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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)**

August 1	<input type="checkbox"/> Bible Reading	<input type="checkbox"/> Prayer
August 2	<input type="checkbox"/> Bible Reading	<input type="checkbox"/> Prayer
August 3	<input type="checkbox"/> Bible Reading	<input type="checkbox"/> Prayer
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Habakkuk's Prophecy to Judah—The Rise of the Chaldeans [Babylonians] (c. 650 BC)

Habakkuk 1–3

1:1 The oracle which Habakkuk the prophet saw.

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

- 2 How long, O LORD, will I call for help,
And You will not hear?
I cry out to You, "Violence!"
Yet You do not save.
- 3 Why do You make me see iniquity,
And cause *me* to look on wickedness?
Yes, destruction and violence are before me;
Strife exists and contention arises.
- 4 Therefore the law is ignored
And justice is never upheld.
For the wicked surround the righteous;
Therefore justice comes out perverted.

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

- 5 "Look among the nations! Observe!
Be astonished! Wonder!
Because *I am* doing something in your days—
You would not believe if you were told. [\[Acts 13:41\]](#)
- 6 "For behold, I am raising up the Chaldeans,
That fierce and impetuous people
Who march throughout the earth
To seize dwelling places which are not theirs.
- 7 "They are dreaded and feared;
Their justice and authority originate with themselves.
- 8 "Their horses are swifter than leopards
And keener than wolves in the evening.
Their horsemen come galloping,
Their horsemen come from afar;
They fly like an eagle swooping *down* to devour.
- 9 "All of them come for violence.
Their horde of faces *moves* forward.
They collect captives like sand.
- 10 "They mock at kings
And rulers are a laughing matter to them.
They laugh at every fortress
And heap up rubble to capture it.
- 11 "Then they will sweep through *like* the wind and pass on.
But they will be held guilty,
They whose strength is their god."

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

- 12 Are You not from everlasting,
O LORD, my God, my Holy One?
We will not die.
You, O LORD, have appointed them to judge;
And You, O Rock, have established them to correct.
- 13 *Your* eyes are too pure to approve evil,
And You can not look on wickedness *with favor*.
Why do You look with favor
On those who deal treacherously?
Why are You silent when the wicked swallow up
Those more righteous than they?
- 14 *Why* have You made men like the fish of the sea,

- Like creeping things without a ruler over them?
 15 *The Chaldeans* bring all of them up with a hook,
 Drag them away with their net,
 And gather them together in their fishing net.
 Therefore they rejoice and are glad.
 16 Therefore they offer a sacrifice to their net
 And burn incense to their fishing net;
 Because through these things their catch is large,
 And their food is plentiful.
 17 Will they therefore empty their net
 And continually slay nations without sparing?

Habakkuk Awaits God's Answer

- 2:1 I will stand on my guard post
 And station myself on the rampart;
 And I will keep watch to see what He will speak to me,
 And how I may reply when I am reproved.

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

- 2 Then the LORD answered me and said,
 "Record the vision
 And inscribe *it* on tablets,
 That the one who reads it may run.
 3 "For the vision is yet for the appointed time;
 It hastens toward the goal and it will not fail.
 Though it tarries, wait for it;
 For it will certainly come, it will not delay. [[Heb 10:37](#)]
 4 "Behold, as for the proud one,
 His soul is not right within him;
 But the righteous will live by his faith. [[Rom 1:17](#); [Gal 3:11](#); [Heb 10:38](#)]
 5 "Furthermore, wine betrays the haughty man,
 So that he does not stay at home.
 He enlarges his appetite like Sheol,
 And he is like death, never satisfied.
 He also gathers to himself all nations
 And collects to himself all peoples.
 6 "Will not all of these take up a taunt-song against him,
 Even mockery *and* insinuations against him
 And say, 'Woe to him who increases what is not his—
 For how long—
 And makes himself rich with loans?'
 7 "Will not your creditors rise up suddenly,
 And those who collect from you awaken?
 Indeed, you will become plunder for them.
 8 "Because you have looted many nations,
 All the remainder of the peoples will loot you—
 Because of human bloodshed and violence done to the land,
 To the town and all its inhabitants.
 9 "Woe to him who gets evil gain for his house
 To put his nest on high,
 To be delivered from the hand of calamity!
 10 "You have devised a shameful thing for your house
 By cutting off many peoples;
 So you are sinning against yourself.
 11 "Surely the stone will cry out from the wall,
 And the rafter will answer it from the framework.
 12 "Woe to him who builds a city with bloodshed
 And founds a town with violence!

- 13 “Is it not indeed from the LORD of hosts
That peoples toil for fire,
And nations grow weary for nothing?
- 14 “For the earth will be filled
With the knowledge of the glory of the LORD,
As the waters cover the sea. [Isa 11:9]
- 15 “Woe to you who make your neighbors drink,
Who mix in your venom even to make *them* drunk
So as to look on their nakedness!
- 16 “You will be filled with disgrace rather than honor.
Now you yourself drink and expose your *own* nakedness.
The cup in the LORD’s right hand will come around to you,
And utter disgrace *will come* upon your glory.
- 17 “For the violence done to Lebanon will overwhelm you,
And the devastation of *its* beasts by which you terrified them,
Because of human bloodshed and violence done to the land,
To the town and all its inhabitants.
- 18 “What profit is the idol when its maker has carved it,
Or an image, a teacher of falsehood?
For *its* maker trusts in his *own* handiwork
When he fashions speechless idols.
- 19 “Woe to him who says to a *piece of wood*, ‘Awake!’
To a mute stone, ‘Arise!’
And that is *your* teacher?
Behold, it is overlaid with gold and silver,
And there is no breath at all inside it.
- 20 “But the LORD 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 LORD, I have heard the report about You *and* I fear.
O LORD, revive Your work in the midst of the years,
In the midst of the years make it known;
In wrath remember mercy.
- 3 God comes from Teman,
And the Holy One from Mount Paran. *Selah.*
His splendor covers the heavens,
And the earth is full of His praise.
- 4 *His* radiance is like the sunlight;
He has rays *flashing* from His hand,
And there is the hiding of His power.
- 5 Before Him goes pestilence,
And plague comes after Him.
- 6 He stood and surveyed the earth;
He looked and startled the nations.
Yes, the perpetual mountains were shattered,
The ancient hills collapsed.
His ways are everlasting.
- 7 I saw the tents of Cushan under distress,
The tent curtains of the land of Midian were trembling.
- 8 Did the LORD rage against the rivers,
Or *was* Your anger against the rivers,
Or *was* Your wrath against the sea,
That You rode on Your horses,
On Your chariots of salvation?
- 9 Your bow was made bare,

- The rods of chastisement were sworn. *Selah*.
 You cleaved the earth with rivers.
- 10 The mountains saw You *and* quaked;
 The downpour of waters swept by.
 The deep uttered forth its voice,
 It lifted high its hands.
- 11 Sun *and* moon stood in their places;
 They went away at the light of Your arrows,
 At the radiance of Your gleaming spear.
- 12 In indignation 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 struck the head of the house of the evil
 To lay him open from thigh to neck. *Selah*.
- 14 You pierced with his own spears
 The head of his throngs.
 They stormed in to scatter us;
 Their exultation *was* like those
 Who devour the oppressed in secret.
- 15 You trampled on the sea with Your horses,
 On the surge of many waters.
- 16 I heard and my inward parts trembled,
 At the sound my lips quivered.
 Decay enters my bones,
 And in my place I tremble.
 Because I must wait quietly for the day of distress,
 For the people to arise *who* will invade us.
- 17 Though the fig tree should not blossom
 And there be no fruit on the vines,
Though the yield of the olive should fail
 And the fields produce no food,
 Though the flock should be cut off from the fold
 And there be no cattle in the stalls,
- 18 Yet I will exult in the LORD,
 I will rejoice in the God of my salvation.
- 19 The Lord GOD is my strength,
 And He has made my feet like hinds' *feet*,
 And makes me walk on my high places.

For the choir director, on my 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 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.

- (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).
 - (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 Therefore the LORD brought the commanders of the army of the king of Assyria against them, and they captured Manasseh with hooks, bound him with bronze *chains* and took him to Babylon.
- 12 When he was in distress, he entreated the LORD his God and humbled himself greatly before the God of his fathers.
- 13 When he prayed to Him, He was moved by his entreaty and heard his supplication, and brought him again to Jerusalem to his kingdom. Then Manasseh knew that the LORD *was* God.
- 14 Now after this he built the outer wall of the city of David on the west side of Gihon, in the valley, even to the entrance of the Fish Gate; and he encircled the Ophel *with it* and made it very high. Then he put army commanders in all the fortified cities of Judah.
- 15 He also removed the foreign gods and the idol from the house of the LORD, as well as all the altars which he had built on the mountain of the house of the LORD and in Jerusalem, and he threw *them* outside the city.
- 16 He set up the altar of the LORD and sacrificed peace offerings and thank offerings on it; and he ordered Judah to serve the LORD God of Israel.
- 17 Nevertheless the people still sacrificed in the high places, *although* only to the LORD their God.

The Death of Manasseh (643t BC)

2 Kings 21:17–18

2 Chronicles 33:18–20

- 17 Now the rest of the acts of Manasseh and all that he did and his sin which he committed, are they not written in the Book of the Chronicles of the Kings of Judah?
- 18 And Manasseh slept with his fathers and was buried in the garden of his own house, in the garden of Uzza, and Amon his son became king in his place.

- 18 Now the rest of the acts of Manasseh even his prayer to his God, and the words of the seers who spoke to him in the name of the LORD God of Israel, behold, they are among the records of the kings of Israel.
- 19 His prayer also and *how God* was entreated by him, and all his sin, his unfaithfulness, and the sites on which he built high places and erected the Asherim and the carved images, before he humbled himself, behold, they are written in the records of the [Seers].
- 20 So Manasseh slept with his fathers, and they buried him in his own 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 became king, and he reigned two years in Jerusalem; and his mother's name *was* Meshullemeth the daughter of Haruz of Jotbah.
- 20 He did evil in the sight of the LORD, as Manasseh his father had done.
- 21 For he walked in all the way that his father had walked, and served the idols that his father had served and worshiped them.
- 22 So he forsook the LORD, the God of his fathers, and did not walk in the way of the LORD.

- 21 Amon *was* twenty-two years old when he became king, and he reigned two years in Jerusalem.
- 22 He did evil in the sight of the LORD as Manasseh his father had done, and Amon sacrificed to all the carved images which his father Manasseh had made, and he served them.
- 23 Moreover, he did not humble himself before the LORD as his father Manasseh had done, but Amon multiplied 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 own house.
- 24 Then the people of the land killed all those who had conspired against King Amon,

- 24 Finally his servants conspired against him and put him to death in his own house.
- 25 But the people of the land killed all the conspirators against King Amon,

and the people of the land made Josiah his son king in his place. 25 Now the rest of the acts of Amon which he did, are they not written in the Book of the Chronicles of the Kings of Judah? 26 He was buried in his grave in the garden of Uzza, and Josiah his son became king in his place.	and the people of the land made Josiah his son king in his place.
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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 became king, and he reigned thirty-one years in Jerusalem; and his mother's name <i>was</i> Jedidah the daughter of Adaiah of Bozkath. 2 He did right in the sight of the LORD and walked in all the way of his father David, nor did he turn aside to the right or to the left.	1 Josiah <i>was</i> eight years old when he became king, and he reigned thirty-one years in Jerusalem. 2 He did right in the sight of the LORD, and walked in the ways of his father David and did not turn aside to the right or to the left.

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

Zephaniah 1–3

Superscription

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

Judgment on the Entire Earth

- 2 "I will completely remove all *things*
From the face of the earth," declares the LORD.
3 "I will remove man and beast;
I will remove the birds of the sky
And the fish of the sea,
And the ruins along with the wicked;
And I will cut off man from the face of the earth," declares the LORD.

Judgment on Judah and Jerusalem

- 4 "So I will stretch out My hand against Judah
And against all the inhabitants of Jerusalem.
And I will cut off the remnant of Baal from this place,
And the names of the idolatrous priests along with the priests.
5 "And those who bow down on the housetops to the host of heaven,
And those who bow down *and* swear to the LORD and *yet* swear by Milcom,
6 And those who have turned back from following the LORD,
And those who have not sought the LORD or inquired of Him."
7 Be silent before the Lord GOD!
For the day of the LORD is near,
For the LORD has prepared a sacrifice,
He has consecrated His guests.
8 "Then it will come about on the day of the LORD's sacrifice
That I will punish the princes, the king's sons
And all who clothe themselves with foreign garments.
9 "And I will punish on that day all who leap on the *temple* threshold,
Who fill the house of their lord with violence and deceit.
10 "On that day," declares the LORD,
"There will be the sound of a cry from the Fish Gate,
A wail from the Second Quarter,
And a loud crash from the hills.
11 "Wail, O inhabitants of the Mortar,
For all the people of Canaan will be silenced;
All who weigh out silver will be cut off.

- 12 “It will come about at that time
That I will search Jerusalem with lamps,
And I will punish the men
Who are stagnant in spirit,
Who say in their hearts,
‘The LORD will not do good or evil!’
- 13 “Moreover, their wealth will become plunder
And their houses desolate;
Yes, they will build houses but not inhabit *them*,
And plant vineyards but not drink their wine.”

Judgment at the Great Day of the Lord

- 14 Near is the great day of the LORD,
Near and coming very quickly;
Listen, the day of the LORD!
In it the warrior cries out bitterly.
- 15 A day of wrath is that day,
A day of trouble and distress,
A day of destruction and desolation,
A day of darkness and gloom,
A day of clouds and thick darkness, [[Joel 2:1–2](#)]
- 16 A day of trumpet and battle cry
Against the fortified cities
And the high corner towers.
- 17 I will bring distress on men
So that they will walk like the blind,
Because they have sinned against the LORD;
And their blood will be poured out like dust
And their flesh like dung.
- 18 Neither their silver nor their gold
Will be able to deliver them
On the day of the LORD’s wrath;
And all the earth will be devoured
In the fire of His jealousy,
For He will make a complete end,
Indeed a terrifying one,
Of all the inhabitants of the earth.

A Call to Repentance

- 2:1 Gather yourselves together, yes, gather,
O nation without shame,
- 2 Before the decree takes effect—
The day passes like the chaff—
Before the burning anger of the LORD comes upon you,
Before the day of the LORD’s anger comes upon you.
- 3 Seek the LORD,
All you humble of the earth
Who have carried out His ordinances;
Seek righteousness, seek humility.
Perhaps you will be hidden
In the day of the LORD’s anger.

Judgment on Philistia

- 4 For Gaza will be abandoned
And Ashkelon a desolation;
Ashdod will be driven out at noon
And Ekron will be uprooted.
- 5 Woe to the inhabitants of the seacoast,

The nation of the Cherethites!
 The word of the LORD is against you,
 O Canaan, land of the Philistines;
 And I will destroy you
 So that there will be no inhabitant.

- 6 So the seacoast will be pastures,
With caves for shepherds and folds for flocks.
- 7 And the coast will be
 For the remnant of the house of Judah,
 They will pasture on it.
 In the houses of Ashkelon they will lie down at evening;
 For the LORD their God will care for them
 And restore their fortune.

Judgment on Moab and Ammon

- 8 “I have heard the taunting of Moab
 And the revilings of the sons of Ammon,
 With which they have taunted My people
 And become arrogant against their territory.
- 9 “Therefore, as I live,” declares the LORD of hosts,
 The God of Israel,
 “Surely Moab will be like Sodom
 And the sons of Ammon like Gomorrah—
 A place possessed by nettles and salt pits,
 And a perpetual desolation.
 The remnant of My people will plunder them
 And the remainder of My nation will inherit them.”

10 This they will have in return for their pride, because they have taunted and become arrogant against the people of the LORD of hosts.

11 The LORD will be terrifying to them, for He will starve all the gods of the earth; and all the coastlands of the nations will bow down to Him, everyone from his *own* place.

Judgment on Cush

- 12 “You also, O Ethiopians, will be slain by My sword.”

Judgment on Assyria and Nineveh

- 13 And He will stretch out His hand against the north
 And destroy Assyria,
 And He will make Nineveh a desolation,
 Parched like the wilderness.
- 14 Flocks will lie down in her midst,
 All beasts which range in herds;
 Both the pelican and the hedgehog
 Will lodge in the tops of her pillars;
 Birds will sing in the window,
 Desolation *will be* on the threshold;
 For He has laid bare the cedar work.
- 15 This is the exultant city
 Which dwells securely,
 Who says in her heart,
 “I am, and there is no one besides me.”
 How she has become a desolation,
 A resting place for beasts!
 Everyone who passes by her will hiss
 And wave his hand *in contempt*.

Jerusalem's Future—Destruction of the Rebellious

- 3:1 Woe to her who is rebellious and defiled,
The tyrannical city!
- 2 She heeded no voice,
She accepted no instruction.
She did not trust in the LORD,
She did not draw near to her God.
- 3 Her princes within her are roaring lions,
Her judges are wolves at evening;
They leave nothing for the morning.
- 4 Her prophets are reckless, treacherous men;
Her priests have profaned the sanctuary.
They have done violence to the law.
- 5 The LORD is righteous within her;
He will do no injustice.
Every morning He brings His justice to light;
He does not fail.
But the unjust knows no shame.
- 6 "I have cut off nations;
Their corner towers are in ruins.
I have made their streets desolate,
With no one passing by;
Their cities are laid waste,
Without a man, without an inhabitant.
- 7 "I said, 'Surely you will revere Me,
Accept instruction.'
So her dwelling will not be cut off
According to all that I have appointed concerning her.
But they were eager to corrupt all their deeds.
- 8 "Therefore wait for Me," declares the LORD,
"For the day when I rise up as a witness.
Indeed, My decision is to gather nations,
To assemble kingdoms,
To pour out on them My indignation,
All My burning anger;
For all the earth will be devoured
By the fire of My zeal.

Jerusalem's Future—Deliverance of the Righteous

- 9 "For then I will give to the peoples purified lips,
That all of them may call on the name of the LORD,
To serve Him shoulder to shoulder.
- 10 "From beyond the rivers of Ethiopia
My worshipers, My dispersed ones,
Will bring My offerings.
- 11 "In that day you will feel no shame
Because of all your deeds
By which you have rebelled against Me;
For then I will remove from your midst
Your proud, exulting ones,
And you will never again be haughty
On My holy mountain.
- 12 "But I will leave among you
A humble and lowly people,
And they will take refuge in the name of the LORD.
- 13 "The remnant of Israel will do no wrong
And tell no lies,
Nor will a deceitful tongue

Be found in their mouths; [[Rev 14:5](#)]
 For they will feed and lie down
 With no one to make them tremble.”

Jerusalem’s Future—Millennial Joy

- 14 Shout for joy, O daughter of Zion!
 Shout *in triumph*, O Israel!
 Rejoice and exult with all *your* heart,
 O daughter of Jerusalem!
- 15 The LORD has taken away *His* judgments against you,
 He has cleared away your enemies.
 The King of Israel, the LORD, is in your midst;
 You will fear disaster no more.
- 16 In that day it will be said to Jerusalem:
 “Do not be afraid, O Zion;
 Do not let your hands fall limp.
- 17 “The LORD your God is in your midst,
 A victorious warrior.
 He will exult over you with joy,
 He will be quiet in His love,
 He will rejoice over you with shouts of joy.
- 18 “I will gather those who grieve about the appointed feasts—
 They came from you, *O Zion*;
The reproach of exile is a burden on them.
- 19 “Behold, I am going to deal at that time
 With all your oppressors,
 I will save the lame
 And gather the outcast,
 And I will turn their shame into praise and renown
 In all the earth.
- 20 “At that time I will bring you in,
 Even at the time when I gather you together;
 Indeed, I will give you renown and praise
 Among all the peoples of the earth,
 When I restore your fortunes before your eyes,”
 Says the LORD.

Josiah Begins to Seek After God (633t BC)

2 Chronicles 34:3a

3a For in the eighth year of his reign while he was still a youth, he began to seek the God of his father David;

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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, of the priests who were in Anathoth in the land of Benjamin,
 2 to whom the word of the LORD came in the days of Josiah the son of Amon, king of Judah, in the thirteenth year of his reign.
 3 It came also in the days of Jehoiakim the son of Josiah, king of Judah, until the end of the eleventh year of Zedekiah the son of Josiah, king of Judah, until the exile of Jerusalem in the fifth month.

Jeremiah's Call and Commission

4 Now the word of the LORD came to me saying,

5 "Before I formed you in the womb I knew you,
 And before you were born I consecrated you;
 I have appointed you a prophet to the nations."

6 Then I said, "Alas, Lord GOD!
 Behold, I do not know how to speak,
 Because I am a youth."

7 But the LORD said to me,
 "Do not say, 'I am a youth,'
 Because everywhere I send you, you shall go,
 And all that I command you, you shall speak.

8 "Do not be afraid of them,
 For I am with you to deliver you," declares the LORD.

9 Then the LORD stretched out His hand and touched my mouth, and the LORD said to me,

"Behold, I have put My words in your mouth.

10 "See, I have appointed you this day over the nations and over the kingdoms,
 To pluck up and to break down,
 To destroy and to overthrow,
 To build and to plant."

Vision of the Branch of an Almond Tree

11 The word of the LORD came to me saying, "What do you see, Jeremiah?" And I said, "I see a rod of an almond tree."

12 Then the LORD said to me, "You have seen well, for I am watching over My word to perform it."

Vision of a Boiling Pot

13 The word of the LORD came to me a second time saying, "What do you see?" And I said, "I see a boiling pot, facing away from the north."

14 Then the LORD said to me, "Out of the north the evil will break forth on all the inhabitants of the land.

15 "For, behold, I am calling all the families of the kingdoms of the north," declares the LORD; "and they will come and they will set each one his throne at the entrance of the gates of Jerusalem, and against all its walls round about and against all the cities of Judah.

16 "I will pronounce My judgments on them concerning all their wickedness, whereby they have forsaken Me and have offered sacrifices to other gods, and worshiped the works of their own hands.

A Divine Challenge and Promise

17 "Now, gird up your loins and arise, and speak to them all which I command you. Do not be dismayed before them, or I will dismay you before them.

18 "Now behold, I have made you today as a fortified city and as a pillar of iron and as walls of bronze against the whole land, to the kings of Judah, to its princes, to its priests and to the people of the land.

19 "They will fight against you, but they will not overcome you, for I am with you to deliver you," declares the LORD.

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

Jeremiah 2

God's Fond Memories of Israel's Youth

1 Now the word of the LORD came to me saying,

2 "Go and proclaim in the ears of Jerusalem, saying, 'Thus says the LORD,

“I remember concerning you the devotion of your youth,
The love of your betrothals,
Your following after Me in the wilderness,
Through a land not sown.

- 3 “Israel was holy to the LORD,
The first of His harvest.
All who ate of it became guilty;
Evil came upon them,” declares the LORD.”

Israel’s Current Apostasy

4 Hear the word of the LORD, O house of Jacob, and all the families of the house of Israel.

5 Thus says the LORD,

“What injustice did your fathers find in Me,
That they went far from Me
And walked after emptiness and became empty?

- 6 “They did not say, ‘Where is the LORD
Who brought us up out of the land of Egypt,
Who led us through the wilderness,
Through a land of deserts and of pits,
Through a land of drought and of deep darkness,
Through a land that no one crossed
And where no man dwelt?’
- 7 “I brought you into the fruitful land
To eat its fruit and its good things.
But you came and defiled My land,
And My inheritance you made an abomination.
- 8 “The priests did not say, ‘Where is the LORD?’
And those who handle the law did not know Me;
The rulers also transgressed against Me,
And the prophets prophesied by Baal
And walked after things that did not profit.
- 9 “Therefore I will yet contend with you,” declares the LORD,
“And with your sons’ sons I will contend.
- 10 “For cross to the coastlands of Kittim and see,
And send to Kedar and observe closely
And see if there has been such *a thing* as this!
- 11 “Has a nation changed gods
When they were not gods?
But My people have changed their glory
For that which does not profit.
- 12 “Be appalled, O heavens, at this,
And shudder, be very desolate,” declares the LORD.
- 13 “For My people have committed two evils:
They have forsaken Me,
The fountain of living waters,
To hew for themselves cisterns,
Broken cisterns
That can hold no water.

The Consequences of Israel’s Apostasy

- 14 “Is Israel a slave?
Or is he a homeborn servant?
Why has he become a prey?
- 15 “The young lions have roared at him,
They have roared loudly.
And they have made his land a waste;

- His cities have been destroyed, without inhabitant.
- 16 “Also the men of Memphis and Tahpanhes
Have shaved the crown of your head.
- 17 “Have you not done this to yourself
By your forsaking the LORD your God
When He led you in the way?
- 18 “But now what are you doing on the road to Egypt,
To drink the waters of the Nile?
Or what are you doing on the road to Assyria,
To drink the waters of the Euphrates?
- 19 “Your own wickedness will correct you,
And your apostasies will reprove you;
Know therefore and see that it is evil and bitter
For you to forsake the LORD your God,
And the dread of Me is not in you,” declares the Lord GOD of hosts.

The Strange Fascination With and Futility of Idolatry

- 20 “For long ago I broke your yoke
And tore off your bonds;
But you said, ‘I will not serve!’
For on every high hill
And under every green tree
You have lain down as a harlot.
- 21 “Yet I planted you a choice vine,
A completely faithful seed.
How then have you turned yourself before Me
Into the degenerate shoots of a foreign vine?
- 22 “Although you wash yourself with lye
And use much soap,
The stain of your iniquity is before Me,” declares the Lord GOD.
- 23 “How can you say, ‘I am not defiled,
I have not gone after the Baals’?
Look at your way in the valley!
Know what you have done!
You are a swift young camel entangling her ways,
- 24 A wild donkey accustomed to the wilderness,
That sniffs the wind in her passion.
In *the time of* her heat who can turn her away?
All who seek her will not become weary;
In her month they will find her.
- 25 “Keep your feet from being unshod
And your throat from thirst;
But you said, ‘It is hopeless!
No! For I have loved strangers,
And after them I will walk.’
- 26 “As the thief is shamed when he is discovered,
So the house of Israel is shamed;
They, their kings, their princes
And their priests and their prophets,
- 27 Who say to a tree, ‘You are my father,’
And to a stone, ‘You gave me birth.’
For they have turned *their* back to Me,
And not *their* face;
But in the time of their trouble they will say,
‘Arise and save us.’
- 28 “But where are your gods
Which 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 cities
Are your gods, O Judah.

Israel Deserves Judgment

- 29 “Why do you contend with Me?
You have all transgressed against Me,” declares the LORD.
- 30 “In vain I have struck your sons;
They accepted no chastening.
Your sword has devoured your prophets
Like a destroying lion.
- 31 “O generation, heed the word of the LORD.
Have I been a wilderness to Israel,
Or a land of thick darkness?
Why do My people say, ‘We are free to roam;
We will no longer come to You’?
- 32 “Can a virgin forget her ornaments,
Or a bride her attire?
Yet My people have forgotten Me
Days without number.
- 33 “How well you prepare your way
To seek love!
Therefore even the wicked women
You have taught your ways.
- 34 “Also on your skirts is found
The lifeblood of the innocent poor;
You did not find them breaking in.
But in spite of all these things,
Yet you said, ‘I am innocent;
Surely His anger is turned away from me.’
Behold, I will enter into judgment with you
Because you say, ‘I have not sinned.’
- 36 “Why do you go around so much
Changing your way?
Also, you will be put to shame by Egypt
As you were put to shame by Assyria.
- 37 “From this *place* also you will go out
With your hands on your head;
For the LORD has rejected those in whom you trust,
And you will not prosper with 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 *God* says, “If a husband divorces his wife
And she goes from him
And belongs to another man,
Will he still return to her?
Will not that land be completely polluted? [cf. [Deut 24:1–4](#)]
But you are a harlot *with* many lovers;
Yet you turn to Me,” declares the LORD.
- 2 “Lift up your eyes to the bare heights and see;
Where have you not been violated?
By the roads you have sat for them
Like an Arab in the desert,
And you have polluted a land
With your harlotry and with your wickedness.

- 3 “Therefore the showers have been withheld,
And there has been no spring rain.
Yet you had a harlot’s forehead;
You refused to be ashamed.
- 4 “Have you not just now called to Me,
‘My Father, You are the friend of my youth?’
- 5 ‘Will He be angry forever?
Will He be indignant to the end?’
Behold, you have spoken
And have done evil things,
And you have had your way.”

Judah More Guilty Than Israel

- 6 Then the LORD said to me in the days of Josiah the king, “Have you seen what faithless Israel did? She went up on every high hill and under every green tree, and she was a harlot there.
- 7 “I thought, ‘After she has done all these things she will return to Me’; but she did not return, and her treacherous sister Judah saw it.
- 8 “And I saw that for all the adulteries of faithless Israel, I had sent her away and given her a writ of divorce, yet her treacherous sister Judah did not fear; but she went and was a harlot also.
- 9 “Because of the lightness of her harlotry, she polluted the land and committed adultery with stones and trees.
- 10 “Yet in spite of all this her treacherous sister Judah did not return to Me with all her heart, but rather in deception,” declares the LORD.
- 11 And the LORD said to me, “Faithless Israel has proved herself more righteous than treacherous Judah.

A Call for Repentance

- 12 “Go and proclaim these words toward the north and say,
- ‘Return, faithless Israel,’ declares the LORD;
‘I will not look upon you in anger.
For I am gracious,’ declares the LORD;
‘I will not be angry forever.
- 13 ‘Only acknowledge your iniquity,
That you have transgressed against the LORD your God
And have scattered your favors to the strangers under every green tree,
And you have not obeyed My voice,’ declares the LORD.
- 14a ‘Return, O faithless sons,’ declares the LORD;
‘For I am a master to you,

Millennial Blessings

- 14b And I will take you one from a city and two from a family,
And I will bring you to Zion.’
- 15 “Then I will give you shepherds after My own heart, who will feed you on knowledge and understanding.
- 16 “It shall be in those days when you are multiplied and increased in the land,” declares the LORD, “they will no longer say, ‘The ark of the covenant of the LORD.’ 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 the LORD,’ and all the nations will be gathered to it, to Jerusalem, for the name of the LORD; nor will they walk anymore after the stubbornness of their evil heart.
- 18 “In those days the house of Judah will walk with the house of Israel, and they will come together from the land of the north to the land that I gave your fathers as an inheritance.

God Describes the True Repentance He Desires

- 19 “Then I said,
- ‘How I would set you among My sons
And give you a pleasant land,
The most beautiful inheritance of the nations!’
And I said, ‘You shall call Me, My Father,
And not turn away from following Me.’

- 20 “Surely, as a woman treacherously departs from her lover,
So you have dealt treacherously with Me,
O house of Israel,” declares the LORD.
- 21 A voice is heard on the bare heights,
The weeping *and* the supplications of the sons of Israel;
Because they have perverted their way,
They have forgotten the LORD their God.
- 22 “Return, O faithless sons,
I will heal your faithlessness.”
“Behold, we come to You;
For You are the LORD our God.
- 23 “Surely, the hills are a deception,
A tumult *on* the mountains.
Surely in the LORD our God
Is the salvation of Israel.
- 24 “But the shameful thing has consumed the labor of our fathers since our youth, their flocks and their herds, their sons and their daughters.
- 25 “Let us lie down in our shame, and let our humiliation cover us; for we have sinned against the LORD our God, we and our fathers, from our youth even to this day. And we have not obeyed the voice of the LORD our God.”
- 4:1 “If you will return, O Israel,” declares the LORD,
“*Then* you should return to Me.
And if you will put away your detested things from My presence,
And will not waver,
- 2 And you will swear, ‘As the LORD lives,’
In truth, in justice and in righteousness;
Then the nations will bless themselves in Him,
And in Him they will glory.”
- 3 For thus says the LORD to the men of Judah and to Jerusalem,
- “Break up your fallow ground,
And do not sow among thorns.
- 4 “Circumcise yourselves to the LORD
And remove the foreskins of your heart,
Men of Judah and inhabitants of Jerusalem,
Or else My wrath will go forth like fire
And burn with none to quench 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.
- 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.

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

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 the trumpet in the land;
 Cry aloud and say,
 ‘Assemble yourselves, and let us go
 Into the fortified cities.’
- 6 “Lift up a standard toward Zion!
 Seek refuge, do not stand *still*,
 For I am bringing evil from the north,
 And 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 a waste.
 Your cities will be ruins
 Without inhabitant.
- 8 “For this, put on sackcloth,
 Lament and wail;
 For the fierce anger of the LORD
 Has not turned back from us.”

9 “It shall come about in that day,” declares the LORD, “that the heart of the king and the heart of the princes will fail; and the priests will be appalled and the prophets will be astounded.”

10 Then I said, “Ah, Lord GOD! Surely You have utterly deceived this people and Jerusalem, saying, ‘You will have peace’; whereas a sword touches the throat.”

The Scorching Hot Wind of Judgment

- 11 In that time it will be said to this people and to Jerusalem, “A scorching wind from the bare heights in the wilderness in the direction of the daughter of My people—not to winnow and not to cleanse,
 12 a wind too strong for this—will come at My command; now I will also pronounce judgments against them.

- 13 “Behold, he goes up like clouds,
 And his chariots like the whirlwind;
 His horses are swifter than eagles.
 Woe to us, for we are ruined!”
- 14 Wash your heart from evil, O Jerusalem,
 That you may be saved.
 How long will your wicked thoughts
 Lodge within you?
- 15 For a voice declares from Dan,
 And proclaims wickedness from Mount Ephraim.
- 16 “Report *it* to the nations, now!
 Proclaim over Jerusalem,
 ‘Besiegers come from a far country,
 And lift their voices against the cities of Judah.
- 17 ‘Like watchmen of a field they are against her round about,
 Because she has rebelled against Me,’ declares the LORD.
- 18 “Your ways and your deeds
 Have brought these things to you.
 This is your evil. How bitter!
 How it has touched your heart!”

Jeremiah's Anguished Cry

- 19 My soul, my soul! I am in anguish! Oh, my heart!
 My heart is pounding in me;
 I cannot be silent,

Because you have heard, O my soul,
The sound of the trumpet,
The alarm of war.

20 Disaster on disaster is proclaimed,
For the whole land is devastated;
Suddenly my tents are devastated,
My curtains in an instant.

21 How long must I see the standard
And hear the sound of the trumpet?

22 “For My people are foolish,
They know Me not;
They are stupid children
And have no understanding.
They are shrewd to do evil,
But to do good they do not know.”

A Vision and an Oracle about the Coming Destruction

23 I looked on the earth, and behold, *it was* formless and void;
And to the heavens, and they had no light.

24 I looked on the mountains, and behold, they were quaking,
And all the hills moved to and fro.

25 I looked, and behold, there was no man,
And all the birds of the heavens had fled.

26 I looked, and behold, the fruitful land was a wilderness,
And all its cities were pulled down
Before the LORD, before His fierce anger.

27 For thus says the LORD,
“The whole land shall be a desolation,
Yet I will not execute a complete destruction.

28 “For this the earth shall mourn
And the heavens above be dark,
Because I have spoken, I have purposed,
And I will not change My mind, nor will I turn from it.”

The Death Agony of Zion

29 At the sound of the horseman and bowman every city flees;
They go into the thickets and climb among the rocks;
Every city is forsaken,
And no man dwells in them.

30 And you, O desolate one, what will you do?
Although you dress in scarlet,
Although you decorate *yourself with* ornaments of gold,
Although you enlarge your eyes with paint,
In vain you make yourself beautiful.
Your lovers despise you;
They seek your life.

31 For I heard a cry as of a woman in labor,
The anguish as of one giving birth to her first child,
The cry of the daughter of Zion gasping for breath,
Stretching out her hands, *saying*,
“Ah, woe is me, for I faint before murderers.”

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

Jeremiah 5

Jeremiah's Vain Search for a Righteous Person

1 “Roam to and fro through the streets of Jerusalem,
And look now and take note.

- And seek in her open squares,
 If you can find a man,
 If there is one who does justice, who seeks truth,
 Then I will pardon her.
- 2 “And although they say, ‘As the LORD lives,’
 Surely they swear falsely.”
- 3 O LORD, do not Your eyes *look* for truth?
 You have smitten them,
But they did not weaken;
 You have consumed them,
 But they refused to take correction.
 They have made their faces harder than rock;
 They have refused to repent.
- 4 Then I said, “They are only the poor,
 They are foolish;
 For they do not know the way of the LORD
Or the ordinance of their God.
- 5 “I will go to the great
 And will speak to them,
 For they know the way of the LORD
And the ordinance of their God.”
 But they too, with one accord, have broken the yoke
And burst the bonds.
- 6 Therefore a lion from the forest will slay them,
 A wolf of the deserts will destroy them,
 A leopard is watching their cities.
 Everyone who goes out of them will be torn in pieces,
 Because their transgressions are many,
 Their apostasies are numerous.

God’s Justification for Judah’s Punishment

- 7 “Why should I pardon you?
 Your sons have forsaken Me
 And sworn by those who are not gods.
 When I had fed them to the full,
 They committed adultery
 And trooped to the harlot’s house.
- 8 “They were well-fed lusty horses,
 Each one neighing after his neighbor’s wife.
- 9 “Shall I not punish these *people*,” declares the LORD,
 “And on a nation such as this
 Shall I not avenge Myself?”
- 10 “Go up through her vine rows and destroy,
 But do not execute a complete destruction;
 Strip away her branches,
 For they are not the LORD’S.
- 11 “For the house of Israel and the house of Judah
 Have dealt very treacherously with Me,” declares the LORD.
- 12 They have lied about the LORD
 And said, “Not He;
 Misfortune will not come on us,
 And we will not see sword or famine.
- 13 “The prophets are *as* 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 the LORD, the God of hosts,

- “Because you have spoken this word,
Behold, I am making My words in your mouth fire
And this people wood, and it will consume them.
- 15 “Behold, I am bringing a nation against you from afar, O house of Israel,” declares the LORD.
“It is an enduring nation,
It is an ancient nation,
A nation whose language you do not know,
Nor can you understand what they say.
- 16 “Their quiver is like an open grave,
All of them are mighty men.
- 17 “They will devour your harvest and your food;
They will devour your sons and your daughters;
They will devour your flocks and your herds;
They will devour your vines and your fig trees;
They will demolish with the sword your fortified cities in which you trust.
- 18 “Yet even in those days,” declares the LORD, “I will not make you a complete destruction.
- 19 “It shall come about when they say, ‘Why has the LORD our God done all these things to us?’ then you shall say to them, ‘As you have forsaken Me and served foreign gods in your land, so you will serve strangers in a land that is not yours.’”

Warning to a Foolish and Rebellious People

- 20 “Declare this in the house of Jacob
And proclaim it in Judah, saying,
- 21 ‘Now hear this, 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 fear Me?’ declares the LORD.
‘Do you not tremble in My presence?
For I have placed the sand as a boundary for the sea,
An eternal decree, so it cannot cross over it.
Though the waves toss, yet they cannot prevail;
Though they roar, yet they cannot cross over it.
- 23 ‘But this people has a stubborn and rebellious heart;
They have turned aside and departed.
- 24 ‘They do not say in their heart,
“Let us now fear the LORD our God,
Who gives rain in its season,
Both the autumn rain and the spring rain,
Who keeps for us
The appointed weeks of the harvest.”
- 25 ‘Your iniquities have turned these away,
And your sins have withheld good from you.
- 26 ‘For wicked men are found among My people,
They watch like fowls lying in wait;
They set a trap,
They catch men.
- 27 ‘Like a cage full of birds,
So their houses are full of deceit;
Therefore they have become great and rich.
- 28 ‘They are fat, they are sleek,
They also excel in deeds of wickedness;
They do not plead the cause,
The cause of the orphan, that they may prosper;
And they do not defend the rights of the poor.
- 29 ‘Shall I not punish these *people*?’ declares the LORD,
‘On a nation such as this
Shall I not avenge Myself?’
- 30 “An appalling and horrible thing

- Has happened in the land:
 31 The prophets prophesy falsely,
 And the priests rule on their *own* authority;
 And My people love it so!
 But what will you do at the end of it?

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 sons of Benjamin,
 From the midst of Jerusalem!
 Now blow a trumpet in Tekoa
 And raise a signal over Beth-haccerem;
 For evil looks down from the north,
 And a great destruction.
- 2 "The comely and dainty one, the daughter of Zion, I will cut off.
- 3 "Shepherds and their flocks will come to her,
 They will pitch *their* tents around her,
 They will pasture each in his place.
- 4 "Prepare war against her;
 Arise, and let us attack at noon.
 Woe to us, for the day declines,
 For the shadows of the evening lengthen!
- 5 "Arise, and let us attack by night
 And destroy her palaces!"

6 For thus says the LORD of hosts,

"Cut down her trees
 And cast up a siege against Jerusalem.
 This is the city to be punished,
 In whose midst there is only oppression.

- 7 "As a well keeps its waters fresh,
 So she keeps fresh her wickedness.
 Violence and destruction are heard in her;
 Sickness and wounds are ever before Me.
- 8 "Be warned, O Jerusalem,
 Or I shall be alienated from you,
 And make you a desolation,
 A land not inhabited."

Punishment of a Shameless People

- 9 Thus says the LORD of hosts,
 "They will thoroughly glean as the vine the remnant of Israel;
 Pass your hand again like a grape gatherer
 Over the branches."
- 10 To whom shall I speak and give warning
 That they may hear?
 Behold, their ears are closed
 And they cannot listen.
 Behold, the word of the LORD has become a reproach to them;
 They have no delight in it.
- 11 But I am full of the wrath of the LORD;
 I am weary with holding *it* in.
 "Pour *it* out on the children in the street
 And on the gathering of young men together;
 For both husband and wife shall be taken,

- The aged and the very old.
- 12 “Their houses shall 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 the LORD.
- 13 “For from the least of them even to the greatest of them,
Everyone is greedy for gain,
And from the prophet even to the priest
Everyone deals falsely.
- 14 “They have healed the brokenness of My people superficially,
Saying, ‘Peace, peace,’
But there is no peace.
- 15 “Were they ashamed because of the abomination they have done?
They were not even ashamed at all;
They did not even know how to blush.
Therefore they shall fall among those who fall;
At the time that I punish them,
They shall be cast down,” says the LORD.

Refusal to Heed God’s Warnings

- 16 Thus says the LORD,
“Stand by the ways and see and ask for the ancient paths,
Where the good way is, and walk in it;
And you will find rest for your souls.
But they said, ‘We will not walk *in it*.’
- 17 “And I set watchmen over you, *saying*,
‘Listen to the sound of the trumpet!’
But they said, ‘We will not listen.’
- 18 “Therefore hear, O nations,
And know, O congregation, what is among them.
- 19 “Hear, O earth: behold, I am bringing disaster on this people,
The fruit of their plans,
Because they have not listened to My words,
And as for My law, they have rejected it also.
- 20 “For what purpose does frankincense come to Me from Sheba
And the sweet cane from a distant land?
Your burnt offerings are not acceptable
And your sacrifices are not pleasing to Me.”

The Terrors of the Approaching Enemy

- 21 Therefore, thus says the LORD,

“Behold, I am laying stumbling blocks before this people.
And they will stumble against them,
Fathers and sons together;
Neighbor and friend will perish.”
- 22 Thus says the LORD,
“Behold, a people is coming from the north land,
And a great nation will be aroused from the remote parts of the earth.
- 23 “They seize bow and spear;
They are cruel and have no mercy;
Their voice roars like the sea,
And they ride on horses,
Arrayed as a man for the battle
Against you, O daughter of Zion!”
- 24 We have heard the report of it;
Our hands are limp.
Anguish has seized us,

- Pain as of a woman in childbirth.
- 25 Do not go out into the field
And do not walk on the road,
For the enemy has a sword,
Terror is on every side.
- 26 O daughter of my people, put on sackcloth
And roll in ashes;
Mourn as for an only son,
A lamentation most bitter.
For suddenly the destroyer
Will come upon us.

God Commissions Jeremiah to Test His People

- 27 “I have made you an assayer *and* a tester among My people,
That you may know and assay their way.”
- 28 All of them are stubbornly rebellious,
Going about as a talebearer.
They are bronze and iron;
They, all of them, are corrupt.
- 29 The bellows blow fiercely,
The lead is consumed by the fire;
In vain the refining goes on,
But the wicked are not separated.
- 30 They call them rejected silver,
Because the LORD 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 the LORD, saying,

2 “Stand in the gate of the LORD’s house and proclaim there this word and say, ‘Hear the word of the LORD, all you of Judah, who enter by these gates to worship the LORD!’”

3 Thus says the LORD of hosts, the God of Israel, “Amend your ways and your deeds, and I will let you dwell in this place.

4 Do not trust in deceptive words, saying, ‘This is the temple of the LORD, the temple of the LORD, the temple of the LORD.’

5 For if you truly amend your ways and your deeds, if you truly practice justice between a man and his neighbor,

6 if you do not oppress the alien, the orphan, or the widow, and do not shed innocent blood in this place, nor walk after other gods to your own ruin,

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

8 “Behold, you are trusting in deceptive words to no avail.

9 Will you steal, murder, and commit adultery and swear falsely, and offer sacrifices to Baal and walk after other gods that you have not known,

10 then come and stand before Me in this house, which is called by My name, and say, ‘We are delivered!’—that you may do all these abominations?

11 Has this house, which is called by My name, become a den of robbers in your sight? Behold, I, even I, have seen *it*,” declares the LORD. [[Matt 21:13](#); [Mark 11:17](#); [Luke 19:46](#)]

12 “But go now to My place which was in Shiloh, where I made My name dwell at the first, and see what I did to it because of the wickedness of My people Israel.

13 And now, because you have done all these things,” declares the LORD, “and I spoke to you, rising up early and speaking, but you did not hear, and I called you but you did not answer,

14 therefore, I will do to the house which is called by My name, in which you trust, and to the place which I gave you and your fathers, as I did to Shiloh.

15 I will cast you out of My sight, as I have cast out all your brothers, all the offspring of Ephraim.

Worship of the Queen of Heaven

16 “As for you, do not pray for this people, and do not lift up cry or prayer for them, and do not intercede with Me; for I do not hear you.

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

18 The children gather wood, and the fathers kindle the fire, and the women knead dough to make cakes for the queen of heaven; and *they* pour out drink offerings to other gods in order to spite Me.

19 Do they spite Me?” declares the LORD. “Is it not themselves *they* spite, to their own shame?”

20 Therefore thus says the Lord GOD, “Behold, My anger and My wrath will be poured out on this place, on man and on beast and on the trees of the field and on the fruit of the ground; and it will burn and not be quenched.”

A Disobedient Nation

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

22 For I did not speak to your fathers, or command them in the day that I brought them out of the land of Egypt, concerning burnt offerings and sacrifices.

23 But this is what I commanded them, saying, ‘Obey My voice, and I will be your God, and you will be My people; and you will walk in all the way which I command you, that it may be well with you.’

24 Yet they did not obey or incline their ear, but walked in *their own* counsels *and* in the stubbornness of their evil heart, and went backward and not forward.

25 Since the day that your fathers came out of the land of Egypt until this day, I have sent you all My servants the prophets, daily rising early and sending *them*.

26 Yet they did not listen to Me or incline their ear, but stiffened their neck; they did more evil than their fathers.

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

28 You shall say to them, ‘This is the nation that did not obey the voice of the LORD their God or accept correction; truth has perished and has been cut off from their mouth.

29 ‘Cut off your hair and cast *it* away,
And take up a lamentation on the bare heights;
For the LORD has rejected and forsaken
The generation of His wrath.’

Coming Judgment on Human Sacrifice

30 For the sons of Judah have done that which is evil in My sight," declares the LORD, "they have set their detestable things in the house which is called by My name, to defile it.

31 They have built the high places of Topheth, which is in the valley of the son of Hinnom, to burn their sons and their daughters in the fire, which I did not command, and it did not come into My mind.

32 "Therefore, behold, days are coming," declares the LORD, "when it will no longer be called Topheth, or the valley of the son of Hinnom, but the valley of the Slaughter; for they will bury in Topheth because there is no *other* place.

33 The dead bodies of this people will be food for the birds of the sky and for the beasts of the earth; and no one will frighten *them* away.

34 Then I will make to cease from the cities of Judah and from the streets of Jerusalem the voice of joy and the voice of gladness, the voice of the bridegroom and the voice of the bride; for the land will become a ruin.

Desecration of Graves by the Enemy

8:1 "At that time," declares the LORD, "they will bring out the bones of the kings of Judah and the bones of its princes, and the bones of the priests and the bones of the prophets, and the bones of the inhabitants of Jerusalem from their graves.

2 They will spread them out to the sun, the moon and to all the host of heaven, which they have loved and which they have served, and which they have gone after and which they have sought, and which they have worshiped. They will not be gathered or buried; they will be as dung on the face of the ground.

3 And death will be chosen rather than life by all the remnant that remains of this evil family, that remains in all the places to which I have driven them," declares the LORD of hosts.

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 "You shall say to them, 'Thus says the LORD,

"Do *men* fall and not get up again?

Does one turn away and not repent?

5 "Why then has this people, Jerusalem,

Turned away in continual apostasy?

They hold fast to deceit,

They refuse to return.

6 "I have listened and heard,

They have spoken what is not right;

No man repented of his wickedness,

Saying, 'What have I done?'

Everyone turned to his course,

Like a horse charging into the battle.

7 "Even the stork in the sky

Knows her seasons;

And the turtledove and the swift and the thrush

Observe the time of their migration;

But My people do not know

The ordinance of the LORD.

8 "How can you say, 'We are wise,

And the law of the LORD is with us?'

But behold, the lying pen of the scribes

Has made *it* into a lie.

9 "The wise men are put to shame,

They are dismayed and caught;

Behold, they have rejected the word of the LORD,

And what kind of wisdom do they have?

10 "Therefore I will give their wives to others,

Their fields to new owners;

Because from the least even to the greatest

Everyone is greedy for gain;

From the prophet even to the priest

Everyone practices deceit.

11 “They heal the brokenness of the daughter of My people superficially,
Saying, ‘Peace, peace,’
But there is no peace.

12 “Were they ashamed because of the abomination they had done?
They certainly were not ashamed,
And they did not know how to blush;
Therefore they shall fall among those who fall;
At the time of their punishment they shall be brought down,”
Says the LORD.

13 “I will surely snatch them away,” declares the LORD;
“There will be no grapes on the vine
And no figs on the fig tree,
And the leaf will wither;
And what I have given them will pass away.””

The People’s Resignation to the Coming Invasion

14 Why are we sitting still?
Assemble yourselves, and let us go into the fortified cities
And let us perish there,
Because the LORD our God has doomed us
And given us poisoned water to drink,
For we have sinned against the LORD.

15 *We* waited for peace, but no good *came*;
For a time of healing, but behold, terror!

16 From Dan is heard the snorting of his horses;
At the sound of the neighing of his stallions
The whole land quakes;
For they come and devour the land and its fullness,
The city and its inhabitants.

17 “For behold, I am sending serpents against you,
Adders, for which there is no charm,
And they will bite you,” declares the LORD.

Lament for a Stricken People

18 My sorrow is beyond healing,
My heart is faint *within me*!

19 Behold, listen! The cry of the daughter of my people from a distant land:
“Is the LORD not in Zion? Is her King not within her?”

“Why have they provoked Me with their graven images, with foreign idols?”

20 “Harvest is past, summer is ended,
And we are not saved.”

21 For the brokenness of the daughter of my people I am broken;
I mourn, dismay has taken hold of me.

22 Is there no balm in Gilead?
Is there no physician there?
Why then has not the health of the daughter of my people been restored?

9:1 Oh that my head were waters
And my eyes a fountain of tears,
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 wayfarers’ lodging place;
That I might leave my people
And go from them!
For all of them are adulterers,
An assembly of treacherous men.

3 “They bend their tongue *like* their bow;

- Lies and not truth prevail in the land;
 For they proceed from evil to evil,
 And they do not know Me,” declares the LORD.
- 4 “Let everyone be on guard against his neighbor,
 And do not trust any brother;
 Because every brother deals craftily,
 And every neighbor goes about as a slanderer.
- 5 “Everyone deceives his neighbor
 And does not speak the truth,
 They have taught their tongue to speak lies;
 They weary themselves committing iniquity.
- 6 “Your dwelling is in the midst of deceit;
 Through deceit they refuse to know Me,” declares the LORD.

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 the LORD of hosts,
- “Behold, I will refine them and assay them;
 For what *else* can I do, because of the daughter of My people?
- 8 “Their tongue is a deadly arrow;
 It speaks deceit;
 With his mouth one speaks peace to his neighbor,
 But inwardly he sets an ambush for him.
- 9 “Shall I not punish them for these things?” declares the LORD.
 “On a nation such as this
 Shall I not avenge Myself?
- 10 “For the mountains I will take up a weeping and wailing,
 And for the pastures of the wilderness a dirge,
 Because they are laid waste so that no one passes through,
 And the lowing of the cattle is not heard;
 Both the birds of the sky and the beasts have fled; they are gone.
- 11 “I will make Jerusalem a heap of ruins,
 A haunt of jackals;
 And I will make the cities of Judah a desolation, without inhabitant.”
- 12 Who is the wise man that may understand this? And *who is* he to whom the mouth of the LORD has spoken, that he may declare it? Why is the land ruined, laid waste like a desert, so that no one passes through?
- 13 The LORD said, “Because they have forsaken My law which I set before them, and have not obeyed My voice nor walked according to it,
 14 but have walked after the stubbornness of their heart and after the Baals, as their fathers taught them,”
 15 therefore thus says the LORD of hosts, the God of Israel, “behold, I will feed them, this people, with wormwood and give them poisoned water to drink.
 16 I will scatter them among the nations, whom neither they nor their fathers have known; and I will send the sword after them until I have annihilated them.”

A Lament over Jerusalem’s Destruction

- 17 Thus says the LORD of hosts,
- “Consider and call for the mourning women, that they may come;
 And send for the wailing women, that they may come!
- 18 “Let them make haste and take up a wailing for us,
 That our eyes may shed tears
 And our eyelids flow with water.
- 19 “For a voice of wailing is heard from Zion,
 ‘How are we ruined!

- We are put to great shame,
For we have left the land,
Because they have cast down our dwellings.”
- 20 Now hear the word of the LORD, O you women,
And let your ear receive the word of His mouth;
Teach your daughters wailing,
And everyone her neighbor a dirge.
- 21 For death has come up through our windows;
It has entered our palaces
To cut off the children from the streets,
The young men from the town squares.
- 22 Speak, “Thus says the LORD,
‘The corpses of men will fall like dung on the open field,
And like the sheaf after the reaper,
But no one will gather *them*.’”

The Only Basis for Boasting

23 Thus says the LORD, “Let not a wise man boast of his wisdom, and let not the mighty man boast of his might, let not a rich man boast of his riches;

24 but let him who boasts boast of this, that he understands and knows Me, [[1 Cor 1:31](#); [2 Cor 10:17](#)] that I am the LORD who exercises lovingkindness, justice and righteousness on earth; for I delight in these things,” declares the LORD.

Circumcision Will Not Save You—Circumcise Your Hearts!

25 “Behold, the days are coming,” declares the LORD, “that I will punish all who are circumcised and yet uncircumcised—

26 Egypt and Judah, and Edom and the sons of Ammon, and Moab and all those inhabiting the desert who clip the hair on their temples; 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 which the LORD speaks to you, O house of Israel.

2 Thus says the LORD,

“Do not learn the way of the nations,
And do not be terrified by the signs of the heavens
Although the nations are terrified by them;
3 For the customs of the peoples are delusion;
Because it is wood cut from the forest,
The work of the hands of a craftsman with a cutting tool.

4 “They decorate *it* with silver and with gold;
They fasten it with nails and with hammers
So that it will not totter.

5 “Like a scarecrow in a cucumber field are they,
And they cannot speak;
They must be carried,
Because they cannot walk!
Do not fear them,
For they can do no harm,
Nor can they do any good.”

6 There is none like You, O LORD;
You are great, and great is Your name in might.

7 Who would not fear You, O King of the nations?
Indeed it is Your due!
For among all the wise men of the nations
And in all their kingdoms,
There is none like You.

8 But they are altogether stupid and foolish

In their discipline of delusion—their idol is wood!

9 Beaten silver is brought from Tarshish,
And gold from Uphaz,
The work of a craftsman and of the hands of a goldsmith;
Violet and purple are their clothing;
They are all the work of skilled men.

10 But the LORD is the true God;
He is the living God and the everlasting King.
At His wrath the earth quakes,
And the nations cannot endure His indignation.

11 Thus you shall say to them, “The gods that did not make the heavens and the earth will perish from the earth and from under the heavens.”

12 *It is* He who made the earth by His power,
Who established the world by His wisdom;
And by His understanding He has stretched out the heavens.

13 When He utters His voice, *there is* a tumult of waters in the heavens,
And He causes the clouds to ascend from the end of the earth;
He makes lightning for the rain,
And brings out the wind from His storehouses.

14 Every man is stupid, devoid of knowledge;
Every goldsmith is put to shame by his idols;
For his molten images are deceitful,
And there is no breath in them.

15 They are worthless, a work of mockery;
In the time of their punishment they will perish.

16 The portion of Jacob is not like these;
For the Maker of all is He,
And Israel is the tribe of His inheritance;
The LORD of hosts is His name.

Announcement of Exile

17 Pick up your bundle from the ground,
You who dwell under siege!

18 For thus says the LORD,

“Behold, I am slinging out the inhabitants of the land
At this time,
And will cause them distress,
That they may be found.”

19 Woe is me, because of my injury!
My wound is incurable.
But I said, “Truly this is a sickness,
And I must bear it.”

20 My tent is destroyed,
And all my ropes are broken;
My sons have gone from me and are no more.
There is no one to stretch out my tent again
Or to set up my curtains.

21 For the shepherds have become stupid
And have not sought the LORD;
Therefore they have not prospered,
And all their flock is scattered.

22 The sound of a report! Behold, it comes—
A great commotion out of the land of the north—
To make the cities of Judah

A desolation, a haunt of jackals.

Jeremiah's Prayer

- 23 I know, O LORD, that a man's way is not in himself,
Nor is it in a man who walks to direct his steps.
- 24 Correct me, O LORD, but with justice;
Not with Your anger, or You will bring me to nothing.
- 25 Pour out Your wrath on the nations that do not know You
And on the families that do not call Your name;
For they have devoured Jacob;
They have devoured him and consumed him
And have laid waste his habitation.

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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

4 Then the king commanded Hilkiah the high priest and the priests of the second order and the doorkeepers, to bring out of the temple of the LORD all the vessels that were made for Baal, for Asherah, and for all the host of heaven;

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

5 He did away with the idolatrous priests whom the kings of Judah had appointed to burn incense in the high places in the cities of Judah and in the surrounding area of Jerusalem, also those who burned incense to Baal, to the sun and to the moon and to the constellations and to all the host of heaven.

6 He brought out the Asherah from the house of the LORD outside Jerusalem to the brook Kidron, and burned it at the brook Kidron, and ground *it* to dust, and threw its dust on the graves of the common people.

7 He also broke down the houses of the *male* cult prostitutes which *were* in the house of the LORD, where the women were weaving hangings for the Asherah.

8 Then he brought all the priests from the cities of Judah, and defiled the high places where the priests had burned incense, from Geba to Beersheba; and he broke 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 one's left at the city gate.

9 Nevertheless the priests of the high places did not go up to the altar of the LORD in Jerusalem, but they ate unleavened bread among their brothers.

10 He also defiled Topheth, which is in the valley of the son of Hinnom, that no man might make his son or his daughter pass through the fire for Molech.

11 He did away with the horses which the kings of Judah had given to the sun, at the entrance of the house of the LORD, by the chamber of Nathan-melech the official, which *was* in the precincts; and he burned the chariots of the sun with fire.

12 The altars which *were* on the roof, the upper chamber of Ahaz, which the kings of Judah had made, and the altars which Manasseh had made in the two courts of the house of the LORD, the king broke down; and he smashed them there and threw their dust into the brook Kidron.

13 The high places which *were* before Jerusalem, which *were* on the right of the mount of destruction which Solomon the king of Israel had built for Ashtoreth the abomination of the Sidonians, and for Chemosh the abomination of Moab, and for Milcom the abomination of the sons of Ammon, the king defiled.

14 He broke in pieces the *sacred* pillars and cut down the Asherim and filled their places with human bones.

15 Furthermore, the altar that *was* at Bethel *and* the high place which Jeroboam the son of Nebat, who made Israel sin, had made, even that altar and the high place he broke down. Then he demolished its stones, ground them to dust, and burned the Asherah.

16 Now when Josiah turned, he saw the graves that *were* there

2 Chronicles 34:3b–7

3b and in the twelfth year he began to purge Judah and Jerusalem of the high places, the Asherim, the carved images and the molten images.

4 They

tore down the altars of the Baals in his presence, and the incense altars that were high above them he chopped down;

also the Asherim, the carved images and the molten images he broke in pieces and ground to powder and scattered *it* on the graves of those who had sacrificed to them.

<p>on the mountain, and he sent and took the bones from the graves and burned <i>them</i> on the altar and defiled it according to the word of the LORD which the man of God proclaimed, who proclaimed these things. [1 Kgs 13:1-3]</p> <p>17 Then he said, “What is this monument that I see?” And the men of the city told him, “It is the grave of the man of God who came from Judah and proclaimed these things which you have done against the altar of Bethel.”</p> <p>18 He said, “Let him alone; let no one disturb his bones.” So they left his bones undisturbed with the bones of the prophet who came from Samaria.</p> <p>19 Josiah also removed all the houses of the high places which <i>were</i> in the cities of Samaria, which the kings of Israel had made provoking the LORD; and he did to them just as he had done in Bethel.</p> <p>20 All the priests of the high places who <i>were</i> there he slaughtered on the altars and burned human bones on them; then he returned to Jerusalem.</p>	<p>6 In the cities of Manasseh, Ephraim, Simeon, even as far as Naphtali, in their surrounding ruins, 7a he also tore down the altars and beat the Asherim and the carved images into powder, and chopped down all the incense altars throughout the land of Israel.</p> <p>5 Then he burned the bones of the priests on their altars and purged Judah and Jerusalem. 7b Then he returned to Jerusalem.</p>
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Josiah Orders Repairs to the Temple (Tishri [October] 623 – Nisan [April] 622 BC)

2 Kings 22:3-7	2 Chronicles 34:8-14
<p>3 Now in the eighteenth year of King Josiah, the king sent Shaphan, the son of Azaliah the son of Meshullam the scribe,</p> <p>to the house of the LORD saying, 4 “Go up to Hilkiah the high priest that he may count the money brought in to the house of the LORD which the doorkeepers have gathered from the people. 5 Let them deliver it into the hand of the workmen who have the oversight of the house of the LORD, and let them give it to the workmen who are in the house of the LORD to repair the damages of the house, 6 to the carpenters and the builders and the masons and for buying timber and hewn stone to repair the house. 7 Only no accounting shall be made with them for the money delivered into their hands, for they deal faithfully.”</p>	<p>8 Now in the eighteenth year of his reign, when he had purged the land and the house, he sent Shaphan the son of Azaliah,</p> <p>and Maaseiah an official of the city, and Joah the son of Joahaz the recorder, to repair the house of the LORD his God.</p> <p>9 They came to Hilkiah the high priest and delivered the money that was brought into the house of God, which the Levites, the doorkeepers, had collected from Manasseh and Ephraim, and from all the remnant of Israel, and from all Judah and Benjamin and the inhabitants of Jerusalem. 10 Then they gave <i>it</i> into the hands of the workmen who had the oversight of the house of the LORD, and the workmen who were working in the house of the LORD used it to restore and repair the house. 11 They in turn gave <i>it</i> to the carpenters and to the builders to buy quarried stone and timber for couplings and to make beams for the houses which the kings of Judah had let go to ruin.</p>

	<p>12 The men did the work faithfully with foremen over them to supervise: Jahath and Obadiah, the Levites of the sons of Merari, Zechariah and Meshullam of the sons of the Kohathites, and the Levites, all who were skillful with musical instruments.</p> <p>13 <i>They were</i> also over the burden bearers, and supervised all the workmen from job to job; and <i>some</i> of the Levites <i>were</i> scribes and officials and gatekeepers.</p> <p>14 When they were bringing out the money which had been brought into the house of the LORD, Hilkiyah the priest found the book of the law of the LORD <i>given</i> by Moses.</p>
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Hilkiyah the High Priest Discovers a Copy of the Torah (c. Nisan [April] 622 BC)

2 Kings 22:8–20

2 Chronicles 34:15–28

8 Then Hilkiyah the high priest said to Shaphan the scribe, "I have found the book of the law in the house of the LORD." And Hilkiyah gave the book to Shaphan who read it.

9 Shaphan the scribe came to the king and brought back word to the king and said, "Your servants have emptied out the money that was found in the house, and have delivered it into the hand of the workmen who have the oversight of the house of the LORD."

10 Moreover, Shaphan the scribe told the king saying, "Hilkiyah the priest has given me a book." And Shaphan read it in the presence of the king.

11 When the king heard the words of the book of the law, he tore his clothes.

12 Then the king commanded Hilkiyah the priest, Ahikam the son of Shaphan, Achbor the son of Micaiah, Shaphan the scribe, and Asaiah the king's servant saying,

13 "Go, inquire of the LORD for me and the people and all Judah concerning the words of this book that has been found, for great is the wrath of the LORD that burns against us, because our fathers have not listened to the words of this book, to do according to all that is written concerning us."

14 So Hilkiyah the priest, Ahikam, Achbor, Shaphan, and Asaiah went to Huldah the prophetess, the wife of Shallum the son of Tikvah, the son of Harhas, keeper of the wardrobe (now she lived in Jerusalem in the Second Quarter); and they spoke to her.

15 She said to them, "Thus says the LORD God of Israel, 'Tell the man who sent you to me,

16 thus says the LORD, "Behold, I bring evil on this place and on its inhabitants, *even* all the words of the book which the king of Judah has read. [cf. [Deut 28:15–68](#)]

17 Because they have forsaken Me and have burned incense to other gods that they might provoke Me to anger with all the work of their hands, therefore My wrath burns against this place, and it shall not be quenched.'"

18 "But to the king of Judah who sent you to inquire of the LORD, thus shall you say to him, 'Thus says the LORD God of Israel, "Regarding the words which you have heard,

19 because your heart was tender and you humbled yourself before the LORD when you heard what I spoke against this place and against its inhabitants that they should become a desolation and a curse,

15 Hilkiyah responded and said to Shaphan the scribe, "I have found the book of the law in the house of the LORD." And Hilkiyah gave the book to Shaphan.

16 Then Shaphan brought the book to the king and reported further word to the king, saying, "Everything that was entrusted to your servants they are doing.

17 "They have also emptied out the money which was found in the house of the LORD, and have delivered it into the hands of the supervisors and the workmen."

18 Moreover, Shaphan the scribe told the king saying, "Hilkiyah the priest gave me a book." And Shaphan read from it in the presence of the king.

19 When the king heard the words of the law, he tore his clothes.

20 Then the king commanded Hilkiyah, Ahikam the son of Shaphan, Abdon the son of Micah, Shaphan the scribe, and Asaiah the king's servant, saying,

21 "Go, inquire of the LORD for me and for those who are left in Israel and in Judah, concerning the words of the book which has been found; for great is the wrath of the LORD which is poured out on us because our fathers have not observed the word of the LORD, to do according to all that is written in this book."

22 So Hilkiyah and *those* whom the king had told went to Huldah the prophetess, the wife of Shallum the son of Tokhath, the son of Hasrah, the keeper of the wardrobe (now she lived in Jerusalem in the Second Quarter); and they spoke to her regarding this.

23 She said to them, "Thus says the LORD, the God of Israel, 'Tell the man who sent you to Me,

24 thus says the LORD, "Behold, I am bringing evil on this place and on its inhabitants, *even* all the curses written in the book which they have read in the presence of the king of Judah.

25 Because they have forsaken Me and have burned incense to other gods, that they might provoke Me to anger with all the works of their hands; therefore My wrath will be poured out on this place and it shall not be quenched.'"

26 "But to the king of Judah who sent you to inquire of the LORD, thus you will say to him, 'Thus says the LORD God of Israel *regarding* the words which you have heard,

27 Because your heart was tender and you humbled yourself before God when you heard His words against this place and against its inhabitants,

<p>and you have torn your clothes and wept before Me, I truly have heard you," declares the LORD. 20 Therefore, behold, I will gather you to your fathers, and you will be gathered to your grave in peace, and your eyes will not see all the evil which I will bring on this place.""" So they brought back word to the king.</p>	<p>and <i>because</i> you humbled yourself before Me, tore your clothes and wept before Me, I truly have heard you," declares the LORD. 28 Behold, I will gather you to your fathers and you shall be gathered to your grave in peace, so your eyes will not see all the evil which I will bring on this place and on its inhabitants.""" And they brought back word to the king.</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 revealing 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 which came to Jeremiah from the LORD, saying,

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

3 and say to them, ‘Thus says the LORD, the God of Israel, “Cursed is the man who does not heed the words of this covenant

4 which I commanded your forefathers in the day that I brought them out of the land of Egypt, from the iron furnace, saying, ‘Listen to My voice, and do according to all which I command you; so you shall be My people, and I will be your God,’

5 in order to confirm the oath which I swore to your forefathers, to give them a land flowing with milk and honey, as *it is* this day.’”

Then I said, “Amen, O LORD.”

6 And the LORD 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 warned your fathers in the day that I brought them up from the land of Egypt, even to this day, warning persistently, saying, “Listen to My voice.”

8 ‘Yet they did not obey or incline their ear, but walked, each one, in the stubbornness of his evil heart; therefore I brought on them all the words of this covenant, which I commanded *them* to do, but they did not.’”

Inescapable Punishment of the Covenant Breakers

9 Then the LORD said to me, “A conspiracy has been found among the men of Judah and among the inhabitants of Jerusalem.

10 “They have turned back to the iniquities of their ancestors who refused to hear 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 which I made with their fathers.”

11 Therefore thus says the LORD, “Behold I am bringing disaster on them which they will not be able to escape; though they will cry to Me, yet I will not listen to them.

12 “Then the cities of Judah and the inhabitants of Jerusalem will go and cry to the gods to whom they burn incense, but they surely will not save them in the time of their disaster.

13 “For your gods are as many as your cities, O Judah; and as many as the streets of Jerusalem are the altars you have set up to the shameful thing, altars to burn incense to Baal.

Jeremiah Forbidden to Pray for the People

14 “Therefore do not pray for this people, nor lift up a cry or prayer for them; for I will not listen when they call to Me because of their disaster.

15 “What right has My beloved in My house
When she has done many vile deeds?
Can the sacrificial flesh take away from you your disaster,
So *that* you can rejoice?”

16 The LORD called your name,
“A green olive tree, beautiful in fruit and form”;
With the noise of a great tumult
He has kindled fire on it,
And its branches are worthless.

17 The LORD of hosts, who planted you, has pronounced evil against you because of the evil of the house of Israel and of the house of Judah, which they have done to provoke Me by offering up sacrifices to Baal.

A Plot against Jeremiah's Life

18 Moreover, the LORD made it known to me and I knew it;
Then You showed me their deeds.

19 But I was like a gentle lamb led to the slaughter;
And I did not know that they had devised plots against me, *saying*,
“Let us destroy the tree with its fruit,
And let us cut him off from the land of the living,
That his name be remembered no more.”

20 But, O LORD of hosts, who judges righteously,
Who tries the feelings and the heart,
Let me see Your vengeance on them,
For to You have I committed my cause.

God's Assurance of Punishment of the Conspirators

21 Therefore thus says the LORD concerning the men of Anathoth, who seek your life, saying, "Do not prophesy in the name of the LORD, so that you will not die at our hand";

22 therefore, thus says the LORD of hosts, "Behold, I am about to punish them! The young men will die by the sword, their sons and daughters will die by famine;

23 and a remnant will not be left to them, for I will bring disaster on the men of Anathoth—the year of their punishment."

Jeremiah's Question about the Prosperity of the Wicked

12:1 Righteous are You, O LORD, that I would plead *my* case with You;

Indeed I would discuss matters of justice with You:

Why has the way of the wicked prospered?

Why are all those who deal in treachery at ease?

2 You have planted them, they have also taken root;

They grow, they have even produced fruit.

You are near to their lips

But far from their mind.

3 But You know me, O LORD;

You see me;

And You examine my heart's *attitude* toward You.

Drag them off like sheep for the slaughter

And set them apart for a day of carnage!

4 How long is the land to mourn

And the vegetation of the countryside to wither?

For the wickedness of those who dwell in it,

Animals and birds have been snatched away,

Because *men* have said, "He will not see our latter ending."

God's Answer

5 "If you have run with footmen and they have tired you out,

Then how can you compete with horses?

If you fall down in a land of peace,

How will you do in the thicket of the Jordan?

6 "For even your brothers and the household of your father,

Even they have dealt treacherously with you,

Even they have cried aloud after you.

Do not believe them, although they may say nice things to you."

God's Rejection of His Inheritance

7 "I have forsaken My house,

I have abandoned My inheritance;

I have given the beloved of My soul

Into the hand of her enemies.

8 "My inheritance has become to Me

Like a lion in the forest;

She has roared against Me;

Therefore I have come to hate her.

9 "Is My inheritance like a speckled bird of prey to Me?

Are the birds of prey against her on every side?

Go, gather all the beasts of the field,

Bring them to devour!

10 "Many shepherds have ruined My vineyard,

They have trampled down My field;

They have made My pleasant field

A desolate wilderness.

11 "It has been made a desolation,

Desolate, it mourns before Me;

The whole land has been made desolate,

Because no man lays it to heart.

- 12 “On all the bare heights in the wilderness
Destroyers have come,
For a sword of the LORD is devouring
From one end of the land even to the other;
There is no peace for anyone.
- 13 “They have sown wheat and have reaped thorns,
They have strained themselves to no profit.
But be ashamed of your harvest
Because of the fierce anger of the LORD.”

A Conditional Promise for Israel’s Neighbors

- 14 Thus says the LORD concerning all My wicked neighbors who strike at the inheritance with which I have endowed My people Israel, “Behold I am about to uproot them from their land and will uproot the house of Judah from among them.
- 15 “And it will come about that after I have uprooted them, I will again have compassion on them; and I will bring them back, each one to his inheritance and each one to his land.
- 16 “Then if they will really learn the ways of My people, to swear by My name, ‘As the LORD lives,’ even as they taught My people to swear by Baal, they will be built up in the midst of My people.
- 17 “But if they will not listen, then I will uproot that nation, uproot and destroy it,” declares the LORD.

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

2 Kings 23:1–3	2 Chronicles 34:29–32
<p>1 Then the king sent, and they gathered to him all the elders of Judah and of Jerusalem.</p> <p>2 The king went up to the house of the LORD and all the men of Judah and all the inhabitants of Jerusalem with him, and the priests and the prophets and all the people, both small and great; and he read in their hearing all the words of the book of the covenant which was found in the house of the LORD.</p> <p>3 The king stood by the pillar and made a covenant before the LORD, to walk after the LORD, and to keep His commandments and His testimonies and His statutes with all <i>his</i> heart and all <i>his</i> soul, to carry out the words of this covenant that were written in this book.</p> <p>And all the people entered into the covenant.</p>	<p>29 Then the king sent and gathered all the elders of Judah and Jerusalem.</p> <p>30 The king went up to the house of the LORD and all the men of Judah, the inhabitants of Jerusalem, the priests, the Levites and all the people, from the greatest to the least; and he read in their hearing all the words of the book of the covenant which was found in the house of the LORD.</p> <p>31 Then the king stood in his place and made a covenant before the LORD to walk after the LORD, and to keep His commandments and His testimonies and His statutes with all his heart and with all his soul, to perform the words of the covenant written in this book.</p> <p>32 Moreover, he made all who were present in Jerusalem and Benjamin to stand <i>with him</i>. So the inhabitants of Jerusalem did according to the covenant of God, the God of their fathers.</p>

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

2 Kings 23:21–23	2 Chronicles 35:1–19
<p>21 Then the king commanded all the people saying, “Celebrate the Passover to the LORD your God as it is written in this book of the covenant.”</p>	<p>1 Then Josiah celebrated the Passover to the LORD in Jerusalem,</p> <p>and they slaughtered the Passover <i>animals</i> on the fourteenth <i>day</i> of the first month.</p> <p>2 He set the priests in their offices and encouraged them in the service of the house of the LORD.</p> <p>3 He also said to the Levites who taught all Israel <i>and</i> who were holy to the LORD, “Put the holy ark in the house which Solomon the son of David king of Israel built; it will be a burden on <i>your</i> shoulders no longer. Now serve the LORD your God and His people Israel.</p> <p>4 “Prepare <i>yourselves</i> by your fathers’ households in your divisions, according to the writing of David king of Israel and according to the writing of his son Solomon.</p> <p>5 “Moreover, stand in the holy place according to the sections of</p>

the fathers' households of your brethren the lay people, and according to the Levites, by division of a father's household.

6 "Now slaughter the Passover *animals*, sanctify yourselves and prepare for your brethren to do according to the word of the LORD by Moses."

7 Josiah contributed to the lay people, to all who were present, flocks of lambs and young goats, all for the Passover offerings, numbering 30,000 plus 3,000 bulls; these were from the king's possessions.

8 His officers also contributed a freewill offering to the people, the priests and the Levites. Hilkiah and Zechariah and Jehiel, the officials of the house of God, gave to the priests for the Passover offerings 2,600 *from the flocks* and 300 bulls.

9 Conaniah also, and Shemaiah and Nethanel, his brothers, and Hashabiah and Jeiel and Jozabad, the officers of the Levites, contributed to the Levites for the Passover offerings 5,000 *from the flocks* and 500 bulls.

10 So the service was prepared, and the priests stood at their stations and the Levites by their divisions according to the king's command.

11 They slaughtered the Passover *animals*, and while the priests sprinkled the blood *received* from their hand, the Levites skinned *them*.

12 Then they removed the burnt offerings that *they* might give them to the sections of the fathers' households of the lay people to present to the LORD, as it is written in the book of Moses. *They did* this also with the bulls.

13 So they roasted the Passover *animals* on the fire according to the ordinance, and they boiled the holy things in pots, in kettles, in pans, and carried *them* speedily to all the lay people.

14 Afterwards they prepared for themselves and for the priests, because the priests, the sons of Aaron, *were* offering the burnt offerings and the fat until night; therefore the Levites prepared for themselves and for the priests, the sons of Aaron.

15 The singers, the sons of Asaph, *were* also at their stations according to the command of David, Asaph, Heman, and Jeduthun the king's seer; and the gatekeepers at each gate did not have to depart from their service, because the Levites their brethren prepared for them.

16 So all the service of the LORD was prepared on that day to celebrate the Passover, and to offer burnt offerings on the altar of the LORD according to the command of King Josiah.

17 Thus the sons of Israel who were present celebrated the Passover at that time, and the Feast of Unleavened Bread seven days.

18 There had not been celebrated a Passover like it in Israel since the days of Samuel the prophet; nor had any of the kings of Israel celebrated such a Passover as Josiah did with the priests, the Levites, all Judah and Israel who were present, and the inhabitants of Jerusalem.

19 In the eighteenth year of Josiah's reign this Passover was celebrated.

22 Surely such a Passover had not been celebrated from the days of the judges who judged Israel, nor in all the days of the kings of Israel and of the kings of Judah.

23 But in the eighteenth year of King Josiah, this Passover was observed to the LORD in Jerusalem.

Josiah Removes Idolatry That Had Appeared Since His Twelfth Year (c. Iyyar [May] 622 BC)

2 Kings 23:24–27

24 Moreover, Josiah removed the mediums and the spiritists and the teraphim and the idols and all the abominations that were seen in the land of Judah and in Jerusalem,

that he might confirm the words of the law which were written in the book that Hilkiah the priest found in the house of the LORD.

25 Before him there was no king like him who turned to the LORD with all his heart and with all his soul and with all his might, according to all the law of Moses; nor did any like him arise after him.

26 However, the LORD did not turn from the fierceness of His great wrath with which His anger burned against Judah, because of all the provocations with which Manasseh had provoked Him.

27 The LORD said, "I will remove Judah also from My sight, as I have removed Israel. And I will cast off Jerusalem, this city which I have chosen, and the temple of which I said, 'My name shall be there.'"

2 Chronicles 34:33

33 Josiah removed

all the abominations from all the lands belonging to the sons of Israel, and made all who were present in Israel to serve the LORD their God.

Throughout his lifetime they did not turn from following the LORD God of their fathers.

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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 the LORD said to me, "Go and buy yourself a linen waistband and put it around your waist, but do not put it in water."
 2 So I bought the waistband in accordance with the word of the LORD and put it around my waist.
 3 Then the word of the LORD came to me a second time, saying,
 4 "Take the waistband that you have bought, which is around your waist, and arise, go to the Euphrates and hide it there in a crevice of the rock."
 5 So I went and hid it by the Euphrates, as the LORD had commanded me.
 6 After many days the LORD said to me, "Arise, go to the Euphrates and take from there the waistband which I commanded you to hide there."
 7 Then I went to the Euphrates and dug, and I took the waistband from the place where I had hidden it; and lo, the waistband was ruined, it was totally worthless.
 8 Then the word of the LORD came to me, saying,
 9 "Thus says the LORD, 'Just so will I destroy the pride of Judah and the great pride of Jerusalem.
 10 This wicked people, who refuse to listen to My words, who walk in the stubbornness of their hearts and have gone after other gods to serve them and to bow down to them, let them be just like this waistband which is totally worthless.
 11 For as the waistband clings to the waist of a man, so I made the whole household of Israel and the whole household of Judah cling to Me,' declares the LORD, 'that they might be for Me a people, for renown, for praise and for glory; but they did not listen.'

The Smashed Wineskins

- 12 "Therefore you are to speak this word to them, 'Thus says the LORD, the God of Israel, "Every jug is to be filled with wine.'" And when they say to you, 'Do we not very well know that every jug is to be filled with wine?'
 13 then say to them, 'Thus says the LORD, "Behold I am about to fill all the inhabitants of this land—the kings that sit for David on his throne, the priests, the prophets and all the inhabitants of Jerusalem—with drunkenness!
 14 I will dash them against each other, both the fathers and the sons together," declares the LORD. "I will not show pity nor be sorry nor have compassion so as not to destroy 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 the LORD to Jeremiah in regard to the drought:

- 2 "Judah mourns
 And her gates languish;
 They sit on the ground in mourning,
 And the cry of Jerusalem has ascended.
 3 "Their nobles have sent their servants for water;
 They have come to the cisterns and found no water.
 They have returned with their vessels empty;
 They have been put to shame and humiliated,
 And they cover their heads.
 4 "Because the ground is cracked,
 For there has been no rain on the land;
 The farmers have been put to shame,
 They have covered their heads.
 5 "For even the doe in the field has given birth only to abandon *her young*,
 Because there is no grass.
 6 "The wild donkeys stand on the bare heights;
 They pant for air like jackals,
 Their eyes fail
 For there is no vegetation.

Jeremiah Intercedes for the People

- 7 "Although our iniquities testify against us,
 O LORD, act for Your name's sake!
 Truly our apostasies have been many,

We have sinned against You.

8 “O Hope of Israel,
Its Savior in time of distress,
Why are You like a stranger in the land
Or like a traveler who has pitched his *tent* for the night?

9 “Why are You like a man dismayed,
Like a mighty man who cannot save?
Yet You are in our midst, O LORD,
And we are called by Your name;
Do not forsake us!”

God Commands Jeremiah to Stop Praying

10 Thus says the LORD to this people, “Even so they have loved to wander; they have not kept their feet in check. Therefore the LORD does not accept them; now He will remember their iniquity and call their sins to account.”

11 So the LORD said to me, “Do not pray for the welfare of this people.

12 When they fast, I am not going to listen to their cry; and when they offer burnt offering and grain offering, I am not going to accept them. Rather I am going to make an end of them by the sword, famine and pestilence.”

Jeremiah Blames False Prophets

13 But, “Ah, Lord GOD!” I said, “Look, the prophets are telling them, ‘You will not see the sword nor will you have famine, but I will give you lasting peace in this place.’”

God’s Judgment on the False Prophets

14 Then the LORD said to me, “The prophets are prophesying falsehood in My name. I have neither sent them nor commanded them nor spoken to them; they are prophesying to you a false vision, divination, futility and the deception of their own minds.

15 Therefore thus says the LORD concerning the prophets who are prophesying in My name, although it was not I who sent them—yet they keep saying, ‘There will be no sword or famine in this land’—by sword and famine those prophets shall meet their end!

16 The people also to whom they are prophesying will be thrown out into the streets of Jerusalem because of the famine and the sword; and there will be no one to bury them—*neither* them, *nor* their wives, nor their sons, nor their daughters—for I will pour out their *own* wickedness on them.

Jeremiah’s Lament and Supplication

17 “You will say this word to them,
‘Let my eyes flow down with tears night and day,
And let them not cease;
For the virgin daughter of my people has been crushed with a mighty blow,
With a sorely infected wound.

18 ‘If I go out to the country,
Behold, those slain with the sword!
Or if I enter the city,
Behold, diseases of famine!
For both prophet and priest
Have gone roving about in the land that they do not know.’”

19 Have You completely rejected Judah?
Or have You loathed Zion?
Why have You stricken us so that we are beyond healing?
We waited for peace, but nothing good *came*;
And for a time of healing, but behold, terror!

20 We know our wickedness, O LORD,
The iniquity of our fathers, for we have sinned against You.

21 Do not despise *us*, for Your own name’s sake;
Do not disgrace the throne of Your glory;
Remember *and* do not annul Your covenant with us.

22 Are there any among the idols of the nations who give rain?
Or can the heavens grant showers?
Is it not You, O LORD our God?
Therefore we hope in You,
For You are the one who has done all these things.

The Futility of Intercession

15:1 Then the LORD said to me, “Even though Moses and Samuel were to stand before Me, My heart would not be with this people; send them away from My presence and let them go!

2 And it shall be that when they say to you, ‘Where should we go?’ then you are to tell them, ‘Thus says the LORD:

“Those *destined* for death, to death;
 And those *destined* for the sword, to the sword;
 And those *destined* for famine, to famine;
 And those *destined* for captivity, to captivity.”

3 “I will appoint over them four kinds of *doom*,” declares the LORD: “the sword to slay, the dogs to drag off, and the birds of the sky and the beasts of the earth to devour and destroy.

4 I will make them an object of horror among all the kingdoms of the earth because of Manasseh, the son of Hezekiah, the king of Judah, for what he did in Jerusalem.

The End of God’s Pity

5 “Indeed, who will have pity on you, O Jerusalem,
 Or who will mourn for you,
 Or who will turn aside to ask about your welfare?

6 “You who have forsaken Me,” declares the LORD,
 “You keep going backward.
 So I will stretch out My hand against you and destroy you;
 I am tired of relenting!

7 “I will winnow them with a winnowing fork
 At the gates of the land;
 I will bereave *them* of children, I will destroy My people;
 They did not repent of their ways.

8 “Their widows will be more numerous before Me
 Than the sand of the seas;
 I will bring against them, against the mother of a young man,
 A destroyer at noonday;
 I will suddenly bring down on her
 Anguish and dismay.

9 “She who bore seven *sons* pines away;
 Her breathing is labored.
 Her sun has set while it was yet day;
 She has been shamed and humiliated.
 So I will give over their survivors to the sword
 Before their enemies,” declares the LORD.

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, my mother, that you have borne me
 As a man of strife and a man of contention to all the land!
 I have not lent, nor have men lent money to me,
 Yet everyone curses me.

11 The LORD said, “Surely I will set you free for *purposes of good*;
 Surely I will cause the enemy to make supplication to you
 In a time of disaster and a time of distress.

12 “Can anyone smash iron,
 Iron from the north, or bronze?

13 “Your wealth and your treasures
 I will give for booty without cost,
 Even for all your sins
 And within all your borders.

14 “Then I will cause your enemies to bring *it*

Into a land you do not know;
For a fire has been kindled in My anger,
It will burn upon you.”

- 15 You who know, O LORD,
Remember me, take notice of me,
And take vengeance for me on my persecutors.
Do not, in view of Your patience, take me away;
Know that for Your sake I endure reproach.
- 16 Your words were found and I ate them,
And Your words became for me a joy and the delight of my heart;
For I have been called by Your name,
O LORD God of hosts.
- 17 I did not sit in the circle of merry-makers,
Nor did I exult.
Because of Your hand *upon me* I sat alone,
For You filled me with indignation.
- 18 Why has my pain been perpetual
And my wound incurable, refusing to be healed?
Will You indeed be to me like a deceptive *stream*
With water that is unreliable?

God Rebukes Jeremiah

- 19 Therefore, thus says the LORD,
“If you return, then I will restore you—
Before Me you will stand;
And if you extract the precious from the worthless,
You will become My spokesman.
They for their part may turn to you,
But as for you, you must not turn to them.
- 20 “Then I will make you to this people
A fortified wall of bronze;
And though they fight against you,
They will not prevail over you;
For I am with you to save you
And deliver you,” declares the LORD.
- 21 “So I will deliver you from the hand of the wicked,
And I will redeem you from the grasp of the violent.”

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

Jeremiah 16

Jeremiah Forbidden to Marry

- 1 The word of the LORD also came to me saying,
2 “You shall not take a wife for yourself nor have sons or daughters in this place.”
3 For thus says the LORD concerning the sons and daughters born in this place, and concerning their mothers who bear them, and their fathers who beget them in this land:
4 They will die of deadly diseases, they will not be lamented or buried; they will be as dung on the surface of the ground and come to an end by sword and famine, and their carcasses will become food for the birds of the sky and for the beasts of the earth.”

Jeremiah Forbidden to Mourn or Feast

- 5 For thus says the LORD, “Do not enter a house of mourning, or go to lament or to console them; for I have withdrawn My peace from this people,” declares the LORD, “My lovingkindness and compassion.
6 Both great men and small will die in this land; they will not be buried, they will not be lamented, nor will anyone gash himself or shave his head for them.
7 Men will not break *bread* in mourning for them, to comfort anyone for the dead, nor give them a cup of consolation to drink for anyone's father or mother.
8 Moreover you shall not go into a house of feasting to sit with them to eat and drink.”

Judah's Coming Punishment

9 For thus says the LORD of hosts, the God of Israel: "Behold, I am going to eliminate from this place, before your eyes and in your time, the voice of rejoicing and the voice of gladness, the voice of the groom and the voice of the bride.

10 Now when you tell this people all these words, they will say to you, 'For what reason has the LORD declared all this great calamity against us? And what is our iniquity, or what is our sin which we have committed against the LORD our God?'

11 Then you are to say to them, '*It is* because your forefathers have forsaken Me,' declares the LORD, 'and have followed other gods and served them and bowed down to them; but Me they have forsaken and have not kept My law.

12 You too have done evil, *even* more than your forefathers; for behold, you are each one walking according to the stubbornness of his own evil heart, without listening to Me.

13 So I will hurl you out of this land into the land which you have not known, neither you nor your fathers; and there you will serve other gods day and night, for I will grant you no favor.'

God Foresees a Future Restoration

14 "Therefore behold, days are coming," declares the LORD, "when it will no longer be said, 'As the LORD lives, who brought up the sons of Israel out of the land of Egypt,'

15 but, 'As the LORD lives, who brought up the sons of Israel from the land of the north and from all the countries where He had banished them.' For I will restore them to their own land which I gave to their fathers.

Futility of Hiding from God

16 "Behold, I am going to send for many fishermen," declares the LORD, "and they will fish for them; and afterwards I will send for many hunters, and they will hunt them from every mountain and every hill and from the clefts of the rocks.

17 For My eyes are on all their ways; they are not hidden from My face, nor is their iniquity concealed from My eyes.

18 I will first doubly repay their iniquity and their sin, because they have polluted My land; they have filled My inheritance with the carcasses of their detestable idols and with their abominations."

All Nations Will One Day Acknowledge the Lord

19 O LORD, 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 say,
"Our fathers have inherited nothing but falsehood,
Futility and things of no profit."

20 Can man make gods for himself?
Yet they are not gods!

21 "Therefore behold, I am going to make them know—
This time I will make them know
My power and My might;
And they shall know that My name is the LORD."

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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 down with an iron stylus;
With a diamond point it is engraved upon the tablet of their heart
And on the horns of their altars,
- 2 As they remember their children,
So they *remember* their altars and their Asherim
By green trees on the high hills.
- 3 O mountain of Mine in the countryside,
I will give over your wealth and all your treasures for booty,
Your high places for sin throughout your borders.
- 4 And you will, even of yourself, let go of your inheritance
That I gave you;
And I will make you serve your enemies
In the land which you do not know;
For you have kindled a fire in My anger
Which will burn forever.

A Choice of Curse or Blessing

- 5 Thus says the LORD,
"Cursed is the man who trusts in mankind
And makes flesh his strength,
And whose heart turns away from the LORD.
- 6 "For he will be like a bush in the desert
And will not see when prosperity comes,
But will live in stony wastes in the wilderness,
A land of salt without inhabitant.
- 7 "Blessed is the man who trusts in the LORD
And whose trust is the LORD.
- 8 "For he will be like a tree planted by the water,
That extends its roots by a stream
And will not fear when the heat comes;
But its leaves will be green,
And it will not be anxious in a year of drought
Nor cease to yield fruit. [cf. [Ps 1:3](#)]

The Incurable Condition of the Human Heart

- 9 "The heart is more deceitful than all else
And is desperately sick;
Who can understand it?
- 10 "I, the LORD, search the heart,
I test the mind,
Even to give to each man according to his ways,
According to the results of his deeds.
- 11 "As a partridge that hatches eggs which it has not laid,
So is he who makes a fortune, but unjustly;
In the midst of his days it will forsake him,
And in the end he will be a fool."

Jeremiah's Appeal for Vindication

- 12 A glorious throne on high from the beginning
Is the place of our sanctuary.
- 13 O LORD, the hope of Israel,
All who forsake You will be put to shame.
Those who turn away on earth will be written down,
Because they have forsaken the fountain of living water, even the LORD.
- 14 Heal me, O LORD, and I will be healed;

- Save me and I will be saved,
For You are my praise.
- 15 Look, they keep saying to me,
“Where is the word of the LORD?
Let it come now!”
- 16 But as for me, I have not hurried away from *being* a shepherd after You,
Nor have I longed for the woeful day;
You Yourself know that the utterance of my lips
Was in Your presence.
- 17 Do not be a terror to me;
You are my refuge in the day of disaster.
- 18 Let those who persecute me be put to shame, but as for me, let me not be put to shame;
Let them be dismayed, but let me not be dismayed.
Bring on them a day of disaster,
And crush them with twofold destruction!

Warning About Sabbath Observance

- 19 Thus the LORD said to me, “Go and stand in the public gate, through which the kings of Judah come in and go out, as well as in all the gates of Jerusalem;
20 and say to them, ‘Listen to the word of the LORD, kings of Judah, and all Judah and all inhabitants of Jerusalem who come in through these gates:
21 Thus says the LORD, “Take heed for yourselves, and do not carry any load on the sabbath day or bring anything in through the gates of Jerusalem.
22 You shall not bring a load out of your houses on the sabbath day nor do any work, but keep the sabbath day holy, as I commanded your forefathers.
23 Yet they did not listen or incline their ears, but stiffened their necks in order not to listen or take correction.
24 But it will come about, if you listen attentively to Me,” declares the LORD, “to bring no load in through the gates of this city on the sabbath day, but to keep the sabbath day holy by doing no work on it,
25 then there will come in through the gates of this city kings and princes sitting on the throne of David, riding in chariots and on horses, they and their princes, the men of Judah and the inhabitants of Jerusalem, and this city will be inhabited forever.
26 They will come in from the cities of Judah and from the environs of Jerusalem, from the land of Benjamin, from the lowland, from the hill country and from the Negev, bringing burnt offerings, sacrifices, grain offerings and incense, and bringing sacrifices of thanksgiving to the house of the LORD.
27 But if you do not listen to Me to keep the sabbath day holy by not carrying a load and coming in through the gates of Jerusalem on the sabbath day, then I will kindle a fire in its gates and it will devour the palaces of Jerusalem and 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 which came to Jeremiah from the LORD saying,
2 “Arise and go down to the potter’s house, and there I will announce My words to you.”
3 Then I went down to the potter’s house, and there he was, making something on the wheel.
4 But the vessel that he was making of clay was spoiled in the hand of the potter; so he remade it into another vessel, as it pleased the potter to make.
5 Then the word of the LORD came to me saying,
6 “Can I not, O house of Israel, deal with you as this potter *does*?” declares the LORD. “Behold, like the clay in the potter’s hand, so are you in My hand, O house of Israel.
7 At one moment I might speak concerning a nation or concerning a kingdom to uproot, to pull down, or to destroy *it*;
8 if that nation against which I have spoken turns from its evil, I will relent concerning the calamity I planned to bring on it.
9 Or at another moment I might speak concerning a nation or concerning a kingdom to build up or to plant *it*;
10 if it does evil in My sight by not obeying My voice, then I will think better of the good with which I had promised to bless it.
11 So now then, speak to the men of Judah and against the inhabitants of Jerusalem saying, ‘Thus says the LORD, “Behold, I am fashioning calamity against you and devising a plan against you. Oh turn back, each of you from his evil way, and reform your ways and your deeds.”’
12 “But they will say, ‘It’s hopeless! For we are going to follow our own plans, and each of us will act according to the stubbornness of his evil heart.’

Punishment of a Forgetful People

- 13 “Therefore thus says the LORD,
 ‘Ask now among the nations,
 Who ever heard the like of this?
 The virgin of Israel
 Has done a most appalling thing.
- 14 ‘Does the snow of Lebanon forsake the rock of the open country?
 Or is the cold flowing water *from* a foreign *land* ever snatched away?
- 15 ‘For My people have forgotten Me,
 They burn incense to worthless gods
 And they have stumbled from their ways,
 From the ancient paths,
 To walk in bypaths,
 Not on a highway,
- 16 To make their land a desolation,
An object of perpetual hissing;
 Everyone who passes by it will be astonished
 And shake his head.
- 17 ‘Like an east wind I will scatter them
 Before the enemy;
 I will show them My back and not *My* face
 In the day of their calamity.’”

A Plot against Jeremiah

18 Then they said, “Come and let us devise plans against Jeremiah. Surely the law is not going to be lost to the priest, nor counsel to the sage, nor the *divine* word to the prophet! Come on and let us strike at him with *our* tongue, and let us give no heed to any of his words.”

- 19 Do give heed to me, O LORD,
 And listen to what my opponents are saying!
- 20 Should good be repaid with evil?
 For they have dug a pit for me.
 Remember how I stood before You
 To speak good on their behalf,
 So as to turn away Your wrath from them.
- 21 Therefore, give their children over to famine
 And deliver them up to the power of the sword;
 And let their wives become childless and widowed.
 Let their men also be smitten to death,
 Their young men struck down by the sword in battle.
- 22 May an outcry be heard from their houses,
 When You suddenly bring raiders upon them;
 For they have dug a pit to capture me
 And hidden snares for my feet.
- 23 Yet You, O LORD, know
 All their deadly designs against me;
 Do not forgive their iniquity
 Or blot out their sin from Your sight.
 But may they 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 says the LORD, “Go and buy a potter’s earthenware jar, and *take* some of the elders of the people and some of the senior priests.
- 2 Then go out to the valley of Ben-hinnom, which is by the entrance of the potsherd gate, and proclaim there the words that I tell

you,
 3 and say, ‘Hear the word of the LORD, O kings of Judah and inhabitants of Jerusalem: thus says the LORD of hosts, the God of Israel, “Behold I am about to bring a calamity upon this place, at which the ears of everyone that hears of it will tingle.
 4 Because they have forsaken Me and have made this an alien place and have burned sacrifices in it to other gods, that neither they nor their forefathers nor the kings of Judah had *ever* known, and *because* they have filled this place with the blood of the innocent
 5 and have built the high places of Baal to burn their sons in the fire as burnt offerings to Baal, a thing which I never commanded or spoke of, nor did it *ever* enter My mind;
 6 therefore, behold, days are coming,” declares the LORD, “when this place will no longer be called Topheth or the valley of Ben-hinnom, but rather the valley of Slaughter.
 7 I will make void the counsel of Judah and Jerusalem in this place, and I will cause them to fall by the sword before their enemies and by the hand of those who seek their life; and I will give over their carcasses as food for the birds of the sky and the beasts of the earth.
 8 I will also make this city a desolation and an *object of* hissing; everyone who passes by it will be astonished and hiss because of all its disasters.
 9 I will make them eat the flesh of their sons and the flesh of their daughters, and they will eat one another’s flesh in the siege and in the distress with which their enemies and those who seek their life will distress them.”’

The Broken Jar and Its Symbolic Meaning

10 “Then you are to break the jar in the sight of the men who accompany you
 11 and say to them, ‘Thus says the LORD of hosts, “Just so will I break this people and this city, even as one breaks a potter’s vessel, which cannot again be repaired; and they will bury in Topheth because there is no *other* place for burial.
 12 This is how I will treat this place and its inhabitants,” declares the LORD, “so as to make this city like Topheth.
 13 The houses of Jerusalem and the houses of the kings of Judah will be defiled like the place Topheth, because of all the houses on whose rooftops they burned sacrifices to all the heavenly host and poured out drink offerings to other gods.”’
 14 Then Jeremiah came from Topheth, where the LORD had sent him to prophesy; and he stood in the court of the LORD’s house and said to all the people:
 15 “Thus says the LORD of hosts, the God of Israel, ‘Behold, I am about to bring on this city and all its towns the entire calamity that I have declared against it, because they have stiffened their necks so as not to heed My words.”’

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

Jeremiah 20

Pashhur’s Punishment of Jeremiah

1 When Pashhur the priest, the son of Immer, who was chief officer in the house of the LORD, heard Jeremiah prophesying these things,
 2 Pashhur had Jeremiah the prophet beaten and put him in the stocks that were at the upper Benjamin Gate, which was by the house of the LORD.
 3 On the next day, when Pashhur released Jeremiah from the stocks, Jeremiah said to him, “Pashhur is not the name the LORD has called you, but rather Magor-missabib.
 4 For thus says the LORD, ‘Behold, I am going to make you a terror to yourself and to all your friends; and while your eyes look on, they will fall by the sword of their enemies. So I will give over all Judah to the hand of the king of Babylon, and he will carry them away as exiles to Babylon and will slay them with the sword.
 5 I will also give over all the wealth of this city, all its produce and all its costly things; even all the treasures of the kings of Judah I will give over to the hand of their enemies, and they will plunder them, take them away and bring them to Babylon.
 6 And you, Pashhur, and all who live in your house will go into captivity; and you will enter Babylon, and there you will die and there you will be buried, you and all your friends to whom you have falsely prophesied.”’

Jeremiah Bemoans His Lot

7 O LORD, You have deceived me and I was deceived;
 You have overcome me and prevailed.
 I have become a laughingstock all day long;
 Everyone mocks me.
 8 For each time I speak, I cry aloud;
 I proclaim violence and destruction,
 Because for me the word of the LORD has resulted
 In reproach and derision all day long.
 9 But if I say, “I will not remember Him
 Or speak anymore in His name,”

Then in my heart it becomes like a burning fire
 Shut up in my bones;
 And I am weary of holding *it* in,
 And I cannot endure *it*.

- 10 For I have heard the whispering of many,
 “Terror on every side!
 Denounce *him*; yes, let us denounce him!”
 All my trusted friends,
 Watching for my fall, say:
 “Perhaps he will be deceived, so that we may prevail against him
 And take our revenge on him.”

Jeremiah Prays for Vengeance

- 11 But the LORD is with me like a dread champion;
 Therefore my persecutors will stumble and not prevail.
 They will be utterly ashamed, because they have failed,
 With an everlasting disgrace that will not be forgotten.
- 12 Yet, O LORD of hosts, You who test the righteous,
 Who see the mind and the heart;
 Let me see Your vengeance on them;
 For to You I have set forth my cause.
- 13 Sing to the LORD, praise the LORD!
 For He has delivered the soul of the needy one
 From the hand of evildoers.

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

- 14 Cursed be the day when I was born;
 Let the day not be blessed when my mother bore me!
- 15 Cursed be the man who brought the news
 To my father, saying,
 “A baby boy has been born to you!”
 And made him very happy.
- 16 But let that man be like the cities
 Which the LORD overthrew without relenting,
 And let him hear an outcry in the morning
 And a shout of alarm at noon;
- 17 Because he did not kill me before birth,
 So that my mother would have been my grave,
 And her womb ever pregnant.
- 18 Why did I ever come forth from the womb
 To look on trouble and sorrow,
 So that my days have been spent in shame?

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

2 Kings 23:28–30	2 Chronicles 35:20–36:1
<p>29 In his days</p> <p>Pharaoh Neco king of Egypt went up to the king of Assyria to the river Euphrates. And King Josiah went to meet him,</p> <p>and when <i>Pharaoh Neco</i> saw him he killed him at Megiddo.</p> <p>30a His servants drove his body in a chariot from Megiddo, and brought him to Jerusalem and buried him in his own tomb.</p> <p>28 Now the rest of the acts of Josiah</p> <p>and all that he did, are they not written in the Book of the Chronicles 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 this, when Josiah had set the temple in order, Neco king of Egypt came up to make war at Carchemish on the Euphrates, and Josiah went out to engage him.</p> <p>21 But Neco sent messengers to him, saying, “What have we to do with each other, O King of Judah? <i>I am not coming</i> against you today but against the house with which I am at war, and God has ordered me to hurry. Stop for your own sake from <i>interfering with</i> God who is with me, so that He will not destroy you.”</p> <p>22 However, Josiah would not turn away from him, but disguised himself in order to make war with him; nor did he listen to the words of Neco from the mouth of God, but came to make war on the plain of Megiddo.</p> <p>23 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 carried him in the second chariot which he had, and brought him to Jerusalem where he died and was buried in the tombs of his fathers. All Judah and Jerusalem mourned for Josiah.</p> <p>25 Then Jeremiah chanted a lament for Josiah. And all the male and female singers speak about Josiah in their lamentations to this day. And they made them an ordinance in Israel; behold, they are also written in the Lamentations.</p> <p>26 Now the rest of the acts of Josiah and his deeds of devotion as written in the law of the LORD,</p> <p>27 and his acts, first to last, behold, they are written in the Book of the Kings of Israel and Judah.</p> <p>36:1 Then the people of the land took Joahaz 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; and his mother’s name was Hamutal the daughter of Jeremiah of Libnah.</p> <p>32 He did evil in the sight of the LORD, according to all that his fathers had done.</p>	<p>2 Joahaz was twenty-three years old when he became king, 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 Pharaoh Neco imprisoned him at Riblah in the land of Hamath, that he might not reign in Jerusalem; and he imposed on the land a fine of one hundred talents of silver and a talent of gold.</p> <p>34 Pharaoh Neco made Eliakim the son of Josiah king in the place of Josiah his father, and changed his name to Jehoiakim. But he took Jehoahaz away and brought <i>him</i> to Egypt,</p>	<p>3 Then the king of Egypt</p> <p>deposed him at Jerusalem, and imposed on the land a fine of one hundred talents of silver and one talent of gold.</p> <p>4 The king of Egypt made Eliakim his brother king over Judah and Jerusalem, and changed his name to Jehoiakim. But Neco took Joahaz his brother and brought him to Egypt.</p>

and he died there.

35 So Jehoiakim gave the silver and gold to Pharaoh, but he taxed the land in order to give the money at the command of Pharaoh. He exacted the silver and gold from the people of the land, each according to his valuation, to give it 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; and his mother's name was Zebidah the daughter of Pedaiiah of Rumah.

37 He did evil in the sight of the LORD, according to all that his fathers had done.

5 Jehoiakim was twenty-five years old when he became king, and he reigned eleven years in Jerusalem;

and he did evil in the sight of the LORD 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 the LORD, "Go down to the house of the king of Judah, and there speak this word

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

3 Thus says the LORD, "Do justice and righteousness, and deliver the one who has been robbed from the power of *his* oppressor. Also do not mistreat *or* do violence to the stranger, the orphan, or the widow; and do not shed innocent blood in this place.

4 For if you men will indeed perform this thing, then kings will enter the gates of this house, sitting in David's place on his throne, riding in chariots and on horses, *even the king* himself and his servants and his people.

5 But if you will not obey these words, I swear by Myself," declares the LORD, "that this house will become a desolation.""

6 For thus says the LORD concerning the house of the king of Judah:

"You are *like* Gilead to Me,

Like the summit of Lebanon;

Yet most assuredly I will make you like a wilderness,

Like cities which are not inhabited.

7 For I will set apart destroyers against you,

Each with his weapons;

And they will cut down your choicest cedars

And throw *them* on the fire.

8 "Many nations will pass by this city; and they will say to one another, 'Why has the LORD done thus to this great city?'

9 Then they will answer, 'Because they forsook the covenant of the LORD their God and bowed down to other gods and served them.'"

Judgment on Shallum (Jehoahaz)

10 Do not weep for the dead or mourn for him, [Josiah]

But weep continually for the one who goes away; [Jehoahaz].

For he will never return

Or see his native land.

11 For thus says the LORD in regard to Shallum the son of Josiah, king of Judah, who became king in the place of Josiah his father, who went forth from this place, "He will never return there;

12 but in the place where they led him captive, there he will die and not see this land again.

Judgment on Jehoiakim

13 Woe to him who builds his house without righteousness

And his upper rooms without justice,

Who uses his neighbor's services without pay

And does not give him his wages,

- 14 Who says, 'I will build myself a roomy house
With spacious upper rooms,
And cut out its windows,
Paneling *it* with cedar and painting *it* bright red.'
- 15 "Do you become a king because you are competing in cedar?
Did not your father eat and drink
And do justice and righteousness?
Then it was well with him.
- 16 "He pled the cause of the afflicted and needy;
Then it was well.
Is not that what it means to know Me?"
Declares the LORD.
- 17 "But your eyes and your heart
Are *intent* only upon your own dishonest gain,
And on shedding innocent blood
And on practicing oppression and extortion."
- 18 Therefore thus says the LORD in regard to Jehoiakim the son of Josiah, king of Judah,

"They will not lament for him:
'Alas, my brother!' or, 'Alas, sister!'
They will not lament for him:
'Alas for the master!' or, 'Alas for his splendor!'
- 19 "He will be buried with a donkey's burial,
Dragged off and thrown out beyond the gates of Jerusalem.

The Consequences of Jerusalem's Disobedience

- 20 "Go up to Lebanon and cry out,
And lift up your voice in Bashan;
Cry out also from Abarim,
For all your lovers have been crushed.
- 21 "I spoke to you in your prosperity;
But you said, 'I will not listen!'
This has been your practice from your youth,
That you have not obeyed My voice.
- 22 "The wind will sweep away all your shepherds,
And your lovers will go into captivity;
Then you will surely be ashamed and humiliated
Because of all your wickedness.
- 23 "You who dwell in Lebanon,
Nested in the cedars,
How you will groan when pangs come upon you,
Pain like a woman in childbirth!

The Future Fate of Jeconiah (Jehoiachin)

- 24 "As I live," declares the LORD, "even though Coniah the son of Jehoiakim king of Judah were a signet *ring* on My right hand, yet I would pull you off;
- 25 and I will give you over into the hand of those who are seeking your life, yes, into the hand of those whom you dread, even into the hand of Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon and into the hand of the Chaldeans.
- 26 I will hurl you and your mother who bore you into another country where you were not born, and there you will die.
- 27 But as for the land to which they desire to return, they will not return to it.
- 28 "Is this man Coniah a despised, shattered jar?
Or is he an undesirable vessel?
Why have he and his descendants been hurled out
And cast into a land that they had not known?
- 29 "O land, land, land,
Hear the word of the LORD!

30 “Thus says the LORD,

‘Write this man down childless,
A man who will not prosper in his days;
For no man of his descendants will prosper
Sitting on the throne of David
Or 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 are destroying and scattering the sheep of My pasture!” declares the LORD.

2 Therefore thus says the LORD God of Israel concerning the shepherds who are tending My people: “You have scattered My flock and driven them away, and have not attended to them; behold, I am about to attend to you for the evil of your deeds,” declares the LORD.

The Coming Righteous King—Jesus

3 “Then I Myself will gather the remnant of My flock out of all the countries where I have driven them and bring them back to their pasture, and they will be fruitful and multiply.

4 I will also raise up shepherds over them and they will tend them; and they will not be afraid any longer, nor be terrified, nor will any be missing,” declares the LORD.

5 “Behold, *the* days are coming,” declares the LORD,
“When I will raise up for David a righteous Branch;
And He will reign as king and act wisely
And do justice and righteousness in the land.

6 “In His days Judah will be saved,
And Israel will dwell securely;
And this is His name by which He will be called,
‘The LORD our righteousness.’

7 “Therefore behold, *the* days are coming,” declares the LORD, “when they will no longer say, ‘As the LORD lives, who brought up the sons of Israel from the land of Egypt,’

8 but, ‘As the LORD lives, who brought up and led back the descendants of the household of Israel from *the* north land and from all the countries where I had driven them.’ Then they will live on their own soil.”

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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 As for the prophets:
 My heart is broken within me,
 All my bones tremble;
 I have become like a drunken man,
 Even like a man overcome with wine,
 Because of the LORD
 And because of His holy words.
- 10 For the land is full of adulterers;
 For the land mourns because of the curse.
 The pastures of the wilderness have dried up.
 Their course also is evil
 And their might is not right.
- 11 “For both prophet and priest are polluted;
 Even in My house I have found their wickedness,” declares the LORD.
- 12 “Therefore their way will be like slippery paths to them,
 They will be driven away into the gloom and fall down in it;
 For I will bring calamity upon them,
 The year of their punishment,” declares the LORD.

Evil Prophets of Samaria Compared to Prophets of Jerusalem

- 13 “Moreover, among the prophets of Samaria I saw an offensive thing:
 They prophesied by Baal and led My people Israel astray.
- 14 “Also among the prophets of Jerusalem I have seen a horrible thing:
 The committing of adultery and walking in falsehood;
 And they strengthen the hands of evildoers,
 So that no one has turned back from his wickedness.
 All of them have become to Me like Sodom,
 And her inhabitants like Gomorrah.
- 15 “Therefore thus says the LORD of hosts concerning the prophets,
 ‘Behold, I am going to feed them wormwood
 And make them drink poisonous water,
 For from the prophets of Jerusalem
 Pollution has gone forth into all the land.’”

God Warns Judah to Reject the Message of the False Prophets

- 16 Thus says the LORD of hosts,
 “Do not listen to the words of the prophets who are prophesying to you.
 They are leading you into futility;
 They speak a vision of their own imagination,
 Not from the mouth of the LORD.
- 17 “They keep saying to those who despise Me,
 ‘The LORD has said, “You will have peace”’;
 And as for everyone who walks in the stubbornness of his own heart,
 They say, ‘Calamity will not come upon you.’
- 18 “But who has stood in the council of the LORD,
 That he should see and hear His word?
 Who has given heed to His word and listened?
- 19 “Behold, the storm of the LORD has gone forth in wrath,
 Even a whirling tempest;
 It will swirl down on the head of the wicked.
- 20 “The anger of the LORD will not turn back
 Until He has performed and carried out the purposes of His heart;
 In the last days you will clearly understand it.

- 21 “I did not send *these* prophets,
But they ran.
I did not speak to them,
But they prophesied.
- 22 “But if they had stood in My council,
Then they would have announced My words to My people,
And would have turned them back from their evil way
And from the evil of their deeds.
- 23 “Am I a God who is near,” declares the LORD,
“And not a God far off?
- 24 “Can a man hide himself in hiding places
So I do not see him?” declares the LORD.
“Do I not fill the heavens and the earth?” declares the LORD.

God’s Rejection of the Lying Prophets

- 25 “I have heard what the prophets have said who prophesy falsely in My name, saying, ‘I had a dream, I had a dream!’
26 How long? Is there *anything* in the hearts of the prophets who prophesy falsehood, even *these* prophets of the deception of their own heart,
27 who intend to make My people forget My name by their dreams which they relate to one another, just as their fathers forgot My name because of Baal?
28 The prophet who has a dream may relate *his* dream, but let him who has My word speak My word in truth. What does straw have *in common* with grain?” declares the LORD.
29 “Is not My word like fire?” declares the LORD, “and like a hammer which shatters a rock?
30 Therefore behold, I am against the prophets,” declares the LORD, “who steal My words from each other.
31 Behold, I am against the prophets,” declares the LORD, “who use their tongues and declare, ‘*The Lord* declares.’
32 Behold, I am against those who have prophesied false dreams,” declares the LORD, “and related them and led My people astray by their falsehoods and reckless boasting; yet I did not send them or command them, nor do they furnish this people the slightest benefit,” declares the LORD.

The Burden of the Lord

- 33 “Now when this people or the prophet or a priest asks you saying, ‘What is the oracle of the LORD?’ then you shall say to them, ‘What oracle?’ The LORD declares, ‘I will abandon you.’
34 Then as for the prophet or the priest or the people who say, ‘The oracle of the LORD,’ I will bring punishment upon that man and his household.
35 Thus will each of you say to his neighbor and to his brother, ‘What has the LORD answered?’ or, ‘What has the LORD spoken?’
36 For you will no longer remember the oracle of the LORD, because every man’s own word will become the oracle, and you have perverted the words of the living God, the LORD of hosts, our God.
37 Thus you will say to *that* prophet, ‘What has the LORD answered you?’ and, ‘What has the LORD spoken?’
38 For if you say, ‘The oracle of the LORD!’ surely thus says the LORD, ‘Because you said this word, “The oracle of the LORD!” I have also sent to you, saying, “You shall not say, ‘The oracle of the LORD!’”’
39 Therefore behold, I will surely forget you and cast you away from My presence, along with the city which I gave you and your fathers.
40 I will put an everlasting reproach on you and an everlasting humiliation which 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 In the beginning of the reign of Jehoiakim the son of Josiah, king of Judah, this word came from the LORD, saying,
2 “Thus says the LORD, ‘Stand in the court of the LORD’s house, and speak to all the cities of Judah who have come to worship *in* the LORD’s house all the words that I have commanded you to speak to them. Do not omit a word!
3 Perhaps they will listen and everyone will turn from his evil way, that I may repent of the calamity which I am planning to do to them because of the evil of their deeds.’
4 And you will say to them, ‘Thus says the LORD, “If you will not listen to Me, to walk in My law which I have set before you,
5 to listen to the words of My servants the prophets, whom I have been sending to you again and again, but you have not listened;
6 then I will make this house like Shiloh, and this city I will make a curse to all the nations of the earth.”’”

Arrest and Trial of Jeremiah

7 The priests and the prophets and all the people heard Jeremiah speaking these words in the house of the LORD.

8 When Jeremiah finished speaking all that the LORD had commanded *him* to speak to all the people, the priests and the prophets and all the people seized him, saying, “You must die!

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

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

11 Then the priests and the prophets spoke to the officials and to all the people, saying, “A death sentence for this man! For he has prophesied against this city as you have heard in your hearing.”

12 Then Jeremiah spoke to all the officials and to all the people, saying, “The LORD 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 the LORD your God; and the LORD will change His mind about the misfortune which He has pronounced against you.

14 But as for me, behold, I am in your hands; do with me as is good and right in your sight.

15 Only know for certain that if you put me to death, you will bring innocent blood on yourselves, and on this city and on its inhabitants; for truly the LORD has sent me to you to speak all these words in your hearing.”

16 Then the officials and all the people said to the priests and to the prophets, “No death sentence for this man! For he has spoken to us in the name of the LORD our God.”

17 Then some of the elders of the land rose up and spoke to all the assembly of the people, saying,

18 “Micah of Moresheth prophesied in the days of Hezekiah king of Judah; and he spoke to all the people of Judah, saying, ‘Thus the LORD of hosts has said,

“Zion will be plowed *as* a field,
And Jerusalem will become ruins,
And the mountain of the house as the high places of a forest.”’ [Mic 3:12]

19 Did Hezekiah king of Judah and all Judah put him to death? Did he not fear the LORD and entreat the favor of the LORD, and the LORD changed His mind about the misfortune which He had pronounced against them? But we are committing a great evil against ourselves.”

Arrest and Slaying of Uriah the Prophet

20 Indeed, there was also a man who prophesied in the name of the LORD, Uriah the son of Shemaiah from Kiriath-jearim; and he prophesied against this city and against this land words similar to all those of Jeremiah.

21 When King Jehoiakim and all his mighty men and all the officials heard his words, then the king sought to put him to death; but Uriah heard *it*, and he was afraid and fled and went to Egypt.

22 Then King Jehoiakim sent men to Egypt: Elnathan the son of Achbor and *certain* men with him *went* into Egypt.

23 And they brought Uriah from Egypt and led him to King Jehoiakim, who slew him with a sword and cast his dead body into the burial place of the common people.

Jeremiah is Released

24 But the hand of Ahikam the son of Shaphan was with Jeremiah, so that he was not given into the hands 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, king of Judah (that was the first year of Nebuchadnezzar 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, king of Judah, even to this day, these twenty-three years the word of the LORD has come to me, and I have spoken to you again and again, but you have not listened.

4 And the LORD has sent to you all His servants the prophets again and again, but you have not listened nor inclined your ear to hear,
5 saying, ‘Turn now everyone from his evil way and from the evil of your deeds, and dwell on the land which the LORD has given to you and your forefathers forever and ever;

6 and do not go after other gods to serve them and to worship them, and do not provoke Me to anger with the work of your hands, and I will do you no harm.’

7 Yet you have not listened to Me,” declares the LORD, “in order that you might provoke Me to anger with the work of your hands to your own harm.

Seventy Years of Punishment

8 “Therefore thus says the LORD of hosts, ‘Because you have not obeyed My words,
9 behold, I will send and take all the families of the north,’ declares the LORD, ‘and *I will send* to Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon, My servant, and will bring them against this land and against its inhabitants and against all these nations round about; and I will utterly destroy them and make them a horror and a hissing, and an everlasting desolation.
10 Moreover, I will take from them the voice of joy and the voice of gladness, the voice of the bridegroom and the voice of the bride, the sound of the millstones and the light of the lamp.
11 This whole land will be a desolation and a horror, and these nations will serve the king of Babylon seventy years.
12 ‘Then it will be when seventy years are completed I will punish the king of Babylon and that nation,’ declares the LORD, ‘for their iniquity, and the land of the Chaldeans; and I will make it an everlasting desolation.
13 I will bring upon that land all My words which I have pronounced against it, all that is written in this book which Jeremiah has prophesied against all the nations.
14 (For many nations and great kings will make slaves of them, even them; and I will recompense them according to their deeds and according to the work of their hands.)’”

The Cup of God’s Wrath

15 For thus the LORD, the God of Israel, says to me, “Take this cup of the wine of wrath from My hand and cause all the nations to whom I send you to drink it.
16 They will drink and stagger and go mad because of the sword that I will send among them.”
17 Then I took the cup from the LORD’s hand and made all the nations to whom the LORD sent me drink it:
18 Jerusalem and the cities of Judah and its kings *and* its princes, to make them a ruin, a horror, a hissing and a curse, as it is this day;
19 Pharaoh king of Egypt, his servants, his princes and all his people;
20 and all the foreign people, all the kings of the land of Uz, all the kings of the land of the Philistines (even Ashkelon, Gaza, Ekron and the remnant of Ashdod);
21 Edom, Moab and the sons of Ammon;
22 and all the kings of Tyre, all the kings of Sidon and the kings of the coastlands which are beyond the sea;
23 and Dedan, Tema, Buz and all who cut the corners *of their hair*;
24 and all the kings of Arabia and all the kings of the foreign people who dwell in the desert;
25 and all the kings of Zimri, all the kings of Elam and all the kings of Media;
26 and all the kings of the north, near and far, one with another; and all the kingdoms of the earth which are upon the face of the ground, and the king of Sheshach shall drink after them.
27 “You shall say to them, ‘Thus says the LORD of hosts, the God of Israel, “Drink, be drunk, vomit, fall and rise no more because of the sword which I will send among you.”’
28 And it will be, if they refuse to take the cup from your hand to drink, then you will say to them, ‘Thus says the LORD of hosts: “You shall surely drink!
29 For behold, I am beginning to work calamity in *this* city which is called by My name, and shall you be completely free from punishment? You will not be free from punishment; for I am summoning a sword against all the inhabitants of the earth,” declares the LORD of hosts.’

God’s Coming Judgment on All Nations

30 “Therefore you shall prophesy against them all these words, and you shall say to them,

‘The LORD will roar from on high
And utter His voice from His holy habitation;
He will roar mightily against His fold.
He will shout like those who tread *the grapes*,
Against all the inhabitants of the earth.

31 ‘A clamor has come to the end of the earth,
Because the LORD has a controversy with the nations.
He is entering into judgment with all flesh;
As for the wicked, He has given them to the sword,’ declares the LORD.”
32 Thus says the LORD of hosts,
“Behold, evil is going forth
From nation to nation,

And a great storm is being stirred up
From the remotest parts of the earth.

33 “Those slain by the LORD on that day will be from one end of the earth to the other. They will not be lamented, gathered or buried; they will be like dung on the face of the ground.

34 “Wail, you shepherds, and cry;
And wallow *in ashes*, you masters of the flock;
For the days of your slaughter and your dispersions have come,
And you will fall like a choice vessel.

35 “Flight will perish from the shepherds,
And escape from the masters of the flock.

36 “*Hear* the sound of the cry of the shepherds,
And the wailing of the masters of the flock!
For the LORD is destroying their pasture,

37 “And the peaceful folds are made silent
Because of the fierce anger of the LORD.

38 “He has left His hiding place like the lion;
For their land has become a horror
Because of the fierceness of the oppressing *sword*
And because of His fierce 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 That which came as the word of the LORD to Jeremiah the prophet concerning the nations.

Egypt's Defeat at Carchemish (605 BC)

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

- 3 "Line up the shield and buckler,
And draw near for the battle!
- 4 "Harness the horses,
And mount the steeds,
And take your stand with helmets *on*!
Polish the spears,
Put on the scale-armor!
- 5 "Why have I seen *it*?
They are terrified,
They are drawing back,
And their mighty men are defeated
And have taken refuge in flight,
Without facing back;
Terror is on every side!"
Declares the LORD.
- 6 Let not the swift man flee,
Nor the mighty man escape;
In the north beside the river Euphrates
They have stumbled and fallen.
- 7 Who is this that rises like the Nile,
Like the rivers whose waters surge about?
- 8 Egypt rises like the Nile,
Even like the rivers whose waters surge about;
And He has said, "I will rise and cover *that* land;
I will surely destroy the city and its inhabitants."
- 9 Go up, you horses, and drive madly, you chariots,
That the mighty men may march forward:
Ethiopia and Put, that handle the shield,
And the Lydians, that handle *and* bend the bow.
- 10 For that day belongs to the Lord GOD of hosts,
A day of vengeance, so as to avenge Himself on His foes;
And the sword will devour and be satiated
And drink its fill of their blood;
For there will be a slaughter for the Lord GOD of hosts,
In the land of the north by the river Euphrates.
- 11 Go up to Gilead and obtain balm,
O virgin daughter of Egypt!
In vain have you multiplied remedies;
There is no healing for you.
- 12 The nations have heard of your shame,
And the earth is full of your cry *of distress*;
For one warrior has stumbled over another,
And both of them have fallen down together.

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

13 *This is* the message which the LORD spoke to Jeremiah the prophet about the coming of Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon to smite the land of Egypt:

- 14 "Declare in Egypt and proclaim in Migdol,

- Proclaim also in Memphis and Tahpanhes;
 Say, 'Take your stand and get yourself ready,
 For the sword has devoured those around you.'
- 15 "Why have your mighty ones become prostrate?
 They do not stand because the LORD has thrust them down.
- 16 "They have repeatedly stumbled;
 Indeed, they have fallen one against another.
 Then they said, 'Get up! And let us go back
 To our own people and our native land
 Away from the sword of the oppressor.'
- 17 "They cried there, 'Pharaoh king of Egypt *is but* a big noise;
 He has let the appointed time pass by!'
- 18 "As I live," declares the King
 Whose name is the LORD of hosts,
 "Surely one shall come *who looms up* like Tabor among the mountains,
 Or like Carmel by the sea.
- 19 "Make your baggage ready for exile,
 O daughter dwelling in Egypt,
 For Memphis will become a desolation;
 It will even be burned down *and* bereft of inhabitants.
- 20 "Egypt is a pretty heifer,
But a horsefly is coming from the north—it is coming!
- 21 "Also her mercenaries in her midst
 Are like fattened calves,
 For even they too have turned back *and* have fled away together;
 They did not stand *their ground*.
 For the day of their calamity has come upon them,
 The time of their punishment.
- 22 "Its sound moves along like a serpent;
 For they move on like an army
 And come to her as woodcutters with axes.
- 23 "They have cut down her forest," declares the LORD;
 "Surely it will no *more* be found,
 Even though they are *now* more numerous than locusts
 And are without number.
- 24 "The daughter of Egypt has been put to shame,
 Given over to the power of the people of the north."

A Word of Hope to Egypt

25 The LORD of hosts, the God of Israel, says, "Behold, I am going to punish Amon of Thebes, and Pharaoh, and Egypt along with her gods and her kings, even Pharaoh and those who trust in him.

26 "I shall give them over to the power of those who are seeking their lives, even into the hand of Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon and into the hand of his officers. Afterwards, however, it will be inhabited as in the days of old," declares the LORD.

Words of Assurance to Israel

- 27 "But as for you, O Jacob My servant, do not fear,
 Nor be dismayed, O Israel!
 For, see, I am going to save you from afar,
 And your descendants from the land of their captivity;
 And Jacob will return and be undisturbed
 And secure, with no one making *him* tremble.
- 28 "O Jacob My servant, do not fear," declares the LORD,
 "For I am with you.
 For I will make a full end of all the nations
 Where I have driven you,
 Yet I will not make a full end of you;
 But I will correct you properly
 And by no means leave you unpunished."

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

Jeremiah 47

1 That which came as the word of the LORD to Jeremiah the prophet concerning the Philistines, before Pharaoh conquered Gaza.

2 Thus says the LORD:

“Behold, waters are going to rise from the north
And become an overflowing torrent,
And overflow the land and all its fullness,
The city and those who live in it;
And the men will cry out,
And every inhabitant of the land will wail.

3 “Because of the noise of the galloping hoofs of his stallions,
The tumult of his chariots, *and* the rumbling of his wheels,
The fathers have not turned back for *their* children,
Because of the limpness of *their* hands,

4 On account of the day that is coming
To destroy all the Philistines,
To cut off from Tyre and Sidon
Every ally that is left;
For the LORD is going to destroy the Philistines,
The remnant of the coastland of Caphtor.

5 “Baldness has come upon Gaza;
Ashkelon has been ruined.
O remnant of their valley,
How long will you gash yourself?

6 “Ah, sword of the LORD,
How long will you not be quiet?
Withdraw into your sheath;
Be at rest and stay still.

7 “How can it be quiet,
When the LORD has given it an order?
Against Ashkelon and against the seacoast—
There He has assigned it.”

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

Jeremiah 48

The Destruction of Moab

1 Concerning Moab. Thus says the LORD of hosts, the God of Israel,

“Woe to Nebo, for it has been destroyed;
Kiriathaim has been put to shame, it has been captured;
The lofty stronghold has been put to shame and shattered.

2 “There is praise for Moab no longer;
In Heshbon they have devised calamity against her:
‘Come and let us cut her off from *being* a nation!’
You too, Madmen, will be silenced;
The sword will follow after you.

3 “The sound of an outcry from Horonaim,
‘Devastation and great destruction!’

4 “Moab is broken,
Her little ones have sounded out a cry *of distress*.

5 “For by the ascent of Luhith
They will ascend with continual weeping;
For at the descent of Horonaim
They have heard the anguished cry of destruction.

6 “Flee, save your lives,
That you may be like a juniper in the wilderness.

- 7 “For because of your trust in your own achievements and treasures,
Even you yourself will be captured;
And Chemosh will go off into exile
Together with his priests and his princes.
- 8 “A destroyer will come to every city,
So that no city will escape;
The valley also will be ruined
And the plateau will be destroyed,
As the LORD has said.
- 9 “Give wings to Moab,
For she will flee away;
And her cities will become a desolation,
Without inhabitants in them.
- 10 “Cursed be the one who does the LORD’s work negligently,
And cursed be the one who restrains his sword from blood.

The Humbling of a Complacent Nation

- 11 “Moab has been at ease since his youth;
He has also been undisturbed, *like wine* on its dregs,
And he has not been emptied from vessel to vessel,
Nor has he gone into exile.
Therefore he retains his flavor,
And his aroma has not changed.
- 12 “Therefore behold, the days are coming,” declares the LORD, “when I will send to him those who tip *vessels*, and they will tip him over, and they will empty his vessels and shatter his jars.
- 13 “And Moab will be ashamed of Chemosh, as the house of Israel was ashamed of Bethel, their confidence.
- 14 “How can you say, ‘We are mighty warriors,
And men valiant for battle’?
- 15 “Moab has been destroyed and men have gone up to his cities;
His choicest young men have also gone down to the slaughter,”
Declares the King, whose name is the LORD of hosts.
- 16 “The disaster of Moab will soon come,
And his calamity has swiftly hastened.
- 17 “Mourn for him, all you who *live* around him,
Even all of you who know his name;
Say, ‘How has the mighty scepter been broken,
A staff of splendor!’

Judgment on Moab’s Cities

- 18 “Come down from your glory
And sit on the parched ground,
O daughter dwelling in Dibon,
For the destroyer of Moab has come up against you,
He has ruined your strongholds.
- 19 “Stand by the road and keep watch,
O inhabitant of Aroer;
Ask him who flees and her who escapes
And say, ‘What has happened?’
- 20 “Moab has been put to shame, for it has been shattered.
Wail and cry out;
Declare by the Arnon
That Moab has been destroyed.
- 21 “Judgment has also come upon the plain, upon Holon, Jahzah and against Mephaath,
22 against Dibon, Nebo and Beth-diblathaim,
23 against Kiriathaim, Beth-gamul and Beth-meon,

24 against Kerioth, Bozrah and all the cities of the land of Moab, far and near.

25 “The horn of Moab has been cut off and his arm broken,” declares the LORD.

The Futility of Moab’s Insolence

26 “Make him drunk, for he has become arrogant toward the LORD; so Moab will wallow in his vomit, and he also will become a laughingstock.

27 “Now was not Israel a laughingstock to you? Or was he caught among thieves? For each time you speak about him you shake *your head in scorn*.

28 “Leave the cities and dwell among the crags,
O inhabitants of Moab,
And be like a dove that nests
Beyond the mouth of the chasm.

29 “We have heard of the pride of Moab—he *is* very proud—
Of his haughtiness, his pride, his arrogance and his self-exaltation.

30 “I know his fury,” declares the LORD,
“But it is futile;
His idle boasts have accomplished nothing.

Lament for Moab

31 “Therefore I will wail for Moab,
Even for all Moab will I cry out;
I will moan for the men of Kir-heres.

32 “More than the weeping for Jazer
I will weep for you, O vine of Sibmah!
Your tendrils stretched across the sea,
They reached to the sea of Jazer;
Upon your summer fruits and your grape harvest
The destroyer has fallen.

33 “So gladness and joy are taken away
From the fruitful field, even from the land of Moab.
And I have made the wine to cease from the wine presses;
No one will tread *them* with shouting,
The shouting will not be shouts *of joy*.

34 “From the outcry at Heshbon even to Elealeh, even to Jahaz they have raised their voice, from Zoar even to Horonaim *and to* Eglath-sheleshiah; for even the waters of Nimrim will become desolate.

35 “I will make an end of Moab,” declares the LORD, “the one who offers *sacrifice* on the high place and the one who burns incense to his gods.

36 “Therefore My heart wails for Moab like flutes; My heart also wails like flutes for the men of Kir-heres. Therefore they have lost the abundance it produced.

37 “For every head is bald and every beard cut short; there are gashes on all the hands and sackcloth on the loins.

38 “On all the housetops of Moab and in its streets there is lamentation everywhere; for I have broken Moab like an undesirable vessel,” declares the LORD.

39 “How shattered it is! *How* they have wailed! How Moab has turned his back—he is ashamed! So Moab will become a laughingstock and an object of terror to all around him.”

Moab’s Punishment and Restoration

40 For thus says the LORD:

“Behold, one will fly swiftly like an eagle
And spread out his wings against Moab.

41 “Kerioth has been captured
And the strongholds have been seized,
So the hearts of the mighty men of Moab in that day
Will be like the heart of a woman in labor.

42 “Moab will be destroyed from *being* a people
Because he has become arrogant toward the LORD.

- 43 “Terror, pit and snare are *coming* upon you,
O inhabitant of Moab,” declares the LORD.
- 44 “The one who flees from the terror
Will fall into the pit,
And the one who climbs up out of the pit
Will be caught in the snare;
For I shall bring upon her, *even* upon Moab,
The year of their punishment,” declares the LORD.
- 45 “In the shadow of Heshbon
The fugitives stand without strength;
For a fire has gone forth from Heshbon
And a flame from the midst of Sihon,
And it has devoured the forehead of Moab
And the scalps of the riotous revelers.
- 46 “Woe to you, Moab!
The people of Chemosh have perished;
For your sons have been taken away captive
And your daughters into captivity.
- 47 “Yet I will restore the fortunes of Moab
In the latter days,” declares the LORD.

Thus far the judgment on Moab.

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

Jeremiah 49:1–6

1 Concerning the sons of Ammon. Thus says the LORD:

- “Does Israel have no sons?
Or has he no heirs?
Why then has Malcam taken possession of Gad
And his people settled in its cities?”
- 2 “Therefore behold, the days are coming,” declares the LORD,
“That I will cause a trumpet blast of war to be heard
Against Rabbah of the sons of Ammon;
And it will become a desolate heap,
And her towns will be set on fire.
Then Israel will take possession of his possessors,”
Says the LORD.
- 3 “Wail, O Heshbon, for Ai has been destroyed!
Cry out, O daughters of Rabbah,
Gird yourselves with sackcloth and lament,
And rush back and forth inside the walls;
For Malcam will go into exile
Together with his priests and his princes.
- 4 “How boastful you are about the valleys!
Your valley is flowing *away*,
O backsliding daughter
Who trusts in her treasures, *saying*,
‘Who will come against me?’
- 5 “Behold, I am going to bring terror upon you,”
Declares the Lord God of hosts,
“From all *directions* around you;
And each of you will be driven out headlong,
With no one to gather the fugitives together.
- 6 “But afterward I will restore
The fortunes of the sons of Ammon,”
Declares the LORD.

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

Jeremiah 49:7–22

7 Concerning Edom. Thus says the LORD of hosts,

“Is there no longer any wisdom in Teman?
Has good counsel been lost to the prudent?
Has their wisdom decayed?”

8 “Flee away, turn back, dwell in the depths,
O inhabitants of Dedan,
For I will bring the disaster of Esau upon him
At the time I punish him.

9 “If grape gatherers came to you,
Would they not leave gleanings?
If thieves *came* by night,
They would destroy *only* until they had enough.

10 “But I have stripped Esau bare,
I have uncovered his hiding places
So that he will not be able to conceal himself;
His offspring has been destroyed along with his relatives
And his neighbors, and he is no more.

11 “Leave your orphans behind, I will keep *them* alive;
And let your widows trust in Me.”

12 For thus says the LORD, “Behold, those who were not sentenced to drink the cup will certainly drink *it*, and are you the one who will be completely acquitted? You will not be acquitted, but you will certainly drink *it*.”

13 “For I have sworn by Myself,” declares the LORD, “that Bozrah will become an object of horror, a reproach, a ruin and a curse; and all its cities will become perpetual ruins.”

14 I have heard a message from the LORD,
And an envoy is sent among the nations, *saying*,
“Gather yourselves together and come against her,
And rise up for battle!”

15 “For behold, I have made you small among the nations,
Despised among men.

16 “As for the terror of you,
The arrogance of your heart has deceived you,
O you who live in the clefts of the rock,
Who occupy the height of the hill.
Though you make your nest as high as an eagle’s,
I will bring you down from there,” declares the LORD.

17 “Edom will become an object of horror; everyone who passes by it will be horrified and will hiss at all its wounds.

18 “Like the overthrow of Sodom and Gomorrah with its neighbors,” says the LORD, “no one will live there, nor will a son of man reside in it.

19 “Behold, one will come up like a lion from the thickets of the Jordan against a perennially watered pasture; for in an instant I will make him run away from it, and whoever is chosen I shall appoint over it. For who is like Me, and who will summon Me *into court*? And who then is the shepherd who can stand against Me?”

20 Therefore hear the plan of the LORD which He has planned against Edom, and His purposes which He has purposed against the inhabitants of Teman: surely they will drag them off, *even* the little ones of the flock; surely He will make their pasture desolate because of them.

21 The earth has quaked at the noise of their downfall. There is an outcry! The noise of it has been heard at the Red Sea.

22 Behold, He will mount up and swoop like an eagle and spread out His wings against Bozrah; and the hearts of the mighty men of Edom in that day will be like the heart of a woman in labor.

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

Jeremiah 49:23–27

23 Concerning Damascus.

“Hamath and Arpad are put to shame,
For they have heard bad news;
They are disheartened.
There is anxiety by the sea,
It cannot be calmed.

24 “Damascus has become helpless;
She has turned away to flee,
And panic has gripped her;
Distress and pangs have taken hold of her
Like a woman in childbirth.

25 “How the city of praise has not been deserted,
The town of My joy!

26 “Therefore, her young men will fall in her streets,
And all the men of war will be silenced in that day,” declares the LORD of hosts.

27 “I will set fire to the wall of Damascus,
And it will devour the fortified towers of Ben-hadad.”

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

Jeremiah 49:28–33

28 Concerning Kedar and the kingdoms of Hazor, which Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon defeated. Thus says the LORD,

“Arise, go up to Kedar
And devastate the men of the east.

29 “They will take away their tents and their flocks;
They will carry off for themselves
Their tent curtains, all their goods and their camels,
And they will call out to one another, ‘Terror on every side!’

30 “Run away, flee! Dwell in the depths,
O inhabitants of Hazor,” declares the LORD;
“For Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon has formed a plan against you
And devised a scheme against you.

31 “Arise, go up against a nation which is at ease,
Which lives securely,” declares the LORD.
“It has no gates or bars;
They dwell alone.

32 “Their camels will become plunder,
And their many cattle for booty,
And I will scatter to all the winds those who cut the corners *of their hair*;
And I will bring their disaster from every side,” declares the LORD.

33 “Hazor will become a haunt of jackals,
A desolation forever;
No one will live there,
Nor will a son of man reside in it.”

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

Jeremiah 36:1–8

1 In the fourth year of Jehoiakim the son of Josiah, king of Judah, this word came to Jeremiah from the LORD, saying,
 2 “Take a scroll and write on it all the words which I have spoken to you concerning Israel and concerning Judah, and concerning all the nations, from the day I *first* spoke to you, from the days of Josiah, even to this day.
 3 Perhaps the house of Judah will hear all the calamity which I plan to bring on them, in order that every man will turn from his evil way; then I will forgive their iniquity and their sin.”
 4 Then Jeremiah called Baruch the son of Neriah, and Baruch wrote on a scroll at the dictation of Jeremiah all the words of the LORD which He had spoken to him.
 5 Jeremiah commanded Baruch, saying, “I am restricted; I cannot go into the house of the LORD.
 6 So you go and read from the scroll which you have written at my dictation the words of the LORD to the people in the LORD’s house on a fast day. And also you shall read them to all *the people of* Judah who come from their cities.
 7 Perhaps their supplication will come before the LORD, and everyone will turn from his evil way, for great is the anger and the wrath that the LORD has pronounced against this people.”
 8 Baruch the son of Neriah did according to all that Jeremiah the prophet commanded him, reading from the book the words of the LORD in the LORD’s house.

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

Jeremiah 45

Baruch’s Complaint

1 *This is* the message which Jeremiah the prophet spoke to Baruch the son of Neriah, when he had written down these words in a book at Jeremiah’s dictation, in the fourth year of Jehoiakim the son of Josiah, king of Judah, saying:
 2 “Thus says the LORD the God of Israel to you, O Baruch:
 3 ‘You said, “Ah, woe is me! For the LORD has added sorrow to my pain; I am weary with my groaning and have found no rest.”’

The Lord’s Assurance

4 Thus you are to say to him, ‘Thus says the LORD, “Behold, what I have built I am about to tear down, and what I have planted I am about to uproot, that is, the whole land.”
 5 But you, are you seeking great things for yourself? Do not seek *them*; for behold, I am going to bring disaster on all flesh,’ declares the LORD, ‘but I will give your life to you 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, and Jehoiakim became his servant *for* three years;

6a Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon came up against him

1 In the third year of the reign of Jehoiakim king of Judah, Nebuchadnezzar 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 Now in the fifth year of Jehoiakim the son of Josiah, king of Judah, in the ninth month, all the people in Jerusalem and all the people who came from the cities of Judah to Jerusalem proclaimed a fast before the LORD.
 10 Then Baruch read from the book the words of Jeremiah in the house of the LORD in the chamber of Gemariah the son of Shaphan the scribe, in the upper court, at the entry of the New Gate of the LORD’s house, to all the people.

Baruch Reads the Scroll to the Officials

11 Now when Micaiah the son of Gemariah, the son of Shaphan, had heard all the words of the LORD from the book,
 12 he went down to the king’s house, into the scribe’s chamber. And behold, all the officials were sitting there—Elishama the scribe, 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 Micaiah declared to them all the words that he had heard when Baruch read from the book to the people.

14 Then all the officials sent Jehudi the son of Nethaniah, the son of Shelemiah, the son of Cush, to Baruch, saying, "Take in your hand the scroll from which you have read to the people and come." So Baruch the son of Neriah took the scroll in his hand and went to them.

15 They said to him, "Sit down, please, and read it to us." So Baruch read it to them.

16 When they had heard all the words, they turned in fear one to another and said to Baruch, "We will surely report all these words to the king."

17 And they asked Baruch, saying, "Tell us, please, how did you write all these words? *Was it* at his dictation?"

18 Then Baruch said to them, "He dictated all these words to me, and I wrote them with ink on the book."

19 Then the officials said to Baruch, "Go, hide yourself, you and Jeremiah, and do not let anyone know where you are."

Jehudi Reads the Scroll to Jehoiakim

20 So they went to the king in the court, but they had deposited the scroll in the chamber of Elishama the scribe, and they reported all the words to the king.

21 Then the king sent Jehudi to get the scroll, and he took it out of the chamber of Elishama the scribe. And Jehudi read it to the king as well as to all the officials who stood beside the king.

22 Now the king was sitting in the winter house in the ninth month, with *a fire* burning in the brazier before him.

23 When Jehudi had read three or four columns, *the king* cut it with a scribe's knife and threw *it* into the fire that was in the brazier, until all the scroll was consumed in the fire that was in the brazier.

24 Yet the king and all his servants who heard all these words were not afraid, nor did they rend their garments.

25 Even though Elnathan and Delaiah and Gemariah pleaded with the king not to burn the scroll, he would not listen to them.

26 And the king commanded Jerahmeel the king's son, Seraiah the son of Azriel, and Shelemiah the son of Abdeel to seize Baruch the scribe and Jeremiah the prophet, but the LORD hid them.

Baruch Rewrites the Scroll

27 Then the word of the LORD came to Jeremiah after the king had burned the scroll and the words which Baruch had written at the dictation of Jeremiah, saying,

28 "Take again another scroll and write on it all the former words that were on the first scroll which Jehoiakim the king of Judah burned.

29 And concerning Jehoiakim king of Judah you shall say, 'Thus says the LORD, "You have burned this scroll, saying, 'Why have you written on it that the king of Babylon will certainly come and destroy this land, and will make man and beast to cease from it?'"

30 Therefore thus says the LORD concerning Jehoiakim king of Judah, "He shall have no one to sit on the throne of David, and his dead body shall be cast out to the heat of the day and the frost of the night.

31 I will also punish him and his descendants and his servants for their iniquity, and I will bring on them and the inhabitants of Jerusalem and the men of Judah all the calamity that I have declared to them—but they did not listen.'"

32 Then Jeremiah took another scroll and gave it to Baruch the son of Neriah, the scribe, and he wrote on it at the dictation of Jeremiah all the words of the book which Jehoiakim king of Judah had burned in the fire; and many similar words were added to them.

Jehoiakim Taken to Babylon (February 604 BC)

2 Chronicles 36:6b–7

Daniel 1:2

6b and bound him with bronze *chains* to take him to Babylon.
7 Nebuchadnezzar also brought *some* of the articles of the house of the LORD to Babylon
and put them in his temple at Babylon.

2 The Lord gave Jehoiakim king of Judah into his hand,
along with some of the vessels of the house of God; and he brought them to the land of Shinar, to the house of his god,
and he brought the vessels into the treasury of his god.

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

Daniel 1:3–21

Daniel and His Three Friends

3 Then the king ordered Ashpenaz, the chief of his officials, to bring in some of the sons of Israel, including some of the royal family and of the nobles,

4 youths in whom was no defect, who were good-looking, showing intelligence in every *branch of* wisdom, endowed with understanding and discerning knowledge, and who had ability for serving in the king's court; and *he ordered him* to teach them the literature and language of the Chaldeans.

5 The king appointed for them a daily ration from the king's choice food and from the wine which he drank, and *appointed* that they

should be educated three years, at the end of which they were to enter the king's personal service.

6 Now among them from the sons of Judah were Daniel, Hananiah, Mishael and Azariah.

7 Then the commander of the officials assigned *new* names to them; and to Daniel he assigned *the name* Belteshazzar, to Hananiah Shadrach, to Mishael Meshach and to Azariah Abed-nego.

Daniel's Example of Appealing to Authority

8 But Daniel made up his mind that he would not defile himself with the king's choice food or with the wine which he drank; so he sought *permission* from the commander of the officials that he might not defile himself.

9 Now God granted Daniel favor and compassion in the sight of the commander of the officials,

10 and the commander of the officials said to Daniel, "I am afraid of my lord the king, who has appointed your food and your drink; for why should he see your faces looking more haggard than the youths who are your own age? Then you would make me forfeit my head to the king."

The Test

11 But Daniel said to the overseer whom the commander of the officials had appointed over Daniel, Hananiah, Mishael and Azariah,

12 "Please test your servants for ten days, and let us be given some vegetables to eat and water to drink.

13 Then let our appearance be observed in your presence and the appearance of the youths who are eating the king's choice food; and deal with your servants according to what you see."

14 So he listened to them in this matter and tested them for ten days.

15 At the end of ten days their appearance seemed better and they were fatter than all the youths who had been eating the king's choice food.

16 So the overseer continued to withhold their choice food and the wine they were to drink, and kept giving them vegetables.

God Blesses Daniel With Wisdom

17 As for these four youths, God gave them knowledge and intelligence in every *branch of* literature and wisdom; Daniel even understood all *kinds of* visions and dreams.

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

Daniel 1:18–21

18 Then at the end of the days which the king had specified for presenting them, the commander of the officials presented them before Nebuchadnezzar.

19 The king talked with them, and out of them all not one was found like Daniel, Hananiah, Mishael and Azariah; so they entered the king's personal service.

20 As for every matter of wisdom and understanding about which the king consulted them, he found them ten times better than all the magicians *and* conjurers who *were* in all his realm.

21 And Daniel continued 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

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

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).

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 had dreams; and his spirit was troubled and his sleep left him.

The Futility of Pagan Interpreters

2 Then the king gave orders to call in the magicians, the conjurers, the sorcerers and the Chaldeans to tell the king his dreams. So they came in and stood before the king.

3 The king said to them, "I had a dream and my spirit is anxious to understand the dream."

4 Then the Chaldeans spoke to the king in Aramaic: "O king, live forever! Tell the dream to your servants, and we will declare the interpretation."

5 The king replied to the Chaldeans, "The command from me is firm: if you do not make known to me the dream and its interpretation, you will be torn limb from limb and your houses will be made a rubbish heap.

6 But if you declare the dream and its interpretation, you will receive from me gifts and a reward and great honor; therefore declare to me the dream and its interpretation."

7 They answered a second time and said, "Let the king tell the dream to his servants, and we will declare the interpretation."

8 The king replied, "I know for certain that you are bargaining for time, inasmuch as you have seen that the command from me is firm,

9 that if you do not make the dream known to me, there is only one decree for you. For you have agreed together to speak lying and corrupt words before me until the situation is changed; therefore tell me the dream, that I may know that you can declare to me its interpretation."

10 The Chaldeans answered the king and said, "There is not a man on earth who could declare the matter for the king, inasmuch as no great king or ruler has *ever* asked anything like this of any magician, conjurer or Chaldean.

11 Moreover, the thing which the king demands is difficult, and there is no one else who could declare it to the king except gods, whose dwelling place is not with *mortal* flesh."

12 Because of this the king became indignant and very furious and gave orders to destroy all the wise men of Babylon.

13 So the decree went forth that the wise men should be slain; and they looked for Daniel and his friends to kill *them*.

Daniel's Intervention

14 Then Daniel replied with discretion and discernment to Arioch, the captain of the king's bodyguard, who had gone forth to slay the wise men of Babylon;

15 he said to Arioch, the king's commander, "For what reason is the decree from the king so urgent?" Then Arioch informed Daniel about the matter.

16 So Daniel went in and requested of the king that he would give him time, in order that he might declare the interpretation to the king.

17 Then Daniel went to his house and informed his friends, Hananiah, Mishael and Azariah, about the matter,

18 so that they might request compassion from the God of heaven concerning this mystery, so that Daniel and his friends would not be destroyed with the rest of the wise men of Babylon.

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

20 Daniel said,

"Let the name of God be blessed forever and ever,
For wisdom and power belong to Him.

21 "It is He who changes the times and the epochs;
He removes kings and establishes kings;
He gives wisdom to wise men
And knowledge to men of understanding.

22 "It is He who reveals the profound and hidden things;
He knows what is in the darkness,
And the light dwells with Him.

23 "To You, O God of my fathers, I give thanks and praise,
For You have given me wisdom and power;
Even now You have made known to me what we requested of You,
For You have made known to us the king's matter."

24 Therefore, Daniel went in to Arioch, whom the king had appointed to destroy the wise men of Babylon; he went and spoke to him as follows: "Do not destroy the wise men of Babylon! Take me into the king's presence, and I will declare the interpretation to the

king.”

25 Then Arioch hurriedly brought Daniel into the king’s presence and spoke to him as follows: “I have found a man among the exiles from Judah who can make the interpretation known to the king!”

26 The king said to Daniel, whose name was Belteshazzar, “Are you able to make known to me the dream which I have seen and its interpretation?”

27 Daniel answered before the king and said, “As for the mystery about which the king has inquired, neither wise men, conjurers, magicians *nor* diviners are able to declare *it* to the king.

28 However, there is a God in heaven who reveals mysteries, and He has made known to King Nebuchadnezzar what will take place in the latter days. This was your dream and the visions in your mind *while* on your bed.

29 As for you, O king, *while* on your bed your thoughts turned to what would take place in the future; and He who reveals mysteries has made known to you what will take place.

30 But as for me, this mystery has not been revealed to me for any wisdom residing in me more than *in* any *other* living man, but for the purpose of making the interpretation known to the king, and that you may understand the thoughts of your mind.

The Dream Revealed

31 “You, O king, were looking and behold, there was a single great statue; that statue, which was large and of extraordinary splendor, was standing in front of you, and its appearance was awesome.

32 The head of that statue *was made* of fine gold, its breast and its arms of silver, its belly and its thighs of bronze, 33 its legs of iron, its feet partly of iron and partly of clay.

34 You continued looking until a stone was cut out without hands, and it struck the statue on its feet of iron and clay and crushed them.

35 Then the iron, the clay, the bronze, the silver and the gold were crushed all at the same time and became like chaff from the summer threshing floors; and the wind carried them away so that not a trace of them was found. But the stone that struck the statue became a great mountain and filled the whole earth.

The Interpretation of the Dream

36 “This *was* the dream; now we will tell its interpretation before the king.

37 You, O king, are the king of kings, to whom the God of heaven has given the kingdom, the power, the strength and the glory; 38 and wherever the sons of men dwell, *or* the beasts of the field, *or* the birds of the sky, He has given *them* into your hand and has caused you to rule over them all. You are the head of gold.

39 After you there will arise another kingdom inferior to you, then another third kingdom of bronze, which will rule over all the earth.

40 Then there will be a fourth kingdom as strong as iron; inasmuch as iron crushes and shatters all things, so, like iron that breaks in pieces, it will crush and break all these in pieces.

41 In that you saw the feet and toes, partly of potter’s clay and partly of iron, it will be a divided kingdom; but it will have in it the toughness of iron, inasmuch as you saw the iron mixed with common clay.

42 As the toes of the feet *were* partly of iron and partly of pottery, *so* some of the kingdom will be strong and part of it will be brittle.

43 And in that you saw the iron mixed with common clay, they will combine with one another in the seed of men; but they will not adhere to one another, even as iron does not combine with pottery.

44 In the days of those kings the God of heaven will set up a kingdom which will never be destroyed, and *that* kingdom will not be left for another people; it will crush and put an end to all these kingdoms, but it will itself endure forever.

45 Inasmuch as you saw that a stone was cut out of the mountain without hands and that it crushed the iron, the bronze, the clay, the silver and the gold, the great God has made known to the king what will take place in the future; so the dream is true and its interpretation is trustworthy.”

Nebuchadnezzar’s Response

46 Then King Nebuchadnezzar fell on his face and did homage to Daniel, and gave orders to present to him an offering and fragrant incense.

47 The king answered Daniel and said, “Surely your God is a God of gods and a Lord of kings and a revealer of mysteries, since you have been able to reveal this mystery.”

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

49 And Daniel made request of the king, and he appointed Shadrach, Meshach and Abed-nego over the administration of the province of Babylon, while Daniel *was* at the king’s court.

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

2 Kings 24:1b–4

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

2 The LORD sent against him bands of Chaldeans, bands of Arameans, bands of Moabites, and bands of Ammonites. So He sent them against Judah to destroy it, according to the word of the LORD which He had spoken through His servants the prophets.

3 Surely at the command of the LORD it came upon Judah, to remove *them* from His sight because of the sins of Manasseh, according to all that he had done,

4 and also for the innocent blood which he shed, for he filled Jerusalem with innocent blood; and the LORD would not forgive.

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

Jeremiah 35

Jeremiah's Test of the Rechabites' Loyalty

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

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

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

4 and I brought them into the house of the LORD, into the chamber of the sons of Hanan the son of Igdaliah, the man of God, which was near the chamber of the officials, which was above the chamber of Maaseiah the son of Shallum, the doorkeeper.

5 Then I set before the men of the house of the Rechabites pitchers full of wine and cups; and I said to them, "Drink wine!"

Refusal to Break Jonadab's Vow

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

7 You shall not build a house, and you shall not sow seed and you shall not plant a vineyard or own one; but in tents you shall dwell all your days, that you may live many days in the land where you sojourn.'

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

9 nor to build ourselves houses to dwell in; and we do not have vineyard or field or seed.

10 We have only dwelt in tents, and have obeyed and have done according to all that Jonadab our father commanded us. [[2 Kgs 10:15–28](#)]

11 But when Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon came up against the land, we said, 'Come and let us go to Jerusalem before the army of the Chaldeans and before the army of the Arameans.' So we have dwelt in Jerusalem."

The Lesson for Judah

12 Then the word of the LORD came to Jeremiah, saying,

13 "Thus says the LORD of hosts, the God of Israel, 'Go and say to the men of Judah and the inhabitants of Jerusalem, "Will you not receive instruction by listening to My words?" declares the LORD.

14 "The words of Jonadab the son of Rechab, which he commanded his sons not to drink wine, are observed. So they do not drink *wine* to this day, for they have obeyed their father's command. But I have spoken to you again and again; yet you have not listened to Me.

15 Also I have sent to you all My servants the prophets, sending *them* again and again, saying: 'Turn now every man from his evil way and amend your deeds, and do not go after other gods to worship them. Then you will dwell in the land which I have given to you and to your forefathers; but you have not inclined your ear or listened to Me.

16 Indeed, the sons of Jonadab the son of Rechab have observed the command of their father which he commanded them, but this people has not listened to Me.'"

17 Therefore thus says the LORD, the God of hosts, the God of Israel, 'Behold, I am bringing on Judah and on all the inhabitants of Jerusalem all the disaster that I have pronounced against them; because I spoke to them but they did not listen, and I have called them but they did not answer.'"

God's Blessing on the Rechabites

18 Then Jeremiah said to the house of the Rechabites, "Thus says the LORD of hosts, the God of Israel, 'Because you have obeyed the command of Jonadab your father, kept all his commands and done according to all that he commanded you;

19 therefore thus says the LORD of hosts, the God of Israel, "Jonadab the son of Rechab shall not lack a man 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 Now the rest of the acts of Jehoiakim and all that he did,</p> <p>are they not written in the Book of the Chronicles of the Kings of Judah?</p> <p>6 So Jehoiakim slept with his fathers, and Jehoiachin his son became king in his place.</p> <p>7 The king of Egypt did not come out of his land again, for the king of Babylon had taken all that belonged to the king of Egypt from the brook of Egypt to the river Euphrates.</p>	<p>8 Now the rest of the acts of Jehoiakim and the abominations which he did, and what was found against him, behold, they are written in the Book of the Kings of Israel and Judah.</p> <p>And Jehoiachin his son became king 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 became king, and he reigned three months in Jerusalem; and his mother's name <i>was</i> Nehushta the daughter of Elnathan of Jerusalem.</p> <p>9 He did evil in the sight of the LORD, according to all that his father had done.</p>	<p>9 Jehoiachin was eight years old when he became king, and he reigned three months and ten days in Jerusalem,</p> <p>and he did evil in the sight of the LORD.</p>

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

Jeremiah 13:15–27

The Threat of Captivity

- 15 Listen and give heed, do not be haughty,
For the LORD has spoken.
- 16 Give glory to the LORD your God,
Before He brings darkness
And before your feet stumble
On the dusky mountains,
And while you are hoping for light
He makes it into deep darkness,
And turns it into gloom.
- 17 But if you will not listen to it,
My soul will sob in secret for *such* pride;
And my eyes will bitterly weep
And flow down with tears,
Because the flock of the LORD has been taken captive.
- 18 Say to the king and the queen mother,
"Take a lowly seat,
For your beautiful crown
Has come down from your head."
- 19 The cities of the Negev have been locked up,
And there is no one to open *them*;
All Judah has been carried into exile,
Wholly carried into exile.

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 you,
Your beautiful sheep?
- 21 "What will you say when He appoints over you—
And you yourself had taught them—

Former companions to be head over you?
 Will not pangs take hold of you
 Like a woman in childbirth?
 22 “If you say in your heart,
 ‘Why have these things happened to me?’
 Because of the magnitude of your iniquity
 Your skirts have been removed
 And your heels have been exposed.
 23 “Can the Ethiopian change his skin
 Or the leopard his spots?
Then you also can do good
 Who are accustomed to doing evil.
 24 “Therefore I will scatter them like drifting straw
 To the desert wind.
 25 “This is your lot, the portion measured to you
 From Me,” declares the LORD,
 “Because you have forgotten Me
 And trusted in falsehood.
 26 “So I Myself have also stripped your skirts off over your face,
 That your shame may be seen.
 27 “As for your adulteries and your *lustful* neighings,
 The lewdness of your prostitution
 On the hills in the field,
 I have seen your abominations.
 Woe to you, O Jerusalem!
 How long will you remain 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
10 At that time the servants of Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon went up to Jerusalem, and the city came under siege. 11 And Nebuchadnezzar the king of Babylon came to the city, while his servants were besieging it. 12 Jehoiachin the king of Judah went out to the king of Babylon, he and his mother and his servants and his captains and his officials. So the king of Babylon took him captive in the eighth year of his reign. 13 He carried out from there all the treasures of the house of the LORD, and the treasures of the king’s house, and cut in pieces all the vessels of gold which Solomon king of Israel had made in the temple of the LORD, just as the LORD had said.	10 At the turn of the year King Nebuchadnezzar sent and brought him to Babylon with the valuable articles of the house of the LORD,		28 These are the people whom Nebuchadnezzar carried away into exile: in the seventh year

<p>14 Then he led away into exile all Jerusalem and all the captains and all the mighty men of valor, ten thousand captives, and all the craftsmen and the smiths. None remained except the poorest people of the land.</p> <p>15 So he led Jehoiachin away into exile to Babylon; also the king's mother and the king's wives and his officials and the leading men of the land, he led away into exile from Jerusalem to Babylon.</p> <p>16 All the men of valor, seven thousand, and the craftsmen and the smiths, one thousand, all strong and fit for war, and these the king of Babylon brought into exile to Babylon.</p> <p>17 Then the king of Babylon made his uncle Mattaniah king in his place, and changed his name to Zedekiah.</p>	<p>and he made his kinsman Zedekiah king over Judah and Jerusalem.</p>	<p>1 Now Zedekiah the son of Josiah whom Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon had made king in the land of Judah, reigned as king in place of Coniah the son of Jehoiakim.</p>	<p>3,023 Jews;</p>
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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; and his mother's name was Hamutal the daughter of Jeremiah of Libnah.</p> <p>19 He did evil in the sight of the LORD, according to all that Jehoiakim had done.</p>	<p>2 But neither he nor his servants nor the people of the land listened to the words of the LORD which He spoke through Jeremiah the prophet.</p>	<p>1 Zedekiah was twenty-one years old when he became king, and he reigned eleven years in Jerusalem; and his mother's name was Hamutal the daughter of Jeremiah of Libnah.</p> <p>2 He did evil in the sight of the LORD like all that Jehoiakim had done.</p>	<p>11 Zedekiah was twenty-one years old when he became king, and he reigned eleven years in Jerusalem.</p> <p>12 He did evil in the sight of the LORD his God; he did not humble himself before Jeremiah the prophet who spoke for the LORD.</p>

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

Jeremiah 24

Description of the Figs

1 After Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon had carried away captive Jeconiah the son of Jehoiakim, king of Judah, and the officials of Judah with the craftsmen and smiths from Jerusalem and had brought them to Babylon, the LORD showed me: behold, two baskets of figs set before the temple of the LORD!

2 One basket had very good figs, like first-ripe figs, and the other basket had very bad figs which could not be eaten due to rotteness.

3 Then the LORD said to me, "What do you see, Jeremiah?" And I said, "Figs, the good figs, very good; and the bad *figs*, very bad, which cannot be eaten due to rotteness."

Meaning of the Good Figs

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

5 "Thus says the LORD God of Israel, 'Like these good figs, so I will regard as good the captives of Judah, whom I have sent out of this place *into* the land of the Chaldeans.

6 For I will set My eyes on them for good, and I will bring them again to this land; and I will build them up and not overthrow them, and I will plant them and not pluck them up.

7 I will give them a heart to know Me, for I am the LORD; and they will be My people, and I will be their God, for they will return to Me with their whole heart.

Meaning of the Bad Figs

8 'But like the bad figs which cannot be eaten due to rotteness—indeed, thus says the LORD—so I will abandon Zedekiah king of Judah and his officials, and the remnant of Jerusalem who remain in this land and the ones who dwell in the land of Egypt.

9 I will make them a terror *and an* evil for all the kingdoms of the earth, as a reproach and a proverb, a taunt and a curse in all places where I will scatter them.

10 I will send the sword, the famine and the pestilence upon them until they are destroyed from the land which I gave to them and their forefathers.'"

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

Jeremiah 29

Sending of the Letter

1 Now these are the words of the letter which Jeremiah the prophet sent from Jerusalem to the rest of the elders of the exile, the priests, the prophets and all the people whom Nebuchadnezzar had taken into exile from Jerusalem to Babylon.

2 (This was after King Jeconiah and the queen mother, the court officials, the princes of Judah and Jerusalem, the craftsmen and the smiths had departed from Jerusalem.)

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

Settle Down in Babylon

4 "Thus says the LORD of hosts, the God of Israel, to all the exiles whom I have sent into exile from Jerusalem to Babylon,

5 'Build houses and live *in them*; and plant gardens and eat their produce.

6 Take wives and become the fathers of sons and daughters, and take wives for your sons and give your daughters to husbands, that they may bear sons and daughters; and multiply there and do not decrease.

7 Seek the welfare of the city where I have sent you into exile, and pray to the LORD on its behalf; for in its welfare you will have welfare.'

Warning against False Prophets

8 For thus says the LORD of hosts, the God of Israel, 'Do not let your prophets who are in your midst and your diviners deceive you, and do not listen to the dreams which they dream.

9 For they prophesy falsely to you in My name; I have not sent them,' declares the LORD.

10 "For thus says the LORD, 'When seventy years have been completed for Babylon, I will visit you and fulfill My good word to you, to bring you back to this place.

11 For I know the plans that I have for you,' declares the LORD, 'plans for welfare and not for calamity to give you a future and a hope.

12 Then you will call upon Me and come and pray to Me, and I will listen to you.

13 You will seek Me and find *Me* when you search for Me with all your heart.

14 I will be found by you,' declares the LORD, 'and I will restore your fortunes and will gather you from all the nations and from all the

places where I have driven you,' declares the LORD, 'and I will bring you back to the place from where I sent you into exile.'

15 "Because you have said, 'The LORD has raised up prophets for us in Babylon' —

16 for thus says the LORD concerning the king who sits on the throne of David, and concerning all the people who dwell in this city, your brothers who did not go with you into exile—

17 thus says the LORD of hosts, 'Behold, I am sending upon them the sword, famine and pestilence, and I will make them like split-open figs that cannot be eaten due to rotteness.

18 I will pursue them with the sword, with famine and with pestilence; and I will make them a terror to all the kingdoms of the earth, to be a curse and a horror and a hissing, and a reproach among all the nations where I have driven them,

19 because they have not listened to My words,' declares the LORD, 'which I sent to them again and again by My servants the prophets; but you did not listen,' declares the LORD.

20 You, therefore, hear the word of the LORD, all you exiles, whom I have sent away from Jerusalem to Babylon.

21 "Thus says the LORD of hosts, the God of Israel, concerning Ahab the son of Kolaiah and concerning Zedekiah the son of Maaseiah, who are prophesying to you falsely in My name, 'Behold, I will deliver them into the hand of Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon, and he will slay them before your eyes.

22 Because of them a curse will be used by all the exiles from Judah who are in Babylon, saying, "May the LORD make you like Zedekiah and like Ahab, whom the king of Babylon roasted in the fire,

23 because they have acted foolishly in Israel, and have committed adultery with their neighbors' wives and have spoken words in My name falsely, which I did not command them; and I am He who knows and am a witness," declares the LORD."

Shemaiah Resists Jeremiah's Message

24 To Shemaiah the Nehelamite you shall speak, saying,

25 "Thus says the LORD of hosts, the God of Israel, 'Because you have sent letters in your own 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 "The LORD has made you priest instead of Jehoiada the priest, to be the overseer in the house of the LORD over every madman who prophesies, to put him in the stocks and in the iron collar,

27 now then, why have you not rebuked Jeremiah of Anathoth who prophesies to you?

28 For he has sent to us in Babylon, saying, '*The exile will be long; build houses and live in them and plant gardens and eat their produce.*'"

God's Message to the Exiles About Shemaiah

29 Zephaniah the priest read this letter to Jeremiah the prophet.

30 Then came the word of the LORD to Jeremiah, saying,

31 "Send to all the exiles, saying, 'Thus says the LORD concerning Shemaiah the Nehelamite, "Because Shemaiah has prophesied to you, although I did not send him, and he has made you trust in a lie,"

32 therefore thus says the LORD, "Behold, I am about to punish Shemaiah the Nehelamite and his descendants; he will not have anyone living among this people, and he will not see the good that I am about to do to My people," declares the LORD, "because he has preached rebellion against the LORD.'"

Jeremiah's Prophecy to Judah—Promises of Restoration (c. 597 BC)

Jeremiah 30

Introduction

1 The word which came to Jeremiah from the LORD, saying,

2 "Thus says the LORD, the God of Israel, 'Write all the words which I have spoken to you in a book.

3 For behold, days are coming,' declares the LORD, 'when I will restore the fortunes of My people Israel and Judah.' The LORD says, 'I will also bring them back to the land that I gave to their forefathers and they shall possess it.'"

Promise of Restoration for Israel

4 Now these are the words which the LORD spoke concerning Israel and concerning Judah:

5 "For thus says the LORD,

'I have heard a sound of terror,
Of dread, and there is no peace.

6 'Ask now, and see

If a male can give birth.

Why do I see every man

With his hands on his loins, as a woman in childbirth?

And *why* have all faces turned pale?

7 'Alas! for that day is great,
There is none like it;
And it is the time of Jacob's distress,
But he will be saved from it.

8 'It shall come about on that day,' declares the LORD of hosts, 'that I will break his yoke from off their neck and will tear off their bonds; and strangers will no longer make them their slaves.

9 But they shall serve the LORD their God and David their king, whom I will raise up for them.

10 'Fear not, O Jacob My servant,' declares the LORD,
'And do not be dismayed, O Israel;
For behold, I will save you from afar
And your offspring from the land of their captivity.
And Jacob will return and will be quiet and at ease,
And no one will make him afraid.

11 'For I am with you,' declares the LORD, 'to save you;
For I will destroy completely all the nations where I have scattered you,
Only I will not destroy you completely.
But I will chasten you justly
And will by no means leave you unpunished.'

Promise of Healing for an Incurable Wound

12 "For thus says the LORD,
'Your wound is incurable
And your injury is serious.

13 'There is no one to plead your cause;
No healing for your sore,
No recovery for you.

14 'All your lovers have forgotten you,
They do not seek you;
For I have wounded you with the wound of an enemy,
With the punishment of a cruel one,
Because your iniquity is great
And your sins are numerous.

15 'Why do you cry out over your injury?
Your pain is incurable.
Because your iniquity is great
And your sins are numerous,
I have done these things to you.

16 'Therefore all who devour you will be devoured;
And all your adversaries, every one of them, will go into captivity;
And those who plunder you will be for plunder,
And all who prey upon you I will give for prey.

17 'For I will restore you to health
And I will heal you of your wounds,' declares the LORD,
'Because they have called you an outcast, saying:
"It is Zion; no one cares for her."

Promise of Restoration of the Fortunes of Israel

18 "Thus says the LORD,
'Behold, I will restore the fortunes of the tents of Jacob
And have compassion on his dwelling places;
And the city will be rebuilt on its ruin,
And the palace will stand on its rightful place.

19 'From them will proceed thanksgiving
And the voice of those who celebrate;
And I will multiply them and they will not be diminished;
I will also honor them and they will not be insignificant.

- 20 'Their children also will be as formerly,
And their congregation shall be established before Me;
And I will punish all their oppressors.
- 21 'Their leader shall be one of them,
And their ruler shall come forth from their midst;
And I will bring him near and he shall approach Me;
For who would dare to risk his life to approach Me?' declares the LORD.
- 22 'You shall be My people,
And I will be your God.'"

The Fierce Anger of the Lord

- 23 Behold, the tempest of the LORD!
Wrath has gone forth,
A sweeping tempest;
It will burst on the head of the wicked.
- 24 The fierce anger of the LORD will not turn back
Until He has performed and until He has accomplished
The intent of His heart;
In the latter days you will understand this.

Jeremiah's Prophecy to Judah—The New Covenant (c. 597 BC)

Jeremiah 31

The Rebuilding of Israel

- 1 "At that time," declares the LORD, "I will be the God of all the families of Israel, and they shall be My people."
- 2 Thus says the LORD,
"The people who survived the sword
Found grace in the wilderness—
Israel, when it went to find its rest."
- 3 The LORD appeared to him from afar, *saying*,
"I have loved you with an everlasting love;
Therefore I have drawn you with lovingkindness.
- 4 "Again I will build you and you will be rebuilt,
O virgin of Israel!
Again you will take up your tambourines,
And go forth to the dances of the merrymakers.
- 5 "Again you will plant vineyards
On the hills of Samaria;
The planters will plant
And will enjoy *them*.
- 6 "For there will be a day when watchmen
On the hills of Ephraim call out,
'Arise, and let us go up *to* Zion,
To the LORD our God.'"

Return of the Scattered People

- 7 For thus says the LORD,
"Sing aloud with gladness for Jacob,
And shout among the chief of the nations;
Proclaim, give praise and say,
'O LORD, save Your people,
The remnant of Israel.'
- 8 "Behold, I am bringing them from the north country,
And I will gather them from the remote parts of the earth,
Among them the blind and the lame,
The woman with child and she who is in labor with child, together;
A great company, they will return here.

- 9 “With weeping they will come,
And by supplication I will lead them;
I will make them walk by streams of waters,
On a straight path in which they will not stumble;
For I am a father to Israel,
And Ephraim is My firstborn.”
- 10 Hear the word of the LORD, O nations,
And declare in the coastlands afar off,
And say, “He who scattered Israel will gather him
And keep him as a shepherd keeps his flock.”
- 11 For the LORD has ransomed Jacob
And redeemed him from the hand of him who was stronger than he.
- 12 “They will come and shout for joy on the height of Zion,
And they will be radiant over the bounty of the LORD—
Over the grain and the new wine and the oil,
And over the young of the flock and the herd;
And their life will be like a watered garden,
And they will never languish again.
- 13 “Then the virgin will rejoice in the dance,
And the young men and the old, together,
For I will turn their mourning into joy
And will comfort them and give them joy for their sorrow.
- 14 “I will fill the soul of the priests with abundance,
And My people will be satisfied with My goodness,” declares the LORD.

The End of Rachel’s Weeping for Her Children

- 15 Thus says the LORD,
“A voice is heard in Ramah,
Lamentation *and* bitter weeping.
Rachel is weeping for her children;
She refuses to be comforted for her children,
Because they are no more.” [\[Matt 2:17–18\]](#)
- 16 Thus says the LORD,

“Restrain your voice from weeping
And your eyes from tears;
For your work will be rewarded,” declares the LORD,
“And they will return from the land of the enemy.”
- 17 “There is hope for your future,” declares the LORD,
“And *your* children will return to their own territory.
- 18 “I have surely heard Ephraim grieving,
‘You have chastised me, and I was chastised,
Like an untrained calf;
Bring me back that I may be restored,
For You are the LORD my God.
- 19 ‘For after I turned back, I repented;
And after I was instructed, I smote on *my* thigh;
I was ashamed and also humiliated
Because I bore the reproach of my youth.’
- 20 “Is Ephraim My dear son?
Is he a delightful child?
Indeed, as often as I have spoken against him,
I certainly *still* remember him;
Therefore My heart yearns for him;
I will surely have mercy on him,” declares the LORD.
- 21 “Set up for yourself roadmarks,
Place for yourself guideposts;

Direct your mind to the highway,
The way by which you went.
Return, O virgin of Israel,
Return to these your cities.

- 22 “How long will you go here and there,
O faithless daughter?
For the LORD has created a new thing in the earth—
A woman will encompass a man.”

Description of Future Blessing

23 Thus says the LORD of hosts, the God of Israel, “Once again they will speak this word in the land of Judah and in its cities when I restore their fortunes,

‘The LORD bless you, O abode of righteousness,
O holy hill!’

24 Judah and all its cities will dwell together in it, the farmer and they who go about with flocks.

25 For I satisfy the weary ones and refresh everyone who languishes.”

26 At this I awoke and looked, and my sleep was pleasant to me.

27 “Behold, days are coming,” declares the LORD, “when I will sow the house of Israel and the house of Judah with the seed of man and with the seed of beast.

28 As I have watched over them to pluck up, to break down, to overthrow, to destroy and to bring disaster, so I will watch over them to build and to plant,” declares the LORD.

Repudiation of a Popular Saying

- 29 “In those days they will not say again,
‘The fathers have eaten sour grapes,
And the children’s teeth are set on edge.’

30 But everyone will die for his own iniquity; each man who eats the sour grapes, his teeth will be set on edge.

Announcement of a New Covenant

31 “Behold, days are coming,” declares the LORD, “when I will make a new covenant with the house of Israel and with the house of Judah,

32 not like the covenant which I made with their fathers in the day I took them by the hand to bring them out of the land of Egypt, My covenant which they broke, although I was a husband to them,” declares the LORD.

33 “But this is the covenant which I will make with the house of Israel after those days,” declares the LORD, “I will put My law within them and on their heart I will write it; and I will be their God, and they shall be My people.

34 They will not teach again, each man his neighbor and each man his brother, saying, ‘Know the LORD,’ for they will all know Me, from the least of them to the greatest of them,” declares the LORD, “for I will forgive their iniquity, and their sin I will remember no more.” [[Heb 8:8–12; 10:16–17](#)]

God’s Assurance of Israel’s Eternal Duration

- 35 Thus says the LORD,
Who gives the sun for light by day
And the fixed order of the moon and the stars for light by night,
Who stirs up the sea so that its waves roar;
The LORD of hosts is His name:
36 “If this fixed order departs
From before Me,” declares the LORD,
“Then the offspring of Israel also will cease
From being a nation before Me forever.”

37 Thus says the LORD,

“If the heavens above can be measured
And the foundations of the earth searched out below,
Then I will also cast off all the offspring of Israel

For all that they have done,” declares the LORD.

God’s Promise that Jerusalem Will be Rebuilt

38 “Behold, days are coming,” declares the LORD, “when the city will be rebuilt for the LORD from the Tower of Hananel to the Corner Gate.

39 The measuring line will go out farther straight ahead to the hill Gareb; then it will turn to Goah.

40 And the whole valley of the dead bodies and of the ashes, and all the fields as far as the brook Kidron, to the corner of the Horse Gate toward the east, shall be holy to the LORD; it will not be plucked up or overthrown anymore forever.”

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Jeremiah's Prophecy Concerning the Nations: Elam (c. 597–596 BC)

Jeremiah 49:34–39

34 That which came as the word of the LORD to Jeremiah the prophet concerning Elam, at the beginning of the reign of Zedekiah king of Judah, saying:

35 “Thus says the LORD of hosts,
‘Behold, I am going to break the bow of Elam,
The finest of their might.

36 ‘I will bring upon Elam the four winds
From the four ends of heaven,
And will scatter them to all these winds;
And there will be no nation
To which the outcasts of Elam will not go.

37 ‘So I will shatter Elam before their enemies
And before those who seek their lives;
And I will bring calamity upon them,
Even My fierce anger,’ declares the LORD,
‘And I will send out the sword after them
Until I have consumed them.

38 ‘Then I will set My throne in Elam
And destroy out of it king and princes,’
Declares the LORD.

39 ‘But it will come about in the last days
That I will restore the fortunes of Elam,’”
Declares the LORD.

Jeremiah's Prophecy Concerning the Nations: Babylon's Doom (c. 597–596 BC)

Jeremiah 50

Announcement of Babylon's Doom

1 The word which the LORD spoke concerning Babylon, the land of the Chaldeans, through Jeremiah the prophet:

2 “Declare and proclaim among the nations.
Proclaim it and lift up a standard.
Do not conceal *it but* say,
‘Babylon has been captured,
Bel has been put to shame, Marduk has been shattered;
Her images have been put to shame, her idols have been shattered.’

3 “For a nation has come up against her out of the north; it will make her land an object of horror, and there will be no inhabitant in it. Both man and beast have wandered off, they have gone away!

4 “In those days and at that time,” declares the LORD, “the sons of Israel will come, *both* they and the sons of Judah as well; they will go along weeping as they go, and it will be the LORD their God they will seek.

5 “They will ask for the way to Zion, *turning* their faces in its direction; they will come that they may join themselves to the LORD *in* an everlasting covenant that will not be forgotten.

6 “My people have become lost sheep;
Their shepherds have led them astray.
They have made them turn aside *on* the mountains;
They have gone along from mountain to hill
And have forgotten their resting place.

7 “All who came upon them have devoured them;
And their adversaries have said, ‘We are not guilty,
Inasmuch as they have sinned against the LORD *who is* the habitation of righteousness,
Even the LORD, the hope of their fathers.’

8 “Wander away from the midst of Babylon
And go forth from the land of the Chaldeans;
Be also like male goats at the head of the flock.

9 “For behold, I am going to arouse and bring up against Babylon

A horde of great nations from the land of the north,
 And they will draw up *their* battle lines against her;
 From there she will be taken captive.
 Their arrows will be like an expert warrior
 Who does not return empty-handed.

- 10 “Chaldea will become plunder;
 All who plunder her will have enough,” declares the LORD.

Explanation for Its Punishment

- 11 “Because you are glad, because you are jubilant,
 O you who pillage My heritage,
 Because you skip about like a threshing heifer
 And neigh like stallions,
 12 Your mother will be greatly ashamed,
 She who gave you birth will be humiliated.
 Behold, *she will be* the least of the nations,
 A wilderness, a parched land and a desert.
 13 “Because of the indignation of the LORD she will not be inhabited,
 But she will be completely desolate;
 Everyone who passes by Babylon will be horrified
 And will hiss because of all her wounds.
 14 “Draw up your battle lines against Babylon on every side,
 All you who bend the bow;
 Shoot at her, do not be sparing with *your* arrows,
 For she has sinned against the LORD.
 15 “Raise your battle cry against her on every side!
 She has given herself up, her pillars have fallen,
 Her walls have been torn down.
 For this is the vengeance of the LORD:
 Take vengeance on her;
 As she has done *to others*, so do to her.
 16 “Cut off the sower from Babylon
 And the one who wields the sickle at the time of harvest;
 From before the sword of the oppressor
 They will each turn back to his own people
 And they will each flee to his own land.

17 “Israel is a scattered flock, the lions have driven *them* away. The first one *who* devoured him was the king of Assyria, and this last one *who* has broken his bones is Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon.

The Restoration of Israel

- 18 “Therefore thus says the LORD of hosts, the God of Israel: ‘Behold, I am going to punish the king of Babylon and his land, just as I punished the king of Assyria.
 19 ‘And I will bring Israel back to his pasture and he will graze on Carmel and Bashan, and his desire will be satisfied in the hill country of Ephraim and Gilead.
 20 ‘In those days and at that time,’ declares the LORD, ‘search will be made for the iniquity of Israel, but there will be none; and for the sins of Judah, but they will not be found; for I will pardon those whom I leave as a remnant.’

God’s Wrath against Babylon

- 21 “Against the land of Merathaim, go up against it,
 And against the inhabitants of Pekod.
 Slay and utterly destroy them,” declares the LORD,
 “And do according to all that I have commanded you.
 22 “The noise of battle is in the land,
 And great destruction.
 23 “How the hammer of the whole earth
 Has been cut off and broken!
 How Babylon has become
 An object of horror among the nations!

- 24 "I set a snare for you and you were also caught, O Babylon,
While you yourself were not aware;
You have been found and also seized
Because you have engaged in conflict with the LORD."
- 25 The LORD has opened His armory
And has brought forth the weapons of His indignation,
For it is a work of the Lord God of hosts
In the land of the Chaldeans.
- 26 Come to her from the farthest border;
Open up her barns,
Pile her up like heaps
And utterly destroy her,
Let nothing be left to her.
- 27 Put all her young bulls to the sword;
Let them go down to the slaughter!
Woe be upon them, for their day has come,
The time of their punishment.
- 28 There is a sound of fugitives and refugees from the land of Babylon,
To declare in Zion the vengeance of the LORD our God,
Vengeance for His temple.
- 29 "Summon many against Babylon,
All those who bend the bow:
Encamp against her on every side,
Let there be no escape.
Repay her according to her work;
According to all that she has done, so do to her;
For she has become arrogant against the LORD,
Against the Holy One of Israel.
- 30 "Therefore her young men will fall in her streets,
And all her men of war will be silenced in that day," declares the LORD.
- 31 "Behold, I am against you, O arrogant one,"
Declares the Lord God of hosts,
"For your day has come,
The time when I will punish you.
- 32 "The arrogant one will stumble and fall
With no one to raise him up;
And I will set fire to his cities
And it will devour all his environs."

The Desolation of Babylon

- 33 Thus says the LORD of hosts,
"The sons of Israel are oppressed,
And the sons of Judah as well;
And all who took them captive have held them fast,
They have refused to let them go.
- 34 "Their Redeemer is strong, the LORD of hosts is His name;
He will vigorously plead their case
So that He may bring rest to the earth,
But turmoil to the inhabitants of Babylon.
- 35 "A sword against the Chaldeans," declares the LORD,
"And against the inhabitants of Babylon
And against her officials and her wise men!
- 36 "A sword against the oracle priests, and they will become fools!
A sword against her mighty men, and they will be shattered!
- 37 "A sword against their horses and against their chariots
And against all the foreigners who are in the midst of her,
And they will become women!
A sword against her treasures, and they will be plundered!
- 38 "A drought on her waters, and they will be dried up!

For it is a land of idols,
And they are mad over fearsome idols.

39 “Therefore the desert creatures will live *there* along with the jackals;
The ostriches also will live in it,
And it will never again be inhabited
Or dwelt in from generation to generation.

40 “As when God overthrew Sodom
And Gomorrah with its neighbors,” declares the LORD,
“No man will live there,
Nor will *any* son of man reside in it.

Babylon’s Helplessness

41 “Behold, a people is coming from the north,
And a great nation and many kings
Will be aroused from the remote parts of the earth.

42 “They seize *their* bow and javelin;
They are cruel and have no mercy.
Their voice roars like the sea;
And they ride on horses,
Marshalled like a man for the battle
Against you, O daughter of Babylon.

43 “The king of Babylon has heard the report about them,
And his hands hang limp;
Distress has gripped him,
Agony like a woman in childbirth.

44 “Behold, one will come up like a lion from the thicket of the Jordan to a perennially watered pasture; for in an instant I will make them run away from it, and whoever is chosen I will appoint over it. For who is like Me, and who will summon Me *into court*? And who then is the shepherd who can stand before Me?”

45 Therefore hear the plan of the LORD which He has planned against Babylon, and His purposes which He has purposed against the land of the Chaldeans: surely they will drag them off, *even* the little ones of the flock; surely He will make their pasture desolate because of them.

46 At the shout, “Babylon has been seized!” the earth is shaken, and an outcry is heard among the nations.

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 the LORD:

“Behold, I am going to arouse against Babylon
And against the inhabitants of Leb-kamai
The spirit of a destroyer.

2 “I will dispatch foreigners to Babylon that they may winnow her
And may devastate her land;
For on every side they will be opposed to her
In the day of *her* calamity.

3 “Let not him who bends his bow bend *it*,
Nor let him rise up in his scale-armor;
So do not spare her young men;
Devote all her army to destruction.

4 “They will fall down slain in the land of the Chaldeans,
And pierced through in their streets.”

5 For neither Israel nor Judah has been forsaken
By his God, the LORD of hosts,
Although their land is full of guilt
Before the Holy One of Israel.

6 Flee from the midst of Babylon,
And each of you save his life!

- Do not be destroyed in her punishment,
For this is the LORD's time of vengeance;
He is going to render recompense to her.
- 7 Babylon has been a golden cup in the hand of the LORD,
Intoxicating all the earth.
The nations have drunk of her wine;
Therefore the nations are going mad.
- 8 Suddenly Babylon has fallen and been broken;
Wail over her!
Bring balm for her pain;
Perhaps she may be healed.
- 9 We applied healing to Babylon, but she was not healed;
Forsake her and let us each go to his own country,
For her judgment has reached to heaven
And towers up to the very skies.
- 10 The LORD has brought about our vindication;
Come and let us recount in Zion
The work of the LORD our God!
- 11 Sharpen the arrows, fill the quivers!
The LORD has aroused the spirit of the kings of the Medes,
Because His purpose is against Babylon to destroy it;
For it is the vengeance of the LORD, vengeance for His temple.
- 12 Lift up a signal against the walls of Babylon;
Post a strong guard,
Station sentries,
Place men in ambush!
For the LORD has both purposed and performed
What He spoke concerning the inhabitants of Babylon.
- 13 O you who dwell by many waters,
Abundant in treasures,
Your end has come,
The measure of your end.
- 14 The LORD of hosts has sworn by Himself:
"Surely I will fill you with a population like locusts,
And they will cry out with shouts of victory over you."

A Hymn of Praise to the Lord

- 15 *It is* He who made the earth by His power,
Who established the world by His wisdom,
And by His understanding He stretched out the heavens.
- 16 When He utters His voice, *there is* a tumult of waters in the heavens,
And He causes the clouds to ascend from the end of the earth;
He makes lightning for the rain
And brings forth the wind from His storehouses.
- 17 All mankind is stupid, devoid of knowledge;
Every goldsmith is put to shame by his idols,
For his molten images are deceitful,
And there is no breath in them.
- 18 They are worthless, a work of mockery;
In the time of their punishment they will perish.
- 19 The portion of Jacob is not like these;
For the Maker of all is He,
And of the tribe of His inheritance;
The LORD of hosts is His name.

God's Power against Enemies

- 20 *He says*, "You are My war-club, My weapon of war;
And with you I shatter nations,
And with you I destroy kingdoms.

- 21 “With you I shatter the horse and his rider,
And with you I shatter the chariot and its rider,
22 And with you I shatter man and woman,
And with you I shatter old man and youth,
And with you I shatter young man and virgin,
23 And with you I shatter the shepherd and his flock,
And with you I shatter the farmer and his team,
And with you I shatter governors and prefects.
- 24 “But I will repay Babylon and all the inhabitants of Chaldea for all their evil that they have done in Zion before your eyes,”
declares the LORD.
- 25 “Behold, I am against you, O destroying mountain,
Who destroys the whole earth,” declares the LORD,
“And I will stretch out My hand against you,
And roll you down from the crags,
And I will make you a burnt out mountain.
- 26 “They will not take from you *even* a stone for a corner
Nor a stone for foundations,
But you will be desolate forever,” declares the LORD.

Nations Summoned against Babylon

- 27 Lift up a signal in the land,
Blow a trumpet among the nations!
Consecrate the nations against her,
Summon against her the kingdoms of Ararat, Minni and Ashkenaz;
Appoint a marshal against her,
Bring up the horses like bristly locusts.
- 28 Consecrate the nations against her,
The kings of the Medes,
Their governors and all their prefects,
And every land of their dominion.
- 29 So the land quakes and writhes,
For the purposes of the LORD against Babylon stand,
To make the land of Babylon
A desolation without inhabitants.
- 30 The mighty men of Babylon have ceased fighting,
They stay in the strongholds;
Their strength is exhausted,
They are becoming *like* women;
Their dwelling places are set on fire,
The bars of her *gates* are broken.
- 31 One courier runs to meet another,
And one messenger to meet another,
To tell the king of Babylon
That his city has been captured from end *to end*;
- 32 The fords also have been seized,
And they have burned the marshes with fire,
And the men of war are terrified.

A Call for Retribution

- 33 For thus says the LORD of hosts, the God of Israel:

“The daughter of Babylon is like a threshing floor
At the time it is stamped firm;
Yet in a little while the time of harvest will come for her.”
- 34 “Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon has devoured me *and* crushed me,
He has set me down *like* an empty vessel;
He has swallowed me like a monster,

He has filled his stomach with my delicacies;
He has washed me away.

- 35 “May the violence *done* to me and to my flesh be upon Babylon,”
The inhabitant of Zion will say;
And, “May my blood be upon the inhabitants of Chaldea,”
Jerusalem will say.

God Answers the Call—Payback Time!

36 Therefore thus says the LORD,

“Behold, I am going to plead your case
And exact full vengeance for you;
And I will dry up her sea
And make her fountain dry.

- 37 “Babylon will become a heap *of ruins*, a haunt of jackals,
An object of horror and hissing, without inhabitants.

- 38 “They will roar together like young lions,
They will growl like lions’ cubs.

- 39 “When they become heated up,
I will serve *them* their banquet
And make them drunk, that they may become jubilant
And may sleep a perpetual sleep
And not wake up,” declares the LORD.

- 40 “I will bring them down like lambs to the slaughter,
Like rams together with male goats.

- 41 “How Sheshak has been captured,
And the praise of the whole earth been seized!
How Babylon has become an object of horror among the nations!

- 42 “The sea has come up over Babylon;
She has been engulfed with its tumultuous waves.

- 43 “Her cities have become an object of horror,
A parched land and a desert,
A land in which no man lives
And through which no son of man passes.

- 44 “I will punish Bel in Babylon,
And I will make what he has swallowed come out of his mouth;
And the nations will no longer stream to him.
Even the wall of Babylon has fallen down!

An Appeal to Flee from Babylon

- 45 “Come forth from her midst, My people,
And each of you save yourselves
From the fierce anger of the LORD.

- 46 “Now so that your heart does not grow faint,
And you are not afraid at the report that *will be* heard in the land—
For the report will come one year,
And after that another report in another year,
And violence *will be* in the land
With ruler against ruler—

- 47 Therefore behold, days are coming
When I will punish the idols of Babylon;
And her whole land will be put to shame
And all her slain will fall in her midst.

- 48 “Then heaven and earth and all that is in them
Will shout for joy over Babylon,
For the destroyers will come to her from the north,”
Declares the LORD.

Another Warning of Babylon's Coming Destruction

- 49 Indeed Babylon is to fall *for* the slain of Israel,
As also for Babylon the slain of all the earth have fallen.
- 50 You who have escaped the sword,
Depart! Do not stay!
Remember the LORD from afar,
And let Jerusalem come to your mind.
- 51 We are ashamed because we have heard reproach;
Disgrace has covered our faces,
For aliens have entered
The holy places of the LORD's house.
- 52 "Therefore behold, the days are coming," declares the LORD,
"When I will punish her idols,
And the mortally wounded will groan throughout her land.
- 53 "Though Babylon should ascend to the heavens,
And though she should fortify her lofty stronghold,
From Me destroyers will come to her," declares the LORD.
- 54 The sound of an outcry from Babylon,
And of great destruction from the land of the Chaldeans!
- 55 For the LORD is going to destroy Babylon,
And He will make *her* loud noise vanish from her.
And their waves will roar like many waters;
The tumult of their voices sounds forth.
- 56 For the destroyer is coming against her, against Babylon,
And her mighty men will be captured,
Their bows are shattered;
For the LORD is a God of recompense,
He will fully repay.
- 57 "I will make her princes and her wise men drunk,
Her governors, her prefects and her mighty men,
That they may sleep a perpetual sleep and not wake up,"
Declares the King, whose name is the LORD of hosts.
- 58 Thus says the LORD of hosts,

"The broad wall of Babylon will be completely razed
And her high gates will be set on fire;
So the peoples will toil for nothing,
And the nations become exhausted *only* for fire."

Zedekiah Travels to Babylon / Jeremiah Sends the Babylon Prophecy (Tishri [October] 595–Adar [March] 594 BC)

Jeremiah 51:59–64

- 59 The message which Jeremiah the prophet commanded Seraiah the son of Neriah, the grandson of Mahseiah, when he went with Zedekiah the king of Judah to Babylon in the fourth year of his reign. (Now Seraiah was quartermaster.)
- 60 So Jeremiah wrote in a single scroll all the calamity which would come upon Babylon, *that is*, all these words which have been written concerning Babylon.
- 61 Then Jeremiah said to Seraiah, "As soon as you come to Babylon, then see that you read all these words aloud,
62 and say, 'You, O LORD, have promised concerning this place to cut it off, so that there will be nothing dwelling in it, whether man or beast, but it will be a perpetual desolation.'
- 63 "And as soon as you finish reading this scroll, you will tie a stone to it and throw it into the middle of the Euphrates,
64 and say, 'Just so shall Babylon sink down and not rise again because of the calamity that I am going to bring upon her; and they will become exhausted.'" Thus far are the words of Jeremiah.

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 an image of gold, the height of which *was* sixty cubits *and* its width six cubits; he set it up on the plain of Dura in the province of Babylon.

2 Then Nebuchadnezzar the king sent *word* to assemble the satraps, the prefects and the governors, the counselors, the treasurers, the judges, the magistrates and all the rulers of the provinces to come to the dedication of the image that Nebuchadnezzar the king had set up.

3 Then the satraps, the prefects and the governors, the counselors, the treasurers, the judges, the magistrates and all the rulers of the provinces were assembled for the dedication of the image that Nebuchadnezzar the king had set up; and they stood before the image that Nebuchadnezzar had set up.

4 Then the herald loudly proclaimed: "To you the command is given, O peoples, nations and *men of every* language,

5 that at the moment you hear the sound of the horn, flute, lyre, trigon, psaltery, bagpipe and all kinds of music, you are to fall down and worship the golden image that Nebuchadnezzar the king has set up.

6 But whoever does not fall down and worship shall immediately be cast into the midst of a furnace of blazing fire."

7 Therefore at that time, when all the peoples heard the sound of the horn, flute, lyre, trigon, psaltery, bagpipe and all kinds of music, all the peoples, nations and *men of every* language fell down *and* worshiped the golden image that Nebuchadnezzar the king had set up.

Daniel's Friends Refuse to Worship

8 For this reason at that time certain Chaldeans came forward and brought charges against the Jews.

9 They responded and said to Nebuchadnezzar the king: "O king, live forever!

10 You, O king, have made a decree that every man who hears the sound of the horn, flute, lyre, trigon, psaltery, and bagpipe and all kinds of music, is to fall down and worship the golden image.

11 But whoever does not fall down and worship shall be cast into the midst of a furnace of blazing fire.

12 There are certain Jews whom you have appointed over the administration of the province of Babylon, *namely* Shadrach, Meshach and Abed-nego. These men, O king, have disregarded you; they do not serve your gods or worship the golden image which you have set up."

13 Then Nebuchadnezzar in rage and anger gave orders to bring Shadrach, Meshach and Abed-nego; then these men were brought before the king.

14 Nebuchadnezzar responded and said to them, "Is it true, Shadrach, Meshach and Abed-nego, that you do not serve my gods or worship the golden image that I have set up?

15 Now if you are ready, at the moment you hear the sound of the horn, flute, lyre, trigon, psaltery and bagpipe and all kinds of music, to fall down and worship the image that I have made, *very well*. But if you do not worship, you will immediately be cast into the midst of a furnace of blazing fire; and what god is there who can deliver you out of my hands?"

16 Shadrach, Meshach and Abed-nego replied to the king, "O Nebuchadnezzar, we do not need to give you an answer concerning this matter.

17 If it be *so*, our God whom we serve is able to deliver us from the furnace of blazing fire; and He will deliver us out of your hand, O king.

18 But *even* if *He does* not, let it be known to you, O king, that we are not going to serve your gods or worship the golden image that you have set up."

The Fiery Furnace

19 Then Nebuchadnezzar was filled with wrath, and his facial expression was altered toward Shadrach, Meshach and Abed-nego. He answered by giving orders to heat the furnace seven times more than it was usually heated.

20 He commanded certain valiant warriors who *were* in his army to tie up Shadrach, Meshach and Abed-nego in order to cast *them* into the furnace of blazing fire.

21 Then these men were tied up in their trousers, their coats, their caps and their *other* clothes, and were cast into the midst of the furnace of blazing fire.

22 For this reason, because the king's command *was* urgent and the furnace had been made extremely hot, the flame of the fire slew those men who carried up Shadrach, Meshach and Abed-nego.

23 But these three men, Shadrach, Meshach and Abed-nego, fell into the midst of the furnace of blazing fire *still* tied up.

24 Then Nebuchadnezzar the king was astounded and stood up in haste; he said to his high officials, "Was it not three men we cast bound into the midst of the fire?" They replied to the king, "Certainly, O king."

25 He said, "Look! I see four men loosed *and* walking *about* in the midst of the fire without harm, and the appearance of the fourth is like a son of *the* gods!"

26 Then Nebuchadnezzar came near to the door of the furnace of blazing fire; he responded and said, "Shadrach, Meshach and Abed-nego, come out, you servants of the Most High God, and come here!" Then Shadrach, Meshach and Abed-nego came out of

the midst of the fire.

27 The satraps, the prefects, the governors and the king's high officials gathered around *and* saw in regard to these men that the fire had no effect on the bodies of these men nor was the hair of their head singed, nor were their trousers damaged, nor had the smell of fire *even* come upon them.

Nebuchadnezzar Honors God

28 Nebuchadnezzar responded and said, "Blessed be the God of Shadrach, Meshach and Abed-nego, who has sent His angel and delivered His servants who put their trust in Him, violating the king's command, and yielded up their bodies so as not to serve or worship any god except their own God.

29 Therefore I make a decree that any people, nation or tongue that speaks anything offensive against the God of Shadrach, Meshach and Abed-nego shall be torn limb from limb and their houses reduced to a rubbish heap, inasmuch as there is no other god who is able to deliver in this way."

30 Then the king caused Shadrach, Meshach and Abed-nego to prosper 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 Zedekiah the son of Josiah, king of Judah, this word came to Jeremiah from the LORD, saying—

2 thus says the LORD to me—"Make for yourself bonds and yokes and put them on your neck,

3 and send word to the king of Edom, to the king of Moab, to the king of the sons of Ammon, to the king of Tyre and to the king of Sidon by the messengers who come to Jerusalem to Zedekiah king of Judah.

4 Command them *to go* to their masters, saying, 'Thus says the LORD of hosts, the God of Israel, thus you shall say to your masters,

5 "I have made the earth, the men and the beasts which are on the face of the earth by My great power and by My outstretched arm, and I will give it to the one who is pleasing in My sight.

6 Now I have given all these lands into the hand of Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon, My servant, and I have given him also the wild animals of the field to serve him.

7 All the nations shall serve him and his son and his grandson until the time of his own land comes; then many nations and great kings will make him their servant.

8 "It will be, *that* the nation or the kingdom which will not serve him, Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon, and which will not put its neck under the yoke of the king of Babylon, I will punish that nation with the sword, with famine and with pestilence," declares the LORD, "until I have destroyed it by his hand.

9 But as for you, do not listen to your prophets, your diviners, your dreamers, your soothsayers or your sorcerers who speak to you, saying, 'You will not serve the king of Babylon.'

10 For they prophesy a lie to you in order to remove you far from your land; and I will drive you out and you will perish.

11 But the nation which will bring its neck under the yoke of the king of Babylon and serve him, I will let remain on its land," declares the LORD, "and they will till it and dwell in it.'""

Jeremiah Warns Zedekiah to Submit to Babylon and Not to Listen to False Prophets

12 I spoke words like all these to Zedekiah 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 will you die, you and your people, by the sword, famine and pestilence, as the LORD has spoken to that nation which will not serve the king of Babylon?

14 So do not listen to the words of the prophets who speak to you, saying, 'You will not serve the king of Babylon,' for they prophesy a lie to you;

15 for I have not sent them," declares the LORD, "but they prophesy falsely in My name, in order that I may drive you out and that you may perish, you and the prophets who prophesy 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 the LORD: Do not listen to the words of your prophets who prophesy to you, saying, 'Behold, the vessels of the LORD's house will now shortly be brought again from Babylon'; for they are prophesying a lie to you.

17 Do not listen to them; serve the king of Babylon, and live! Why should this city become a ruin?

18 But if they are prophets, and if the word of the LORD is with them, let them now entreat the LORD of hosts that the vessels which are left in the house of the LORD, in the house of the king of Judah and in Jerusalem may not go to Babylon.

19 For thus says the LORD of hosts concerning the pillars, concerning the sea, concerning the stands and concerning the rest of the vessels that are left in this city,

20 which Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon did not take when he carried into exile Jeconiah the son of Jehoiakim, king of Judah, from

Jerusalem to Babylon, and all the nobles of Judah and Jerusalem.

21 Yes, thus says the LORD of hosts, the God of Israel, concerning the vessels that are left in the house of the LORD and in the house of the king of Judah and in Jerusalem,

22 ‘They will be carried to Babylon and they will be there until the day I visit them,’ declares the LORD. ‘Then I will bring them back and restore them to this place.’”

Conflict between Jeremiah and Hananiah (Ab [August] 594 BC)

Jeremiah 28

Hananiah’s False Prophecy

1 Now in the same year, in the beginning of the reign of Zedekiah king of Judah, in the fourth year, in the fifth month, Hananiah the son of Azzur, the prophet, who was from Gibeon, spoke to me in the house of the LORD in the presence of the priests and all the people, saying,

2 “Thus says the LORD of hosts, the God of Israel, ‘I have broken the yoke of the king of Babylon.

3 Within two years I am going to bring back to this place all the vessels of the LORD’s house, which Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon took away from this place and carried to Babylon.

4 I am also going to bring back to this place Jeconiah the son of Jehoiakim, king of Judah, and all the exiles of Judah who went to Babylon,’ declares the LORD, ‘for I will break the yoke of the king of Babylon.’”

Jeremiah’s Response to Hananiah

5 Then the prophet Jeremiah spoke to the prophet Hananiah in the presence of the priests and in the presence of all the people who were standing in the house of the LORD,

6 and the prophet Jeremiah said, “Amen! May the LORD do so; may the LORD confirm your words which you have prophesied to bring back the vessels of the LORD’s house and all the exiles, from Babylon to this place.

7 Yet hear now this word which I am about to speak 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 lands and against great kingdoms, of war and of calamity and of pestilence.

9 The prophet who prophesies of peace, when the word of the prophet comes to pass, then that prophet will be known as one whom the LORD 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 Hananiah spoke in the presence of all the people, saying, “Thus says the LORD, ‘Even so will I break within two full years the yoke of Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon from the neck of all the nations.’” Then the prophet Jeremiah went his way.

Jeremiah Denounces Hananiah

12 The word of the LORD came to Jeremiah after Hananiah the prophet had broken the yoke from off the neck of the prophet Jeremiah, saying,

13 “Go and speak to Hananiah, saying, ‘Thus says the LORD, “You have broken the yokes of wood, but you have made instead of them yokes of iron.”

14 For thus says the LORD of hosts, the God of Israel, “I have put a yoke of iron on the neck of all these nations, that they may serve Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon; and they will serve him. And I have also given him the beasts of the field.””

15 Then Jeremiah the prophet said to Hananiah the prophet, “Listen now, Hananiah, the LORD has not sent you, and you have made this people trust in a lie.

16 Therefore thus says the LORD, ‘Behold, I am about to remove you from the face of the earth. This year you are going to die, because you have counseled rebellion against the LORD.’”

17 So Hananiah the prophet died in the same year in the seventh month.

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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 ἑτοῦς ὀκτωκαιδεκάτου 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 Now it came about in the thirtieth year, on the fifth *day* of the fourth month, while I was by the river Chebar among the exiles, the heavens were opened and I saw visions of God.

2 (On the fifth of the month in the fifth year of King Jehoiachin's exile,

3 the word of the LORD came expressly to Ezekiel the priest, son of Buzi, in the land of the Chaldeans by the river Chebar; and there the hand of the LORD came upon him.)

The Windstorm

4 As I looked, behold, a storm wind was coming from the north, a great cloud with fire flashing forth continually and a bright light around it, and in its midst something like glowing metal in the midst of the fire.

The Four Living Creatures

5 Within it there were figures resembling four living beings. And this was their appearance: they had human form.

6 Each of them had four faces and four wings.

7 Their legs were straight and their feet were like a calf's hoof, and they gleamed like burnished bronze.

8 Under their wings on their four sides *were* human hands. As for the faces and wings of the four of them,

9 their wings touched one another; *their faces* did not turn when they moved, each went straight forward.

10 As for the form of their faces, *each* had the face of a man; all four had the face of a lion on the right and the face of a bull on the left, and all four had the face of an eagle.

11 Such were their faces. Their wings were spread out above; each had two touching another *being*, and two covering their bodies.

12 And each went straight forward; wherever the spirit was about to go, they would go, without turning as they went.

13 In the midst of the living beings there was something that looked like burning coals of fire, like torches darting back and forth among the living beings. The fire was bright, and lightning was flashing from the fire.

14 And the living beings ran to and fro like bolts of lightning.

The Wheels

15 Now as I looked at the living beings, behold, there was one wheel on the earth beside the living beings, for *each of* the four of them.

16 The appearance of the wheels and their workmanship *was* like sparkling beryl, and all four of them had the same form, their appearance and workmanship *being* as if one wheel were within another.

17 Whenever they moved, they moved in any of their four directions without turning as they moved.

18 As for their rims they were lofty and awesome, and the rims of all four of them were full of eyes round about.

19 Whenever the living beings moved, the wheels moved with them. And whenever the living beings rose from the earth, the wheels rose *also*.

20 Wherever the spirit was about to go, they would go in that direction. And the wheels rose close beside them; for the spirit of the living beings *was* in the wheels.

21 Whenever those went, these went; and whenever those stood still, these stood still. And whenever those rose from the earth, the wheels rose close beside them; for the spirit of the living beings *was* in the wheels.

The Platform

22 Now over the heads of the living beings *there was* something like an expanse, like the awesome gleam of crystal, spread out over their heads.

23 Under the expanse their wings *were stretched out* straight, one toward the other; each one also had two wings covering its body on the one side and on the other.

24 I also heard the sound of their wings like the sound of abundant waters as they went, like the voice of the Almighty, a sound of tumult like the sound of an army camp; whenever they stood still, they dropped their wings.

25 And there came a voice from above the expanse that was over their heads; whenever they stood still, they dropped their wings.

The Throne

26 Now above the expanse that was over their heads there was something resembling a throne, like lapis lazuli in appearance; and on that which resembled a throne, high up, *was* a figure with the appearance of a man.

27 Then I noticed from the appearance of His loins and upward something like glowing metal that looked like fire all around within it, and from the appearance of His loins and downward I saw something like fire; and *there was* a radiance around Him.

28 As the appearance of the rainbow in the clouds on a rainy day, so *was* the appearance of the surrounding radiance. Such *was* the appearance of the likeness of the glory of the LORD. And when I saw *it*, I fell on my face and heard a voice speaking.

God Sends Ezekiel to be His Prophet to the Exiles

2:1 Then He said to me, “Son of man, stand on your feet that I may speak with you!”

2 As He spoke to me the Spirit entered me and set me on my feet; and I heard *Him* speaking to me.

3 Then He said to me, “Son of man, I am sending you to the sons of Israel, to a rebellious people who have rebelled against Me; they and their fathers have transgressed against Me to this very day.

4 I am sending you to them who are stubborn and obstinate children, and you shall say to them, ‘Thus says the Lord God.’

5 As for them, whether they listen or not—for they are a rebellious house—they will know that a prophet has been among them.

6 And you, son of man, neither fear them nor fear their words, though thistles and thorns are with you and you sit on scorpions; neither fear their words nor be dismayed at their presence, for they are a rebellious house.

7 But you shall speak My words to them whether they listen or not, for they are rebellious.

8 “Now you, son of man, listen to what I am speaking to you; do not be rebellious like that rebellious house. Open your mouth and eat what I am giving you.”

9 Then I looked, and behold, a hand was extended to me; and lo, a scroll *was* in it.

10 When He spread it out before me, it was written on the front and back, and written on it were lamentations, mourning and woe.

Ezekiel and the Scroll

3:1 Then He said to me, “Son of man, eat what you find; eat this scroll, and go, speak to the house of Israel.”

2 So I opened my mouth, and He fed me this scroll.

3 He said to me, “Son of man, feed your stomach and fill your body with this scroll which I am giving you.” Then I ate it, and it was sweet as honey in my mouth.

4 Then He said to me, “Son of man, go to the house of Israel and speak with My words to them.

5 For you are not being sent to a people of unintelligible speech or difficult language, *but* to the house of Israel,

6 nor to many peoples of unintelligible speech or difficult language, whose words you cannot understand. But I have sent you to them who should listen to you;

7 yet the house of Israel will not be willing to listen to you, since they are not willing to listen to Me. Surely the whole house of Israel is stubborn and obstinate.

8 Behold, I have made your face as hard as their faces and your forehead as hard as their foreheads.

9 Like emery harder than flint I have made your forehead. Do not be afraid of them or be dismayed before them, though they are a rebellious house.”

10 Moreover, He said to me, “Son of man, take into your heart all My words which I will speak to you and listen closely.

11 Go to the exiles, to the sons of your people, and speak to them and tell them, whether they listen or not, ‘Thus says the Lord God.’”

12 Then the Spirit lifted me up, and I heard a great rumbling sound behind me, “Blessed be the glory of the LORD in His place.”

13 And I *heard* the sound of the wings of the living beings touching one another and the sound of the wheels beside them, even a great rumbling sound.

14 So the Spirit lifted me up and took me away; and I went embittered in the rage of my spirit, and the hand of the LORD was strong on me.

Ezekiel Appointed as Watchman for Israel (August 6, 593 BC)**Ezekiel 3:15–27**

15 Then I came to the exiles who lived beside the river Chebar at Tel-abib, and I sat there seven days where they were living, causing consternation among them.

16 At the end of seven days the word of the LORD came to me, saying,

17 “Son of man, I have appointed you a watchman to the house of Israel; whenever you hear a word from My mouth, warn them from Me.

18 When I say to the wicked, ‘You will surely die,’ and you do not warn him or speak out to warn the wicked from his wicked way that he may live, that wicked man shall die in his iniquity, but his blood I will require at your hand.

19 Yet if you have warned the wicked and he does not turn from his wickedness or from his wicked way, he shall die in his iniquity; but you have delivered yourself.

20 Again, when a righteous man turns away from his righteousness and commits iniquity, and I place an obstacle before him, he will die; since you have not warned him, he shall die in his sin, and his righteous deeds which he has done shall not be remembered; but his blood I will require at your hand.

21 However, if you have warned the righteous man that the righteous should not sin and he does not sin, he shall surely live because he took warning; and you have delivered yourself.”

22 The hand of the LORD was on me there, and He said to me, “Get up, go out to the plain, and there I will speak to you.”

23 So I got up and went out to the plain; and behold, the glory of the LORD was standing there, like the glory which I saw by the river Chebar, and I fell on my face.

24 The Spirit then entered me and made me stand on my feet, and He spoke with me and said to me, “Go, shut yourself up in your house.

25 As for you, son of man, they will put ropes on you and bind you with them so that you cannot go out among them.

26 Moreover, I will make your tongue stick to the roof of your mouth so that you will be mute and cannot be a man who rebukes them, for they are a rebellious house.

27 But when I speak to you, I will open your mouth and you will say to them, ‘Thus says the Lord God.’ He who hears, let him hear; and he who refuses, let him refuse; 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 you son of man, get yourself a brick, place it before you and inscribe a city on it, Jerusalem.
- 2 Then lay siege against it, build a siege wall, raise up a ramp, pitch camps and place battering rams against it all around.
- 3 Then get yourself an iron plate and set it up as an iron wall between you and the city, and set your face toward it so that it is under siege, and besiege it. This is a sign to the house of Israel.
- 4 "As for you, lie down on your left side and lay the iniquity of the house of Israel on it; you shall bear their iniquity for the number of days that you lie on it.
- 5 For I have assigned you a number of days corresponding to the years of their iniquity, three hundred and ninety days; thus you shall bear the iniquity of the house of Israel.
- 6 When you have completed these, you shall lie down a second time, *but* on your right side and bear the iniquity of the house of Judah; I have assigned it to you for forty days, a day for each year.
- 7 Then you shall set your face toward the siege of Jerusalem with your arm bared and prophesy against it.
- 8 Now behold, I will put ropes on you so that you cannot turn from one side to the other until you have completed the days of your siege.

The Unclean Meal

- 9 "But as for you, take wheat, barley, beans, lentils, millet and spelt, put them in one vessel and make them into bread for yourself; you shall eat it according to the number of the days that you lie on your side, three hundred and ninety days.
- 10 Your food which you eat *shall be* twenty shekels a day by weight; you shall eat it from time to time.
- 11 The water you drink shall be the sixth part of a hin by measure; you shall drink it from time to time.
- 12 You shall eat it as a barley cake, having baked *it* in their sight over human dung."
- 13 Then the LORD said, "Thus will the sons of Israel eat their bread unclean among the nations where I will banish them."
- 14 But I said, "Ah, Lord GOD! Behold, I have never been defiled; for from my youth until now I have never eaten what died of itself or was torn by beasts, nor has any unclean meat ever entered my mouth."
- 15 Then He said to me, "See, I will give you cow's dung in place of human dung over which you will prepare your bread."
- 16 Moreover, He said to me, "Son of man, behold, I am going to break the staff of bread in Jerusalem, and they will eat bread by weight and with anxiety, and drink water by measure and in horror,
- 17 because bread and water will be scarce; and they will be appalled with one another and waste away in their iniquity.

Ezekiel's Prophecy to the Exiles—The Fall of Jerusalem (August 6, 593 BC)

Ezekiel 5

The Shaved Head and Beard

- 1 "As for you, son of man, take a sharp sword; take and use it *as* a barber's razor on your head and beard. Then take scales for weighing and divide the hair.
- 2 One third you shall burn in the fire at the center of the city, when the days of the siege are completed. Then you shall take one third and strike *it* with the sword all around the city, and one third you shall scatter to the wind; and I will unsheathe a sword behind them.
- 3 Take also a few in number from them and bind them in the edges of your *robes*.
- 4 Take again some of them and throw them into the fire and burn them in the fire; from it a fire will spread to all the house of Israel.
- 5 "Thus says the Lord GOD, 'This is Jerusalem; I have set her at the center of the nations, with lands around her.
- 6 But she has rebelled against My ordinances more wickedly than the nations and against My statutes more than the lands which surround her; for they have rejected My ordinances and have not walked in My statutes.'

First Announcement of Judgment on Jerusalem

- 7 Therefore, thus says the Lord GOD, 'Because you have more turmoil than the nations which surround you *and* have not walked in My statutes, nor observed My ordinances, nor observed the ordinances of the nations which surround you,'
- 8 therefore, thus says the Lord GOD, 'Behold, I, even I, am against you, and I will execute judgments among you in the sight of the nations.
- 9 And because of all your abominations, I will do among you what I have not done, and the like of which I will never do again.
- 10 Therefore, fathers will eat *their* sons among you, and sons will eat their fathers; for I will execute judgments on you and scatter all your remnant to every wind.

Second Announcement of Judgment on Jerusalem

- 11 So as I live,' declares the Lord GOD, 'surely, because you have defiled My sanctuary with all your detestable idols and with all your abominations, therefore I will also withdraw, and My eye will have no pity and I will not spare.

12 One third of you will die by plague or be consumed by famine among you, one third will fall by the sword around you, and one third I will scatter to every wind, and I will unsheathe a sword behind them.

13 ‘Thus My anger will be spent and I will satisfy My wrath on them, and I will be appeased; then they will know that I, the LORD, have spoken in My zeal when I have spent My wrath upon them.

14 Moreover, I will make you a desolation and a reproach among the nations which surround you, in the sight of all who pass by.

15 So it will be a reproach, a reviling, a warning and an object of horror to the nations who surround you when I execute judgments against you in anger, wrath and raging rebukes. I, the LORD, have spoken.

16 When I send against them the deadly arrows of famine which were for the destruction of those whom I will send to destroy you, then I will also intensify the famine upon you and break the staff of bread.

17 Moreover, I will send on you famine and wild beasts, and they will bereave you of children; plague and bloodshed also will pass through you, and I will bring the sword on you. I, the LORD, 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 the LORD came to me saying,
 2 “Son of man, set your face toward the mountains of Israel, and prophesy against them
 3 and say, ‘Mountains of Israel, listen to the word of the Lord God! Thus says the Lord God to the mountains, the hills, the ravines and the valleys: “Behold, I Myself am going to bring a sword on you, and I will destroy your high places.
 4 So your altars will become desolate and your incense altars will be smashed; and I will make your slain fall in front of your idols.
 5 I will also lay the dead bodies of the sons of Israel in front of their idols; and I will scatter your bones around your altars.
 6 In all your dwellings, cities will become waste and the high places will be desolate, that your altars may become waste and desolate, your idols may be broken and brought to an end, your incense altars may be cut down, and your works may be blotted out.
 7 The slain will fall among you, and you will know that I am the LORD.

“Then They Will Know”

8 “However, I will leave a remnant, for you will have those who escaped the sword among the nations when you are scattered among the countries.
 9 Then those of you who escape will remember Me among the nations to which they will be carried captive, how I have been hurt by their adulterous hearts which turned away from Me, and by their eyes which played the harlot after their idols; and they will loathe themselves in their own sight for the evils which they have committed, for all their abominations.
 10 Then they will know that I am the LORD; I have not said in vain that I would inflict this disaster on them.”
 11 “Thus says the Lord God, ‘Clap your hand, stamp your foot and say, “Alas, because of all the evil abominations of the house of Israel, which will fall by sword, famine and plague!
 12 He who is far off will die by the plague, and he who is near will fall by the sword, and he who remains and is besieged will die by the famine. Thus will I spend My wrath on them.
 13 Then you will know that I am the LORD, when their slain are among their idols around their altars, on every high hill, on all the tops of the mountains, under every green tree and under every leafy oak—the places where they offered soothing aroma to all their idols.
 14 So throughout all their habitations I will stretch out My hand against them and make the land more desolate and waste than the wilderness toward Diblah; thus they will know that I am the LORD.””

Ezekiel’s Prophecy to the Exiles—Disaster Is Coming (c. 592 BC)

Ezekiel 7

The First Alarm

1 Moreover, the word of the LORD came to me saying,
 2 “And you, son of man, thus says the Lord God to the land of Israel, ‘An end! The end is coming on the four corners of the land.
 3 Now the end is upon you, and I will send My anger against you; I will judge you according to your ways and bring all your abominations upon you.
 4 For My eye will have no pity on you, nor will I spare you, but I will bring your ways upon you, and your abominations will be among you; then you will know that I am the LORD!’

The Second Alarm

5 “Thus says the Lord God, ‘A disaster, unique disaster, behold it is coming!
 6 An end is coming; the end has come! It has awakened against you; behold, it has come!
 7 Your doom has come to you, O inhabitant of the land. The time has come, the day is near—tumult rather than joyful shouting on

the mountains.

8 Now I will shortly pour out My wrath on you and spend My anger against you; judge you according to your ways and bring on you all your abominations.

9 My eye will show no pity nor will I spare. I will repay you according to your ways, while your abominations are in your midst; then you will know that I, the LORD, do the smiting.

The Third Alarm

10 'Behold, the day! Behold, it is coming! *Your* doom has gone forth; the rod has budded, arrogance has blossomed.

11 Violence has grown into a rod of wickedness. None of them *shall remain*, none of their people, none of their wealth, nor anything eminent among them.

12 The time has come, the day has arrived. Let not the buyer rejoice nor the seller mourn; for wrath is against all their multitude.

13 Indeed, the seller will not regain what he sold as long as they *both* live; for the vision regarding all their multitude will not be averted, nor will any of them maintain his life by his iniquity.

14 'They have blown the trumpet and made everything ready, but no one is going to the battle, for My wrath is against all their multitude.

15 The sword is outside and the plague and the famine are within. He who is in the field will die by the sword; famine and the plague will also consume those in the city.

16 Even when their survivors escape, they will be on the mountains like doves of the valleys, all of them mourning, each over his own iniquity.

17 All hands will hang limp and all knees will become *like* water.

18 They will gird themselves with sackcloth and shuddering will overwhelm them; and shame *will be* on all faces and baldness on all their heads.

19 They will fling their silver into the streets and their gold will become an abhorrent thing; their silver and their gold will not be able to deliver them in the day of the wrath of the LORD. They cannot satisfy their appetite nor can they fill their stomachs, for their iniquity has become an occasion of stumbling.

20 They transformed the beauty of His ornaments into pride, and they made the images of their abominations *and* their detestable things with it; therefore I will make it an abhorrent thing to them.

21 I will give it into the hands of the foreigners as plunder and to the wicked of the earth as spoil, and they will profane it.

22 I will also turn My face from them, and they will profane My secret place; then robbers will enter and profane it.

23 'Make the chain, for the land is full of bloody crimes and the city is full of violence.

24 Therefore, I will bring the worst of the nations, and they will possess their houses. I will also make the pride of the strong ones cease, and their holy places will be profaned.

25 When anguish comes, they will seek peace, but there will be none.

26 Disaster will come upon disaster and rumor will be *added* to rumor; then they will seek a vision from a prophet, but the law will be lost from the priest and counsel from the elders.

27 The king will mourn, the prince will be clothed with horror, and the hands of the people of the land will tremble. According to their conduct I will deal with them, and by their judgments I will judge them. And they will know that I am the LORD.'"

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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 Vision

8:1 It came about in the sixth year, on the fifth *day* of the sixth month, as I was sitting in my house with the elders of Judah sitting before me, that the hand of the Lord GOD fell on me there.

The Idol of Jealousy

2 Then I looked, and behold, a likeness as the appearance of a man; from His loins and downward *there was* the appearance of fire, and from His loins and upward the appearance of brightness, like the appearance of glowing metal.
 3 He stretched out the form of a hand and caught me by a lock of my head; and the Spirit lifted me up between earth and heaven and brought me in the visions of God to Jerusalem, to the entrance of the north gate of the inner *court*, where the seat of the idol of jealousy, which provokes to jealousy, was *located*.
 4 And behold, the glory of the God of Israel *was* there, like the appearance which I saw in the plain.
 5 Then He said to me, "Son of man, raise your eyes now toward the north." So I raised my eyes toward the north, and behold, to the north of the altar gate *was* this idol of jealousy at the entrance.
 6 And He said to me, "Son of man, do you see what they are doing, the great abominations which the house of Israel are committing here, so that I would be far from My sanctuary? But yet you will see still greater abominations."

Idol Worship by the Elders

7 Then He brought me to the entrance of the court, and when I looked, behold, a hole in the wall.
 8 He said to me, "Son of man, now dig through the wall." So I dug through the wall, and behold, an entrance.
 9 And He said to me, "Go in and see the wicked abominations that they are committing here."
 10 So I entered and looked, and behold, every form of creeping things and beasts *and* detestable things, with all the idols of the house of Israel, were carved on the wall all around.
 11 Standing in front of them were seventy elders of the house of Israel, with Jaazaniah the son of Shaphan standing among them, each man with his censer in his hand and the fragrance of the cloud of incense rising.
 12 Then He said to me, "Son of man, do you see what the elders of the house of Israel are committing in the dark, each man in the room of his carved images? For they say, 'The LORD does not see us; the LORD has forsaken the land.'"
 13 And He said to me, "Yet you will see still greater abominations which they are committing."

Idol Worship by the Women

14 Then He brought me to the entrance of the gate of the LORD's house which *was* toward the north; and behold, women were sitting there weeping for Tammuz.
 15 He said to me, "Do you see *this*, son of man? Yet you will see still greater abominations than these."

Worshipping the Sun

16 Then He brought me into the inner court of the LORD's house. And behold, at the entrance to the temple of the LORD, between the porch and the altar, *were* about twenty-five men with their backs to the temple of the LORD and their faces toward the east; and they were prostrating themselves eastward toward the sun.
 17 He said to me, "Do you see *this*, son of man? Is it too light a thing for the house of Judah to commit the abominations which they have committed here, that they have filled the land with violence and provoked Me repeatedly? For behold, they are putting the twig to their nose.
 18 Therefore, I indeed will deal in wrath. My eye will have no pity nor will I spare; and though they cry in My ears with a loud voice, yet I will not listen to them."

The Heavenly Executioners

9:1 Then He cried out in my hearing with a loud voice saying, "Draw near, O executioners of the city, each with his destroying weapon in his hand."
 2 Behold, six men came from the direction of the upper gate which faces north, each with his shattering weapon in his hand; and among them was a certain man clothed in linen with a writing case at his loins. And they went in and stood beside the bronze altar.
 3 Then the glory of the God of Israel went up from the cherub on which it had been, to the threshold of the temple. And He called to the man clothed in linen at whose loins was the writing case.
 4 The LORD said to him, "Go through the midst of the city, *even* through the midst of Jerusalem, and put a mark on the foreheads of the men who sigh and groan over all the abominations which are being committed in its midst."
 5 But to the others He said in my hearing, "Go through the city after him and strike; do not let your eye have pity and do not spare.
 6 Utterly slay old men, young men, maidens, little children, and women, but do not touch any man on whom is the mark; and you shall start from My sanctuary." So they started with the elders who *were* before the temple.
 7 And He said to them, "Defile the temple and fill the courts with the slain. Go out!" Thus they went out and struck down *the people*

in the city.

8 As they were striking *the people* and I *alone* was left, I fell on my face and cried out saying, “Alas, Lord God! Are You destroying the whole remnant of Israel by pouring out Your wrath on Jerusalem?”

9 Then He said to me, “The iniquity of the house of Israel and Judah is very, very great, and the land is filled with blood and the city is full of perversion; for they say, ‘The LORD has forsaken the land, and the LORD does not see!’

10 But as for Me, My eye will have no pity nor will I spare, but I will bring their conduct upon their heads.”

11 Then behold, the man clothed in linen at whose loins was the writing case reported, saying, “I have done just as You have commanded me.”

God’s Glory Leaves the Most Holy Place

10:1 Then I looked, and behold, in the expanse that was over the heads of the cherubim something like a sapphire stone, in appearance resembling a throne, appeared above them.

2 And He spoke to the man clothed in linen and said, “Enter between the whirling wheels under the cherubim and fill your hands with coals of fire from between the cherubim and scatter *them* over the city.” And he entered in my sight.

3 Now the cherubim were standing on the right side of the temple when the man entered, and the cloud filled the inner court.

4 Then the glory of the LORD went up from the cherub to the threshold of the temple, and the temple was filled with the cloud and the court was filled with the brightness of the glory of the LORD.

5 Moreover, the sound of the wings of the cherubim was heard as far as the outer court, like the voice of God Almighty when He speaks.

6 It came about when He commanded the man clothed in linen, saying, “Take fire from between the whirling wheels, from between the cherubim,” he entered and stood beside a wheel.

7 Then the cherub stretched out his hand from between the cherubim to the fire which was between the cherubim, took *some* and put *it* into the hands of the one clothed in linen, who took *it* and went out.

8 The cherubim appeared to have the form of a man’s hand under their wings.

God’s Glory Leaves the Temple

9 Then I looked, and behold, four wheels beside the cherubim, one wheel beside each cherub; and the appearance of the wheels *was* like the gleam of a Tarshish stone.

10 As for their appearance, all four of them had the same likeness, as if one wheel were within another wheel.

11 When they moved, they went in *any of* their four directions without turning as they went; but they followed in the direction which they faced, without turning as they went.

12 Their whole body, their backs, their hands, their wings and the wheels were full of eyes all around, the wheels belonging to all four of them.

13 The wheels were called in my hearing, the whirling wheels.

14 And each one had four faces. The first face *was* the face of a cherub, the second face *was* the face of a man, the third the face of a lion, and the fourth the face of an eagle.

15 Then the cherubim rose up. They are the living beings that I saw by the river Chebar.

16 Now when the cherubim moved, the wheels would go beside them; also when the cherubim lifted up their wings to rise from the ground, the wheels would not turn from beside them.

17 When the cherubim stood still, the wheels would stand still; and when they rose up, the wheels would rise with them, for the spirit of the living beings *was* in them.

18 Then the glory of the LORD departed from the threshold of the temple and stood over the cherubim.

19 When the cherubim departed, they lifted their wings and rose up from the earth in my sight with the wheels beside them; and they stood still at the entrance of the east gate of the LORD’s house, and the glory of the God of Israel hovered over them.

20 These are the living beings that I saw beneath the God of Israel by the river Chebar; so I knew that they *were* cherubim.

21 Each one had four faces and each one four wings, and beneath their wings *was* the form of human hands.

22 As for the likeness of their faces, they were the same faces whose appearance I had seen by the river Chebar. Each one went straight ahead.

The Wicked Advice of the Officials

11:1 Moreover, the Spirit lifted me up and brought me to the east gate of the LORD’s house which faced eastward. And behold, *there were* twenty-five men at the entrance of the gate, and among them I saw Jaazaniah son of Azzur and Pelatiah son of Benaiah, leaders of the people.

2 He said to me, “Son of man, these are the men who devise iniquity and give evil advice in this city,

3 who say, ‘Is not *the time* near to build houses? This *city* is the pot and we are the flesh.’

4 Therefore, prophesy against them, son of man, prophesy!”

5 Then the Spirit of the LORD fell upon me, and He said to me, “Say, ‘Thus says the LORD, “So you think, house of Israel, for I know your thoughts.

6 You have multiplied your slain in this city, filling its streets with them.”

7 Therefore, thus says the Lord GOD, “Your slain whom you have laid in the midst of the city are the flesh and this *city* is the pot; but I will bring you out of it.

8 You have feared a sword; so I will bring a sword upon you,” the Lord GOD declares.

9 “And I will bring you out of the midst of the city and deliver you into the hands of strangers and execute judgments against you.

10 You will fall by the sword. I will judge you to the border of Israel; so you shall know that I am the LORD.

11 This *city* will not be a pot for you, nor will you be flesh in the midst of it, *but* I will judge you to the border of Israel.

12 Thus you will know that I am the LORD; for you have not walked in My statutes nor have you executed My ordinances, but have acted according to the ordinances of the nations around you.””

13 Now it came about as I prophesied, that Pelatiah son of Benaiah died. Then I fell on my face and cried out with a loud voice and said, “Alas, Lord GOD! Will You bring the remnant of Israel to a complete end?”

A New Heart for the Regathered Remnant

14 Then the word of the LORD came to me, saying,

15 “Son of man, your brothers, your relatives, your fellow exiles and the whole house of Israel, all of them, *are those* to whom the inhabitants of Jerusalem have said, ‘Go far from the LORD; this land has been given us as a possession.’

16 Therefore say, ‘Thus says the Lord GOD, “Though I had removed them far away among the nations and though I had scattered them among the countries, yet I was a sanctuary for them a little while in the countries where they had gone.”’

17 Therefore say, ‘Thus says the Lord GOD, “I will gather you from the peoples and assemble you out of the countries among which you have been scattered, and I will give you the land of Israel.”’

18 When they come there, they will remove all its detestable things and all its abominations from it.

19 And I will give them one heart, and put a new spirit within them. And I will take the heart of stone out of their flesh and give them a heart of flesh,

20 that they may walk in My statutes and keep My ordinances and do them. Then they will be My people, and I shall be their God.

21 But as for those whose hearts go after their detestable things and abominations, I will bring their conduct down on their heads,” declares the Lord GOD.

God’s Glory Leaves Jerusalem

22 Then the cherubim lifted up their wings with the wheels beside them, and the glory of the God of Israel hovered over them.

23 The glory of the LORD went up from the midst of the city and stood over the mountain which is east of the city.

The End of the Vision

24 And the Spirit lifted me up and brought me in a vision by the Spirit of God to the exiles in Chaldea. So the vision that I had seen left me.

25 Then I told the exiles all the things that the LORD 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 Then the word of the LORD came to me, saying,
 2 “Son of man, you live in the midst of the rebellious house, who have eyes to see but do not see, ears to hear but do not hear; for they are a rebellious house.
 3 Therefore, son of man, prepare for yourself baggage for exile and go into exile by day in their sight; even go into exile from your place to another place in their sight. Perhaps they will understand though they are a rebellious house.
 4 Bring your baggage out by day in their sight, as baggage for exile. Then you will go out at evening in their sight, as those going into exile.
 5 Dig a hole through the wall in their sight and go out through it.
 6 Load *the baggage* on *your* shoulder in their sight *and* carry *it* out in the dark. You shall cover your face so that you cannot see the land, for I have set you as a sign to the house of Israel.”
 7 I did so, as I had been commanded. By day I brought out my baggage like the baggage of an exile. Then in the evening I dug through the wall with my hands; I went out in the dark *and* carried *the baggage* on *my* shoulder in their sight.
 8 In the morning the word of the LORD came to me, saying,
 9 “Son of man, has not the house of Israel, the rebellious house, said to you, ‘What are you doing?’
 10 Say to them, ‘Thus says the Lord GOD, “This burden *concerns* the prince in Jerusalem as well as all the house of Israel who are in it.”’
 11 Say, ‘I am a sign to you. As I have done, so it will be done to them; they will go into exile, into captivity.’
 12 The prince who is among them will load *his baggage* on *his* shoulder in the dark and go out. They will dig a hole through the wall to bring *it* out. He will cover his face so that he can not see the land with *his* eyes. [cf. [2 Kgs 25:4](#); [Jer 39:4](#); [52:7](#)]
 13 I will also spread My net over him, and he will be caught in My snare. And I will bring him to Babylon in the land of the Chaldeans; yet he will not see it, though he will die there. [cf. [2 Kgs 25:5–7](#); [Jer 39:5](#); [52:7–8](#)]
 14 I will scatter to every wind all who are around him, his helpers and all his troops; and I will draw out a sword after them.
 15 So they will know that I am the LORD when I scatter them among the nations and spread them among the countries.
 16 But I will spare a few of them from the sword, the famine and the pestilence that they may tell all their abominations among the nations where they go, and may know that I am the LORD.”

Pantomime of Terror

- 17 Moreover, the word of the LORD came to me saying,
 18 “Son of man, eat your bread with trembling and drink your water with quivering and anxiety.
 19 Then say to the people of the land, ‘Thus says the Lord GOD concerning the inhabitants of Jerusalem in the land of Israel, “They will eat their bread with anxiety and drink their water with horror, because their land will be stripped of its fullness on account of the violence of all who live in it.
 20 The inhabited cities will be laid waste and the land will be a desolation. So you will know that I am the LORD.”’”

God Ends a Proverb

- 21 Then the word of the LORD came to me, saying,
 22 “Son of man, what is this proverb you *people* have concerning the land of Israel, saying, ‘The days are long and every vision fails’?
 23 Therefore say to them, ‘Thus says the Lord GOD, “I will make this proverb cease so that they will no longer use it as a proverb in Israel.” But tell them, “The days draw near as well as the fulfillment of every vision.
 24 For there will no longer be any false vision or flattering divination within the house of Israel.
 25 For I the LORD will speak, and whatever word I speak will be performed. It will no longer be delayed, for in your days, O rebellious house, I will speak the word and perform it,” declares the Lord GOD.’”

Ezekiel Confirms the Imminence of His Prophecies

- 26 Furthermore, the word of the LORD came to me, saying,
 27 “Son of man, behold, the house of Israel is saying, ‘The vision that he sees is for many years *from now*, and he prophesies of times far off.’
 28 Therefore say to them, ‘Thus says the Lord GOD, “None of My words will be delayed any longer. Whatever word I speak will be performed,”’” declares the Lord GOD.

Ezekiel's Prophecy to the Exiles—False Prophets (c. late 592 BC)

Ezekiel 13

Charges against False Prophets

- 1 Then the word of the LORD came to me saying,

- 2 “Son of man, prophesy against the prophets of Israel who prophesy, and say to those who prophesy from their own inspiration, ‘Listen to the word of the LORD!’
- 3 Thus says the Lord GOD, “Woe to the foolish prophets who are following their own spirit and have seen nothing.
- 4 O Israel, your prophets have been like foxes among ruins.
- 5 You have not gone up into the breaches, nor did you build the wall around the house of Israel to stand in the battle on the day of the LORD.
- 6 They see falsehood and lying divination who are saying, ‘The LORD declares,’ when the LORD has not sent them; yet they hope for the fulfillment of *their* word.
- 7 Did you not see a false vision and speak a lying divination when you said, ‘The LORD declares,’ but it is not I who have spoken?’”

Judgment on False Prophets

- 8 Therefore, thus says the Lord GOD, “Because you have spoken falsehood and seen a lie, therefore behold, I am against you,” declares the Lord GOD.
- 9 “So My hand will be against the prophets who see false visions and utter lying divinations. They will have no place in the council of My people, nor will they be written down in the register of the house of Israel, nor will they enter the land of Israel, that you may know that I am the Lord GOD.
- 10 It is definitely because they have misled My people by saying, ‘Peace!’ when there is no peace. And when anyone builds a wall, behold, they plaster it over with whitewash;
- 11 so tell those who plaster *it* over with whitewash, that it will fall. A flooding rain will come, and you, O hailstones, will fall; and a violent wind will break out.
- 12 Behold, when the wall has fallen, will you not be asked, ‘Where is the plaster with which you plastered *it*?’”
- 13 Therefore, thus says the Lord GOD, “I will make a violent wind break out in My wrath. There will also be in My anger a flooding rain and hailstones to consume *it* in wrath.
- 14 So I will tear down the wall which you plastered over with whitewash and bring it down to the ground, so that its foundation is laid bare; and when it falls, you will be consumed in its midst. And you will know that I am the LORD.
- 15 Thus I will spend My wrath on the wall and on those who have plastered it over with whitewash; and I will say to you, ‘The wall is gone and its plasterers are gone,
- 16 *along with* the prophets of Israel who prophesy to Jerusalem, and who see visions of peace for her when there is no peace,’ declares the Lord GOD. [cf. [Acts 23:3](#)]

Charges against False Prophetesses

- 17 “Now you, son of man, set your face against the daughters of your people who are prophesying from their own inspiration. Prophesy against them
- 18 and say, ‘Thus says the Lord GOD, “Woe to the women who sew *magic* bands on all wrists and make veils for the heads of *persons* of every stature to hunt down lives! Will you hunt down the lives of My people, but preserve the lives *of others* for yourselves?
- 19 For handfuls of barley and fragments of bread, you have profaned Me to My people to put to death some who should not die and to keep others alive who should not live, by your lying to My people who listen to lies.’”

Judgment on False Prophetesses

- 20 Therefore, thus says the Lord GOD, “Behold, I am against your *magic* bands by which you hunt lives there as birds and I will tear them from your arms; and I will let them go, even those lives whom you hunt as birds.
- 21 I will also tear off your veils and deliver My people from your hands, and they will no longer be in your hands to be hunted; and you will know that I am the LORD.
- 22 Because you disheartened the righteous with falsehood when I did not cause him grief, but have encouraged the wicked not to turn from his wicked way *and* preserve his life,
- 23 therefore, you women will no longer see false visions or practice divination, and I will deliver My people out of your hand. Thus you will know that I am the LORD.”

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 Then some elders of Israel came to me and sat down before me.
- 2 And the word of the LORD came to me, saying,
- 3 “Son of man, these men have set up their idols in their hearts and have put right before their faces the stumbling block of their iniquity. Should I be consulted by them at all?
- 4 Therefore speak to them and tell them, ‘Thus says the Lord GOD, “Any man of the house of Israel who sets up his idols in his heart, puts right before his face the stumbling block of his iniquity, and *then* comes to the prophet, I the LORD will be brought to give him an

answer in the matter in view of the multitude of his idols,

5 in order to lay hold of the hearts of the house of Israel who are estranged from Me through all their idols.”

6 “Therefore say to the house of Israel, ‘Thus says the Lord GOD, “Repent and turn away from your idols and turn your faces away from all your abominations.

7 For anyone of the house of Israel or of the immigrants who stay in Israel who separates himself from Me, sets up his idols in his heart, puts right before his face the stumbling block of his iniquity, and *then* comes to the prophet to inquire of Me for himself, I the LORD will be brought to answer him in My own person.

8 I will set My face against that man and make him a sign and a proverb, and I will cut him off from among My people. So you will know that I am the LORD.

9 “But if the prophet is prevailed upon to speak a word, it is I, the LORD, who have prevailed upon that prophet, and I will stretch out My hand against him and destroy him from among My people Israel.

10 They will bear *the punishment of* their iniquity; as the iniquity of the inquirer is, so the iniquity of the prophet will be,

11 in order that the house of Israel may no longer stray from Me and no longer defile themselves with all their transgressions. Thus they will be My people, and I shall be their God,” declares the Lord GOD.”

Jerusalem’s Four Terrible Judgments

12 Then the word of the LORD came to me saying,

13 “Son of man, if a country sins against Me by committing unfaithfulness, and I stretch out My hand against it, destroy its supply of bread, send famine against it and cut off from it both man and beast,

14 even *though* these three men, Noah, Daniel and Job were in its midst, by their *own* righteousness they could *only* deliver themselves,” declares the Lord GOD.

15 “If I were to cause wild beasts to pass through the land and they depopulated it, and it became desolate so that no one would pass through it because of the beasts,

16 *though* these three men were in its midst, as I live,” declares the Lord GOD, “they could not deliver either *their* sons or *their* daughters. They alone would be delivered, but the country would be desolate.

17 Or *if* I should bring a sword on that country and say, ‘Let the sword pass through the country and cut off man and beast from it,’

18 even *though* these three men were in its midst, as I live,” declares the Lord GOD, “they could not deliver either *their* sons or *their* daughters, but they alone would be delivered.

19 Or *if* I should send a plague against that country and pour out My wrath in blood on it to cut off man and beast from it,

20 even *though* Noah, Daniel and Job were in its midst, as I live,” declares the Lord GOD, “they could not deliver either *their* son or *their* daughter. They would deliver only themselves by their righteousness.”

21 For thus says the Lord GOD, “How much more when I send My four severe judgments against Jerusalem: sword, famine, wild beasts and plague to cut off man and beast from it!

22 Yet, behold, survivors will be left in it who will be brought out, *both* sons and daughters. Behold, they are going to come forth to you and you will see their conduct and actions; then you will be comforted for the calamity which I have brought against Jerusalem for everything which I have brought upon it.

23 Then they will comfort you when you see their conduct and actions, for you will know that I have not done in vain whatever I did to it,” declares the Lord GOD.

Ezekiel’s Prophecy to the Exiles—The Useless Vine (c. late 592 BC)

Ezekiel 15

1 Then the word of the LORD came to me, saying,

2 “Son of man, how is the wood of the vine *better* than any wood of a branch which is among the trees of the forest?

3 Can wood be taken from it to make anything, or can *men* take a peg from it on which to hang any vessel?

4 If it has been put into the fire for fuel, *and* the fire has consumed both of its ends and its middle part has been charred, is it *then* useful for anything?

5 Behold, while it is intact, it is not made into anything. How much less, when the fire has consumed it and it is charred, can it still be made into anything!

6 Therefore, thus says the Lord GOD, ‘As the wood of the vine among the trees of the forest, which I have given to the fire for fuel, so have I given up the inhabitants of Jerusalem;

7 and I set My face against them. *Though* they have come out of the fire, yet the fire will consume them. Then you will know that I am the LORD, when I set My face against them.

8 Thus I will make the land desolate, because they have acted unfaithfully,” declares the Lord GOD.

Ezekiel's Prophecy to the Exiles—Jerusalem: The Adulterous Wife (c. late 592 BC)

Ezekiel 16

Jerusalem's Lowly Origins

1 Then the word of the LORD came to me, saying,

2 "Son of man, make known to Jerusalem her abominations

3 and say, 'Thus says the Lord GOD to Jerusalem, "Your origin and your birth are from the land of the Canaanite, your father was an Amorite and your mother a Hittite.

4 As for your birth, on the day you were born your navel cord was not cut, nor were you washed with water for cleansing; you were not rubbed with salt or even wrapped in cloths.

5 No eye looked with pity on you to do any of these things for you, to have compassion on you. Rather you were thrown out into the open field, for you were abhorred on the day you were born.

Yahweh's Compassion

6 "When I passed by you and saw you squirming in your blood, I said to you *while you were* in your blood, 'Live!' Yes, I said to you *while you were* in your blood, 'Live!'

7 I made you numerous like plants of the field. Then you grew up, became tall and reached the age for fine ornaments; *your* breasts were formed and your hair had grown. Yet you were naked and bare.

8 "Then I passed by you and saw you, and behold, you were at the time for love; so I spread My skirt over you and covered your nakedness. I also swore to you and entered into a covenant with you so that you became Mine," declares the Lord GOD.

9 "Then I bathed you with water, washed off your blood from you and anointed you with oil.

10 I also clothed you with embroidered cloth and put sandals of porpoise skin on your feet; and I wrapped you with fine linen and covered you with silk.

11 I adorned you with ornaments, put bracelets on your hands and a necklace around your neck.

12 I also put a ring in your nostril, earrings in your ears and a beautiful crown on your head.

13 Thus you were adorned with gold and silver, and your dress was of fine linen, silk and embroidered cloth. You ate fine flour, honey and oil; so you were exceedingly beautiful and advanced to royalty.

14 Then your fame went forth among the nations on account of your beauty, for it was perfect because of My splendor which I bestowed on you," declares the Lord GOD.

Jerusalem's Religious Promiscuity

15 "But you trusted in your beauty and played the harlot because of your fame, and you poured out your harlotries on every passer-by who might be *willing*.

16 You took some of your clothes, made for yourself high places of various colors and played the harlot on them, which should never come about nor happen.

17 You also took your beautiful jewels *made* of My gold and of My silver, which I had given you, and made for yourself male images that you might play the harlot with them.

18 Then you took your embroidered cloth and covered them, and offered My oil and My incense before them.

19 Also My bread which I gave you, fine flour, oil and honey with which I fed you, you would offer before them for a soothing aroma; so it happened," declares the Lord GOD.

20 "Moreover, you took your sons and daughters whom you had borne to Me and sacrificed them to idols to be devoured. Were your harlotries so small a matter?

21 You slaughtered My children and offered them up to idols by causing them to pass through *the fire*.

22 Besides all your abominations and harlotries you did not remember the days of your youth, when you were naked and bare and squirming in your blood.

Jerusalem's Political Promiscuity

23 "Then it came about after all your wickedness ('Woe, woe to you!' declares the Lord GOD),

24 that you built yourself a shrine and made yourself a high place in every square.

25 You built yourself a high place at the top of every street and made your beauty abominable, and you spread your legs to every passer-by to multiply your harlotry.

26 You also played the harlot with the Egyptians, your lustful neighbors, and multiplied your harlotry to make Me angry.

27 Behold now, I have stretched out My hand against you and diminished your rations. And I delivered you up to the desire of those who hate you, the daughters of the Philistines, who are ashamed of your lewd conduct.

28 Moreover, you played the harlot with the Assyrians because you were not satisfied; you played the harlot with them and still were not satisfied.

29 You also multiplied your harlotry with the land of merchants, Chaldea, yet even with this you were not satisfied."'''

30 "How languishing is your heart," declares the Lord GOD, "while you do all these things, the actions of a bold-faced harlot.

31 When you built your shrine at the beginning of every street and made your high place in every square, in disdain of money, you were not like a harlot.

32 You adulteress wife, who takes strangers instead of her husband!

33 Men give gifts to all harlots, but you give your gifts to all your lovers to bribe them to come to you from every direction for your harlotries.

34 Thus you are different from those women in your harlotries, in that no one plays the harlot as you do, because you give money and no money is given you; thus you are different.”

The Sentencing of Jerusalem

35 Therefore, O harlot, hear the word of the LORD.

36 Thus says the Lord GOD, “Because your lewdness was poured out and your nakedness uncovered through your harlotries with your lovers and with all your detestable idols, and because of the blood of your sons which you gave to idols,

37 therefore, behold, I will gather all your lovers with whom you took pleasure, even all those whom you loved *and* all those whom you hated. So I will gather them against you from every direction and expose your nakedness to them that they may see all your nakedness.

38 Thus I will judge you like women who commit adultery or shed blood are judged; and I will bring on you the blood of wrath and jealousy.

39 I will also give you into the hands of your lovers, and they will tear down your shrines, demolish your high places, strip you of your clothing, take away your jewels, and will leave you naked and bare.

40 They will incite a crowd against you and they will stone you and cut you to pieces with their swords.

41 They will burn your houses with fire and execute judgments on you in the sight of many women. Then I will stop you from playing the harlot, and you will also no longer pay your lovers.

42 So I will calm My fury against you and My jealousy will depart from you, and I will be pacified and angry no more.

43 Because you have not remembered the days of your youth but have enraged Me by all these things, behold, I in turn will bring your conduct down on your own head,” declares the Lord GOD, “so that you will not commit this lewdness on top of all your *other* abominations.

Like Mother, Like Daughter

44 “Behold, everyone who quotes proverbs will quote *this* proverb concerning you, saying, ‘Like mother, like daughter.’

45 You are the daughter of your mother, who loathed her husband and children. You are also the sister of your sisters, who loathed their husbands and children. Your mother was a Hittite and your father an Amorite.

46 Now your older sister is Samaria, who lives north of you with her daughters; and your younger sister, who lives south of you, is Sodom with her daughters.

47 Yet you have not merely walked in their ways or done according to their abominations; but, as if that were too little, you acted more corruptly in all your conduct than they.

48 As I live,” declares the Lord GOD, “Sodom, your sister and her daughters have not done as you and your daughters have done.

49 Behold, this was the guilt of your sister Sodom: she and her daughters had arrogance, abundant food and careless ease, but she did not help the poor and needy.

50 Thus they were haughty and committed abominations before Me. Therefore I removed them when I saw *it*.

51 Furthermore, Samaria did not commit half of your sins, for you have multiplied your abominations more than they. Thus you have made your sisters appear righteous by all your abominations which you have committed.

52 Also bear your disgrace in that you have made judgment favorable for your sisters. Because of your sins in which you acted more abominably than they, they are more in the right than you. Yes, be also ashamed and bear your disgrace, in that you made your sisters appear righteous.

The Double Ray of Hope

53 “Nevertheless, I will restore their captivity, the captivity of Sodom and her daughters, the captivity of Samaria and her daughters, and along with them your own captivity,

54 in order that you may bear your humiliation and feel ashamed for all that you have done when you become a consolation to them.

55 Your sisters, Sodom with her daughters and Samaria with her daughters, will return to their former state, and you with your daughters will *also* return to your former state.

56 As *the name of* your sister Sodom was not heard from your lips in your day of pride,

57 before your wickedness was uncovered, so now you have become the reproach of the daughters of Edom and of all who are around her, of the daughters of the Philistines—those surrounding *you* who despise you.

58 You have borne *the penalty of* your lewdness and abominations,” the LORD declares.

The Future New Covenant

59 For thus says the Lord GOD, “I will also do with you as you have done, you who have despised the oath by breaking the covenant.

60 “Nevertheless, I will remember My covenant with you in the days of your youth, and I will establish an everlasting covenant with you.

61 Then you will remember your ways and be ashamed when you receive your sisters, *both* your older and your younger; and I will give them to you as daughters, but not because of your covenant.

62 Thus I will establish My covenant with you, and you shall know that I am the LORD,

63 so that you may remember and be ashamed and never open your mouth anymore because of your humiliation, when I have forgiven you for all that you have done,” the Lord God declares.

Ezekiel’s Prophecy to the Exiles—The Eagles and the Vine (c. late 592 BC)

Ezekiel 17

The Parable of the Two Eagles

1 Now the word of the LORD came to me saying,

2 “Son of man, propound a riddle and speak a parable to the house of Israel,

3 saying, ‘Thus says the Lord GOD, “A great eagle with great wings, long pinions and a full plumage of many colors came to Lebanon and took away the top of the cedar.

4 He plucked off the topmost of its young twigs and brought it to a land of merchants; he set it in a city of traders.

5 He also took some of the seed of the land and planted it in fertile soil. He placed *it* beside abundant waters; he set it *like* a willow.

6 Then it sprouted and became a low, spreading vine with its branches turned toward him, but its roots remained under it. So it became a vine and yielded shoots and sent out branches.

7 “But there was another great eagle with great wings and much plumage; and behold, this vine bent its roots toward him and sent out its branches toward him from the beds where it was planted, that he might water it.

8 It was planted in good soil beside abundant waters, that it might yield branches and bear fruit *and* become a splendid vine.”

9 Say, ‘Thus says the Lord GOD, “Will it thrive? Will he not pull up its roots and cut off its fruit, so that it withers—so that all its sprouting leaves wither? And neither by great strength nor by many people can it be raised from its roots *again*.

10 Behold, though it is planted, will it thrive? Will it not completely wither as soon as the east wind strikes it—wither on the beds where it grew?”’

The Interpretation of the Parable

11 Moreover, the word of the LORD came to me, saying,

12 “Say now to the rebellious house, ‘Do you not know what these things *mean*?’ Say, ‘Behold, the king of Babylon came to Jerusalem, took its king and princes and brought them to him in Babylon.

13 He took one of the royal family and made a covenant with him, putting him under oath. He also took away the mighty of the land, 14 that the kingdom might be in subjection, not exalting itself, *but* keeping his covenant that it might continue.

15 But he rebelled against him by sending his envoys to Egypt that they might give him horses and many troops. Will he succeed? Will he who does such things escape? Can he indeed break the covenant and escape?

16 As I live,’ declares the Lord GOD, ‘Surely in the country of the king who put him on the throne, whose oath he despised and whose covenant he broke, in Babylon he shall die.

17 Pharaoh with *his* mighty army and great company will not help him in the war, when they cast up ramps and build siege walls to cut off many lives.

18 Now he despised the oath by breaking the covenant, and behold, he pledged his allegiance, yet did all these things; he shall not escape.”

19 Therefore, thus says the Lord GOD, “As I live, surely My oath which he despised and My covenant which he broke, I will inflict on his head.

20 I will spread My net over him, and he will be caught in My snare. Then I will bring him to Babylon and enter into judgment with him there *regarding* the unfaithful act which he has committed against Me.

21 All the choice men in all his troops will fall by the sword, and the survivors will be scattered to every wind; and you will know that I, the LORD, have spoken.”

Epilogue—The New Cedar

22 Thus says the Lord GOD, “I will also take *a sprig* from the lofty top of the cedar and set *it* out; I will pluck from the topmost of its young twigs a tender one and I will plant *it* on a high and lofty mountain.

23 On the high mountain of Israel I will plant it, that it may bring forth boughs and bear fruit and become a stately cedar. And birds of every kind will nest under it; they will nest in the shade of its branches.

24 All the trees of the field will know that I am the LORD; I bring down the high tree, exalt the low tree, dry up the green tree and make the dry tree flourish. I am the LORD; I have spoken, and I will perform *it*.”

Ezekiel's Prophecy to the Exiles—Individual Responsibility and Retribution (c. late 592 BC)

Ezekiel 18

Israel's Proverb

1 Then the word of the LORD came to me, saying,

2 "What do you mean by using this proverb concerning the land of Israel, saying,

'The fathers eat the sour grapes,
But the children's teeth are set on edge'?

3 As I live," declares the Lord GOD, "you are surely not going to use this proverb in Israel anymore.

4 Behold, all souls are Mine; the soul of the father as well as the soul of the son is Mine. The soul who sins will die.

A Righteous Man's Wicked Son

5 "But if a man is righteous and practices justice and righteousness,

6 and does not eat at the mountain *shrines* or lift up his eyes to the idols of the house of Israel, or defile his neighbor's wife or approach a woman during her menstrual period—

7 if a man does not oppress anyone, but restores to the debtor his pledge, does not commit robbery, *but* gives his bread to the hungry and covers the naked with clothing,

8 if he does not lend *money* on interest or take increase, *if* he keeps his hand from iniquity *and* executes true justice between man and man,

9 *if* he walks in My statutes and My ordinances so as to deal faithfully—he is righteous *and* will surely live," declares the Lord GOD.

10 "Then he may have a violent son who sheds blood and who does any of these things to a brother

11 (though he himself did not do any of these things), that is, he even eats at the mountain *shrines*, and defiles his neighbor's wife, 12 oppresses the poor and needy, commits robbery, does not restore a pledge, but lifts up his eyes to the idols *and* commits abomination,

13 he lends *money* on interest and takes increase; will he live? He will not live! He has committed all these abominations, he will surely be put to death; his blood will be on his own head.

A Wicked Man's Righteous Son

14 "Now behold, he has a son who has observed all his father's sins which he committed, and observing does not do likewise.

15 He does not eat at the mountain *shrines* or lift up his eyes to the idols of the house of Israel, or defile his neighbor's wife, 16 or oppress anyone, or retain a pledge, or commit robbery, *but* he gives his bread to the hungry and covers the naked with clothing,

17 he keeps his hand from the poor, does not take interest or increase, *but* executes My ordinances, and walks in My statutes; he will not die for his father's iniquity, he will surely live.

Each Individual Stands On Their Own

18 As for his father, because he practiced extortion, robbed *his* brother and did what was not good among his people, behold, he will die for his iniquity.

19 "Yet you say, 'Why should the son not bear the punishment for the father's iniquity?' When the son has practiced justice and righteousness and has observed all My statutes and done them, he shall surely live.

20 The person who sins will die. The son will not bear the punishment for the father's iniquity, nor will the father bear the punishment for the son's iniquity; the righteousness of the righteous will be upon himself, and the wickedness of the wicked will be upon himself.

The Salvation of the Wicked Who Repent

21 "But if the wicked man turns from all his sins which he has committed and observes all My statutes and practices justice and righteousness, he shall surely live; he shall not die.

22 All his transgressions which he has committed will not be remembered against him; because of his righteousness which he has practiced, he will live.

23 Do I have any pleasure in the death of the wicked," declares the Lord GOD, "rather than that he should turn from his ways and live?

The Destruction of the Righteous Who Rebel

24 "But when a righteous man turns away from his righteousness, commits iniquity and does according to all the abominations that a wicked man does, will he live? All his righteous deeds which he has done will not be remembered for his treachery which he has committed and his sin which he has committed; for them he will die.

25 Yet you say, 'The way of the Lord is not right.' Hear now, O house of Israel! Is My way not right? Is it not your ways that are not right?

26 When a righteous man turns away from his righteousness, commits iniquity and dies because of it, for his iniquity which he has

committed he will die.

27 Again, when a wicked man turns away from his wickedness which he has committed and practices justice and righteousness, he will save his life.

28 Because he considered and turned away from all his transgressions which he had committed, he shall surely live; he shall not die.

29 But the house of Israel says, 'The way of the Lord is not right.' Are My ways not right, O house of Israel? Is it not your ways that are not right?

Repent!

30 "Therefore I will judge you, O house of Israel, each according to his conduct," declares the Lord God. "Repent and turn away from all your transgressions, so that iniquity may not become a stumbling block to you.

31 Cast away from you all your transgressions which you have committed and make yourselves a new heart and a new spirit! For why will you die, O house of Israel?

32 For I have no pleasure in the death of anyone who dies," declares the Lord God. "Therefore, 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 "As for you, take up a lamentation for the princes of Israel

2 and say,

'What was your mother?

A lioness among lions!

She lay down among young lions,

She reared her cubs.

3 'When she brought up one of her cubs,

He became a lion,

And he learned to tear *his* prey;

He devoured men.

4 'Then nations heard about him;

He was captured in their pit,

And they brought him with hooks

To the land of Egypt. [cf. Jehohaz in [2 Kgs 23:31–33](#)]

5 'When she saw, as she waited,

That her hope was lost,

She took another of her cubs

And made him a young lion.

6 'And he walked about among the lions;

He became a young lion,

He learned to tear *his* prey;

He devoured men.

7 'He destroyed their fortified towers

And laid waste their cities;

And the land and its fullness were appalled

Because of the sound of his roaring.

8 'Then nations set against him

On every side from *their* provinces,

And they spread their net over him;

He was captured in their pit.

9 'They put him in a cage with hooks

And brought him to the king of Babylon; [cf. Jehoiachin in [2 Kgs 24:8–16](#)]

They brought him in hunting nets

So that his voice would be heard no more

On the mountains of Israel.

Dirge for the Vine of Judah

10 'Your mother was like a vine in your vineyard,

Planted by the waters;

It was fruitful and full of branches

Because of abundant waters.

- 11 'And it had strong branches *fit* for scepters of rulers,
And its height was raised above the clouds
So that it was seen in its height with the mass of its branches.
- 12 'But it was plucked up in fury;
It was cast down to the ground;
And the east wind dried up its fruit.
Its strong branch was torn off
So that it withered;
The fire consumed it.
- 13 'And now it is planted in the wilderness,
In a dry and thirsty land.
- 14 'And fire has gone out from *its* branch;
It has consumed its shoots *and* fruit,
So that there is not in it a strong branch,
A scepter to rule.'"

This is a lamentation, and has become a lamentation.

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 Now in the seventh year, in the fifth *month*, on the tenth of the month, certain of the elders of Israel came to inquire of the LORD, and sat before me.
- 2 And the word of the LORD came to me saying,
- 3 "Son of man, speak to the elders of Israel and say to them, 'Thus says the Lord GOD, "Do you come to inquire of Me? As I live," declares the Lord GOD, "I will not be inquired of by you.'"
- 4 Will you judge them, will you judge them, son of man? Make them know the abominations of their fathers;

Israel's Rebellion in Egypt

- 5 and say to them, 'Thus says the Lord GOD, "On the day when I chose Israel and swore to the descendants of the house of Jacob and made Myself known to them in the land of Egypt, when I swore to them, saying, I am the LORD your God,
- 6 on that day I swore to them, to bring them out from the land of Egypt into a land that I had selected for them, flowing with milk and honey, which is the glory of all lands.
- 7 I said to them, 'Cast away, each of you, the detestable things of his eyes, and do not defile yourselves with the idols of Egypt; I am the LORD your God.'
- 8 But they rebelled against Me and were not willing to listen to Me; they did not cast away the detestable things of their eyes, nor did they forsake the idols of Egypt. Then I resolved to pour out My wrath on them, to accomplish My anger against them in the midst of the land of Egypt.
- 9 But I acted for the sake of My name, that it should not be profaned in the sight of the nations among whom they *lived*, in whose sight I made Myself known to them by bringing them out of the land of Egypt.

Israel's Rebellion in the Wilderness (Exodus generation)

- 10 So I took them out of the land of Egypt and brought them into the wilderness.
- 11 I gave them My statutes and informed them of My ordinances, by which, if a man observes them, he will live. [[Lev 18:5](#)]
- 12 Also I gave them My sabbaths to be a sign between Me and them, that they might know that I am the LORD who sanctifies them.
- 13 But the house of Israel rebelled against Me in the wilderness. They did not walk in My statutes and they rejected My ordinances, by which, if a man observes them, he will live; and My sabbaths they greatly profaned. Then I resolved to pour out My wrath on them in the wilderness, to annihilate them.
- 14 But I acted for the sake of My name, that it should not be profaned in the sight of the nations, before whose sight I had brought them out.
- 15 Also I swore to them in the wilderness that I would not bring them into the land which I had given them, flowing with milk and honey, which is the glory of all lands,
- 16 because they rejected My ordinances, and as for My statutes, they did not walk in them; they even profaned My sabbaths, for their heart continually went after their idols.
- 17 Yet My eye spared them rather than destroying them, and I did not cause their annihilation in the wilderness.

Israel's Rebellion in the Wilderness (Wandering generation)

- 18 "I said to their children in the wilderness, 'Do not walk in the statutes of your fathers or keep their ordinances or defile yourselves with their idols.

19 I am the LORD your God; walk in My statutes and keep My ordinances and observe them.

20 Sanctify My sabbaths; and they shall be a sign between Me and you, that you may know that I am the LORD your God.'

21 But the children rebelled against Me; they did not walk in My statutes, nor were they careful to observe My ordinances, by which, if a man observes them, he will live; they profaned My sabbaths. So I resolved to pour out My wrath on them, to accomplish My anger against them in the wilderness.

22 But I withdrew My hand and acted for the sake of My name, that it should not be profaned in the sight of the nations in whose sight I had brought them out.

23 Also I swore to them in the wilderness that I would scatter them among the nations and disperse them among the lands,

24 because they had not observed My ordinances, but had rejected My statutes and had profaned My sabbaths, and their eyes were on the idols of their fathers.

25 I also gave them statutes that were not good and ordinances by which they could not live;

26 and I pronounced them unclean because of their gifts, in that they caused all their firstborn to pass through *the fire* so that I might make them desolate, in order that they might know that I am the LORD.'"

Israel's Rebellion in the Recent Past

27 "Therefore, son of man, speak to the house of Israel and say to them, 'Thus says the Lord GOD, "Yet in this your fathers have blasphemed Me by acting treacherously against Me.

28 When I had brought them into the land which I swore to give to them, then they saw every high hill and every leafy tree, and they offered there their sacrifices and there they presented the provocation of their offering. There also they made their soothing aroma and there they poured out their drink offerings.

29 Then I said to them, 'What is the high place to which you go?' So its name is called Bamah to this day.'"

30 Therefore, say to the house of Israel, 'Thus says the Lord GOD, "Will you defile yourselves after the manner of your fathers and play the harlot after their detestable things?

31 When you offer your gifts, when you cause your sons to pass through the fire, you are defiling yourselves with all your idols to this day. And shall I be inquired of by you, O house of Israel? As I live," declares the Lord GOD, "I will not be inquired of by you.

The Future Transformation of Israel—Israel in the Desert

32 What comes into your mind will not come about, when you say: 'We will be like the nations, like the tribes of the lands, serving wood and stone.'

33 "As I live," declares the Lord GOD, "surely with a mighty hand and with an outstretched arm and with wrath poured out, I shall be king over you.

34 I will bring you out from the peoples and gather you from the lands where you are scattered, with a mighty hand and with an outstretched arm and with wrath poured out;

35 and I will bring you into the wilderness of the peoples, and there I will enter into judgment with you face to face.

36 As I entered into judgment with your fathers in the wilderness of the land of Egypt, so I will enter into judgment with you," declares the Lord GOD.

37 "I will make you pass under the rod, and I will bring you into the bond of the covenant;

38 and I will purge from you the rebels and those who transgress against Me; I will bring them out of the land where they sojourn, but they will not enter the land of Israel. Thus you will know that I am the LORD.

The Future Transformation of Israel—Israel on Yahweh's Holy Mountain

39 "As for you, O house of Israel," thus says the Lord GOD, "Go, serve everyone his idols; but later you will surely listen to Me, and My holy name you will profane no longer with your gifts and with your idols.

40 For on My holy mountain, on the high mountain of Israel," declares the Lord GOD, "there the whole house of Israel, all of them, will serve Me in the land; there I will accept them and there I will seek your contributions and the choicest of your gifts, with all your holy things.

41 As a soothing aroma I will accept you when I bring you out from the peoples and gather you from the lands where you are scattered; and I will prove Myself holy among you in the sight of the nations.

42 And you will know that I am the LORD, when I bring you into the land of Israel, into the land which I swore to give to your forefathers.

43 There you will remember your ways and all your deeds with which you have defiled yourselves; and you will loathe yourselves in your own sight for all the evil things that you have done.

44 Then you will know that I am the LORD when I have dealt with you for My name's sake, not according to your evil ways or according to your corrupt deeds, O house of Israel," declares the Lord GOD.'"

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 Now the word of the LORD came to me, saying,

46 "Son of man, set your face toward Teman, and speak out against the south and prophesy against the forest land of the Negev,
47 and say to the forest of the Negev, 'Hear the word of the LORD: thus says the Lord GOD, "Behold, I am about to kindle a fire in you, and it will consume every green tree in you, as well as every dry tree; the blazing flame will not be quenched and the whole surface from south to north will be burned by it.

48 All flesh will see that I, the LORD, have kindled it; it shall not be quenched.'"

49 Then I said, "Ah Lord GOD! They are saying of me, 'Is he not *just* speaking parables?'"

21:1 And the word of the LORD came to me saying,

2 "Son of man, set your face toward Jerusalem, and speak against the sanctuaries and prophesy against the land of Israel;

3 and say to the land of Israel, 'Thus says the LORD, "Behold, I am against you; and I will draw My sword out of its sheath and cut off from you the righteous and the wicked.

4 Because I will cut off from you the righteous and the wicked, therefore My sword will go forth from its sheath against all flesh from south to north.

5 Thus all flesh will know that I, the LORD, have drawn My sword out of its sheath. It will not return *to its sheath* again.'"

6 As for you, son of man, groan with breaking heart and bitter grief, groan in their sight.

7 And when they say to you, 'Why do you groan?' you shall say, 'Because of the news that is coming; and every heart will melt, all hands will be feeble, every spirit will faint and all knees will be weak as water. Behold, it comes and it will happen,' declares the Lord GOD."

The Song of the Sword

8 Again the word of the LORD came to me, saying,

9 "Son of man, prophesy and say, 'Thus says the LORD.' Say,

'A sword, a sword sharpened
And also polished!

10 'Sharpened to make a slaughter,
Polished to flash like lightning!'

Or shall we rejoice, the rod of My son despising every tree?

11 It is given to be polished, that it may be handled; the sword is sharpened and polished, to give it into the hand of the slayer.

12 Cry out and wail, son of man; for it is against My people, it is against all the officials of Israel. They are delivered over to the sword with My people, therefore strike *your* thigh.

13 For *there is* a testing; and what if even the rod which despises will be no more?" declares the Lord GOD.

14 "You therefore, son of man, prophesy and clap *your* hands together; and let the sword be doubled the third time, the sword for the slain. It is the sword for the great one slain, which surrounds them,

15 that *their* hearts may melt, and many fall at all their gates. I have given the glittering sword. Ah! It is made *for striking* like lightning, it is wrapped up *in readiness* for slaughter.

16 Show yourself sharp, go to the right; set yourself; go to the left, wherever your edge is appointed.

17 I will also clap My hands together, and I will appease My wrath; I, the LORD, have spoken."

The Agent of the Sword

18 The word of the LORD came to me saying,

19 "As for you, son of man, make two ways for the sword of the king of Babylon to come; both of them will go out of one land. And make a signpost; make it at the head of the way to the city.

20 You shall mark a way for the sword to come to Rabbah of the sons of Ammon, and to Judah into fortified Jerusalem.

21 For the king of Babylon stands at the parting of the way, at the head of the two ways, to use divination; he shakes the arrows, he consults the household idols, he looks at the liver.

22 Into his right hand came the divination, 'Jerusalem,' to set battering rams, to open the mouth for slaughter, to lift up the voice with a battle cry, to set battering rams against the gates, to cast up ramps, to build a siege wall.

23 And it will be to them like a false divination in their eyes; they have *sworn* solemn oaths. But he brings iniquity to remembrance, that they may be seized.

24 "Therefore, thus says the Lord GOD, 'Because you have made your iniquity to be remembered, in that your transgressions are uncovered, so that in all your deeds your sins appear—because you have come to remembrance, you will be seized with the hand.'

25 And you, O slain, wicked one, the prince of Israel, whose day has come, in the time of the punishment of the end,'

26 thus says the Lord GOD, 'Remove the turban and take off the crown; this *will* no longer *be* the same. Exalt that which is low and abase that which is high.

27 A ruin, a ruin, a ruin, I will make it. This also will be no more until He comes whose right it is, and I will give it *to Him*.'

The Taunt of the Sword

28 “And you, son of man, prophesy and say, ‘Thus says the Lord GOD concerning the sons of Ammon and concerning their reproach,’ and say: ‘A sword, a sword is drawn, polished for the slaughter, to cause it to consume, that it may be like lightning—

29 while they see for you false visions, while they divine lies for you—to place you on the necks of the wicked who are slain, whose day has come, in the time of the punishment of the end.

30 Return *it* to its sheath. In the place where you were created, in the land of your origin, I will judge you.

31 I will pour out My indignation 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 in destruction.

32 You will be fuel for the fire; your blood will be in the midst of the land. You will not be remembered, for I, the LORD, 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 Then the word of the LORD came to me, saying,

2 “And you, son of man, will you judge, will you judge the bloody city? Then cause her to know all her abominations.

3 You shall say, ‘Thus says the Lord GOD, “A city shedding blood in her midst, so that her time will come, and that makes idols, contrary to her *interest*, for defilement!

4 You have become guilty by the blood which you have shed, and defiled by your idols which you have made. Thus you have brought your day near and have come to your years; therefore I have made you a reproach to the nations and a mocking to all the lands.

5 Those who are near and those who are far from you will mock you, you of ill repute, full of turmoil.

6 “Behold, the rulers of Israel, each according to his power, have been in you for the purpose of shedding blood.

7 They have treated father and mother lightly within you. The alien they have oppressed in your midst; the fatherless and the widow they have wronged in you.

8 You have despised My holy things and profaned My sabbaths.

9 Slanderous men have been in you for the purpose of shedding blood, and in you they have eaten at the mountain *shrines*. In your midst they have committed acts of lewdness.

10 In you they have uncovered *their* fathers’ nakedness; in you they have humbled her who was unclean in her menstrual impurity.

11 One has committed abomination with his neighbor’s wife and another has lewdly defiled his daughter-in-law. And another in you has humbled his sister, his father’s daughter.

12 In you they have taken bribes to shed blood; you have taken interest and profits, and you have injured your neighbors for gain by oppression, and you have forgotten Me,” declares the Lord GOD.

13 “Behold, then, I smite My hand at your dishonest gain which you have acquired and at the bloodshed which is among you.

14 Can your heart endure, or can your hands be strong in the days that I will deal with you? I, the LORD, have spoken and will act.

15 I will scatter you among the nations and I will disperse you through the lands, and I will consume your uncleanness from you.

16 You will profane yourself in the sight of the nations, and you will know that I am the LORD.””

In the Smelter of God’s Wrath

17 And the word of the LORD came to me, saying,

18 “Son of man, the house of Israel has become dross to Me; all of them are bronze and tin and iron and lead in the furnace; they are the dross of silver.

19 Therefore, thus says the Lord GOD, ‘Because all of you have become dross, therefore, behold, I am going to gather you into the midst of Jerusalem.

20 As they gather silver and bronze and iron and lead and tin into the furnace to blow fire on it in order to melt *it*, so I will gather *you* in My anger and in My wrath and I will lay you *there* and melt you.

21 I will gather you and blow on you with the fire of My wrath, and you will be melted in the midst of it.

22 As silver is melted in the furnace, so you will be melted in the midst of it; and you will know that I, the LORD, have poured out My wrath on you.”

The Unmanned Breach

23 And the word of the LORD came to me, saying,

24 “Son of man, say to her, ‘You are a land that is not cleansed or rained on in the day of indignation.’

25 There is a conspiracy of her prophets in her midst like a roaring lion tearing the prey. They have devoured lives; they have taken treasure and precious things; they have made many widows in the midst of her.

26 Her priests have done violence to My law and have profaned My holy things; they have made no distinction between the holy and the profane, and they have not taught the difference between the unclean and the clean; and they hide their eyes from My sabbaths, and I am profaned among them.

27 Her princes within her are like wolves tearing the prey, by shedding blood *and* destroying lives in order to get dishonest gain.

28 Her prophets have smeared whitewash for them, seeing false visions and divining lies for them, saying, ‘Thus says the Lord GOD,’ when the LORD has not spoken.

29 The people of the land have practiced oppression and committed robbery, and they have wronged the poor and needy and have oppressed the sojourner without justice.

30 I searched for a man among them who would build up the wall and stand in the gap before Me for the land, so that I would not destroy it; but I found no one.

31 Thus I have poured out My indignation on them; I have consumed them with the fire of My wrath; their way I have brought upon their heads,” declares the Lord GOD.

Ezekiel’s Prophecy to the Exiles—A Tale of Two Sisters (August 14, 591 BC)

Ezekiel 23

Introduction of the Accused

1 The word of the LORD came to me again, saying,

2 “Son of man, there were two women, the daughters of one mother;

3 and they played the harlot in Egypt. They played the harlot in their youth; there their breasts were pressed and there their virgin bosom was handled.

4 Their names were Oholah the elder and Oholibah her sister. And they became Mine, and they bore sons and daughters. And *as for* their names, Samaria is Oholah and Jerusalem is Oholibah.

The Indictment of Oholah (Samaria)

5 “Oholah played the harlot while she was Mine; and she lusted after her lovers, after the Assyrians, *her* neighbors,

6 who were clothed in purple, governors and officials, all of them desirable young men, horsemen riding on horses.

7 She bestowed her harlotries on them, all of whom *were* the choicest men of Assyria; and with all whom she lusted after, with all their idols she defiled herself.

8 She did not forsake her harlotries from *the time in* Egypt; for in her youth men had lain with her, and they handled her virgin bosom and poured out their lust 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, but they slew her with the sword. Thus she became a byword among women, and they executed judgments on her.

The Indictment of Oholibah (Jerusalem)

11 “Now her sister Oholibah saw *this*, yet she was more corrupt in her lust than she, and her harlotries were more than the harlotries of her sister.

12 She lusted after the Assyrians, governors and officials, the ones near, magnificently dressed, horsemen riding on horses, all of them desirable young men.

13 I saw that she had defiled herself; they both took the same way.

14 So she increased her harlotries. And she saw men portrayed on the wall, images of the Chaldeans portrayed with vermilion,

15 girded with belts on their loins, with flowing turbans on their heads, all of them looking like officers, like the Babylonians *in* Chaldea, the land of their birth.

16 When she saw them she lusted after them and sent messengers to them in Chaldea.

17 The Babylonians came to her to the bed of love and defiled her with their harlotry. And when she had been defiled by them, she became disgusted with them.

18 She uncovered her harlotries and uncovered her nakedness; then I became disgusted with her, as I had become disgusted with her sister.

19 Yet she multiplied her harlotries, remembering the days of her youth, when she played the harlot in the land of Egypt.

20 She lusted after their paramours, whose flesh is *like* the flesh of donkeys and whose issue is *like* the issue of horses.

21 Thus you longed for the lewdness of your youth, when the Egyptians handled your bosom because of the breasts of your youth.

The Sentencing of Oholibah (Jerusalem)

22 “Therefore, O Oholibah, thus says the Lord GOD, ‘Behold I will arouse your lovers against you, from whom you were alienated, and I will bring them against you from every side:

23 the Babylonians and all the Chaldeans, Pekod and Shoa and Koa, *and* all the Assyrians with them; desirable young men, governors and officials all of them, officers and men of renown, all of them riding on horses.

24 They will come against you with weapons, chariots and wagons, and with a company of peoples. They will set themselves against you on every side with buckler and shield and helmet; and I will commit the judgment to them, and they will judge you according to their customs.

25 I will set My jealousy against you, that they may deal with you in wrath. They will remove your nose and your ears; and your survivors will fall by the sword. They will take your sons and your daughters; and your survivors will be consumed by the fire.

26 They will also strip you of your clothes and take away your beautiful jewels.

27 Thus I will make your lewdness and your harlotry *brought* from the land of Egypt to cease from you, so that you will not lift up your eyes to them or remember Egypt anymore.’

28 For thus says the Lord GOD, ‘Behold, I will give you into the hand of those whom you hate, into the hand of those from whom you were alienated.

29 They will deal with you in hatred, take all your property, and leave you naked and bare. And the nakedness of your harlotries will be uncovered, both your lewdness and your harlotries.

30 These things will be done to you because you have played the harlot with the nations, because you have defiled yourself with their idols.

31 You have walked in the way of your sister; therefore I will give her cup into your hand.’

32 Thus says the Lord GOD,

‘You will drink your sister’s cup,
Which is deep and wide.
You will be laughed at and held in derision;
It contains much.

33 ‘You will be filled with drunkenness and sorrow,
The cup of horror and desolation,
The cup of your sister Samaria.

34 ‘You will drink it and drain it.
Then you will gnaw its fragments
And tear your breasts;

for I have spoken,’ declares the Lord GOD.

35 Therefore, thus says the Lord GOD, ‘Because you have forgotten Me and cast Me behind your back, bear now the *punishment* of your lewdness and your harlotries.’”

The Charges against Oholah (Samaria) and Oholibah (Jerusalem)

36 Moreover, the LORD said to me, “Son of man, will you judge Oholah and Oholibah? Then declare to them their abominations.

37 For they have committed adultery, and blood is on their hands. Thus they have committed adultery with their idols and even caused their sons, whom they bore to Me, to pass through *the fire* to them as food.

38 Again, they have done this to Me: they have defiled My sanctuary on the same day and have profaned My sabbaths.

39 For when they had slaughtered their children for their idols, they entered My sanctuary on the same day to profane it; and lo, thus they did within My house.

40 “Furthermore, they have even sent for men who come from afar, to whom a messenger was sent; and lo, they came—for whom you bathed, painted your eyes and decorated yourselves with ornaments;

41 and you sat on a splendid couch with a table arranged before it on which you had set My incense and My oil.

42 The sound of a carefree multitude was with her; and drunkards were brought from the wilderness with men of the common sort. And they put bracelets on the hands of the women and beautiful crowns on their heads.

43 “Then I said concerning her who was worn out by adulteries, ‘Will they now commit adultery with her when she is *thus*?’

44 But they went in to her as they would go in to a harlot. Thus they went in to Oholah and to Oholibah, the lewd women.

45 But they, righteous men, will judge them with the judgment of adulteresses and with the judgment of women who shed blood, because they are adulteresses and blood is on their hands.

The Sentencing of Oholah (Samaria) and Oholibah (Jerusalem)

46 “For thus says the Lord GOD, ‘Bring up a company against them and give them over to terror and plunder.

47 The company will stone them with stones and cut them down with their swords; they will slay their sons and their daughters and burn their houses with fire.

48 Thus I will make lewdness cease from the land, that all women may be admonished and not commit lewdness as you have done.

49 Your lewdness will be requited upon you, and you will bear the penalty of *worshipping* your idols; thus you will know that I am the Lord GOD.’”

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Zedekiah Rebels Against Nebuchadnezzar (c. 590 BC)		
2 Kings 24:20	Jeremiah 52:3	2 Chronicles 36:13–16
<p>20 For through the anger of the LORD <i>this</i> came about in Jerusalem and Judah until He cast them out from His presence. And Zedekiah rebelled against the king of Babylon.</p>	<p>3 For through the anger of the LORD <i>this</i> came about in Jerusalem and Judah until He cast them out from His presence. And Zedekiah rebelled against the king of Babylon.</p>	<p>13b But he [Zedekiah] stiffened his neck and hardened his heart against turning to the LORD God of Israel. 14 Furthermore, all the officials of the priests and the people were very unfaithful <i>following</i> all the abominations of the nations; and they defiled the house of the LORD which He had sanctified in Jerusalem. 15 The LORD, the God of their fathers, sent <i>word</i> to them again and again by His messengers, because He had compassion on His people and on His dwelling place; 16 but they <i>continually</i> mocked the messengers of God, despised His words and scoffed at His prophets, until the wrath of the LORD arose against His people, until there was no remedy. 13a He also rebelled against King Nebuchadnezzar who had made him swear <i>allegiance</i> 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 Now in the ninth year of his reign, on the tenth day of the tenth month, Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon came, he and all his army, against Jerusalem, camped against it and built a siege wall all around it.</p>	<p>1 Now when Jerusalem was captured in the ninth year of Zedekiah king of Judah, in the tenth month, Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon and all his army came to Jerusalem and laid siege to it;</p>	<p>4 Now it came about in the ninth year of his reign, on the tenth <i>day</i> of the tenth month, that Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon came, he and all his army, against Jerusalem, camped against it and built a siege wall all around it.</p>	<p>17a Therefore He [God] brought up against them the king of the Chaldeans</p>

Ezekiel’s Prophecy to the Exiles—Jerusalem’s Final Judgment (January 27, 589 BC)	
Ezekiel 24	
<p>The Boiling Pot 1 And the word of the LORD came to me in the ninth year, in the tenth month, on the tenth of the month, saying, 2 “Son of man, write the name of the day, this very day. The king of Babylon has laid siege to Jerusalem this very day. 3 Speak a parable to the rebellious house and say to them, ‘Thus says the Lord GOD, “Put on the pot, put <i>it</i> on and also pour water in it; 4 Put in it the pieces, Every good piece, the thigh and the shoulder; Fill <i>it</i> with choice bones. 5 “Take the choicest of the flock, And also pile wood under the pot. Make it boil vigorously.</p>	

Also seethe its bones in it.”

6 ‘Therefore, thus says the Lord God,

“Woe to the bloody city,
To the pot in which there is rust
And whose rust has not gone out of it!
Take out of it piece after piece,
Without making a choice.

7 “For her blood is in her midst;
She placed it on the bare rock;
She did not pour it on the ground
To cover it with dust.

8 “That it may cause wrath to come up to take vengeance,
I have put her blood on the bare rock,
That it may not be covered.”

9 ‘Therefore, thus says the Lord God,

“Woe to the bloody city!
I also will make the pile great.

10 “Heap on the wood, kindle the fire,
Boil the flesh well
And mix in the spices,
And let the bones be burned.

11 “Then set it empty on its coals
So that it may be hot
And its bronze may glow
And its filthiness may be melted in it,
Its rust consumed.

12 “She has wearied *Me* with toil,
Yet her great rust has not gone from her;
Let her rust *be* in the fire!

13 “In your filthiness is lewdness.
Because I *would* have cleansed you,
Yet you are not clean,
You will not be cleansed from your filthiness again
Until I have spent My wrath on you.

14 I, the LORD, have spoken; it is coming and I will act. I will not relent, and I will not pity and I will not be sorry; according to your ways and according to your deeds I will judge you,” declares the Lord GOD.”

The Death of Ezekiel’s Wife

15 And the word of the LORD came to me saying,

16 “Son of man, behold, I am about to take from you the desire of your eyes with a blow; but you shall not mourn and you shall not weep, and your tears shall not come.

17 Groan silently; make no mourning for the dead. Bind on your turban and put your shoes on your feet, and do not cover *your* mustache and do not eat the bread of men.”

18 So I spoke to the people in the morning, and in the evening my wife died. And in the morning I did as I was commanded.

19 The people said to me, “Will you not tell us what these things that you are doing mean for us?”

20 Then I said to them, “The word of the LORD came to me saying,

21 ‘Speak to the house of Israel, “Thus says the Lord GOD, ‘Behold, I am about to profane My sanctuary, the pride of your power, the desire of your eyes and the delight of your soul; and your sons and your daughters whom you have left behind will fall by the sword.

22 You will do as I have done; you will not cover *your* mustache and you will not eat the bread of men.

23 Your turbans will be on your heads and your shoes on your feet. You will not mourn and you will not weep, but you will rot away in your iniquities and you will groan to one another.

24 Thus Ezekiel will be a sign to you; according to all that he has done you will do; when it comes, then you will know that I am the Lord GOD.”

A Fugitive Will Bring News of Jerusalem's Fall to Ezekiel (fulfilled in Ezekiel 33:21)

25 'As for you, son of man, will *it* not be on the day when I take from them their stronghold, the joy of their pride, the desire of their eyes and their heart's delight, their sons and their daughters,

26 that on that day he who escapes will come to you with information for *your* ears?

27 On that day your mouth will be opened to him who escaped, and you will speak and be mute no longer. Thus you will be a sign to them, and they will know that I am the LORD."

Ezekiel's Prophecy to the Exiles—Concerning the Nations Around Judah (January 27, 589 BC)

Ezekiel 25

Ammon

1 And the word of the LORD came to me saying,

2 "Son of man, set your face toward the sons of Ammon and prophesy against them,

3 and say to the sons of Ammon, 'Hear the word of the Lord GOD! Thus says the Lord GOD, "Because you said, 'Aha!' against My sanctuary when it was profaned, and against the land of Israel when it was made desolate, and against the house of Judah when they went into exile,

4 therefore, behold, I am going to give you to the sons of the east for a possession, and they will set their encampments among you and make their dwellings among you; they will eat your fruit and drink your milk.

5 I will make Rabbah a pasture for camels and the sons of Ammon a resting place for flocks. Thus you will know that I am the LORD."

6 For thus says the Lord GOD, "Because you have clapped your hands and stamped your feet and rejoiced with all the scorn of your soul against the land of Israel,

7 therefore, behold, I have stretched out My hand against you and I will give you for spoil to the nations. And I will cut you off from the peoples and make you perish from the lands; I will destroy you. Thus you will know that I am the LORD."

Moab

8 'Thus says the Lord GOD, "Because Moab and Seir say, 'Behold, the house of Judah is like all the nations,'

9 therefore, behold, I am going to deprive the flank of Moab of *its* cities, of its cities which are on its frontiers, the glory of the land, Beth-jeshimoth, Baal-meon and Kiriathaim,

10 and I will give it for a possession along with the sons of Ammon to the sons of the east, so that the sons of Ammon will not be remembered among the nations.

11 Thus I will execute judgments on Moab, and they will know that I am the LORD."

Edom

12 'Thus says the Lord GOD, "Because Edom has acted against the house of Judah by taking vengeance, and has incurred grievous guilt, and avenged themselves upon them,"

13 therefore thus says the Lord GOD, "I will also stretch out My hand against Edom and cut off man and beast from it. And I will lay it waste; from Teman even to Dedan they will fall by the sword.

14 I will lay My vengeance on Edom by the hand of My people Israel. Therefore, they will act in Edom according to My anger and according to My wrath; thus they will know My vengeance," declares the Lord GOD.

Philistia

15 'Thus says the Lord GOD, "Because the Philistines have acted in revenge and have taken vengeance with scorn of soul to destroy with everlasting enmity,"

16 therefore thus says the Lord GOD, "Behold, I will stretch out My hand against the Philistines, even cut off the Cherethites and destroy the remnant of the seacoast.

17 I will execute great vengeance on them with wrathful rebukes; and they will know that I am the LORD when I lay My vengeance on them.""

Zedekiah Asks Jeremiah for Help (c. February 589 BC)

Jeremiah 21

Jeremiah's Answer to Zedekiah

1 The word which came to Jeremiah from the LORD when King Zedekiah sent to him Pashhur the son of Malchijah, and Zephaniah the priest, the son of Maaseiah, saying,

2 "Please inquire of the LORD on our behalf, for Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon is warring against us; perhaps the LORD will deal with us according to all His wonderful acts, so that *the enemy* will withdraw from us."

3 Then Jeremiah said to them, "You shall say to Zedekiah as follows:

4 'Thus says the LORD God of Israel, "Behold, I am about to turn back the weapons of war which are in your hands, with which you

are warring against the king of Babylon and the Chaldeans who are besieging you outside the wall; and I will gather them into the center of this city.

5 I Myself will war against you with an outstretched hand and a mighty arm, even in anger and wrath and great indignation.

6 I will also strike down the inhabitants of this city, both man and beast; they will die of a great pestilence.

7 Then afterwards," declares the LORD, "I will give over Zedekiah king of Judah and his servants and the people, even those who survive in this city from the pestilence, the sword and the famine, into the hand of Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon, and into the hand of their foes and into the hand of those who seek their lives; and he will strike them down with the edge of the sword. He will not spare them nor have pity nor compassion."

8 "You shall also say to this people, 'Thus says the LORD, "Behold, I set before you the way of life and the way of death.

9 He who dwells in this city will die by the sword and by famine and by pestilence; but he who goes out and falls away to the Chaldeans who are besieging you will live, and he will have his own life as booty.

10 For I have set My face against this city for harm and not for good," declares the LORD. "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 "Then say to the household of the king of Judah, 'Hear the word of the LORD,

12 O house of David, thus says the LORD:

"Administer justice every morning;

And deliver the *person* who has been robbed from the power of *his* oppressor,

That My wrath may not go forth like fire

And burn with none to extinguish *it*,

Because of the evil of their deeds.

Warning to a Complacent City

13 "Behold, I am against you, O valley dweller,

O rocky plain," declares the LORD,

"You men who say, 'Who will come down against us?

Or who will enter into our habitations?'

14 "But I will punish you according to the results of your deeds," declares the LORD,

"And I will kindle a fire in its forest

That it may devour all its environs."""

Nebuchadnezzar Leaves Jerusalem to Deal with Pharaoh Hophra [Egypt] (589 BC)

Jeremiah 37:4–5

4 Now Jeremiah was *still* coming in and going out among the people, for they had not *yet* put him in the prison.

5 Meanwhile, Pharaoh's army had set out from Egypt; and when the Chaldeans who had been besieging Jerusalem heard the report about them, they lifted the *siege* from Jerusalem.

Hophra's Intervention Gives Zedekiah False Hope (589 BC)

Jeremiah 37:3, 6–10

3 Yet King Zedekiah sent Jehucal the son of Shelemiah, and Zephaniah the son of Maaseiah, the priest, to Jeremiah the prophet, saying, "Please pray to the LORD our God on our behalf."

6 Then the word of the LORD came to Jeremiah the prophet, saying,

7 "Thus says the LORD God of Israel, 'Thus you are to say to the king of Judah, who sent you to Me to inquire of Me: "Behold, Pharaoh's army which has come out for your assistance is going to return to its own land of Egypt.

8 The Chaldeans will also return and fight against this city, and they will capture it and burn it with fire.'"

9 Thus says the LORD, 'Do not deceive yourselves, saying, "The Chaldeans will surely go away from us," for they will not go.

10 For even if you had defeated the entire army of Chaldeans who were fighting against you, and there were *only* wounded men left among them, each man in his tent, they would rise up and burn this city with fire."

Zedekiah and the Slaves (589 BC)

Jeremiah 34

Historical Summary

1 The word which came to Jeremiah from the LORD, when Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon and all his army, with all the kingdoms of the earth that were under his dominion and all the peoples, were fighting against Jerusalem and against all its cities, saying,
 2 “Thus says the LORD God of Israel, ‘Go and speak to Zedekiah king of Judah and say to him: “Thus says the LORD, ‘Behold, I am giving this city into the hand of the king of Babylon, and he will burn it with fire.
 3 You will not escape from his hand, for you will surely be captured and delivered into his hand; and you will see the king of Babylon eye to eye, and he will speak with you face to face, and you will go to Babylon.’”
 4 Yet hear the word of the LORD, O Zedekiah king of Judah! Thus says the LORD concerning you, ‘You will not die by the sword.
 5 You will die in peace; and as *spices* were burned for your fathers, the former kings who were before you, so they will burn *spices* for you; and they will lament for you, “Alas, lord!”’ For I have spoken the word,” declares the LORD.
 6 Then Jeremiah the prophet spoke all these words to Zedekiah king of Judah in Jerusalem
 7 when the army of the king of Babylon was fighting against Jerusalem and against all the remaining cities of Judah, *that is*, Lachish and Azekah, for they *alone* remained as fortified cities among the cities of Judah.

A Broken Promise of Freedom for the Slaves

8 The word which came to Jeremiah from the LORD after King Zedekiah had made a covenant with all the people who were in Jerusalem to proclaim release to them:
 9 that each man should set free his male servant and each man his female servant, a Hebrew man or a Hebrew woman; so that no one should keep them, a Jew his brother, in bondage.
 10 And all the officials and all the people obeyed who had entered into the covenant that each man should set free his male servant and each man his female servant, so that no one should keep them any longer in bondage; they obeyed, and set *them free*.
 11 But afterward they turned around and took back the male servants and the female servants whom they had set free, and brought them into subjection for male servants and for female servants.

God Denounces the Broken Promise

12 Then the word of the LORD came to Jeremiah from the LORD, saying,
 13 “Thus says the LORD God of Israel, ‘I made a covenant with your forefathers in the day that I brought them out of the land of Egypt, from the house of bondage, saying,
 14 “At the end of seven years each of you shall set free his Hebrew brother who has been sold to you and has served you six years, you shall send him out free from you; [[Exod 21:1–4](#); [Deut 15:12–15](#)] but your forefathers did not obey Me or incline their ear to Me.
 15 Although recently you *had* turned and done what is right in My sight, each man proclaiming release to his neighbor, and you had made a covenant before Me in the house which is called by My name.
 16 Yet you turned and profaned My name, and each man took back his male servant and each man his female servant whom you had set free according to their desire, and you brought them into subjection to be your male servants and female servants.’”

Punishment for the Broken Promise

17 “Therefore thus says the LORD, ‘You have not obeyed Me in proclaiming release each man to his brother and each man to his neighbor. Behold, I am proclaiming a release to you,’ declares the LORD, ‘to the sword, to the pestilence and to the famine; and I will make you a terror to all the kingdoms of the earth.
 18 I will give the men who have transgressed My covenant, who have not fulfilled the words of the covenant which they made before Me, *when* they cut the calf in two and passed between its parts—
 19 the officials of Judah and the officials of Jerusalem, the court officers and the priests and all the people of the land who passed between the parts of the calf—
 20 I will give them into the hand of their enemies and into the hand of those who seek their life. And their dead bodies will be food for the birds of the sky and the beasts of the earth.
 21 Zedekiah king of Judah and his officials I will give into the hand of their enemies and into the hand of those who seek their life, and into the hand of the army of the king of Babylon which has gone away from you.
 22 Behold, I am going to command,’ declares the LORD, ‘and I will bring them back to this city; and they will fight against it and take it and burn it with fire; and I will make the cities of Judah a desolation without inhabitant.’”

Jeremiah’s Arrest and Imprisonment (589 BC)

Jeremiah 37:11–21

Jeremiah’s Arrest

11 Now it happened when the army of the Chaldeans had lifted *the siege* from Jerusalem because of Pharaoh’s army,
 12 that Jeremiah went out from Jerusalem to go to the land of Benjamin in order to take possession of *some* property there among

the people.

13 While he was at the Gate of Benjamin, a captain of the guard whose name was Irijah, the son of Shelemiah the son of Hananiah was there; and he arrested Jeremiah the prophet, saying, "You are going over to the Chaldeans!"

14 But Jeremiah said, "A lie! I am not going over to the Chaldeans"; yet he would not listen to him. So Irijah arrested Jeremiah and brought him to the officials.

15 Then the officials were angry at Jeremiah and beat him, and they put him in jail in the house of Jonathan the scribe, which they had made into the prison.

16 For Jeremiah had come into the dungeon, that is, the vaulted cell; and Jeremiah stayed there many days.

Jeremiah's Secret Meeting with Zedekiah

17 Now King Zedekiah sent and took him *out*; and in his palace the king secretly asked him and said, "Is there a word from the LORD?" And Jeremiah said, "There is!" Then he said, "You will be given into the hand of the king of Babylon!"

18 Moreover Jeremiah said to King Zedekiah, "In what way have I sinned against you, or against your servants, or against this people, that you have put me in prison?"

19 Where then are your prophets who prophesied to you, saying, 'The king of Babylon will not come against you or against this land'?"

20 But now, please listen, O my lord the king; please let my petition come before you and do not make me return to the house of Jonathan the scribe, that I may not die there."

21 Then King Zedekiah gave commandment, and they committed Jeremiah to the court of the guardhouse and gave him a loaf of bread daily from the bakers' street, until all the bread in the city was gone. So Jeremiah remained in the court of the guardhouse.

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 Jucal the son of Shelemiah, and Pashhur the son of Malchijah heard the words that Jeremiah was speaking to all the people, saying,

2 "Thus says the LORD, 'He who stays in this city will die by the sword and by famine and by pestilence, but he who goes out to the Chaldeans will live and have his *own* life as booty and stay alive.'

3 Thus says the LORD, 'This city will certainly 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, "Now let this man be put to death, inasmuch as he is discouraging the men of war who are left in this city and all the people, by speaking such words to them; for this man is not seeking the well-being of this people but rather their harm."

5 So King Zedekiah said, "Behold, he is in your hands; for the king can *do* nothing against you."

6 Then they took Jeremiah and cast him into the cistern *of* Malchijah the king's son, which was in the court of the guardhouse; and they let Jeremiah down with ropes. Now in the cistern there was no water but only mud, and Jeremiah sank into the mud.

Jeremiah's Rescue by Ebed-Melech

7 But Ebed-melech the Ethiopian, a eunuch, while he was in the king's palace, heard that they had put Jeremiah into the cistern. Now the king was sitting in the Gate of Benjamin;

8 and Ebed-melech went out from the king's palace and spoke to the king, saying,

9 "My lord the king, these men have acted wickedly in all that they have done to Jeremiah the prophet whom they have cast into the cistern; and he will die right where he is because of the famine, for there is no more bread in the city."

10 Then the king commanded Ebed-melech the Ethiopian, saying, "Take thirty men from here under your authority and bring up Jeremiah the prophet from the cistern before he dies."

11 So Ebed-melech took the men under his authority and went into the king's palace to *a place* beneath the storeroom and took from there worn-out clothes and worn-out rags and let them down by ropes into the cistern to Jeremiah.

12 Then Ebed-melech the Ethiopian said to Jeremiah, "Now put these worn-out clothes and rags under your armpits under the ropes"; and Jeremiah did so.

13 So they pulled Jeremiah up with the ropes and lifted him out of the cistern, and Jeremiah stayed in the court of the guardhouse.

A Second Secret Meeting With Zedekiah

14 Then King Zedekiah sent and had Jeremiah the prophet brought to him at the third entrance that is in the house of the LORD; and the king said to Jeremiah, "I am going to ask you something; do not hide anything from me."

15 Then Jeremiah said to Zedekiah, "If I tell you, will you not certainly put me to death? Besides, if I give you advice, you will not listen to me."

16 But King Zedekiah swore to Jeremiah in secret saying, "As the LORD lives, who made this life for us, surely I will not put you to death nor will I give you over to the hand of these men who are seeking your life."

17 Then Jeremiah said to Zedekiah, “Thus says the LORD God of hosts, the God of Israel, ‘If you will indeed go out to the officers of the king of Babylon, then you will live, this city will not be burned with fire, and you and your household will survive.

18 But if you will not go out to the officers of the king of Babylon, then this city will be given over to the hand of the Chaldeans; and they will burn it with fire, and you yourself will not escape from their hand.’”

19 Then King Zedekiah said to Jeremiah, “I dread the Jews who have gone over to the Chaldeans, for they may give me over into their hand and they will abuse me.”

20 But Jeremiah said, “They will not give you over. Please obey the LORD in what I am saying to you, that it may go well with you and you may live.

21 But if you keep refusing to go out, this is the word which the LORD has shown me:

22 ‘Then behold, all of the women who have been left in the palace of the king of Judah are going to be brought out to the officers of the king of Babylon; and those women will say,

“Your close friends
Have misled and overpowered you;
While your feet were sunk in the mire,
They turned back.”

23 They will also bring out all your wives and your sons to the Chaldeans, and you yourself will not escape from their hand, but will be seized by the hand of the king of Babylon, and this city will be burned with fire.’”

24 Then Zedekiah said to Jeremiah, “Let no man know about these words and you will not die.

25 But if the officials hear that I have talked with you and come to you and say to you, ‘Tell us now what you said to the king and what the king said to you; do not hide *it* from us and we will not put you to death,’

26 then you are to say to them, ‘I was presenting my petition before the king, not to make me return to the house of Jonathan to die there.’”

Jeremiah is Questioned by the Officials

27 Then all the officials came to Jeremiah and questioned him. So he reported to them in accordance with all these words which the king had commanded; and they ceased speaking with him, since the conversation had not been overheard.

28 So Jeremiah stayed in the court of the guardhouse until the day that Jerusalem was captured.

God’s Message to Jeremiah’s Rescuer, Ebed-Melech (589 BC)

Jeremiah 39:15–18

15 Now the word of the LORD had come to Jeremiah while he was confined in the court of the guardhouse, saying,

16 “Go and speak to Ebed-melech the Ethiopian, saying, ‘Thus says the LORD of hosts, the God of Israel, “Behold, I am about to bring My words on this city for disaster and not for prosperity; and they will take place before you on that day.

17 But I will deliver you on that day,” declares the LORD, “and you will not be given into the hand of the men whom you dread.

18 For I will certainly rescue you, and you will not fall by the sword; but you will have your *own* life as booty, because you have trusted in Me,” declares the LORD.’”

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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 of the month, the word of the LORD came to me saying,
 2 “Son of man, set your face against Pharaoh king of Egypt and prophesy against him and against all Egypt.
 3 Speak and say, ‘Thus says the Lord GOD,

“Behold, I am against you, Pharaoh king of Egypt,
 The great monster that lies in the midst of his rivers,
 That has said, ‘My Nile is mine, and I myself have made *it*.’

4 “I will put hooks in your jaws
 And make the fish of your rivers cling to your scales.
 And I will bring you up out of the midst of your rivers,
 And all the fish of your rivers will cling to your scales.
 5 “I will abandon you to the wilderness, you and all the fish of your rivers;
 You will fall on the open field; you will not be brought together or gathered.
 I have given you for food to the beasts of the earth and to the birds of the sky.
 6 “Then all the inhabitants of Egypt will know that I am the LORD,
 Because they have been *only* a staff *made* of reed to the house of Israel.
 7 “When they took hold of you with the hand,
 You broke and tore all their hands;
 And when they leaned on you,
 You broke and made all their loins quake.”

Judgment on Egypt

8 ‘Therefore thus says the Lord GOD, “Behold, I will bring upon you a sword and I will cut off from you man and beast.
 9 The land of Egypt will become a desolation and waste. Then they will know that I am the LORD. Because you said, ‘The Nile is mine, and I have made *it*,’
 10 therefore, behold, I am against you and against your rivers, and I will make the land of Egypt an utter waste and desolation, from Migdol to Syene and even to the border of Ethiopia.
 11 A man’s foot will not pass through it, and the foot of a beast will not pass through it, and it will not be inhabited for forty years.
 12 So I will make the land of Egypt a desolation in the midst of desolated lands. And her cities, in the midst of cities that are laid waste, will be desolate forty years; and I will scatter the Egyptians among the nations and disperse them among the lands.”

Future Restoration for Egypt

13 ‘For thus says the Lord GOD, “At the end of forty years I will gather the Egyptians from the peoples among whom they were scattered.
 14 I will turn the fortunes of Egypt and make them return to the land of Pathros, to the land of their origin, and there they will be a lowly kingdom.
 15 It will be the lowest of the kingdoms, and it will never again lift itself up above the nations. And I will make them so small that they will not rule over the nations.
 16 And it will never again be the confidence of the house of Israel, bringing to mind the iniquity of their having turned to Egypt. Then they will know that I am the Lord GOD.”’”

Jeremiah Buys a Field (c. 588 BC)

Jeremiah 32

Synopsis of Jeremiah's Current Condition

1 The word that came to Jeremiah from the LORD in the tenth year of Zedekiah king of Judah, which was the eighteenth year of Nebuchadnezzar.
 2 Now at that time the army of the king of Babylon was besieging Jerusalem, and Jeremiah the prophet was shut up in the court of the guard, which *was in* the house of the king of Judah,
 3 because Zedekiah king of Judah had shut him up, saying, “Why do you prophesy, saying, ‘Thus says the LORD, “Behold, I am about to give this city into the hand of the king of Babylon, and he will take it;
 4 and Zedekiah king of Judah will not escape out of the hand of the Chaldeans, but he will surely be given into the hand of the king of Babylon, and he will speak with him face to face and see him eye to eye;
 5 and he will take Zedekiah to Babylon, and he will be there until I visit him,” declares the LORD. “If you fight against the Chaldeans, you will not succeed”?’”

Jeremiah Buys a Field at Anathoth from His Cousin Hanamel

6 And Jeremiah said, “The word of the LORD came to me, saying,

7 ‘Behold, Hanamel the son of Shallum your uncle is coming to you, saying, “Buy for yourself my field which is at Anathoth, for you have the right of redemption to buy it.”’

8 Then Hanamel my uncle’s son came to me in the court of the guard according to the word of the LORD and said to me, ‘Buy my field, please, that is at Anathoth, which is in the land of Benjamin; for you have the right of possession and the redemption is yours; buy *it* for yourself.’ Then I knew that this was the word of the LORD.

9 “I bought the field which was at Anathoth from Hanamel my uncle’s son, and I weighed out the silver for him, seventeen shekels of silver.

10 I signed and sealed the deed, and called in witnesses, and weighed out the silver on the scales.

11 Then I took the deeds of purchase, both the sealed *copy containing* the terms and conditions and the open *copy*;

12 and I gave the deed of purchase to Baruch the son of Neriah, the son of Mahseiah, in the sight of Hanamel my uncle’s son and in the sight of the witnesses who signed the deed of purchase, before all the Jews who were sitting in the court of the guard.

13 And I commanded Baruch in their presence, saying,

14 ‘Thus says the LORD of hosts, the God of Israel, “Take these deeds, this sealed deed of purchase and this open deed, and put them in an earthenware jar, that they may last a long time.”

15 For thus says the LORD of hosts, the God of Israel, “Houses and fields and vineyards will again be bought in this land.”’

Jeremiah’s Prayer

16 “After I had given the deed of purchase to Baruch the son of Neriah, then I prayed to the LORD, saying,

17 ‘Ah Lord GOD! Behold, You have made the heavens and the earth by Your great power and by Your outstretched arm! Nothing is too difficult for You,

18 who shows lovingkindness to thousands, but repays the iniquity of fathers into the bosom of their children after them, O great and mighty God. The LORD of hosts is His name;

19 great in counsel and mighty in deed, whose eyes are open to all the ways of the sons of men, giving to everyone according to his ways and according to the fruit of his deeds;

20 who has set signs and wonders in the land of Egypt, *and* even to this day both in Israel and among mankind; and You have made a name for Yourself, as at this day.

21 You brought Your people Israel out of the land of Egypt with signs and with wonders, and with a strong hand and with an outstretched arm and with great terror;

22 and gave them this land, which You swore to their forefathers to give them, a land flowing with milk and honey.

23 They came in and took possession of it, but they did not obey Your voice or walk in Your law; they have done nothing of all that You commanded them to do; therefore You have made all this calamity come upon them.

24 Behold, the siege ramps have reached the city to take it; and the city is given into the hand of the Chaldeans who fight against it, because of the sword, the famine and the pestilence; and what You have spoken has come to pass; and behold, You see *it*.

25 You have said to me, O Lord GOD, “Buy for yourself the field with money and call in witnesses”—although the city is given into the hand of the Chaldeans.”’

God’s Answer to Jeremiah’s Prayer

26 Then the word of the LORD came to Jeremiah, saying,

27 “Behold, I am the LORD, the God of all flesh; is anything too difficult for Me?”

28 Therefore thus says the LORD, “Behold, I am about to give this city into the hand of the Chaldeans and into the hand of Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon, and he will take it.

29 The Chaldeans who are fighting against this city will enter and set this city on fire and burn it, with the houses where *people* have offered incense to Baal on their roofs and poured out drink offerings to other gods to provoke Me to anger.

30 Indeed the sons of Israel and the sons of Judah have been doing only evil in My sight from their youth; for the sons of Israel have been only provoking Me to anger by the work of their hands,” declares the LORD.

31 “Indeed this city has been to Me *a provocation of* My anger and My wrath from the day that they built it, even to this day, so that it should be removed from before My face,

32 because of all the evil of the sons of Israel and the sons of Judah which they have done to provoke Me to anger—they, their kings, their leaders, their priests, their prophets, the men of Judah and the inhabitants of Jerusalem.

33 They have turned *their* back to Me and not *their* face; though *I* taught them, teaching again and again, they would not listen and receive instruction.

34 But they put their detestable things in the house which is called by My name, to defile it.

35 They built the high places of Baal that are in the valley of Ben-hinnom to cause their sons and their daughters to pass through *the fire* to Molech, which I had not commanded them nor had it entered My mind that they should do this abomination, to cause Judah to sin.

The Promise of Future Restoration and a New Covenant

36 “Now therefore thus says the LORD God of Israel concerning this city of which you say, ‘It is given into the hand of the king of Babylon by sword, by famine and by pestilence.’

37 Behold, I will gather them out of all the lands to which I have driven them in My anger, in My wrath and in great indignation; and I will bring them back to this place and make them dwell in safety.

38 They shall be My people, and I will be their God;

39 and I will give them one heart and one way, that they may fear Me always, for their own good and for *the good* of their children after them.

40 I will make an everlasting covenant with them that I will not turn away from them, to do them good; and I will put the fear of Me in their hearts so that they will not turn away from Me.

41 I will rejoice over them to do them good and will faithfully plant them in this land with all My heart and with all My soul.

42 For thus says the LORD, ‘Just as I brought all this great disaster on this people, so I am going to bring on them all the good that I am promising them.

43 Fields will be bought in this land of which you say, “It is a desolation, without man or beast; it is given into the hand of the Chaldeans.”

44 Men will buy fields for money, sign and seal deeds, and call in witnesses in the land of Benjamin, in the environs of Jerusalem, in the cities of Judah, in the cities of the hill country, in the cities of the lowland and in the cities of the Negev; for I will restore their fortunes,’ declares the LORD.”

Encouragement in the Guardhouse (c. 588/587 BC)**Jeremiah 33****The Rebuilding of Judah and Jerusalem**

1 Then the word of the LORD came to Jeremiah the second time, while he was still confined in the court of the guard, saying,

2 “Thus says the LORD who made *the earth*, the LORD who formed it to establish it, the LORD is His name,

3 ‘Call to Me and I will answer you, and I will tell you great and mighty things, which you do not know.’

4 For thus says the LORD God of Israel concerning the houses of this city, and concerning the houses of the kings of Judah which are broken down *to make a defense* against the siege ramps and against the sword,

5 ‘While *they* are coming to fight with the Chaldeans and to fill them with the corpses of men whom I have slain in My anger and in My wrath, and I have hidden My face from this city because of all their wickedness:

6 Behold, I will bring to it health and healing, and I will heal them; and I will reveal to them an abundance of peace and truth.

7 I will restore the fortunes of Judah and the fortunes of Israel and will rebuild them as they were at first.

8 I will cleanse them from all their iniquity by which they have sinned against Me, and I will pardon all their iniquities by which they have sinned against Me and by which they have transgressed against Me.

The Restoration of Joy and Thanks

9 It will be to Me a name of joy, praise and glory before all the nations of the earth which will hear of all the good that I do for them, and they will fear and tremble because of all the good and all the peace that I make for it.’

10 “Thus says the LORD, ‘Yet again there will be heard in this place, of which you say, “It is a waste, without man and without beast,” *that is*, in the cities of Judah and in the streets of Jerusalem that are desolate, without man and without inhabitant and without beast,

The Restoration of Pastures and Flocks

11 the voice of joy and the voice of gladness, the voice of the bridegroom and the voice of the bride, the voice of those who say,

“Give thanks to the LORD of hosts,
For the LORD is good,
For His lovingkindness is everlasting”;

and of those who bring a thank offering into the house of the LORD. For I will restore the fortunes of the land as they were at first,’ says the LORD.

12 “Thus says the LORD of hosts, ‘There will again be in this place which is waste, without man or beast, and in all its cities, a habitation of shepherds who rest their flocks.

13 In the cities of the hill country, in the cities of the lowland, in the cities of the Negev, in the land of Benjamin, in the environs of Jerusalem and in the cities of Judah, the flocks will again pass under the hands of the one who numbers them,’ says the LORD.

The Restoration of the Davidic Dynasty and the Levitical Priesthood

14 ‘Behold, days are coming,’ declares the LORD, ‘when I will fulfill the good word which I have spoken concerning the house of Israel

and the house of Judah.

15 In those days and at that time I will cause a righteous Branch of David to spring forth; and He shall execute justice and righteousness on the earth.

16 In those days Judah will be saved and Jerusalem will dwell in safety; and this is *the name* by which she will be called: the LORD is our righteousness.'

17 For thus says the LORD, 'David shall never lack a man to sit on the throne of the house of Israel;

18 and the Levitical priests shall never lack a man before Me to offer burnt offerings, to burn grain offerings and to prepare sacrifices continually.'"

19 The word of the LORD came to Jeremiah, saying,

20 "Thus says the LORD, 'If you can break My covenant for the day and My covenant for the night, so that day and night will not be at their appointed time,

21 then My covenant may also be broken with David My servant so that he will not have a son to reign on his throne, and with the Levitical priests, My ministers.

22 As the host of heaven cannot be counted and the sand of the sea cannot be measured, so I will multiply the descendants of David My servant and the Levites who minister to Me.'"

23 And the word of the LORD came to Jeremiah, saying,

24 "Have you not observed what this people have spoken, saying, 'The two families which the LORD chose, He has rejected them'? Thus they despise My people, no longer are they as a nation in their sight.

25 Thus says the LORD, 'If My covenant *for* day and night *stand* not, *and* the fixed patterns of heaven and earth I have not established,

26 then I would reject the descendants of Jacob and David My servant, not taking from his descendants rulers over the descendants of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob. But I will restore their fortunes and will have mercy 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 In the eleventh year, in the first *month*, on the seventh of the month, the word of the LORD came to me saying,
 21 “Son of man, I have broken the arm of Pharaoh king of Egypt; and, behold, it has not been bound up for healing or wrapped with a bandage, that it may be strong to hold the sword.
 22 Therefore thus says the Lord GOD, ‘Behold, I am against Pharaoh king of Egypt and will break his arms, both the strong and the broken; and I will make the sword fall from his hand.
 23 I will scatter the Egyptians among the nations and disperse them among the lands.
 24 For I will strengthen the arms of the king of Babylon and put My sword in his hand; and I will break the arms of Pharaoh, so that he will groan before him with the groanings of a wounded man.
 25 Thus I will strengthen the arms of the king of Babylon, but the arms of Pharaoh will fall. Then they will know that I am the LORD, when I put My sword into the hand of the king of Babylon and he stretches it out against the land of Egypt.
 26 When I scatter the Egyptians among the nations and disperse them among the lands, then they will know that I am the LORD.’”

Ezekiel's Prophecy to the Exiles—Fall of the Great Tree (June 21, 587 BC)

Ezekiel 31

Description of the Great Tree

1 In the eleventh year, in the third *month*, on the first of the month, the word of the LORD came to me saying,
 2 “Son of man, say to Pharaoh king of Egypt and to his hordes,
 ‘Whom are you like in your greatness?
 3 ‘Behold, Assyria *was* a cedar in Lebanon
 With beautiful branches and forest shade,
 And very high,
 And its top was among the clouds.
 4 ‘The waters made it grow, the deep made it high.
 With its rivers it continually extended all around its planting place,
 And sent out its channels to all the trees of the field.
 5 ‘Therefore its height was loftier than all the trees of the field
 And its boughs became many and its branches long
 Because of many waters as it spread them out.
 6 ‘All the birds of the heavens nested in its boughs,
 And under its branches all the beasts of the field gave birth,
 And all great nations lived under its shade.
 7 ‘So it was beautiful in its greatness, in the length of its branches;
 For its roots extended to many waters.
 8 ‘The cedars in God’s garden could not match it;
 The cypresses could not compare with its boughs,
 And the plane trees could not match its branches.
 No tree in God’s garden could compare with it in its beauty.
 9 ‘I made it beautiful with the multitude of its branches,
 And all the trees of Eden, which were in the garden of God, were jealous of it.

Fall of the Great Tree

10 ‘Therefore thus says the Lord GOD, “Because it is high in stature and has set its top among the clouds, and its heart is haughty in its loftiness,
 11 therefore I will give it into the hand of a despot of the nations; he will thoroughly deal with it. According to its wickedness I have driven it away.
 12 Alien tyrants of the nations have cut it down and left it; on the mountains and in all the valleys its branches have fallen and its boughs have been broken in all the ravines of the land. And all the peoples of the earth have gone down from its shade and left it.
 13 On its ruin all the birds of the heavens will dwell, and all the beasts of the field will be on its *fallen* branches
 14 so that all the trees by the waters may not be exalted in their stature, nor set their top among the clouds, nor their well-watered mighty ones stand *erect* in their height. For they have all been given over to death, to the earth beneath, among the sons of men, with those who go down to the pit.”
 15 ‘Thus says the Lord GOD, “On the day when it went down to Sheol I caused lamentations; I closed the deep over it and held back its rivers. And *its* many waters were stopped up, and I made Lebanon mourn for it, and all the trees of the field wilted away on account of it.

16 I made the nations quake at the sound of its fall when I made it go down to Sheol with those who go down to the pit; and all the well-watered trees of Eden, the choicest and best of Lebanon, were comforted in the earth beneath.

17 They also went down with it to Sheol to those who were slain by the sword; and those who were its strength lived under its shade among the nations.

18 “To which among the trees of Eden are you thus equal in glory and greatness? Yet you will be brought down with the trees of Eden to the earth beneath; you will lie in the midst of the uncircumcised, with those who were slain by the sword. So is Pharaoh and all his hordes!” declares the Lord God.”

The Fall of Jerusalem (July 29, 587 BC)

2 Kings 25:2–7	Jeremiah 39:2–7	Jeremiah 52:5–11	2 Chronicles 36:17b
<p>2 So the city was under siege until the eleventh year of King Zedekiah.</p> <p>3 On the ninth day of the <i>fourth</i> month the famine was so severe in the city that there was no food for the people of the land.</p> <p>4 Then the city was broken into,</p> <p>and all the men of war <i>fled</i> by night</p> <p>by way of the gate between the two walls beside the king’s garden, though the Chaldeans were all around the city.</p> <p>And they went by way of the Arabah.</p> <p>5 But the army of the Chaldeans pursued the king and overtook him in the plains of Jericho and all his army was scattered from him.</p> <p>6 Then they captured the king and brought him to the king of Babylon at Riblah, and he passed sentence on him.</p>	<p>2 in the eleventh year of Zedekiah, in the fourth month, in the ninth <i>day</i> of the month,</p> <p>the city <i>wall</i> was breached.</p> <p>3 Then all the officials of the king of Babylon came in and sat down at the Middle Gate: Nergal-sar-ezer, Samgar-nebu, Sar-sekim the Rab-saris, Nergal-sar-ezer <i>the</i> Rab-mag, and all the rest of the officials of the king of Babylon.</p> <p>4 When Zedekiah the king of Judah and all the men of war saw them, they fled and went out of the city at night by way of the king’s garden through the gate between the two walls;</p> <p>and he went out toward the Arabah.</p> <p>5 But the army of the Chaldeans pursued them and overtook Zedekiah in the plains of Jericho;</p> <p>and they seized him and brought him up to Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon at Riblah in the land of Hamath, and he passed sentence on him.</p>	<p>5 So the city was under siege until the eleventh year of King Zedekiah.</p> <p>6 On the ninth <i>day</i> of the fourth month the famine was so severe in the city that there was no food for the people of the land.</p> <p>7 Then the city was broken into,</p> <p>and all the men of war fled and went forth from the city at night by way of the gate between the two walls which <i>was</i> by the king’s garden, though the Chaldeans were all around the city.</p> <p>And they went by way of the Arabah.</p> <p>8 But the army of the Chaldeans pursued the king and 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>17b who slew their young men with the sword in the house of their sanctuary, and had no compassion on young man or virgin, old man or infirm; He <i>gave them</i> all into his hand.</p>

<p>7 They slaughtered the sons of Zedekiah before his eyes,</p> <p>then put out the eyes of Zedekiah and bound him with bronze fetters and brought him to Babylon.</p>	<p>6 Then the king of Babylon slew the sons of Zedekiah before his eyes at Riblah; the king of Babylon also slew all the nobles of Judah.</p> <p>7 He then blinded Zedekiah's eyes and bound him in fetters of bronze to bring him to Babylon.</p>	<p>10 The king of Babylon slaughtered the sons of Zedekiah before his eyes, and he also slaughtered all the princes of Judah in Riblah.</p> <p>11 Then he blinded the eyes of Zedekiah; and the king of Babylon bound him with bronze fetters and brought him to Babylon and 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 Now on the seventh day of the fifth month, which was the nineteenth year of King Nebuchadnezzar, king of Babylon, Nebuzaradan the captain of the guard, a servant of the king of Babylon, came to Jerusalem.</p> <p>13 Now the bronze pillars which were in the house of the LORD, and the stands and the bronze sea which were in the house of the LORD, the Chaldeans broke in pieces and carried the bronze to Babylon.</p> <p>14 They took away the pots, the shovels, the snuffers, the spoons, and all the bronze vessels which were used in <i>temple</i> service.</p> <p>15 The captain of the guard also took away the firepans and the basins,</p> <p>what was fine gold and what was fine silver.</p> <p>16 The two pillars, the one sea, and the stands which</p>		<p>12 Now on the tenth <i>day</i> of the fifth month, which was the nineteenth year of King Nebuchadnezzar, king of Babylon, Nebuzaradan the captain of the bodyguard, who was in the service of the king of Babylon, came to Jerusalem.</p> <p>17 Now the bronze pillars which belonged to the house of the LORD and the stands and the bronze sea, which were in the house of the LORD, the Chaldeans broke in pieces and carried all their bronze to Babylon.</p> <p>18 They also took away the pots, the shovels, the snuffers, the basins, the pans and all the bronze vessels which were used in <i>temple</i> service.</p> <p>19 The captain of the guard also took away the bowls, the firepans, the basins, the pots, the lampstands, the pans and the drink offering bowls, what was fine gold and what was fine silver.</p> <p>20 The two pillars, the one sea, and the twelve bronze bulls that were under the sea, and the stands, which King</p>	<p>18 All the articles of the house of God, great and small, and the treasures of the house of the LORD, and the treasures of the king and of his officers, he brought <i>them</i> all to Babylon.</p>

<p>Solomon had made for the house of the LORD—the bronze of all these vessels was beyond weight.</p> <p>17 The height of the one pillar was eighteen cubits,</p> <p>and a bronze capital was on it; the height of the capital was three cubits, with a network and pomegranates on the capital all around, all of bronze. And the second pillar was like these</p> <p>with network.</p> <p>9 He burned</p> <p>the house of the LORD, the king’s house, and all the houses of Jerusalem; even every great house he burned with fire.</p> <p>10 So all the army of the Chaldeans who <i>were with</i> the captain of the guard broke down the walls around Jerusalem.</p>	<p>8 The Chaldeans also burned with fire</p> <p>the king’s palace and the houses of the people,</p> <p>and they</p> <p>broke down the walls of Jerusalem.</p>	<p>Solomon had made for the house of the LORD—the bronze of all these vessels was beyond weight.</p> <p>21 As for the pillars, the height of each pillar <i>was</i> eighteen cubits, and it <i>was</i> twelve cubits in circumference and four fingers in thickness, <i>and</i> hollow.</p> <p>22 Now a capital of bronze was on it; and the height of each capital was five cubits, with a network and pomegranates on the capital all around, all of bronze. And the second pillar was like these, including pomegranates.</p> <p>23 There were ninety-six exposed pomegranates; all the pomegranates <i>numbered</i> a hundred on the network all around.</p> <p>13 He burned</p> <p>the house of the LORD, the king’s house and all the houses of Jerusalem; even every large house he burned with fire.</p> <p>14 So all the army of the Chaldeans who <i>were with</i> the captain of the guard broke down all the walls around Jerusalem.</p>	<p>19a Then they burned</p> <p>the house of God</p> <p>19c and burned all its fortified buildings with fire and destroyed all its valuable articles.</p> <p>19b and broke down the wall of Jerusalem,</p>
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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
<p>18 Then the captain of the guard took Seraiah the chief priest and Zephaniah the second priest, with the three officers of the temple.</p> <p>19 From the city he took one official who was overseer of the men of war, and five of the king’s advisers who were found in the city; and the scribe of the captain of the army who mustered the people of the land; and sixty men of the people of the land who were found in the city.</p> <p>20 Nebuzaradan the captain of</p>		<p>24 Then the captain of the guard took Seraiah the chief priest and Zephaniah the second priest, with the three officers of the temple.</p> <p>25 He also took from the city one official who was overseer of the men of war, and seven of the king’s advisers who were found in the city, and the scribe of the commander of the army who mustered the people of the land, and sixty men of the people of the land who were found in the midst of the city.</p> <p>26 Nebuzaradan the captain of</p>	

<p>the guard took them and brought them to the king of Babylon at Riblah. 21a Then the king of Babylon struck them down and put them to death at Riblah in the land of Hamath. 11 Then the rest of the people who were left in the city and the deserters who had deserted to the king of Babylon and the rest of the people, Nebuzaradan the captain of the guard carried away into exile. 12 But the captain of the guard left some of the poorest of the land</p> <p>to be vinedressers and plowmen. 21b So Judah was led away into exile from its land.</p>	<p>9 As for the rest of the people who were left in the city, the deserters who had gone over to him and the rest of the people who remained, Nebuzaradan the captain of the bodyguard carried <i>them</i> into exile in Babylon. 10 But some of the poorest people who had nothing, Nebuzaradan the captain of the bodyguard left behind in the land of Judah, and gave them vineyards and fields at that time.</p>	<p>the guard took them and brought them to the king of Babylon at Riblah. 27a Then the king of Babylon struck them down and put them to death at Riblah in the land of Hamath. 15 Then Nebuzaradan the captain of the guard carried away into exile some of the poorest of the people, the rest of the people who were left in the city, the deserters who had deserted to the king of Babylon and the rest of the artisans. 16 But Nebuzaradan the captain of the guard left some of the poorest of the land</p> <p>to be vinedressers and plowmen. 27b So Judah was led away into exile from its land. 28a These are the people whom Nebuchadnezzar carried away into exile: 29 in the eighteenth year of Nebuchadnezzar 832 persons from Jerusalem;</p>	<p>20a Those who had escaped from the sword he carried away 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 for* the people who were left in the land of Judah, whom Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon had left, 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 Now Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon gave orders about Jeremiah through Nebuzaradan the captain of the bodyguard, saying, 12 "Take him and look after him, and do nothing harmful to him, but rather deal with him just as he tells you."

13 So Nebuzaradan the captain of the bodyguard sent *word*, along with Nebushazban the Rab-saris, and Nergal-sar-ezer the Rab-mag, and all the leading officers of the king of Babylon;

14a they even sent and took Jeremiah out of the court of the guardhouse and entrusted him to Gedaliah, the son of Ahikam, the son of Shaphan, to take him home.

Jeremiah Mingles With the Deportees and Ends Up Being Taken With Them to Ramah

14b So he stayed among the people.

40:1 The word which came to Jeremiah from the LORD after Nebuzaradan captain of the bodyguard had released him from Ramah, when he had taken him bound in chains among all the exiles of Jerusalem and Judah who were being exiled to Babylon.

Nebuzaradan Personally Oversees Jeremiah's Release

2 Now the captain of the bodyguard had taken Jeremiah and said to him, "The LORD your God promised this calamity against this place;

3 and the LORD has brought *it* on and done just as He promised. Because you *people* sinned against the LORD and did not listen to His voice, therefore this thing has happened to you.

4 But now, behold, I am freeing you today from the chains which are on your hands. If you would prefer to come with me to Babylon, come *along*, and I will look after you; but if you would prefer not to come with me to Babylon, never mind. Look, the whole land is before you; go wherever it seems good and right for you to go."

5 As Jeremiah was still not going back, *he said*, "Go on back then to Gedaliah the son of Ahikam, the son of Shaphan, whom the king of Babylon has appointed over the cities of Judah, and stay with him among the people; or else go anywhere it seems right for you to go." So the captain of the bodyguard gave him a ration and a gift and let him go.

6 Then Jeremiah went to Mizpah to Gedaliah the son of Ahikam and stayed with him among 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 O God, why have You rejected *us* forever?
Why does Your anger smoke against the sheep of Your pasture?
- 2 Remember Your congregation, which You have purchased of old,
Which You have redeemed to be the tribe of Your inheritance;
And this Mount Zion, where You have dwelt.
- 3 Turn Your footsteps toward the perpetual ruins;
The enemy has damaged everything within the sanctuary.
- 4 Your adversaries have roared in the midst of Your meeting place;
They have set up their own standards for signs.
- 5 It seems as if one had lifted up
His axe in a forest of trees.
- 6 And now all its carved work
They smash with hatchet and hammers.
- 7 They have burned Your sanctuary to the ground;
They have defiled the dwelling place of Your name.
- 8 They said in their heart, "Let us completely subdue them."
They have burned all the meeting places of God in the land.
- 9 We do not see our signs;
There is no longer any prophet,

- Nor is there any among us who knows how long.
- 10 How long, O God, will the adversary revile,
And the enemy spurn Your name forever?
- 11 Why do You withdraw Your hand, even Your right hand?
From within Your bosom, destroy *them*!
- 12 Yet God is my king from of old,
Who works deeds of deliverance in the midst of the earth.
- 13 You divided 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 for the creatures of the wilderness.
- 15 You broke open springs and torrents;
You dried up ever-flowing streams.
- 16 Yours is the day, Yours also is the night;
You have prepared the light and the sun.
- 17 You have established all the boundaries of the earth;
You have made summer and winter.
- 18 Remember this, O LORD, that the enemy has reviled,
And a foolish people has spurned Your name.
- 19 Do not deliver the soul of Your turtledove to the wild beast;
Do not forget the life of Your afflicted forever.
- 20 Consider the covenant;
For the dark places of the land are full of the habitations of violence.
- 21 Let not the oppressed return dishonored;
Let the afflicted and needy praise Your name.
- 22 Arise, O God, *and* plead Your own cause;
Remember how the foolish man reproaches You all day long.
- 23 Do not forget the voice of Your adversaries,
The uproar of those who rise against You which ascends continually.

How Long, O Lord? (c. September 587 BC)

Psalm 79

A psalm of Asaph.

- 1 O God, the nations have invaded Your inheritance;
They have defiled Your holy temple;
They have laid Jerusalem in ruins.
- 2 They have given the dead bodies of Your servants for food to the birds of the heavens,
The flesh of Your godly ones to the beasts of the earth.
- 3 They have poured out their blood like water round about Jerusalem;
And there was no one to bury them.
- 4 We have become a reproach to our neighbors,
A scoffing and derision to those around us.
- 5 How long, O LORD? Will You be angry forever?
Will Your jealousy burn like fire?
- 6 Pour out Your wrath upon the nations which do not know You,
And upon the kingdoms which do not call upon Your name.
- 7 For they have devoured Jacob
And laid waste his habitation.
- 8 Do not remember the iniquities of *our* forefathers against us;
Let Your compassion come quickly to meet us,
For 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 Your name's sake.
- 10 Why should the nations say, "Where is their God?"
Let there be known among the nations in our sight,
Vengeance for the blood of Your servants which has been shed.
- 11 Let the groaning of the prisoner come before You;

- According to the greatness of Your power preserve those who are doomed to die.
- 12 And return to our neighbors sevenfold into their bosom
The reproach with which they have reproached You, O Lord.
- 13 So we Your people and the sheep of Your pasture
Will give thanks to You forever;
To all generations 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 down and wept,
When we remembered Zion.
- 2 Upon the willows in the midst of it
We hung our harps.
- 3 For there our captors demanded of us songs,
And our tormentors mirth, *saying*,
"Sing us one of the songs of Zion."
- 4 How can we sing the LORD's song
In a foreign land?
- 5 If I forget you, O Jerusalem,
May my right hand forget *her skill*.
- 6 May my tongue cling to the roof of my mouth
If I do not remember you,
If I do not exalt Jerusalem
Above my chief joy.
- 7 Remember, O LORD, against the sons of Edom
The day of Jerusalem,
Who said, "Raze it, raze it
To its very foundation."
- 8 O daughter of Babylon, you devastated one,
How blessed will be the one who repays you
With the recompense with which you have repaid us.
- 9 How blessed will be the one who seizes and dashes your little ones
Against the rock.

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A Lament for Jerusalem – Part 1 (c. September 587 BC)

Lamentations 1–2

The Prophet Speaks:*Aleph*

1:1 How lonely sits the city
That was full of people!
She has become like a widow
Who was *once* great among the nations!
She who was a princess among the provinces
Has become a forced laborer!

Beth

2 She weeps bitterly in the night
And her tears are on her cheeks;
She has none to comfort her
Among all her lovers.
All her friends have dealt treacherously with her;
They have become her enemies.

Gimel

3 Judah has gone into exile under affliction
And under harsh servitude;
She dwells among the nations,
But she has found no rest;
All her pursuers have overtaken her
In the midst of distress.

Daleth

4 The roads of Zion are in mourning
Because no one comes to the appointed feasts.
All her gates are desolate;
Her priests are groaning,
Her virgins are afflicted,
And she herself is bitter.

He

5 Her adversaries have become her masters,
Her enemies prosper;
For the LORD has caused her grief
Because of the multitude of her transgressions;
Her little ones have gone away
As captives before the adversary.

Waw

6 All her majesty
Has departed from the daughter of Zion;
Her princes have become like deer
That have found no pasture;
And they have fled without strength
Before the pursuer.

Zayin

7 In the days of her affliction and homelessness
Jerusalem remembers all her precious things
That were from the days of old,
When her people fell into the hand of the adversary
And no one helped her.
The adversaries saw her,
They mocked at her ruin.

Heth

8 Jerusalem sinned greatly,
Therefore she has become an unclean thing.
All who honored her despise her
Because they have seen her nakedness;
Even she herself groans and turns away.

Teth

9 Her uncleanness was in her skirts;
She did not consider her future.
Therefore she has fallen astonishingly;
She has no comforter.
“See, O LORD, my affliction,
For the enemy has magnified himself!”

Yod

10 The adversary has stretched out his hand
Over all her precious things,
For she has seen the nations enter her sanctuary,
The ones whom You commanded
That they should not enter into Your congregation.

Kaph

11a All her people groan seeking bread;
They have given their precious things for food
To restore their lives themselves.

Jerusalem Speaks:

11b “See, O LORD, and look,
For I am despised.”

Lamed

12 “Is it nothing to all you who pass this way?
Look and see if there is any pain like my pain
Which was severely dealt out to me,
Which the LORD inflicted on the day of His fierce anger.

Mem

13 “From on high He sent fire into my bones,
And it prevailed *over them*.
He has spread a net for my feet;
He has turned me back;
He has made me desolate,
Faint all day long.

Nun

14 “The yoke of my transgressions is bound;
By His hand they are knit together.
They have come upon my neck;
He has made my strength fail.
The Lord has given me into the hands
Of *those against whom* I am not able to stand.

Samech

15 “The Lord has rejected all my strong men
In my midst;
He has called an appointed time against me
To crush my young men;
The Lord has trodden *as in* a wine press
The virgin daughter of Judah.

Ayin

16 “For these things I weep;
My eyes run down with water;
Because far from me is a comforter,
One who restores my soul.
My children are desolate
Because the enemy has prevailed.”

The Prophet Speaks:*Pe*

17 Zion stretches out her hands;
There is no one to comfort her;
The LORD has commanded concerning Jacob
That the ones round about him should be his adversaries;
Jerusalem has become an unclean thing among them.

Jerusalem Speaks:*Tsade*

18 “The LORD is righteous;
For I have rebelled against His command;
Hear now, all peoples,
And behold my pain;
My virgins and my young men
Have gone into captivity.

Qoph

19 “I called to my lovers, *but* they deceived me;
My priests and my elders perished in the city
While they sought food to restore their strength themselves.

Resh

20 “See, O LORD, for I am in distress;
My spirit is greatly troubled;
My heart is overturned within me,
For I have been very rebellious.
In the street the sword slays;
In the house it is like death.

Shin

21 “They have heard that I groan;
There is no one to comfort me;
All my enemies have heard of my calamity;
They are glad that You have done *it*.
Oh, that You would bring the day which You have proclaimed,
That they may become like me.

Taw

22 “Let all their wickedness come before You;
And deal with them as You have dealt with me
For all my transgressions;
For my groans are many and my heart is faint.”

The Prophet Speaks:*Aleph*

2:1 How the Lord has covered the daughter of Zion
With a cloud in His anger!
He has cast from heaven to earth
The glory of Israel,
And has not remembered His footstool
In the day of His anger.

Beth

- 2 The Lord has swallowed up; He has not spared
All the habitations of Jacob.
In His wrath He has thrown down
The strongholds of the daughter of Judah;
He has brought *them* down to the ground;
He has profaned the kingdom and its princes.

Gimel

- 3 In fierce anger He has cut off
All the strength of Israel;
He has drawn back His right hand
From before the enemy.
And He has burned in Jacob like a flaming fire
Consuming round about.

Daleth

- 4 He has bent His bow like an enemy;
He has set His right hand like an adversary
And slain all that were pleasant to the eye;
In the tent of the daughter of Zion
He has poured out His wrath like fire.

He

- 5 The Lord has become like an enemy.
He has swallowed up Israel;
He has swallowed up all its palaces,
He has destroyed its strongholds
And multiplied in the daughter of Judah
Mourning and moaning.

Waw

- 6 And He has violently treated His tabernacle like a garden *booth*;
He has destroyed His appointed meeting place.
The LORD has caused to be forgotten
The appointed feast and sabbath in Zion,
And He has despised king and priest
In the indignation of His anger.

Zayin

- 7 The Lord has rejected His altar,
He has abandoned His sanctuary;
He has delivered into the hand of the enemy
The walls of her palaces.
They have made a noise in the house of the LORD
As in the day of an appointed feast.

Heth

- 8 The LORD determined to destroy
The wall of the daughter of Zion.
He has stretched out a line,
He has not restrained His hand from destroying,
And He has caused rampart and wall to lament;
They have languished together.

Teth

- 9 Her gates have sunk into the ground,
He has destroyed and broken her bars.
Her king and her princes are among the nations;
The law is no more.

Also, her prophets find
No vision from the LORD.

Yod

10 The elders of the daughter of Zion
Sit on the ground, they are silent.
They have thrown dust on their heads;
They have girded themselves with sackcloth.
The virgins of Jerusalem
Have bowed their heads to the ground.

Kaph

11 My eyes fail because of tears,
My spirit is greatly troubled;
My heart is poured out on the earth
Because of the destruction of the daughter of my people,
When little ones and infants faint
In the streets of the city.

Lamed

12 They say to their mothers,
“Where is grain and wine?”
As they faint like a wounded man
In the streets of the city,
As their life is poured out
On their mothers’ bosom.

Mem

13 How shall I admonish you?
To what shall I compare you,
O daughter of Jerusalem?
To what shall I liken you as I comfort you,
O virgin daughter of Zion?
For your ruin is as vast as the sea;
Who can heal you?

Nun

14 Your prophets have seen for you
False and foolish *visions*;
And they have not exposed your iniquity
So as to restore you from captivity,
But they have seen for you false and misleading oracles.

Samech

15 All who pass along the way
Clap their hands *in derision* at you;
They hiss and shake their heads
At the daughter of Jerusalem,
“Is this the city of which they said,
‘The perfection of beauty,
A joy to all the earth’?”

Pe

16 All your enemies
Have opened their mouths wide against you;
They hiss and gnash *their* teeth.
They say, “We have swallowed *her* up!
Surely this is the day for which we waited;
We have reached *it*, we have seen *it*.”

Ayin

17 The LORD has done what He purposed;
He has accomplished His word
Which He commanded from days of old.
He has thrown down without sparing,
And He has caused the enemy to rejoice over you;
He has exalted the might of your adversaries.

Tsade

18 Their heart cried out to the Lord,
“O wall of the daughter of Zion,
Let *your* tears run down like a river day and night;
Give yourself no relief,
Let your eyes have no rest.

Qoph

19 “Arise, cry aloud in the night
At the beginning of the night watches;
Pour out your heart like water
Before the presence of the Lord;
Lift up your hands to Him
For the life of your little ones
Who are faint because of hunger
At the head of every street.”

Jerusalem Speaks:*Resh*

20 See, O LORD, and look!
With whom have You dealt thus?
Should women eat their offspring,
The little ones who were born healthy?
Should priest and prophet be slain
In the sanctuary of the Lord?

Shin

21 On the ground in the streets
Lie young and old;
My virgins and my young men
Have fallen by the sword.
You have slain *them* in the day of Your anger,
You have slaughtered, not sparing.

Taw

22 You called as in the day of an appointed feast
My terrors on every side;
And there was no one who escaped or survived
In the day of the LORD’s anger.
Those whom I bore and reared,
My enemy annihilated them.

A Lament for Jerusalem – Part 2 (c. September 587 BC)

Lamentations 3

The Prophet Speaks:*Aleph*

- 1 I am the man who has seen affliction
Because of the rod of His wrath.
- 2 He has driven me and made me walk
In darkness and not in light.
- 3 Surely against me He has turned His hand
Repeatedly all the day.

Beth

- 4 He has caused my flesh and my skin to waste away,
He has broken my bones.
- 5 He has besieged and encompassed me with bitterness and hardship.
- 6 In dark places He has made me dwell,
Like those who have long been dead.

Gimel

- 7 He has walled me in so that I cannot go out;
He has made my chain heavy.
- 8 Even when I cry out and call for help,
He shuts out my prayer.
- 9 He has blocked my ways with hewn stone;
He has made my paths crooked.

Daleth

- 10 He is to me like a bear lying in wait,
Like a lion in secret places.
- 11 He has turned aside my ways and torn me to pieces;
He has made me desolate.
- 12 He bent His bow
And set me as a target for the arrow.

He

- 13 He made the arrows of His quiver
To enter into my inward parts.
- 14 I have become a laughingstock to all my people,
Their *mocking* song all the day.
- 15 He has filled me with bitterness,
He has made me drunk with wormwood.

Waw

- 16 He has broken my teeth with gravel;
He has made me cower in the dust.
- 17 My soul has been rejected from peace;
I have forgotten happiness.
- 18 So I say, "My strength has perished,
And *so has* my hope from the LORD."

Zayin

- 19 Remember my affliction and my wandering, the wormwood and bitterness.
- 20 Surely my soul remembers
And is bowed down within me.
- 21 This I recall to my mind,
Therefore I have hope.

Heth

- 22 The LORD's lovingkindnesses indeed never cease,
For His compassions never fail.

- 23 *They are new every morning;*
Great is Your faithfulness.
- 24 “The LORD is my portion,” says my soul,
“Therefore I have hope in Him.”

Teth

- 25 The LORD is good to those who wait for Him,
To the person who seeks Him.
- 26 *It is good that he waits silently*
For the salvation of the LORD.
- 27 *It is good for a man that he should bear*
The yoke in his youth.

Yod

- 28 Let him sit alone and be silent
Since He has laid *it* on him.
- 29 Let him put his mouth in the dust,
Perhaps there is hope.
- 30 Let him give his cheek to the smiter,
Let him be filled with reproach.

Kaph

- 31 For the Lord will not reject forever,
32 For if He causes grief,
Then He will have compassion
According to His abundant lovingkindness.
- 33 For He does not afflict willingly
Or grieve the sons of men.

Lamed

- 34 To crush under His feet
All the prisoners of the land,
- 35 To deprive a man of justice
In the presence of the Most High,
- 36 To defraud a man in his lawsuit—
Of these things the Lord does not approve.

Mem

- 37 Who is there who speaks and it comes to pass,
Unless the Lord has commanded *it*?
- 38 *Is it* not from the mouth of the Most High
That both good and ill go forth?
- 39 Why should *any* living mortal, or *any* man,
Offer complaint in view of his sins?

Nun

- 40 Let us examine and probe our ways,
And let us return to the LORD.
- 41 We lift up our heart and hands
Toward God in heaven;
- 42 We have transgressed and rebelled,
You have not pardoned.

Samech

- 43 You have covered *Yourself* with anger
And pursued us;
You have slain *and* have not spared.
- 44 You have covered Yourself with a cloud
So that no prayer can pass through.
- 45 *You have made us mere* offscouring and refuse

In the midst of the peoples.

Pe

- 46 All our enemies have opened their mouths against us.
47 Panic and pitfall have befallen us,
Devastation and destruction;
48 My eyes run down with streams of water
Because of the destruction of the daughter of my people.

Ayin

- 49 My eyes pour down unceasingly,
Without stopping,
50 Until the LORD looks down
And sees from heaven.
51 My eyes bring pain to my soul
Because of all the daughters of my city.

Tsade

- 52 My enemies without cause
Hunted me down like a bird;
53 They have silenced me in the pit
And have placed a stone on me.
54 Waters flowed over my head;
I said, "I am cut off!"

Qoph

- 55 I called on Your name, O LORD,
Out of the lowest pit.
56 You have heard my voice,
"Do not hide Your ear from my *prayer for relief*,
From my cry for help."
57 You drew near when I called on You;
You said, "Do not fear!"

Resh

- 58 O Lord, You have pleaded my soul's cause;
You have redeemed my life.
59 O LORD, You have seen my oppression;
Judge my case.
60 You have seen all their vengeance,
All their schemes against me.

Shin

- 61 You have heard their reproach, O LORD,
All their schemes against me.
62 The lips of my assailants and their whispering
Are against me all day long.
63 Look on their sitting and their rising;
I am their mocking song.

Taw

- 64 You will recompense them, O LORD,
According to the work of their hands.
65 You will give them hardness of heart,
Your curse will be on them.
66 You will pursue them in anger and destroy them
From under the heavens of the LORD!