing to listen to you, for they *are* not willing to listen to me, for all of the house of Israel is hard of forehead, and they *are* hard of heart.

8 *But* look, I have made your face hard against their faces and your forehead hard against their forehead.

9 Like a diamond harder than flint I have made your forehead; you must not fear them, and you must not be dismayed on account of them, for they are a rebellious house.

10 And he said to me, “Son of man, all of my words that I shall speak to you, receive into your heart and hear with your ears.

11 And come, go to the exiles, to the children of your people, and you must speak to them, and say to them, ‘Thus says the Lord Yahweh!’ whether they listen or whether they fail *to listen*.”

12 And the Spirit lifted me up, and I heard behind me the sound of a great earthquake when the glory of Yahweh rose from its place.

13 And *it was* the sound of the wings of the living creatures touching lightly one against the other, and the sound of the wheels beside them and *the* sound of a great earthquake.

14 And *the* Spirit lifted me and took me, and I went *in* bitterness in the heat of my spirit, and the hand of Yahweh *was* strong on me.

Ezekiel Appointed as Watchman for Israel (August 6, 593 BC)

Ezekiel 3:15–27

15 And I went to the exiles *at* Tel Abib, who *were* dwelling near the Kebar River, and I sat *where* they *were* dwelling. I sat there seven days in the midst of them, stunned.

16 And then it happened at *the* end of seven days, the word of Yahweh came to me, saying,

17 “Son of man, I have appointed you *as* a watchman for the house of Israel. When you hear a word from my mouth, then you must warn them from me.

18 When I say to the wicked, ‘Surely you will die,’ and you do not warn him and you do not speak to warn *the* wicked from his wicked way so that he may live, that wicked *person* will die because of his guilt, and from your hand I will seek his blood.

19 And you, if you do warn *the* wicked and he does not turn from his wickedness and from his wicked way, on account of his guilt he will die, and you yourself will have saved your life.

20 And when the righteous turns from his righteousness and does injustice, and I place a stumbling block before him, he will die, for you did not warn him. Because of his sin he will die, and his righteousness that he did will not be remembered, and his blood I shall seek from your hand.

21 And if you warn him, the righteous, not to sin, and *the* righteous does not sin, surely he will live, for he heeded a warning. And you will have saved your life.”

22 And the hand of Yahweh was on me there, and he said to me, “Rise up, go out to the valley, and there I will speak with you.”

23 And I rose up, and I went to the valley, and, look, there the glory of Yahweh was standing, like the glory that I saw near the Kebar River, and I fell on my face.

24 And *the* Spirit came into me, and it made me stand on my feet, and he spoke with me and said to me, “Come, shut yourself inside your house,

25 and you, son of man, look, they will place cords on you, and they will tie you up with them. Then you will not go out into the midst of them.

26 And I will make your tongue cling to the roof of your mouth, and you will be silenced, and you will not be a reproving man for them, for they are a rebellious house.

27 And when I speak with you, I will open your mouth, and you must say to them, ‘Thus says the Lord Yahweh: “The *one* hearing him, let him hear, and the *one* failing to hear, let him fail,” ‘ for they are a rebellious house.

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Chronological Notes

1) Ezekiel was exiled to Babylon with king Jehoiachin (2 Kgs 24:10–17; 2 Chr 36:10; Ezek 1:1–3) and his prophecies show a genuine concern to date the significant events he lived through. He measured these dates in terms of the captivity of Jehoiachin (Ezek 1:2).¹ The following dates are given:²

- 5th year, 4th month, 5th day (July 31, 593) – Ezek 1:2.
- 6th year, 6th month, 5th day (September 17, 592) – Ezek 8:1.
- 7th year, 5th month, 10th day (August 14, 591) – Ezek 20:1.
- 9th year, 10th month, 10th day (January 27, 589) – Ezek 24:1.
- 11th year, ? month, 1st day (September 18, 587) – Ezek 26:1.³
- 10th year, 10th month, 12th day (January 17, 588) – Ezek 29:1.⁴
- 27th year, 1st month, 1st day (April 26, 571) – Ezek 29:17.
- 11th year, 1st month, 7th day (April 29, 587) – Ezek 30:20.
- 11th year, 3rd month, 1st day (June 21, 587) – Ezek 31:1.
- 12th year, 12th month, 1st day (March 15, 586) – Ezek 32:1.
- 12th year, 12th month, 15th day (March 29, 586) – Ezek 32:17.
- 12th year, 10th month, 5th day (January 19, 586) – Ezek 33:21.⁵
- 25th year, 1st month, 10th day (November 2, 574) – Ezek 40:1.⁶

¹ The single exception to this rule is found in Ezekiel 1:1 in which Ezekiel makes reference to “the thirtieth year.” Block comments: “the explanation Origen proposed long ago remains the most likely: the *terminus a quo* is the year of the prophet’s own birth” (Daniel I. Block, “The Book of Ezekiel, Chapters 1–24,” *NICOT*, 82). However, I believe Hoeh makes an insightful suggestion when he says: “The original Hebrew expression is not a reference to the age of the prophet Ezekiel, but to the fifth year of the captivity of the king (593–592) would clearly be the thirtieth year of the renewal of the covenant which occurred, in the eighteenth year (622–621) of Josiah (2 Chr 34:8–33)” (Herman L. Hoeh, “When Did Nebuchadnezzar Conquer Jerusalem?” This paper was delivered at the Symposium of “Frontiers of Knowledge” at Ambassador College, Pasadena, California, 1976).

² All Julian dates are based on the computation of R. A. Parker and W. H. Dubberstein, *Babylonian Chronology 626 B.C.–A.D. 75*, BUS 19 (Providence: Brown University Press, 1956), p. 28. See also the online Babylonian Calendar Converter available at http://www.staff.science.uu.nl/~gent0113/babylon/babycal_converter.htm#converter.

³ The month is assumed to be the first month of the 11th year.

⁴ This is the first deviation from strict chronological order in the book of Ezekiel.

⁵ See the details of Rules 1, 3 and 7 in Rodger C. Young, “When Did Jerusalem Fall?” *JETS* 47.1 (Mar 2004): 26–27 where the length of time between Jerusalem’s fall and Ezekiel hearing from the fugitive is solved by the July 29, 587 date (it would be 18 months with the 586 date which commentators agree is too long [cf. Block]).

⁶ For confirmation that Ezekiel used the Tishri calendar and that the fall of Jerusalem is correctly dated to July 29, 587, see the following articles: Rodger C. Young, “Ezekiel 40:1 As a Corrective for Seven Wrong Ideas in Biblical Interpretation,” *AUSS*, Vol. 44, 265–283; Rodger C. Young, “When Did Jerusalem Fall?” *JETS* 47.1 (Mar 2004): 21–38.

Ezekiel's Prophecy to the Exiles—The Siege of Jerusalem (August 6, 593 BC)

Ezekiel 4

The Clay Brick

- 1 “Now, son of man, take for yourself a brick, and you must put it before you, and you must portray on it a city, Jerusalem.
- 2 And you must build against it siege works, and you must build against it a bulwark, and you must heap against it a siege ramp, and you must set up against it camps and put against it a battering ram all around.
- 3 And take for yourself a plate of iron, and you must place it as a wall of iron between you and the city, and you must set your face against it, and it must be under siege, and you must lay the siege against it; it is a sign for the house of Israel.
- 4 And you, lie down on your left side, and you must put the guilt of the house of Israel on it. You will carry their guilt the number of days that you will lie on it.
- 5 And I will give to you the years of their guilt according to the number of the days, three hundred and ninety days, and you must bear the guilt of the house of Israel.
- 6 When you have completed these, then you must lie a second time on your right side; and you must bear the guilt of the house of Judah forty days, a day for each year, a day for each year I give it to you.
- 7 And toward the siege of Jerusalem you must set your face and your bared arm; then you must prophesy against it.
- 8 Now look! I will put on you cords, and you may not turn yourself from one side to your other side until you complete the days of your siege.

The Unclean Meal

- 9 “And you, take for yourself wheat and barley and beans and lentils and millet and spelt, and you must put them in one vessel, and you must make them for yourself into a food during the number of days that you are lying on your side; three hundred and ninety days you shall eat it.
- 10 And your food that you will eat will be according to weight; twenty shekels for each day at fixed times you shall eat it.
- 11 And an amount of water you shall drink, a sixth of a hin; at fixed times you shall drink it.
- 12 And as a bread-cake of barley you shall eat it, and with human excrement you shall bake it before their eyes.”
- 13 And Yahweh said, “Thus shall the Israelites eat their unclean food among the nations where I will scatter them.”
- 14 And I said, “Ah, Lord Yahweh! Look! I have not been defiling myself, and a dead body and mangled carcass I have not eaten from my childhood until now, and unclean meat has not come into my mouth!”
- 15 And he said to me, “See I will give you cattle manure in the place of the feces of a human, and you may prepare your food on it.”
- 16 And he said to me, “Son of man, look, I am going to break the supply of bread in Jerusalem, and they will eat bread by weight, anxiously, and rationed water, and they will drink with horror,
- 17 so that they will lack food and water, and they will be appalled with one another, and they will waste away because of their guilt.

Ezekiel's Prophecy to the Exiles—The Fall of Jerusalem (August 6, 593 BC)

Ezekiel 5

The Shaved Head and Beard

- 1 “And you, son of man, take for yourself a sword, sharp as a barber's razor. Take it for yourself, and you must cause it to pass over your head and over your beard, and you must take for yourself a set of scales for weighing, and you must divide them.
- 2 A third you must burn with fire in the midst of the city at the completion of the days of the siege, and you must take a third, and you must strike it with the sword around it, and a third you must scatter to the wind, and I will draw a sword behind them.
- 3 And you must take from these a few in number, and you must tuck them in your hem.
- 4 And from them again you shall take some, and you must throw them in the middle of the fire, and you must burn them with fire; from it a fire will go out to all of the house of Israel.
- 5 Thus says the Lord Yahweh: This is Jerusalem in the midst of the nations where I have put her, and countries are around her.
- 6 But she has rebelled against my regulations to the point of wickedness more than the nations, and my statutes more than the countries that are around her; for they rejected my regulations, and as for my statutes, they did not walk in them.

First Announcement of Judgment on Jerusalem

- 7 Therefore, thus says the Lord Yahweh: Because of your commotion more than the nations that are around you—you did not walk in my statutes, and you did not do my regulations, and according to the regulations of the nations that are around you, you did not do.
- 8 Therefore thus says the Lord Yahweh: Look! I, even I, am against you, and I will execute judgment in the midst of you before the eyes of the nations,
- 9 and I will do with you that which I have not done, and which I will not do again, because of all of your detestable things.
- 10 Therefore parents will eat children in the midst of you, and children will eat their parents, and I will execute judgment in you, and I will scatter your entire remnant to every wind.

Second Announcement of Judgment on Jerusalem

11 Therefore as surely as I live, declares the Lord Yahweh, Surely because you have defiled my sanctuary with all of your vile idols and with all of your detestable things, now indeed I will reduce, and my eye will not take pity, and surely I will show no compassion.
 12 A third of you will die because of the plague, and because of the famine they will perish in the midst of you, and a third will fall through the sword around you, and a third I will scatter to every direction of the wind, and I will draw *the* sword behind them.
 13 And my anger will come to an end, and I will place my rage on them, and I will relent, and they will know that I, Yahweh, have spoken in my passion when I fully vent my rage against them.
 14 And I will make you into a desolate place and into a disgrace among the nations that surround you before the eyes of every one who passes by.
 15 And it will be *an* object of taunting and *an* object of mockery, a warning and a horror to the nations that *are* around you whenever I execute judgments against you in anger and in wrath and in furious punishments! I, Yahweh, have spoken!
 16 When I send my arrows of deadly famine against them, which will be as destruction that I will send *in order* to destroy you, I will increase famine against you, and I will break the supply of food for you.
 17 And I will send against you famine and fierce animals, and they will make you childless; and plague and blood will pass through you, and I will bring *the* sword upon you. I, Yahweh, I have spoken!"

Ezekiel's Prophecy to the Exiles—Message to the Mountains (c. 592 BC)

Ezekiel 6

Destruction of All Idolatry

1 And the word of Yahweh came to me, saying,
 2 "Son of man, set your face to the mountains of Israel and prophesy against them,
 3 and you must say, 'Mountains of Israel, hear the word of the Lord Yahweh, thus says the Lord Yahweh to the mountains and to the hills, to the ravines and to the valleys: "Look, I *am* bringing upon you *the* sword, and I will destroy your high places,
 4 and your altars will be desolate, and your incense altars will be broken, and I will throw down your slain ones before your idols,
 5 and I will place the corpses of the children of Israel before their idols, and I will scatter your bones around your altars.
 6 In all of your dwellings, the cities will be desolate and the high places will be ruined, so that your altars will be desolate and will suffer punishment. Your idols will be broken and will come to an end, and your incense altars will be cut down, and your works will be destroyed,
 7 and the slain one will fall in the midst of you, and *then* you will know that I *am* Yahweh.

"Then They Will Know"

8 But I will spare *some*, so there will be for you fugitives from *the* sword among the nations when you are scattered in the countries.
 9 And your fugitives will remember me among the nations *to* which they were taken captive, that I was shattered by their adulterous heart which departed from me, and by their adulterous eyes which *went* after their idols, and they will feel loathing for themselves, for the evil that they did, for all of their detestable things.
 10 And they will know that I *am* Yahweh; not in vain I spoke to bring to them this evil."
 11 Thus says the Lord Yahweh: 'Clap your hand and stamp with your foot, and say, "Alas, for all of the detestable things of the evil of the house of Israel, because of which they will fall with the sword, with the famine, and with the plague.
 12 The one who is far *away* will die by the plague, and the one who is near will fall by the sword, and the one who is being left behind and being spared will die by the famine, and I will complete my rage on them.
 13 And you will know that I *am* Yahweh when their slain ones are in the midst of their idols around their altars at every high hill, on the tops of all the mountains and under every green tree and under every leafy oak—the place *at* which they gave *a* pleasing scent for all of their idols.
 14 And I will stretch out my hand against them, and I will make the land a desolation and a wasteland from the desert to Riblah in all of their dwellings, and they will know that I *am* Yahweh." "'

Ezekiel's Prophecy to the Exiles—Disaster Is Coming (c. 592 BC)

Ezekiel 7

The First Alarm

1 And the word of Yahweh came to me, saying,
 2 "And you, son of man, thus says the Lord Yahweh to the land of Israel: '*The* end comes, the end on the four corners of the land.
 3 Now the end *is* on you, and I will send my anger on you, and I will judge you according to your ways, and I will bring on you all your detestable things.
 4 And my eye will not take pity on you, and I will not show compassion for your ways; on you I will bring your detestable things; they will be in the midst of you, and you will know that I *am* Yahweh.'

The Second Alarm

5 Thus says the Lord Yahweh: 'Look! Disaster after disaster *is* coming!

6 *The* end comes, comes the end! It has awakened against you! Look! *It* comes!

7 Doom is coming against you, the dweller of the land; the time comes, the day *is* near, panic and not joy *is* on the mountains.

8 Soon I will pour out my rage on you, and I will fully vent my anger on you, and I will judge you according to your ways, and I will bring on you all of your detestable things.

9 And my eye will not take pity, and I will not show compassion. According to your ways I will deal with you, and your detestable things will be in the midst of you, and you will know that I *am* Yahweh *who* strikes.

The Third Alarm

10 Look! The day is coming; doom goes out, the staff blossoms, pride sprouts.

11 Violence has grown to *become* a staff of wickedness; none from them *will remain*, and none from their abundance nor from their wealth; and prominence *will not be* among them.

12 The time has come, the day has arrived; let not the buyer rejoice, and let the seller not mourn, for anger *is* on all their multitude.

13 For the seller will not return to the merchandise while they are still alive, for the vision *is* about all of its multitude; it will not change, and a man because of his guilt will not be able to hold onto his life.

14 They shall blow on the trumpet and prepare everything, but *there is* no *one* going to the battle, for my anger *is* on all of their multitude.

15 The sword is outside, and the plague and the famine are inside; *the one* who *is* in the field will die by the sword, and *the one* who *is* in the city, famine and plague will devour him.

16 And *if* their survivors will escape, they will be on the mountains, like the doves of the valley, all of them groaning, each because of his guilt.

17 All of the hands will hang limp, and all of the knees will be wet with urine.

18 And they will wear sackcloth, and horror will cover them, and on all of *the* faces *will be* shame, and baldness on all of their heads.

19 Their silver they will discard on the streets, and filth will be their gold; their silver and their gold will not be able to rescue them on the day of the wrath of Yahweh. They will not satisfy their hunger and their stomachs they will not fill, for their guilt will be their stumbling block.

20 " 'And the beauty of its ornament he made into a prideful thing and made with it their detestable things and their vile idols; therefore I will make it into an impure thing for them.

21 And I will give it into the hand of strangers as plunder and to the wicked people of the earth as spoil, and they will defile it.

22 And I will turn my face from them, and they will defile my treasured *place*, and violent ones will enter and defile it.

23 Make a chain for the land; it is full of bloody crimes and the city is full of violence.

24 And I will bring *the* worst of *the* nations, and they will take possession of their houses, and I will put to an end *the* pride of *the* mighty ones, and their sanctuaries will be defiled.

25 Anguish comes, and they will seek peace, and *there will be* none.

26 Calamity upon calamity will come, and rumor will be upon rumor. And they will seek a vision from a prophet, but instruction will perish from *the* priest and counsel from *the* elders.

27 The king will mourn, and *the* prince will be dressed with despair, and the hands of the people of the land will tremble. According to their way I will do to them, and according to their judgments I will judge them, and they will know that I *am* Yahweh."

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Ezekiel's Prophecy to the Exiles—A Vision of the Departure of God's Glory (September 17, 592 BC)

Ezekiel 8–11

Introduction to the Visions

8:1 And then in the sixth year, in the sixth *month*, on the fifth *day* of the month, I was sitting in my house, and the elders of Judah were sitting before me. And the hand of the Lord Yahweh fell on me there,

The Idol of Jealousy

2 and I saw, and look! A figure like *the* appearance of a man; from the appearance of his waist and below *was* fire, and from his waist and upward *was* like *the* appearance of brightness, like the outward appearance of amber.

3 And he sent out *the* form of a hand, and he took me by a lock of hair of my head, and *the* Spirit lifted me between earth and heaven, and it brought me to Jerusalem in visions of God to the doorway of *the* inner gate that faced north, *at* which there *was* the seat of the image of jealousy, which was making jealous.

4 And look! There *was* the glory of the God of Israel like the vision that I saw in the valley.

5 And he said to me, "Son of man, lift up now your eyes toward the north." And I lifted up my eyes toward the north, and, look, *there was* to the north of the gate of the altar this image of jealousy at the entrance.

6 And he said to me, "Son of man, "Do you see what they *are* doing—great detestable things that the house of Israel *is* committing here *so as* to drive *me* from my sanctuary, and yet you will see again greater detestable things."

Idol Worship by the Elders

7 And he brought me to the doorway of the courtyard, and I saw, and look! A hole in the wall.

8 And he said to me, "Son of man, dig now through the wall." And I dug through the wall, and look! There was a doorway.

9 And he said to me, "Come and see the detestable things, the evil that they are doing here.

10 And I came, and I saw, and look, all kinds of creatures and detestable beasts; *and* all of the idols of the house of Israel *were* carved on the wall all around.

11 And seventy men from the elders of the house of Israel, and Jaazaniah, the son of Shaphan, *was* standing in the midst of them, *and they were* standing before them. Each *one had* his censer in his hand, and the fragrance of the cloud of the incense *was* going up.

12 And he said to me, "Have you seen, son of man, what the elders of the house of Israel *are* doing in the dark, each in the inner rooms of his idol, for *they are* saying, 'Yahweh *is* not seeing us; Yahweh has abandoned the land.'"

13 And he said to me, "Still you will see again greater detestable things that they *are* doing."

Idol Worship by the Women

14 And he brought me to the doorway of the gate of the house of Yahweh that *is* toward the north, and look! There *were* the women sitting weeping for Tammuz.

15 And he said to me, "Have you seen, son of man? Still you will see again greater detestable things than these."

Worshipping the Sun

16 And he brought me to the inner courtyard of the house of Yahweh, and look, *at* the doorway of the temple of Yahweh, between the portico and the altar, *there were* about twenty-five men *with* their backs to the temple of Yahweh and their faces toward the east, and they *were* bowing down toward the east before the sun.

17 And he said to me, "Have you seen, son of man? Was it too small a thing for the house of Judah to do the detestable things that they did here? For they filled up the land *with* violence, and they provoked me to anger again, and look! They *are* putting the branch to their nose.

18 And so I will act in rage, and my eye will not take pity, and I will not have compassion, and they will cry in my ear *with* a loud voice, and I will not hear them."

The Heavenly Executioners

9:1 And he called in my ears *with* a loud voice, saying, "*They* have come near, the punishers of the city, and each *with* his weapon of destruction in his hand.

2 And look! Six men coming from the way of the upper gate that faced northward, and each *with* his weapon for shattering in his hand; and one man *was* in the midst of them, dressed in linen, and the writing case of the scribe *was* at his side. And they came and stood beside the bronze altar.

3 And the glory of the God of Israel lifted itself up from upon the cherub that he was on *and went* to the threshold of the house, and he called to the man who *was* clothed in linen with a scribal writing case at his side.

4 And Yahweh said to him, "Go through in the midst of the city, in the midst of Jerusalem, and you must place a mark on the foreheads of the men who are groaning and lamenting about all of the detestable things that are being done in the midst of her."

5 And to the others he said in my hearing, "Go through the city behind him and kill! Your eyes shall not take pity, and you shall not have compassion.

6 You must kill totally old man, young man and young woman, and little children and women, but concerning every man with the mark on him you must not approach; and from my sanctuary you must begin.” And they began with the old men who were before the house.

7 And he said to them, “Defile the house and fill the courtyards *with* the dead; go out! And they went out, and they killed in the city.
8 And then as they were striking, and I *was* left behind, I fell on my face, and I cried out, and I said, “Ah, Lord Yahweh! “*Will you be* destroying all of the remnant of Israel while you pour out your rage on Jerusalem?”

9 And he said to me, “The guilt of the house of Israel and Judah *is* exceedingly great, and the land is filled with bloodguilt, and the city is full of injustice. For they say Yahweh abandoned the land, and Yahweh does not see.

10 And I, my eye will not take pity, and I will not have compassion; their way I will bring on their head.”

11 And look! The man clothed in linen *and* with a writing case at his side *was* bringing back a word, saying, “I have done all that you commanded me.”

God’s Glory Leaves the Most Holy Place

10:1 And I looked, and look! On the expanse that *was* above the head of the cherubim *something* like a stone of sapphire, *and* like *the* appearance of *the* shape of a throne it appeared above them.

2 And he spoke to the man clothed in linen and said, “Go in among the wheel area under the cherubim and fill the hollow of your hands *with* coals of fire from among the cherubim, and toss *them* on the city.” And he went *right* before my eyes.

3 Now the cherubim *were* standing on *the* south of the temple when the man went, and the cloud filled the inner courtyard.

4 And the glory of Yahweh rose up from on the cherub toward the threshold of the house, and the house was filled with the cloud, and the courtyard was filled with the brightness of the glory of Yahweh.

5 And the sound of the wings of the cherubim was heard as far as the outer courtyard; *it was* like the voice of God Shaddai when he speaks.

6 And then at his command to the man clothed in linen, saying, “Take fire from among the wheel area from among the cherubim,” he went and stood beside the wheel.

7 Then the cherub stretched out his hand from among the cherubim toward the fire that *was* among the cherubim, and he lifted up and gave *it* into the hollow of the hand of *the man* clothed with linen, and he took *it*, and he went out.

8 And *there* appeared for the cherubim *the* form of a human hand under their wings.

God’s Glory Leaves the Temple

9 And I saw, and look, four wheels beside the cherubim, one wheel beside each cherub, and the appearance of the wheels *was* like *the* outward appearance of turquoise stone.

10 Their appearance was the same for each of the four of them, as if the wheel was in the midst of a wheel.

11 When they went to the four of their directions *that* they went, they did not change direction when they went, for the place *to* which the head turned, they went behind him; they did not change direction at their going.

12 And their whole body, and their rims, and their spokes, and their wings, and the wheels *were* full of eyes *all* around—the wheels for the four of them.

13 Concerning the wheels, he *was* calling them “the wheelwork” in my hearing.

14 And each one had four faces; the face of the one *was* the face of a cherub, and the face of the second *was the* face of a human, and the face of the third *was the* face of a lion, and the fourth *was the* face of an eagle.

15 And the cherubim rose; that is, the living creatures that I saw at the Kebar River.

16 And when the cherubim went, the wheels beside them went; and when the cherubim lifted their wings to rise up from the earth, the wheels also did not turn aside from beside them.

17 When they stood, they stood, and at their rising, they rose with them, for the spirit of the living creatures *was* in them.

18 And the glory of Yahweh went out from the threshold of the temple, and it stood above the cherubim.

19 And the cherubim lifted up their wings, and they rose from the earth before my eyes. At their going out, the wheels *were* beside them. And he stood *at* the doorway of the eastern gate of the temple of Yahweh, and the glory of the God of Israel was over them.

20 This *was* the living creature that I saw under the God of Israel at the Kebar River, and I knew that they *were* cherubim.

21 Each one had four faces, and *there were* four wings for each, and *the* likeness of human hands *was* under their wings.

22 And the likeness of their faces, they *were* the faces that I saw at the Kebar River; *thus was* their appearance, and they each went straight ahead.

The Wicked Advice of the Officials

11:1 And *the* Spirit lifted me up, and it brought me to the eastern gate, the one facing east, of the temple of Yahweh. And look, there were twenty-five men in the doorway of the gate, and I saw Jaazaniah the son of Azzur in the midst of them, and Pelatiah the son of Benaiah, the commanders of the people.

2 And he said to me, “Son of man, these *are* the men who devise mischief, and *who are* offering bad counsel in this city,

3 *who are* saying, “The building of houses *is* not near; *the city* is the pot, and we *are* the flesh.

4 Therefore prophesy against them! Prophesy, son of man!”

5 And the Spirit of Yahweh fell on me, and he said to me, "Say, 'thus says Yahweh: "This is what you think, house of Israel, and I myself know them, the thoughts of your spirit.

6 You made your slain ones numerous in this city, and you have filled its streets *with* slain ones."

7 Therefore thus says the Lord Yahweh: "Your slain ones whom you put in its midst, they *are* the flesh, and it is *the* pot, and I will bring you out from its midst.

8 *The* sword you have feared, and *the* sword I will bring against you!" declares the Lord Yahweh.

9 "And I will bring you out from its midst, and I will give you into *the* hand of strangers, and I will execute judgments against you.

10 By the sword you will fall at the border of Israel; I will judge you, and you will know that I *am* Yahweh.

11 It will not be as a pot to you, and *so* you would be in the midst of it as flesh, *for* at the border of Israel I will judge you.

12 And you will know that I *am* Yahweh, whose rules you did not follow, and whose regulations you did not do, but according to the regulations of the nations that *are* around you, you acted."

13 And it happened *that* as I was prophesying, Pelatihu the son of Benaiahu died! And I fell on my face, and I cried *with* a loud voice, and I said, "Ah, Lord Yahweh, you *are* making *a* complete destruction *of* the remnant of Israel!"

A New Heart for the Regathered Remnant

14 And the word of Yahweh came to me, saying,

15 "Son of man, your brothers, your brothers, the men of your redemption, and all of the house of Israel, all of it, who said concerning the inhabitants of Jerusalem, 'They are far from Yahweh, *therefore* to us this land was given as a possession.'

16 Therefore say, 'Thus says the Lord Yahweh: "Though I have removed them *far away* among the nations and though I have scattered them among the countries, yet I was a sanctuary to them *for a* little while in the countries to which they have gone."

17 Therefore say, 'Thus says the Lord Yahweh: "And I will assemble you from the peoples, and I will gather you from the countries *to* which you were scattered among them, and I will give the land of Israel to you.

18 And *when* they come there, then they will remove all of its vile idols and all of its detestable things from it.

19 And I will give to them one heart, and a new spirit I will give in their inner parts. And I will remove their heart of stone from their body, and I will give to them a heart of flesh,

20 so that they may walk in my statutes, and they will keep my regulations, and they will do them, and they will be to me a people, and I myself will be to them as God.

21 But to the heart of their abominations and the detestable things their heart is going. I will bring their way on their head," declares the Lord Yahweh."

God's Glory Leaves Jerusalem

22 Then the cherubim lifted up their wings, and their wheels *were* beside them, and the glory of the God of Israel was over them.

23 And the glory of Yahweh went up from the midst of the city, and it stood *still* on the mountain that *is* to the east of the city.

The End of the Visions

24 And *the* Spirit lifted me up, and it brought me to Chaldea, to the exiles, in the vision by the spirit of God; and the vision that I had seen left me.

25 And I spoke to the exiles all of the words of Yahweh that he had shown me.

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Ezekiel's Prophecy to the Exiles—Ezekiel's Playacting (c. late 592 BC)

Ezekiel 12

Packed for Exile

1 And the word of Yahweh came to me, saying,
 2 “Son of man, you *are* dwelling in the midst of the house of rebellion who has eyes to see and they do not see; they have ears to hear, and they do not hear, for they *are* a house of rebellion.
 3 And you, son of man, prepare for yourself *the* baggage of an exile, and go into exile by day before their eyes. And you must go into exile from your place to another place before their eyes; perhaps they will see that they *are* a house of rebellion.
 4 And you must bring out your baggage like *the* baggage of an exile by day before their eyes, and you must go out in the evening before their eyes like those who go into exile.
 5 Before their eyes dig through for yourself, through the wall, and you must bring *the* baggage out through it.
 6 Before their eyes, on your shoulder, you must lift up *the* baggage in the dusk, and your face you must cover, so that you may not see the land, for I make you *as* a sign to the house of Israel.”
 7 And I did just as I was commanded; my baggage, like *the* baggage of an exile, I brought out by day, and in the evening I dug through for myself into the wall with my hand in the dusk; I brought *the* baggage on *my* shoulder; I carried *it* before their eyes.
 8 And the word of Yahweh came to me in the morning, saying,
 9 “Son of man, did not they, the house of Israel, the house of rebellion, say to you, ‘What *are* you doing?’
 10 Say to them, ‘Thus says the Lord Yahweh: “This oracle *is* about the prince in Jerusalem and the entire house of Israel who are among them.”’
 11 Say, ‘I am your sign, and just as I did, so will it be done to them in the exile; into captivity they will go.’
 12 And the prince who *is* in the midst of them, on *his* shoulder he will carry *the* baggage in the dusk, and he will go out; the wall will be dug through to bring him through it; and he will cover his face so that he will not see the land with his eye. [cf. [2 Kgs 25:4](#); [Jer 39:4](#); [52:7](#)]
 13 And I will spread out my net on him, and he will be captured in my hunting snare, and I will bring him to Babylon, the land of the Chaldeans, but he will not see it, and there he will die. [cf. [2 Kgs 25:5–7](#); [Jer 39:5](#); [52:7–8](#)]
 14 And all who *are* around him, his help and all of his troops I will scatter in every direction, and I will draw *the* sword behind them.
 15 And they will know that I *am* Yahweh when I scatter them among the nations and I scatter them in the countries.
 16 But I will spare from them a few men from *the* sword, from *the* famine and from *the* plague, so that they may tell of all their abominations among the nations to which they will go, and they will know that I *am* Yahweh.”

Pantomime of Terror

17 And the word of Yahweh came to me, saying,
 18 “Son of man, you must eat your food with trembling, and your water with shuddering, and with anxiety you must drink.
 19 And you must say to the people of the land, ‘Thus says the Lord Yahweh to the inhabitants of Jerusalem about the land of Israel: “They will eat their food with anxiety and their water they will drink with horror, because their land will be desolate from its fullness because of all the violence of those who are dwelling in it.
 20 And the inhabited cities will be desolate, and the land will be a desolation, and you will know that I *am* Yahweh.” ’”

God Ends a Proverb

21 And the word of Yahweh came to me, saying,
 22 “Son of man, what *is* this proverb you people have about the land of Israel, saying, ‘The days are prolonged, and every vision has come to nothing.’
 23 Therefore say to them, ‘Thus says the Lord Yahweh: “I will put an end to this proverb, and they will not quote it as a proverb again in Israel.” ‘ But say to them, ‘The days are near, and *also* the word of every vision.’
 24 For *there* will not be any longer any false vision or flattering divination in the midst of the house of Israel.
 25 For I, Yahweh, I will speak what I will speak *as* a word, and it will be done. It will not prolong *itself* any longer, for in your days, house of rebellion, I will speak a word and I will fulfill it!” declares the Lord Yahweh.

Ezekiel Confirms the Imminence of His Prophecies

26 And the word of Yahweh came to me, saying,
 27 “Son of man, look! The house of Israel *is* saying, ‘The vision that he *is* seeing *is* for many days *from now*, and for distant times he *is* prophesying.’
 28 Therefore say to them, ‘Thus says the Lord Yahweh: “None of my words will *be* prolonged any longer that I speak *as* a word, and it will be fulfilled!” ’” declares the Lord Yahweh.

Ezekiel's Prophecy to the Exiles—False Prophets (c. late 592 BC)

Ezekiel 13

Charges against False Prophets

- 1 And the word of Yahweh came to me, saying,
 2 “Son of man, prophesy to the prophets of Israel who are prophesying, and you must say to *those who are* prophets out of their own imagination, ‘Hear the word of Yahweh!’
 3 Thus says the Lord Yahweh: ‘Alas, for the foolish prophets who *are* going after their *own* spirit, and they did not see anything!
 4 Your prophets have been like foxes among ruins.
 5 You did not go up into the breaches and repair a wall for the house of Israel to stand *firm* in the battle on the day of Yahweh.
 6 They saw falseness and a lying divination, the ones saying, ‘Declaration of Yahweh!’ and Yahweh did not send them, and they wait for the confirmation of their word.
 7 Have you not seen a false vision and spoken *a* lying divination, and *you* said, ‘Declaration of Yahweh!’ but I myself did not speak.

Judgment on False Prophets

- 8 Therefore thus says the Lord Yahweh: ‘Because of your speaking falseness and *because* you envisioned a lie, therefore, look! I *am* against you!’ declares the Lord Yahweh.
 9 “And it will be my hand against the prophets who *are* seeing falseness and who *are* practicing lying divination. They will not be in the council of my people, and they will not be written *down* in the record *book* of the house of Israel, and into the land of Israel they will not come, and *then* you will know that I *am* the Lord Yahweh.
 10 Because, yes, because they led my people astray, saying ‘Peace!’ And *there is* not peace. And *when* anyone builds a flimsy wall, look, they coat it *with* whitewash.
 11 Say to *those covering it with* whitewash that it will fall; there will be a torrent of rain, and I will give stones of hail; they will fall! And a windstorm will burst forth!
 12 And look! *When* the wall falls, will it not be said to you, ‘Where *is* the whitewash *with* which you covered *it*?’
 13 Therefore thus says the Lord Yahweh: ‘And *so* I will let burst forth a windstorm in my rage, and there will be a torrent of rain in my anger, and hailstones in *my* rage for complete destruction.
 14 And I will break down the wall that you covered *with* whitewash, and I will knock it to the ground, and its foundation will be revealed, and it will fall, and you will come to an end in the midst of it, and you will know that I *am* Yahweh!
 15 And I will fully vent my rage against the wall and against those covering it *with* whitewash, and I will say to you, “The wall is no more, and the people covering it are no more,
 16 *that is*, the prophets of Israel, the ones prophesying concerning Jerusalem and the ones seeing visions of peace, and there is not peace!” ” declares the Lord Yahweh. [cf. [Acts 23:3](#)]

Charges against False Prophetesses

- 17 “And you, son of man, place your face toward the daughters of your people who prophesy from their imagination, and prophesy against them!
 18 And you must say, ‘Thus says the Lord Yahweh: “Woe to those who sew magic charm bands on all the wrists of the hands of my *people* and those who make the veils *that are* on the head of *people of* every height, to ensnare *people’s* lives! Will you ensnare *the* lives of my people and keep yourselves alive?
 19 And you defiled me among my people for a handful of barley and for morsels of bread to kill persons who should not die and to keep alive persons who should not live by *means of* your lies to my people *who are* listening to *your* lies.”’

Judgment on False Prophetesses

- 20 Therefore thus says the Lord Yahweh: ‘Look! I am against your magic charm bands with which you are ensnaring persons as birds; I will tear them from your arms, and I will release the persons that you *are* ensnaring, *treating* persons as birds.
 21 And I will tear off your veils, and I will deliver my people from your hand, and they will not any longer be in your hand as prey, and you will know that I *am* Yahweh.
 22 Because *you* disheartened *the* heart of *the* righteous by deception, and I have not caused him pain, and strengthened *the* hands of *the* wicked *so that he did* not turn from his wicked way to save his life.
 23 Therefore falseness you will not see, and divination you will not practice any longer, and I will rescue my people from your hand, and you will know that I *am* Yahweh!”’

Ezekiel's Prophecy to the Exiles—Noah, Daniel and Job (c. late 592 BC)

Ezekiel 14

God Will Deal Personally with the Hypocrisy of the Elders

1 And men from the elders of Israel came to me, and they sat before me.

2 And the word of Yahweh came to me, saying,

3 “Son of man, these men took up their idols into their heart and they placed before themselves a stumbling block of their guilt. Should I really let myself be consulted by them?

4 Therefore speak with them, and you must say to them, ‘Thus says the Lord Yahweh: “Every person from the house of Israel who brings up his idols into his heart and places before himself a stumbling block of his guilt and yet he comes to the prophet, I Yahweh, I will respond to him through this act with respect to the multitude of his idols,

5 so that I may take hold of the house of Israel by their heart, those who are estranged from me, all of them, through their idols.’

6 Therefore say to the house of Israel, ‘Thus says the Lord Yahweh: “Return, and turn away from your idols and from all of your detestable things! Turn away your faces!”’

7 For each person from the house of Israel, and from the alien who dwells as an alien in Israel, who separates himself from following me and brings up his idols into his heart and places before himself a stumbling block of his guilt, and yet he comes to the prophet to consult him concerning me, I Yahweh will answer him myself.

8 And I will set my face against that person, and I will make him to be a sign and make him into the subject of proverbs; and I will cut him off from the midst of my people, and you will know I am Yahweh.

9 And the prophet, if he is deceived and he speaks a word, I Yahweh, I have deceived that prophet, and I will stretch out my hand against him, and I will destroy him from the midst of my people Israel.

10 And they will bear their guilt, like the guilt of the inquirer so the guilt of the prophet will be,

11 so that the house of Israel will not go astray again from me, and they will not make themselves unclean again with all of their transgressions, and they will be for me a people, and I will be for them as God,” declares the Lord Yahweh.

Jerusalem's Four Terrible Judgments

12 And the word of Yahweh came to me, saying,

13 “Son of man, when a land sins against me by acting very unfaithfully, then I will stretch out my hand against it, and I will break for it the supply of food, and I will send against it famine, and I will cut it off, both human and animal.

14 And if even the three of these men were in the midst of it—Noah, Daniel, and Job—they, through their righteousness, would save only themselves!” declares the Lord Yahweh.

15 “If a fierce animal I should let cross through the land, and it should make it childless and it will be a desolation, so that there will not be one crossing over the land due to the presence of the animal,

16 even if these three men were in the midst of it, as surely as I live,” declares the Lord Yahweh, “surely they will not save sons and daughters; they themselves alone, they will be saved, but the land will be a desolation.

17 Or, if I bring a sword over that land, and I say, ‘Sword, let it cross over into the land!’ And I will cut off from it both human and animal.

18 And if these three men were in the midst of it, as surely as I live,” declares the Lord Yahweh, “they will not save sons and daughters, but they alone will be saved.

19 And if I were to send a plague to that land, and I pour out my rage on it with blood to cut it off, both human and animal,

20 and if Noah, Daniel, and Job were in the midst of her, as surely as I live,” declares the Lord Yahweh, “surely not a son, surely not a daughter will they save by their righteousness; they would save themselves.”

21 For thus says the Lord Yahweh: “How much more when I send my four punishments—the evil sword, and famine, and a fierce animal, and a plague—to Jerusalem to cut it off, both human and animal!

22 But look! A remnant will be left over in it, sons and daughters who will be brought out. Look! They are coming out to you, and you will see their way, and with their deeds you will be consoled with respect to the evil that I brought over Jerusalem, all of it that I brought over it.

23 And they will console you when you see their way and their deeds, and you will know that not for nothing I did all that I did in it,” declares the Lord Yahweh.

Ezekiel's Prophecy to the Exiles—The Useless Vine (c. late 592 BC)

Ezekiel 15

1 And the word of Yahweh came to me, saying,

2 “Son of man, how will the wood of the vine be better than any of the wood of the branch which is among the trees of the forest?

3 Can wood be taken from it to make anything, or can they take a tent peg from it to hang on it any object?

4 Look! It is given to the fire as fuel. The fire will consume two of its ends, and its middle will be charred. Is it useful for anything?

5 Look! When it is in perfect condition, it will not be used for anything, how much less when the fire has consumed it and it is charred; and then can it be used again for anything?

6 Therefore thus says the Lord Yahweh: Just like the wood of the vine among the trees of the forest which I gave to the fire for fuel, so I have given the inhabitants of Jerusalem.

7 And I will set my face against them. From the fire they *may* escape, but the fire will *yet* consume them, and they will know that I *am* Yahweh when I set my face against them.

8 And I will make the land *a* desolation because they acted very unfaithfully!” declares the Lord Yahweh.

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Ezekiel's Prophecy to the Exiles—Jerusalem: The Adulterous Wife (c. late 592 BC)

Ezekiel 16

Jerusalem's Lowly Origins

1 And the word of Yahweh came to me, saying,
 2 "Son of man, make known to Jerusalem its detestable things,
 3 and you must say, 'Thus says the Lord Yahweh to Jerusalem: Your origin and your birth *were* from the land of the Canaanites, your father *was* an Amorite, and your mother *was* a Hittite.
 4 And *as for* your birth, on the day you were born your umbilical cord was not cut, and you were not thoroughly washed clean with water, and you were not thoroughly rubbed with salt, and you were not carefully wrapped in strips of cloth.
 5 No eye took pity on you to do to you one of these *things* to show compassion for you, and you were thrown into the open field in *their* despising of you on the day you were born.

Yahweh's Compassion

6 " 'And I passed by you, and I saw you kicking about in your blood, and I said to you in your blood, "Live!
 7 Grow up; I will make you like a plant of the field." And you grew up, and you became tall and reached full womanhood. *Your* breasts were formed, and your hair had grown, but you *were* naked and bare.
 8 " 'And I passed by you, and I saw you, and look, your time of lovemaking had come, and *so* I spread out my hem over you, and I covered your nakedness, and I swore to you, and I entered into a covenant with you,' declares the Lord Yahweh, 'and you became mine.
 9 And I washed you with water, and I rinsed off your blood from on you, and I anointed you with oil.
 10 And I clothed you *with* beautiful finished cloth, and I put sandals *on* you *of* fine leather, and I bound you in fine linen, and I covered you *with* costly fabric.
 11 And I adorned you *with* ornaments, and I put a bracelet on your arms and a necklace on your neck.
 12 And I put an ornamental ring on your nose and earrings on your ears and a beautiful crown on your head.
 13 And you adorned yourself with gold and silver, and your clothing *was* fine linen and costly fabric and beautiful finished cloth; you ate finely milled flour and honey and olive oil, and you became exceedingly beautiful; you were fit to be a queen.
 14 And a name went out for you among the nations because of your beauty, for it *was* perfect because of my majesty that I bestowed on you,' declares the Lord Yahweh.

Jerusalem's Religious Promiscuity

15 'And you trusted in your beauty, and you prostituted on account of your name, and you poured out your fornication on every *one* passing by, *saying*, "Let it be his."
 16 And you took from your clothes and you made for yourself colorful shrines, and you prostituted on them; this had not happened before, and it will not continue to happen.
 17 And you took your beautiful jewelry *made* from my gold and from my silver that I had given to you, and you made for yourself male images, and you prostituted with them.
 18 And you took the clothes of your beautiful finished cloth, and you covered them and my oil and my incense you set before them.
 19 And my bread that I gave to you, finely milled flour and oil and honey *with which* I fed you, then you set it before them as a pleasing odor, and so it was,' declares the Lord Yahweh.
 20 'And you took your sons and your daughters whom you had borne for me, and you sacrificed them to them to be eaten, as if your whorings were not enough.
 21 And you slaughtered my children, and you gave them to be sacrificed to them.
 22 And *in* all of your detestable things and your fornication you did not remember the days of your childhood when you were naked and bare, *when* you were kicking about in your blood.

Jerusalem's Political Promiscuity

23 " 'And then after all of your evil! Woe, woe, to you!' declares the Lord Yahweh.
 24 'And *then* you built for yourself a mound, and you made for yourself a high place in every public square.
 25 At *the* head of every street you built your high place and you disgraced your beauty and you spread your feet for every passerby, and you increased your whoring.
 26 And you prostituted with the Egyptians, your neighbors who were sexually aroused, and you increased your fornication to provoke me.
 27 And look! I stretched out my hand against you, and I reduced your portion, and I gave you into the desire of your haters, the daughters of the Philistines, who were ashamed because of your lewd conduct.
 28 And you prostituted with the Assyrians on account of your insatiable lust, and you prostituted *with* them, and still you were not satisfied.
 29 And you increased your fornication to *the* land of traders, *to* Chaldea, and even with this you were not satisfied.
 30 How hot with fever *was* your heart!' declares the Lord Yahweh. 'When you did all of these actions of a headstrong female prostitute,
 31 when you built your mound at *the* head of every street and your high place you made on every street, yet you were not like a

prostitute, *as you were* scorning your harlot's wages.

32 O, adulterous woman! In the place of her husband she received strangers.

33 To all prostitutes they give a fee, but you, you gave your gifts to all of your lovers, and you bribed them to come to you from all around in your whorings!

34 And it was the opposite with you from the *other* women in your whorings; no one solicited you as a prostitute. You gave a harlot's wages, and a harlot's wages *were* not given to you, and *so* it was *just* the opposite.

The Sentencing of Jerusalem

35 " 'Therefore, prostitute, hear the word of Yahweh.

36 Thus says the Lord Yahweh: Because of the pouring out of your shame and *because* your nakedness was revealed in your whoring with your lovers, and on account of all of the idols of your detestable things, and according to the blood of your children whom you gave to them,

37 therefore, look! I *am* gathering all of your lovers whom you were pleased about, and all of whom you loved in addition to all of whom you hated, and I will gather them against you from everywhere, and I *will* uncover your nakedness to them, and they will see all of your nakedness.

38 And I will judge you *with the* judgment of *women* committing adultery and shedding blood, and I will give you *the* blood of rage and jealousy.

39 And I will give you into their hand, and they will demolish your mound, and they will break down your high places, and they will strip you of your clothes, and they will take your beautiful jewelry, and they will leave you naked and bare.

40 And they will bring up against you a crowd, and they will stone you with stones, and they will cut you to pieces with their swords.

41 And they will burn your houses with fire, and they will execute against you judgments before many women, and I will stop you from prostitution, and also a harlot's wages you will not give again.

42 And I will satisfy my rage on you, and my jealousy will turn away from you, and I will be calm, and I will not be angry *any* longer.

43 Because you did not remember the days of your childhood and you made me angry with all of these. And in turn I, look, I will return your way upon *your* head,' declares the Lord Yahweh, 'and did you not *do* wickedness in addition to all of your detestable things?

Like Mother, Like Daughter

44 Look! Everyone quoting a proverb against you, he will quote, saying, 'Like her mother *is* her daughter!'

45 You *are* a daughter of your mother *who* abhorred her husband and her children, and you *are* a sister of your sisters who abhorred their husbands and their children. Your mother *was* a Hittite, and your father *was* an Amorite.

46 And your elder sister, she *is* Samaria, and her daughters, *who are* dwelling on your north, and your younger sister *is* the one dwelling on your south; *she is* Sodom and her daughters.

47 And you have not *only* gone in their ways, but you *also* did according to their detestable things. In such a short time you behaved *more* corruptly than they in all of your ways.

48 As surely as I live,' declares the Lord Yahweh, 'surely your sister Sodom and her daughters did not *do* as you and your daughters did.

49 Look! This was the iniquity of Sodom, your sister: Pride, abundance of food, and prosperous ease was to her and to her daughters, and she did not sustain the needy and the poor.

50 And they were proud, and they did a detestable thing before me, and I removed them because I saw *it*.

51 And Samaria did not sin according to even half of your sins, and you caused your detestable things to increase more than they, and you made your sister righteous *in comparison* with all of your detestable things that you did.

52 Also, you bear your disgrace, *by* which you furnished justification to your sisters through your sins *by* which you acted more abominably than they; they were more righteous than you, and also, you be ashamed and bear your disgrace through your making your sister righteous.

The Double Ray of Hope

53 And I will restore their fortune, the fortunes of Sodom and her daughters, and the fortunes of Samaria and her daughters, and *even* the fortunes of your captivity in the midst of them,

54 in order that you may bear your disgrace and you may be put to shame because of all that you did at your consoling them.

55 And *as for* your sisters, Sodom and her daughters, they will return to their former state, and Samaria and her daughters, they will return to their former state, and you and your daughters will return to your former state.

56 And was not Sodom, your sister, a byword in your mouth in the day of your pride

57 before your evil was uncovered? *It was* like the time of the scorn of the daughters of Aram and all *those* around her, and of the daughters of the Philistines, those all around who *are* despising you.

58 Your wickedness and your detestable things, you, you must bear them,' declares Yahweh.

The Future New Covenant

59 'For thus says the Lord Yahweh: And I will do it to you according to what you have done, who despised *the* oath to break covenant.

60 And I, I will remember my covenant with you in the days of your youth, and I will establish with you an everlasting covenant.
 61 And you will remember your ways, and you will be ashamed when you take your sisters, both the older and the younger, and I give them to you as daughters, but not on account of your covenant.
 62 And I, I will establish my covenant with you, and you will know that I *am* Yahweh,
 63 in order that you will remember, and you will be ashamed, and you will not open your mouth again because of your disgrace when I forgive you for all that you have done!” declares the Lord Yahweh.

Ezekiel's Prophecy to the Exiles—The Eagles and the Vine (c. late 592 BC)

Ezekiel 17

The Parable of the Two Eagles

1 And the word of Yahweh came to me, saying,
 2 “Son of man, tell a riddle and quote a proverb to the house of Israel,
 3 and you must say, “Thus says the Lord Yahweh: “The great eagle with great wings and long feathers *and* full of variegated plumage came to Lebanon and he took the treetop of the cedar.
 4 He plucked the top of its new plant shoot, and he brought it to the land of Canaan *and* put it in a city of merchants,
 5 and he took from the seed of the land and placed it in fertile soil on many waters; *like* a willow he planted it.
 6 And it sprouted, and it became a vine spreading out, low of height, turning its branches to him, and its roots were under it, and it became a vine, and it made branches, and it sent out foliage.
 7 “ “And there was another great eagle, great of wings and *with* abundant plumage, and look! This vine stretched out its roots toward him and extended its branches to him to water it from the garden bed where it was planted.
 8 It was planted in *a* good field by many waters to produce branches and to bear fruit to become a beautiful vine.”
 9 Say, ‘Thus says the Lord Yahweh: “Will it prosper? Will he not tear out its roots, and will he not make its fruit scaly, and it will wither, and all of the freshness of its vegetation will dry up? And to lift it from its roots will not require great strength or many people.
 10 And look! *Though* it is planted, will it prosper? When the east wind strikes it, will it not dry up completely? On the garden bed of its vegetation it will dry up!” ’”

The Interpretation of the Parable

11 And the word of Yahweh came to me, saying,
 12 “Say now to the rebellious house of Israel, ‘Do you not know what these *are*?’ Say, ‘Look! The king of Babylon will come *to* Jerusalem, and he will take its king and its officials, and he will bring them to himself, *to* Babylon.
 13 And he took from the seed of the kingship, and he made with him a covenant, and he brought him under oath, and he took the rulers of the land,
 14 so that *they would* be a humble kingdom and not lift itself up to keep his covenant in order for it to stand.
 15 But he rebelled against him by sending his messengers *to* Egypt to give to him horses and a large army. Will he succeed? Will he escape doing these *things*, and can he break *the* covenant and escape?
 16 As I live,’ declares the Lord Yahweh, ‘surely in the place of the king who made him king, who despised his oath and who broke his covenant with him—in the midst of Babylon he will die.
 17 And not with a great army and with a great crowd will Pharaoh work with him in the war, at the pouring out of a siege ramp and the building of siege works to destroy many lives.
 18 And he despised *the* oath to break covenant. And, look, he gave his hand *in pledge*, and *yet* he did all of these *things*. He will not escape.’
 19 Therefore thus says the Lord Yahweh: ‘As I live, surely my oath that he despised and my covenant that he broke I will return upon his head.
 20 And I will spread my net over him, and he will be caught in my hunting net, and I will bring him *to* Babylon, and I will enter into judgment with him there *about* his infidelity that he displayed against me.
 21 And all of his choice troops, among all of his troops, they will fall by the sword, and *those who are* remaining, they will be scattered to all *the directions of the* wind, and you will know that I, Yahweh, I have spoken.’

Epilogue—The New Cedar

22 Thus says the Lord Yahweh: ‘And I will take, *even* I, from the treetop of the high cedar, and I will plant *it*, from the head of its new plant shoot I will pluck a tender one, and I will plant *it*, *even* I, on a high and lofty mountain.
 23 On the height of the mountain of Israel I will plant *it*, and it will carry branches, and it will bear fruit, and it will become a noble cedar, and all of the birds of all wings will dwell under it in the shade of its branches.
 24 And all of the trees of the field will know that I, Yahweh, I will bring low a high tree, *and* I will exalt a low, fresh tree, and I will make a dry tree flourish. I, Yahweh, I have spoken, and I will do *it*.”

Ezekiel's Prophecy to the Exiles—Individual Responsibility and Retribution (c. late 592 BC)

Ezekiel 18

Israel's Proverb

1 And the word of Yahweh came to me, saying,

2 "What do you mean by quoting this proverb about the land of Israel, saying,

'The fathers, they ate unripe fruit,
and the teeth of the child became blunt.'

3 As I live, declares the Lord Yahweh, it will surely not any longer be appropriate for you to quote this proverb in Israel!

4 Look! All lives are mine. The lives of father and son alike are mine. The person sinning will die.

A Righteous Man's Wicked Son

5 And if a man is righteous and does justice and righteousness,

6 and on the mountains he *does* not eat and he *does* not lift up his eyes to the idols of the house of Israel, and the wife of his neighbor he *does* not defile and he *does* not approach a woman of menstruation,

7 and he oppresses no one *and* he returns *a* pledge for his loan and he commits no robbery *and* he gives his bread to *the* hungry and he covers a naked person *with* a garment,

8 *and* he does not charge interest and he takes no usury, *and* he holds back his hand from injustice *and* he executes *a* judgment of fairness between persons,

9 *and* in my statutes he goes about and my regulations he keeps, performing faithfully—*then* he is righteous, *and* certainly he will live," declares the Lord Yahweh.

10 "And *now* he has a son, a violent one, who sheds blood and does any of these things

11 (though he did not do all of these *things*), *for the son* also eats on the mountains and he defiles the wife of his neighbor.

12 He oppresses *the* needy and *the* poor, *and* he commits robbery, *and* he *does* not return *a* pledge for a loan, *and* he lifts his eyes to the idols *so* he does a detestable thing.

13 He charges interest and takes usury. Then, shall he live? He shall not live, *for* he did all of these detestable things. Surely he will die! His blood will be on him.

A Wicked Man's Righteous Son

14 "And look! He has a son, and he sees all of the sin of his father that he did, and he sees *it*, but he does not *do* it.

15 On the mountains he does not eat, and he does not lift *up* his eyes to the idols of the house of Israel, *and* the wife of his neighbor he does not defile.

16 And he oppresses no one; he requires no pledge for a loan, and he does not commit robbery; he gives his bread to *the* hungry, and he covers the naked person *with* a garment.

17 He brings back his hand from iniquity; he does not take interest and usury; he does my regulations; he goes in my statutes. He will not die because of the guilt of his father; he will surely live!

Each Individual Stands On Their Own

18 Because his father oppressed severely; he stole from his brother; *that* which *is* not good he did in the midst of his people, and look! He will die through his guilt.

19 "Yet you say, 'Why *does* the son not bear the guilt of the father?' And *since* the son does justice and righteousness and he keeps all of my statutes and does them, he shall surely live!

20 The person, the *one* sinning, will die. A son shall not bear the guilt of the father, and a father shall not bear the guilt of the son. The righteousness of the righteous shall be on him; the wickedness of the wicked shall be on him.

The Salvation of the Wicked Who Repent

21 But if the wicked returns from all of his sins that he has done and he keeps all of my statutes and he does justice and righteousness, he shall surely live; he shall not die!

22 All of his transgressions that he committed will not be remembered against him. Through his righteousness that he has done he shall live.

23 Have I delight by any means *in the* death of *the* wicked, declares the Lord Yahweh, *and* not at his turning from his way, so that he lives?

The Destruction of the Righteous Who Rebel

24 And when the righteous turns from his righteousness, so that he does injustice, and does all of the detestable things that the wicked do, then will he live *because of* all of his righteousness that he did? *Those things* will not be remembered because of his infidelity that he displayed, and because of his sin that he committed. Through them he shall die.

25 “Yet you say, ‘The way of the Lord is not fair!’ Listen, now, house of Israel, is my way not fair? *Is it not your ways that are not fair?*
 26 When the righteous turns from his righteousness, and he does injustice, then he will die because of them; because of his injustice that he did he will die!

27 And when the wicked turns from his wickedness that he did and he does justice and righteousness, he will preserve his life.

28 And if he sees and he returns from all of his transgressions that he did, surely he will live; he will not die!

29 And yet they, the house of Israel, say, ‘The way of the Lord is not fair!’ *Are not my ways fair, house of Israel? Are not your ways unfair?*

Repent!

30 “Therefore I will judge you, house of Israel, each one according to his ways,” declares the Lord Yahweh. “Repent and turn around from all of your transgression, and it will not be as a stumbling block of iniquity to you.

31 Throw away from yourselves all of your transgressions that you committed, and make for yourselves a new heart and new spirit, and so why will you die, house of Israel?

32 For I have no pleasure in the death of the dying,” declares the Lord Yahweh. “And so repent and live!”

Ezekiel’s Prophecy to the Exiles—Lament for the Princes of Israel (c. late 592 BC)

Ezekiel 19

Dirge for the Lions of Judah

1 “And you, raise a lament about the leaders of Israel,
 2 and you must say,

‘What a lioness *was* your mother
 among *the* lions.

She lay down in the midst of young lions,
 and she reared her lion cubs.

3 And she raised up one from her cubs;
 he became a fierce lion,
 and he learned to tear prey;
 he ate humans.

4 And nations heard about him;
 in their pit he was caught,
 and they brought him with hooks
 to the land of Egypt. [cf. Jehoahaz in [2 Kgs 23:31–33](#)]

5 And she saw that she was waiting *in vain*;
 her hope was destroyed,
 and she took one from her cubs,
 and she made him a fierce lion.

6 And he walked about in the midst of lions;
 he became a fierce lion,
 and he learned to tear prey;
 he ate humans.

7 And he knew their widows,
 and he devastated their cities,
 and *the* land was appalled, and everyone in it
 at the sound of his roar.

8 And nations set out against him
 from the surrounding provinces,
 and they spread their net over him,
 and he was caught in their pit.

9 And they put him in a collar with hooks,
 and they brought him to the king of Babylon; [cf. Jehoiachin in [2 Kgs 24:8–16](#)]
 they brought him into a prison,
 so that his voice *would* not be heard any longer
 on the mountains of Israel.

Dirge for the Vine of Judah

10 Your mother *was* like the vine in your vineyard;

planted fruitfully beside water,
and it was full of branches
from many waters.

- 11 And she produced branches of strength
to scepters of rulers;
its height became tall
between thick foliage,
and it was seen because of its tallness
among the abundance of its branches.
- 12 But it was uprooted in rage;
it was thrown to the earth,
and the east wind dried up its fruit;
they were stripped off,
and its strong branch dried up;
fire consumed it.
- 13 And now *it is* planted in the desert,
in a dry and thirsty land.
- 14 And *so* fire has gone out from the stem of its branches;
its fruit it has consumed,
and *there* was not in it a strong branch,
a scepter for ruling.”

This *is* a lament, and it will be used as a lament.

Ezekiel's Prophecy to the Exiles—The History of Israel's Rebellion (August 14, 591 BC)

Ezekiel 20:1–44

Call for Israel's Arraignment

- 1 And then in the seventh year, in the fifth *month*, on the tenth *day* of the month, men from the elders of Israel came to consult Yahweh, and they sat before me.
- 2 And the word of Yahweh came to me, saying,
- 3 “Son of man, speak with the elders of Israel, and you must say to them, ‘Thus says the Lord Yahweh: “*Are you coming to consult me? As I live, I will surely not allow myself to be consulted by you!*” ‘ declares the Lord Yahweh.
- 4 Will you judge them? Will you judge *them*, son of man? Make known to them the detestable things of their ancestors.

Israel's Rebellion in Egypt

- 5 And you must say to them, ‘Thus says the Lord Yahweh: “On the day of my choosing Israel I swore to the offspring of the house of Jacob, and I made myself known to them in the land of Egypt, and I swore to them, saying, ‘*I am Yahweh your God.*’
- 6 On that day I swore to them to bring them out from the land of Egypt to *the* land that I had searched out for them, flowing with milk and honey—it *is the most* beautiful of all of the lands.
- 7 Then I said to them, ‘*Let each one* throw away the detestable things of his eyes, and you must not make yourselves unclean with the idols of Egypt! *I am Yahweh your God.*’
- 8 But they rebelled against me, and they were not willing to listen to me; each *one* did not throw away the detestable things of their eyes; and they did not abandon the idols of Egypt, and I decided to pour out my rage on them, to fully vent my anger against them in the midst of the land of Egypt.
- 9 “But I acted for the sake of my name to keep it from being profaned before the eyes of the nations among whom they lived, where I made known to them before their eyes, to bring them out from the land of Egypt.

Israel's Rebellion in the Wilderness (Exodus generation)

- 10 And I brought them out from the land of Egypt, and I brought them to the desert,
- 11 and I gave my statutes to them, and my regulations I made known to them, which, if a person does them, then he will live by them. [[Lev 18:5](#)]
- 12 And also my Sabbaths I gave to them to be a sign between me and between them so they would know that I, Yahweh, *am the one* sanctifying them.
- 13 “But in the desert the house of Israel rebelled against me; they did not walk in my statutes, and they rejected my regulations, which, if a person does them, he will live by them, and they greatly profaned my Sabbaths, and I decided to pour out my rage on them in the desert to destroy them,
- 14 and I acted for the sake of my name, *that it* not be profaned before the eyes of the nations before whom I brought them out.

15 And also I myself swore to them in the desert not to bring them into the land that I had given *to them*, flowing with milk and honey—it *is the most* beautiful of all of the lands—

16 because they despised my judgments, and they did not walk in my statutes, and my Sabbaths they profaned, for their heart was going after their idols.

17 But my eye took pity on them by not destroying them, and I did not completely destroy them in the desert.

Israel's Rebellion in the Wilderness (Wandering generation)

18 “And I said to their children in the desert, ‘You must not go in the statutes of your parents; you must not keep their regulations, and you must not make yourself unclean with their idols.

19 I, Yahweh, *am* your God, *so* go in my statutes and keep my regulations and do them.

20 And treat my Sabbaths as holy, and they will be a sign between me and between you that you may know that I, Yahweh, *am* your God.’

21 But the children rebelled against me; they did not walk in my statutes, and they did not observe my regulations, which *if* a person does them, then he will live by them. My Sabbaths they desecrated, and I decided to pour out my rage on them, to finish my anger against them in the desert.

22 But I withheld my hand, and I acted for the sake of my name not to be profaned before the eyes of the nations *before* whom I *had* brought them out before their eyes.

23 What is more, I swore to them in the desert to scatter them among the nations and to disperse them in the lands,

24 because they did not *do* my regulations, and my statutes they despised, and my Sabbaths they profaned, and their eyes were after the idols of their ancestors.

25 And in turn I gave to them rules *that were* not good and regulations by which they will not live.

26 And I defiled them through their gifts in sacrificing all of *the* first offspring of *the* womb, in order that I will cause them to be stunned, so that they will know that I *am* Yahweh.

Israel's Rebellion in the Recent Past

27 “Therefore speak to the house of Israel, son of man, and you must say to them, ‘Thus says the Lord Yahweh: “Again *in* this your ancestors blasphemed me at their display of infidelity toward me.”’

28 And I brought them to the land that I swore to give to them, and they saw every high hill and every leafy tree, and they offered their sacrifices, and they presented there the provocation of their offering, and they gave there their fragrant incense offering, and they poured out their libations there.

29 And I said to them, ‘What *is* the high place to which you are going?’ And it is called Bamah until this day.

30 Therefore thus say to the house of Israel, ‘Thus says the Lord Yahweh: “In the way of your ancestors *will* you defile yourself, and after their vile idols *will* you prostitute *yourselves*?’

31 And when you lift up your gifts, sacrificing your children through the fire, you are defiling yourself through all of your idols until today, and will I let myself be consulted by you, house of Israel?” ‘As I live,’ declares the Lord Yahweh, “I will not let myself be consulted by you!

The Future Transformation of Israel—Israel in the Desert

32 And what you are planning, surely it will not be—that you are saying, ‘Let us be like the nations, like the clans of the lands, serving wood and stone!’

33 “As I live,” declares the Lord Yahweh, “surely with *a* strong hand and with *an* outstretched arm and with rage pouring forth I will reign as king over you!

34 And I will bring you from the peoples, and I will gather you from the countries *to* which you were scattered with *a* strong hand and with an outstretched arm and with rage poured out.

35 Then I will bring you to the desert of the peoples, and I will execute justice on you there face to face.

36 Just as I executed justice on your ancestors in the desert of the land of Egypt, likewise I will execute justice on you!” declares the Lord Yahweh.

37 “And I will make you pass under the rod, and I will bring you into the bond of the covenant.

38 And I will purge the rebels from *among* you and the *ones* transgressing against me; I will bring them out from the land where they are living as aliens, but into the land of Israel they will not come, and *then* you will know that I *am* Yahweh.

The Future Transformation of Israel—Israel on Yahweh's Holy Mountain

39 And you, house of Israel, thus says the Lord Yahweh: “*Let* each one go serve his idols *now* and after, if you *are* not listening to me, but my holy name you will not profane *any* longer with your gifts and with your idols.

40 “For on my holy mountain, on the mountain of the height of Israel,” declares the Lord Yahweh, “there all of the house of Israel will serve me, all of them, in the land. I will take pleasure in them, and there I will accept your contributions and the best of your portions with all of your holy objects.

41 I will accept you as a fragrant incense offering when I bring you out from the peoples and I gather you from the lands *to* which

you were scattered, and I will show myself holy among you before the eyes of the nations.

42 And you will know that I *am* Yahweh when I bring you to the land of Israel, to the land that I swore to give to your ancestors.

43 And you will remember there your ways, and all of your deeds by which you were made unclean, and you will feel a loathing for yourself for all of your evils that you have done.

44 And you will know that I *am* Yahweh when I deal with you for the sake of my name and not according to your evil ways or according to your corrupted deeds, house of Israel," declares the Lord Yahweh.

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Ezekiel's Prophecy to the Exiles—Yahweh's Avenging Sword (August 14, 591 BC)

Ezekiel 20:45–21:32

The Riddle of the Sword

20:45 And the word of Yahweh came to me, saying,

46 “Son of man, set your face *toward* the way of *the* south, and preach to *the* south, and prophesy against the forest of the territory of the Negev.

47 And you must say to the forest of the Negev, ‘Hear the word of Yahweh, thus says the Lord Yahweh: “Look! I am kindling against you a fire, and it will devour in you every fresh tree and every dry tree; *the* blaze of *the* flame will not be quenched, and all the surfaces from *the* south to *the* north will be scorched by it.

48 And all creatures will see that I, Yahweh, I kindled it—it will not be quenched!” “

49 Then I said, “Ah, Lord Yahweh, they are saying about me, ‘Is he not posing a parable?’”

The Meaning of the Riddle

21:1 And the word of Yahweh came to me, saying,

2 “Son of man, set your face toward Jerusalem, and preach to *the* sanctuaries, and prophesy to the land of Israel.

3 And you must say to the land of Israel, ‘Thus says Yahweh: “Look! I *am* against you, and I will draw out my sword from its sheath, and I will cut *off* from you *the* righteous and *the* wicked.

4 Because I will cut *off* from you *both* righteous and wicked, therefore my sword will go out from its sheath to all creatures from south to north.

5 And they will know, all creatures, that I, Yahweh, I will bring out my sword from its sheath; it will not return again!”

6 And you, son of man, groan with shaking hips, and you must groan with bitterness before their eyes.

7 And then when they say to you, ‘On account of what *are* you groaning?’ then you must say, ‘On account of *the* report, for it is coming, and every heart will be weak and all hands will hang limp and every spirit will be disheartened, and all knees will go *like* water.’ Look! It is coming, and it will happen!” declares the Lord Yahweh.

The Song of the Sword

8 And the word of Yahweh came to me, saying,

9 “Son of man, prophesy, and you must say, ‘Thus says the Lord,’ say, ‘A sword, a sword *is* sharpened and *is* also polished.

10 It is sharpened to slaughter a slaughter, polished to flash like lightning! Or will we rejoice? A rod, my son, *is* despising every tree.

11 And he gives it to be polished, to be seized by the hand. It is sharpened—a sword—and it *is* polished to give it into *the* hand of *the* killer.

12 Cry and wail, son of man, for it is against my people; it is against all of the princes of Israel. They are thrown to *the* sword with my people; therefore strike your thigh.

13 For examine! And what if also *the* rod will not be despising?’ declares the Lord Yahweh.

14 And you, son of man, prophesy and clap your hands. And the sword will strike twice; let it happen a third time. It *is* a sword of the dead, *the* sword of the great dead that *is* surrounding them,

15 so that a heart melts, and the fallen multiply at all of their gates. I gave a sword for slaughter, *and* alas! It is made for flashing, it is grasped for slaughtering.

16 Gather together, strike to the right; cause to go to the left, where your edge *is* directed.

17 And also I myself will clap my hands, and I will satisfy my rage! I, Yahweh, I have spoken.”

The Agent of the Sword

18 And the word of Yahweh came to me, saying,

19 “And you, son of man, mark *out* for yourself two roads for the coming of the sword of the king of Babylon; they must both go out from the same land. And hew *out* a signpost; hew *it* at *the* head of *the* road of *the* city.

20 You must mark a road for *the* coming of *the* sword to Rabbah of the Ammonites and to Judah, in Jerusalem *the* fortified.

21 For the king of Babylon stands at the fork of the road at the head of the two roads to practice divination. He shakes the arrows, he inquires with the teraphim, he examines the liver.

22 In his right hand is the divination for Jerusalem, to put *up* battering rams, to open *a* mouth for slaughter, to raise the battle cry, to put *up* battering rams against gates, to build a siege ramp, to build siege works.

23 And it will be to them like practicing divination falsely in their eyes; they have sworn oaths for themselves. But he *will* bring *their* guilt to remembrance *so as* to seize them.

24 “Therefore thus says the Lord Yahweh: ‘Because you have brought to remembrance your guilt by the uncovering of your transgressions, so that your sins in all of your deeds appear—because of your being remembered, you will be captured in the hand.’

25 And *as for* you, profane one, wicked prince of Israel, whose day has come with *the* time of *the* punishment of *the* end,

26 thus says the Lord Yahweh: ‘Remove the turban and lift off the crown; things *are* no longer the same. Exalt the low and bring low the high.

27 A ruin, a ruin, a ruin I will make it! Also this has not *ever* happened; *it will remain* until the coming of *the one* to whom the

judgment belongs and I have given it *to him*.’

The Taunt of the Sword

28 And you, son of man, prophesy, and you must say, ‘Thus says the Lord Yahweh to the Ammonites and concerning their disgrace,’ and you must say, ‘A sword, a sword *is* drawn for slaughtering; *it is* polished for holding, for flashing like lightning,

29 when seeing a false vision for you in vain, when practicing divination for you falsely, to give you on *the* neck of *the* profane ones of *the* wicked, whose day has come, the time of final punishment.

30 Return it to its sheath in *the* place where you were created. In the land of your origin I will judge you!

31 And I will pour out my anger on you; I will blow on you with the fire of my wrath, and I will give you into *the* hand of brutal men, skilled craftsmen of destruction.

32 You will be as fuel for the fire; your blood will be in the midst of the earth. You will not be remembered, for I, Yahweh, I have spoken.”

Ezekiel’s Prophecy to the Exiles—Woe to the Bloody City! (August 14, 591 BC)

Ezekiel 22

Indictment of the Bloody City

1 And the word of Yahweh came to me, saying,

2 “And you, son of man, will you judge? Will you judge the bloody city? Then you must make known *to* her all of her detestable things!

3 And you must say, ‘Thus says the Lord Yahweh: “A city pouring out blood in the midst of her; its time has come, and it made idols for itself, becoming unclean.

4 By your blood that you poured out you have become guilty, and by your idols that you made you have become unclean, and you have brought your days near, and your appointed years have come. Therefore I have made you a disgrace for the nations and a laughingstock to all of the countries.

5 The *people* near and the *people* far from you will make fun of you, the unclean and the terrified.

6 Look! The princes of Israel, each *one* according to his strength, they are in you for the shedding of blood.

7 They have treated father and mother with contempt in you; they violated the alien with extortion; in the midst of you they mistreated *the* orphan and widow.

8 You despised my holy objects; my Sabbaths you profaned.

9 Slandorous men are among you to shed blood, and they, among you, eat upon the mountains; they do wickedness in the midst of you.

10 They uncover *the* nakedness of *a* father among you; they violate *a woman* unclean of menstruation among you.

11 And a man does a detestable thing *with* the wife of his neighbor, and a man defiles his daughter-in-law in wickedness, and a man sexually violates among you his sister, the daughter of his father.

12 They take a bribe among you in order to shed blood; and you take usury, and you make gain *from* your neighbors by extortion, and so you have forgotten me, declares the Lord Yahweh.

13 And look! I strike my hand for your ill-gotten gain that you *have* made and at your blood that was in the midst of you.

14 Can your heart endure, or can your hands be strong at the days *in* which I *am* dealing with you? I, Yahweh, I have spoken, and I will act!

15 I will scatter you among the nations, and I will disperse you through the countries, and I will purge your uncleanness from you.

16 And I will be profaned by you before *the* eyes of *the* nations, and you will know that I *am* Yahweh.” ”

In the Smelter of God’s Wrath

17 And the word of Yahweh came to me, saying,

18 “Son of man, the house of Israel has become as silver dross to me; all of them *are as* bronze and tin and iron and lead in the midst of a furnace, *even as* silver dross, silver *dross* they became!

19 Therefore thus says the Lord Yahweh: ‘Because all of you have become *as* silver dross, therefore look! I *am* gathering you to the midst of Jerusalem,

20 like the gathering of silver and bronze and iron and lead and tin to the middle of a furnace to blow fire on it for melting. Thus I will gather in my anger and in my rage, and I will deposit you, and I will melt you.

21 And I will gather you, and I will blow on you with the fire of my wrath, and so I will melt *you* in the midst of her.

22 Thus you will be melted like *the* melting of silver in the midst of a furnace, and you will know that I, Yahweh, I have poured out my rage on you.”

The Unmanned Breach

23 And the word of Yahweh came to me, saying,

24 “Son of man, say to her, ‘You *are* a land not cleansed; it is not rained upon *in the* day of indignation.’

25 The conspiracy of its prophets in the midst of her *is* like a roaring lion *that* is tearing prey. They devour people, and they take wealth and treasure; they make its widows numerous in the midst of her.

26 Its priests treat my law violently, and they profane my holy objects; they do not distinguish between *a* holy object and what is unholy, or between the clean and the unclean. They do not teach the difference, and they hide their eyes from my Sabbaths, and so I am profaned in the midst of them.

27 Its officials *are* like wolves tearing prey in its midst, to pour out blood, to destroy people, to make dishonest gain.

28 And for them its prophets plaster whitewash; *they are* seeing falseness and *are* practicing divination for them *by* lying, saying, ‘Thus says the Lord Yahweh,’ and Yahweh has not spoken.

29 They severely oppress the people of the land, and they committed robbery, and they mistreated *the* needy and *the* poor, and they oppressed the alien without justice.

30 And so I sought for them somebody, one repairing *the* wall and standing in the breach before me on behalf of the land not to destroy it, but I did not find *anyone*,

31 and so I poured out my indignation on them. With the fire of my wrath I destroyed them; I returned their way upon their head,” declares the Lord Yahweh.

Ezekiel’s Prophecy to the Exiles—A Tale of Two Sisters (August 14, 591 BC)

Ezekiel 23

Introduction of the Accused

1 And the word of Yahweh came to me, saying,
 2 “Son of man, there were two women, *the* daughters of one mother,
 3 and they prostituted *themselves* in Egypt in their childhood; they were prostituting *themselves* there, *and* their breasts were fondled, and there they caressed the bosoms of their virginity.
 4 Now *as for* their names, the older *was* Oholah, and Oholibah *was* her sister. And they became mine, and they bore sons and daughters, and their names *are* Samaria *for* Oholah, and Jerusalem *for* Oholibah.

The Indictment of Oholah (Samaria)

5 And Oholah prostituted *herself* while she was still mine, and she lusted for her lovers, for Assyria *who was* nearby,
 6 clothed in blue cloth, governors and prefects, handsome young men *and* all of them horsemen, experts on horseback.
 7 And she bestowed her fornication on them, *on* the choice *ones* of the Assyrians, all of them, and with every one *after* which she lusted; with all of their idols she defiled herself.
 8 And her whorings from *the time of* Egypt she *did* not abandon, for they slept with her in her childhood, and they caressed the bosoms of her virginity, and they poured out their fornication on her.
 9 Therefore I gave her into the hand of her lovers, into the hand of the Assyrians after whom she lusted.
 10 They uncovered her nakedness; they took her sons and her daughters, and they killed her with the sword. And she became a name for the women, and they executed judgments against her.

The Indictment of Oholibah (Jerusalem)

11 “And though Oholibah her sister saw, yet in her lust she behaved more corruptly than her, and her whoring *was* more than the prostitution of her sister.
 12 She lusted after the Assyrians, governors and prefects, warriors clothed in perfection, expert horsemen, all of them handsome young men.
 13 And I saw that she was defiled; they had both taken the same path!
 14 And she increased her whorings, and she saw men carved on the wall, images of Chaldeans carved in red,
 15 belted with a belt at their waist with turbans on their heads, all of them *giving the* appearance of adjutants, the image of the Babylonians; Chaldea *was* the land of their birth.
 16 And she lusted for them when her eyes saw them, and she sent messengers to them *at* Chaldea.
 17 And so the Babylonians came to her *for the* bed of lovemaking; and they defiled her with their fornication, and she was defiled by them, and she turned from them.
 18 And she revealed her whorings, and she revealed her nakedness, and so I turned from her just as I turned from her sister.
 19 Yet she increased her whorings, recalling the days of her childhood when she was prostituted in the land of Egypt.
 20 And she lusted after her male lovers whose genitalia *were the* genitalia of male donkeys and *their* seminal emission *was the* seminal emission of horses.
 21 And you longed *after* the obscene conduct of your youth when your bosom was caressed by Egypt, fondling your young breasts.

The Sentencing of Oholibah (Jerusalem)

22 “Therefore, Oholibah, thus says the Lord Yahweh: ‘Look! I *am* stirring up your lovers against you *concerning* whom you turned away, and I will bring them against you from all around:

23 the Babylonians and all of the Chaldeans, Pekod and Shoa and Koa, all of the Assyrians *along* with them, handsome young men, governors and prefects, all of them adjutants and excellent horsemen.

24 And they will come against you *with* an army chariot and wagon and with a crowd of peoples; they will set *themselves* against you *from* all around *with* large shield and small shield and helmet. And I will give before them judgment, and they will judge you with their judgments.

25 And I will direct my zeal against you, and they will deal with you in anger; your nose and your ears they will remove, and those who are left, they will fall by the sword, and they will take your sons and your daughters, and your remnant will be consumed by fire.

26 And they will strip you *of* your clothes, and they will take your splendid jewelry.

27 And I will put an end to your obscene conduct *coming* from you and your fornication from the land of Egypt, and you will not lift your eyes to them; and you will not remember Egypt again.'

28 For thus says the Lord Yahweh: 'Look! I *am* giving you into the hand of those you hated, into the hand of those from whom you turned away.

29 And they will deal with you in hatred, and they will take all of your acquisitions, and they will leave you naked and *in* bareness; and the nakedness of your fornication and your obscene conduct and your whorings will be exposed.

30 These *things are* accomplished against you since you prostituted yourself after the nations, *and* on account of that, you defiled yourself by their idols.

31 You went in the *same* way of your sister, and I will give her cup into your hand.'"

32 Thus says the Lord Yahweh: "You will drink the deep and wide cup of your sister; you will be as laughter and as scorn; the cup holds so much!

33 You will be filled with drunkenness and sorrow, for a cup of horror and desolation *is* the cup of your sister, Samaria.

34 And you will drink it, and you will drain *it*, and its potsherds you will gnaw, and you will tear out your breasts, for I myself spoke," declares the Lord Yahweh.

35 Therefore thus says the Lord Yahweh: "Because you have forgotten me, and you threw me behind your back, now in turn you bear your obscene conduct and your whorings."

The Charges against Oholah (Samaria) and Oholibah (Jerusalem)

36 And Yahweh said to me, "Son of man, will you judge Oholah and Oholibah and declare their abominable deeds to them?"

37 For they committed adultery, and blood *is* on their hands, and they committed adultery with their idols, and even their children that they had borne for me—they sacrificed them as food!

38 Also they did this to me: they defiled my sanctuary on that day, and they profaned my Sabbaths,

39 and when they slaughtered their children for their idols, they came to my sanctuary on that day to profane it. And look, this is what they did in my house!

40 What is worse, they sent for men who come from a distant place, *to* whom a messenger *was* sent to them, and look! They came! *Men* for whom you bathed and painted your eyes, and you adorned yourself *with* an ornament.

41 And you sat on a magnificent couch and a table prepared before her, and my incense and my olive oil you put on her.

42 And a sound of a carefree crowd *was* with it, and in addition to *these* men, a crowd of drunken men was brought in from *the* desert, and they put bracelets on their arms and a crown of splendor on their heads.

43 And I said to the one worn out *with* adulteries, 'Now they will prostitute *her concerning* her fornication, even her.'

44 And *so* they went to her like going to a female prostitute; and thus they went to Oholah and to Oholibah, the women of obscene conduct.

45 But righteous men, they will judge them *with the* judgment of committing adultery, and *with the* judgment of shedding blood; for they were committing adultery, and blood *was* on their hands."

The Sentencing of Oholah (Samaria) and Oholibah (Jerusalem)

46 For thus says the Lord Yahweh: "Bring up against them an assembly, and make them as a thing of horror and as plunder.

47 And an assembly must stone them *with* stones, and they must cut them down. With their swords they shall kill their sons and their daughters, and with fire they shall burn their houses.

48 And I will cause obscene conduct to cease from the land, and all of the women will be warned, and they will not do according to your wickedness.

49 And they will repay your obscene conduct upon you, and the guilt of your idols you will bear, and you will know that I *am* the Lord Yahweh.

Zedekiah Rebels Against Nebuchadnezzar (c. 590 BC)

| 2 Kings 24:20 | Jeremiah 52:3 | 2 Chronicles 36:13–16 |
|--|---|---|
| <p>20 For it happened because of the anger of Yahweh, in Jerusalem and in Judah, until they were cast out from his presence. Then Zedekiah rebelled against the king of Babylon.</p> | <p>3 For because of the anger of Yahweh this happened in Jerusalem and Judah until his casting them from his presence. And Zedekiah rebelled against the king of Babylon.</p> | <p>13b He [Zedekiah] stiffened his neck and hardened his heart against turning to Yahweh, the God of Israel. 14 All the leaders of the priests and the people likewise increased in unfaithfulness according to all the detestable things of the nations. And they polluted the house of Yahweh that he had consecrated in Jerusalem. 15 And Yahweh, the God of their ancestors, had repeatedly and persistently sent to them by the hand of his messengers, because he had compassion on his people and on his dwelling place. 16 But they were mocking the messengers of God and despising his words and scoffing at his prophets until the wrath of Yahweh rose against his people until there was no remedy. 13a And he also rebelled against King Nebuchadnezzar, who had made him swear by God.</p> |

Nebuchadnezzar's Third and Final Siege of Jerusalem (January 27, 589 BC)

| 2 Kings 25:1 | Jeremiah 39:1 | Jeremiah 52:4 | 2 Chronicles 36:17a |
|---|---|---|---|
| <p>1 It happened that in the ninth year of his reign, in the tenth month, on the tenth of the month, Nebuchadnezzar the king of Babylon came, he and his army, against Jerusalem. He encamped against it and built siege works against it all around.</p> | <p>1 In the ninth year of Zedekiah, the king of Judah, in the tenth month, Nebuchadnezzar the king of Babylon and all his army came against Jerusalem and laid siege to it.</p> | <p>4 And then in the ninth year of his reign, in the tenth month, on the tenth <i>day</i> of the month, Nebuchadnezzar the king of Babylon came against Jerusalem, he and all his army. And they laid siege to it, and built siege works against it all around.</p> | <p>17a Therefore he [God] brought against them the king of the Chaldeans,</p> |

Ezekiel's Prophecy to the Exiles—Jerusalem's Final Judgment (January 27, 589 BC)

Ezekiel 24

The Boiling Pot

- 1 And the word of Yahweh came to me in the ninth year, in the tenth month, on the tenth *day* of the month, saying,
 2 "Son of man, write for yourself the name of the day, this very day. The king of Babylon laid siege to Jerusalem on exactly this day!
 3 And deliver a proverb to the rebellious house, and you must say to them, 'Thus says the Lord Yahweh: "Place the pot! Place *it* and also pour water into it.
 4 Gather its pieces to it, every good piece, thigh and shoulder, fill it *with* choice bones;
 5 take the choicest of the flock, and also pile the bones under it; boil it vigorously; indeed, its bones boiled in the midst of it." "'
 6 Therefore thus says the Lord Yahweh: "Woe *to* the city of bloodguilt! A pot that *has* its rust in it; its rust did not go out from it.

Bring it out piece by piece; one is as good as another.

7 For her blood was in the midst of her; she put it on a bare rock; she *did* not pour it on the ground to cover it *with* dust.

8 To stir up rage, to avenge myself *through* vengeance, I placed its blood on *the* barrenness of a rock, so that it may not be covered.”

9 Therefore thus says the Lord Yahweh: “Woe *to* the city of bloodguilt! I, even I, will make the pile of wood great!

10 Pile up the logs; kindle the fire; finish *cooking* the meat, and mix *in* the spices, and let the bones be burned.

11 And make it stand empty upon its burning coals so that it may become hot, and its copper may become molten and be melted in the midst of it, *so that* its uncleanness and its rust be consumed.

12 *Through* effort she has caused weariness; its thick rust went not *out of* it. Its rust! Into *the* fire *with* its rust!

13 In your uncleanness *is* obscene conduct, because I cleansed you, but you were not clean from your uncleanness; you will not be clean again until I fully vent my rage on you.

14 I, Yahweh, I have spoken. *It is* coming, and I did *it*; I will not disregard, and I will not take pity, and I will not reconsider. According to your ways and according to your deeds they will judge you!” declares the Lord Yahweh.

The Death of Ezekiel’s Wife

15 And the word of Yahweh came to me, saying,

16 “Son of man, look! I *am* taking from you what is pleasing to your eyes with a plague, but you shall not mourn, and you shall not weep, and your tears shall not run down.

17 Sigh in silence *for the* dead; you shall not make a mourning ceremony. Bind your turban on you, and you must put your sandals on your feet. You must not cover your *upper* lip, and the bread of mourners you shall not eat.”

18 And I spoke to the people in the morning, and my wife died in the evening, and I did in the morning just as I was commanded.

19 And the people said to me, “Will you not make known to us what these *things* that you are doing *mean* for us?”

20 And I said to them that the word of Yahweh came to me, saying,

21 “Say to the house of Israel, ‘Thus says the Lord Yahweh: “Look! I *will be* profaning my sanctuary, the pride of your strength *and* the delight of your eyes and the object of your own affection; and your sons and your daughters whom you left behind will fall by the sword,

22 and you shall do just as I did: You shall not cover your *upper* lip, and you shall not eat *the* bread of mourners.

23 And your turban *must be* on your heads, and your sandals *must be* on your feet. You shall not mourn, and you shall not weep, but you shall waste away because of your iniquities, and you shall groan to one another.

24 And Ezekiel will be to you as a sign; everything that he did you shall do; and when it comes you will know that I *am* the Lord Yahweh.

A Fugitive Will Bring News of Jerusalem’s Fall to Ezekiel (fulfilled in Ezekiel 33:21)

25 “And you, son of man, *will it* not *be that* on the day when I take from them their stronghold, the joy of their glory, the delight of their eyes, and the longing of their inner self, their sons and daughters—

26 on that day a survivor will come to you with the news.

27 On that day your mouth shall be opened at the arrival of the fugitive, and you shall speak, and you shall not be silent *any* longer, and you shall be to them as a sign, and they will know that I *am* Yahweh.”

Ezekiel’s Prophecy to the Exiles—Concerning the Nations Around Judah (January 27, 589 BC)

Ezekiel 25

Ammon

1 And the word of Yahweh came to me, saying,

2 “Son of man, set your face toward the Ammonites and prophesy against them,

3 and you must say to the Ammonites, ‘Hear the word of the Lord Yahweh! Thus says the Lord Yahweh: “Because of your saying, ‘Ah!’ to my sanctuary when it was profaned, and to the land of Israel when it was desolate, and to the house of Judah when they went into the exile,

4 therefore look! I *am* giving you to the people of the East as a possession, and they will set up their encampments in you, and they will make in you their dwelling places; they themselves will eat your fruit and they themselves will drink your milk.

5 And I will make Rabbah as a pasture of camels and the Ammonites as a haunt of flocks, and they will know that I *am* Yahweh.” ”

6 For thus says the Lord Yahweh: “Because of clapping your hand and stamping with your foot, and *because* you rejoiced in yourself with all of your malice over the land of Israel,

7 therefore look! I stretched out my hand against you, and I will give you as plunder to the nations, and I will cut you off from the peoples, and I will destroy you from the countries, and I will wipe you out, and you will know that I *am* Yahweh.”

Moab

8 Thus says the Lord Yahweh: “Because of Moab and Seir saying, ‘The house of Judah *is* like all of the nations,’

9 therefore, look! I *am* opening the side of Moab from the cities on its frontier, *the* glory of *the* land: Beth Jeshimoth, Baal Meon,

and Kiriathaim.

10 I will give it to the people of the East in addition to the Ammonites as a possession, so that the Ammonites will not be remembered among the nations.

11 And on Moab I will execute punishments, and they will know that I *am* Yahweh.”

Edom

12 Thus says the Lord Yahweh: “Because of the doings of Edom in avenging himself *with* vengeance for the house of Judah, and so they became very guilty and they avenged themselves on them,”

13 therefore thus says the Lord Yahweh: “so I will stretch out my hand against Edom and I will cut off from it *both* human and animal, and I will make it a ruin from Teman and Dedan; they will fall by the sword.

14 And I will exact my vengeance on Edom by the hand of my people Israel, and they will do in Edom according to my anger and according to my rage, and they will know my vengeance,” declares the Lord Yahweh.

Philistia

15 Thus says the Lord Yahweh: “Because of the acting of *the* Philistines in vengeance, so that they avenged themselves relentlessly with malice in themselves for destruction with everlasting hostility,

16 therefore thus says the Lord Yahweh: ‘Look! I *am* stretching out my hand against *the* Philistines, and I will cut off the Kerethites, and I will destroy the remainder of the seacoast.

17 And I will execute on them great vengeance with punishments of rage, and they will know that I *am* Yahweh when I exact my vengeance on them!”

Zedekiah Asks Jeremiah for Help (c. February 589 BC)

Jeremiah 21

Jeremiah’s Answer to Zedekiah

1 The word that came to Jeremiah from Yahweh when King Zedekiah sent to him Pashhur, the son of Malchiah, and Zephaniah, the son of Maaseiah, the priest, saying,

2 “Please inquire of Yahweh on behalf of us, for Nebuchadnezzar the king of Babylon *is* fighting against us. Perhaps Yahweh will do with us according to all his miraculous acts, so that he may go up from against us.”

3 Then Jeremiah said to them, “Thus you shall say to Zedekiah:

4 ‘Thus says Yahweh, the God of Israel: “Look, I *am* about to turn back the weapons of war that *are* in your hands, *with* which you *are* fighting against them, the king of Babylon and the Chaldeans who are laying siege to you from outside the wall, and I will gather them into the center of this city.

5 And I myself will fight against you with outstretched hand, and with strong arm, and in anger, and in fury, and in great wrath.

6 And I will strike the inhabitants of this city, both humankind and animal; by a great plague they will die.

7 And afterward,” declares Yahweh, “I will give Zedekiah, the king of Judah, and his servants, and the people, and those who remain in this city from the plague, from the sword, and from the famine, into the hand of Nebuchadnezzar, the king of Babylon, and into the hand of their enemies, and into the hand of those who seek their lives, and he will strike them with *the* edge of *the* sword. He will not take pity on them, and he will not have compassion, nor will he show compassion.”

8 “And to this people you shall say, ‘Thus says Yahweh, “Look, I *am* setting before you the way of life and the way of death.

9 He who stays in this city will die by the sword, or by the famine, or by the plague. And he who goes out and goes over to the Chaldeans who are laying siege to you will live, and his life will be to him as booty.

10 For I have set my face against this city for evil and not for good,” declares Yahweh. It will be given into the hand of the king of Babylon, and he will burn it with fire.”

Warning to the House of David

11 “And to the house of the king of Judah, ‘Hear the word of Yahweh,

12 O house of David, thus says Yahweh,

“Execute judgment in the morning, justice,
and deliver *the* one who has been seized
from *the* hand of *the* oppressor,
lest my wrath goes forth like the fire and it burns,
and there is no *one who* quenches *it*
because of the evil of your deeds.

Warning to a Complacent City

13 Look, I *am* against you,

O inhabitants of the valley,
O rock of the plain," declares Yahweh;
"you who say, 'Who can descend against us,
or who can enter into our hiding place?'

- 14 And I will punish you
according to the fruit of your deeds," declares Yahweh,
"And I will kindle a fire in its forest,
and it will devour all its surroundings." "

Nebuchadnezzar Leaves Jerusalem to Deal with Pharaoh Hophra [Egypt] (589 BC)

Jeremiah 37:4–5

4 Now Jeremiah *was* coming and going out in the midst of the people and they had not put him *in* the house of imprisonment.
5 And the army of Pharaoh had come out from Egypt, and the Chaldeans, who were laying siege to Jerusalem, heard their report and they withdrew from Jerusalem.

Hophra's Intervention Gives Zedekiah False Hope (589 BC)

Jeremiah 37:3, 6–10

3 And king Zedekiah sent Jehucal the son of Shelemiah, and Zephaniah the son of Maaseiah, the priest, to Jeremiah the prophet, saying, "Please pray for us to Yahweh our God."
6 And the word of Yahweh came to Jeremiah the prophet, saying,
7 "Thus says Yahweh, the God of Israel, 'This is what you shall say to the king of Judah, who sent you to me to inquire *of* me, "Look, the army of Pharaoh, which set out to help you, *is* going to return to his land Egypt.
8 And the Chaldeans will return, and they will fight against this city, and they will capture it, and they will burn it with fire."
9 Thus says Yahweh: 'You must not deceive yourselves, saying, "Surely the Chaldeans will go from us," for they will not go.
10 For *even* if you struck the whole army of *the* Chaldeans who are fighting against you, and *only* men pierced through remained among them, each one in his tent, they would rise up and they would burn this city with fire.'"

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Zedekiah and the Slaves (589 BC)

Jeremiah 34

Historical Summary

1 The word that came to Jeremiah from Yahweh, when Nebuchadnezzar the king of Babylon, and all his army, with all *the* kingdoms of *the* earth *under* the dominion of his hand, and all the peoples *were* fighting against Jerusalem and against all its cities, saying,
 2 “Thus says Yahweh, the God of Israel: ‘Go and say to Zedekiah the king of Judah, now you must say to him, “Thus says Yahweh: ‘Look, I *am* going to give this city into the hand of the king of Babylon, and he will burn it with fire.
 3 And you will not escape from his hand, but surely you will be captured, and into his hand you will be given, and you will see the king of Babylon eye to eye, and you will speak face to face with him, and *to* Babylon you will go.’
 4 However, hear the word of Yahweh, *O* Zedekiah, the king of Judah. Thus says Yahweh concerning you: ‘You will not die by the sword.
 5 In peace you will die, and as *there was* burning for your ancestors, the former kings who were before you, so they will burn for you, and they will lament for you, “Alas, lord!” For *the* word I have spoken,’ declares Yahweh.” ”
 6 Then Jeremiah the prophet spoke to Zedekiah the king of Judah all these words in Jerusalem
 7 when the army of the king of Babylon *was* fighting against Jerusalem and against all the cities of Judah that were left over—Lachish and Azekah, for these remained among the cities of Judah, the cities of fortification.

A Broken Promise of Freedom for the Slaves

8 The word that came to Jeremiah from Yahweh after king Zedekiah made a covenant with all the people who *were* in Jerusalem to proclaim release to them,
 9 to let go each one his *male* slave and each one his female slave, the Hebrew and the free Hebrew, *so that* no one among the Judeans *should* enslave his fellow countryman.
 10 And all the officials and all the people obeyed, who had entered into the covenant to let go each one his *male* slave and each one his female slave, not enslaving them again, and they obeyed and they let *them* go.
 11 But afterward they turned back and they brought back the *male* slaves and the female slaves whom they had let go free, and they subdued them as *male* slaves and female slaves.

God Denounces the Broken Promise

12 And the word of Yahweh came to Jeremiah from Yahweh, saying,
 13 “Thus says Yahweh, the God of Israel: ‘I made a covenant with your ancestors on the day of my bringing them out from the land of Egypt, from *the* house of slaves, saying,
 14 “At *the* end of seven years you must let go each one his fellow countryman, the Hebrew who has been sold to you and who has served you six years, and you must let him go free from you.” [\[Exod 21:1–4; Deut 15:12–15\]](#) But your ancestors did not listen to me, and they did not incline their ears.
 15 And you turned back recently and you did right in my eyes, to proclaim release each one to his neighbor, and you made a covenant before me in the house that is called by my name.
 16 But you turned back and you profaned my name when you brought back each one his *male* slave and each one his female slave, whom you had let go free according to their desire, and you subdued them to be to you as *male* slaves and as female slaves.’

Punishment for the Broken Promise

17 “Therefore thus says Yahweh, ‘You have not listened to me to proclaim release each one to his fellow countryman and each one to his neighbor. Look, I *am* going to proclaim to you a release,’ declares Yahweh, ‘to the sword, to the plague, and to the famine, and I will make you a terror to all the kingdoms of the earth.
 18 And I will make the men who transgressed my covenant, who have not kept the words of the covenant that they made before me, *like* the calf which they cut in two and they passed between its parts—
 19 the officials of Judah, and the officials of Jerusalem, the eunuchs, and the priests, and all the people of the land who passed between the parts of the calf—
 20 and I will give them into the hand of their enemies, and into the hand of the seekers of their lives, and their dead bodies will become as food for the birds of the heavens and for the animals of the earth.
 21 And Zedekiah the king of Judah and his officials I will give into the hand of their enemies, and into the hand of the seekers of their lives, and into the hand of the army of the king of Babylon, who retreated from you.
 22 Look, I *am* going to command,’ declares Yahweh, ‘and I will bring them back to this city, and they will fight against it, and they will capture it, and they will burn it with fire, and the towns of Judah I will make a desolation without an inhabitant.’”

Jeremiah's Arrest and Imprisonment (589 BC)

Jeremiah 37:11–21

Jeremiah's Arrest

11 And then, at the withdrawing of the army of the Chaldeans from Jerusalem before the army of Pharaoh,
 12 Jeremiah set out from Jerusalem to go to the land of Benjamin to receive a portion from there in the midst of the people.
 13 And when he *was* at the Gate of Benjamin, there *was* a sentry on duty whose name *was* Irijah, the son of Shelemiah, the son of Hananiah, and he seized Jeremiah the prophet, saying, "You *are* deserting to the Chaldeans!"
 14 And Jeremiah said, "*That is* a lie! I *am* not deserting to the Chaldeans." But he would not listen to him. So Irijah seized Jeremiah and brought him to the officials.
 15 And the officials were angry at Jeremiah and they struck him. And they put him *in* prison, *in* the house of Jonathan the secretary, for they had converted it to the prison.
 16 So Jeremiah came to the dungeon, even to the vaulted cells, and Jeremiah stayed there many days.

Jeremiah's Secret Meeting with Zedekiah

17 Then King Zedekiah sent and fetched him. And the king questioned him in secrecy in his house, and he said, "Is there a word from Yahweh?" And Jeremiah said, "There is." And he said, "You will be given into the hand of the king of Babylon."
 18 Then Jeremiah said to King Zedekiah, "What did I do wrong to you, or to your servants, or to this people, that you have put me in prison?
 19 And where *are* your prophets who prophesied to you, saying, 'The king of Babylon will not come against you and against this land'?"
 20 Now then, my lord the king, please let my plea fall before you. You must not send me back to the house of Jonathan the secretary, so that I will not die there."
 21 So King Zedekiah commanded, and they handed Jeremiah over in the courtyard of the guard, and they gave to him a round loaf of bread from the street of the bakers every day until the finishing of all the bread from the city. And Jeremiah stayed in the courtyard of the guard.

The Attempt on Jeremiah's Life (589 BC)

Jeremiah 38

The Demand for Jeremiah's Punishment

1 Now Shephatiah the son of Mattan, and Gedaliah the son of Pashhur, and Jehucal the son of Shelemiah, and Pashhur the son of Malchiah heard the words that Jeremiah *was* saying to all the people, saying,
 2 "Thus says Yahweh, 'The *one who* stays in this city will die by the sword, by the famine, and by the plague. But the *one who* goes out to the Chaldeans will live. And his life will be for him as booty, and he will live.'
 3 Thus says Yahweh, 'Surely this city will be given into the hand of the army of the king of Babylon, and he will capture it.'
 4 Then the officials said to the king, "Please, this man must be killed, because he *is* making slack the hands of the soldiers who are left in this city, and the hands of all the people, by speaking to them words like these, for this man *is* not seeking for welfare to this people, but only for harm."
 5 And Zedekiah the king said, "Look, he *is* in your hand, for the king is not able to *do* a thing against you."
 6 So they took Jeremiah and threw him into the pit of Malchiah, the son of the king, which *was* in the courtyard of the guard. And they let Jeremiah down by ropes. Now in the pit there was no water, but only mud, and Jeremiah sank in the mud.

Jeremiah's Rescue by Ebed-Melech

7 When Ebed-melech the Cushite, a eunuch who *was* in the house of the king, heard that they had put Jeremiah into the pit—now the king *was* sitting at the Gate of Benjamin—
 8 Ebed-melech went out from the house of the king and spoke to the king, saying,
 9 "My lord the king, these men have done evil *in* all that they have done to Jeremiah the prophet, *in* that they have thrown *him* into the pit, and he will die there because of starvation, for there is no longer any bread in the city."
 10 Then the king commanded Ebed-melech the Cushite, saying, "Take with you these thirty men and pull Jeremiah the prophet up from the pit before he dies."
 11 So Ebed-melech took the men with him and went to the palace of the king, to a *place* beneath the storehouse, and he took from there rags and worn-out clothes. And he let them down into the pit by ropes to Jeremiah.
 12 Then Ebed-melech the Cushite said to Jeremiah, "Please put the rags and worn-out clothes under the joints of your arms under the ropes," and Jeremiah did so.
 13 And they pulled Jeremiah by the ropes and brought him up from the pit. And Jeremiah stayed in the courtyard of the guard.

A Second Secret Meeting With Zedekiah

14 And Zedekiah the king sent and made someone bring Jeremiah the prophet to him, to *the* third entrance that *was* at the temple of Yahweh. And the king said to Jeremiah, “I *am* asking you something, you must not hide anything from me.”

15 And Jeremiah said to Zedekiah, “If I tell you, will you not surely kill me? Besides, if I advise you, you will not listen to me.

16 So Zedekiah the king swore to Jeremiah in secret, saying, “As Yahweh lives, who has made for us this life, I will not kill you and I will not give you into the hand of these men who are seeking your life.”

17 Then Jeremiah said to Zedekiah, “Thus says Yahweh, the God of hosts, the God of Israel, ‘If only you will go surrender to the officials of the king of Babylon, then you will live, and this city will not be burned with fire, and you will live, you and your house.

18 But if you *do* not go surrender to the officials of the king of Babylon, then this city will be given into the hand of the Chaldeans, and they will burn it with fire, and you will not escape from their hand.’”

19 And Zedekiah the king said to Jeremiah, “I *am* afraid of the Judeans who have deserted to the Chaldeans, lest they give me into their hand and they abuse me.”

20 And Jeremiah said, “They will not give *you over*. Please obey the voice of Yahweh with regard to what I *am* saying to you, and it will go well with you, and you will live.

21 But if you *are* refusing to surrender, this *is* the thing that Yahweh has shown me.

22 Now look, all the women who remain in the house of the king of Judah *are* being led out to the officials of the king of Babylon. And look, *they are* saying,

‘Your trusted friends have misled you,
and they have prevailed against you.
Your feet are stuck in the mud,
so they turned backward.’

23 And all your wives and your children *will be* led out to the Chaldeans, and you will not escape from their hand, but by the hand of the king of Babylon you will be seized, and this city will burn with fire.”

24 And Zedekiah said to Jeremiah, “No man must know about these words so that you will not die.

25 And if the officials hear that I have spoken with you, and they come to you and say to you, ‘Please tell us what you said to the king. You must not conceal *it* from us so that we will not kill you. And what did the king say to you?’

26 Then you shall say to them, ‘I *was* presenting my plea before the king, to not cause me to return *to* the house of Jonathan to die there.’”

Jeremiah is Questioned by the Officials

27 And all the officials came to Jeremiah and questioned him, and he informed them like all these words that the king commanded. So they fell silent, for the conversation was not heard.

28 And Jeremiah stayed in the courtyard of the guard until *the* day that Jerusalem was captured.

God’s Message to Jeremiah’s Rescuer, Ebed-Melech (589 BC)

Jeremiah 39:15–18

15 And the word of Yahweh came to Jeremiah at his confinement in the courtyard of the guard, saying,

16 “Go and say to Ebed-melech the Cushite, saying, ‘Thus says Yahweh of hosts, the God of Israel: “Look, I *am* about to bring my words to pass against this city for evil and not for good. And they will be before you on that day.

17 But I will rescue you on that day,” declares Yahweh, “and you will not be given into the hand of the men of whom you are frightened.

18 For surely I will save you, and you will not fall by the sword. But your life will be for you as booty because you have trusted in me,” declares Yahweh.’”

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Ezekiel's Prophecy to the Exiles—God's Message to Egypt (January 17, 588 BC)

Ezekiel 29:1–16

The Crocodile of the Nile

1 In the tenth year, in the tenth *month*, on the twelfth *day* of the month, the word of Yahweh came to me, saying,
 2 “Son of man, set your face against Pharaoh, the king of Egypt, and prophesy against him and against Egypt, all of it.
 3 Speak, and you must say, ‘thus says the Lord Yahweh:

“Look! I am against you,
 Pharaoh, king of Egypt,
 the great sea monster,
 the *one* lying down
 in the midst of his Nile streams,
 who says to me, “*It is my Nile, and I made it for myself.*”

4 And so I will put hooks in your jawbones,
 and I will make the fish of your Nile streams stick to your scales,
 and I will bring you up from the midst of your Nile streams,
 and all of the fish of your Nile streams *which* cling to your scales.
 5 And I will fling you *to* the desert,
 you and all the fish of your Nile streams.
 On the surface of the field you will fall;
 you will not be gathered,
 and you will not be assembled.
 To the animals of the field
 and to the birds of the heavens
 I will give you as food.
 6 And all of the inhabitants of Egypt will know that I *am* Yahweh,
 because of their being a staff of reed for the house of Israel.
 7 When they took hold of you with the hand, you snapped,
 and you split their every shoulder.
 And when they leaned on you, you broke,
 and you caused all of their loins to wobble.”

Judgment on Egypt

8 Therefore thus says the Lord Yahweh: “Look! I *am* bringing on you *a* sword, and I will cut off from you human and animal.
 9 And the land of Egypt will become *a* desolation and ruins, and they will know that I *am* Yahweh because he said, ‘The Nile *is* mine!
 And I, I made *it!*’
 10 Therefore look! I *am* against you and against your Nile streams, and I will make the land of Egypt into ruins, *a* pile of rubble, *a*
 desolation from Migdol *to* Syene and up to the boundary of Cush.
 11 A foot of a human will not pass over it, and a foot of an animal will not pass over it, and so it will not be inhabited *for* forty years.
 12 And I will make the land of Egypt a desolation in the midst of desolated countries, and its cities *to be* in the midst of ruined cities.
 They will be *a* desolation *for* forty years, and I will scatter Egypt among the nations, and I will disperse them among the countries.”

Future Restoration for Egypt

13 For thus says the Lord Yahweh: “At the end of forty years I will gather Egypt from the peoples *among* whom they were scattered.
 14 And I will restore the fortunes of Egypt, and I will bring them back *to* the land of Pathros, to the land of their origin, and they will
 be a lowly kingdom there.
 15 Of *all* the kingdoms it will be *the most* lowly, and it will not exalt itself again over the nations, and I will make them small *so as* not
 to rule over the nations.
 16 And it will not be again for the house of Israel an object of trust, bringing to remembrance *their* guilt when they turned back to
 them, and they will know that I *am* the Lord Yahweh.”

Jeremiah Buys a Field (c. 588 BC)

Jeremiah 32

Synopsis of Jeremiah's Current Condition

1 The word that came to Jeremiah from Yahweh in the tenth year of Zedekiah the king of Judah, that *was* the eighteenth year of
 Nebuchadnezzar.

2 Now at that time the army of the king of Babylon *was* laying siege to Jerusalem and Jeremiah the prophet was confined in the courtyard of the guard that *was in* the palace of the king of Judah,
 3 where Zedekiah, the king of Judah, had confined him, saying, “Why *are* you prophesying, saying, ‘Thus says Yahweh, “Look, I *am* going to give this city into the hand of the king of Babylon, and he will capture it,
 4 and Zedekiah, the king of Judah, will not escape from the hand of the Chaldeans, but surely he will be given into the hand of the king of Babylon, and he will speak face to face with him and he will see him eye to eye,
 5 and *to* Babylon he will bring Zedekiah, and there he will be until my attending to him,” declares Yahweh. “If you fight against the Chaldeans, you will not be successful” ‘?”

Jeremiah Buys a Field at Anathoth from His Cousin Hanamel

6 And Jeremiah said, “The word of Yahweh came to me, saying,
 7 ‘Look, Hanamel, the son of Shallum, your uncle, *is* going to come to you, saying, “Buy for yourself my field that *is* at Anathoth, for you have the right of redemption to buy *it*.””
 8 Then Hanamel, the son of my uncle, came to me, to the courtyard of the guard according to the word of Yahweh, and he said to me, ‘Please buy my field that *is* at Anathoth, that *is* in the land of Benjamin, for to you *is* the claim of possession, and to you the redemption; buy *it* for yourself.’ Then I knew that this *was* the word of Yahweh.
 9 And I bought the field from Hanamel, the son of my uncle, that *was* at Anathoth. And I weighed out to him the money, seventeen silver shekels.
 10 And I signed on the letter and sealed *it*, and I called witnesses as witness, and I weighed out the money on a set of scales.
 11 Then I took the deed of the purchase, the sealed *copy containing* the commandments and the rules, together with the *one* that was open.
 12 And I gave the deed of the purchase to Baruch the son of Neriah, the son of Mahseiah, in the presence of Hanamel, *the son of* my uncle, and in the presence of the witnesses who signed the deed of the purchase, in the presence of the Judeans who were sitting in the courtyard of the guard.
 13 And I commanded Baruch in their presence, saying,
 14 ‘Thus says Yahweh of hosts, the God of Israel, “Take these deeds, this deed of the purchase, the sealed one, and this opened deed, and you must put them in an earthenware jar so that they may be kept preserved many days.”
 15 For thus says Yahweh of hosts, the God of Israel: “Houses and fields and vineyards will again be bought in this land.””

Jeremiah’s Prayer

16 And I prayed to Yahweh—after giving my deed of the purchase to Baruch the son of Neriah—saying,
 17 ‘Ah Lord Yahweh! Look, you made the heavens and the earth by your great power and by your outstretched arm. Nothing is too difficult for you,
 18 showing loyal love to the thousands, and repaying the guilt of parents into the laps of their children after them. Powerful, great, mighty, his name *is* Yahweh of hosts,
 19 great in counsel and great *in* deed, whose eyes *are* opened to all the ways of the children of humankind, to give to each one according to his ways and according to the fruit of his deeds,
 20 who accomplished signs and wonders in the land of Egypt, up to this day, and in Israel, and among humankind, and you have made for yourself a name, as *it is* this day.
 21 And you brought out your people Israel from the land of Egypt with signs, and with wonders, and with a strong hand, and with an arm stretched out, and with great terror.
 22 And you gave to them this land, which you swore to their ancestors to give to them, a land flowing with milk and honey.
 23 And they entered and took possession of it, but they did not listen to your voice, and they did not follow your law. They did nothing of all that you commanded to them to do, and you caused to happen *to* them all this disaster.
 24 Look, the siege ramps have come up *to* the city to capture it, and the city has been given into the hand of the Chaldeans who are fighting against it, because of the sword, the famine, and the plague, and what you spoke happened, and look, you *are* seeing *it*.
 25 Yet you have said to me, Lord Yahweh, “Buy for yourself the field with the money, and call witnesses as witness,” though the city has been given into the hand of the Chaldeans.”

God’s Answer to Jeremiah’s Prayer

26 And the word of Yahweh came to Jeremiah, saying,
 27 “Look, I *am* Yahweh, *the* God of all flesh; is anything too difficult for me?”
 28 Therefore thus says Yahweh: “Look, I *am* going to give this city into the hand of the Chaldeans, and into the hand of Nebuchadnezzar, the king of Babylon, and he will capture it.
 29 And the Chaldeans, who are fighting against this city, will come and set this city on fire, and they will burn it, and the houses where they have made smoke offerings on their roofs to Baal, and *where* they have devoted libations to other gods, in order to provoke me to anger.
 30 For the people of Israel and the people of Judah were doing only evil in my eyes from their youth, for the people of Israel *were*

only provoking me to anger by the work of their hands,” declares Yahweh.

31 “For this city has been for me *a cause* of my anger and of my wrath from the day that they built it even until this day, *so I will* remove it from my sight,

32 because of all the evil of the people of Israel and the people of Judah that they did to provoke me to anger—they, their kings, their officials, their priests, and their prophets, and the men of Judah, and the inhabitants of Jerusalem.

33 And they have turned to me *their backs* and not *their faces*, though I have taught them over and over again, but they *were* not listening to accept discipline.

34 And they set up their abominations in the house that is called by my name, to defile it.

35 And they built the high places of Baal that *are* in the Valley of Ben Hinnom to present as offerings their sons and their daughters to Molech, which I had not commanded them, and it had not come to my mind to do this detestable thing in order to cause Judah to sin.”

The Promise of Future Restoration and a New Covenant

36 “So now therefore, thus says Yahweh, the God of Israel, concerning this city, *of which you are* saying, ‘It will be given into the hand of the king of Babylon by the sword, and by the famine, and by the plague’:

37 Look, I *am* going to gather them from all the lands *to which I driven* them in my anger, and in my fury, and in great wrath, and I will bring them back to this place, and I will cause them to dwell in safety.

38 And they will be for me a people, and I will be for them God.

39 And I will give to them one heart and one way, to revere me forever, for good to them, and to their children after them.

40 And I will make with them an everlasting covenant that I will not turn away from them, my doing good *to them*, and my reverence I will put in their hearts so that *they will* not turn aside from me.

41 And I will rejoice over them to do good *to them*, and I will plant them in this land in faithfulness with all my heart, and with all my inner self.”

42 “For thus says Yahweh, ‘Just as I have brought to this people all this great disaster, so I *will* bring upon them all the good that I promise to them.

43 And the fields will be bought in this land *of which you are* saying, “It is a desolation, without humankind or animals. It has been given into the hand of the Chaldeans.”

44 They will buy fields with money, and they will sign the deeds, and they will seal *them*, and they will call witnesses as witness in the land of Benjamin, and in the surroundings of Jerusalem, and in the cities of Judah, and in the cities of the hill country, and in the cities of the Shephelah, and in the cities of the Negev, for I will restore their fortunes,’ declares Yahweh.”

Encouragement in the Guardhouse (c. 588/587 BC)

Jeremiah 33

The Rebuilding of Judah and Jerusalem

1 And the word of Yahweh came to Jeremiah *a second time* while he *was* still held back in the courtyard of the guard, saying,

2 “Thus says Yahweh who made *the earth*, Yahweh who formed it to establish it, Yahweh *is* his name:

3 ‘Call to me, and I will answer you, and I will tell you *great things* and inaccessible *things that you have not known.*’

4 For thus says Yahweh, the God of Israel, concerning the houses of this city and concerning the houses of the kings of Judah, that were torn down *to make a defense* against the siege ramps and against the sword:

5 ‘*They are* coming to fight against the Chaldeans, and to fill them with the corpses of the people whom I will strike in my anger and in my wrath, for whom I have hidden my face from this city because of all their wickedness.

6 Look, I *am* going to bring healing and health to it, and I will heal them, and I will reveal to them abundance of peace and reliability.

7 And I will restore the fortunes of Judah and the fortunes of Israel, and I will rebuild them as in the beginning.

8 And I will cleanse them from all their guilt that they sinned against me, and I will forgive all their iniquities that they sinned against me, and that they rebelled against me.

The Restoration of Joy and Thanks

9 And it will be to me a name of jubilation, a praise, and a glory before all the nations of the earth, who will hear all the good that I *will do for* them, and they will fear, and they will tremble because of all the good, and because of all the prosperity that I *will* provide for it.’

10 “Thus says Yahweh: ‘Again will be heard in this place, *of which you are* saying, “It is a waste, without people and without animals,” in the towns of Judah and in the streets of Jerusalem that are desolate, without people and without inhabitants and without animals,

The Restoration of Pastures and Flocks

11 *the* voice of jubilation, and *the* voice of joy, *the* voice of *the* bridegroom, and *the* voice of *the* bride, *the* voices of *those who* say, “Praise Yahweh of hosts, for Yahweh *is* good, for his loyal love *is* forever,” *the voices of those who* bring thank offerings *to the house*

of Yahweh, for I will restore the fortunes of the land as in the beginning,' says Yahweh.

12 Thus says Yahweh of hosts: 'Again there will be in this waste place, without people and animals, and in all its towns, pasture for shepherds allowing *their* flock to lie down.

13 In the towns of the hill country, in the towns of the Shephelah, and in the towns of the Negev, and in the land of Benjamin, and in the surroundings of Jerusalem, and in the towns of Judah, flocks will again pass under *the* hands of *the* counter,' says Yahweh.

The Restoration of the Davidic Dynasty and the Levitical Priesthood

14 'Look, days *are* coming,' declares Yahweh, 'and I will fulfill the good promise that I promised to the house of Israel and to the house of Judah.

15 In those days and in that time I will make a branch of righteousness sprout for David, and he will execute justice and righteousness in the land.

16 In those days Judah will be saved, and Jerusalem will dwell safely, and this *is* what they shall call it: "Yahweh *is* our righteousness."

17 For thus says Yahweh: 'A man who sits on the throne of the house of Israel will not be cut off for David.

18 And for the priests, a man from the Levites *who* offers burnt offerings and *who* burns grain offerings and *who* brings sacrifices will not be cut off before me forever."

19 And the word of Yahweh came to Jeremiah, saying,

20 "Thus says Yahweh: 'If you could break my covenant *with* the day, and my covenant *with* the night, so that day and night *would* not come at their time,

21 then my covenant could be broken with David my servant, from having a son who could rule on his throne, and with the Levites, the priests, my ministers.

22 As the host of heaven cannot be counted, and the sand of the sea cannot be measured, so I will make numerous the offspring of David my servant and the Levites *who* minister *to* me."

23 And the word of Yahweh came to Jeremiah, saying,

24 "Have you not seen how these people speak, saying, 'The two clans whom Yahweh chose, he has also rejected them'? Thus they spurn my people from being a nation before them *any* longer.

25 Thus says Yahweh: 'If my covenant *with* day and *with* night, *the* regulations of heaven and earth, I had not established,

26 then the offspring of Jacob and David my servant I would reject, from choosing rulers from his offspring over the offspring of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob; for I will restore their fortunes and I will have compassion on them."

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Ezekiel's Prophecy to the Exiles—Egypt's Broken Arm (April 29, 587 BC)

Ezekiel 30:20–26

20 And then in the eleventh year, in the first *month*, on the seventh *day* of the month, the word of Yahweh came to me, saying,
 21 “Son of man, the arm of Pharaoh, the king of Egypt, I have broken. And look, it has not been bound up for giving of a remedy, or for *the* placing of a splint to bind it *up* to make it strong to take hold of the sword.”
 22 Therefore thus says the Lord Yahweh: “Look! I *am* against Pharaoh, the king of Egypt, and I will break his strong arm and the broken *arm*, and I will let the sword fall from his hand.
 23 And I will scatter Egypt among the nations, and I will disperse them among the countries.
 24 And I will strengthen the arm of the king of Babylon, and I will give my sword into his hand, and I will break the arms of Pharaoh, and he will groan *with the* groaning of *the* mortally wounded before him.
 25 And I will strengthen the arm of the king of Babylon, and the arms of Pharaoh will fall. And they will know that I *am* Yahweh when I give my sword into the hand of the king of Babylon, and he will stretch it out to the land of Egypt.
 26 And I will scatter Egypt among the nations, and I will disperse them into the countries, and they will know that I *am* Yahweh.”

Ezekiel's Prophecy to the Exiles—Fall of the Great Tree (June 21, 587 BC)

Ezekiel 31

Description of the Great Tree

1 And then in the eleventh year, in the third *month*, on the first *day* of the month, the word of Yahweh came to me, saying,
 2 “Son of man, say to Pharaoh, the king of Egypt, and to his crowd,

‘To whom are you like in your greatness?

- 3 Look! Assyria *was* a cedar in Lebanon,
with beautiful branches and a forest giving shade,
 and very high,
 and its treetop *was* between *the* clouds.
 4 Waters made it great,
 the deep made it grow high;
 its rivers *were* going all around its planting area,
 and its channels it sent *out*
 to all of the trees of the field.
 5 Therefore it became tall,
with its height more than all of the trees of the field,
 and its branches became numerous,
 and its branches became long
 from its sending its shoots from abundant water.
 6 In its branches all the birds of the heaven made their nest,
 and under its branches all the animals of the field gave birth,
 and in its shadow all *the* many nations lived.
 7 And it was beautiful in its greatness,
 in the length of its branches,
 for its root *was* toward much water.
 8 Cedars in the garden of God
 could not *be* equal to it;
 fir trees could not resemble its branches,
 and plane trees were not *even* like its branches;
 any tree *even* in the garden of God
 could not resemble it in its beauty.
 9 I made it beautiful with the abundance of its branches,
 and all of the trees of Eden that *were* in the garden of God envied it.”

Fall of the Great Tree

10 Therefore thus says the Lord Yahweh: “Because it was tall in height and it set its treetop between thick clouds, and he took pride in his tallness,
 11 then I gave it into *the* hand of *the* leader of nations; he dealt thoroughly with it according to its wickedness. I drove it *out*.
 12 And strangers cut it off, *the most* ruthless of nations, and they abandoned it. On the mountains and in all *of the* valleys its branches fell, and its branches were broken in all the river channels of the land, and all the peoples of the world went out from its shadow, and they abandoned it.
 13 On its fallen trunk all the birds of the heaven *now* dwell, and all the animals of the field were on its branches.

14 *This occurred* so that all of *the trees with abundant water* will not become tall, and they will not set their treetop between *their* thick foliage, and *so that* all of the trees that are abundantly watered will not stand up to them in their tallness, for all of them, they have been given *over* to death, to *the world* below in the midst of mortals, to *the people* going down to the grave.”

15 Thus says the Lord Yahweh: “On the day of its going down to Sheol, I caused mourning; I covered over it *with* the deep, and I withheld its rivers, and many waters were restrained, and I brought gloom over it; Lebanon and all of the trees of the field, they *had* fainted because of it.

16 From the sound of its downfall I caused nations to shake when I made it go down to Sheol, with *the people* going down to *the* grave, and *so in the world* below all of the trees of Eden, *the* choice and the best of Lebanon, all the well-watered trees were comforted!

17 They also went down with it to Sheol to those who died by the sword, and its army *who had* lived in its shadow in the midst of nations.

18 To whom could you be compared, whether in glory or in majesty among the trees of Eden? And yet you will be brought down with the trees of Eden to *the world* below; in the midst of *the* uncircumcised you will lie with those who died by the sword. That is Pharaoh and his entire crowd!” declares the Lord Yahweh.

The Fall of Jerusalem (July 29, 587 BC)

| 2 Kings 25:2–7 | Jeremiah 38:28b; 39:2–7 | Jeremiah 52:5–11 | 2 Chronicles 36:17b |
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| <p>2 So the city came under siege until the eleventh year of the king.</p> <p>3 In the ninth [<i>day of the</i>] month the famine became severe in the city, and there was no food for the people of the land.</p> <p>4 Then the city was breached,</p> | <p>38:28b And it happened that Jerusalem was captured.</p> <p>39:2 In the eleventh year of Zedekiah, in the fourth month, on <i>the ninth day</i> of the month,</p> <p>the city was taken by assault.</p> <p>3 And all the officials of the king of Babylon came and sat in the Middle Gate: Nergal-sharezer, Samgar-nebo, Sarsechim <i>the</i> chief officer, Nergal-sharezer <i>the</i> high official, with all the rest of the officials of the king of Babylon.</p> <p>4 And then when Zedekiah the king of Judah saw them, and all the soldiers <i>with him</i>, they fled and went out <i>at night</i> from the city <i>by the way of the garden of the king</i> through <i>the gate</i> between the walls.</p> <p>And they went out toward the Jordan Valley.</p> <p>5 But the army of <i>the</i></p> | <p>5 So the city came under siege until <i>the</i> eleventh year of King Zedekiah.</p> <p>6 In the fourth month, on <i>the ninth day</i> of the month, the famine in the city became severe and there was no food for the people of the land.</p> <p>7 Then the city was breached,</p> <p>and all the soldiers fled and went out from the city <i>by night by the way of the gate</i> between the two walls that <i>are</i> at the garden of the king, though <i>the</i> Chaldeans <i>were</i> all around the city.</p> <p>And they went <i>in</i> the direction of the Jordan Valley.</p> <p>8 But the army of <i>the</i></p> | <p>17b and he killed their young men with the sword in the house of their sanctuary. He showed no mercy on a young man, a virgin, <i>the</i> elderly, or decrepit. He delivered all into his hand.</p> |
| <p>and all of the men of war <i>entered</i></p> <p>by night by way of the gate between the wall which was by the garden of the king, and the Chaldeans <i>were</i> against the city all around, so he left by the way of the Arabah.</p> <p>5 But the army of the</p> | <p>the king of Judah saw them, and all the soldiers <i>with him</i>, they fled and went out <i>at night</i> from the city <i>by the way of the garden of the king</i> through <i>the gate</i> between the walls.</p> <p>And they went out toward the Jordan Valley.</p> <p>5 But the army of <i>the</i></p> | <p>and all the soldiers fled and went out from the city <i>by night by the way of the gate</i> between the two walls that <i>are</i> at the garden of the king, though <i>the</i> Chaldeans <i>were</i> all around the city.</p> <p>And they went <i>in</i> the direction of the Jordan Valley.</p> <p>8 But the army of <i>the</i></p> | <p>17b and he killed their young men with the sword in the house of their sanctuary. He showed no mercy on a young man, a virgin, <i>the</i> elderly, or decrepit. He delivered all into his hand.</p> |

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| <p>Chaldeans pursued the king, and they overtook him in the Arabah of Jericho, and all of his army scattered from him.</p> <p>6 So they captured the king and brought him up to the king of Babylon at Riblah, and they passed sentence on him.</p> <p>7 They slaughtered the sons of Zedekiah before his eyes;</p> <p>then they blinded the eyes of Zedekiah and bound him in bronze fetters</p> <p>and brought him to Babylon.</p> | <p>Chaldeans pursued after them and overtook Zedekiah in the plains of Jericho.</p> <p>And they took him and brought him up to Nebuchadnezzar the king of Babylon at Riblah in the land of Hamath. And he pronounced sentence on him.</p> <p>6 And the king of Babylon slaughtered the sons of Zedekiah at Riblah before his eyes. The king of Babylon also slaughtered all the nobles of Judah.</p> <p>7 Then he blinded the eyes of Zedekiah and tied him up with bronze fetters</p> <p>to bring him to Babylon.</p> | <p>Chaldeans pursued after the king and they overtook Zedekiah in the plains of Jericho, and all his army was scattered from him.</p> <p>9 Then they captured the king and brought him up to the king of Babylon at Riblah in the land of Hamath, and he passed sentence on him.</p> <p>10 And the king of Babylon slaughtered the sons of Zedekiah before his eyes, and he also slaughtered all the officials of Judah at Riblah.</p> <p>11 Then he made blind the eyes of Zedekiah, and they tied him up with bronze fetters, and the king of Babylon brought him to Babylon. And he put him in prison until the day of his death.</p> | |
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Nebuzaradan Oversees the Pillaging and Destruction of Jerusalem (August 25–28, 587 BC)

| 2 Kings 25:8–10, 13–17 | Jeremiah 39:8 | Jeremiah 52:12–14, 17–23 | 2 Chronicles 36:18–19 |
|--|---------------|---|---|
| <p>8 In the fifth month, on the seventh of the month, that is, the nineteenth year of King Nebuchadnezzar the king of Babylon, Nebuzaradan, a commander of the imperial guard, a servant of the king of Babylon, came to Jerusalem.</p> <p>13 The bronze pillars which were in the temple of Yahweh, the water carts, and the bronze sea that was in the temple of Yahweh, the Chaldeans broke into pieces and carried their bronze to Babylon.</p> <p>14 The pots, the shovels, the snuffers, the dishes, and the vessels of bronze</p> | | <p>12 Now in the fifth month, on the tenth day of the month, which was the nineteenth year of King Nebuchadnezzar the king of Babylon, Nebuzaradan the captain of the guard, who stood before the king of Babylon, entered into Jerusalem.</p> <p>17 And the Chaldeans broke the pillars of bronze that were in the temple of Yahweh, and the kettle stands and the sea of bronze that were in the temple of Yahweh, and they carried all their bronze to Babylon.</p> <p>18 And they took with them the pots, and the shovels, and the snuffers, and the sprinkling bowls, and the pans, and all the vessels of bronze</p> | <p>18 And all the vessels of the house of God, the great and the small, the storehouses of the house of Yahweh, and the storehouses of the king and his princes, these all he brought to Babylon.</p> |

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| <p>with which they served there, they took. 15 The firepans and the basins, whatever was gold, the commander of the imperial guard took <i>for</i> the gold and whatever was silver, <i>for</i> the silver.</p> <p>16 The two pillars, the one sea, and the water cart</p> <p>which Solomon had made for the temple of Yahweh, there was no weighing to the bronze of all of these vessels.</p> <p>17 The height of the one pillar <i>was</i> eighteen cubits;</p> <p>a bronze capital was on it, with the height of the capital <i>being</i> three cubits. The latticework and pomegranates on the capital all around were bronze, and likewise on the latticework for the second pillar.</p> | | <p>which <i>were used in temple</i> service. 19 And <i>the</i> captain of <i>the</i> guard <i>took</i> the bowls, and the firepans, and the sprinkling bowls, and the pots, and the lampstands, and the pans, and the libation bowls, those made of solid gold and those made of solid silver. 20 The two pillars, the one sea, and the twelve bronze oxen that <i>were</i> under the kettle stands which King Solomon had made for the temple of Yahweh— there was not a weight for the bronze of all these vessels! 21 Now the pillars, <i>the</i> height of one pillar <i>was</i> eighteen cubits, and a thread of twelve cubits surrounded it, and its thickness <i>was</i> four fingers, hollowed out. 22 And a capital upon it <i>was</i> bronze and the height of the one capital <i>was</i> five cubits, and latticework and pomegranates <i>were</i> on the capital on all sides, all <i>of</i> bronze. And like these <i>was</i> the second pillar with pomegranates. 23 And there were ninety-six pomegranates on the sides; all the pomegranates on the latticework on all sides <i>were</i> a hundred.</p> | |
| <p>9 He burned the temple of Yahweh, the palace of the king, and all of the houses of Jerusalem; every large house he burned with fire.</p> <p>10 He and all the army of <i>the</i> Chaldeans who <i>were with</i> the imperial guard tore down the wall of Jerusalem all around.</p> | <p>8 And the Chaldeans burned the palace of the king and the houses of the people with fire</p> <p>and broke down the walls of Jerusalem.</p> | <p>13 And he burned the temple of Yahweh, and the palace of the king, and all the houses of Jerusalem, even every great house he burned with fire.</p> <p>14 And all the army of <i>the</i> Chaldeans who <i>were with the</i> captain of <i>the</i> guard broke down all the walls of Jerusalem all around.</p> | <p>19a And they burned the house of God.</p> <p>19c and burned its citadels with fire and destroyed all the vessels of its treasuries. 19b And they shattered the walls of Jerusalem</p> |

Jerusalem's Leaders Executed and the City Exiled to Babylon (August 25–28, 587 BC)

| 2 Kings 25:11–12, 18–21 | Jeremiah 39:9–10 | Jer 52:15–16, 24–28a, 29 | 2 Chronicles 36:20a |
|--|------------------|---|---------------------|
| 18 Then the commander of the imperial guard took Seraiah | | 24 Then <i>the</i> captain of <i>the</i> guard took Seraiah | |

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| <p>the chief priest, Zephaniah the second priest, and three of the threshold keepers. 19 From the city he took one court official who <i>was</i> chief officer over the men of war, five men from the king’s council who were found in the city, the secretary of the commander of the army who mustered the people of the land, and sixty men from the people of the land being found in the city. 20 Nebuzaradan commander of the imperial guard took them and brought them to the king of Babylon at Riblah. 21a Then the king of Babylon struck them down and killed them at Riblah in the land of Hamath; 11 The remainder of the people left in the city, the deserters who had deserted to the king of Babylon, and the remainder of the multitude, Nebuzaradan the commander of the imperial guard deported. 12 But the poor of the land the commander of the imperial guard left for the vineyards and for tilling. 21b thus Judah was removed from its land.</p> | <p>9 Then the rest of the people who were left in the city, and those deserting who had deserted to him, and the rest of the people who remained, Nebuzaradan, <i>the</i> captain of <i>the</i> guard, deported <i>to</i> Babylon. 10 And some of the poor people, who had nothing, Nebuzaradan, <i>the</i> captain of <i>the</i> guard, left in the land of Judah. And he gave them vineyards and fields on that day.</p> | <p>the chief priest, and Zephaniah the second priest, and three keepers of the threshold. 25 And from the city he took one high official who was chief officer over the soldiers, and seven men of the king’s advisors who were found in the city, and the secretary of the commander of the army who levied for military service the people of the land, and sixty men of the people of the land who were found in the midst of the city. 26 Then Nebuzaradan <i>the</i> captain of <i>the</i> guard took them and brought them to the king of Babylon <i>at</i> Riblah. 27a And the king of Babylon struck them down and killed them at Riblah in the land of Hamath. 15 And Nebuzaradan <i>the</i> captain of <i>the</i> guard deported <i>some</i> of the poor of the people, and the rest of the people who were left in the city, and the deserters who deserted to the king of Babylon, along with the rest of the craftsmen. 16 But Nebuzaradan <i>the</i> captain of <i>the</i> guard left <i>some</i> of the poor of the land <i>to serve</i> as vinedressers and farmers. 27b So Judah left from its land. 28a <i>This is the number of</i> the people whom Nebuchadnezzar deported: 29 in <i>the</i> eighteenth year of Nebuchadnezzar, eight hundred and thirty-two persons from Jerusalem;</p> | <p>20a And he took those who escaped the sword to Babylon.</p> |
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Chronological Notes

- 1) For the calculation of the date of the fall of Jerusalem, see the following definitive paper: Rodger C. Young, “When Did Jerusalem Fall?” *JETS* 47.1 (Mar 2004): 21–38.

- 2) From that article, the following paragraphs are important to understand today's reading: "The writings of Jeremiah end with chapter 51 (Jer 51:64), so his methods of dating are not automatically applicable to the contents of chapter 52. The contents of that chapter, except for verses 28 through 30, are all parallel to passages in the last two chapters of 2 Kings, so the methods already determined for these chapters in 2 Kings (Tishri, non-accession reckoning) can be applied to the corresponding verses in Jeremiah 52. Verses 28 through 30 are independent of the Book of Kings and are interesting enough to require special consideration. Jer 52:28–30 gives the number of captives taken by Nebuchadnezzar in his seventh, eighteenth, and twenty-third years. There is one thing certain about the counting of captives—the captives themselves are in no position to do it. Every king and pharaoh must have had an official assigned to this task, so that the number of those vanquished could be recorded on a stela or in the annals glorifying the king's exploits. Thus the list of captives in Jer 52:28–30 could not have originated in a Judean record—it came from the official records of Nebuchadnezzar. The years of the monarch would therefore be the Nisan, accession years used in Babylon. This is an independent verification of the use of non-accession years when Jeremiah and the author of the last two chapters of 2 Kings referred to Nebuchadnezzar: the seventh (accession) year of Jer 52:28 corresponds to the eighth (non-accession) year of 2 Kgs 24:12, and the eighteenth (accession) year of Jer 52:29 corresponds to the nineteenth (non-accession) year of 2 Kgs 25:8. These are not mistakes, as some have assumed. They are a valuable clue that the synchronisms to Nebuchadnezzar in 2 Kings were to be taken in a non-accession sense, and this conclusion could have been reached from these texts alone without going through the more thorough analysis of the present article" (p. 36).

Gedaliah Appointed Governor of Judah (c. September 587 BC)

2 Kings 25:22

22 Now *as far as* the people left in Judah whom Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon left behind, he appointed Gedaliah the son of Ahikam the son of Shaphan over them.

Jeremiah's Release (c. September 587 BC)

Jeremiah 39:11–14; 40:1–6

Jeremiah Released at Nebuchadnezzar's Personal Command

39:11 And Nebuchadnezzar the king of Babylon commanded concerning Jeremiah through Nebuzaradan, *the* captain of *the* guard, saying,

12 "Take him and set your eyes on him. And you must not do something bad to him, but only that which he speaks to you, so do with him."

13 So Nebuzaradan, *the* captain of *the* guard, sent *word*, along with Nebushazban *the* chief officer, and Nergal-sharezer *the* high official, and all the chief officers of the king of Babylon.

14a And they sent and took Jeremiah from the courtyard of the guard and gave him to Gedaliah the son of Ahikam, the son of Shaphan, to take him to the house,

Jeremiah Mingles With the Deportees and Ends Up Being Taken With Them to Ramah

14b so he stayed in the midst of the people.

40:1 The word that came to Jeremiah from Yahweh after Nebuzaradan, *the* captain of *the* guard, had let him go from Ramah, where he had been taken bound in chains in the midst of all the exiles of Jerusalem and Judah who were being deported *to* Babylon.

Nebuzaradan Personally Oversees Jeremiah's Release

2 And *the* captain of *the* guard took Jeremiah and said to him, "Yahweh your God threatened this disaster to this place, 3 and *now* he has brought *it about*, and Yahweh has done just as he threatened. Because you sinned against Yahweh and did not listen to his voice, so this thing *has* happened to you.

4 And so then look, I have released you today from the chains that *were* on your hands. If it is good in your eyes to come with me *to* Babylon, *then* come, and I will take care of you. But if it is bad in your eyes to come with me *to* Babylon, *then* refrain. Look, the whole land *is* before you. *To wherever it is* good and right in your eyes to go, *then* go there."

5 While he still had not turned back, *Nebuzaradan* added, "Return to Gedaliah the son of Ahikam, the son of Shaphan, whom the king of Babylon has appointed *in an official position* over the towns of Judah, and stay with him in the midst of the people. Or *to wherever it is* right in your eyes to go, *then* go there." Then *the* captain of *the* guard gave him an allowance of provisions and a present, and let him go.

6 So Jeremiah went to Gedaliah the son of Ahikam, *at* Mizpah and stayed with him in the midst of the people who were left in the land.

Arise, O God, Defend Your Cause (c. September 587 BC)

Psalm 74

A maskil of Asaph.

- 1 Why, O God, have you rejected *us* forever?
Why does your anger smoke
against the sheep of your pasture?
- 2 Remember your congregation *that* you bought long ago,
when you redeemed the tribe of your inheritance.
Remember Mount Zion where you have dwelt.
- 3 Lift your steps to the perpetual ruins,
to all that the enemy has ruined in the sanctuary.
- 4 Your enemies have roared in the midst of your meeting place;
they have set up their signs *for* signs.
- 5 They are known *to be* like *those who* wield
axes in a thicket of trees.
- 6 And now its carved works altogether
they have smashed with axe and hammer.
- 7 They have set fire to your sanctuary.
They have defiled to the ground,

- the dwelling place for your name.
- 8 They have said in their heart,
“We will completely oppress them.”
They burned all the meeting places of God in the land.
- 9 We do not see our signs,
and there is no longer a prophet.
No one with us knows how long.
- 10 How long, O God, will *the* adversary taunt?
Will *the* enemy treat your name with contempt forever?
- 11 Why do you draw back your hand, even your right hand?
Take it from your bosom; destroy *them!*
- 12 But God *has been* my king from long ago,
working salvation in the midst of the earth.
- 13 You split open *the* sea by your strength;
You broke *the* heads of *the* sea monsters in the waters.
- 14 You crushed the heads of Leviathan;
you gave him *as* food to *the* desert dwelling creatures.
- 15 You split open spring and wadi.
You dried up ever-flowing rivers.
- 16 Yours *is the* day, yours *is the* night also.
You established light and *the* sun.
- 17 You defined all *the* boundaries of *the* earth;
Summer and winter—you formed them.
- 18 O Yahweh, remember this: *the* enemy taunts,
and foolish people treat your name with contempt.
- 19 Do not give to beasts the life of your dove;
do not ever forget the life of your afflicted ones.
- 20 Have regard for the covenant,
because *the* dark places of *the* land are full of
the haunts of violence.
- 21 Do not let *the* oppressed turn back humiliated;
let *the* poor and needy praise your name.
- 22 Rise up, O God, plead your cause;
remember the reproaching of you by *the* foolish all day long.
- 23 Do not forget the sound of your adversaries,
the roar of those rising up against you ascending continually.

How Long, O Lord? (c. September 587 BC)

Psalm 79

A psalm of Asaph.

- 1 O God, *the* nations have entered your inheritance;
they have defiled your holy temple;
they have reduced Jerusalem to ruins.
- 2 They have given the bodies of your servants
as food for the birds of the heavens,
the flesh of your faithful to *the* beasts of *the* earth.
- 3 They have poured out their blood like water
all around Jerusalem,
and there was none to bury *them*.
- 4 We have become a taunt to our neighbors,
a derision and a scorn to those around us.
- 5 How long, O Yahweh? Will you be angry forever?
Will your jealousy burn like fire?
- 6 Pour out your anger on the nations
that do not know you,
and on *the* kingdoms
that do not call on your name,

- 7 because they have devoured Jacob
and have laid waste his habitation.
- 8 Do not remember against us former iniquities;
let your mercies meet us quickly
because we are brought very low.
- 9 Help us, O God of our salvation,
for the glory of your name;
and deliver us and forgive our sins
for the sake of your name.
- 10 Why should the nations say,
“Where *is* their God?”
Let it be known among the nations before our eyes,
by the avenging of the blood of your servants
that was poured out.
- 11 Let the groaning of the prisoner come before you.
According to the greatness of your power,
spare *the* children *appointed to* death.
- 12 And return to our neighbors sevenfold upon them
their taunts *with* which they taunted you, O Lord.
- 13 Then we, your people and the flock of your pasture,
we will give thanks to you forever.
Generation after generation
we will tell of your praise.

How Shall We Sing the Lord’s Song? (c. September 587 BC)

Psalm 137

- 1 By the rivers of Babylon,
there we sat, yes, we wept,
when we remembered Zion.
- 2 On *the* willows in her midst,
we hung up our lyres.
- 3 For there our captors asked of us
words of a song,
and our tormentors *asked of us* jubilation,
“Sing for us from a song of Zion.”
- 4 How could we sing the song of Yahweh
in a foreign land?
- 5 If I forget you, O Jerusalem,
let my right hand forget.
- 6 Let my tongue cling to the roof of my mouth,
if I do not remember you,
if do not I exalt Jerusalem
above my highest joy.
- 7 Remember, O Yahweh, against the sons of Edom
the day of Jerusalem,
the ones who said, “Lay *it* bare! Lay *it* bare
to its foundation!”
- 8 O daughter of Babylon, about to be devastated,
happy *shall be he* who pays back to you
what you paid out to us.
- 9 Happy *shall be he* who seizes
and smashes your children
against the rock.

A Lament for Jerusalem – Part 1 (c. September 587 BC)

Lamentations 1–2

The Prophet Speaks:*Aleph*

1:1 How desolate the city sits
that was full of people!
She has become like a widow,
once great among the nations!
Like a woman of nobility in the provinces,
she has become a forced laborer.

Beth

2 She weeps bitterly in the night,
her tears *are* on her cheeks;
she has no comforter
among all her lovers.
All her friends have been unfaithful to her;
they have become her enemies.

Gimel

3 Judah has gone into exile with misery
and under hard servitude;
she lives among the nations,
she has not found a resting place;
all her pursuers have overtaken her
amidst *her* distress.

Daleth

4 The roads of Zion *are* mourning
because no one comes to the festival.
All her gates *are* desolate,
her priests groan;
her young women *are* worried,
and she herself suffers bitterly.

He

5 Her foes have become *her* master,
her enemies are at ease;
Yahweh has made her suffer
because of the greatness of her transgressions.
Her children have gone away,
captive before the foe.

Waw

6 All her majesty has gone away
from the daughter of Zion;
her princes have become like young stags
that have not found pasture;
they have gone away without strength,
before the pursuer.

Zayin

7 Jerusalem remembers
the days of her misery and wanderings,
all her treasures
that were from the days of long ago.
When her people fell into *the* hand of the enemy,
there was no one helping her;

the enemies saw her, they mocked
at her destruction.

Heth

8 Jerusalem sinned grievously,
thus she became an objection of derision;
all those who honored her despise her
because they have seen her nakedness.
She herself groans
and turns away.

Teth

9 Her uncleanness *was* in her skirts;
she did not remember her future,
she has descended beyond understanding,
there is no comforter for her.
See, O Yahweh, my persecution!
My enemy has been made great!

Yod

10 The enemy has stretched out his hand
over all her treasures;
for she has seen the nations,
they entered her sanctuary,
those whom you commanded not to enter
in your assembly.

Kaph

11 All her people groan,
they are searching for bread.
They give their treasures for food,
to bring back life.

Jerusalem Speaks:

See, O Yahweh, and look,
how I am despised.

Lamed

12 Is it nothing to you, all who pass by?
Look and see
if there is sorrow like my sorrow,
which was dealt to me,
which Yahweh inflicted
on the day of his wrath.

Mem

13 From heaven he sent fire,
into my bones he let it descend.
He spread out a net for my feet;
he turned me back,
he gave me devastation,
fainting all day.

Nun

14 My rebellion was bound *as* a yoke,
with his hand it was fastened together;
it was put on my neck
and caused my strength to fail.

The Lord gave me into the hands
of those whom I cannot withstand.

Samech

15 The Lord has rejected
all my mighty ones in my midst.
He called an assembly against me,
to crush my young men;
like in a wine press,
the Lord has trodden *on*
the virgin daughter of Judah.

Ayin

16 For these *things*, I am weeping,
my eyes flow with tears;
because a comforter is far from me,
one to restore my life.
My sons are desolate
because *the* enemy has prevailed.

The Prophet Speaks:

Pe

17 Zion stretches out her hands;
there is no one to comfort her.
Yahweh has commanded against Jacob,
that those surrounding him *should be* his enemies;
Jerusalem has become
a defilement among them.

Jerusalem Speaks:

Tsade

18 Yahweh is righteous;
I have rebelled *against* his word.
Please hear, all *the* nations,
And see my pain;
My young women and young men
went into captivity.

Qoph

19 I have called to my lovers,
they themselves deceived me;
my priests and elders perished in the city
when they sought food for themselves
to revive their life.

Resh

20 See, O Yahweh, that I am in distress;
my stomach is in torment,
my heart has turned inside me
because I have certainly rebelled.
From outside a sword brings bereavement,
inside the house *it is* like death.

Shin

21 They hear that I was groaning;
there is no comforter for me.
All my enemies have heard my misery,
they are pleased that you have done it.

Bring *that* day that you have proclaimed,
And let them be like me.

Taw

22 Let all their evil come before you;
and deal with them
just as you have dealt with me
because of all my crimes;
for my groaning is much and my heart *is* faint.

The Prophet Speaks:

Aleph

2:1 How, in his anger,
the Lord has covered the daughter of Zion in a cloud!
He has thrown down from heavens *to* earth
the splendor of Israel,
and he has not remembered his footstool
in the day of his anger.

Beth

2 The Lord has devoured; he has not shown mercy
to all the dwellings of Jacob;
he has broken down in his wrath
the fortifications of the daughter of Judah;
he has leveled to the ground, he has dishonored
the kingdom and its commanders.

Gimel

3 He has cut down in fierce anger
all the might of Israel;
he has withdrawn his right hand
from the faces of *the* enemy,
and he has burned in Jacob like a flaming fire,
it has consumed all around.

Daleth

4 He has bent his bow like an enemy;
he has set his right hand
like a foe, and he has slain
all *the* treasures of *the* eye;
in the tent of the daughter of Zion,
he has poured out his anger like fire.

He

5 The Lord has become like an enemy;
he has destroyed Israel;
he has destroyed all its citadel fortresses;
he has ruined all its fortifications
and multiplied lamentation and mourning
in the daughter of Judah.

Waw

6 He has broken down his dwelling place like the garden;
he has ruined his appointed feasts;
Yahweh has made *them* forget in Zion
festival and Sabbath,
and he has despised in his anger
king and priest.

Zayin

7 The Lord has rejected his altar;
he has rejected his sanctuary;
he has delivered into the hands of the enemy
the walls of its citadel fortresses.
They have cried out in the house of Yahweh
like a day of an appointed feast.

Heth

8 Yahweh has planned to destroy
the wall of the daughter of Zion.
He measured *with* a line; he has not restrained
his hand from destroying;
he caused rampart and wall to mourn;
together they have languished away.

Teth

9 Her gates have sunk into the earth;
he has ruined and broken her bars,
her kings and its princes *are* among the nations;
there is no more law.
Also, her prophets have not found
a revelation from Yahweh.

Yod

10 They sit on the ground,
the elders of the daughter of Zion are silent.
They cast dust on their head,
they have put on sackcloth;
the young women of Jerusalem
have bowed their head down to the ground.

Kaph

11 My eyes have spent all their tears;
my stomach is in torment,
my heart is poured out on the earth
because of the destruction of the daughter of my people,
because child and babe faint
in *the* public squares of a city.

Lamed

12 To their mothers they say,
“Where is the bread and wine?”
as they faint like the wounded
in *the* public squares of a city,
as their life is being poured out
onto the bosom of their mothers.

Mem

13 What can I say for you? What can I compare to you,
O daughter of Jerusalem?
To what can I liken you so that I can comfort you,
O virgin daughter of Zion?
For your destruction *is* as vast as the sea;
who can heal you?

Nun

14 Your prophets had a vision for you,

false and worthless;
they have not exposed your sin,
to restore your fortune;
they have seen oracles for you,
false and misleading.

Samech

15 They clap hands over you,
all who pass along the way;
they hiss and they shake their head,
at the daughter of Jerusalem.
Is this the city of which it is said,
“A perfection of beauty, a joy for all the earth?”

Pe

16 They have opened their mouths against you,
all your enemies.
They hiss and gnash a tooth,
and they say, “We have destroyed *her*!
Surely this *is* the day we have hoped for;
we have found *it*, we have seen *it*!”

Ayin

17 Yahweh has done what he has planned;
he has fulfilled his promise
that he ordained from the days of old;
he has demolished and not shown mercy;
he has made an enemy rejoice over you,
he has exalted the might of your foes.

Tsade

18 Their heart cried to the Lord,
“O wall of the daughter of Zion,
let tears stream down like a river;
day and night,
do not give yourself relief,
do not give your eyes rest.

Qoph

19 “Arise, cry out in the night,
at the beginning of the night watches;
pour out your heart like water,
before the face of the Lord.
Lift to him your hands,
for the life of your children,
who faint in starvation,
at the head of all streets.”

Jerusalem Speaks:*Resh*

20 See, Yahweh, and take note!
With whom have you dealt thus?
Should women eat their young
children of tender care?
Should priest and prophet be slain
in the sanctuary of the Lord?

Shin

21 They lie in *the* soil of *the* streets,
young and old;
my young women and young men,
they have fallen by the sword;
you have slain on the day of your anger,
you have slaughtered and not shown mercy.

Taw

22 You have summoned my horror from all around,
as if for a feast day;
no one on the day of Yahweh's anger
is a fugitive and a survivor;
whoever I have cared for and reared,
my enemy has destroyed.

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A Lament for Jerusalem – Part 2 (c. September 587 BC)

Lamentations 3

The Prophet Speaks:*Aleph*

- 1 I am a man who has seen misery,
under the rod of his wrath.
- 2 He has driven me along, he brought
darkness and not light.
- 3 Surely he has turned his hand against me,
all day long.

Beth

- 4 He has worn out my flesh and skin,
he has broken my bones.
- 5 He has besieged and engulfed me
with bitterness and hardship.
- 6 In darkness he has let me dwell
like *the* dead of long ago.

Gimel

- 7 He has built a wall around me, I cannot go out;
he has made my bronze fetters heavy.
- 8 Though I cry out for help,
he shuts out my prayers.
- 9 He has blocked my ways with dressed stones;
he has made my paths crooked.

Daleth

- 10 To me he *is* like a bear lying in wait,
a lion in hiding.
- 11 He has forsaken my way and torn me to pieces;
he has caused me desolation.
- 12 He has bent his bow and set me
as the target for the arrow.

He

- 13 He shot the arrows of his quiver
into my kidneys.
- 14 I have become a laughingstock for all the people,
their mocking song all day long.
- 15 He has filled me with bitterness,
he has drenched me *with* wormwood.

Waw

- 16 He has broken my teeth on grit,
he has trampled me down in ash.
- 17 My life has been removed from peace,
I have forgotten goodness.
- 18 And I have said, "My glory is ruined,
my expectation from Yahweh."

Zayin

- 19 Remember my misery and bitterness,
the wormwood and venom!
- 20 Surely my soul remembers
and bows down within me.
- 21 This I have reminded myself,
therefore I will hope.

Heth

- 22 The loyal love of Yahweh does not cease;

his compassions do not come to an end.

23 *They* are new in the morning,
great is your faithfulness.

24 “Yahweh is my portion,”
says my soul,
“Thus I will hope on him.”

Teth

25 Yahweh is good to those who wait on him,
to the person that seeks him.

26 *It is* good to wait in silence
for the salvation of Yahweh.

27 *It is* good for a man who carries
the yoke of his childhood.

Yod

28 Let him sit alone and be silent
when he has laid it on him.

29 Let him put his mouth in the dust;
perhaps there is hope.

30 Let him give a cheek to his smiter,
let him be filled with disgrace.

Kaph

31 For the Lord will not reject
forever.

32 For even though he causes grief he has compassion
according to the greatness of his royal love.

33 He does not afflict willingly,
or grieve anyone.

Lamed

34 To crush under his feet
all *the* prisoners of *the* earth;
35 to deprive one of justice
before the face of the Most High;
36 to subvert a person in a legal dispute—
the Lord has not found delight *in these things*.

Mem

37 Who can speak and it will happen
if the Lord has not commanded *it*?

38 *Is* it not from the mouth of the Most High
that disaster and good will come?

39 Why should any living person complain
about his sin?

Nun

40 Let us test and examine our ways;
let us return to Yahweh.

41 Let us lift up our hearts with our hands
to God in the heavens.

42 We ourselves have transgressed and rebelled,
you have not forgiven.

Samech

43 You have covered *yourself* in anger and pursued us,
you have slain and not shown mercy.

44 You have covered yourself in a cloud
so that prayer cannot pass through.

45 You have made us scum and refuse
in the midst of the nations.

Pe

46 All our enemies
have opened their mouth against us.
47 Fear and a pit have come upon us,
desolation and destruction.
48 Channels of water run down my eyes
because of the destruction of the daughter of my people.

Ayin

49 My eyes have poured down unceasingly
without respite,
50 until Yahweh looks down
and sees from heaven.
51 My eyes inflict my soul
because of all the daughters of my city.

Tsade

52 My enemies hunt me without cause,
like a bird.
53 They have silenced me in a pit,
they have thrown a stone at me.
54 Water has flown over my head,
I said, "I am cut off."

Qoph

55 I have called your name, O Yahweh,
from the depths of the pit.
56 You have heard my cry, "Do not shut your ear
to my cry for help, for my relief!"
57 You came near on a day *when* I called you,
you said, "Do not fear!"

Resh

58 O Lord, you have pleaded for my cause,
you have redeemed my life.
59 You have seen my injustice, O Yahweh;
judge my case.
60 You have seen all their vengeance,
all there plans against me.

Shin

61 You have heard their disgrace, O Yahweh,
all their plans against me.
62 The lips and meditation of my assailants
are against me all day long.
63 Look at their sitting and their standing,
I *am* their mocking song.

Taw

64 Return to them what is deserved, O Yahweh,
according to the work of their hands.
65 Give them a stubborn heart;
curse them!
66 Pursue them in anger and destroy them
from under the heavens of Yahweh.