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Chronological Bible Plan September



SEPTEMBER

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

September 1	<input type="checkbox"/> Bible Reading	<input type="checkbox"/> Prayer
September 2	<input type="checkbox"/> Bible Reading	<input type="checkbox"/> Prayer
September 3	<input type="checkbox"/> Bible Reading	<input type="checkbox"/> Prayer
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A Lament for Jerusalem – Part 3 (c. September 587 BC)

Lamentations 4–5

The Prophet Speaks:*Aleph*

4:1 How *the* gold has grown dim,
the pure gold has changed.
The stones of holiness are scattered
at the head of every street.

Beth

2 The precious sons of Zion
weighed against fine gold,
how they are thought of as earthen vessels of clay,
the work of the potter's hands.

Gimel

3 Even the jackal bears the beast
and nurses their cubs;
but the daughter of my people has become ruthless,
like ostriches in the wilderness.

Daleth

4 The tongue of the nursling cleaves
to its palate in thirst.
Children beg *for* food,
no one lays it out before them.

He

5 The ones who eat delicacies,
they are ruined in the streets;
the ones nurtured in purple
lie *on* piles of trash.

Waw

6 The iniquity of the daughter of my people
is greater than the sin of Sodom;
it was overthrown in a moment
and no hands were laid on her.

Zayin

7 Her princes were purer than snow,
they were whiter than milk;
their bodies were more ruddy than rubies,
sapphire their appearance.

Heth

8 *Now* their appearance is blacker than soot,
they are not recognized in the streets;
their skin has shriveled on their bones,
it has become dry like wood.

Teth

9 Happier were *the* victims of *the* sword
than the victims of famine;
they have pined away, very hungry
for the crops of my field.

Yod

10 *The* hands of compassionate women,
have cooked their children;
they became as something to eat
in the destruction of the daughter of my people.

Kaph

- 11 Yahweh has completed his anger,
he has poured out his fierce anger;
he has kindled a fire in Zion,
it consumed her foundations.

Lamed

- 12 *The* kings of *the* earth did not believe,
and all *the* inhabitants of *the* world,
that a foe and an enemy could enter
into the gates of Jerusalem.

Mem

- 13 Because of the sins of her prophets,
the guilt of her priests,
who shed blood in her midst,
of righteous people.

Nun

- 14 They wander blindly in the streets;
they were defiled with the blood,
their clothes could not be touched.

Samech

- 15 “Go away! Defiled!” they shout to them.
“Go away! Go away! Do not touch!”
so they left, they left; it was said among the nations,
“They will no longer dwell with us.”

Pe

- 16 The presence of Yahweh has scattered them,
he will no longer watch over them;
they did not honor the priests,
they did not show mercy *to* elders.

The People of Jerusalem Lament:*Ayin*

- 17 Still our eyes failed,
looking for our help in vain;
in our watchtower, we kept watch
for a nation that could not save.

Tsade

- 18 They hunted our steps,
from walking in our streets;
our end has come near, our days are finished,
our end has come.

Qoph

- 19 Our pursuers were swifter
than *the* eagles of *the* heavens;
they chased us on the mountains,
they have set an ambush for us in the desert.

Resh

- 20 The breath of our nostrils, the anointed one of Yahweh,
was captured in their pits;
of whom we said, “In his shadow
we will live among the nations.”

The Prophet Speaks:*Shin*

21 Rejoice and be glad, O daughter of Edom,
you who dwell in the land of Uz;
but to you also the cup will pass,
you will become drunk and strip yourself bare.

Taw

22 The *punishment* of your iniquity is completed, O daughter of Zion,
your exile will not continue;
but he will punish your iniquity, O daughter of Edom,
he will reveal your sins.

The People of Jerusalem Pray:

5:1 Remember, O Yahweh, what has become of us;
take note, and see our disgrace!
2 Our inheritance has been turned over to strangers,
our houses, to foreigners.
3 We have become orphans, fatherless,
our mothers are like widows.
4 We pay for water with money,
our wood comes *to us* at a price.
5 We are driven on our necks;
we are weary, there is no rest for us.
6 We have made a deal with Egypt *and* Assyria
to be satisfied *with* food.
7 Our fathers have sinned, they are no more;
we bear their iniquity.
8 Slaves rule over us;
there is no one to deliver us from their hand.
9 We risk our life for food
because of the sword of the desert.
10 Our skin is hot like an oven
because of the scorching famine.
11 They raped women in Zion,
young women in the cities of Judah.
12 They hang princes by their hand;
they do not show respect before elders.
13 Young men must carry a hand-mill
and boys stumble under the wood.
14 Elders are no longer at the gate,
young men no longer play stringed instruments.
15 The joy of our hearts has stopped;
our circle-dancing has changed to a mourning ceremony.
16 The crown has fallen from our head;
woe to us, for we have sinned!
17 Because of this, our heart has become faint,
because of these, our eyes have become dim.
18 Because of Mount Zion, which lies desolate,
foxes tread on it.
19 You, O Yahweh, will sit forever
on your throne for generation to generation.
20 Why have you forgotten us forever?
Why have you forsaken us for so long?
21 Restore us to you, O Yahweh, that we will be restored;
renew our days as of old.
22 Unless you have utterly rejected us,
unless you are angry with us beyond measure.

Ezekiel's Prophecy to the Exiles—Oracle against Tyre (September 18, 587 BC)

Ezekiel 26:1–28:19

The Announcement of Tyre's Demise

26:1 And it was in the eleventh year, on the first *day* of the month, the word of Yahweh came to me, saying,

2 "Son of man, because Tyre said concerning Jerusalem, 'Ah! The gates of the peoples are broken; it has swung *open* to me; I shall be filled, *for* it lies in ruins!'

3 Therefore thus says the Lord Yahweh: 'Look! I *am* against you, Tyre, and I will bring up against you many nations like the stirring up of the sea stirring up its waves.

4 And I will destroy the walls of Tyre, and they will demolish its towers, and I will scrape away its earthen dirt from it, and I will make it into a bare rock.

5 It will become a place for spreading out dragnets in the midst of the sea; for I have spoken,' declares the Lord Yahweh. 'And it will become as plunder for the nations,

6 and its daughters who *are* in the field with the sword, they will be killed; and they will know that I *am* Yahweh.'"

The Agent of God's Judgment

7 For thus says the Lord Yahweh: "Look! I *am* bringing to Tyre Nebuchadnezzar, the king of Babylon, from *the* north, *the* king of kings, with horse and with chariot and with horsemen and *his* assembly and many people.

8 Your daughters he will kill in the field with the sword, and he will place against you siege works, and he will build against you a siege ramp, and he will raise against you a shield,

9 and the thrust of his battering ram he will direct against your walls, and your towers he will break down with his weapons.

10 From the abundance of his horses he will cover you *with* their fine dust; at *the* sound of horseman and wheel and chariot your walls will shake, at his coming into your gates like the entrance of a city *that is* being broken through.

11 With the hooves of his horses he will trample all of your streets. He will kill your people with the sword, and your strong stone pillars will tumble down to the earth.

12 And they will plunder your wealth, and they will loot your merchandise, and they will break down your walls, and the houses of your delight they will break down, and your stones and your timbers and your earthen dirt they will cast into the midst of *the* water.

13 And, I will put an end to the noise of your songs, and the sound of your lyres will not be heard any longer.

14 And I will make you into a bare rock, a place for *the* spreading out of dragnets. You will not be built again, for I, Yahweh, I have spoken," declares the Lord Yahweh.

The International Impact of Tyre's Demise

15 Thus says the Lord Yahweh to Tyre, "Will not the coastlands shake from the sound of your downfall, at *the* groaning of the wounded, at people being killed in the midst of you?

16 And all the princes of the sea will go down from their thrones, and they will remove their robes, and their beautiful garments of finished cloth they will take off. With terror they will be clothed, and on the ground they will sit, and they will tremble continually, and they will be appalled over you.

17 And they will raise a lament over you, and they will say to you,

'How you have been lost *who was* inhabited from *the* seas;
the city that was praised, that was strong.
It *is located* on the sea,
and its inhabitants imposed their terror on all of its inhabitants.

18 Now the coastlands will tremble
at the day of your downfall,
and the islands that *are* in the sea
will be horrified because of your departure.'"

The Role of Yahweh in Tyre's Demise

19 For thus says the Lord Yahweh: "When I make you a desolate city, like the cities that are not inhabited, when bringing up over you the deep, the great surging waters will cover you.

20 And I will bring you down with *those who are* going down to the grave, an ancient people, and I will cause you to dwell in the world of *the* depths, in the ruins from of old with *those who are* going down to *the* grave, so that you will not be inhabited and have a place in *the* land of *the* living.

21 Sudden terrors I will bring *on* you, and you shall no *longer exist*; and you will be sought, and you will not be found again forever," declares the Lord Yahweh.

Lament over the Shipwreck of Tyre

27:1 And the word of Yahweh came to me, saying,

2 “And you, son of man, raise a lament against Tyre.

3 And you must say to Tyre, the one who sits at *the* entrance of the sea *as* the merchant of the peoples to the many coastlands,
‘Thus says the Lord Yahweh:

Tyre, you yourself said
“I *am* perfect in beauty!”

4 In *the* heart of *the* seas *are* your boundaries;
your builders perfected your beauty.

5 They built *with* pine trees from Senir
all of your boards for you;
they took cedars from Lebanon
to make a sailing mast for you.

6 They made your oars
with oaks from Bashan;
your deck they made *with* inlaid ivory,
with cypress trees from the coastlands of Cyprus.

7 Your sail was fine linen with colorful weaving from Egypt
to serve as a banner for you;
blue and purple cloth from the coastlands of Cyprus
was your awning.

8 The inhabitants of Sidon and Arvan
were your rowers;
your skilled men, O Tyre, were from your own people,
and they *were* your seamen.

9 The elders of Gebal and its skilled men were among you
as the repairers of *the* seam of your boat;
all of the ships of the sea and their mariners were among you
to barter your wares.

10 Persia and Lud and Put
were among your soldiers;
small shield and helmet hung among you
and gave *to you* your adornment.

11 The people of Arvan and Helech
were on your walls all around,
and Gammadites
were in your towers.
They hung their quivers on your walls all around;
they perfected your beauty.

12 “ ‘Tarshish *was* your trader; from *the* abundance of all of *their* wealth, with silver, iron, tin, and lead they exchanged for your merchandise.

13 Javan, Tubal, and Meshech were your traders; in exchange for people and an object of bronze they gave *you* your wares.

14 From Beth Togarmah they exchanged horses and war horses and mules for your wares.

15 The people of Dedan *were* trading *with* you, many coastlands *composed* the region of your influence; they brought back horns of ivory and ebony *as* your payment.

16 Edom *was* trading *with* you because of the abundance of your products, *trading* with malachite, purple wool yarn and colorful weaving, and fine white fabric and black corals and rubies; *all these* they exchange for your merchandise.

17 Judah and the land of Israel *were* trading *with* you with wheat from Minnith and millet and honey and olive oil and balm; *all these* they gave *for* your wares.

18 Damascus *was* trading *with* you because of the abundance of your products, because of the abundance of all of *your* wealth, *trading* with the wine of Helbon and white wool.

19 Vedan and Javan from Uzal, they exchanged wrought iron, cinnamon, and reed spice for your merchandise; *all this* was for your wares.

20 Dedan *was* trading *with* you, with garments of woven material for riding.

21 Arabia and all of the leaders of Kedar *were* your customers; with young rams and *adult* rams and goats *they were* trading with them with you.

22 The traders of Sheba and Raamah *were* trading *with* you, with the finest of every spice and with every precious stone and gold; they exchanged *all these* for your merchandise.

- 23 Haran and Canneh and Eden, the traders of Sheba, Assyria, *and* Kilmad *were* trading *with* you.
 24 They *were* trading *with* you in finery, in mantles of blue cloth and colorful embroidered work and with rugs of variegated cloth in twisted cords and knotted tightly; these were among your merchandise.
 25 The ships of Tarshish *were* carrying *for* you your wares, and you were filled, and you became very heavy in *the* heart of *the* seas.
- 26 “ ‘Into many waters
 the rowers brought you;
but the east wind wrecked you
 in *the* heart of *the* seas.
- 27 Your wealth and your merchandise, your wares,
 your mariners, and your seamen,
 your shipwrights and the barterers of your wares
 and all of your soldiers who *are* in you,
 along with all of your crew who are in the midst of you,
 they will fall in *the* heart of *the* seas on the day of your downfall.
- 28 At the sound of the shout of your seamen,
the pasturelands will shake.
- 29 And they will go down from their ships,
 all of *those* holding an oar,
 mariners, all of the seamen of the sea
 will stand on the land,
- 30 and they will lament over you with their voice,
 and they will cry out bitterly,
 and they will throw dust on their heads,
and they will roll in the dust.
- 31 They will shave themselves bald for your sake,
 and they will dress themselves *in* sackcloth,
 and they will weep over you with *a* bitterness of soul
and with bitter wailing.
- 32 And they will raise over you with their wailing a lament,
 and they will chant a lament over you:
 ‘Who is like Tyre,
 like *this* destruction in the midst of the sea?’
- 33 When your merchandise went out from *the* seas,
 you satisfied many peoples with the abundance of your wealth,
 and *by* your wares
 you made rich *the* kings of *the* world.
- 34 Now you are broken by seas
 in *the* depths of waters;
 your wares and all of your crew
 in the midst of you have sunk.
- 35 All of the inhabitants of the coastlands
 are appalled over you,
 and their kings shudder *in* horror;
 they distort their faces!
- 36 The traders among the peoples hiss over you;
 you have become *a* horror,
 and you shall be no more forever!’”

Doom for the Prince of Tyre

- 28:1 And the word of Yahweh came to me, saying,
 2 “Son of man, say to the leader of Tyre, ‘Thus says the Lord Yahweh:

“Because your heart was haughty,
 and you said, ‘I *am* a god;
 I sit *in* *the* seat of *the* gods,
 I sit in *the* heart of *the* seas!’
 But you are a human, not a god,

and you gave your heart to be like *the* heart of a god.

- 3 Look, are you wiser than Daniel,
so *that* no secret is hidden *from* you?
4 By your wisdom and by your understanding
you have gained for yourself wealth,
and you have amassed gold and silver
in your treasuries.
5 By the abundance of your wisdom in your trading
you *have* increased your wealth
and your heart was proud in your wealth.” ”

6 Therefore thus says the Lord Yahweh:

- “Because of your regarding your mind
like *the* mind of a god,
7 therefore look! I *am* bringing strangers over you,
the most ruthless of *the* peoples,
and they will draw their swords against the beauty of your wisdom,
and they will defile your splendor.
8 They will thrust you down to the pit,
and you will die a violent death
in *the* heart of *the* seas.
9 Will you indeed still say “I *am* a god!”
before the face of your killers?
And *in fact* you *are* a human and not a god
in the hand of those who pierce you.
10 You will die *the* death of *the* uncircumcised
by the hand of strangers,

for I myself have spoken!” declares the Lord Yahweh.

Lament for the King of Tyre (a type of Satan)

- 11 And the word of Yahweh came to me, saying,
12 “Son of man, raise a lament over the king of Tyre, and you must say to him, ‘thus says the Lord Yahweh:

- “You were a perfect model of an example,
full of wisdom and perfect of beauty.
13 You were in Eden, the garden of God,
and every precious stone *was* your adornment:
carnelian, topaz and moonstone,
turquoise, onyx and jasper,
sapphire, malachite and emerald.
And gold *was* the craftsmanship of your settings
and your mountings in you;
on the day when you were created they were prepared.
14 You were *an* anointed guardian cherub,
and I placed you on God’s holy mountain;
you walked in the midst of stones of fire.
15 You *were* blameless in your ways
from the day when you were created,
until wickedness was found in you.
16 In the abundance of your trading,
they filled the midst of you *with* violence, and you sinned;
and I cast you as a profane thing from the mountain of God,
and I expelled you, *the* guardian cherub,
from the midst of *the* stones of fire.
17 Your heart was proud because of your beauty;
you ruined your wisdom because of your splendor.

- I threw you on the ground before kings;
I have exposed you for viewing.
- 18 From the abundance of your iniquities
in the dishonesty of your trading,
I profaned your sanctuaries
and I brought fire from your midst;
it consumed you, and I have turned you to ashes on the earth
before the eyes of everyone who sees you.
- 19 All who know you among the peoples
are appalled over you;
you have become *as* horrors,
and you shall cease to exist forever.” ”

Ezekiel's Prophecy to the Exiles—Oracle against Sidon (September 18, 587 BC)

Ezekiel 28:20–26

- 20 And the word of Yahweh came to me, saying,
21 “Son of man, set your face toward Sidon and prophesy against it,
22 and you must say, ‘Thus says the Lord Yahweh:

“Look! I *am* against you, Sidon,
and I display my glory in the midst of you,
and they will know that I *am* Yahweh
when I execute my judgments,
and I will show myself holy within it.

- 23 And I will send into it a plague,
and blood will *be* in its streets.
And *the* dead will fall in the midst of her
by *the* sword *that is* against it from all around;
and they will know that I *am* Yahweh.

- 24 And there will not be any longer *a* painful thorn and a sharp thornbush for the house of Israel from anywhere around them *from those* who are despising them, and they will know that I *am* the Lord Yahweh.” ”
- 25 Thus says the Lord Yahweh: “When I gather the house of Israel from the peoples to which they were scattered *about* in them, and I show myself holy in them before the eyes of the nations, then they will live on their soil, which I gave to my servant Jacob.
26 And they will live on it in safety, and they will build houses, and they will plant vineyards, and they will live in safety when I execute my judgments on all those who despise them from all around them, and *then* they will know that I *am* Yahweh their God.”

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Gedaliah Urges the Judahite Army to Stay and Settle Down (c. Sep/Oct 587 BC)

2 Kings 25:23–24

23 When all of the commanders of the troops heard, they and the men, that the king of Babylon had appointed Gedaliah,

they came to Gedaliah at Mizpah, *even* Ishmael the son of Nethaniah, Johanan the son of Kareah, Seriah the son of Tanhumeth the Netophathite, Jaazaniah the son of the Maacathite, they and their men.

24 Gedaliah swore to them and to their men, and he said to them, “You must not be afraid because of the Chaldeans. Settle in the land and serve the king of Babylon, and may it go well with you.”

Jeremiah 40:7–12

7 When all the commanders of the armies who *were* in the open country and their men heard that the king of Babylon had appointed Gedaliah the son of Ahikam *in an official position* in the land, and that he had put him in charge of men, and women, and little children, and of the poor of the land, of *all those* who had not been deported *to* Babylon,

8 then they went to Gedaliah *at* Mizpah— Ishmael the son of Nethaniah, and Johanan, and Jehonathan the son of Kareah, and Seraiah the son of Tanhumeth, and the sons of Ephai the Netophathite, and Jezaniah the son of the Maacathite, they and their men.

9 And Gedaliah the son of Ahikam, the son of Shaphan, swore to them and to their men, saying, “You must not be afraid of serving the Chaldeans. Stay in the land and serve the king of Babylon, and it will go well with you.

10 As for me, look, I *am* staying at Mizpah to represent *you* before the Chaldeans who come to us. But you, gather wine and summer fruit and oil, and put *them* in your vessels, and live in your towns that you have seized.”

11 And also all the Judeans who *were* in Moab, and among the Ammonites, and in Edom, and who *were* in all the lands, *when* they heard that the king of Babylon had given a remnant to Judah and that he had appointed Gedaliah the son of Ahikam, the son of Shaphan, *in an official position* over them,

12 then all the Judeans returned from all the places *to* which they were scattered. And they came *to* the land of Judah, to Gedaliah *at* Mizpah, and they gathered wine and summer fruit that yielded in great abundance.

The Ammonite Scheme: Ishmael Assassinates Gedaliah (October 587 BC)

2 Kings 25:25

25 But it happened in the seventh month that Ishmael the son of Nethaniah the son of Elishama from the offspring of the kingship came, and ten men with him,

Jeremiah 40:13–41:3

40:13 And Johanan the son of Kareah and all the commanders of the armies who *were* in the open country came to Gedaliah *at* Mizpah

14 and said to him, “Are you at all aware that Baalis, the king of the Ammonites, has sent Ishmael the son of Nethaniah, to kill you?” But Gedaliah the son of Ahikam would not believe them.

15 Then Johanan the son of Kareah said to Gedaliah in secrecy at Mizpah, saying, “Please let me go and kill Ishmael the son of Nethaniah, and nobody will know. Why should he kill you, so that all of Judah who are gathered to you will be scattered, and the remnant of Judah will perish?”

16 But Gedaliah the son of Ahikam said to Johanan the son of Kareah, “You must not do this thing, for you *are* telling a lie about Ishmael.”

41:1 And then in the seventh month Ishmael the son of Nethaniah, the son of Elishama, from the offspring of the kingship, and *one of* the chief officers of the king, came to Gedaliah the son of Ahikam *at* Mizpah, along with ten men.

And they ate bread together there at Mizpah.

2 And Ishmael the son of Nethaniah got up,

<p>and they struck down Gedaliah</p> <p>so that he died with the Judeans and with the Chaldeans who were with him at Mizpah.</p>	<p>along with the ten men who were with him, and they struck Gedaliah the son of Ahikam, the son of Shaphan, with the sword and killed him whom the king of Babylon had appointed <i>in an official position</i> over the land.</p> <p>3 Then Ishmael killed all the Judeans who were with Gedaliah at Mizpah, along with the Chaldeans who were found there, the soldiers.</p>
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The Ammonite Scheme: Johanan Defeats Ishmael (October 587 BC)

Jeremiah 41:4–15

4 And then on the second day of the killing of Gedaliah—and no one knew—
5 then men came from Shechem, from Shiloh, and from Samaria, eighty men *with* shaven beards and torn garments, *who had* cut themselves with blades, having grain offerings and frankincense in their hands to bring *to* the temple of Yahweh.
6 And Ishmael the son of Nethaniah came out to meet them from Mizpah, weeping as he came. And then as *he was* meeting them, he said to them, “Come to Gedaliah, the son of Ahikam.”
7 And then, the moment of their coming to the middle of the city, then Ishmael the son of Nethaniah, along with the men who *were* with him, slaughtered them *and threw them* to the middle of the pit.
8 But ten men were found among them, and they said to Ishmael, “You must not kill us, for we have hidden treasures in the field, wheat, and barley, and oil, and honey. So he refrained and he did not kill them in the midst of their fellow countrymen.
9 Now the pit *into* which Ishmael threw all the corpses of the men whom he had killed along with Gedaliah *was the same one* that King Asa had made because of Baasha the king of Israel, *who was* against him. Ishmael the son of Nethaniah filled *it with* the slain ones.
10 Then Ishmael took captive all the rest of the people who *were* in Mizpah, the daughters of the king and all the people who were left at Mizpah, *over* whom Nebuzaradan, *the* captain of *the* guard, had appointed Gedaliah the son of Ahikam. And Ishmael took them captive and set out to cross over to the Ammonites.
11 When Johanan the son of Kareah and all the commanders of the armies who *were* with him, heard all the evil that Ishmael the son of Nethaniah had done,
12 then they took all the men and went to fight against Ishmael the son of Nethaniah. And they met him at *the* great pool that *is* in Gibeon.
13 And then, the moment that all the people who *were* with Ishmael saw Johanan the son of Kareah and all the commanders of the armies who *were* with him, they were glad.
14 So all the people whom Ishmael had taken captive from Mizpah turned around and returned and went to Johanan the son of Kareah.
15 But Ishmael the son of Nethaniah escaped with eight men from Johanan, and they went to the Ammonites.

Johanan and the Remnant Decide to Flee to Egypt (October 587 BC)

2 Kings 25:26

Jeremiah 41:16–18

<p>26 Then all the people, from youngest to oldest, and the commanders of the troops, went <i>to</i> Egypt, for they were afraid of the presence of the Chaldeans.</p>	<p>16 Then Johanan the son of Kareah and all the commanders of the armies who <i>were</i> with him took from Mizpah all the rest of the people whom he had recovered from Ishmael the son of Nethaniah, after he had killed Gedaliah the son of Ahikam, strong men, soldiers, and women, and little children, and eunuchs whom he brought back from Gibeon.</p> <p>17 And they set out and stayed at the lodging place of Chimham that <i>is</i> near Bethlehem, intending to go <i>to</i> Egypt 18 because of the Chaldeans. For they were afraid of them, because Ishmael the son of Nethaniah had killed Gedaliah the son of Ahikam, whom the king of Babylon had appointed <i>in an official position</i> over the land.</p>
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The Flight to Egypt (c. November–December 587 BC)

Jeremiah 42:1–43:7

The People Ask Jeremiah to Speak to God on Their Behalf

42:1 Then all the commanders of the armies, and Johanan the son of Kareah, and Jezaniah the son of Hoshaiah, and all the people from *the* smallest to *the* greatest, approached
 2 and said to Jeremiah the prophet, “May our plea please fall before you, and pray for us to Yahweh your God, for all this remnant, for we are left *but* a few of many, as your eyes *are* seeing us.
 3 And let Yahweh your God inform us the way in which we should go and the thing that we should do.”
 4 And Jeremiah the prophet said to them, “I have heard. Look, I *am* going to pray to Yahweh your God according to your words, and then all the words that Yahweh answers you I will tell you; I will not withhold from you a word.”

The People Promise to Obey God

5 Then they said to Jeremiah, “May Yahweh be against us as a true and faithful witness if we do not do according to all the words that Yahweh sends you for us.
 6 Whether good or bad, we will listen to the voice of Yahweh our God, *to* whom we *are* sending you, so that it may go well with us when we listen to the voice of Yahweh our God.”

Jeremiah Tells the People What God Said

7 And then at *the* end of ten days the word of Yahweh came to Jeremiah.
 8 And he summoned Johanan the son of Kareah, and all the commanders of the armies who *were* with him, and all the people from *the* smallest to *the* greatest,
 9 and said to them, “Thus says Yahweh, the God of Israel, to whom you sent me to cause your plea to fall before him:
 10 ‘If only you will stay in this land, then I will build you and I will not tear *you* down, and I will plant you and I will not pluck *you* up, for I relent of the disaster that I have brought to you.
 11 You must not be afraid of the king of Babylon whom you *are* afraid of. You must not be afraid of him,’ declares Yahweh, ‘for I *am* with you to save you and to deliver you from his hand.
 12 And I will show you compassion, and he will have compassion on you and will restore you to your soil.
 13 But if you *are* saying, “We will not stay in this land,” *so as to* not listen to the voice of Yahweh your God,
 14 saying, “No, for we will go *to* the land of Egypt where we will not see war, and we will not hear *the* sound of a horn, and we will not be hungry for bread, and there we will stay,”
 15 then therefore hear the word of Yahweh, O remnant of Judah. Thus says Yahweh of hosts, the God of Israel: “If you are determined to go *to* Egypt, and you go to dwell as aliens there,
 16 then it will be *that* the sword that you *are* in fear of will overtake you there in the land of Egypt, and the famine that you *are* anxious of will pursue after you there *into* Egypt, and there you will die.
 17 So all the people who are determined to go *to* Egypt to dwell as aliens there will die by the sword, by the famine, and by the plague, and there will not be for them an escapee or a survivor from the disaster that I *am* bringing upon them.”
 18 For thus says Yahweh of hosts, the God of Israel: “As my anger and my wrath were poured out on the inhabitants of Jerusalem, so my wrath will pour out on you at your going *to* Egypt, and you will become a curse, and a horror, and a curse *formula*, and a disgrace, and you will no longer see this place.”
 19 Yahweh has spoken to you, O remnant of Judah, ‘You must not go *to* Egypt.’ You must certainly know that I have warned you today
 20 that you have made a fatal mistake, for you sent me to Yahweh your God, saying, ‘Pray for us to Yahweh our God, and all that Yahweh our God says, so tell us and we will do *it*.’
 21 So I have told you today, and you have not listened to the voice of Yahweh your God, or of anything that he sent me for you.
 22 Now then, certainly you must know that by the sword, by the famine, and by the plague you will die in the place where you desire to go, to dwell as aliens there.”

The People Refuse to Believe Jeremiah

43:1 And then, when Jeremiah had finished speaking to all the people all the words of Yahweh their God, for which Yahweh their God had sent him to them with all these words,
 2 Azariah the son of Hoshaiah, and Johanan the son of Kareah, and all the insolent men spoke, saying to Jeremiah, “You *are* telling a lie! Yahweh our God did not send you, saying, ‘You must not go *to* Egypt to dwell as aliens there.’
 3 But Baruch the son of Neriah *is* inciting you against us in order to give us into the hand of the Chaldeans, to kill us and to deport us to Babylon.”

The People Travel to Egypt and Take Jeremiah With Them

4 So Johanan the son of Kareah and all the commanders of the armies, and all the people did not listen to the voice of Yahweh to stay in the land of Judah.

5 But Johanan the son of Kareah and all the commanders of the armies took all the remnant of Judah who had returned from all the nations *to* which they had been scattered to dwell as aliens in the land of Judah—

6 the men, and the women, and the little children, and the daughters of the king, and everyone whom Nebuzaradan *the* captain of *the* guard had left with Gedaliah the son of Ahikam, the son of Shaphan, and Jeremiah the prophet, and Baruch the son of Neriah—

7 and they came *into* the land of Egypt, for they did not listen to the voice of Yahweh. And they came up to Tahpanhes.

Jeremiah Confronts the Jews in Egypt for Their Idolatry (c. 587/586 BC)

Jeremiah 43:8–44:30

Jeremiah's Prophecy of Nebuchadnezzar's Triumph over Egypt

43:8 And the word of Yahweh came to Jeremiah in Tahpanhes, saying,

9 "Take in your hands large stones and bury them in the mortar in the clay floor that *is* at the entrance of the palace of Pharaoh in Tahpanhes before the eyes of *the* people of *the* Judeans,

10 and say to them, 'Thus says Yahweh of hosts, the God of Israel: "Look, I *am* going to send and take Nebuchadnezzar the king of Babylon, my servant, and I will set his throne above these stones that I have hidden. And he will spread out his canopy over them.

11 And he will come and ravage the land of Egypt, *and deliver those who are appointed* for the plague, to the plague, and *those who are appointed* for the captivity, to the captivity, and *those who are appointed* for the sword, to the sword.

12 Then he will kindle a fire in the temples of the gods of Egypt, and he will burn them and take them captive. And he will wrap up the land of Egypt just as the shepherd wraps up his cloak. And he will go forth from there in peace.

13 And he will break the stone pillars of Heliopolis, which *is* in the land of Egypt. And he will burn the temples of the gods of Egypt with fire." "

Jeremiah Condemns the Jews' Idolatry in Egypt

44:1 The word that came to Jeremiah concerning all the Judeans who were living in the land of Egypt, who were living at Migdol, and Tahpanhes, and Memphis, and in the land of Pathros, saying,

2 "Thus says Yahweh of hosts, the God of Israel: 'You yourselves have seen all the disaster that I have brought on Jerusalem, and on all the towns of Judah. And look, they *are* a site of ruins this day, and there is not in them an inhabitant,

3 because of their wickedness that they committed to provoke me to anger by going to make smoke offerings, serving other gods whom they had not known, *neither* they, you, or your ancestors.

4 And I sent to you all my servants the prophets, sending over and over again, saying, "Please, you must not do this detestable thing that I hate."

5 But they did not listen and they did not incline their ears to turn back from their wickedness, to not make smoke offerings to other gods.

6 So my wrath and my anger were poured out and burned in the towns of Judah and in the streets of Jerusalem, and they became as a site of ruins, as a desolation, as *they are* this day.'

7 So then, thus says Yahweh, the God of hosts, the God of Israel, 'Why *are* you doing great harm to yourselves, to cut off for yourselves man and woman, child and suckling, from the midst of Judah, to not leave over for yourselves a remnant,

8 provoking me to anger with the works of your hands, to make smoke offerings to other gods in the land of Egypt where you *have* come to dwell as aliens, so as to cut off yourselves, and so that you are becoming as a curse, and as a disgrace among all the nations of the earth?

9 Have you forgotten the wicked things of your ancestors, and the wicked things of the kings of Judah, and the wicked things of their wives, and your wicked things, and the wicked things of your wives, which they committed in the land of Judah and in the streets of Jerusalem?

10 They have not shown contrition up to this day, and they have not shown reverence, and they have not walked in my law and in my statutes that I set before you and before your ancestors.'

11 Therefore thus says Yahweh of hosts, the God of Israel: 'Look, I am determined to bring disaster on you, even to exterminate all Judah.

12 And I will take *away* the remnant of Judah who are determined to come *to* the land of Egypt to dwell as aliens there, and everyone will perish. They will fall in the land of Egypt by the sword; they will perish by the famine, from *the* smallest to *the* greatest. By the sword and by the famine they will die and become as a curse, as a horror, and as a curse, and as a disgrace.

13 So I will punish those who live in the land of Egypt just as I have punished Jerusalem, with the sword, with the famine, and with the plague.

14 And there will not be a survivor or an escapee of the remnant of Judah, those who have come to dwell as an alien there in the land of Egypt, to return *to* the land of Judah where they *are* longing to return to dwell there, for they will not turn back, but only *some* survivors.'"

The Jews Reject Jeremiah's Warning and Proclaim Their Allegiance to the Queen of Heaven

15 Then all the men who knew that their wives *were* making smoke offerings to other gods, and all the women who stood *by*, a great

assembly, and all the people who lived in the land of Egypt in Pathros, answered Jeremiah, saying,

16 “Concerning the word that you have spoken to us in the name of Yahweh, we *are* not going to listen to you!

17 But certainly we will do everything that went out from our mouths, to make smoke offerings to the queen of heaven and to pour out to her libations just as we did, we, and our ancestors, our kings, and our officials, in the towns of Judah and in the streets of Jerusalem, *for* then we had enough to eat, and we were well-off, and we did not see disaster.

18 But since we stopped making smoke offerings to the queen of heaven and pouring out libations to her, we have lacked everything, and by the sword and by the famine we have perished.

19 And indeed, *when we were* making smoke offerings to the queen of heaven and pouring out to her libations, *was it not* with the consent of our husbands *that* we made for her sacrificial cakes marked with her image, and we poured out to her libations?”

Jeremiah Condemns the People’s Decision

20 Then Jeremiah said to all the people, to the men and to the women, and to all the people who answered him a word, saying,

21 “The offering that you made, smoke offerings in the towns of Judah and in the streets of Jerusalem, you, and your ancestors, your kings, and your officials, and the people of the land, *did* not Yahweh remember them, and *did* it *not* come to his mind?

22 And Yahweh was no longer able to bear *it*, because of the evil of your deeds, because of the detestable things that you committed. Thus your land became as a site of ruins, and as a horror, and as a curse, without inhabitants, as *it is* this day.

23 Because of *the fact* that you made smoke offerings, and that you sinned against Yahweh, and you did not listen to the voice of Yahweh, and you have not walked in his law, and in his statute, and in his legal provisions, therefore this disaster has happened to you, as *it is* this day.”

24 Then Jeremiah said to all the people and to all the women, “Hear the word of Yahweh, all Judah who *are* in the land of Egypt.

25 Thus says Yahweh of hosts, the God of Israel, saying, ‘You and your wives have promised with your mouths and with your hands you have fulfilled, saying, “We certainly will carry out our vows that we vowed, to make smoke offerings to the queen of the heavens, and to pour out to her libations.” You must certainly keep your vows and you must certainly carry out your vows.’

26 Therefore hear the word of Yahweh, all Judah, those who live in the land of Egypt: ‘Look, I hereby swear by my great name,’ says Yahweh, ‘surely my name will no longer be called in the mouth of any man of Judah, saying, “as the Lord Yahweh lives,” in all the land of Egypt.

27 Look, I *am* going to watch over them for harm and not for good, and all people of Judah who *are* in the land of Egypt will perish by the sword and by the famine until their perishing.

28 And *the* survivors of *the* sword will return from the land of Egypt *to* the land of Judah few in number. And all the remnant of Judah who have come to the land of Egypt to dwell as aliens there will know whose word will endure, from me or from them.

A Sign of Coming Punishment

29 And this *will be* to you the sign,’ declares Yahweh, ‘that I *am* going to punish you in this place, so that you may know that surely my words will endure against you for evil.’

30 Thus says Yahweh: ‘Look, I *am* going to give Pharaoh Hophra, the king of Egypt, into the hand of his enemies, and into the hand of those who seek his life, just as I gave Zedekiah the king of Judah into the hand of Nebuchadnezzar the king of Babylon, his enemy and the one who sought his life.’”

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Ezekiel's Prophecy to the Exiles—Ezekiel Learns of Jerusalem's Destruction (January 19, 586 BC)

Ezekiel 33:21–33

Ezekiel Unable to Speak Prior to Learning of Jerusalem's Fall

21 And then it was in the twelfth year, in the tenth *month*, on the fifth *day* of the month of our exile, a survivor from Jerusalem came to me, saying, "The city was destroyed!"

22 And the hand of Yahweh was on me on the evening before the coming of the survivor, and he opened my mouth before the survivor came to me in the morning, and my mouth was opened, and I was no longer dumb.

Those Left in Judah Were Making Claims on the Land

23 And the word of Yahweh came to me, saying,

24 "Son of man, the inhabitants of these ruins on the soil of Israel *are* saying, 'Abraham was one *man*, and he took possession of the land, and we *are* many; the land has been given for us as *a* possession.'

Yahweh Declares Their Claims to be Morally and Religiously Bankrupt

25 Therefore say to them, 'Thus says the Lord Yahweh: "You eat blood *in your meat*, and you raise your eyes to your idols and you pour out blood, and *yet* you want to take possession of the land?"

26 You rely on your sword, you do a detestable thing, and each man defiles the wife of his neighbor, and *yet* you want to take possession of the land?"

27 "Thus you must say to them, 'Thus says the Lord Yahweh: "As I live, surely whoever *is* in the ruins, by the sword they will fall, and whoever *is* on the surface of the open field, I will give him to the animals to eat him, and whoever *is* in the stronghold and in the cave, they will die by the plague.

28 And I will make the land *a* desolation and *a* wasteland, and the pride of its strength will come to an end, and the mountains of Israel will be desolate with no one traveling through them."

29 And they will know that I *am* Yahweh when I make my land *a* desolation and *a* wasteland, because of all of their detestable things that they have done.

God's Message to Ezekiel about the Exiles

30 "And you, son of man, your people, the ones talking together concerning you beside the walls and in the doorways of the houses, each one with his brother saying, 'Please come and hear what *is* the word that is going out from Yahweh.'

31 And they come to you as people do, and they sit before you, and my people hear your words, and they do not do them, for they *are* showing passion in their mouth, but their heart *is* going after ill-gotten gain.

32 Now, look! You *are* to them like a sensual song, beautiful of voice and played well on an instrument, and they hear your words, but they are not doing them.

33 So when it comes, look! It is coming! And *then* they will know that a prophet was in the midst of them."

Ezekiel's Prophecy to the Exiles—Salvation of Yahweh's Flock (January 19–March 14, 586 BC)

Ezekiel 34

Condemnation of the Shepherds

1 And the word of Yahweh came to me, saying,

2 "Son of man, prophesy against the shepherds of Israel, prophesy, and you must say to them, to the shepherds, 'Thus says the Lord Yahweh: "Woe *to* the shepherds of Israel who were feeding themselves! Must not the shepherds feed the flock?"

3 The fat you eat, and you clothe *yourself with* the wool; the well-nourished *animals* you slaughter, *but* you do not feed the flock.

4 The weak you *have* not strengthened, and the sick you *have* not healed, and with respect to the hurt you have not bound *them up*, and you *have* not brought back the scattered, and you *have* not sought the lost, but *rather* you ruled over them with force and with ruthlessness.

5 And they were scattered without a shepherd, and they were as food for all the animals of the field *when* they were scattered.

6 My flock went astray upon all of the mountains and on every high hill, and *so* upon all the surface of the world my flock were scattered, and there was no one seeking them, and there was no one searching for them."

7 Therefore, hear, *O* shepherds, the word of Yahweh:

8 "As I live," declares the Lord Yahweh, "Surely because my flock have become as plunder, and my flock became as food to all the animals of the field, since there was not a shepherd, *since* my shepherds *have* not sought my flock, but the shepherds fed themselves, and they fed not my flock,"

9 therefore, *O* shepherds, hear the word of Yahweh,

10 'Thus says the Lord Yahweh: "Look! I *am* against the shepherds, and I will seek my flock from their hand, and I will put an end to them from shepherding flocks, and the shepherds will no longer feed themselves, and I will deliver my flocks from their mouth, so that they will not be as food for them."

The Good Shepherd

11 “For thus says the Lord Yahweh: “Look! I, even I, will seek my flock, and I will look after them,

12 *just like the caring of a shepherd for his herd on the day when he is in the midst of his scattered flock. Thus I will look after my flock, and I will deliver them from all the places to which they were scattered on the day of storm and stress.*

13 And I will bring them out from the peoples, and I will gather them from the countries, and I will bring them to their soil, and I will feed them on the mountains of Israel, in the valleys, and in all of the settlements of the land.

14 I will feed them in good pasture, and their pasture will be on the mountains of the heights of Israel; there they will lie down in good pasture, and *on lush pasture they will feed on the mountains of Israel.*

15 I myself will feed my flock and I myself will allow them to lie down,” declares the Lord Yahweh.

16 “I will seek the lost, and I will bring back the scattered, and I will bind *up* the one hurt, and I will strengthen the sick; and the fat and the strong I will destroy. I will feed her with justice.”

Judgment Among the Flock

17 “And you, my flock, thus says the Lord Yahweh: “Look! I *am* judging between one sheep and another, between the rams and between the he-goats.

18 Is it not enough for you *that* you feed on the good pasture? And *still* you must trample the remainder of your pasture with your feet, and clear water you drink, and the leftover water you must make muddy with your feet.

19 And my flock must graze the *pasture* treaded upon by your feet, and must drink the mud puddle *stirred up* by your feet.”

20 “Therefore thus says the Lord Yahweh to them: “Look! I, even I will judge between fat sheep and between lean sheep,

21 because with *your* flank and with *your* shoulder you shoved, and with your horns you pushed all of the sick *animals* until you scattered it to the outside.

22 And so I will save my flock, and they will no longer be for plunder, and I will judge between one sheep and another.

The Messianic Shepherd

23 And I will set up over them one shepherd, and he will feed them; *that is*, my servant David. He will feed them, and he will be for them as a shepherd. [cf. [John 10:11–16](#)]

24 And I, Yahweh, I will be for them as God, and my servant David *will be* a leader in the midst of them. I, Yahweh, I have spoken.

The Covenant of Peace

25 And I will make them a covenant of peace, and I will put an end to wild animals from the land, and they will dwell in the desert safely, and they will sleep in the forest.

26 And I will make them and *the area* all around my hill a blessing, and I will let the rain go down at its appointed time; they will be rains of blessing.

27 And the tree of the field will give its fruit, and the land will give its produce, and they will be on their land safely, and they will know that I *am* Yahweh when I break their yoke, and I will deliver them from the hand of the ones enslaving them.

28 And they will not be *any* longer plunder to the nations, and the animals of the land will not eat them, and they will dwell in safety, and *there will not be anyone* frightening them.

29 And I will raise for them a garden plot of renown, and they will no longer be victims of famine in the land, and they will not bear any more the insult of the nations.

30 And they will know that I, Yahweh their God, *am* with them and they *are* my people, the house of Israel,” declares the Lord Yahweh,

31 “and you *are* my flock, the flock of my pasture. You *are* my people; I *am* your God,” declares the Lord Yahweh.”

Ezekiel’s Prophecy to the Exiles—Oracle against Edom (January 19–March 14, 586 BC)

Ezekiel 35:1–36:15

God Denounces Edom’s Treachery

35:1 And the word of Yahweh came to me, saying,

2 “Son of man, set your face against the mountain of Seir and prophesy against it,

3 and you must say to it, ‘Thus says the Lord Yahweh: “Look! I am against you, mountain of Seir, and I will stretch out my hand against you, and I will make you *a* desolation and *a* wasteland.

4 Your cities I will make ruins, and you will be *a* desolation, and *then* you will know that I *am* Yahweh,

5 because there *has been* to you an ancient hostility, and you handed over the Israelites to *the* power of *the* sword at the time of their disaster, at the time of their final punishment.

6 Therefore as I live,” declares the Lord Yahweh, “Certainly to blood *guilt* I will prepare you and blood will pursue; since you did not hate blood, it will pursue you.

7 And I will make the mountain of Seir into *a* desolation and ruin, and I will cut off from it *both he who is crossing over and he who is returning.*

8 And I will fill its mountains *with* its slain; your hills and your valleys and all of your watercourses, the slain by *the* sword will fall in them.

9 An everlasting desolation I will make you, and your cities will not return, and you will know that I *am* Yahweh.

10 *I do this* because of your saying, ‘The two nations and the two lands, they will be mine, and we will take possession of it,’ and yet Yahweh was there.

11 Therefore, as I live,” declares the Lord Yahweh, “so I will deal *with you* according to your anger and according to your jealousy that you did, because of your hatred against them, and I will make myself known among them when I judge you.

12 And you will know that I, Yahweh, I have heard all of your contemptible words that you said against the mountains of Israel, saying, ‘They will be desolate; they are given to us as food.’

13 And you magnified yourself against me with your insolent speech, and you spoke voluminously against me *with* your words—I heard!

14 Thus the Lord Yahweh says, ‘As the whole world rejoices, I will make you *a* desolation.

15 Like your rejoicing over the inheritance of the house of Israel because it was desolate, I will do to you; you will be *a* desolation, mountain of Seir and all of Edom, indeed all of it; and they will know that I *am* Yahweh.’”

The Enemies of the Mountains of Israel

36:1 “And you, son of man, prophesy to the mountains of Israel; and so you must say, ‘Mountains of Israel, hear the word of Yahweh;

2 thus says the Lord Yahweh: “Because the enemy said concerning you, ‘Ah, and *the* ancient high places will be to us as a possession!’”

3 Therefore prophesy, and you must say, ‘Thus says the Lord Yahweh: “Because indeed when you were desolate, then they crushed you from all around, so that you became a possession to the remainder of the nations, and you became a byword and object of slander for the people.”

4 Therefore, mountains of Israel, hear the word of the Lord Yahweh; thus says the Lord Yahweh to the mountains and to the hills, to the river channels and to the valleys and to the ruins that *are* desolate and to the cities that *are* abandoned *and* that have become as plunder and as scorn for the remainder of the nations that *are* from all around.

5 Therefore thus says the Lord Yahweh: “Certainly in the fire of my passion I spoke against the rest of the nations and against all Edom, who made my land as *a* possession, because of its pastureland for plunder, for themselves in all of *the* joy of their whole heart *and* in *their* inner disdain.”

6 Therefore prophesy against the land of Israel, and you must say to the mountains and to the hills, to the river channels and to the valleys, thus says the Lord Yahweh: “Look! I spoke in my passion and in my anger *the* insult of *the* peoples you have endured.”

7 Therefore thus says the Lord Yahweh: “I swear certainly *that* the nations that are all around you, they indeed will endure their disgrace.

The Blessing of the Mountains of Israel

8 “ “But you, mountains of Israel, your branch you will shoot, and your fruit you will carry for my people Israel, for they *are* soon to come.

9 For look! I *am* for you, and I will turn you, and you will be tilled, and you will be planted.

10 And I will cause your population to increase for you, all of the house of Israel, all of it, and the towns will be inhabited, and the ruins will be built.

11 And I will cause your population to increase for you, and domestic animals, *even* they will be numerous, and they will be fruitful, and I will cause you to be inhabited like your ancient times, and I will do good *things* more than *in* your former times, and you will know that I *am* Yahweh.

12 And I will send over you my people Israel, and they will take possession of you, and you will be for them as an inheritance, and you will no longer bereave them of their children.”

13 “ ‘Thus says the Lord Yahweh, because *they are* saying to you, “You *are an* eater of humans, and you are one who makes childless your people.”

14 Therefore humans you will not eat *any* longer, and your nation you will not make childless *any* longer,” declares the Lord Yahweh.

15 “And I will not let you hear *any* longer the insult of the nations, and *the* disgrace of *the* peoples you will not bear *any* longer; you *yourself* will not cause your nation to stumble,” declares the Lord Yahweh.’”

Ezekiel’s Prophecy to the Exiles—Restoration of Yahweh’s Honor (January 19–March 14, 586 BC)

Ezekiel 36:16–38

Historical Retrospect—Israel Profaned Yahweh’s Name

16 And the word of Yahweh came to me, saying,

17 “Son of man, the house of Israel, *they* were dwelling on their soil, and they defiled it with their way and with their deeds; like the uncleanness of menstruation was their way before me.

18 And I poured out my rage on them for the blood that they poured on the land and for their idols *with which* they defiled it.
 19 And I scattered them among the nations, and I dispersed *them* in the countries according to their way, and according to their deeds I judged them.
 20 And they came into the nations to which they went, and they profaned my holy name when they said to them, ‘These *are* the people of Yahweh, and from his land they went out.’
 21 And I was concerned for my holy name, which, the house of Israel defiled among the nations to which they went.

Yahweh Will Vindicate His Name

22 “Therefore thus say to the house of Israel, ‘Thus says the Lord Yahweh: “Not for your sake *am* I about to act, house of Israel, but for my holy name, which you defiled among the nations to which you went.
 23 And I will consecrate my great name, which *was* profaned among the nations *and* which you have profaned in the midst of them, and the nations will know that I *am* Yahweh!” ‘ a declaration of the Lord Yahweh, when I show myself holy before their eyes.
 24 “ ‘And I will take you from the nations, and I will gather you from all of the lands, and I will bring you to your land.
 25 And I will sprinkle on you pure water, and you will be clean from all of your uncleanness, and I will cleanse you from all of your idols.
 26 And I will give a new heart to you, and a new spirit I will give into your inner parts, and I will remove the heart of stone from your flesh, and I will give to you a heart of flesh. [cf. [Jer 31:31-34](#); [Ps 51:7-10](#); [John 3:3-10](#)]
 27 And I will give my spirit into your inner parts, [cf. [Joel 2:28-29](#); [Acts 2:1-18](#)] and I will make *it* so that you will go in my rules, and my regulations you will remember, and you will do *them*.
 28 And you will dwell in the land that I gave to your ancestors, and you will be to me *as* a people, and I will be to you as God.
 29 And I will save you from all of your uncleanness, and I will call to the grain, and I will cause it to increase, and I will not bring famine upon you.
 30 And I will cause the fruit of the tree and the crop of the field to increase, so that you will not suffer again *the* disgrace of famine among the nations.
 31 And you will remember your evil ways and your deeds that *were* not good, and you will loathe yourself over your iniquities and over your detestable things.
 32 *But* not for your sake *am* I acting,” declares the Lord Yahweh. “Let it be known to you, be ashamed, and be put to shame because of your ways, house of Israel.

The Nations Will Honor Yahweh after He Restores Israel

33 “Thus says the Lord Yahweh: ‘On the day when I cleanse you from all of your iniquities, I will cause the cities to be inhabited, and the ruins will be rebuilt.
 34 And the land that was desolate will be cultivated in the very place that it was desolate before *the* eyes of all of *the* persons crossing over.
 35 And they will say, “This desolate land has become like the garden of Eden, and the wasted and desolate and destroyed cities, *now* being refortified, are inhabited.”
 36 And the nations who are left all around, you will know that I, Yahweh, I built that which was destroyed; I planted the desolate *land*; I, Yahweh, I have spoken, and I will act.’
 37 “Thus says the Lord Yahweh: ‘Again this *time* I will let myself be inquired of by the house of Israel, to do *something* for them; I will cause them to increase their population like a flock.
 38 Like *the* flock of *the* sanctuary, like the flock of Jerusalem at its festival, so the desolate cities will be filled with flocks of people; and they will know that I *am* Yahweh.”’

Ezekiel’s Prophecy to the Exiles—The Valley of Dry Bones (January 19–March 14, 586 BC)

Ezekiel 37:1–14

1 The hand of Yahweh was upon me, and he brought me by the Spirit of Yahweh, and he let me rest in the midst of the valley, and it *was* full of bones.
 2 And he led me all around over them, and look, very many on the surface of the valley, and look, very dry.
 3 And he said to me, “Son of man, can these bones live?” And I said, “Lord Yahweh, you know.”
 4 And he said to me, “Prophecy to these bones, and you must say to them, *to* the dry bones, ‘Hear the word of Yahweh!
 5 Thus says the Lord Yahweh to these bones: “Look! I *am* bringing into you breath, and you will live!
 6 And I will lay on you sinews, and I will let flesh come upon you, and I will cover you over *with* skin, and I will put breath into you, and you will live, and you will know that I *am* Yahweh.” ’”
 7 And I prophesied just as I had been commanded, and *there* was a sound at my prophesying, and look! A rattling, and they came together—*the* bones! Bone to its bone!
 8 And I looked, and indeed, sinews *were* on them, and flesh went up, and skin covered over them upward, but breath *was* not in them.

9 And he said to me, “Prophesy to the breath; prophesy, son of man, and you must say to the breath, ‘Thus says the Lord Yahweh from the four winds, “Come, O spirit and breath, on these dead ones, so that they may live!” ’”

10 And I prophesied as he commanded me, and the breath came into them, and they became alive, and they stood on their feet, a very, very large group.

11 And he said to me, “Son of man, these bones *are* all of the house of Israel; look! *they are* saying, ‘Our bones are dried up, and our hope is destroyed; we are cut off as far as we are concerned.’

12 Therefore prophesy, and you must say to them, ‘Thus says the Lord Yahweh: “Look! I *am* opening your graves, and I will bring you up from your graves, my people, and I will bring you to the land of Israel!

13 And you will know that I *am* Yahweh when I open your graves when I bring you up from your graves, my people!

14 And I will put my breath into you so that you may live, and I will cause you to rest on your soil, and you will know that I, Yahweh, I have spoken, and I will act!” ‘ declares Yahweh.”

Ezekiel’s Prophecy to the Exiles—The Two Branches (January 19–March 14, 586 BC)

Ezekiel 37:15–28

15 And the word of Yahweh came to me, saying,

16 “And you, son of man, take for yourself a piece of wood, and write on it, ‘For Judah and for the Israelites his associates,’ and take another *piece of* wood, and write on it, ‘For Joseph, *the piece of* wood of Ephraim and all of the house of Israel his associates.’

17 And join them one to *the* other with respect to you *as one piece of* wood, so that they may become one in your hand.

18 When your people say to you, saying, ‘Will you not inform us *as to* what these *actions* mean for you?’

19 *Then* speak to them, ‘Thus says the Lord Yahweh: “Look! I *am* taking *the piece of* wood for Joseph that *is* in the hand of Ephraim and the tribes of Israel its associates, and I will put them on it, *the piece of* wood of Judah, and I will make them into one *piece of* wood, so that they be one in my hand.”

20 And the *pieces of* wood on which you wrote will be in your hand before their eyes.

21 And speak to them, ‘Thus says the Lord Yahweh: “Look! I *am* taking the Israelites from among the nations to which they went, and I will gather them from everywhere, and I will bring them to their *own* soil.

22 And I will make them into one nation in the land on the mountains of Israel, and they will all have one king as their king, and they will not again be two nations and will not again divide into two kingdoms again.

23 And they will not defile themselves again with their idols and with vile idols and with all of their transgressions, and I will save them from all of their apostasy by which they sinned, and I will cleanse them and they will be for me as a people and I, I will be for them as God.

24 “ “And my servant David *will be* king over them, and one shepherd will be for all of them, and in my regulations they will go, and my statutes they will observe, and they will do them.

25 And they will dwell on the land that I gave to my servant, to Jacob, in which your ancestors dwelled, and they will dwell on it, they and their children and the children of their children forever, and my servant David *will be* a leader for them forever.

26 And I will make with them a covenant of peace; an everlasting covenant it will be with them. And I will establish them, and I will cause them to increase, and I will put my sanctuary in the midst of them forever.

27 And my tabernacle will be with them, and I will be for them as God, and they will be to me as a nation.

28 And the nations will know that I, Yahweh, *am* consecrating Israel when my sanctuary *is* in the midst of them forever.” ’”

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Ezekiel's Prophecy to the Exiles—Gog's Invasion (January 19–March 14, 586 BC)

Ezekiel 38

The Invasion of the Armies of Gog

1 And the word of Yahweh came to me, saying,
 2 “Son of man, set your face toward Gog of the land of Magog, the head leader of Meshech and Tubal, and prophesy against him.
 3 And you must say, ‘Thus says the Lord Yahweh: “Look! I *am* against you, Gog, the head leader of Meshach and Tubal,
 4 and I will turn you around, and I will place hooks in your cheeks, and I will bring you out and all of your horses and horsemen fully armed, all of them, *a* great crowd, holding *a* shield, and small shield, *and* holding swords, all of them.
 5 Persia, Cush, and Put *are* with them, all of them, with *a* small shield and helmet.
 6 Gomer and all of its troops, Beth Togarmah, the remote areas of the north, and with all of its troops and many peoples with them.
 7 Be ready, and prepare yourselves, you and all of your assembly, the assembling around you, and you must be for them as a guard.
 8 After many days you will be mustered; in the last years you will come to a restored land from *the* sword, gathered from many peoples on the mountains of Israel which were as permanent ruins *but* from peoples it was brought out, and they will dwell in safety, all of them.
 9 And you will advance like a storm; you will come, *and* you will be like a cloud covering the land, and all of your troops and many nations *along* with you.”
 10 “Thus says the Lord Yahweh: “And then on that day, things will come up on your mind, and you will devise evil plans.
 11 And you will say, ‘I will go up against a land of open country; I will come *to* the *people* being at rest in safety, all of them dwelling without a wall and crossbars and without doors,
 12 to loot loot, and to plunder plunder, to assail inhabited ruins and *a* people gathered together from *various* peoples *and who are* acquiring livestock and goods *and* dwelling at the center of the world.
 13 Sheba and Dedan and traders of Tarshish and all its strong lions, they *will* ask you, ‘To loot loot are you coming? To plunder plunder *have* you summoned your assembly, to take away silver and gold, to take livestock and goods, to loot great amounts of loot?’”
 14 “Therefore prophesy, son of man, and you must say to Gog, ‘Thus says the Lord Yahweh: “Will you not realize on that day when my people Israel are dwelling in safety,
 15 and *so* you will come from your place, from *the* remote areas of *the* north, you and many people with you, horsemen all of them, a great crowd and a vast army,
 16 and you will advance against my people Israel like a cloud covering the land; it will be in the last days, and I will bring you against my land, so that the nations know me, when I show myself holy through you before their eyes, O Gog!’”

Yahweh Comes to Israel's Defense

17 “Thus says the Lord Yahweh, ‘Are you he of whom I spoke in former days by the hand of my servants the prophets of Israel *who* were prophesying in those days for years *that I would* bring you against them?
 18 And *so* then in that day, on the day of the coming of God against the land of Israel,’ declares the Lord Yahweh, ‘my rage will come up in my anger.
 19 And in my passion, *in* the fire of my wrath, I spoke *that* certainly on that day *a* great earthquake will be on the land of Israel.
 20 And the fish of the sea and the birds of the heaven and the animals of the field and all of the creeping things that creep on the earth and all of the humans who *are* on the surface of the earth will shake at my presence; and the mountains will be demolished, and the steep mountain sides will fall, and every wall on the earth will fall.
 21 And I will call against him in all of my mountains a sword,’ declares the Lord Yahweh, ‘*And the* sword of each *person* will be against his brother.
 22 And I will execute justice with him with a plague and with blood and torrents of rain, and hailstones; fire and sulfur I will cause to fall on him and on his troops and on many peoples who *are* with him.
 23 And *so* I will exalt myself, and I will show myself holy, and I will make myself known before *the* eyes of many nations, and they will know that I *am* Yahweh.’”

Ezekiel's Prophecy to the Exiles—Yahweh's Judgment on Gog (January 19–March 14, 586 BC)

Ezekiel 39

The Destruction of the Invading Armies

1 “And you, son of man, prophesy against Gog, and you must say, ‘Thus says the Lord Yahweh: “Look! I *am* against you Gog, the head leader of Meshech and Tubal,
 2 and I will turn you around, and I will drag you along, and I will bring you up from *the* remote areas of *the* north, and I will bring you against the mountains of Israel,
 3 and I will strike your bow from your left hand, and your arrows from your right hand I will cause to fall.
 4 On the mountains of Israel you will fall, you and all of your troops, and *the* peoples who *are* with you, to birds of prey, birds of every wing, and animals of the field I will give you as food.

5 On the surface of the field you will fall, for I myself have spoken," declares the Lord Yahweh.
 6 "And I will send fire against Magog and among *the people* inhabiting the coastlands in safety, and they will know that I *am* Yahweh.
 7 And my holy name I will make known in the midst of my people Israel, and I will not let the name of my holiness be profaned anymore, and the nations will know that I *am* Yahweh, *the holy one* in Israel.
 8 Look! *it is coming*, and it will happen," declares the Lord Yahweh. "It is the day about which I have spoken.
 9 " "And the inhabitants of the towns of Israel will go out, and they will set ablaze, and they will kindle a fire with a weapon and a small shield and a shield, *with* a bow and with arrows, and with hand clubs and with spears, and *so* they will light a fire with them, a fire lasting seven years.
 10 And they will not carry trees from the field, and they will not chop wood from the forests, for with the weapons they will light a fire; and they will plunder *those* plundering them, and they will plunder *those* plundering them," ' declares the Lord Yahweh.
 11 " "And then on that day I will give to Gog a grave there in Israel, The Valley of the Travelers, east of the sea, and it will block the travelers and Gog and all of his hordes they will bury there, and they will call *it* the Valley of Hamon-Gog.
 12 And the house of Israel will bury them for seven months to cleanse the land.
 13 All of the people of the land will bury them, and it will be an honor for them *on* the day when I appear," ' declares the Lord Yahweh.
 14 " "And they will set apart men to continually go through the land burying the travelers, the ones left over on *the* surface of the land to cleanse it; for the whole of seven months they will explore *it*.
 15 And the ones going through, they will go through within the land, and if *anyone* sees *the* bones of a person, *then* he will build beside it a sign *to remain* until the buriers have buried him in the Valley of Hamon-Gog.
 16 And furthermore *the* name of *the* city *there is* Hamonah, and *thus* they will cleanse the land."

The Great Slaughter

17 "And you, son of man, thus says the Lord Yahweh: 'Say to all kinds of birds and animals of the field, "Be gathered, come be gathered from everywhere to my sacrifice that I *am* sacrificing for you, a great sacrifice on the mountains of Israel, and you will eat flesh, and you will drink blood.
 18 Flesh of warriors you will eat, and the blood of leaders of the land you will drink; rams, young rams and goats, bulls, *and* the fattened animals of Bashan—all of them!
 19 And you will eat fat until you are satiated, and you will drink blood until you are drunk from my sacrifice that I sacrifice for you,
 20 and you will be satisfied at my table *with* horse and horsemen and warriors and every man of war," ' declares the Lord Yahweh.
 21 "And I will display my glory among the nations, and all of the nations will see my judgment that I have executed and my hand that I have laid upon them.
 22 "And the house of Israel will know that I *am* Yahweh their God from that day and beyond,
 23 and the nations will know that because of their guilt the house of Israel went into exile, because they acted unfaithfully against me, and I hid my face from them, and I gave them into the hand of their foes, and they fell by the sword, all of them.
 24 According to their uncleanness and according to their transgression I dealt with them, and I hid my face from them.

Israel Restored

25 Therefore thus says the Lord Yahweh: "Now I will restore the fortunes of Jacob, and I will have compassion on all of the house of Israel, and I will be jealous for my holy name.
 26 And they will forget their disgrace and all of their infidelity that they displayed against me when they dwelt on their soil in safety with nobody making them afraid.
 27 When I restore them from the nations and I gather them from the countries of their enemies, then I will show myself holy through them before the eyes of many nations.
 28 And they will know that I *am* Yahweh their God, *because of* when I deported them into the nations, and I reassembled them to their soil, and I will not let any of them remain there any longer.
 29 And I will not hide my face again from them when I pour out my Spirit over the house of Israel," declares the Lord Yahweh.

Ezekiel's Prophecy to the Exiles—A Lament over Pharaoh (March 15, 586 BC)

Ezekiel 32:1–16

Judgment on Pharaoh

1 And then in the twelfth year, in the twelfth month, on the first *day* of the month, the word of Yahweh came to me, saying,
 2 "Son of man, raise a lament over Pharaoh, the king of Egypt, and you must say to him,

'With a fierce, strong lion among nations you compared yourself,
 and you *are* like the sea monster in the seas,
 and you thrash about in your rivers,
 and you make water turbid with your feet,

and you make your rivers muddy.

3 Thus says the Lord Yahweh:

Now I will spread my net over you
in *the* assembly of many peoples,
and I will bring you up in my dragnet.

4 And I will throw you on the ground;
on the surface of the open field I will hurl you,
and I will cause every bird of the heaven to dwell on you,
and I will satisfy the animals of all of the world from you.

5 And I will put your flesh on the mountains,
and I will fill the valleys *with* your carcass.

6 And I will water *the* land *with* your discharge from your blood
on the mountains,
and valleys will be filled from you.

7 And I will cover *you* at extinguishing your heavens,
and I will make dark their stars,
and I will cover *the* sun with the cloud,
and *the* moon will not give its light.

8 All sources of light in the heavens,
I will make them dark over you,
and I will put darkness on your land,”

declares the Lord Yahweh.

9 “And I will disturb *the* hearts of many peoples
at my bringing *about* your captivity among the nations,
to countries that you do not know.

10 And I will cause many peoples to be awestruck over you,
and their kings will shudder over you *in* horror,
at my brandishing my sword before their faces,
and they will tremble continually,
each *person* for his life,
on the day of your downfall.”

Babylon’s Role in Egypt’s Fall

11 For thus says the Lord Yahweh:

“The sword of the king of Babylon,
it will come to you.

12 By the swords of warriors I will cause to fall your hordes
by the most ruthless of *the* nations, all of them,
and they will devastate the majesty of Egypt,
and all of its hordes will be destroyed.

13 And I will destroy all her domestic livestock
beside many waters.
The feet of humans will not make them turbid again,
and *the* hooves of domestic livestock will not make them turbid.

14 Then I will make their waters settle,
and their rivers as the olive oil I will let flow,”

declares the Lord Yahweh.

15 “Then I make the land of Egypt *a* desolation,
so that the land will be stripped from its fullness
when I strike all of *those* dwelling in it,
and they will know that I *am* Yahweh.

16 This is a lament, and they will chant it as a lament; the daughters *of* the nations will chant it as a lament over Egypt, and over all of its hordes they will chant it as a lament,” declares the Lord Yahweh.

Ezekiel’s Prophecy to the Exiles—Pharaoh’s Descent into Sheol (March 29, 586 BC)

Ezekiel 32:17–32

Egypt’s Hosts in Sheol

17 And then in the twelfth year, on the fifteenth *day* of the month, the word of Yahweh came to me, saying,

18 “Son of man, mourn over the hordes of Egypt, and make her go down, *and* with her *the* daughters of mighty nations, down to the deep underworld with *the people* going down to *the* grave.

19 You are more lovely than whom? Go down and be laid in rest with *the* uncircumcised.

20 In the midst of *the* people slain by *the* sword it is given they will fall *to* a sword; they carried her off and all of her hordes.

21 *The* chiefs of *the* warriors will speak to him from the middle of Sheol; with his helpers they have gone down; the uncircumcised lie *still*, those slain by the sword.

Assyria in Sheol

22 Assyria *is* there and all of its assembly; all around it *are* its graves, all of them killed, those fallen by the sword,

23 who will be given its graves in *the* remote areas of *the* pit, and its assembly will be all around its grave, all of them killed, fallen by the sword, *those* who spread terror in *the* land of *the* living.

Elam in Sheol

24 Elam *is* there and all of its hordes, all around its grave, all of them dead who fell by the sword, *those* who went down uncircumcised to *the* depths of *the* underworld, *those* who spread their terror to *the* land of *the* living, and *now* they bear their disgrace with *the people* going down to *the* grave.

25 In the midst of *the* slain they made a bed for her with all of her hordes all around its graves, all of them uncircumcised, slain by *the* sword, for their terror was spread in *the* land of *the* living, and they *now* bear their disgrace with *the people* going down to *the* grave; in the midst of *the* slain it was placed.

Meshech, Tubal and Their Followers in Sheol

26 Meshech *and* Tubal *are* there and all of its hordes, all around him its graves, all of them uncircumcised *and* killed by *the* sword, for they gave their terror in *the* land of *the* living.

27 And they do not lie with warriors fallen from long ago, who went down *to* Sheol with their weapons of war, and they placed their sword under their heads, and their shields were on their bones, for *the* terror of *the* warriors *was* in *the* land of the living.

28 And you *too* in the midst of uncircumcised *people* will be broken, and you will lie with *those* slain by *the* sword.

Edom, Prince of the North and Sidon in Sheol

29 There *is* Edom, its kings and all of its leaders who are laid *along* with their might with *those* killed by *the* sword; they will lie with *the* uncircumcised and with *the people* going down to the grave.

30 There are *also* the princes of *the* north, all of them, all of *the* Sidonians who have gone down, being ashamed *to* lie with *the* slain because of their terror *that they caused* from their might, and they lie uncircumcised with *those* killed by *the* sword, and they bear their disgrace *along* with *the people* going down to *the* grave.

Pharaoh’s Doom

31 Pharaoh will see them, and he will be comforted over all of his hordes killed by *the* sword, Pharaoh and all of his army,” declares the Lord Yahweh.

32 “For he spread my terror in *the* land of *the* living, and *so* he will be laid down in the midst of the uncircumcised with those killed by *the* sword: Pharaoh and all of his hordes,” declares the Lord Yahweh.

Ezekiel’s Prophecy to the Exiles—The Watchman and Individual Responsibility (March 29, 586 BC)

Ezekiel 33:1–20

The Duty of the Watchman

1 And the word of Yahweh came to me, saying,

2 “Son of man, speak to your people, and you must say to them, ‘A land, if I bring over it a sword and the people of the land take a man, one from their number, and they appoint him for them as a watchman,

3 and he sees the sword coming against the land, and he blows on the horn and he warns the people,

4 and anyone who listens hears the sound of the horn and he does not take warning and *the* sword comes and it takes him, his blood will be on his *own* head.

5 *For* he heard the sound of the horn and he did not take warning; his blood will be on him. But *if* he took warning, he saved his life.

6 And *as for* the watchman, if he sees the sword coming and he does not blow the horn, and the people *are* not warned, and *the* sword comes and it takes their lives, he will be taken through his guilt, but his blood from the hand of the watchman I will seek.'

The Function of the Watchman

7 "And you, son of man, I have made you a watchman for the house of Israel; if you hear a word from my mouth, then you must warn them from me.

8 When I say to the wicked, 'Wicked *one*, you will certainly die,' and you did not speak to warn *the* wicked from his way, he, *the* wicked, will die by his guilt, but his blood I will seek from your hand.

9 But, you, if you warn *the* wicked from his way, to turn from it, and he does not turn from his way, he will die by his guilt, and you will have saved your life.

10 "And you, son of man, say to the house of Israel, saying, 'So you said, saying, "Indeed, our transgressions and our sins *are* on us, and because of them we *are* rotting, and how can we live?"'"

Individual Responsibility

11 Say to them, 'As I live,' declares the Lord Yahweh, 'Surely I have no delight in the death of the wicked, except in *the* wicked returning from his way, and he lives. Turn back! Turn back from your ways, O evil *ones*, for why should you die, house of Israel?'

12 "So you, son of man, say to your people *that* the righteousness of the righteous shall not save him in the day of his transgression, and the wickedness of the wicked will not cause him to stumble on the day of his returning from his wickedness; and *the* righteous will not be able to live by it on the day when he returns to his sin.

13 When I say to the righteous, 'Certainly he will live,' and he trusted in his righteousness, and he *turns and he* does injustice, all of his righteousness will not be remembered, and because of his injustice that he did, because of it he will die.

14 And when I say to the wicked, 'Certainly you will die,' but he returns from his sin and he does justice and righteousness—

15 *for example*, *the* wicked returns a pledge for a loan, he restores stolen property, he goes in the statutes of life *so as* not to do injustice—certainly he will live; he will not die.

16 All of his sins that he committed, they will not be remembered against him, and he did justice and righteousness; certainly he will live.

17 "Yet your people say, 'The way of the Lord is not fair!' yet their way is not fair.

18 When *the* righteous turns from his righteousness and does injustice, then he will die because of it.

19 And when the wicked turns from his wickedness, and he does justice and righteousness, because of it he will certainly live!

20 Yet you said, 'The way of the Lord is not fair!' I will judge you, house of Israel, each *person* according to his ways."

A Fourth Deportation to Babylon (582n BC)

Jeremiah 52:28a, 30

The Fourth Deportation (retribution for Gedaliah's murder?)

28a This *is the number of* the people whom Nebuchadnezzar deported:

30a in *the* twenty-third year of Nebuchadnezzar, Nebuzaradan, *the* captain of *the* guard, deported seven hundred and forty-five Judean persons;

Summary and Total

30b *there were* four thousand six hundred persons in all.

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Ezekiel's Vision of the Millennium Temple—God's Glorious House (November 2, 574 BC)

Ezekiel 40–42

The Man With the Measuring Rod

40:1 In the twenty-fifth year of our exile, at the beginning of the year, on the tenth *day* of the month, in the fourteenth year after the city was destroyed, in this day exactly, the hand of Yahweh was on me, and he brought me there

2 in visions from God. He brought me to the land of Israel and put me on a very high mountain, and on it *was something* like a structure of a city to the south.

3 And he brought me there, and look, there was a man whose appearance *was* like *the* appearance of bronze, and a cord of linen *was* in his hand and a reed for measurement; *he* was standing in the gate.

4 And the man spoke to me, “Son of man, look with your eyes and listen with your ears and apply your heart to all that I *am* showing you, for you were brought here in order to show you *this*; tell all that you *are* seeing to the house of Israel.”

The Wall, Gate and Lodges

5 And there was a wall on *the* outside of the temple all the way around it, and in the hand of the man the reed for measurement *was* six *long* cubits, according to the cubit and a handbreadth, and he measured the width of the outer wall *as* one reed, and *the* height *as* one reed.

6 And *then* he went toward *the* gate whose face *was* to the east. And he went up by its steps, and he measured the threshold of the gate, one reed wide.

7 And the alcove *was* one reed long and one reed wide, and between the alcoves *was* five cubits, and the threshold of the gate along the side of the portico of the gate on the inside *was* one reed.

8 And *then* he measured the portico of the gate on the inside *as* one reed.

9 And he measured the portico of the gate *as* eight cubits, and its pilaster *was* two cubits *thick*, and *he measured* the portico of the gate on the inside.

10 And the alcoves of the gate *toward* the way eastward *were* three on each side; the same measurements applied to all three of them; and the same measurement applied to the pilaster on each side.

11 And he measured the width of the doorway of the gate *as* ten cubits and the length of the gateway *was* thirteen cubits.

12 And a wall *was* before the alcoves; one cubit on either side *was the* wall from here. And the alcove *was* six cubits on each side.

13 And he measured the gate from the top slab of the alcove to its *opposite* top slab *as* twenty-five cubits *in* width, from one entrance to the other one opposite it.

14 And he made *the* pilasters sixty cubits, and to the pilaster of the courtyard all the way around the gate.

15 And from the front of the gate *at* the entrance to the front of the portico of the inner gate *was* fifty cubits.

16 And *there were* narrow windows for the alcoves and for their pilasters *to the* inside of the gate all the way around *it*. And likewise *with respect* to the porticos and windows *were* all the way around to the inside, and on a pilaster *there were* images of palm trees.

The Outer and Inner Courts

17 And he brought me to the outer courtyard, and there were chambers and a pavement made for the courtyard all around *it*, and thirty chambers *were facing* to the pavement.

18 And the pavement flanked the side of the gates and all along the gates; this *describes* the lower pavement.

19 And he measured *the width* from the front of the lower gate to the front of the outside of *the* inner courtyard *as* a hundred cubits to the east and to the north.

20 And *as for* the gate that *had* its face toward the north of the outer courtyard, he measured its length and its width.

21 And its alcoves *were* three on each side, and its pilasters and its porticos had the same measurement *as* the first gate: its length *was* fifty cubits, and *its width was* twenty-five cubits.

22 And its windows and its porticos and its palm tree images *were* like the measurement of the gate that *was* facing toward the east; and it had seven steps that go up it, and *there were* porticos before them.

23 And a gate *led* to the inner courtyard, opposite the gate to the north and to the east, and he measured from gate to gate *as* a hundred cubits.

24 And *then* he took me toward the south, and look, a gate toward the south, and he measured its pilasters and its porticos; *they had* measurements *just* like the others.

25 And *there were* for it windows and for its porticos all the way around it like these windows; fifty cubits long and twenty-five cubits wide.

26 And seven steps *were* going up *to* it and its porticos before them. And it had palm tree images all along its pilasters.

27 And *there was to* the way of the south a gate for the inner courtyard, and he measured from gate to the gate *on* the way of the south, *a* hundred cubits.

28 And he brought me to *the* inner courtyard through the gate of the south, and he measured the south gate, *and it had* measurements like the others.

29 And its alcoves and its pilasters and its porticos *were just* like these measurements. And *it had* windows for it and for its porticos all the way around, fifty cubits along *its length*, and twenty-five cubits *wide*.

30 And *there were* porticos all the way around *its* length, twenty-five cubits; and *its* width was five cubits.

31 And its porticos *were* to the outer courtyard, and palm tree images *were* on its pilasters, and eight steps *were for* its stairs.

32 And he brought me to the inner courtyard *by way of* the east *gate*, and he measured the gate *as just* like the other measurements.

33 And its alcoves and its pilasters and its porticos *were also* like these measurements, and windows *were* for it and for its porticos all around; *its* length was fifty cubits, *and it was* twenty-five cubits wide.

34 And its porticos *were* toward the outer courtyard, and palm tree images *were* on its pilasters one each side, and eight steps served as it stairs.

35 And he brought me to the gate of the north, and he measured *it*; and he measured the same measurements as these others,

36 its alcoves, its pilasters and porticos, and its windows all the way around, and *a* length of fifty cubits and twenty-five cubits wide.

37 And its pilasters faced the outer courtyard, and it had palm tree images on its pilasters on each side; and eight steps *served as* its stairs.

The Chamber for the Priests

38 And a chamber with its doorway *was* in the pilasters at the gates, and there they rinsed off the burnt offering.

39 And in the portico of the gate were two tables on each side to slaughter the burnt offering on them and the sin offering and the guilt offering.

40 And on the outer side as *one* goes up to the doorway of the gate *to* the north *were* two tables, and on the other side, which *is* toward the portico of the gate, *were* two tables.

41 On each side of the gate were four tables, eight tables *in all*, *and* on them they slaughtered *sacrifices*.

42 And four tables *were* for the burnt offering, *and made of* dressed stones, one cubit and a half long and one cubit and a half wide and one cubit high was their measurements, and they placed the objects *with* which they slaughtered the burnt offering on them and the sacrifice.

43 And *there were* double-pronged hooks, one handbreadth *in width*, put in place in the house all around, and on the tables *was* the flesh of the offering.

44 And on the outside of the inner gate, *there were* chambers for singers in the inner courtyard, which *was* to the side of the north gate, and their faces *were* to the south *with respect to one*, *and* on the side of the east gate *one* facing to the north.

45 And he said to me, "This chamber with its face toward the south *is* for the priests *who are* taking care of the responsibility of the temple.

46 And the chamber with its face to the north *is* for the priests *who are* taking care of the responsibility of the altar. They *are* the descendants of Zadok, the *ones who* approach *from among* the descendants of Levi to Yahweh to serve him."

47 And he measured the courtyard *as to its* length, a hundred cubits, and a hundred cubits wide, squared, and the altar is in front of the temple.

The Porch

48 And he brought me to the portico of the temple, and he measured *the* pilaster of *the* portico, five cubits on each side, and the width of the gate was three cubits on each side.

49 The length of the portico *was* twenty cubits and its width eleven cubits, and with ten steps they went up to it, and the pilasters had pillars, one on each side.

The Posts of the Temple

41:1 And he brought me to the temple *sanctuary*, and he measured the pilasters, six cubits wide on each side; *this was* the width of the tent.

2 And the width of the doorway *was* ten cubits, and the sidewall of the doorway was five cubits on each side, and he measured its length *as* forty cubits, and *its* width was twenty cubits.

3 And he went into *the* inner *room*, and he measured the pilaster of the doorway *as* two cubits and the doorway *as* six cubits and the width of the doorway seven cubits.

4 And he measured its length *as* twenty cubits and *its* width *as* twenty cubits *to the* front of the temple, and he said to me, "This *is* the most holy place.

The Wall and Side Chambers

5 And he measured the wall of the temple *as* six cubits, and the width of the side room *as* four cubits all along the outside wall for the temple all around the wall.

6 And the side rooms *were* side by side *in* three *stories* and *a total of* thirty rooms, and *there were* offsets in the wall, which *was* for the temple for the side rooms, all the way around to be supports, and *so* they were not supports *extending* into the wall of the temple.

7 And *each level* widened, and it went around upward to the side rooms for the structure that surrounds the temple upward all the way around, therefore *the* width *increased* to the temple upward, and thus the lower *level* goes up to the upper *level* *by means of*

the middle story.

8 And I saw for the temple a platform all the way around the foundations of the side rooms; *it was* the length of a full reed, six cubits long.

9 The width of the *outside* wall, which *was* for the side room to the outside, *was* five cubits, and *a space* that was set between *the* side rooms, which *was* for the temple

10 and between the chambers *was the* width of twenty cubits all around the temple, all the way around *it*.

11 And the doorway of the side room faced the open area; one doorway faced the north, and one doorway *was* to the south, and the width of the place of the open area *was* five cubits all around.

The Building Facing the Temple

12 And the building that faced the courtyard *was* toward the west, *and* its width *was* seventy cubits, and the wall of the building *was* five cubits wide all the way around, and its length *was* ninety cubits.

13 And he measured the temple, *and* its length *was* a hundred cubits, and the courtyard and the building and its walls, *their* length *was* a hundred cubits.

14 And the width of the front of the temple and the courtyard to the east *was* a hundred cubits.

The Galleries About the Temple

15 And he measured the length of the building facing the courtyard at the rear and its galleries, a hundred cubits on each side, and *also* the temple, the court, and the porticos of the courtyard,

16 the thresholds and the framed windows and the galleries around the three of them. Before the threshold *was* a covering of wood all around, and *from* the ground up to the windows, and *all around* the windows, *they were* covered.

17 Above the doorway and up to the inner temple and on the outside, and on all of the wall all the way around in the inner and in the outer *areas were* patterns,

18 and *it was* made of cherubim and palm tree images; a palm tree image between cherub and cherub, and the cherub had two faces.

19 And *the* face of a human *was* toward the palm tree image on the one side, and *the* face of a fierce strong lion faced the palm tree image on the other side; this work *was* executed for the entire temple all the way around.

20 From the ground up to above the doorway, the cherubim and the palm tree images *were* made, and *also* the *outer* wall of the temple.

The Altar of Incense

21 *As far as* the temple *is concerned* its doorframe *was* squared, and before the sanctuary *was* the appearance as *it were* the appearance of

22 a wooden altar *that was* three cubits high, and its length *was* two cubits, and its corners for it and its length and its walls *were of* wood. And he spoke to me, "This *is* the table that *is* before Yahweh."

23 And the two doors *were* for the temple and for the sanctuary.

24 And two leaves of a door *were* for *each of* the doors, two hinged leaves of a door: two *were* for the first door, and two leaves of a door *were* for the other door.

25 And cherubim *were* made on them, that is, on the doors of the temple and palm tree images like the ones prepared for the walls; and *an overhang of* wood *was* on the surface of the porticos on the outside.

26 And narrow windows and palm tree images *were* on either side, *and* on the side walls of the portico, and the side rooms of the temple and their overhang.

The Inner Court of the Chamber

42:1 And he brought me out to the outer courtyard to the north, and he brought me to the chamber which *was* opposite the courtyard and which *is* opposite the building to the north.

2 *As to the* face of *the* length of *the building with* the doorway to the north, *it was* a hundred cubits, and its width *was* fifty cubits.

3 Opposite the twenty *cubits* of the inner courtyard, and opposite *the* pavement that *was* to the outer courtyard *was* a gallery facing a gallery in the three *stories*.

4 And in front of the chambers *was* a passageway ten cubits *in* width toward the inside, a walkway of one cubit, and their doorways *were* to the north.

5 And the upper chambers narrowed, for *the* galleries took away *space* from them more than *they took* from the lower *levels* and more than *they took* from the middle *level in* the building.

6 For they *were* three stories and they had no pillars like the pillars of the courtyards; therefore they were smaller than the lower *stories* and than the middle *stories* from the ground up.

7 And *there was* a wall that was to the outside alongside the chambers *on* the walkway to the outer courtyard in front of the chambers; its length *was* fifty cubits.

8 For the length of the chambers which *were* to the outer courtyard *was* fifty cubits, and look! *The chambers* on the front of the

temple *were* a hundred cubits.

9 And from under these chambers *was* the entrance from the east for them when one enters from the outer courtyard.

10 All along the width of the wall of the courtyard eastward in front of the courtyard to the front of the building *were* chambers.

11 And a walkway *was* before them like the appearance of the chambers which *were on* the north, *just like them in* their length, *and so was* their width and all their exits, and *they were built* like their arrangements and like their doorways,

12 and like the doorways of the chambers which *were on* the way of the south *was a* doorway at the head of the way before the stone wall, projecting *on* the way of the east at their coming.

The Priests' Use of the Chambers

13 And he said to me, "The chambers of the north *and* the chambers of the south which *are* before the courtyard, they are the holy chambers in which the priests, who *are* near to Yahweh, will eat the most holy objects. There they shall put the most holy objects, and the grain offering and the sin offering and the guilt offering, for the place *is* holy.

14 When the priests enter, then they shall not go out from the sanctuary to the outer courtyard; and there they must put their garments in which they serve because they *are* holy. They must put on other garments and *then* they may approach *the area* that is for the people.

Measurements of Outer Wall and Entire Complex

15 And he completed the measurements of the inner temple, and he brought me *to* the walkway of the gate that faces toward the east and he measured it all the way around.

16 He measured the east side with the reed for measuring, five hundred cubits, with *respect to* reeds with the reed for measurement, *he measured it* all around.

17 He measured the north side *as* five hundred *cubits, with respect to* reeds with the reed for measurement all around.

18 *Then* he measured the south side *as* five hundred *cubits, with respect to* reeds with the reed for measurement.

19 He went around the west side *and* he measured five hundred *cubits, with respect to* reeds with the reed for measurement.

20 Toward the four sides he measured it; *there was* a wall for it all the way around. *Its length was* five hundred *cubits* and *its width was* five hundred *cubits*, in order to make *a* separation between what is holy and what is common.

Ezekiel's Vision of the Millennium Temple—Yahweh Returns to the Temple (November 2, 574 BC)

Ezekiel 43:1–11

God's Glory Fills the Temple

1 And he brought me to the gate which *was* facing east.

2 And, look! The glory of the God of Israel, it came from the way of the east, and its sound *was* like *the* sound of many waters and the land radiated due to his glory!

3 And the appearance of the vision which I saw *was* as the vision which I saw at his coming to destroy the city, and *these* visions *were also* as the vision which I saw by the Kebar River, and I fell on my face.

4 And *then* the glory of Yahweh came to the temple by the way of the gate facing east.

5 And *the* Spirit lifted me and it brought me to the inner courtyard and, look! The glory of Yahweh filled the temple!

Exhortation to Purity

6 And I heard *someone* speaking to me from the house, and a man was standing beside me.

7 And he said to me, "Son of man, *this is* the place of my throne and the place for the soles of my feet where I will dwell in the midst of the Israelites to eternity, and they, the house of Israel, they and their kings, will not again defile my holy name with their fornication and with their offerings for the dead of their kings *on* their high places.

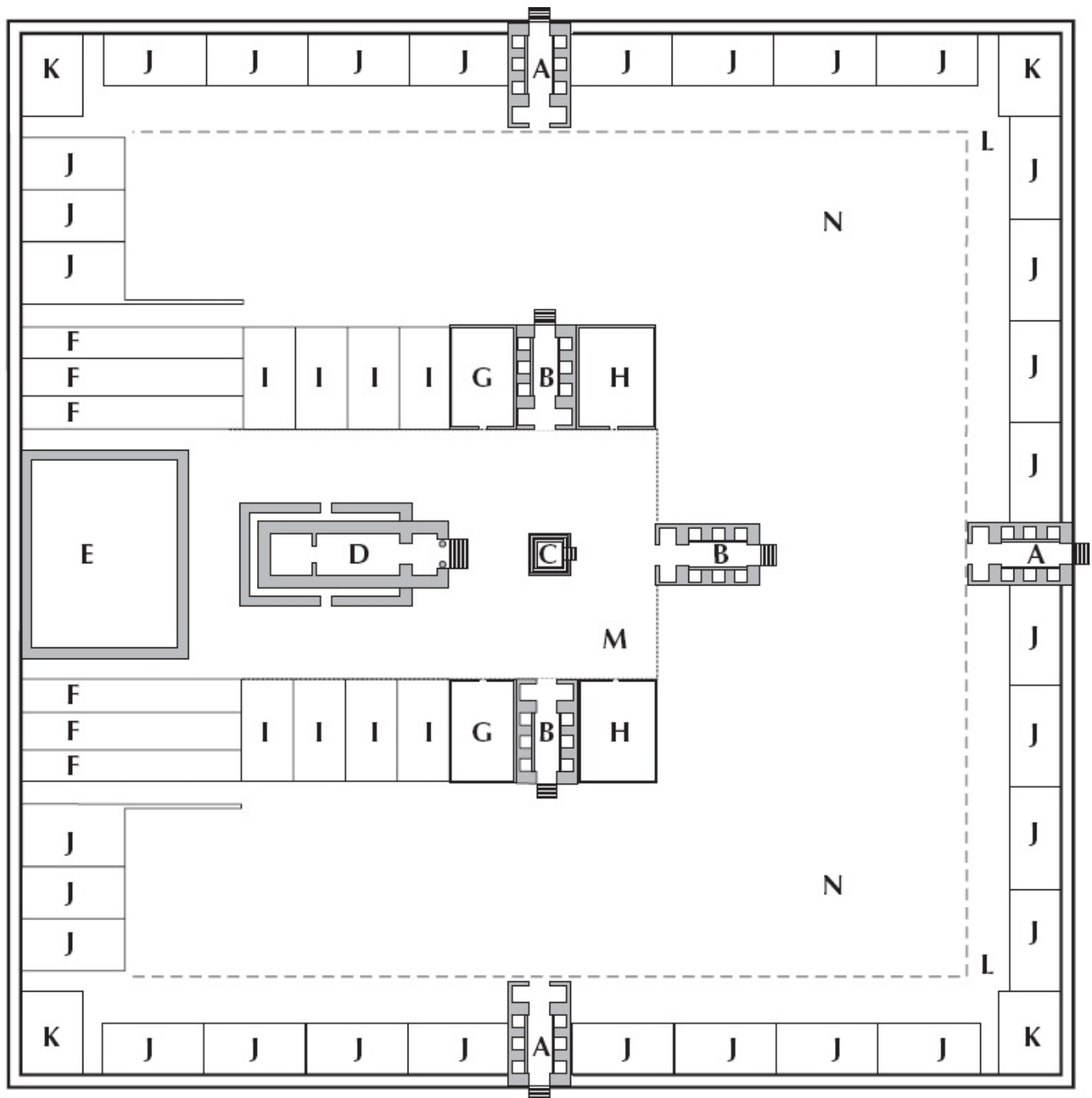
8 When they placed their threshold with my threshold, their doorframe beside my doorframe and the wall *was* between me and between them, then they defiled my holy name, with their detestable things that they did, and *so* I consumed them in my anger.

9 Now let them send their fornication far away and the offerings for the dead of their kings *away* from me, and I will dwell in the midst of them forever.

Purpose of God's Revelation of the Millennial Temple

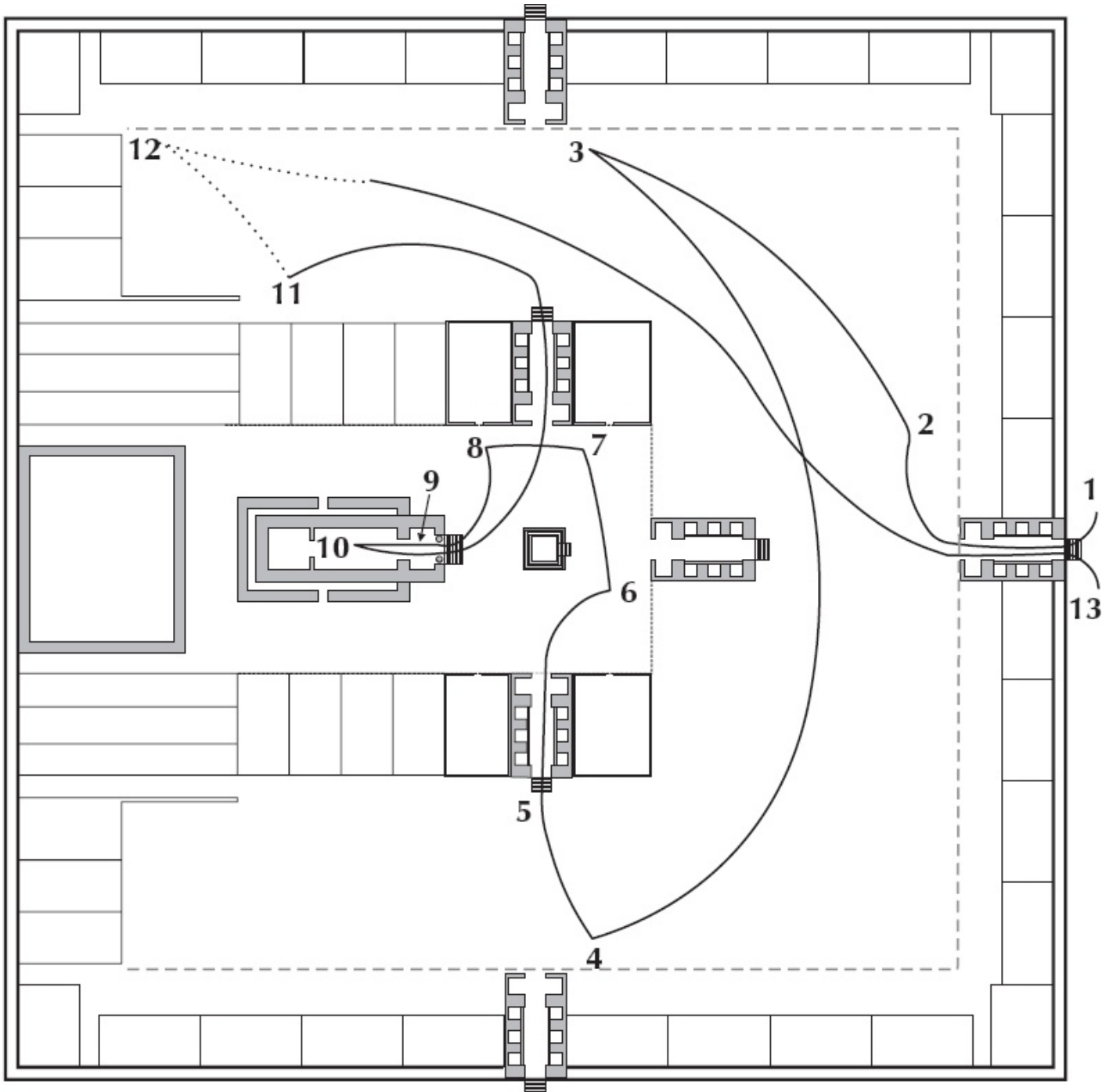
10 You, son of man, describe *to* the house of Israel the temple and let them be ashamed of their iniquities and let them measure the pattern.

11 And if they are ashamed of all that they did, *then* the plan of the temple and its arrangement and its exits and its entrances and all of its plans and all of its statutes. And all of its plans and all of its laws make known *to* them and write *them* before their eyes, so that they may remember all of its plans and all of its statutes, so that they do them!



Key

- | | |
|--|---------------------------------------|
| A Outer gates (40:5-16, 20-27) | H Chamber of offerings (40:38) |
| B Inner gates (40:28-37) | I Outer chambers (41:9b-10) |
| C Altar (43:13-17) | J Worshiper's chambers (40:17) |
| D Temple (40:48–41:11, 15-26) | K Kitchens (46:19-24) |
| E Binyān (41:12-14) | L Lower pavement (40:18) |
| F Priestly sacristies (42:1-14) | M Inner court (40:44) |
| G Priestly chambers (40:44-46) | N Outer court (40:17-19) |



Key

- 1 40:1-16
- 2 40:17-19
- 3 40:20-23
- 4 40:24-27
- 5 40:28-31

- 6 40:32-34
- 7 40:35-37
- 8 40:44-46
- 9 40:48-49

- 10 41:1-4
- 11 42:1-14
- 12 46:19-24
- 13 42:15-20

Ezekiel's Vision of the Millennium Temple—Law of the Temple (November 2, 574 BC)

Ezekiel 43:12–27; 44–46

The Law of the Temple

43:12 This *is* the law of the temple: On the top of the mountain, all of its territory, all the way around it, will be most holy. Look, this *is* the law of the temple.

Measurements of the Altar

13 And these *are* the measurements of the altar in the cubits (a cubit *is* a cubit and a handbreadth): now its gutter is a cubit in depth by a cubit in width and its rim along its edge all around is one span, and this *is also* the height of the altar.

14 And from the gutter at the ground up to the lower ledge *is* two cubits, and *its* width *is* one cubit, and from the small ledge up to the large ledge *is* four cubits, and *its* width *is* one cubit.

15 And the altar hearth *was* four cubits, and from the altar hearth and upwards *were* the four horns *of the altar*.

16 And the altar hearth *was* twelve *cubits in* length and twelve *cubits in* width; *it was* squared on its four sides.

17 And the ledge *was* fourteen *cubits in* length with fourteen *cubits its* width to *all* four of its sides, and a rim *was* all around it of one-half cubit. And the gutter for it *was* a cubit all around, and its steps *were* facing east."

Consecration of the Altar to the Lord

18 And he said to me, "Son of man, thus says the Lord Yahweh: 'These *are* the statutes of the altar on the day when it is made, to sacrifice a burnt offering on it and to sprinkle blood on it.

19 And you must give to the Levitical priests who *are* from the offspring of Zadok, the *ones coming* near me," declares the Lord Yahweh, "to serve me, a bull, a calf as *a* sin offering.

20 You must take some of its blood and put *it* on the four horns of the altar, and the four corners of the ledge, and on the rim all around; thus you must purify it and make atonement for it.

21 And you must take the bull, the sin offering, and you must burn it in the designated place of the temple outside of the holy place.

22 And on the second day you must offer a he-goat without defect as *a* sin offering, and they must purify the altar like they purified with the bull.

23 When you are finished from purifying, you must offer a bull, a calf, without defect, and a ram from the flock without defect.

24 And you must bring them near before Yahweh, and the priests must throw salt on them, and they must offer them *as* a burnt offering to Yahweh.

25 *For* seven days you must provide a goat of sin offering for the day and a bull, a calf, and a ram from the flock without defect; you must provide *them*.

26 Seven days they must purify the altar and they must cleanse it and *so* they will consecrate it.

27 And they will finish the days, and then on the eighth day and beyond *that* the priests will offer on the altar your burnt offerings and your fellowship offerings, and *then* I will be pleased with you," declares the Lord Yahweh.

The Prince in the Gate

44:1 And he brought me *back by* the way of the outer gate of the sanctuary that *is* facing east, and it was shut.

2 And Yahweh said to me, "This gate will be shut. It shall not be opened, and no one will go through it, for Yahweh, the God of Israel, has entered it, and it will be shut.

3 The prince, he may sit in it to eat food before Yahweh; he will come from the way of the portico of the gate and by means of its way he will *also* go out."

The Sanctity of God's House

4 Then he brought me *by* the way of the gate of the north to the front of the temple, and I looked, and look! The glory of Yahweh filled the temple of Yahweh, and I fell on my face.

5 And Yahweh said, "Son of man, set your heart and look with your eyes and with your ears hear everything I *am* saying to you concerning all the statutes of the temple of Yahweh and concerning all its laws, and you must listen *with* your heart concerning the entrance of the temple with all of *the* exits of the sanctuary.

6 And you must say to *the* rebellious, to the house of Israel, 'Thus says the Lord Yahweh: "Enough for you, house of Israel, of all of your detestable things!

7 At your bringing foreigners *who are* uncircumcised of heart and uncircumcised of flesh to be in my sanctuary to profane it, my temple, as you offered my food, fat, and blood, so you broke my covenant by all of your detestable things.

8 And you did not observe the responsibility of my sanctuary, but you appointed *them* as the keepers of my responsibility in my sanctuary for you."

Ministry of the Levites

9 Thus says the Lord Yahweh: "Every foreigner uncircumcised of heart and uncircumcised of flesh shall not come into my sanctuary—*not* any of *the* foreigners who *are* in the midst of the Israelites.

10 But the Levites who removed themselves from me at the going astray of Israel, who went astray from me *and went* after their idols, as a result they will bear their guilt.

11 Then they will be in my sanctuary, *those serving in* my sanctuary, *as* sentries at the gates of the temple and *as those* serving the temple; they will slaughter the burnt offering and the sacrifice for the people, and they will stand before them to serve them, 12 because they used to serve them before their idols and they were for the house of Israel *like* a stumbling block of iniquity. Therefore I swore concerning them,” declares the Lord Yahweh, “*that* they will bear their iniquity.

13 And they shall not approach me to serve as *a* priest for me and to come near to all of my holy objects, to the most holy objects, and they will bear their disgrace and *the results of* their detestable things they have done.

14 And I will appoint them *as* the keepers of the responsibility of the temple, for all of its work and everything which will be done in it.

Ministry of the Zadokite Priests

15 But the Levitical priests, the descendants of Zadok, who cared for the responsibility of my sanctuary when the Israelites went astray from me, they will approach me to serve me, and they will stand before me to offer to me fat and blood,” declares the Lord Yahweh.

16 “They shall come to my sanctuary, and they shall approach my table to serve me, and they will observe my requirement.

17 And then when they come to the gates of the inner courtyards, they shall put on their inner linen garments and not wear wool *garments* when they serve in the gates of the inner courtyard and inside the temple.

18 Linen turbans shall be on their head and linen undergarments shall be on their waists; they shall not gird themselves with *material causing* perspiration.

19 When they go out to the outer courtyard to the people, they must take off their garment in which they *were* serving, and they must place them in the holy chambers, and they must put on other *garments*, so that they will not make the people holy with their garments.

20 And their head they shall not shave, or long hair they shall not let grow; short they shall clip their heads.

21 And no priest shall drink wine when they come into the inner courtyard.

22 And a widow or divorced *woman* they shall not take for themselves as wives, but only a virgin from the offspring of the house of Israel, or the widow who is a widow for a priest they may take.

23 And they will teach my people *the difference* between what is holy and what is unholy, and *the difference* between unclean and clean they must show them.

24 And at a legal dispute they themselves shall stand to judge; employing my judgments they shall judge it, and *with respect to* my laws and my statutes. All my festivals they shall keep and my Sabbaths they shall consecrate.

25 And near a dead person he shall not come to be defiled, but only for a father and for a mother and for a son and for a daughter, for a brother and for a sister who was not married may they defile themselves.

26 And, after his cleansing, they shall count for him seven days,

27 and *then* on the day of his coming into the sanctuary to the inner courtyard to serve in the sanctuary, he shall offer his sin offering,” declares the Lord Yahweh.

Portion of the Priests

28 And *thus* it will be to them as *regards* inheritance, *that I am* their inheritance, and so you shall not give to them property in Israel; *I am* their property.

29 The grain offering and the sin offering and the guilt offering, they themselves may eat them, and *also* all *the* consecrated possessions in Israel will be theirs.

30 And *also* what is first of all of *the* firstfruits of everything, and of all of *the* contribution of everything from all of your contributions, to the priest it belongs, and what is first of your dough you shall give to the priest, so that a blessing may rest on your house.

31 Any dead body or mangled carcass from the birds or from the animals, the priests shall not eat.”

The Holy Portion of the Land

45:1 And when you allocate the land as an inheritance, you shall provide a contribution for Yahweh *as* a holy portion from the land, *its length being* twenty-five thousand *cubits* and *its width* ten thousand *cubits*; *it is* holy in all its territory, all around.

2 And *there* shall be from this *area* five hundred *cubits* by five hundred *cubits*, squared all around, for the sanctuary; and fifty cubits *of open space shall be* for it all around *it*.

3 And from this measured area you shall measure a length of twenty-five thousand *cubits* and a width of ten thousand *cubits*, and in it will be the sanctuary, the most holy place.

4 *It is* a holy portion from the land; it will be for the priests, the servants of the sanctuary who approach to serve Yahweh, and it will be for them a place for houses and a holy place for the sanctuary.

5 And *an area* twenty-five thousand *cubits* in length and ten thousand *cubits* in width will be for the Levites, the servants of the temple. *It will serve as* property for them as cities to dwell in.

6 And *as* property of the city, you must set apart alongside the contribution of the sanctuary *a portion* five thousand *cubits* in width and twenty-five thousand *cubits* in length, *and* it shall be for the entire house of Israel.

7 And *a portion will be* for the prince on both sides of the holy district, and *both sides* of the property of the city, *and* alongside the property of the city on the west, and *alongside the property* on the east. And *also its* length corresponds to one of the tribal portions to the west *running* to the eastern border.

8 *This* shall be to him with respect to the land as property in Israel; *and so* my princes shall not again oppress my people, but they shall give the land to the house of Israel according to their tribes.”

Charge to the Princes of Israel

9 Thus says the Lord Yahweh, “Enough *of this* for you, the princes of Israel; put away violence and destruction and do justice and righteousness; revoke your *acts of* dispossession from upon my people!” declares the Lord Yahweh.

10 *There* shall be for you an honest set of scales and an honest ephah and an honest bath.

11 The ephah and the bath shall be one unit of measurement; the tenth part of the homer *is* the bath, and the tenth of the homer *is* the ephah; *so* the homer shall be its unit of measurement.

12 And the shekel *shall weigh* twenty *gerahs*, twenty shekels and five and twenty shekels *and* ten and five shekels, *that* shall make the mina for you.

Offerings of Israel’s Prince

13 *This is* the contribution *offering* which you shall present: a sixth of the ephah from a homer of wheat, and a sixth of the ephah from a homer of barley.

14 And the quota of the olive oil, the bath *of* the olive oil, *is* the tenth part of a bath from a kor, *which is* ten baths, *or* a homer—for ten baths *are equal* to a homer.

15 And one sheep from the flock from *among* two hundred from the pastures of Israel *will be taken* as a grain offering and as a burnt offering *and as a* fellowship offering to make atonement for them,” declares the Lord Yahweh.

16 “All of the people of the land shall join *in* to this contribution with the prince in Israel.

17 “But on the prince shall be *the responsibility* for the burnt offerings, and the grain offering, and the libation at the feasts, and at the New Moon festivals, and at the Sabbaths at all of the assemblies of the house of Israel; he shall provide the sin offering, and the grain offering, and the burnt offering, and the fellowship offering to make atonement for the house of Israel.

Purification of the Sanctuary

18 Thus says the Lord Yahweh: ‘On the first *month* on the first *day* of the month, you shall take a bull, a calf without defect, and you shall purify the sanctuary.

19 And the priest shall take from the blood of the sin offering, and he shall put *it* on the doorframe of the temple and on the four corners of the ledge of the altar and on the doorframe of the gate of the inner courtyard.

20 And so you shall do on the seventh *day* in the month for anyone doing wrong inadvertently or due to ignorance, and *so* you must make atonement for the temple.

The New Passover

21 In the first *month*, on the fourteenth day of the month, you shall have the Passover, *a feast lasting* for seven days, *when* you shall eat unleavened breads.

22 And the prince shall provide on that day for himself and for all of the people of the land a bull *as a* sin offering.

23 And *during* the seven days of the religious feast he shall provide *as a* burnt offering to Yahweh seven bulls and seven rams without defect for each of the seven days, and *as a* sin offering a he-goat for each day.

24 And *as a* grain offering, an ephah for the bull and an ephah for the ram he must provide, and a hin of olive oil for each ephah.

25 In the seventh *month*, on the fifteenth day of the month, during the feast, he shall provide just as *he has* for these seven days, as *he did* for the sin offering, as *he did* for the burnt offering, and as *he did* for the grain offering, and as *he did* for the olive oil.”

Offerings for the Sabbath

46:1 Thus says the Lord Yahweh: “The gate of the inner courtyard facing east must be shut *on* the six of the days for work, but on the day of the Sabbath it must be opened and on the day of the new moon it must be opened.

2 And the prince shall come *by way* of the portico of the gate from *the* outside, and he shall stand at the doorframe of the gate and the priests shall prepare his burnt offering and his fellowship offerings, and he shall bow down at the threshold of the gate. Then he shall go out, but the gate shall not be closed until the evening.

3 And the people of the land will bow down *at* the doorway of that gate on the Sabbaths and on the new moons before Yahweh.

4 And the burnt offering which the prince will offer to Yahweh on the Sabbath day *must be* six male lambs without defect and a ram without defect.

5 And *the* grain offering *he will give shall be* an ephah for each ram, and for the male lambs *the* grain offering *shall be* as much as he wants to give and a hin of olive oil for each ephah.

Offerings for the New Moon

6 And on the day of the new moon *he will offer* a bull, a calf without defect and six male lambs and a ram; they must be without defect.

7 And an ephah for each bull and an ephah for the ram he must provide *as* a grain offering, and *also* for the male lambs as much as he can afford and a hin *of* olive oil for each ephah.

8 And when the prince comes, on the way of the portico of the gate he shall come and by this way he shall go out.

Conduct During the Appointed Feasts

9 And when the people of the land come before Yahweh at the festivals, *the one coming by way of the gate of the north* to bow down must go out *by the way of the gate of the south*, and the *one coming by way of the gate of the south* must go out *by the way of the gate of the north*, so he must not return *by the way of the gate by which he came*, but before it he shall go out opposite it.

10 And the prince *will be* in the midst of them; he will come in when they come in, and when they go out he will go out.

11 And at the festivals and at the appointed times, the grain offering will be an ephah with a bull and an ephah with the ram and with the male lambs, as much as he wants to give, and a hin of olive oil for each ephah.

12 And when the prince makes a freewill offering, a burnt offering, or a fellowship offering *as* a freewill offering to Yahweh, the gate facing east will be open for him. And he must offer his burnt offering and his fellowship offering just as he does on the day of the Sabbath, and *then* he must go out and the gate will shut after he goes out.

Daily Sacrifices

13 And a male lamb, a yearling without defect, he must provide as a burnt offering daily for Yahweh; every morning he must provide it.

14 And *a* grain offering he must provide in addition to it every morning, a sixth of an ephah and a third of a hin of olive oil to moisten the finely milled flour *as* a grain offering to Yahweh as a perpetual statute.

15 So they must provide the male lamb and the grain offering and the olive oil every morning as a regular burnt offering.”

Regulations Concerning the Prince

16 Thus says the Lord Yahweh: “If the prince gives a gift to any *one* from *among* his sons, it *is* his inheritance *and* it will belong to his sons; it is their possession as an inheritance.

17 And if he give a gift from his inheritance to one from *among* his servants, then it will belong to him until the year of release, and *then* it will return to the prince. His inheritance *with respect to* his sons will be only for them.

18 But the prince shall not take from the inheritance of the people to rob them, *separating them* from their property; from his *own* property he shall bestow an inheritance on his sons, so that my people will not be driven away, any one, from his property.”

The Sacrificial Places for the Offerings

19 Then he brought me through the entrance which *was* on the side of the gate to the holy chambers to the priests; *the chambers* were facing northwards and, look, there *was* a place at the extreme end westwards.

20 And he said to me, “This *is* the place where the priests will boil the guilt offering and the sin offering, *and* where they shall bake the grain offering *in order* not to bring *them* out to the outer courtyard to make the people holy.

21 And he brought me to the outer courtyard and led me past the four corners of the courtyard; and look, there was a courtyard in each corner of the courtyard.

22 In the four corners of the courtyard *were* small courtyards forty *cubits* in length and thirty *cubits* in width, *each with* the same measurements for the four of them with corners.

23 And a row *was* all around inside them, and cooking-places *were* made under the rows of stones all around.

24 And he said to me, “These *are* the houses for cooking, where *the ones* serving the temple shall cook the sacrifices of the people.”

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Ezekiel's Vision of the Millennium Temple—Water Flowing from the Temple (November 2, 574 BC)

Ezekiel 47:1–12

Waters from the House of God

1 And he brought me back to the doorway of the temple and, look! There was water coming out from under the threshold of the temple eastward, because the face of the temple *was* eastwards; and the water was coming down from under the south side of the temple, from south of the altar.

2 And he brought me out *by the way of the north gate* and he led me around *by the way* leading to the outside of the outer gate *by way of the gate* facing east, and look, there was water trickling from the south side.

The Man with the Measuring Line

3 As the man went eastward a measuring line *was* in his hand, and he measured a thousand cubits. And he led me through *on* into the water; *it was* ankle deep.

4 And he measured a thousand *cubits*, and he brought me over into the waters *and it was* knee deep. And he measured a thousand *cubits*, and he brought me over *into* the waters *and it was* waist deep.

5 And he measured a thousand *cubits*, *and it became* a stream that I was not able to cross, because the water rose, waters a person could swim in, *and became* a stream that could not be crossed.

The Healing of the Waters

6 And he asked me, "Son of man, did you see *this*?" And he made me go, and he brought me back *along* the bank of the stream.

7 When I returned, then look! On the bank of the river *were* many trees on both sides.

8 And he said to me, "These waters *are* going out to the eastern region, and they go down to the Jordan Valley, and they come *to* the sea *and flow* into the sea *where* they issue out, and the waters *in the sea* will be healed.

9 And then every living creature *with* which it teems, to every place the waters come it will live; *and* very many fish will live because these waters came there, and *so* the *water* will be healed and everything *will be* alive everywhere that the stream will come.

10 And then fishers from En Gedi and *on* up to En Eglaim will stand beside it, a sea-girt drying yard for nets; their fish for the dragnets will be of every kind, like the fish of the great sea, *and* very many.

11 But its marshes and its swamps will not be cured, for they were given for salt.

12 And along the stream will go up on its banks from both sides every tree producing food; its leaf will not wither and it will not cease *producing* its fruit. Every month it will bear early fruit, for its waters *are* going out from the sanctuary, and its fruit will be as food, and its leaf for healing."

Ezekiel's Vision of the Millennium Temple—New Boundaries of Israel (November 2, 574 BC)

Ezekiel 47:13–23

Method of Dividing the Land

13 Thus says the Lord Yahweh: "This *is* the boundary *by* which you shall distribute the land for the twelve tribes of Israel: Two shares *shall be* for Joseph.

14 And you must take possession of it, each *one a share* like his brother, *of this land* which I swore to give it to your fathers, and *so* this land shall fall to you as an inheritance.

Borders of Israel

15 And this *is* the boundary of the land: On the north side, from the great sea *by* the way of Hethlon until you come to Zedad,

16 Hamath *to* Berothath *to* Sibraim, which *is* between the boundary of Damascus and the boundary of Hamath, *on* *to* Hazer Hatticon, which *is* on the boundary of Hauran.

17 And *so* *the* boundary will be from the sea to Hazar Enan *at* the boundary of Damascus northwards and the boundary of Hamath *to the north*, and this *is the boundary on the side of the north*.

18 And the eastern boundary *will be* between Hauran and Damascus, and from between Gilead and the land of Israel *along* the Jordan *River* from *the* boundary on the eastern sea to Tamar. And this is the border on the east.

19 And on the south side the border *will run* from Tamar up to the waters *of* Meribot Kadesh *and along* the wadi to the Great Sea. And this *is* the boundary to the south.

20 And on the west side the Great Sea *shall be* the boundary up to opposite Lebo-Hamath. This is the western boundary.

Instructions for Dividing the Land Among the Tribes

21 You shall divide this land for yourselves according to the tribes of Israel.

22 And then you shall allocate it as an inheritance for yourselves and for the aliens dwelling as aliens in the midst of you who have children in the midst of you, and *so* they shall be to you *just* like full citizens among the Israelites. With you they shall be allotted with an inheritance in the midst of the tribes of Israel.

23 And then in the tribe *in* which an alien who is with you dwells, there you shall give his inheritance," declares the Lord Yahweh.

Ezekiel's Vision of the Millennium Temple—New Tribal Allotments (November 2, 574 BC)

Ezekiel 48

Inheritance of the Tribes of Israel

1 And these *are* the names of the tribes: At the end of the north, along the way to Hethlon from Lebo-hamath to Hazar Enan on the boundary of Damascus beside Hamath northward, *there* will be one *portion* for Dan from the eastern border to the west.

2 And next to the territory of Dan, from the eastern border up to the western border, one *portion* for Asher.

3 And next to the territory of Asher, from the eastern border and up to the western border, one *portion* for Naphtali.

4 And next to the territory of Naphtali, from the eastern border up to the western border, one *portion* for Manasseh.

5 And next to the territory of Manasseh, from the eastern border up to the western border, one *portion* for Ephraim.

6 And next to the territory of Ephraim, from the eastern border and up to the western border, one *portion* for Reuben.

7 And next to the territory of Reuben, from the eastern border up to the western border, one *portion* for Judah.

23 And *for* the remainder of the tribes: From *the side on the east* up to *the side on the west*, Benjamin one *portion*;

24 and next to the territory of Benjamin, from *the side on the east* up to *the side of the sea*, Simeon one *portion*;

25 and next to the territory of Simeon, from *the side of the east* up to *the side of the sea*, Issachar one *portion*;

26 and next to the territory of Issachar, from *the side of the east* up to *the side of the sea*, Zebulun one *portion*;

27 and next to the territory of Zebulun, from *the side of the east* up to *the side of the sea*, Gad one *portion*;

28 and next to the territory of Gad, to *the side of the south*, southward; and *the* territory will be from Tamar to the waters of Meribath Kadesh, *toward* the wadi, *on* to the Great Sea.

29 This *is* the land that you shall allot as *an* inheritance to the tribes of Israel, and these *are* their portions," declares the Lord Yahweh.

The Sacred Reserve—Sanctuary Allotment

8 And next to the territory of Judah, from the eastern border up to the western border, shall be *located* the contribution that you set apart, twenty-five thousand *cubits* in width, and its length *just* like one of the portions from the eastern border up to the western border, and the sanctuary shall be in the midst of it.

9 The contribution that you shall set apart for Yahweh, its length *shall be* twenty-five thousand *cubits*, and its width ten thousand *cubits*.

10 And to these shall be the holy district: to the priests northwards twenty-five thousand *cubits*, and westwards *its* width ten thousand *cubits*, and eastwards *its* width ten thousand *cubits*, and southwards its length twenty-five thousand *cubits*, and the sanctuary of Yahweh shall be in the midst of it.

11 To the priests, the *ones* being consecrated from the descendants of Zadok, who took care of my service *and* who did not go astray when the Israelites went astray, just as the Levites went astray.

12 And it will be for them a special gift from the contribution of the land as a most holy object next to the territory of the Levites.

13 And the Levites alongside the territory of the priests *shall have* twenty-five thousand *cubits* in length and in width ten thousand *cubits*, its full length, twenty-five thousand *cubits* and its *full width*, ten thousand *cubits*.

14 And they shall not sell *any part* from it, and shall not exchange, and shall not transfer the best of the land, for *it is* holy to Yahweh.

The Sacred Reserve—Public Allotment

15 And the remaining part of five thousand *cubits* in the width by twenty-five thousand *cubits*, *is* unholy; it is for the city as dwelling and as pastureland; and the city will be *located* in the middle of it.

16 And these *shall be* its measurements: *on* its side to *the north*, four thousand five hundred *cubits*; and *on* its side to *the south*, four thousand five hundred *cubits*; and *on* the eastern side, four thousand five hundred *cubits*; and *on* the western side, four thousand five hundred *cubits*.

17 And a pastureland shall be for the city northwards, two hundred and fifty *cubits*, southwards two hundred and fifty *cubits*, and eastwards two hundred and fifty *cubits*, and westwards two hundred and fifty *cubits*.

18 And the rest in *its* length alongside the holy district, ten thousand *cubits* eastwards and ten thousand westwards; and it shall be alongside the holy district and its yield shall be as food for the workers of the city.

19 And the workers of the city from all the tribes of Israel shall cultivate it.

20 All of the contribution, twenty-five thousand by twenty five thousand *cubits* square, you shall set apart *as* the holy district *along* with the property of the city.

The Sacred Reserve—Prince Allotment

21 And the rest *shall be* to the prince, on both sides of the holy district and of the property of the city extending from twenty-five thousand *cubits* of the contribution up to *the boundary of the east*, and westwards extending twenty-five thousand *cubits* to the boundary of *the sea* alongside *the tribal* portions. They shall be for the prince, and it shall be the holy district, and the sanctuary of the temple will be in its middle.

22 And *also* the property of the Levites and the property of the city will be in the midst of *the property* which *is* for the prince; between the territory of Judah and *between* the territory of Benjamin *the land* will be for the prince.

The Gates of the New City

30 And these *shall be* the exits of the city: From the north side, four thousand and five hundred *cubits by* measurement.

31 And the gates of the city *shall be* according to the names of the tribes of Israel: three gates *to the* north, the gate of Reuben, one; the gate of Judah, one; the gate of Levi, one.

32 And *on the* east side, four thousand five hundred *cubits, and* three gates, and *so* the gate of Joseph, one; the gate of Benjamin, one; the gate of Dan, one.

33 And *on the* south side, four thousand five hundred *cubits by* measurement, and *so* three gates, the gate of Simeon, one; the gate of Issachar, one; the gate of Zebulun, one.

34 *And* on the west side, four thousand five hundred *cubits, and* their gates three, the gate of Gad, one; the gate of Asher, one; the gate of Naphtali, one.

35 All around *the city is* eighteen thousand *cubits, and* the name of the city from *that day is* “Yahweh Is There”!

Ezekiel's Prophecy to the Exiles—Oracle against Egypt (April 26, 571 BC)

Ezekiel 29:17-30:19

Nebuchadnezzar's Conquest of Egypt after Conquest of Tyre (Ezekiel's Last Prophecy)

29:17 And then in the twenty-seventh year, in the first *month*, on the first *day* of the month, the word of Yahweh came to me, saying,

18 “Son of man, Nebuchadnezzar the king of Babylon, he made his army labor hard against Tyre. Every head was rubbed bare, and every shoulder *was* rubbed raw, but a wage was not *paid* for him and for his army from Tyre for the labor that he did against it.”

19 Therefore thus says the Lord Yahweh: “Look! I *am* giving to Nebuchadnezzar the king of Babylon the land of Egypt, and he will carry its wealth *away*, and he will plunder its plunder, and he will loot its loot, and it will be *a* wage for his army.

20 As his wages that he worked for, I will give to him the land of Egypt, because they worked for me,” declares the Lord Yahweh.

21 “On that day I will cause power to grow *up* for the house of Israel, and for you I will give an opening of *your* mouth in the midst of them, and they will know that I *am* Yahweh.”

Judgment on Egypt and the Nations

30:1 And the word of Yahweh came to me, saying,

2 “Son of man, prophesy, and you must say, ‘thus says the Lord Yahweh:

“Wail, alas! For the day!

3 For a day *is* near;
indeed, a day *is* near for Yahweh.
A day of cloud,
a time of *the* nations it will be.

4 And a sword will come in Egypt,
and anguish will be in Cush,
at the falling of *the* slain in Egypt.
And they will take its wealth,
and its foundation will be demolished.

5 Cush and Put and Lud and all of Arabia and Kub and the people of the land of the treaty with them—by the sword they will fall.”

Desolation of the Land of Egypt

6 Thus says Yahweh:

“And the supporters of Egypt will fall,
and the majesty of its strength will go down
from Migdol *to* Syene;
by the sword they will fall in it,”
declares the Lord Yahweh.

7 “And they will be desolate in the midst of desolate countries,
and its cities will be in the midst of ruined cities.

8 And they will know that I *am* Yahweh
when I put my fire in Egypt,
and all of its helpers are broken.

9 On that day messengers will go down from before me in the ships to terrify unsuspecting Cush, and anguish will be in them on the day of Egypt; for look, *it is coming!*”

God’s Instrument of Punishment

10 Thus says the Lord Yahweh:

“And I will put an end to the crowds of Egypt
by the hand of Nebuchadnezzar the king of Babylon.

11 He and his people with him, *the most* ruthless of nations,
will be brought to destroy the land.

And they will draw their swords against Egypt,
and they will fill the land *with the slain*,

12 and I will make the Nile streams dry land,
and I will sell the land into *the* hand of bad *people*,
and I will lay waste *the* land and its fullness
by *the* hand of strangers.

I, Yahweh, I have spoken.”

Visitation on Egypt’s Idolatrous Cities

13 Thus says the Lord Yahweh:

“And I will destroy *the* idols,
and I will put an end to *the* worthless idols from Memphis.
And there will no longer be a prince from the land of Egypt,
and I will put fear in the land of Egypt.

14 And I will lay waste Pathros,
and I will set fire in Zoan,
and I will execute judgments in No.

15 I will pour out my rage over Sin,
the stronghold of Egypt,
and I will cut off the crowd of No.

16 And I will set fire in Egypt,
certainly Sin will writhe,
and No will be breached,
and Memphis *will* face enemies daily.

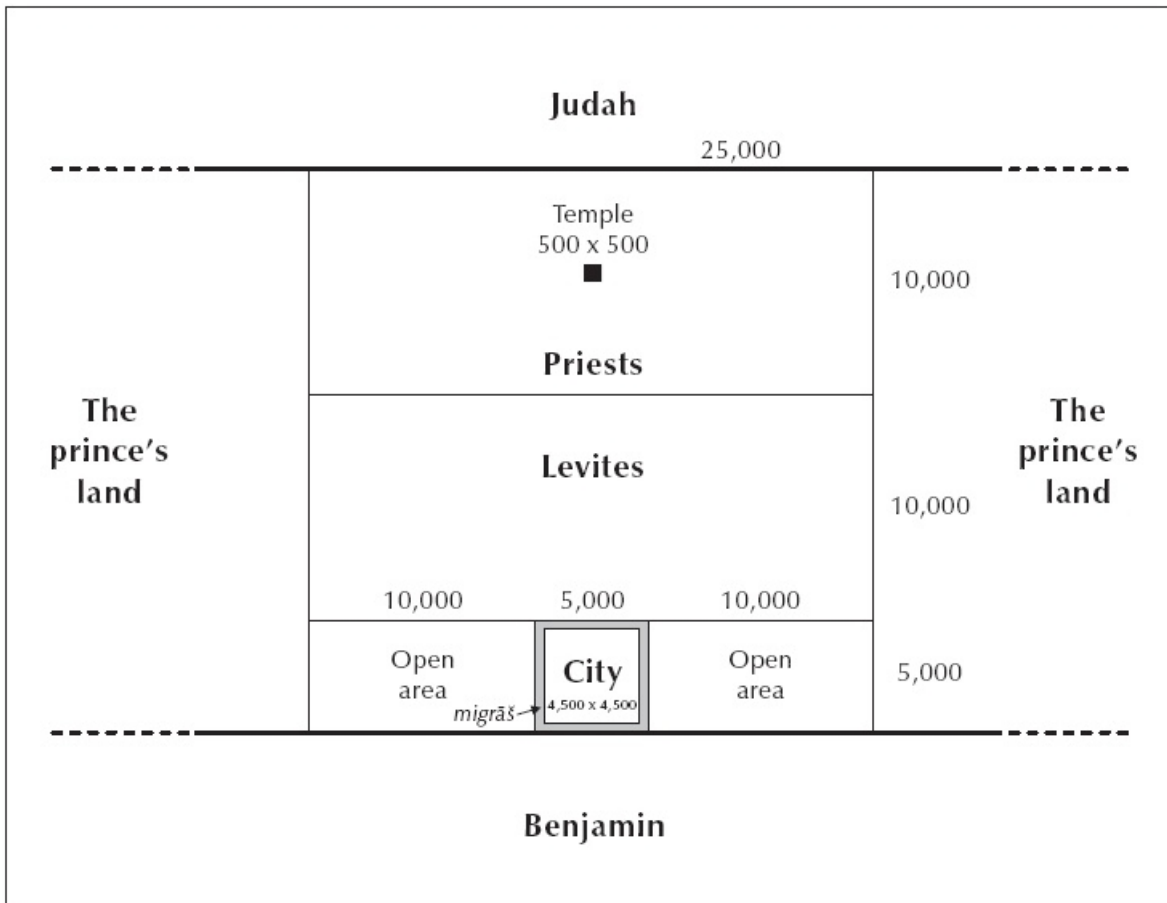
17 The young men of On and Pi Beseth will fall by the sword,
and they will go into captivity.

18 And at Tahpanhes the day will become dark
when I break the yoke of Egypt,
and in it the majesty of its strength
will come to an end.

A cloud will cover it,
and its daughters will go into captivity.

19 And I will execute judgments in Egypt,
and they will know that I *am* Yahweh.”

Ezekiel's Vision of the Sacred Reserve



Nebuchadnezzar's Madness (c. 573–569 BC)

Daniel 4

The King's Proclamation

1 Nebuchadnezzar the king to all of the nations, the peoples and languages that live in the whole earth: "May your prosperity increase!

2 It is pleasing to me to recount the signs and wonders that the Most High God worked for me.

3 How great *are* his signs and wonders, how strong *is* his kingdom, an everlasting kingdom; and his sovereignty is from generation to generation.

The King's Dream

4 "I, Nebuchadnezzar, was content in my house and prospering in my palace.

5 And I saw a dream and a revelation on my bed and it frightened me, and the visions of my head terrified me.

6 And a decree was sent out, *ordering that all the wise men of Babylon were* to be brought in before me so that they may make known to me *the* explanation of the dream.

7 Then the magicians, the conjurers, the astrologers and the diviners came in and I told them the dream, but they could not make known to me its explanation.

8 Then at last Daniel came before me whose name was Belteshazzar, according to the name of my god, *and* in whom was the spirit of the holy gods, and I related the dream to him.

9 " 'O Belteshazzar, chief of the magicians, I myself know that *the* spirit of *the* holy gods *is* in you, and no mystery is too difficult for you. *Now tell me the* visions of my dream that I saw, and its explanation.

10 Now *these were* the visions of my head *as I was lying* on my bed: I was gazing and, look, a tree *was* in the midst of the earth, and its height *was* exalted.

11 The tree grew and it became strong,
and its height reached to heaven,
and it was visible to the end of the whole earth.

12 Its foliage *was* beautiful,
and its fruit abundant,
and in it *was* provision for all.
Under it the animals of the field sought shade,
and in its branches the birds of heaven nested,
and from it all the living beings were fed.

13 " 'I was looking in the vision of my head *as I lay* on my bed, and look, a watcher, and *a holy one*, came down from heaven.

14 He cried aloud and so he said:

"Cut down the tree and chop off its branches;
shake off its foliage and scatter its fruit.
Let the animals flee from under it,
and the birds from its branches.

15 But the stump of its roots
leave in the earth,
along with a band of iron and bronze;
leave it in the grass of the field.
And in the dew of heaven
let it be watered,
and with the animals
let his lot *be* in *the* grass of the earth.

16 Let his mind be changed from *that of a* human,
and let *the* mind of an animal be given to him,
and let seven times pass over him.

17 The sentence *is* by *the* decree of *the* watchers,
and the decision *by the* command of *the* holy ones,
in order that the living will know
that the Most High *is* sovereign over *the* kingdom of humankind,
and to whomever he wills he gives it,
and he *even* sets *the* humblest of men over it."

18 “This *is* the dream *that* I, Nebuchadnezzar the king, saw. Now you, Belteshazzar, declare its explanation, for all of *the* wise men of my kingdom were not able to make the explanation known to me, but you are able because *the* spirit of holy gods *is* in you.’

The Interpretation of the Dream

19 “Then Daniel, whose name *was* Belteshazzar, was distressed for some time, and his thoughts disturbed him. The king answered and he said, ‘Belteshazzar, let the dream and its explanation not disturb you.’ Belteshazzar answered and said, ‘My lord, *may* the dream and its explanation *be* for *those who* hate you and for your enemies.

20 The tree that you saw, which grew and became strong and its height reached to heaven and it was visible to the end of the whole earth,

21 and its foliage *was* beautiful and its fruit abundant, and *so there was* provision for all in it, *and* the animals of the field lived under it and in its branches nest *the* birds of heaven,

22 —it is you, O king, who have grown *great* and you have grown strong, and *so* your greatness has increased and it has reached to heaven and your sovereignty to the end of the earth.

23 And *inasmuch* that the king saw *the* watcher, a holy *one* coming down from heaven and he said, “Cut down the tree and destroy it, but the stump of its root in the earth leave with a band of iron and bronze in the grass of the field, and let it be watered with the dew of heaven and *let* his lot *be* with *the* animals of the field until seven times have passed over him.”

24 This *is* the explanation, O king, and it *is* a decree of the Most High that has come upon my lord the king:

25 you will be driven away from human society and you will dwell with the animals of the field, and you will be caused to graze grass like the oxen yourself, and you will be watered with the dew of heaven, and seven *periods of* time will pass over you until that you have acknowledged that the Most High *is* sovereign over the kingdom of humankind, and to whom he wills he gives it.

26 And in that they said to leave alone the stump of the tree’s root, so your kingdom *will be* restored for you when you acknowledge that heaven *is* sovereign.

27 Therefore, O king, let my advice be acceptable *to you* and your sin remove with righteousness and your iniquity with having mercy on *the* oppressed, in case there might be a prolongation of your prosperity.”

The Fulfillment of the Dream

28 All this happened to Nebuchadnezzar the king.

29 At the end of twelve months he was walking on the *roof of* the royal palace of Babylon.

30 And the king answered and said, “Is this not the great Babylon which I have built as a royal palace by the strength of my own power, and for the glory of my own majesty?”

31 *While* the words *were* still in the mouth of the king, a voice from heaven came, *saying*, ‘To you, King Nebuchadnezzar, *it is* declared that the kingdom has departed from you,

32 and you will be driven away from human society and your dwelling *will be* with the animals of the field and they will cause you to graze *the* grass like oxen, and seven times will pass over you, until you acknowledge that the Most High *is* sovereign over the kingdom of humankind and that he gives it to whom he wills.’

33 Immediately the word was fulfilled concerning Nebuchadnezzar, and he was expelled from human society and he ate grass like oxen, and his body was bathed with the dew of heaven until his hair *was* like *the hair of* an eagle and his nails grew like *a bird’s* claws.

Nebuchadnezzar Worships God

34 “But at the end of that period, I, Nebuchadnezzar, lifted up my eyes to heaven, and *then* my reason returned to me; and I blessed the Most High and the one who lives forever I praised and I honored.

“For his sovereignty *is* an everlasting sovereignty,
and his kingdom *continues* from generation to generation.

35 And all the dwellers of the earth
are regarded as nothing,
and he does according to his desire
in the host of heaven and *among* the dwellers of earth,
and there is not *one* who can hold back his hand,
or ask him, ‘What are you doing?’

36 “At that time my reason returned to me, and *also* the glory of my kingdom and my majesty and splendor returned to me, and my advisers and my lords searched *me* out, and I was established over my kingdom and abundant greatness was added to me.

37 Now I, Nebuchadnezzar, praise and exalt and honor the king of heaven, for all his works *are* truth, and his ways *are* justice and that he is able to humble those who walk in pride.”

Evil-Merodach (Amel-Marduk) Releases Jehoiachin From Prison (March 31, 561 BC)

2 Kings 25:27–30

27 It happened in the thirty-seventh year of the exile of Jehoiachin king of Judah, in the twelfth month on the twenty-seventh of the month, Evil-Merodach king of Babylon in the year that he became king, lifted the head of Jehoiachin king of Judah from the house of imprisonment.
 28 He spoke kindly to him, and he gave him a better seat than the seat of the kings who *were* with him in Babylon.
 29 So he changed the clothes of his imprisonment, and he ate food continually in his presence all the days of his life.
 30 His allowance was continually given to him from the king, a portion every day all the days of his life.

Jeremiah 52:31–34

31 And then in *the* thirty-seventh year of the exile of Jehoiachin, the king of Judah, in *the* twelfth month, on *the* twenty-fifth *day* of the month, Evil-Merodach, the king of Babylon, in the *first* year of his reign, lifted up the head of Jehoiachin, the king of Judah, and brought him out from prison.
 32 Then he spoke with him kindly and gave his seat above the seats of the kings who *were* with him in Babylon.
 33 So he changed the garments of his imprisonment and he ate food before him continually all the days of his life.
 34 And his allowance, a continual allowance was given to him by the king of Babylon on a daily basis all the days of his life up to the day of his death.

Daniel's Vision of Future World History (553n BC)

Daniel 7

Setting of the Vision

1 In the first year of Belshazzar the king of Babylon, Daniel saw a dream and visions of his head *as he lay* on his bed; then he wrote down the dream *and the* summary of *the* words as follows:

The Four Beasts

2 Daniel explained and said, "I was looking in my vision in the night, and look, the four winds of heaven were stirring *up* the great sea.
 3 And four great beasts *were* coming up from the sea, differing from one another.
 4 The first *was* like *a* lion and had *the* wings of an eagle. I was watching until its wings were plucked off, and it was lifted up from the earth and it was raised on *its* feet like a human, and a human heart was given to it.
 5 And look, another beast, a second one, looking like a bear. And it was raised up on one side and three tusks *were* in its mouth between its teeth, and so it was told, "Arise, eat much flesh!"
 6 After this I was watching and look, another *beast* like a leopard; it had four wings of a bird on its back, and the beast had four heads, and dominion was given to it.
 7 After this in the visions of the night I was looking and there was a fourth beast, terrifying and frightful and exceedingly strong, and it had great iron teeth, *and it was* devouring and crushing, and it stamped the remainder with its feet; and it was different from all *the other* beasts that preceded it and it had ten horns.

The Little Horn

8 I was considering the horns, and look, another little horn came up among them, and three of the earlier horns were rooted out from before it, and there were eyes like the eyes of *a* human in this horn and *also* a mouth *that was* speaking boastfully.

The Destruction of the Fourth Beast

9 "I continued watching until thrones were placed and an Ancient of Days sat; his clothing *was* like white snow and the hair of his head *was* like pure wool and his throne *was* a flame of fire and its wheels *were* burning fire.
 10 A stream of fire issued forth and flowed from his presence; thousands *upon* thousands served him and ten thousand *upon* ten thousand stood before him. The judge sat, and *the* books were opened.
 11 "I continued watching then because of the noise of the boastful words of the horn *who was* speaking; I continued watching until the beast was slain and its body was destroyed, and it was given *over* to burning with fire.
 12 And *as for* the remainder of the beasts, their dominion was taken away, but a prolongation of their life was given to them for a season and a time.

The Kingdom of Christ

13 "I continued watching in the visions of the night, and look, with the clouds of heaven *one* like a son of man was coming, and he came to the Ancient of Days, and was presented before him. [\[Matt 16:27; 24:30; 26:64; Mark 13:26; 14:62; Luke 21:27; Rev 1:7\]](#)
 14 And to him was given dominion and glory and kingship that all the peoples, the nations, and languages *would* serve him; his dominion *is* a dominion without end that will not cease, and his kingdom *is one* that will not be destroyed.

The Interpretation of the Vision

15 "As for me, Daniel, my spirit was troubled within me, and the visions of my head terrified me.

16 So I approached one of the attendants and I asked him *about* the truth concerning all this; and he told me *that* he would make known to me the explanation of the matter.

17 ‘These great beasts which are four *in number are* four kings *who* will arise from the earth.

18 But the holy ones of the Most High will receive the kingdom, and they will take possession of the kingdom forever, forever and ever.’

19 “Then I desired to make certain concerning the fourth beast that was different from all the others—exceedingly terrifying, with its iron teeth and its claws of bronze; it devoured and crushed *and* stamped the remainder with its feet—

20 and concerning the horns that *were* on its head, and *concerning the other horn* that came up and before which three horns fell, and this horn had eyes and *a* mouth speaking boastfully, and its appearance *was* larger than its companions.

21 I continued watching, and this horn made war with *the* holy ones and it prevailed over them,

22 until the Ancient of Days came and gave judgment to *the* holy ones of the Most High; and the time arrived and *the* holy ones took possession of the kingdom.

23 “And he said, ‘The fourth beast *is* the fourth kingdom *that* will be on the earth that will be different from all the *other* kingdoms, and it will devour the whole earth and it will trample it and it will crush it.

24 And *as for* the ten horns *coming* from it, *from* this kingdom ten kings will arise, and another will arise after them. And he will be different from the earlier *ones*, and he will subdue three kings.

25 And he will speak words against the Most High, and he will wear out *the* holy ones of the Most High, and he will attempt to change times and law, and they will be given into his hand for a time and two times and half a time.

26 Then the court will sit, and his dominion will be removed, to be eradicated and to be destroyed totally.

27 And the kingdom and the dominion and the greatness of the kingdoms under the whole heaven will be given to *the* nation of *the* holy ones of the Most High; his kingdom is an everlasting kingdom, and all the dominions will serve and obey him.’

28 This is the end of the account. As for me, Daniel—my thoughts terrified me greatly and my face changed over me, but I kept the matter in my heart.”

Daniel’s Vision of the Ram and the Goat (551n BC)

Daniel 8

Setting of the Vision

1 In the third year *of* the kingdom of Belshazzar the king, a vision appeared to me, Daniel, after the one that appeared to me previously.

2 And I saw in the vision, and when I saw, I *was* in Susa, the citadel that *was* in the province of Elam. And I saw in the vision, and I myself was at the stream of Ulai.

The Ram (Media/Persia)

3 And I lifted up my eyes and I saw, and look! A ram standing before the stream, and it had two horns, and the horns *were* long, but the one *was* longer than the second, and the longer *one* came up after the other one.

4 I saw the ram charging westward and northward and southward, and none of the beasts stood before it, and there was no rescuing from its power, and it did what it wanted and it became strong.

The Goat (Greece)

5 And I was considering *this*, and look, a he-goat coming from the west across the face of the whole earth, and *it* was not touching the ground; and the he-goat *had* a conspicuous horn between its eyes.

6 Then it came toward the ram that had the two horns that I saw standing before the stream, and it ran at it with the rage of its power.

7 And I saw it approaching the ram and it was furious at it, and it struck the ram, and it broke its two horns, and there was not strength in the ram to stand before him, and he threw it down to the ground and trampled it, and there was no one who could rescue the ram from its power.

8 And the he-goat grew exceedingly great, and at the height of its power the great horn was broken, and four conspicuous horns came up in place of it toward the four winds of heaven.

The Little Horn (Antiochus IV Epiphanes)

9 And from one of them came forth *a* horn, a little one, and it grew exceedingly toward the south, and toward the east, and toward the beautiful land.

10 And it grew up to the host of heaven, and it threw down to the ground some of the host and some of the stars and trampled them.

11 Even against the prince of the hosts it acted arrogantly and took away from him the regular burnt offering, and the place of his sanctuary was overthrown.

12 And on account of transgression, *the* host was given over *to the horn* in addition to the regular burnt offering. And it cast down

truth to the ground, and it acted, and it had success.

13 And I heard a certain holy one speaking, and a certain other holy one said to the specific one who was speaking, “For how long is the vision *concerning* the regular burnt offering, and the transgression *that* makes desolate, and *the* giving over of the sanctuary and *the* host to trampling?”

14 And he said to me, “For two thousand three hundred evenings and mornings, then *the* sanctuary will be restored.”

Gabriel Sent to Interpret the Vision

15 And then when I, Daniel, saw the vision, and I was seeking understanding, there was *one* standing before me with *the* appearance of a man.

16 And I heard *the* voice of a human at *the* Ulai, and he called and said, “Gabriel, *make* this *man* understand the vision.”

17 And he came beside where I was standing, and when he came I became terrified and I fell prostrate on my face. And he said to me, “Understand, son of man, that the vision *is* for *the* time of *the* end.”

18 And when he spoke with me I fell into a trance with my face to the ground, and he touched me and made me stand on by feet.

The Interpretation of the Vision

19 And he said, “Look, I am making known to you what will happen in the period of wrath, for *it* refers to *the* appointed time of *the* end.

20 “The ram that you saw who had two horns *represents* the kings of Media and Persia.

21 “And the hairy he-goat *is* the kingdom of Greece, and the great horn that *is* between his eyes—he *is* the first king.

22 And the *horn* that was broken, and *then* there arose four *horns* in place of it—*these* are four kingdoms that will arise from *his* nation, but not with his power.

23 And at the end of their kingdom, when the transgressions are completed, a king will arise, fierce in countenance and skilled in riddles.

24 And his power will grow, but not by his *own* power, and he will cause fearful destruction, and he will succeed and he will act, and he will destroy *the* mighty and *the* people of *the* holy ones.

25 And by his planning he will make a success of deceit by his hand, and in his mind he will boast, and in *their* ease he will destroy many, and *even* against *the* prince of princes he will rise up, and he will be broken, *but* not by human hands.

26 And the vision of the evening and the morning that has been described, it *is* true; and you, seal *up* the vision, for it refers to many days to come.”

27 And I, Daniel, was overcome, and I became ill for *some* days, and I performed the business of the king, and I was dismayed over the vision and I did not understand it.

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Chronological Notes

1) A Possible Historical Setting for Daniel 4.¹

- A) There is no chronological information in the text for the setting of the events in Daniel 4. The only thing we are told is that Nebuchadnezzar had his dream when he was at home in his palace and was at ease and flourishing (4:4). Twelve months later he was struck with insanity (4:29–32) and did not occupy the throne for a period of “seven times” (4:16), which is usually interpreted to mean “seven years,” but instead probably refers to a shorter period of complete reformation for the king.²
- B) The parts of the Babylonian Chronicle extant for the reign of Nebuchadnezzar end in his tenth year, which extended from Nisan 595 to the end of Adar II 594 BC.³ The only other records of Nebuchadnezzar’s activity are the siege and fall of Jerusalem (589–587), the thirteen-year siege of Tyre (586–573), and a campaign in Egypt in 568/567 BC to quash a revolt by the regent he had placed in charge of that part of the empire.⁴ Nebuchadnezzar died in 562 BC. Thus it would appear as if Nebuchadnezzar had his dream sometime between 573 BC and his death in 562 BC. Since he was in Babylon and “at ease”

¹ Sourced from Andrew E. Steinmann, “Daniel,” *Concordia Commentary*, (Concordia Publishing House, 2008): 208. The footnotes that follow are also from Steinmann.

² For the meaning of the phrase, see Steinmann, 236–37. The phrase is also used in 4:23, 25, 32.

³ BM 21946 (Wiseman, *Chronicles of Chaldean Kings*, 72–75).

⁴ See Wiseman, *Nebuchadnezzar and Babylon*, or Weisberg, *Texts from the Time of Nebuchadnezzar*.

and “flourishing” (4:4) when he had the dream, he was in Babylon twelve months later at the fulfillment of the dream, and he was insane for some period afterwards, Nebuchadnezzar could not have had the dream during the years 570–565, since in 568/567 he was in Egypt and sane enough to lead his troops in battle. Thus Nebuchadnezzar could not have dreamt this dream any earlier than 573 BC nor any later than 560 BC.

- C) From this data we can conclude that there are two possible spans of years for the events of Daniel 4: either 573–569 BC or 564–562 BC. Since there is hardly enough time for all of the events to have taken place in the last two years of his reign, it is most likely that Daniel 4 is set sometime during 573–569. Perhaps the rebellion in Egypt was prompted by Nebuchadnezzar’s return to power; the vassal king in Egypt may have perceived that it was a good time to assert his independence (of which he might have had a taste during Nebuchadnezzar’s insanity). If this was the case, then a date sometime in the late 570s is to be preferred for the events of Daniel 4.

Belshazzar's Feast and the Fall of Babylon (October 11, 539 BC)

Daniel 5

Belshazzar's Feast

- 1 Belshazzar the king made a great festival for *a* thousand of his lords, and in the presence of the thousand *lords* he was drinking wine.
- 2 When he tasted the wine, Belshazzar commanded *that they bring the* vessels of gold and silver that Nebuchadnezzar his predecessor had taken from the temple that *was* in Jerusalem, so that the king and his lords, his wives and his concubines may drink from them.
- 3 Then they brought in the vessels of gold that they took from the temple, the house of God that *was* in Jerusalem, and the king and his lords, his wives and his concubines drank from them.
- 4 They drank the wine and praised the gods of gold and silver, bronze, iron, wood and stone.

The Writing on the Wall

- 5 Immediately human fingers appeared and they wrote opposite the lampstand on the plaster of the wall of the palace of the king, and the king was watching the palm of the hand that was writing.
- 6 Then his face changed and his thoughts terrified him, and his hip joints gave way and his knees knocked together.
- 7 The king cried aloud to bring *in* the conjurers, the astrologers and the diviners; the king spoke and said to *the* wise men of Babylon, "Any man that can read this writing and can tell me its explanation will be clothed *in* purple and *will have a* necklace of gold *hung* around his neck and he will rule *as third in authority* in the kingdom."
- 8 Then all the wise men of the king came in, but they were not able to read the writing or to make known its explanation.
- 9 Then the king, Belshazzar, became greatly terrified, and his facial features changed upon him, and his lords were perplexed.

Daniel Summoned

- 10 Because of the words of the king and his lords, the queen came into the banqueting hall and the queen spoke up and said, "O king, live forever, and let not your thoughts terrify you and *do* not let your facial expressions grow pale.
- 11 There is a man in your kingdom who has the spirit of the holy gods in him. And in the days of your predecessor, enlightenment and insight and wisdom like the wisdom of the gods was found in him; and, O king, Nebuchadnezzar your predecessor appointed him *as* chief of the magicians, the conjurers, the astrologers, *and* the diviners. Your predecessor the king *did this*
- 12 because *there* was found in him *an* excellent spirit and understanding and insight *for* interpreting dreams and explaining riddles and solving riddles; *that is*, in Daniel whom the king named Beltshazzar. Now, let Daniel be called and he will tell the explanation."
- 13 Then Daniel was brought in before the king, *and* the king spoke and said to Daniel, "You *are* Daniel who are one of the exiles of Judah whom my predecessor, the king, brought from Judah.
- 14 And I have heard that a spirit of the gods *is* in you and enlightenment and insight and excellent wisdom was found in you.
- 15 And now the wise men *and* the conjurers were brought in before me so that they could read this writing *in order to* make its explanation known to me, but they were not able to disclose the explanation of the matter.
- 16 But I have heard concerning you that you are able to produce interpretations and to solve riddles; now if you are able to read the writing and to make known its explanation to me, you will be clothed *in* purple and *a* necklace of gold *will be placed* around your neck and you will rule *as third in command* in the kingdom."

A Refusal and a Rebuke

- 17 Then Daniel answered and said before the king, "Let your gifts be for yourself or your rewards give to another; nevertheless, I will read the writing to the king and I will make known to him the explanation.
- 18 O king, the Most High God gave the kingdom and the greatness and the glory and the majesty to Nebuchadnezzar your predecessor.
- 19 And because of the greatness that he gave to him, all the peoples, the nations and languages trembled and feared before him; whomever he wanted he killed, and whomever he wanted he let live, and whomever he wanted he honored, and whomever he wanted he humbled.
- 20 But when his heart became arrogant and his spirit became hard *so as* to act proudly, he was deposed from the throne of his kingdom and the glory was taken away from him.
- 21 And he was driven away from human society and his mind was made like the animals and his dwelling *was* with the wild asses; *and* he was given grass like oxen to eat, and with the dew of heaven his body was bathed, until he acknowledged that the Most High God *is* sovereign over the kingdom of humankind, and whoever he wants he sets over it.
- 22 "But you his successor, Belshazzar, have not humbled your heart even though you knew all this.
- 23 And *now* you have exalted yourself against the Lord of heaven, and the vessels of his temple you have brought in before you, and you and your lords, your wives and your concubines, have been drinking wine from them, and you have praised the gods of silver, gold, bronze, iron, wood, and stone that *do* not see and *do* not hear and *do* not know, but the God who holds your life in his hand and all of your ways come from him, you have not honored.
- 24 So then the palm of the hand was sent out from his presence and this writing was inscribed.

The Writing Explained

25 “Now this was the writing that was inscribed: ‘Mene, Mene, Tekel and Parsin.’

26 “This *is* the explanation of the matter: ‘Mene’—God has numbered your kingdom and brought an end *to* it.

27 “‘Tekel’—you have been weighed on scales and you have been found wanting.

28 “‘Peres’—your kingdom has been divided and given to *the* Medes and Persians.”

29 Then Belshazzar commanded, and they clothed Daniel *with* purple and *placed* a necklace of gold around his neck, and they made a proclamation concerning him that he would be *the* third ruler *in authority* in the kingdom.

The Fall of Babylon

30 That same night Belshazzar, the Chaldean king, was killed.

31 And Darius the Mede received the kingdom when he was about sixty-two years old.

Darius’ New Government (November 7–24, 539 BC)

Daniel 6:1–2

1 It pleased Darius, and he set up one hundred and twenty satraps over the kingdom, that they were throughout the whole kingdom,

2 and over them *were* three administrators, *of* whom Daniel *was* one, *so* that these satraps were giving account to them, and the king would not be suffering loss.

Daniel Set Above All the Governors (November 25, 539 – February 21, 538 BC)

Daniel 6:3

3 Then Daniel began distinguishing himself above the administrators and the satraps because an exceptional spirit *was* in him, and *so* the king planned to appoint him over the whole kingdom.

Daniel and the Lion’s Den (February–March, 538 BC)

Daniel 6:4–28

The Plot

4 Then the *other* administrators and satraps began to seek to find *a* pretext against Daniel in connection with the kingdom, but they were not able to find any pretext and corruption because he was trustworthy, and no negligence or corruption could be found in him.

5 Then these men said, “We will not find any pretext against this Daniel unless we find it in connection with the law of his God.”

6 So the administrators and the satraps conspired with respect to the king and so they said to him, “Darius, O king, live forever!

7 All of *the* administrators of the kingdom, and the prefects, the satraps, the counselors and the governors took counsel *and have* agreed to establish an edict of the king and to enforce a decree that whoever will seek a prayer from any god or human except from you *for* up to thirty days will be thrown into the lion pit.

8 Now, O king, establish the edict and you must sign the document *so* that *it* cannot be changed, according to *the* law of *the* Medes and Persians which cannot be revoked.”

9 So the king, Darius, signed the writing and the interdict.

The Accusation and Condemnation of Daniel

10 Now when Daniel realized that the document was signed, he went to his house (now he had windows in his upper room that were open toward Jerusalem), and three times daily he knelt on his knees and prayed and *gave* praise before his God, just as he had been doing previously.

11 Then these men came as a group and they found Daniel praying and pleading for mercy before his God.

12 Then they approached and spoke with the king concerning the edict of the king, “Did you not sign an edict that any person who would seek *anything* from any God or human within thirty days except from you, O king, would be thrown into the lion pit?” The king answered and said, “The matter *as you have just stated* is certain according to *the* law of *the* Medes and Persians which cannot be revoked.”

13 Then they responded and said before the king, “Daniel, who *is* from the exiles of Judah, is not paying any attention to you, O king, or to the decree that you have signed, and three times daily he says his prayer.”

14 Then the king, when he heard that report, he was extremely distressed over it; and concerning Daniel he was determined to rescue him. And until the setting of the sun he was making every effort to deliver him.

15 Then these men came as *a* group to the king and said, “Recall, O king, that *with respect to the* law of *the* Medes and Persians that any decree or edict that the king establishes cannot be changed.”

16 Then the king gave the command, and Daniel was brought in and they threw *him* into the lion pit. The king said to Daniel, “Your God, whom you serve faithfully, may he rescue you!”

17 And a stone was brought and it was put on the entrance of the pit, and the king sealed it with his signet *ring* and with the signet *rings* of his lords, so that nothing would be changed concerning Daniel.

18 Then the king went to his palace and spent the night in fasting, and no food was brought in before him and his sleep fled from him.

The Deliverance of Daniel

19 Then the king got up at daybreak, at first light, and he went in haste to the lion pit.

20 And when he came near to the pit, he cried out to Daniel with *a* distressed voice, *and* the king spoke and said to Daniel, “O Daniel, servant of the living God, your God whom you serve faithfully, was he able to rescue you from the lions?”

21 Then Daniel spoke to the king, “O king, live forever!”

22 My God sent his angel and he shut the mouth of the lions and they did not hurt me, because before him I was found blameless, and also before you, O king, I have not done *any* wrong.”

23 Then the king was exceedingly glad over it and commanded *that* Daniel be lifted up from the pit; and *there* was not any wound found on him, because he had trusted in his God.

The Accusers Killed and Daniel’s God Honored

24 The king then commanded, and these men were brought who had accused Daniel, and they threw them and their children and their wives into the lion pit, and they had not reached the floor of the pit before the lions had overpowered them and they had crushed all of their bones.

25 Then Darius the king wrote to all the people, the nations, and the languages living in the whole earth, “May your prosperity become great!

26 I make a decree that in all the dominion of my kingdom *people* will be trembling and fearing before the God of Daniel, for he *is* the living God and endures forever and his kingdom *is* one that will not be destroyed and his dominion has no end.

27 *He is* rescuing, delivering, and working signs and wonders in the heavens and on earth, for he *has* rescued Daniel from the power of the lions.”

Daniel Prospers in the Medo-Persian Empire

28 So this Daniel prospered during the kingdom of Darius and during the kingdom of Cyrus the Persian.

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Chronological Notes

1) Historical Setting of Daniel 5.¹

- A) According to Daniel 5:30, Babylon fell to the Persian army shortly after the disastrous end of Belshazzar’s banquet. The Persians marched into Babylon on October 12, 539 (16 Tishri 539). Therefore the banquet that is the historical setting of Daniel 5 must have been on the evening of October 11, 539.
- B) At the end of chapter 4, Nebuchadnezzar had recovered from his insanity and regained his throne. He then died in 562 BC. If the final events of Daniel 4 occurred during the last year of Nebuchadnezzar’s reign, then Daniel 5 begins twenty-three years later, in 539 BC. However, if Nebuchadnezzar’s insanity ended about 570 BC, then about thirty years has passed between the end of Daniel 4 and the events in Daniel 5.
- C) Much had happened in the years between Nebuchadnezzar’s death and Belshazzar’s feast. Nebuchadnezzar was succeeded by his son Amel-marduk, who reigned two short years from 562–560. Amel-marduk was assassinated, and his brother-in-law, Neriglissar, seized the throne and ruled from 560 to 556. Neriglissar was succeeded by his young son Labashi-marduk, who reigned only a few months in 556. He was deposed in a rebellion that brought one of the members of the coup, Nabonidus, to the throne.
- D) Nabonidus reigned from 556 BC until the fall of Babylon to the Persians in 539. He proved to be singularly unpopular in Babylon because of his devotion to the god Sin instead of the patron god of Babylon, Marduk (also called Bel). In response

¹ Sourced from Andrew E. Steinmann, *Daniel*, Concordia Commentary (Concordia Publishing House, 2008): 259.

to this unpopularity, Nabonidus installed his son Belshazzar as coregent and voluntarily exiled himself to Tema in the Arabian Desert for some ten years. The commonly accepted date for the beginning of Belshazzar's coregency is 553, although there is good evidence that it did not begin until 550. Nabonidus was in Babylon again in 539. With the Persian army approaching Babylon, Nabonidus left the city and met Cyrus in battle at Sippar two days before the fall of Babylon. The Babylonian troops were routed by the Persians, and Nabonidus fled. He later returned to Babylon after its fall to the Persians and surrendered himself. Cyrus allowed him to live the remainder of his life in Carmania according to Berosus. Therefore the sequence of Babylonian rulers after Nebuchadnezzar's death in 562 to the fall of Babylon in 539 is as follows:

- Amel-marduk (562–560)
- Neriglissar (560–556)
- Labashi-marduk (556)
- Nabonidus (556–539), with coregent Belshazzar (553–539 or 550–539)

2) Historical Setting of Daniel 6.²

- A) In Daniel 5:31, Darius the Mede (Cyrus the Persian) "received the kingdom," and in Daniel 6:1, Darius decides to place satraps over the conquered kingdom of Babylon. It is obvious that Daniel 6 took place shortly after the fall of Babylon to the Persians.
- B) The city of Babylon was entered by the Persian commander Gubaru on 16 Tishri 539 BC (October 12, 539). The Persian king Cyrus arrived in Babylon on 3 Heshvan 539 (October 29, 539). He appointed Gubaru governor and other officials were appointed under Gubaru. However, Gubaru died on 11 Heshvan (November 6, 539). Babylonian records do not reveal who was ruler of Babylon under Cyrus between 11 Heshvan 539 and the beginning of Cyrus' first official year on 1 Nisan 538 (March 24, 538). However, almost thirty cuneiform tablets from Cyrus' first year speak of "Cyrus, king of lands, Cambyses, king of Babylon," indicating that Cyrus' son Cambyses was placed on the throne of Babylon as coregent with his father. Moreover, Cambyses took part in the New Year's festival honoring the patron god of Babylon, Marduk (Bel)—a privilege reserved for Babylon's king. However, probably due to the difficulty Cambyses had working with Babylonian officials, he was removed from the throne nine months later and replaced by a governor named Gubaru (a different man than the now-deceased Persian commander by the same name). Beginning with the tenth month of his first year, Cyrus is called "king of Babylon, king of lands." Gubaru remained governor beyond Cyrus' death until Cambyses' fifth year as king over the Persian Empire.
- C) We should note that Daniel was Cyrus' presumptive choice to be the person placed over the entire kingdom of Babylon (6:2). However, nowhere does Daniel 6 say that he was placed in that position. Instead, we are only told that Daniel "prospered" during the reign of Cyrus (6:28) and lived until at least Cyrus' third year (10:1). Given the trouble Cyrus had with jealousy among officials in Babylon (as evidenced by the account in Daniel 6), it appears that he decided instead to place his son Cambyses in charge. Therefore, Daniel was probably not promoted to the position of governor, though he appears to have retained important influence in the affairs of the kingdom.
- D) Thus the events of Daniel 6 take place between Cyrus' arrival in the city of Babylon in October 539 and the naming of Cambyses as king of Babylon in late March 538. We can construct a possible chronology for the events in Daniel 6 as follows:
- 3 Heshvan (October 29) 539 BC – Cyrus arrived in Babylon and appointed Gubaru governor.
 - 4–10 Heshvan (October 30–November 5) 539 – Gubaru began appointing satraps.
 - 11 Heshvan (November 6) 539 – Gubaru died.
 - 12–29 Heshvan (November 7–24) 539 – Cyrus completed appointing satraps and placed three overseers (including Daniel) over the satraps (instead of a new governor; Daniel 6:1–2).
 - Kislev 539–Shebta 538 (November 25, 539–February 21, 538) – Daniel distinguished himself; Cyrus planned to appoint him as governor of the kingdom of Babylon (Daniel 6:3).
 - Late Shebat–Adar 538 (Late February–March 23, 538) – The plot against Daniel was hatched. Daniel rescued from the lions' den.
 - 1 Nisan (March 24) 538 – At the beginning of Cyrus' first official year, Cambyses was made king of Babylon and took part in New Year's festival in Babylon.

² Sourced from Andrew E. Steinmann, *Daniel*, Concordia Commentary (Concordia Publishing House, 2008): 301–303.

Official Genealogical Records: Introduction (c. 538 BC)

1 Chronicles 9:1a

1a So all Israel was enrolled in genealogy. And behold, they were written in the book of the kings of Israel.

Official Genealogical Records: Adam's Descendants (c. 538 BC)

1 Chronicles 1:1–27

Adam to Noah

- 1 Adam, Seth, Enosh;
- 2 Kenan, Mahalalel, Jared;
- 3 Enoch, Methuselah, Lamech;
- 4 Noah, Shem, Ham, and Japheth.

Japheth's Descendants

- 5 The sons of Japheth: Gomer, Magog, Madai, Javan, Tubal, Meshech, and Tiras.
- 6 The sons of Gomer: Ashkenaz, Diphath, and Togarmah.
- 7 The sons of Javan: Elishah, Tarshish, Kittim, and Rhodanim.

Ham's Descendants

- 8 The sons of Ham: Cush, Mizraim, Put, and Canaan.
- 9 The sons of Cush: Seba, Havilah, Sabta, Raamah, and Sabteca. And the sons of Raamah: Sheba and Dedan.
- 10 And Cush fathered Nimrod; he himself began to be mighty on earth.
- 11 And Mizraim fathered the Ludim, the Anamim, the Lehabim, the Naphtuhim,
- 12 the Pathrusim, the Casluhim (from whence the Philistines descended), and the Caphtorim.
- 13 And Canaan fathered Zidon his firstborn, and Heth,
- 14 and the Jebusites, the Amorites, the Girgashites,
- 15 the Hivites, the Arkites, the Sinites,
- 16 the Arvadites, the Zemarites, and the Hamathites.

Shem's Descendants

- 17 The sons of Shem: Elam, Asshur, Arphaxad, Lud, Aram, Uz, Hul, Gether, and Meshech.
- 18 And Arphaxad fathered Shelah; and Shelah fathered Eber.
- 19 And two sons were born to Eber: the name of the one *was* Peleg (for in his days the earth was divided), and the name of his brother *was* Joktan.
- 20 And Joktan fathered Almodad, Sheleph, Hazarmaveth, Jerah,
- 21 Hadoram, Uzal, Diklah,
- 22 Ebal, Abimael, Sheba,
- 23 Ophir, Havilah, and Jobab; all these were the sons of Joktan.
- 24 Shem, Arphaxad, Shelah;
- 25 Eber, Peleg, Reu;
- 26 Serug, Nahor, Terah;
- 27 Abram, that is, Abraham.

Official Genealogical Records: Abraham's Descendants (c. 538 BC)

1 Chronicles 1:28–54

Abraham's Two Sons

- 28 The sons of Abraham: Isaac and Ishmael.

Ishmael's Descendants

- 29 These *are* their generations: the firstborn of Ishmael, Nebaioth, and Kedar, Abdeel, Mibsam,
- 30 Mishma, Dumah, Massa, Hadad, Tema,
- 31 Jetur, Naphish, and Kedmah. These *are* the sons of Ishmael.

Abraham's Descendants Through Keturah

- 32 And the sons of Keturah, Abraham's concubine: she gave birth to Zimran, Jokshan, Medan, Midian, Ishbak, and Shuah. And the sons of Jokshan: Sheba and Dedan.

33 And the sons of Midian: Ephah, Epher, Enoch, Abida, and Eldaah. All these *were* the sons of Keturah.

Isaac's Descendants

34 Abraham fathered Isaac. The sons of Isaac: Esau and Israel.

The Line of Esau

35 The sons of Esau: Eliphaz, Reuel, Jeush, Jalam, and Korah.

36 The sons of Eliphaz: Teman, Omar, Zephi, Gatam, Kenaz, Timna, and Amalek.

37 The sons of Reuel: Nahath, Zerah, Shammah, and Mizzah.

The Line of Seir

38 And the sons of Seir: Lotan, Shobal, Zibeon, Anah, Dishon, Ezer, and Dishan.

39 And the sons of Lotan: Hori and Homam; and the sister of Lotan *was* Timna.

40 The sons of Shobal: Alian, Manahath, Ebal, Shephi, and Onam. And the sons of Zibeon: Aiah and Anah.

41 The sons of Anah: Dishon. And the sons of Dishon: Hamran, Eshban, Ithran, and Keran.

42 The sons of Ezer: Bilhan, Zaavan, and Jaakan. The sons of Dishan: Uz and Aran.

The Edomite Kings and Chiefs

43 These *are* the kings who reigned in the land of Edom before any king reigned over the Israelites: Bela son of Beor, and the name of his city *was* Dinhabah.

44 When Bela died, Jobab son of Zerah from Bozrah reigned in his place.

45 When Jobab died, Husham from the land of the Temanites reigned in his place.

46 When Husham died, Hadad son of Bedad, who defeated the Midianites in the country of Moab, reigned in his place. And the name of his city *was* Avith.

47 When Hadad died, Samlah from Masrekah reigned in his place.

48 When Samlah died, Shaul from Rehoboth-by-the-River reigned in his place.

49 When Shaul died, Baal-Hanan son of Achbor reigned in his place.

50 When Baal-Hanan died, Hadad reigned in his place, and the name of his city *was* Pai. And the name of his wife *was* Mehetabel, daughter of Matred, daughter of Me-Zahab.

51 And Hadad died. And the chiefs of Edom were: chiefs Timna, Aliah, Jetheth,

52 Oholibamah, Elah, Pinon,

53 Kenaz, Teman, Mibzar,

54 Magdiel, and Iram. These *are* the chiefs of Edom.

Official Genealogical Records: Israel's Twelve Sons (c. 538 BC)

1 Chronicles 2:1–2

1 These *are* the sons of Israel: Reuben, Simeon, Levi, Judah, Issachar, Zebulun,

2 Dan, Joseph, Benjamin, Naphtali, Gad, and Asher.

Official Genealogical Records: Judah's Descendants (c. 538 BC)

1 Chronicles 2:3–55

Judah's Sons Through Hezron

3 The sons of Judah: Er, Onan and Shelah; *these* three were born to him from Bathshua the Canaanite. Now Er, Judah's firstborn, *was* evil in the sight of Yahweh, and he put him to death.

4 And Tamar his daughter-in-law bore Perez and Zerah to him. The sons of Judah *were* five in all.

5 The sons of Perez: Hezron and Hamul.

6 The sons of Zerah: Zimri, Ethan, Heman, Calcol, and Dara, five in all.

7 The son of Carmi: Achar, the troubler of Israel, who acted unfaithfully in the matter of the devoted thing.

8 And the son of Ethan *was* Azariah.

9 The sons of Hezron who were born to him: Jerahmeel, Ram, and Caleb.

The Descendants of Ram, Son of Hezron

10 And Ram fathered Amminadab, and Amminadab fathered Nahshon, prince of the sons of Judah.

11 And Nahshon fathered Salma, and Salma fathered Boaz.

12 And Boaz fathered Obed, and Obed fathered Jesse.

13 And Jesse fathered Eliab his firstborn, Abinadab the second, Shimea the third,

- 14 Nethanel the fourth, Raddai the fifth,
 15 Ozem the sixth, David the seventh.
 16 And their sisters *were* Zeruiah and Abigail. The sons of Zeruiah: Abishai, Joab, and Asahel, three.
 17 And Abigail bore Amasa, and the father of Amasa *was* Jether the Ishmaelite.

The Descendants of Caleb, Son of Hezron

- 18 And Caleb the son of Hezron fathered children by Azubah his wife and by Jerioth. And these *were* her sons: Jeshur, Shobab, and Ardon.
 19 And when Azubah died, Caleb married Ephrathah, and she bore Hur to him.
 20 And Hur fathered Uri, and Uri fathered Bezalel.
 21 And afterward Hezron went in to the daughter of Makir the father of Gilead. And he married her when he was sixty years old. And she bore Segub to him.
 22 And Segub fathered Jair, and he had twenty-three cities in the land of Gilead.
 23 And Geshur and Aram took Havvoth-Jair from them, Kenath and its villages, sixty cities. All these *were* the descendants of Makir, the father of Gilead.
 24 And after the death of Hezron in Caleb-Ephrathah, Abijah the wife of Hezron bore to him Ashhur, the father of Tekoa.

The Descendants of Jerahmeel, Son of Hezron

- 25 And the sons of Jerahmeel the firstborn of Hezron were Ram his firstborn, Bunah, Oren, Ozem, and Ahijah.
 26 And Jerahmeel had another wife, and her name *was* Atarah. She *was* the mother of Onam.
 27 The sons of Ram the firstborn of Jerahmeel were Maaz, Jamin, and Eker.
 28 And the sons of Onam were Shammai and Jada. And the sons of Shammai *were* Nadab and Abishur.
 29 And the name of the wife of Abishur *was* Abihail, and she bore to him Ahban and Molid.
 30 And the sons of Nadab *were* Seled and Appaim. And Seled died without children.
 31 And the sons of Appaim: Ishi. The sons of Ishi: Sheshan. The sons of Sheshan: Ahlai.
 32 And the sons of Jada the brother of Shammai: Jether and Jonathan. And Jether died without children.
 33 And the sons of Jonathan: Peleth and Zaza. These were the children of Jerahmeel.

Supplementary Material on Jerahmeel

- 34 And Sheshan had no sons, only daughters, but Sheshan had an Egyptian slave, and his name *was* Jarha.
 35 So Sheshan gave his daughter to Jarha his slave for a wife, and she bore to him Attai.
 36 And Attai fathered Nathan, and Nathan fathered Zabad.
 37 And Zabad fathered Ephlail, and Ephlail fathered Obed.
 38 And Obed fathered Jehu, and Jehu fathered Azariah.
 39 And Azariah fathered Helez, and Helez fathered Eleasah.
 40 And Eleasah fathered Sismai, and Sismai fathered Shallum.
 41 And Shallum fathered Jekamiah, and Jekamiah fathered Elishama.

Supplementary Material on Caleb

- 42 And the sons of Caleb the brother of Jerahmeel were Mesha his firstborn; he *was* the father of Ziph. The sons of Mareshah: Hebron.
 43 And the sons of Hebron *were* Korah, Tappuah, Rekem, and Shema.
 44 And Shema fathered Raham, the father of Jorkeam. And Rekem fathered Shammai.
 45 And the son of Shammai *was* Maon, and Maon *was* the father of Beth-Zur.
 46 And Ephah, the concubine of Caleb, gave birth to Haran, Moza, and Gazez. And Haran fathered Gazez.
 47 And the sons of Jahdai *were* Regem, Jotham, Geshan, Pelet, Ephah, and Shaaph.
 48 Maacah, the concubine of Caleb, gave birth to Sheber and Tirhanah.
 49 She also gave birth to Shaaph the father of Madmannah, Sheva the father of Machbenah and the father of Gibeaz; and the daughter of Caleb *was* Acsah.
 50 These were the descendants of Caleb. The sons of Hur the firstborn of Ephrathah: Shobal the father of Kiriath-Jearim,
 51 Salma the father of Bethlehem, *and* Hareph the father of Beth-Gader.
 52 And Shobal the father of Kiriath-Jearim had *other* sons: Haroeh, half of the Menuhoth.
 53 And the families of Kiriath-Jearim: the Ithrites, the Puthites, the Shumathites, and the Mishraitites. From these descended the Zorathites and the Eshtaolites.
 54 The sons of Salma: Bethlehem, the Netophathites, Ataroth-Beth-Joab, and half of the Manahathites, the Zorites.
 55 And the families of the scribes who lived *at* Jabez: the Tirathites, the Shimeathites, and the Sucathites. These *were* the Kenites who came from Hammath, the father of the house of Recab.

Official Genealogical Records: David's Descendants (c. 538 BC)

1 Chronicles 3:1–9

- 1 These were the sons of David who were born to him in Hebron: the firstborn, Amnon, by Ahinoam the Jezreelite; the second, Daniel, by Abigail the Carmelite;
- 2 the third, Absalom, the son of Maacah the daughter of Talmai, king of Geshur; the fourth, Adonijah, the son of Haggith;
- 3 the fifth, Shephatiah, by Abital; the sixth, Ithream, by his wife Eglah.
- 4 Six were born to him in Hebron. And he reigned there seven years and six months. And he reigned thirty-three years in Jerusalem.
- 5 And these were born to him in Jerusalem: Shimea, Shobab, Nathan, and Solomon, four by Bathshua the daughter of Ammiel;
- 6 then Ibhar, Elishama, Eliphelet,
- 7 Nogah, Nepheg, Japhia,
- 8 Elishama, Eliada, and Eliphelet, nine.
- 9 All these *were* the sons of David, besides the sons of the concubines. And Tamar was their sister.

Official Genealogical Records: Solomon's Descendants (c. 538 BC)

1 Chronicles 3:10–24

- 10 Now the son of Solomon *was* Rehoboam; Abijah *was* his son, Asa *was* his son, Jehoshaphat *was* his son,
- 11 Joram *was* his son, Ahaziah *was* his son, Joash *was* his son,
- 12 Amaziah *was* his son, Azariah *was* his son, Jotham *was* his son,
- 13 Ahaz *was* his son, Hezekiah *was* his son, Manasseh *was* his son,
- 14 Amon *was* his son, Josiah *was* his son.
- 15 And the sons of Josiah: Johanan the firstborn, the second Jehoiakim, the third Zedekiah, the fourth Shallum.
- 16 And the descendants of Jehoiakim: Jeconiah his son, Zedekiah his son.
- 17 And the sons of Jeconiah, the captive: Shealtiel his son,
- 18 Malchiram, Pedaiiah, Shenazzar, Jekamiah, Hoshama, and Nedabiah.
- 19 And the sons of Pedaiiah: Zerubbabel and Shimei. And the sons of Zerubbabel: Meshullam and Hananiah, and Shelomith their sister,
- 20 and Hashubah, Ohel, Berekiah, Hasadiah, and Jushab-Hesed, five.
- 21 And the sons of Hananiah: Pelatiah and Jeshaiah. The sons of Rephaiah, the sons of Arnan, the sons of Obadiah, the sons of Shecaniah.
- 22 And the sons of Shecaniah: Shemaiah. And the sons of Shemaiah: Hattush, Igal, Bariah, Neariah, and Shaphat, six.
- 23 And the sons of Neariah: Elieoenai, Hezekiah, and Azrikam, three.
- 24 And the sons of Elieoenai: Hodaviah, Eliashib, Pelaiah, Akkub, Johanan, Delaiah, and Anani, seven.

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Chronological Notes

- 1) I placed the genealogical records of 1 Chronicles 1–9 here in the reading plan because they form the background for the next great event in Israel's history—the return of the Jews from their exile in Babylon. Genealogical records played a very important part in the return to Jerusalem. The records showed which people belonged to which tribe—this had great significance because God had allotted the land on the basis of tribal descent. The records also showed which people belonged to the priesthood. Ezra 2:61–63 and Nehemiah 7:63–65 record that some of the returning “sons of the priests” were excluded from the priesthood as unclean because they could not be found among those enrolled in the genealogies. Also, during Nehemiah's term as governor, God prompted him to make sure the people were enrolled in the genealogies (Neh 7:5). Thus the genealogical records of 1 Chronicles 1–9 are an important prelude to the story of the return. Including them here highlights their relevance and avoids interrupting the narrative later as events unfold.

Official Genealogical Records: Other Descendants of Judah (c. 538 BC)

1 Chronicles 4:1–23

- 1 The sons of Judah: Perez, Hezron, Carmi, Hur, and Shobal.
- 2 And Reaiah the son of Shobal fathered Jahath, and Jahath fathered Ahumai and Lahad. These *were* the clans of the Zorathites.
- 3 And these *were* the sons of Etam: Jezreel, Ishma, and Idbash. And the name of their sister *was* Hazzeleponi,
- 4 and Penuel *was* the father of Gedor, and Ezer *was* the father of Hushah. These *were* the sons of Hur, the firstborn of Ephrathah, the father of Bethlehem.
- 5 And Ashhur, the father of Tekoa, had two wives: Helah and Naarah.
- 6 And Naarah bore him Ahuzzam, Hopher, Temeni, and Haahashtari. These *were* the sons of Naarah.
- 7 The sons of Helah: Zereth, Izhar, and Ethnan.
- 8 And Koz fathered Anub, Zobebah, and the clans of Aharhel, the son of Harum.
- 9 And Jabez *was* more honorable than his brothers. And his mother called his name Jabez, saying, "Because I bore him in pain."
- 10 And Jabez called upon the God of Israel, saying, "Oh that you would surely bless me and enlarge my border. And may your hand be with me, that you would keep me from evil so that it might not harm me!" And God granted what he asked.
- 11 Chelub, the brother of Shuhah, fathered Mehir. He *was* the father of Eshton.
- 12 And Eshton fathered Beth-Rapha, Paseah, and Tehinnah, the father of the city of Nahash. These *are* the men of Recah.
- 13 The sons of Kenaz: Othniel and Seraiah. And the sons of Othniel: Hathath.
- 14 And Meonothai fathered Ophrah; and Seraiah fathered Joab, the father of Ge-Harashim, because they *were* craftsmen.
- 15 The sons of Caleb, the son of Jephunneh: Iru, Elah, and Naam. And the sons of Elah: Kenaz.
- 16 The sons of Jehallelel: Ziph, Ziphah, Tiria, and Asarel.
- 17 The sons of Ezra: Jether, Mered, Ephraim, and Jalon. And she became pregnant with Miriam, Shammai, and Ishbah, the father of Eshtemoa.
- 18 And his Judahite wife bore Jered the father of Gedor, Heber the father of Soco, and Jekuthiel the father of Zanoah. And these *were* the sons of Bithiah daughter of Pharaoh, whom Mered married.
- 19 The sons of the wife of Hodiah, the sister of Naham, *were* the fathers of Keilah the Garmite and Eshtemoa the Maacathite.
- 20 The sons of Shimon: Amnon, Rinnah, Ben-Hanan, and Tolon. The sons of Ishi: Zoheth and Ben-Zoheth.
- 21 The sons of Shelah, the son of Judah: Er the father of Lecah, Laadah the father of Mareshah, and the families of the house of linen workers at Beth Ashbea;
- 22 and Jokim, and the men of Cozeba, and Joash, and Saraph, who ruled in Moab and returned to Lehem. (Now the records are ancient).
- 23 These *were* the potters and inhabitants of Netaim and Gederah. They lived there with the king in his service.

Official Genealogical Records: Simeon's Descendants (c. 538 BC)

1 Chronicles 4:24–43

- 24 The sons of Simeon: Nemuel, Jamin, Jarib, Zerah, Shaul.
- 25 Shallum his son, Mibsam his son, Mishma his son.
- 26 The sons of Mishma: Hammuel his son, Zaccur his son, Shimei his son.
- 27 Shimei had sixteen sons and six daughters, but his brothers did not have many children. But all their families did not multiply like the men of Judah.
- 28 And they lived in Beersheba, Moladah, Hazar Shual,
- 29 Bilhah, Ezem, Tolad,
- 30 Bethuel, Hormah, Ziklag,
- 31 Beth-Marcaboth, Hazar-Susim, Beth-Biri, and Shaaraim. These *were* their cities until David reigned.
- 32 And their villages *were* Etam, Ain, Rimmon, Token, and Ashan, five cities
- 33 and all their villages that surrounding these cities as far as Baal. These *were* their settlements, and they kept a genealogical record for them.
- 34 Meshobab, Jamlech, and Joshah the son of Amaziah,
- 35 Joel, and Jehu the son of Joshibiah, son of Seraiah, son of Asiel.
- 36 And Elioenai, Jaakobah, Jeshohaiah, Asaiah, Adiel, Jesimiel, Benaiah,
- 37 and Ziza the son of Shiphi, son of Allon, son of Jedaiah, son of Shimri, son of Shemaiah.
- 38 These mentioned by name *were* leaders in their families, and their fathers' households increased greatly.
- 39 And they went to the entrance of Gedor, up to the east side of the valley, to seek pasture for their flocks.
- 40 And they found fertile and good pasture, and the land *was* very broad, quiet, and at ease, for the former inhabitants there *were* from Ham.
- 41 These, mentioned by name, came in the days of Hezekiah, king of Judah, and attacked their tents and the Meunites who were found there. And they devoted them to destruction to this day, and they settled among them because *there was* pasture there for their flocks.

42 And some of them from the Simeonites went to Mount Seir, five hundred men. And Pelatiah, Neariah, Rephaiah, and Uzziel, the sons of Ishi, *were* under their leadership.

43 And they destroyed the remainder of the Amalekites who had escaped, and they have lived there to this day.

Official Genealogical Records: Reuben's Descendants (c. 538 BC)

1 Chronicles 5:1–10

1 The sons of Reuben the firstborn of Israel (for he was the firstborn, but when he defiled the couch of his father, his birthright was given to the sons of Joseph, the son of Israel, so that he was not enrolled in the genealogy as the firstborn,

2 though Judah became strong among his brothers and a chief *came* from him, but the birthright belonged to Joseph).

3 The sons of Reuben the firstborn of Israel: Enoch, Pallu, Hezron, and Carmi.

4 The sons of Joel: Shemaiah his son, Gog his son, Shimei his son,

5 Micah his son, Reaiah his son, Baal his son,

6 Beerah his son, a leader of the Reubenites, whom Tiglath-Pilneser king of Assyria deported into exile.

7 And his kinsmen by their families, when their generations were recorded in *the* genealogy: the chief, Jeiel, and Zechariah,

8 and Bela son of Azaz, son of Shema, son of Joel, who lived in Aroer, as far as Nebo and Baal-Meon.

9 He also lived to the east up to the entrance of the desert this side of the River Euphrates, for their livestock had multiplied in the land of Gilead.

10 And in the days of Saul they made war against the Hagrites, and they fell into their hand. And they lived in their tents in all the region east of Gilead.

Official Genealogical Records: Gad's Descendants (c. 538 BC)

1 Chronicles 5:11–17

11 And the sons of Gad lived near to them in the land of Bashan as far as Salecah:

12 Joel the chief, Shapham the second, Janai, and Shaphat in Bashan.

13 And their kinsmen according to their fathers' households: Michael, Meshullam, Sheba, Jorai, Jacan, Zia, and Eber, seven.

14 These *were* the sons of Abihail the son of Huri, son of Jaroah, son of Gilead, son of Michael, son of Jeshishai, son of Jahdo, son of Buz.

15 Ahi son of Abdiel, son of Guni, *was* chief in their fathers' households.

16 And they lived in Gilead, in Bashan, and in its towns, and in all the pasturelands of Sharon to their limits.

17 All of them were enrolled in *the* genealogy in the days of Jotham, king of Judah, and in the days of Jeroboam, king of Israel.

Official Genealogical Records: East Manasseh's Descendants (c. 538 BC)

1 Chronicles 5:23–25

23 And the sons of the half-tribe of Manasseh lived in the land from Bashan to Baal-Hermon, Senir, and Mount Hermon. They *were* numerous.

24 Now these *were* the heads of their fathers' households: Ephraim, Ishi, Eliel, Azriel, Jeremiah, Hodaviah, and Jahdiel, mighty men of strength, famous men, heads of their fathers' households.

25 But they transgressed against the God of their ancestors and prostituted themselves after the gods of the peoples of the land, whom God had destroyed before them.

Official Genealogical Records: Levi's Descendants (c. 538 BC)

1 Chronicles 6:1–30, 50–53

The High Priestly Line Through Aaron

1 The sons of Levi: Gershon, Kohath, and Merari.

2 The sons of Kohath: Amram, Izhar, Hebron, and Uzziel.

3a The children of Amram: Aaron, Moses, and Miriam.

3b The sons of Aaron: Nadab, Abihu, Eleazar, and Ithamar.

4 Eleazar fathered Phinehas; Phinehas fathered Abishua;

5 Abishua fathered Bukki; Bukki fathered Uzzi;

6 Uzzi fathered Zerariah; Zerariah fathered Meraioth;

7 Meraioth fathered Amariah; Amariah fathered Ahitub;

8 Ahitub fathered Zadok; Zadok fathered Ahimaaaz;

9 Ahimaaaz fathered Azariah; Azariah fathered Johanan;

- 10 and Johanan fathered Azariah. *It was* he who served as priest in the temple that Solomon built in Jerusalem.
11 And Azariah fathered Amariah; Amariah fathered Ahitub;
12 Ahitub fathered Zadok; Zadok fathered Shallum;
13 Shallum fathered Hilkiyah; Hilkiyah fathered Azariah;
14 Azariah fathered Seraiah; Seraiah fathered Jehozadak.
15 And Jehozadak went into exile *when* Yahweh *sent* Judah and Jerusalem into exile by the hand of Nebuchadnezzar.

Clans of Gershom, Kohath and Merari

- 16 The sons of Levi: Gershom, Kohath, and Merari.
17 Now these *are* the names of the sons of Gershom: Libni and Shimei.
18 The sons of Kohath: Amram, Izhar, Hebron, and Uzziel.
19 The sons of Merari: Mahli and Mushi. Now these *are* the families of the Levites according to their ancestors.
20 Of Gershom: Libni his son, Jahath his son, Zimmah his son,
21 Joah his son, Iddo his son, Zerah his son, Jeatherai his son.
22 The sons of Kohath: Amminadab his son, Korah his son, Assir his son,
23 Elkanah his son, Ebiasaph his son, Assir his son,
24 Tahath his son, Uriel his son, Uzziyah his son, and Shaul his son.
25 The sons of Elkanah: Amasai and Ahimoth,
26 Elkanah his son, Zophai his son, Nahath his son,
27 Eliab his son, Jeroham his son, Elkanah his son.
28 The sons of Samuel: *Joel* his firstborn and Abijah the second.
29 The sons of Merari: Mahli, Libni his son, Shimei his son, Uzzah his son,
30 Shimea his son, Haggiah his son, and Asaiah his son.

List of High Priests from Aaron to David

- 50 Now these *are* the sons of Aaron: Eleazar his son, Phinehas his son, Abishua his son,
51 Bukki his son, Uzzi his son, Zerahiah his son,
52 Meraioth his son, Amariah his son, Ahitub his son,
53 Zadok his son, Ahimaaz his son.

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Official Genealogical Records: Issachar's Descendants (c. 538 BC)

1 Chronicles 7:1–5

- 1 The sons of Issachar: Tola, Puah, Jashub, and Shimron, four.
- 2 The sons of Tola: Uzzi, Rephaiah, Jeriel, Jahmai, Ibsam, and Shemuel, heads of their fathers' houses; for Tola, mighty warriors of their generations, their number in the days of David *were* twenty-two thousand six hundred.
- 3 The sons of Uzzi: Izrahiah. And the sons of Izrahiah: Michael, Obadiah, Joel, and Isshiah; all five of them *were* chiefs.
- 4 And in addition to them, according to their generations, according to the house of their fathers, *were* troops of the army for war: thirty-six thousand. For they had many wives and sons.
- 5 Now their kinsmen belonging to all the clans of Issachar *were* in all eighty-seven thousand mighty warriors, enrolled according to their genealogy.

Official Genealogical Records: Naphtali's Descendants (c. 538 BC)

1 Chronicles 7:13

- 13 The sons of Naphtali: Jahziel, Guni, Jezer, and Shallum, the descendants of Bilhah.

Official Genealogical Records: West Manasseh's Descendants (c. 538 BC)

1 Chronicles 7:14–19

- 14 The sons of Manasseh: Asriel, whom his Aramean concubine bore; she gave birth to Makir the father of Gilead.
- 15 And Machir took a wife for Huppim and for Shuppim. And the name of his sister *was* Maacah. And the name of the second, Zelophehad. And Zelophehad had daughters.
- 16 And Maacah the wife of Machir gave birth to a son, and she called his name Peresh. And the name of his brother *was* Sheresh, and his sons *were* Ulam and Rekem.
- 17 The sons of Ulam: Bedan. These *were* the sons of Gilead the son of Makir, son of Manasseh.
- 18 And his sister, Hammolecheth, gave birth to Ishhod, Abiezer, and Mahlah.
- 19 The sons of Shemida were Ahian, Shechem, Likhi, and Aniam.

Official Genealogical Records: Ephraim's Descendants (c. 538 BC)

1 Chronicles 7:20–29

- 20 The sons of Ephraim: Shuthelah and Bered his son, Tahath his son, Eleadah his son, Tahath his son,
- 21 Zabad his son, Shuthelah his son, and Ezer and Elead. And the men of Gath who were born in the land killed them because they came down to take their livestock.
- 22 And Ephraim their father mourned many days, and his brothers came to comfort him.
- 23 And Ephraim went in to his wife, and she conceived and gave birth to a son. And he called his name Beriah because disaster *had been* upon his house.
- 24 And his daughter *was* Sheerah, and she built Lower and Upper Beth-Horon and Uzen-Sheerah.
- 25 And Rephah *was* his son, and Resheph, and Telah his son, Tahan his son,
- 26 Ladan his son, Ammihud his son, Elishama his son,
- 27 Nun his son, Joshua his son.
- 28 And their property and their dwellings *were* Bethel and its towns. And to the east, Naaran. And to the west, Gezer and its towns, and Shechem and its towns, up to Aija and its towns.
- 29 And along the borders of the sons of Manasseh: Beth-Shean and its towns, Taanach and its towns, Megiddo and its towns, and Dor and its towns. In these lived the sons of Joseph the son of Israel.

Official Genealogical Records: Asher's Descendants (c. 538 BC)

1 Chronicles 7:30–40

- 30 The sons of Asher: Imnah, Ishvah, Ishvi, Beriah, and their sister Serah.
- 31 The sons of Beriah: Heber and Malkiel, who *was* the father of Birzayith.
- 32 And Heber fathered Japhlet, Shomer, Hotham, and their sister Shua.
- 33 The sons of Japhlet: Pasach, Bimhal, and Ashvath. These *were* the sons of Japhlet.
- 34 The sons of Shemer: Ahi, Rohgah, Jehubbah, and Aram.
- 35 The sons of Helem his brother: Zophah, Imna, Shelesh, and Amal.
- 36 The sons of Zophah: Suah, Harnepher, Shual, Beri, Imrah,
- 37 Bezer, Hod, Shamma, Shilshah, Ithran, and Beera.

38 The sons of Jether: Jephunneh, Pispah, and Ara.
 39 The sons of Ulla: Arah, Hannel, and Rizia.
 40 All of these *were* the sons of Asher, heads of the house of the fathers, chosen mighty warriors, heads of the princes. And their number enrolled by genealogy, in the army for the war, *was* twenty-six thousand men.

Official Genealogical Records: Benjamin's Descendants (c. 538 BC)

1 Chronicles 7:6–12; 8:1–28

Introduction

7:6 *The sons of* Benjamin: Bela, Beker, and Jediael, three.
 7 The sons of Bela: Ezbon, Uzzi, Uzziel, Jerimoth, and Iri, five, *the* heads of *the* house of *the* fathers, mighty warriors. And their enrollment by genealogy *was* twenty-two thousand thirty-four.
 8 The sons of Beker: Zemirah, Joash, Eliezer, Elioenai, Omri, Jeremoth, Abijah, Anathoth, and Alemeth. All these *were* the sons of Beker.
 9 And their enrollment by genealogy according to their generations, *as* heads of the house of their fathers, mighty warriors, *was* twenty thousand two hundred.
 10 The sons of Jediael: Bilhan. And the sons of Bilhan: Jeush, Benjamin, Ehud, Kenaanah, Zethan, Tarshish, and Ahishahar.
 11 All these *were* the sons of Jediael according to the heads of the families, mighty warriors, seventeen thousand two hundred, able to go to war.
 12 And Shuppim and Huppim *were* the sons of Ir; Hushim, the son of Aher.

Family Leaders

8:1 Now Benjamin fathered Bela his firstborn, Ashbel the second, Aharah the third,
 2 Nohah the fourth, and Rapha the fifth.
 3 And Bela had sons: Addar, Gera, Abihud,
 4 Abishua, Naaman, Ahoah,
 5 Gera, Shephuphan, and Huram.
 6 And these *are* the sons of Ehud (these were heads of the families for the inhabitants of Geba, and they took them away to Manahath):
 7 Naaman, Ahijah, and Gera, who took them away. And he fathered Uzza and Ahihud.
 8 And Shaharaim fathered *children* in the fields of Moab after he had sent them away—Hushim and Baara, his wives.
 9 And he fathered by Hodesh his wife Jobab, Zibia, Meshah, Malcam,
 10 Jeuz, Sakia, and Mirmah. These *were* his sons, heads of the families.
 11 And by Husham he fathered Abitub and Elpaal.
 12 The sons of Elpaal: Eber, Misham, Shemed (he built Ono and Lod with its towns),
 13 and Beriah and Shema who *were* the heads of the families of the inhabitants of Aijalon (they themselves chased away the inhabitants of Gath).
 14 Now Ahio, Shashak, Jeremoth,
 15 Zebadiah, Arad, Eder,
 16 Michael, Ishpah, and Joha *were* sons of Beriah.
 17 And Zebadiah, Meshullam, Hizki, Heber,
 18 Ishmerai, Izliah, and Jobab *were* the sons of Elpaal.
 19 And Jakim, Zikri, Zabdi,
 20 Elienai, Zillethai, Eliel,
 21 Adaiah, Beraiah, and Shimrath *were* the sons of Shimei.
 22 And Ishpan, Eber, Eliel,
 23 Abdon, Zikri, Hanan,
 24 Hananiah, Elam, Antothijah,
 25 Iphdeiah, and Peniel *were* the sons of Shashak.
 26 And Shamsherai, Shehariah, Athaliah,
 27 Jareshiah, Elijah, and Zikri *were* the sons of Jeroham.
 28 These *were* the heads of the families according to their generations, chiefs. These lived in Jerusalem.

Official Genealogical Records: Line of King Saul (c. 538 BC)

1 Chronicles 8:29–40

1 Chronicles 9:35–44

Saul's Ancestors

29 And *Jeiel* the father of Gibeon lived in Gibeon.

35 And *these* lived in Gibeon: Jeiel the father of Gibeon.

And the name of his wife *was* Maacah.
 30 And his firstborn son *was* Abdon, then Zur, Kish, Baal, Nadab,
 31 Gedor, Ahio, Zeker,
 32 and Mikloth (he fathered Shimeah). Now these also lived
 nearby their brothers in Jerusalem with their kinsmen.
 33a And Ner fathered Kish, and Kish fathered Saul,

Saul's Descendants

33b and Saul fathered Jonathan, Malchi-Shua, Abinadab, and
 Eshbaal.
 34 And the son of Jonathan *was* Merib-baal,
 and Merib-baal fathered Micah.
 35 And the sons of Micah: Pithon, Melech, Tarea,
 and Ahaz.
 36 And Ahaz fathered Jehoaddah,
 and Jehoaddah fathered Alemeth, Azmaveth, and Zimri.
 And Zimri fathered Moza.
 37 And Moza fathered Binea; Raphah *was* his son,
 Eleasah his son, and Azel his son.
 38 And Azel had six sons, and these *are* their names: Azrikam,
 Bokeru, Ishmael, Sheariah, Obadiah, and Hanan.
 All these *were* the sons of Azel.
 39 And the sons of Eshek his brother: Ulam his firstborn, Jeush
 the second, and Eliphelet the third.
 40 And the sons of Ulam were men *who were* mighty warriors,
 bowmen, and *they had* many sons and grandsons, one hundred
 and fifty. All these were Benjaminites.

And the name of his wife *was* Maacah.
 36 And his firstborn son Abdon, and Zur, Kish, Baal, Ner, Nadab,
 37 Gedor, Ahio, Zechariah, and Mikloth.
 38 And Mikloth fathered Shimeam. And they also lived
 nearby their brothers in Jerusalem with their brothers.
 39a And Ner fathered Kish, and Kish fathered Saul,

39b and Saul fathered Jonathan, Malchi-Shua, Abinadab, and
 Eshbaal.
 40 And the son of Jonathan *was* Meribaal.
 And Meribaal fathered Micah.
 41 And the sons of Micah *were* Pithon, Melech, Tahrea,
and Ahaz.
 42 And Ahaz fathered Jarah,
 and Jarah fathered Alemeth, Azmaveth, and Zimri.
 And Zimri fathered Moza,
 43 and Moza fathered Binea; and Rephaiah *was* his son,
 Eleasah his son, Azel his son.
 44 And Azel had six sons, and these *are* their names: Azrikam,
 Bokeru, Ishmael, Sheariah, Obadiah, and Hanan.
 These *were* the sons of Azel.

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Daniel's Vision of the Seventy Sevens (c. April 538 BC)

Daniel 9

Daniel's Understanding of Jeremiah's Prophecies Concerning the Length of the Captivity

1 In *the* first year of Darius, *the* son of Ahasuerus, from *the* offspring of *the* Medes, who became king over *the* kingdom of *the* Chaldeans—

2 in *the* first year of his kingship I, Daniel, observed in the scrolls the number of the years that it was *that were* to be fulfilled according to *the* word of Yahweh to Jeremiah the prophet for the devastation of Jerusalem—seventy years. [[Jer 25:11–12; 29:10](#)]

Daniel's Prayer

3 Then I turned my face to the Lord God to seek *him* by prayer and pleas for mercy, in fasting and *in* sackcloth and ashes.

4 And I prayed to Yahweh my God, and I made confession and I said, “O Lord, the great and awesome God, keeping the covenant and loyal love with *those who* love him and with *those who* keep his commandments,

5 we have sinned and we have done wrong and we acted wickedly and we rebelled and *have been* turning aside from your commandments and from your ordinances. [cf. [1 Kgs 8:47](#)]

6 We have not listened to your servants the prophets, who spoke in your name to our kings, our princes and our ancestors and to all the people of the land.

7 “Righteousness belongs to you, O Lord, and on us *is* open shame, *just as it is* this day to the people of Judah and to the inhabitants of Jerusalem and to all Israel, those who are near and those who are far off in all the lands *to* which you have driven them, because of their infidelity which they displayed against you.

8 Yahweh, on us *is* open shame, on our kings, on our princes, and on our ancestors, because we have sinned against you.

9 Compassion and forgiveness belong to the Lord, our God, for we have rebelled against him,

10 and we have not listened to the voice of Yahweh our God, by following his law which he placed before us by *the* hand of his servants the prophets.

11 “And all Israel transgressed your law and turned aside *so as* not to listen to your voice, and *so* the curse and the oath which *was* written in the law of Moses, the servant of God, has been poured out upon us, because we have sinned against him.

12 And *so* he *has* carried out his words which he spoke against us and against our rulers who ruled us, to bring upon us *a* great calamity which *was* not done under all *of* heaven as it was done in Jerusalem.

13 Just as *it is* written in the law of Moses, all of this calamity has come upon us, and we have not implored the face of Yahweh our God *so as* to turn from our iniquities and to attend closely to your faithfulness.

14 So Yahweh *has* kept watch over the calamity, and *now* he *has* brought it upon us. Indeed, Yahweh our God *is* righteous concerning all his works that he has done, but we have not listened to his voice.

15 “And now, Lord our God, who have brought your people out from *the* land of Egypt with a strong hand, and you *have* made for yourself a name *until* this day—we have sinned, we have acted wickedly.

16 Lord, according to all your righteousness, please let your anger and your rage turn away from your city Jerusalem, your holy mountain, because through our sins and through the iniquities of our ancestors Jerusalem and your people have become an object of mockery among all of our neighbors.

17 “And now, listen to the prayer of your servant and to his pleas for mercy. Shine your face upon your desolate sanctuary for your sake, O Lord.

18 Incline your ear, my God, and listen; open your eyes and look at our desolation and the city that is called *by* your name, for we *are* not presenting our pleas for mercy before you because of our righteousness, but *rather* because of your great compassion.

19 Lord, listen! Lord, forgive! Lord, pay heed and act! You must not delay for your sake, my God; because your city and your people are called by your name.”

Gabriel Comes in Answer to Daniel's Prayer

20 Now I *was* still speaking and praying, and confessing my sin and the sin of my people Israel, and presenting my plea before Yahweh my God, on behalf of the holy mountain of my God.

21 And I *was* still speaking in prayer, and the man Gabriel, whom I had seen in the vision previously, in my weariness touched me at *the* time of *the* evening offering.

22 And he instructed *me* and he spoke with me and he said, “Daniel I have now come out to teach you understanding.

23 At the beginning of your pleas for mercy, a word went out, and *now* I have come to declare *it*, for you *are* highly esteemed, and *so* consider the word and understand the vision.

24 “Seventy weeks is decreed for your people and for your holy city, to put an end to the transgression and to seal *up* sin and to make atonement for guilt and to bring *in* everlasting righteousness and to seal vision and prophet and to anoint the most holy place.

25 And you must know and you must understand *that* from *the* time of the going out of *the* word to restore and build Jerusalem until *an* anointed *one*—*a* leader—*will be* seven weeks and sixty-two weeks; it will be restored and will be built *with* streets and *a* moat, but in a time of oppression.

26 “And after the sixty and two weeks an anointed one shall be cut off, and he shall have nothing, and *the* people of the coming leader will destroy the city and the sanctuary, and its end *will be* with the flood and *on to the end there shall be* war; *these*

desolations are determined.

27 And he will make a strong covenant with the many *for* one week, but *in* half of the week he will let cease sacrifice and offering and in its place a desolating abomination *comes* even until the determined complete destruction is poured out on *the* desolator.” [Matt 24:15; Mark 13:14]

Cyrus' [Persia] Proclamation—the End of the Exile (c. May 538 BC)

2 Chronicles 36:20b–23

Ezra 1:1–4

20b And they [*the Jewish exiles*] became servants to him [*Nebuchadnezzar*] and to his sons until the rule of the kingdom of Persia,
 21 to fulfill the word of Yahweh by the mouth of Jeremiah, until the land has enjoyed its Sabbaths. All the days of desolation it kept Sabbath, to fulfill seventy years.
 22 And in the first year of Cyrus, the king of Persia, in order to fulfill the word of Yahweh by the mouth of Jeremiah, Yahweh stirred up the spirit of Cyrus, king of Persia, so that he made a proclamation throughout all his kingdom and also in writing, saying:
 23 “Thus says Cyrus, king of Persia: ‘Yahweh the God of heaven has given to me all the kingdoms of the earth, and he has appointed me to build a house for him at Jerusalem, which *is* in Judah.
 Whoever *is* among you from all his people, may Yahweh his God go up with him.’”

1 In the first year of Cyrus king of Persia, in order to accomplish the word of Yahweh by the mouth of Jeremiah, Yahweh stirred the spirit of Cyrus king of Persia and he sent a message to all of his kingdom and also *put the message* in writing:
 2 “Thus says Cyrus king of Persia: Yahweh, the God of the heavens, has given me all the kingdoms of the earth. And he himself has appointed me to build a house for him in Jerusalem, which *is* in Judah.
 3 Whoever among you *who is* from all of his people, may his God be with him and may he go up to Jerusalem, which *is* in Judah, and may he build the house of Yahweh, the God of Israel. He *is* the God who *is* in Jerusalem.
 4 And let every survivor, from wherever he resides be assisted by the men of that place with silver and gold, with possessions and domestic animals, and with the freewill offering for the house of God which *is* in Jerusalem.”

The Remnant Prepare to Return to Jerusalem (c. May–December 538 BC)

Ezra 1:5–11

5 So the heads of the families for Judah and Benjamin, and the priests and the Levites—to all whose spirit God had stirred—*prepared* to go up and build the house of Yahweh which *is* in Jerusalem.
 6 And all of their neighbors helped them with objects of silver, gold, possessions, domestic animals, and with valuable gifts—besides all of *the* freewill offering.
 7 And Cyrus the king brought out the objects of the house of Yahweh that Nebuchadnezzar had brought from Jerusalem and placed in the house of his gods.
 8 Cyrus the king of Persia let them go out by the hand of Mithredath the treasurer, and he counted them out to Sheshbazzar the prince of Judah.
 9 Now these were the inventories: thirty gold metal dishes, one thousand silver metal dishes, twenty-nine vessels,
 10 thirty bowls of gold, four hundred and ten matching silver metal bowls, and one thousand other objects.
 11 All of the objects of gold and silver metal *were* five thousand four hundred. All this Sheshbazzar brought up along with the exiles from Babylonia to Jerusalem.

The Return of the Exiles Under Zerubbabel – Part 1 (Spring 537 BC)

Ezra 2:1–35

Nehemiah 7:5b–38

Leadership

1 Now these were the people of the province who came up from the captivity of the exile whom Nebuchadnezzar the king of Babylon carried captive to Babylonia. They returned to

5b I found the book of the genealogy of those who first came back, and I found *this* written upon it:
 6 These are the people of the province who came up from captivity of the exiles whom Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon had carried into exile. They returned to

Jerusalem and Judah, each to his *own* city.

2a They came with Zerubbabel, Jeshua, Nehemiah, Seraiah, Reelaiah, Mordecai, Bilshan, Mispar, Bigvai, Rehum, and Baanah.

General Population

2b The number of the men of the people of Israel:

3 the descendants of Parosh, two thousand one hundred and seventy-two;

4 the descendants of Shephatiah, three hundred and seventy-two;

5 the descendants of Arah, seven hundred and seventy-five;

6 the descendants of Pahath-moab, *particularly* the descendants of Jeshua and Joab, two thousand eight hundred and twelve;

7 the descendants of Elam, one thousand two hundred and fifty-four;

8 the descendants of Zattu, nine hundred and forty-five;

9 the descendants of Zaccai, seven hundred and sixty;

10 the descendants of Bani, six hundred and forty-two;

11 the descendants of Bebai, six hundred and twenty-three;

12 the descendants of Azgad, one thousand two hundred and twenty-two;

13 the descendants of Adonikam, six hundred and sixty-six;

14 the descendants of Bigvai, two thousand fifty-six;

15 the descendants of Adin, four hundred and fifty-four;

16 the descendants of Ater, *particularly* of Hezekiah, ninety-eight;

17 the descendants of Bezai, three hundred and twenty-three;

18 the descendants of Jorah, one hundred and twelve;

19 the descendants of Hashum, two hundred and twenty-three;

20 the descendants of Gibbar, ninety-five;

21 the people of Bethlehem, one hundred and twenty-three;

22 the men of Netophah, fifty-six;

23 the men of Anathoth, one hundred and twenty-eight;

24 the people of Azmaveth, forty-two;

25 the people of Kiriath Arim, Kephirah, and Beeroth, seven hundred and forty-three;

26 the people of Ramah and Geba, six hundred and twenty-one;

27 the men of Micmash, one hundred and twenty-two;

28 the men of Bethel and Ai, two hundred and twenty-three;

29 the people of Nebo, fifty-two;

30 the people of Magbish, one hundred and fifty-six;

31 the people of the other Elam, one thousand two hundred and fifty-four;

32 the people of Harim, three hundred and twenty;

33 the people of Lod, Hadid, and Ono, seven hundred and twenty-five;

34 the people of Jericho, three hundred and forty-five;

35 the people of Senaah, three thousand six hundred and thirty.

Jerusalem and to Judah, each one to his city.

7a These came with Zerubbabel, Joshua, Nehemiah, Azariah, Raamiah, Nahamani, Mordecai, Bilshan, Mispereth, Bigvai, Nehum, Baanah.

7b The number of the men of the people of Israel:

8 the descendants of Parosh, two thousand one hundred and seventy-two.

9 The descendants of Shephatiah, three hundred and seventy-two.

10 The descendants of Arah, six hundred and fifty-two.

11 The descendants of Pahath-Moab, of the descendants of Jeshua and Joab, two thousand eight hundred and eighteen.

12 The descendants of Elam, one thousand two hundred and fifty-four.

13 The descendants of Zattu, eight hundred and forty-five.

14 The descendants of Zaccai, seven hundred and sixty.

15 The descendants of Binnui, six hundred and forty-eight.

16 The descendants of Bebai, six hundred and twenty-eight.

17 The descendants of Azgad, two thousand three hundred and twenty-two.

18 The descendants of Adonikam, six hundred and sixty-seven.

19 The descendants of Bigvai, two thousand and sixty-seven.

20 The descendants of Adin, six hundred and fifty-five.

21 The descendants of Ater, *namely* of Hezekiah, ninety-eight.

23 The descendants of Bezai, three hundred and twenty-four.

24 The descendants of Hariph, one hundred and twelve.

22 The descendants of Hashum, three hundred and twenty-eight.

25 The descendants of Gibeon, ninety-five.

26 The men of Bethlehem and Netophah, one hundred and eighty-eight.

27 The men of Anathoth, one hundred and twenty-eight.

28 The men of Beth-azmaveth, forty-two.

29 The men of Kiriath-Jearim, Kephirah, and Beeroth, seven hundred and forty-three.

30 The men of Ramah and Geba, six hundred and twenty-one.

31 The men of Micmash, one hundred and twenty-two.

32 The men of Bethel and Ai, one hundred and twenty-three.

33 The men of the other Nebo, fifty-two.

34 The people of the other Elam, one thousand two hundred and fifty-four.

35 The people of Harim, three hundred and twenty.

37 The people of Lod, Hadid, and Ono, seven hundred and twenty-one.

36 The people of Jericho, three hundred and forty-five.

38 The people of Senaah, three thousand nine hundred and thirty.

Chronological Notes

1) Ezra's Calendar.

- A) I am currently of the opinion that Ezra used a Tishri-to-Tishri (Fall-to-Fall) calendar.¹ This is primarily due to the fact that Ezra and Nehemiah are closely connected and Nehemiah used a Tishri-to-Tishri calendar (cf. Neh 1:1; 2:1). I am not alone in this opinion—many other scholars have argued for this position: Hoehner, Thiele, Horn, Keil, Yamauchi, Getz, Fensham, Loken, Laney, Shea, Young and Hardy (note that several of these scholars are Seventh-Day Adventists, and so have a special interest in the chronology of Ezra, Nehemiah and Daniel). Steinmann, however, is of the opinion that Ezra used a Nisan-to-Nisan (Spring-to-Spring) calendar (so also Williamson, Clines and McFall). Thus I will be diverging from Steinmann's dates for the chronology of Ezra and Nehemiah (usually only by a single year).

2) The Date of the First Return.²

- A) The book of Ezra contains numerous chronological references. It begins with Ezra 1:1's reference to Cyrus' first year as king of Babylon (538/537 BC) and ends with Ezra 10:17's reference to the first day of the first month of what is apparently Artaxerxes' eighth year (March 27, 457 BC). Between these two verses are sixteen other references to specific years, months, or days (3:1, 6, 8; 4:24; 5:13, 6:3, 15, 19; 7:7, 8, 9 (twice); 8:31, 33; 10:9, 16).
- B) Despite this wealth of chronological data, the date of the first major event in the book following Cyrus' decree—the return of exiles under the leadership of Zerubbabel—is not recorded. The closest the writer comes to dating this event is Ezra 3:8 which implies that the events of Ezra 2:1–3:7 took place in the first year “after their arrival at the house of God, at Jerusalem” (Ezra 3:8). But that does not answer the question of when the exiles first returned to Jerusalem. It must have happened sometime after Cyrus' decree in 538 BC in his first year and sometime before the end of his reign in 530 BC, since Ezra 4:5 indicates that the effort to rebuild the temple in Jerusalem was stalled during the reign of Cyrus.
- C) The return probably occurred earlier in Cyrus' reign rather than late in his reign, since after the return, the work on the temple began but then was stopped for “all the [rest of the] days of King Cyrus of Persia” (Ezra 4:5), and that phrase seems ill-suited if the return to Jerusalem (and subsequently the start of the work on the temple) had only taken place during the last year or two of his reign.
- D) Steinmann argues (based on the postexilic cycle of Sabbatical Years, pp. 37–39) that the first return occurred in 533 BC, some five years after Cyrus' decree in 538 BC permitting the return. He defends this view by listing several reasons why it is “not at all unreasonable” (cf. pp. 38–39). However, the current majority view is that the return occurred very early in Cyrus' reign, that is, in 538/537.
- E) At this time, I have decided to go with the current majority view and date the first return to the Spring of 537 BC. I may revisit this decision at some time in the future.

¹ For a defense of this position see the following: Siegfried H. Horn and Lynn H. Wood, *The Chronology of Ezra 7* (Brushton, NY: TEACH Services, 2006), Siegfried H. Horn and Lynn H. Wood, “The Fifth-Century Jewish Calendar at Elephantine,” *Journal of Near Eastern Studies* 13 (Jan 1954): 1–20, and Frank W. Hardy, “The Context for Ezra's Use of a Fall-to-Fall Calendar,” *Historicism* No. 8 (Oct 86): 2–65.

² See Andrew E. Steinmann, *Ezra and Nehemiah*, Concordia Commentary (Concordia Publishing House, 2010): 29–39 and “A Chronological Note: The Return of the Exiles under Sheshbazzar and Zerubbabel (Ezra 1–2),” *JETS* 51 (2008): 513–22.

The Return of the Exiles Under Zerubbabel – Part 2 (Spring 537 BC)

Ezra 2:36–70

Nehemiah 7:39–73a

Priests

36 The priests: the descendants of Jedaiah, of the house of Jeshua, nine hundred and seventy-three;
 37 the descendants of Immer, one thousand fifty-two;
 38 the descendants of Pashhur, one thousand two hundred and forty-seven;
 39 the descendants of Harim, one thousand seventeen.

Levites

40 The Levites: the descendants of Jeshua and Kadmiel, of the descendants of Hodaviah, seventy-four.
 41 The singers: the descendants of Asaph, one hundred and twenty-eight.
 42 The descendants of the gatekeepers: the descendants of Shallum, the descendants of Ater, the descendants of Talmon, the descendants of Akkub, the descendants of Hatita, and the descendants of Shobai; in total one hundred and thirty-nine.

Temple Servants

43 The temple servants: the descendants of Ziha, the descendants of Hasupha, the descendants of Tabbaoth,
 44 the descendants of Keros, the descendants of Siaha, the descendants of Padon,
 45 the descendants of Lebanah, the descendants of Hagabah, the descendants of Akkub,
 46 the descendants of Hagab, the descendants of Shamlai, the descendants of Hanan,
 47 the descendants of Giddel, the descendants of Gahar, the descendants of Reaiah,
 48 the descendants of Rezin, the descendants of Nekoda, the descendants of Gazzam,
 49 the descendants of Uzza, the descendants of Paseah, the descendants of Besai,
 50 the descendants of Asnah, the descendants of Meunim, the descendants of Nephisim,
 51 the descendants of Bakbuk, the descendants of Hakupha, the descendants of Harhur,
 52 the descendants of Bazluth, the descendants of Mehida, the descendants of Harsha,
 53 the descendants of Barkos, the descendants of Sisera, the descendants of Temah,
 54 the descendants of Neziah, and the descendants of Hatipha.

Descendants of Solomon's Servants

55 The descendants of Solomon's servants: the descendants of Sotai, the descendants of Hassophereth, the descendants of Peruda,
 56 the descendants of Jaalah, the descendants of Darkon, the descendants of Giddel,
 57 the descendants of Shephatiah, the descendants of Hattil, the descendants of Pochereth-hazzebaim, and the descendants of Ami.
 58 All the temple servants and the descendants of Solomon's servants were three hundred and ninety-two.

39 The priests: The descendants of Jedaiah, of the house of Jeshua, nine hundred and seventy-three.
 40 The descendants of Immer, one thousand and fifty-two.
 41 The descendants of Pashhur, one thousand two hundred and forty-seven.
 42 The descendants of Harim, one thousand and seventeen.

43 The Levites: the descendants of Jeshua, *namely* of Kadmiel of the descendants of Hodaviah, seventy-four.
 44 The singers: the descendants of Asaph, one hundred and forty-eight.
 45 The gatekeepers: the descendants of Shallum, the descendants of Ater, the descendants of Talmon, the descendants of Akkub, the descendants of Hatita, the descendants of Shobai, one hundred and thirty-eight.

46 The temple servants: the descendants of Ziha, the descendants of Hasupha, the descendants of Tabbaoth,
 47 the descendants of Keros, the descendants of Siaha, the descendants of Padon,
 48 the descendants of Lebanah, the descendants of Hagaba,

the descendants of Shalmal,
 49 the descendants of Hanan, the descendants of Giddel, the descendants of Gahar,
 50 the descendants of Reaiah, the descendants of Rezin, the descendants of Nekoda,
 51 the descendants of Gazzam, the descendants of Uzza, the descendants of Paseah,
 52 the descendants of Besai,

the descendants of Meunim, the descendants of Nephushesim,
 53 the descendants of Bakbuk, the descendants of Hakupha, the descendants of Harhur,
 54 the descendants of Bazlith, the descendants of Mehida, the descendants of Harsha,
 55 the descendants of Barkos, the descendants of Sisera, the descendants of Temah,
 56 the descendants of Neziah, the descendants of Hatipha.

57 The descendants of Solomon's servants: the descendants of Sotai, the descendants of Sophereth, the descendants of Perida,
 58 the descendants of Jaala, the descendants of Darkon, the descendants of Giddel,
 59 the descendants of Shephatiah, the descendants of Hattil, the descendants of Pochereth-Hazzebaim, the descendants of Amon.
 60 All the temple servants and the descendants of Solomon's servants were three hundred and ninety-two.

Israelites of Doubtful Origin

59 Now these were the ones who came up from Tel-melah, Tel-harsha, Cherub, Addan, and Immer, but they were not able to prove their fathers' household and their descent, if they were from Israel:

60 the descendants of Delaiah, the descendants of Tobiah, and the descendants of Nekoda, six hundred and fifty-two.

Priests of Doubtful Origin

61 And from the descendants of the priests: the descendants of Habaiah, the descendants of Hakkoz, and the descendants of Barzillai (who took a wife from the daughters of Barzillai the Gileadite, and was called by their name).

62 These sought their record in the genealogy *records*, but they were not found, and were excluded from the priesthood as unclean.

63 The governor said to them that they could not eat from the holy food of the sanctuary until there was present a priest for the Urim and Thummim.

Totals

64 The whole assembly together was forty-two thousand three hundred and sixty,

65 apart from their male and female servants, of whom were seven thousand three hundred and thirty-seven; and they had two hundred male and female singers.

66 Their horses *numbered* seven hundred and thirty-six, their mules *numbered* two hundred and forty-five,

67 their camels *numbered* four hundred and thirty-five, their donkeys *numbered* six thousand seven hundred and twenty.

Arrival in Jerusalem

68 When *some* of the heads of families came to the house of Yahweh that *is* in Jerusalem, they gave freewill offerings for the house of God to erect it on its place.

69 According to their ability they gave to the treasury room for the work sixty-one thousand darics of gold, five thousand minas of silver, and one hundred priestly tunics.

70 The priests, the Levites, and some of the people lived *in Jerusalem*, and the singers, the gatekeepers, and the temple servants *lived* in their cities, and all Israel in their cities.

61 These were the ones who came up from Tel-melah, Tel-harsha, Cherub, Addon, and Immer, but they were not able to prove their ancestral houses or their descent, whether they were from Israel:

62 the descendants of Delaiah, the descendants of Tobiah, the descendants of Nekoda, six hundred and forty-two.

63 And from the priests: the descendants of Hobaiah, the descendants of Hakkoz, the descendants of Barzillai (who had taken as a wife from the daughters of Barzillai the Gileadite and was called by their name).

64 These sought their record among those enrolled in the genealogy, but it was not found there, so they were excluded as unclean from the priesthood.

65 So the governor said to them that they could not eat the most holy food until a priest could come with Urim and Thummim.

66 All of the assembly together was forty-two thousand three hundred and sixty,

67 besides their servants and female slaves— these were seven thousand three hundred and thirty-seven. And the male and female singers were two hundred and forty-five, 68

69 *there were* four hundred and thirty-five camels and six thousand seven hundred and twenty male donkeys.

70 Now some from the heads of the families

gave to the work.

The governor gave to the storehouse one thousand darics of gold, fifty basins, and five hundred and thirty priestly tunics.

71 Now some of the heads of the families gave to the storehouse of the work twenty thousand gold darics and two thousand two hundred silver minas.

72 And what the rest of the people gave was twenty thousand darics of gold, and two thousand silver minas, and sixty-seven priestly tunics.

73a So the priests, the Levites, the gatekeepers, the singers, some of the people, the temple servants, and all Israel settled in their cities.

Altar Rebuilt and Normal Sacrificial Activities Resumed (September 537 BC)

Ezra 3:1–7

The Rebuilding of the Altar

1 Now the seventh month drew near and the Israelites *were* in the cities, so the people gathered as one in Jerusalem.

2 And Jeshua son of Jehozadak and his brothers the priests stood up, and Zerubbabel the son of Shealtiel and his brothers built the

altar of the God of Israel, in order to offer burnt offerings on it, as it is written in the law of Moses, the man of God.

3 They set up the altar on its foundations, because they were in terror because of the peoples of the lands. And they offered burnt offerings on it for Yahweh, burnt offerings for the morning and the evening.

The Festival of Booths

4 And they kept the feast of booths, as it is written, and *offered* burnt offerings day by day in number according to the ordinance as described for each day.

5 After *this*, *they presented* the daily sacrifice of burnt offerings, *the offerings* for the New Moon Festival, and for all of the appointed times consecrated for Yahweh and for all who gave a freewill offering to Yahweh.

6a From the first day of the seventh month they began to offer burnt offerings to Yahweh.

The Beginning of Temple Reconstruction

6b But the temple of Yahweh was not yet founded.

7 So they gave money to the stone craftsmen and skilled craftsmen, and food, drink, and olive oil to the Sidonians and Tyrians, to bring cedar trees from Lebanon to the sea of Joppa, according to the authorization over them of Cyrus king of Persia.

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Daniel's Three Week Fast (April 2–22, 536 BC)

Daniel 10:1–3

1 In the third year of Cyrus *the* king of *the* Persians, a word was revealed to Daniel, who was called *by* his name Belteshazzar, and the word *was* reliable and *it concerned* a great tribulation, and he understood the word and he received understanding.

2 In those days, I, Daniel, I *myself* was *in* mourning for three whole weeks.

3 I had not eaten *any* choice food, and meat and wine did not enter my mouth, and I did not use any ointment until the end of three whole weeks.

Introduction to Daniel's Final Vision (April 23, 536 BC)

Daniel 10:4–11:1

Vision of the Heavenly Being

10:4 And *then* on *the* twenty-fourth day of the first month, I *myself* was on the bank of the great river; that is, *the* Tigris.

5 And I lifted up my eyes and I saw, and there was a man, *and* he was dressed *in* linen, and his waist was girded with *the* gold of Uphaz.

6 Now his body *was* like turquoise, and his face *was* like *the* appearance of lightning, and his eyes *were* like torches of fire, and his arms and his legs *were* like *the* gleam of polished bronze, and the sound of his words *was* like *the* sound of a multitude.

7 And I saw, I, Daniel alone, the vision; and the people who were with me did not see the vision; nevertheless, a great trembling fell upon them and they fled *in order* to hide themselves.

8 And I myself, Daniel, alone saw this great vision, and *as a result* no strength was left in me and my complexion grew deathly pale, and I did not retain any strength.

9 And I heard the sound of his words, and when I heard the sound of his words I myself *began* falling into a trance on my face, with my face to the ground.

The Interpreting Angel's Explanation

10 And look, a hand touched me and it roused me to my knees and the palms of my hands.

11 And he said to me, "Daniel, *a* man beloved, pay attention to the words that I *am* speaking to you and stand upright where you are, for I have now been sent to you." And while he was speaking with me this word, I stood up trembling.

12 And he said to me, "You must not fear, Daniel, for from the first day that you set your heart to understand and to humble yourself before your God, your words were heard, and I *myself* have come because of your words.

13 But *the* prince of *the* kingdom of Persia stood before me *for* twenty-one days. And look, Michael, one of the chief princes, came to assist me, and I left *him* there beside *the* king of *the* Persians.

14 And I have come to instruct you about what will happen to your people in the future, for *there is* a further vision *here* for the future.

Daniel Strengthened to Understand the Vision

15 And while he was speaking with me according to these words, I turned my face toward the ground and I was speechless.

16 Then look, there was one in the form of a human; he touched my lips and I opened my mouth and I spoke and I said to the *one* standing before me, "My lord, because of the vision my anxieties fell upon me and I *have* not retained *my* strength.

17 So how am I, a servant of my lord to speak with you, my lord, and I just now have no strength in me?"

18 And he again touched me, the one in the form of a human, and he strengthened me.

19 And he said, "You must not fear, *O* beloved man. Peace be to you; be strong and be courageous!" And when he spoke with me, I was strengthened and I said, "Let my lord speak, for you have strengthened me."

20 Then he asked, "Do you know why I have come to you? And now I return to fight against the prince of Persia and I *myself am* going, and look, *the* prince of Javan will come.

21 However, I will tell you what is inscribed in *the* book of truth, and there is not one *who* contends with me against these *beings* except Michael, your prince."

11:1 "And I, in the first year of Darius the Mede, I stood as a support and as a protection for him.

Daniel's Final Vision of the Future (April 23, 536 BC)

Daniel 11:2–12:3

Concerning Persia (Xerxes I)

11:2 And now I will reveal *the* truth to you. Look! Still three kings will arise in Persia, and the fourth will get abundance *and* great wealth, *even* more than all of *them*, and when he becomes strong through his wealth, *then* he will stir up everyone against *the* kingdom of Javan.

Concerning Greece (Alexander the Great)

3 And a mighty king will arise, and he will rule *with* great dominion, and he will do as he pleases.

4 But as he rises in power, his kingdom will be divided toward the four winds of heaven, but not to his posterity, and not according to his dominion *by* which he ruled, for his kingdom will be uprooted and *be given* to others besides them.

Concerning Egypt and Syria (The Ptolemies and the Seleucids)

5 “Then the king of the south will grow strong and *also* one of his officials, and he will grow stronger than him and he will rule a dominion greater than his dominion.

6 And at *the* end of *some* years they will make an alliance, and the daughter of the king of the south will come to the king of the north to make a peace treaty, but she will not retain her position of power, and his offspring will not endure, and she will be given up, she and her attendants and her child supporting her, in those times.

7 And a branch from her roots will rise up *in* his place, and he will come against the army and he will enter the stronghold of the king of the north and he will take action against them and he will prevail.

8 And also their gods with their idols *and* with the precious vessels, silver and gold he will take to Egypt into captivity, and *for* years he will leave the king of the north alone.

9 And *then* he will come into the kingdom of the king of the south, but he will return to his land.

10 “But his sons will wage war and they will gather a multitude of great forces and he will advance with great force, and he will overflow *like a flood* and he will pass through and he will return, and they will wage war up to his fortress.

11 And the king of the south will become furious, and he will go and he will battle against him, against the king of the north; and he will muster a great multitude, and the multitude will be given into his hand.

12 When the multitude is carried off, his heart will be exalted and he will overthrow tens of thousands, but he will not prevail.

13 And the king of the north will again raise a multitude, greater than the former, and at the end of some years he will surely come with *a* great army and with great supplies.

14 “And in these times many will rise *up* against the king of the south, and the violent ones of your people will lift themselves to fulfill *the* vision, but they will fall.

15 And the king of the north will come, and he will throw up siege ramps and capture a city of fortifications and the military forces of the south and his choice troops will not stand, for there is no strength *left* to resist.

16 And the *one* coming to him will act according to his pleasure, and there is no *one who* will stand before him, and he will stand in the beautiful land and complete destruction *will be* in his power.

17 And he will set his face to come with the authority of his whole kingdom and will form an agreement; and he will act, and the daughter of women he will give to him to destroy it, but *the ploy* will not succeed and she will not support him.

18 And he will turn his face to *the* coastlands, and he will capture many, but a commander will end his insults to him so that instead his insults will turn back upon him.

19 And he will turn back his face toward the strongholds of his land, but he will stumble and he will fall and will not be found.

20 “Then in his place will arise *one* sending an official *throughout the* glory of *his* kingdom, and in a few days he will be broken, but not in anger and not in battle.

Concerning Antiochus IV Epiphanes

21 And in his place a despicable person will arise on whom they have not conferred the majesty of *the* kingdom, and he will come in without warning and he will seize *the* kingdom by deceit.

22 And before him mighty military forces will be utterly swept away, and they will be broken, and also *the* leader of *the* covenant.

23 And after an alliance *is made* with him, he will act deceitfully, and he will rise and he will become powerful with few people *backing him*.

24 In *a time of* ease and in *the* rich parts of *the* province, he will come and he will do what his predecessors did not do; he will distribute plunder and spoil and possessions to them, and he will devise his plans against fortifications, but *only* for a time.

25 And he will stir up his power and his heart against the king of the south and with a much greater and stronger army; but he will not succeed, for they will devise plans against him.

26 And those who eat of his royal rations will break him and his army will be overwhelmed, and many will fall, slain.

27 And two of the kings will bend their hearts to evil. And at the same table they will speak lies, but *what is discussed* will not succeed, for still an end *is coming* at the appointed time.

28 Then he will return to his land with many possessions, but his heart *will be set* against the holy covenant, and he will take action and he will return to his land.

29 “At the appointed time he will return and he will come into the south, but it will not be as it was before.

30 And *the* ships of Kittim will come against him, and he will lose heart, and he will turn back, and he will be enraged against the holy covenant, and he will take action, and he will turn back, and he will pay attention to *those who* forsake the holy covenant.

31 And military forces from him will occupy and will profane the sanctuary stronghold, and they will abolish the regular burnt offering, and they will set up the abomination that causes desolation. [[Matt 24:15](#); [Mark 13:14](#)]

32 “And those who violate *the* covenant he will seduce with flattery, but the persons who know their God will stand firm and will take action.

33 And those who have insight will instruct the many, but they will fall by sword and by flame, by captivity and by plunder for some time.

34 And when they fall they will receive little help, and many will join with them *in* hypocrisy.

35 And *even* some of those who have insight will fall *in order for* them to be refined by it, and to be purified and cleansed until the time of *the* end, for the appointed time *is* still to come.

Concerning the End Times (The Antichrist)

36 “Then the king will do as he pleases, and he will exalt himself and will consider himself above any god, and he will speak horrendous things against *the* God of gods, yet he will succeed until *the period* of anger is finished, for *what* is determined will be done.

37 He will not pay respect to the gods of his ancestors, or to *the* darling of women, and not to any god will he pay respect, for he will consider himself great over all *gods*.

38 But instead he will honor the god of fortresses, a god whom his ancestors did not know. He will honor *him* with gold, and with silver, and with precious stones and with costly gifts.

39 And he will deal with *the* fortified strongholds with *the help of* a foreign god; and he will increase wealth for whoever will acknowledge *him*, and he will cause them to rule over the many, and he will distribute land for a price.

40 “And at *the* time of *the* end the king of the south will attack him, and the king of the north will storm against him with chariots and with horsemen and with many ships, and he will advance against the countries and he will sweep through like a flood.

41 And he will come into the beautiful land and many will fall victim, but these will escape from his power: Edom and Moab and the best part of the Ammonites.

42 And he will stretch out his hand against countries and the land of Egypt will not escape.

43 And he will rule over the treasures of gold and the silver and over all the precious things of Egypt; and *the* Libyans and *the* Cushites *will follow* in his footsteps.

44 But reports will terrify him from *the* east and from *the* north, and he will go out with great fury to destroy and *to* exterminate many.

45 And *then* he will pitch the tents of his palace between *the* sea *and* the beautiful holy mountain, and he will come to his end, and there is no one helping him.”

12:1 “Now at that time, Michael, the great prince, will arise, the protector over the sons of your people, and it will be a time of distress that has not been since *your people* have been a nation until that time. And at that time your people will escape, everyone who is found written in the scroll.

2 And many from *those* sleeping in the dusty ground will awake, some to everlasting life and some to disgrace and everlasting contempt.

3 But the *ones* having insight will shine like the brightness of the expanse, and *the ones* providing justice *for* the many *will be* like the stars forever and ever.

Final Instructions to Daniel (April 23, 536 BC)

Daniel 12:4–13

Instruction to Preserve the Message

4 But you, Daniel, keep the words secret and seal the scroll until *the* time of *the* end; many will run back and forth and knowledge will increase.”

Duration of the “Time of Distress”

5 Then I looked, I myself, Daniel, and look, there were two others standing: one on this bank of the stream and one on the other.

6 Then he said to the man *who* was clothed in linen who *was* above the water of the stream, “How long until the end of the wonders?”

7 And I heard the man *who* was clothed in linen who *was* above the water of the stream, and he raised his right hand and his left hand to heaven and he swore by the one who lives forever that *an* appointed time, appointed times, and half *an appointed time* *would pass* when *the* shattering of the power of the holy people would be completed; *then* all these things will be accomplished.

Daniel’s Last Question

8 Now I myself heard, but I *did* not understand, and I said, “My lord, what *will be* the outcome of these things?”

9 And he said, “Go, Daniel, for the words *are* secret and *are* sealed up until *the* time of *the* end.

10 Many will be purified and will be cleansed and will be refined, but *the* wicked will act wickedly and none of the wicked will understand, but those who have insight will understand.

11 And from *the* time the regular burnt offering is removed and *the* abomination that causes desolation is set up *there will be* one thousand two hundred and ninety days. [[Matt 24:15](#); [Mark 13:14](#)]

12 Happy *is* the *one who is* persevering, and attains *to* the one thousand three hundred and thirty-five days.

13 But you, go *on* to the end and rest, and you will arise for your allotted inheritance at the end of the days.”

The Foundation of the Second Temple is Laid (May 536 BC)

Ezra 3:8–13

8 In the second year after their coming to the house of God at Jerusalem, in the second month, Zerubbabel son of Shealtiel and Jeshua son of Jehozadak began *their work*, and the remainder of their brothers the priests and the Levites and all who came from the captivity to Jerusalem. They appointed the Levites from twenty years and older to direct the work of the house of Yahweh.

9 And Jeshua *with* his sons and brothers, and Kadmiel and his sons—the sons of Judah—together directed the workers in the house of God, *along with* the sons of Henadad and their sons and brothers the Levites.

10 And the builders laid the foundation of the temple of Yahweh, and the priests *in their* apparel with the trumpets, and the Levites, the sons of Asaph, with the cymbals, were positioned to praise Yahweh, as described by King David of Israel.

11 And they sang responsively, with praising and thanksgiving to Yahweh *saying*, “For he is good, for his loyal love is everlasting for Israel.” And all of the people responded with a great shout of joyful acclaim in praise to Yahweh because the house of Yahweh was laid.

12 But many of the elderly priests, Levites, and heads of the families who had seen the first temple, wept with a loud voice when they saw the foundation of this house, but many shouted aloud with joy.

13 No person could distinguish the sound of joyful acclaim from the sound of people weeping, for the people shouted with great joyful acclaim and the sound was heard from afar.

Restore Us, O Lord (c. May 536 BC)

Psalms 126

A song of ascents.

- 1 When Yahweh restored the fortunes of Zion,
we were like dreamers.
- 2 Then our mouth was filled with laughter,
and our tongue with rejoicing.
Then they said among the nations,
“Yahweh has done great *things* for these *people*.”
- 3 Yahweh has done great *things* for us;
we are glad.
- 4 Restore, O Yahweh, our fortunes
like the streams in the Negeb.
- 5 Those who sow with tears
shall reap with rejoicing.
- 6 He who diligently goes *out* with weeping,
carrying the seed bag,
shall certainly come *in* with rejoicing,
carrying his sheaves.

Temple Construction Halted by Local Enemies (536–520 BC)

Ezra 4:1–5, 24

1 Now the enemies of Judah and Benjamin heard that the returned exiles *were* building a temple for Yahweh the God of Israel.

2 And they approached Zerubbabel and the heads of the families, and they said to them, “Let us build with you. Like you, we seek your God and have been sacrificing *to him* from the days of Esarhaddon the king of Assyria who brought us up here.

3 But Zerubbabel, Jeshua, and the rest of the heads of the families of Israel said to them, “*It is* not for you but for us to build a house for our God. For we ourselves alone will build *it* for Yahweh the God of Israel, just as Cyrus the king of Persia has commanded us.”

4 Then the people of the land discouraged the people of Judah and made them afraid to build

5 and bribed officials against them to frustrate their plan for all the days of Cyrus king of Persia until the reign of Darius king of Persia.

24 Then the work on the house of God in Jerusalem stopped, and was discontinued until the second year of the reign of Darius king of Persia.

Temple Construction Restarted Through Preaching of Haggai and Zechariah (520 BC)

Ezra 5:1

1 Now the prophets, Haggai and Zechariah the son of Iddo, prophesied to the Jews who were in Judah and in Jerusalem, in the name of the God of Israel who was over them.

Haggai's Prophecy to the Remnant—Living Large While God's House Lies in Ruins (August 29, 520 BC)

Haggai 1:1–13

1 In the second year of King Darius, in the sixth month, on *the* first day, the word of Yahweh came through Haggai the prophet to Zerubbabel the son of Shealtiel, governor of Judah, and to Joshua the son of Jehozadak, the high priest, saying,
 2 “Thus says Yahweh of hosts: ‘This people says, “The time has not come to rebuild the temple of Yahweh.”’
 3 And the word of Yahweh came through Haggai the prophet, saying,
 4 “*Is it* a time for you yourselves to dwell in your houses that have been paneled *while* this house *is* desolate?”
 5 And so then, thus says Yahweh of hosts: ‘Consider your ways!
 6 You have sown much but have harvested little. You have eaten without *being* satisfied; you have drunk without being satiated; you have worn clothes without *being* warm; the one who earns wages puts it in a pouch with holes.’
 7 Thus says Yahweh of hosts: ‘Consider your ways!
 8 Go up the mountain and bring wood and build the house so that I may be pleased with it and honored,’ says Yahweh.
 9 ‘You have looked for much, and look! *It came* to little; and *when* you brought *it* home, I blew *it away*. Why?’ declares Yahweh of hosts. ‘Because my house *is* desolate and you *are* running each to your own house!
 10 Therefore, because of you *the* heavens have withheld *the* dew and the earth has withheld its produce.
 11 I have called for a drought on the land and the hills, on the grain, the new wine, the olive oil, on what the soil produces, on human beings and wild animals, and on all their labor.’”
 12 Zerubbabel son of Shealtiel, Joshua son of Jehozadak, the high priest, and all the remnant of the people gave heed to the voice of Yahweh their God and to the words of Haggai the prophet, as Yahweh their God had sent him, and the people feared Yahweh.
 13 And Haggai the messenger of Yahweh spoke to the people with the message of Yahweh, saying, “ ‘*I am* with you’ declares Yahweh.”

Work Begins Again on the Temple (September 21, 520 BC)

Haggai 1:14–15

Ezra 5:2

14 And Yahweh stirred up the spirit of Zerubbabel son of Shealtiel, governor of Judah, and the spirit of Joshua son of Jehozadak, the high priest, and the spirit of all the remnant of the people. And they came and did *the* work on the house of Yahweh of hosts, their God,
 15 on the twenty-fourth day of the sixth month in the second year of King Darius.

2 Then Zerubbabel the son of Shealtiel and Jeshua the son of Jozadak set out and began to build the house of God that is in Jerusalem.
 And with them the prophets of God *were* helping them.

Tattenai Questions the Remnant's Authority to Rebuild the Temple (c. October 520 BC)

Ezra 5:3–17

3 At the same time Tattenai, governor of *the province* Beyond the River, and Shethar-bozenai, and their associates came to them and spoke to them thus: “Who issued you all a decree to build this house and to finish this structure?”
 4 Then we asked them this: “What are the names of the men who are building this building?”
 5 And the eye of their God was on the elders of the Jews, and they did not stop them until the report came to Darius, and then *answer* was received.
 6 The copy of the letter that Tattenai, the governor of *the province* Beyond the River, and Shethar-bozenai and his associates the envoys who were in *the province* Beyond the River sent to Darius the king.
 7 They sent to him the report in which was written as follows: “To Darius the king, all peace.
 8 May it be known to the king that we went to the province of Judah, the house of the great God. It is being built with stone blocks and timber is being put in the walls. This work is being done with diligence and is making progress in their hands.
 9 Then we asked those elders and said this to them, ‘Who issued forth to you a decree to build this house and to finish this structure?’
 10 We also asked them their names to make them known to you, that we might write down the name of their leaders.

11 And this is the answer they returned to us: ‘We are servants of the God of heaven and earth, and we are building the house that was built formerly many years ago, *which* a great king of Israel had built and finished.

12 But because our ancestors angered the God of heaven, he gave them into the hand of the Chaldean King Nebuchadnezzar of Babylon. He destroyed this house and carried away the people to Babylonia.

13 But in the first year of King Cyrus of Babylon’s reign he issued forth a decree to build this house of God.

14 Also, the gold and silver vessels of the house of God, which Nebuchadnezzar took away from the temple in Jerusalem and brought to the temple in Babylonia, King Cyrus removed them from the temple in Babylonia and they were given to Sheshbazzar, whom he appointed governor.

15 He said to him, ‘Take these vessels. Go put them in the temple in Jerusalem and let the house of God be built on its site.’

16 Then this Sheshbazzar came and laid the foundation of the house of God in Jerusalem. And from that *time* until now it is being built, but not yet finished.’

17 And now, if it seems good for the king, let it be investigated in the house of the treasury of the king in Babylonia *to see* if a decree was issued forth from King Cyrus to build this house of God in Jerusalem. And let the king send to us his desire on this matter.”

Haggai’s Prophecy to the Remnant—Don’t Be Discouraged (October 17, 520 BC)

Haggai 2:1–9

1 In the seventh *month* on the twenty-first day, the word of Yahweh came through Haggai the prophet, saying,

2 “Speak now to Zerubbabel son of Shealtiel, governor of Judah, and to Joshua son of Jehozadak, the high priest, and to the remnant of the people, saying,

3 ‘Who among you *is* left that saw this house in its former glory? And how do you see it now? Does it seem like nothing to you?

4 ‘But now take courage, Zerubbabel,’ declares Yahweh. ‘Take courage, Joshua son of Jehozadak, the high priest, and take courage, all the people of the land,’ declares Yahweh. ‘Do the work, because I *am* with you,’ declares Yahweh of hosts,

5 ‘according to the promise that I covenanted with you when you came out of Egypt. My spirit is with you; do not be afraid.’

6 For thus says Yahweh of hosts: ‘Once again, in a little while, I will shake the heavens and the earth and the sea and dry land. [\[Heb 12:26\]](#)

7 I will shake all the nations so that the treasure of all the nations will come, and I will fill this house *with* glory,’ says Yahweh of hosts.

8 ‘The silver *is* mine and the gold *is* mine,’ declares Yahweh of hosts.

9 ‘The latter glory of this house will be greater than the former,’ says Yahweh of hosts, ‘and in this place I will give peace’ declares Yahweh of hosts.”

Zechariah’s Prophecy to the Remnant—Don’t Be Like Your Ancestors (c. October 27, 520 BC)

Zechariah 1:1–6

1 In the eighth month, in the second year of Darius, the word of Yahweh came to the prophet Zechariah son of Berekiah, son of Iddo, saying,

2 “Yahweh was very angry with your ancestors.

3 You must say to them: ‘Thus says Yahweh of hosts: “Return to me,” declares Yahweh of hosts, “and I will return to you,” says Yahweh of hosts.

4 “Do not be like your ancestors, to whom the former prophets proclaimed, saying, ‘Thus says Yahweh of hosts: “Return from your evil ways and your evil deeds!” ‘ But they did not hear and they did not pay attention to me,” declares Yahweh.

5 “Your ancestors, where are they? And the prophets, do they live forever?

6 However, did not my words and my regulations which I commanded my servants the prophets overtake your ancestors? And they repented and said, ‘Yahweh of hosts planned to do with us according to our ways, and according to our deeds so he has dealt with us.’”

Haggai’s Prophecy to the Remnant—Sin’s Corrupting Influence (December 18, 520 BC)

Haggai 2:10–19

10 On *the* twenty-fourth *day* of the ninth *month*, in the second year of Darius, the word of Yahweh came to the prophet Haggai, saying,

11 “Thus says Yahweh of hosts: ‘Ask now the priests *for* a ruling:

12 If a man carries consecrated meat in the hem of his garment, and his hem touches bread, or stew, or wine, or olive oil, or any kind of food, will it become holy?’” The priests answered, “No.”

13 Then Haggai said, “If one who is unclean from contact with a corpse touches any of these, will it become unclean?” The priests answered, “Yes, it will become unclean.”

14 And Haggai answered and said, “ ‘So *it is with* this people, and *with* this nation before me,’ declares Yahweh, ‘and so *it is with* every kind of work of their hands; and what they offer there *is* unclean.
 15 But now, please consider from this day forward, before one stone was placed on another in the temple of Yahweh,
 16 from that time when one came to a heap of twenty *measures*, there were *only* ten, and *when* one came to the wine vat to draw out fifty measures, there were *only* twenty.
 17 I struck you with blight, and with plant mildew, and hail, all the work of your hands. But you did not come back to me,’ declares Yahweh.
 18 ‘Please consider from this day forward, from the twenty-fourth day of the ninth *month*, from the day that the foundation of Yahweh’s temple was laid, consider:
 19 *Is there* still seed in the store chamber? Do the vine, the fig tree, the pomegranate, and the olive tree still produce nothing? From this day *forward* I will bless you.’”

Haggai’s Prophecy to Zerubbabel—A Message of Encouragement (December 18, 520 BC)

Haggai 2:20–23

20 And the word of Yahweh came to Haggai a second time on the twenty-fourth *day* of the month saying,
 21 “Say to Zerubbabel, governor of Judah: I *am* going to shake the heavens and the earth, [[Heb 12:26](#)]
 22 and I will overthrow the thrones of kingdoms and destroy the military strength of the kingdoms of the nations. I will overthrow chariots and their drivers; horses and their riders will fall, every one by the sword of another!
 23 ‘On that day,’ declares Yahweh of hosts, ‘I will take you, Zerubbabel son of Shealtiel, my servant,’ declares Yahweh, ‘and I will make you a signet ring, for I have chosen you,’ declares Yahweh of hosts.”

Darius Sends His Approval for the Temple to be Rebuilt (c. January 519 BC)

Ezra 6:1–14a

Discovery of Cyrus’ Edict

1 Then King Darius issued forth a decree, and they searched the house of the treasury of scrolls being stored in Babylonia.
 2 But it was in Ecbatana in the province of Media, in the citadel, that a certain scroll had written on it, “A record.
 3 In the first year of King Cyrus, he issued forth a decree concerning the house of God in Jerusalem. Let the house be built, the place where sacrifices are offered and let its foundations be raised. Its height *shall be* sixty cubits and its width sixty cubits,
 4 with three layers of great stones and a layer of timber. Let the new expenses be paid from the house of the king.
 5 Also, let the gold and silver vessels of the house of God, which Nebuchadnezzar took from the temple in Jerusalem and brought to Babylonia, be returned and brought to the temple in Jerusalem to its place. Put them in the house of God.”

Darius’ Order to Tattenai

6 “Now then, Tattenai governor of *the province* Beyond the River, Shethar-bozenai, and your associates, the envoys who are in *the province* Beyond the River—keep far away from there.
 7 Leave this work of the house of God alone. Let the governor of the Jews and the elders of the Jews build this house of God on its site.
 8 And I issue forth a decree for what you should do for these elders of the Jews to build this house of God. The full expense will be paid to these men from the riches of the king from the taxes of *the province* Beyond the River, without delay.
 9 Whatever may be needed—young bulls, young rams, sheep for burnt offerings to the God of heaven, wheat, salt, wine, and oil for the priests in Jerusalem—let it be given to them day by day with no negligence,
 10 that they may offer incense offerings to the God of heaven, and pray for the life of the king and his children.
 11 Furthermore, I issue forth a decree that if any person violates this decree, let a beam be pulled out from his house and let him be impaled on it. And let his house be made a pile of rubble on *account of* this.
 12 May the God who has set his name there overthrow any king or people who sets his hand to alter *or* to destroy this house of God in Jerusalem. I, Darius, issue forth a decree. Let it be done with diligence.”

Tattenai Immediately Obeys

13 Then Tattenai the governor of the *province* Beyond the River, Shethar-bozenai, and their associates consequently did with diligence what Darius the king ordered.
 14a So the elders of the Jews were building and prospering, through the prophecy of Haggai the prophet and Zechariah son of Iddo.

Zechariah's Eight Night Visions (February 15, 519 BC)

Zechariah 1:7–6:15

The First Vision—The Horsemen

1:7 On the twenty-fourth day of *the* eleventh month, the month of Shebat, in the second year of Darius, the word of Yahweh came to Zechariah the prophet, son of Berekiah, son of Iddo, saying,

8 I had a vision in the night, and look, a man riding on a red horse. And he *was* standing between the myrtle shrubs that *were* in the ravine, and behind him *were* red, reddish-brown, and white horses.

9 And I asked, "What *are* these, my lord?" And the angel *who was* talking with me said, "I will show you what these are."

10 And the man standing between the myrtle shrubs answered and said, "These *are* those whom Yahweh has sent to patrol *the* earth."

11 And they answered the angel of Yahweh who was standing between the myrtle shrubs, and they said, "We have patrolled the earth, and look, all the earth is dwelling in peace."

12 The angel of Yahweh answered and said, "O Yahweh of hosts, how long will you have no compassion on Jerusalem and the cities of Judah, *with* which you showed fury these seventy years?"

13 *With* gracious and comforting words Yahweh answered the angel who was talking with me.

14 And the angel who was talking with me said to me, "Proclaim, saying, 'Thus says Yahweh of hosts: 'I am very jealous for Jerusalem and for Zion!

15 And I am extremely angry with the nations that are at ease, for *while* I was a little angry, they furthered disaster."

16 Therefore, thus says Yahweh: "I have returned to Jerusalem with compassion. My temple will be built in it," declares Yahweh of hosts, "and a measuring line will be stretched out over Jerusalem."

17 Proclaim again, saying, 'Thus says Yahweh of hosts: "My cities shall again overflow from prosperity, and Yahweh will comfort Zion again, and he will choose Jerusalem again." "'

The Second Vision—Four Horns and Four Smiths

18 And I looked up and I saw, and look, *there were* four horns!

19 And I said to the angel *who was* talking with me, "What *are* these?" And he said to me, "These *are* the horns that have scattered Judah, Israel, and Jerusalem."

20 Then Yahweh showed me four skilled craftsmen,

21 and I asked, "What *are* these coming to do?" And he answered, saying, "These *are* the horns that scattered Judah, so that no man lifted up his head; but these have come to frighten them, to strike down the horns of the nations that lifted a horn against the land of Judah to scatter it."

The Third Vision—The Surveyor

2:1 And I looked up and I saw, and look, a man, and in his hand *was* a measuring rope!

2 And I asked, "Where *are* you going?" And he answered me, "To measure Jerusalem to see what *is* its width and what *is* its length."

3 And look, the angel who was talking to me *was* coming forward, and another angel *was* coming forward to meet him.

4 And he said to him, "Run, say to that young man, 'Jerusalem shall be inhabited like villages without walls because of the multitude of people and animals in its midst.

5 And I will be for it a wall of fire all around,' declares Yahweh, 'and I will be *the* glory in its midst.'"

6 "Woe! Woe! Flee from *the* land of *the* north," declares Yahweh, "for I have scattered you like *the* four winds of the heavens," declares Yahweh.

7 "Woe, Zion! Escape, you inhabitants of *the* daughter of Babylon!"

8 For thus said Yahweh of hosts, after glory he sent me against the nations plundering you: Truly, the one touching you *is* touching the apple of his eye.

9 "Yes, look! I *am* going to wave my hand against them, and they will become plunder for their servants, and you will know that Yahweh of hosts has sent me.

10 Sing and rejoice, O daughter of Zion, for look, I *am* coming and I will dwell in your midst," declares Yahweh.

11 "Many nations will join themselves to Yahweh on that day, and they will be my people, and I will dwell in your midst. And you will know that Yahweh of hosts has sent me to you.

12 And Yahweh will inherit Judah *as* his portion in the holy land, and he will again choose Jerusalem.

13 Be silent, all people, before Yahweh, for he is roused from his holy dwelling."

The Fourth Vision—The Cleansing of Joshua the High Priest

3:1 And he showed me Joshua the high priest standing before the angel of Yahweh; and Satan was standing on his right to accuse him.

2 But Yahweh said to Satan, "Yahweh rebukes you, O Satan! Yahweh who has chosen Jerusalem rebukes you! *Is* this not a stick snatched from the fire?" [cf. [Jude 1:9](#)]

3 And Joshua was clothed *in* filthy garments and was standing before the angel.

4 And he answered and said to the ones standing before him, saying, “Remove the filthy garments from him.” And he said to him, “See, I have taken away your guilt from you, and will clothe you *with rich garments*.”

5 And I said, “Let them put a clean headband on his head.” And they put a clean headband on his head, and they clothed him *with garments*. And the angel of Yahweh *was standing by*.

6 And the angel of Yahweh assured Joshua, saying,

7 “Thus says Yahweh of hosts: ‘If you will walk in my ways, and if you will keep my requirements, then you will judge my house, and you will also guard my courtyards, and I will give to you passageways among these that are standing here.

8 Listen, please, O Joshua the high priest, you and your companions that are sitting before you. For *the men are* a sign that, look, I *am* going to bring my servant *the Branch*.

9 For consider, the stone that I set before Joshua, on one stone *are* seven eyes. Look, I am going to engrave an inscription on it,’ declares Yahweh of hosts, ‘and I will remove the guilt of that land in a single day.

10 On that day,’ declares Yahweh of hosts, ‘you will invite one another under *the* vine and under *the* fig tree.’”

The Fifth Vision—The Gold Lampstand and Two Olive Trees

4:1 And the angel *who was* talking with me returned, and he wakened me as one who is wakened from his sleep.

2 And he said to me, “What do you see?” And I said, “I see, and look, a lampstand all of gold, and a bowl *was* on its top, and its seven lamps on it, and seven lips on *each of* the lamps that *are* on its top.

3 And *there are* two olive trees by it, one on the right of the bowl and the other on its left.”

4 And I answered and said to the angel *who was* talking to me, “What *are* these, my lord?”

5 And the angel *who was* talking with me answered and said to me, “Do you not know what these *are*?” And I said, “No, my lord.”

6 And he answered and said to me, “This *is* the word of Yahweh to Zerubbabel, saying, ‘Not by strength and not by power, but *only* by my Spirit,’ says Yahweh of hosts.

7 ‘Who *are* you O great mountain? Before Zerubbabel *you will become* level ground, and he will bring out the top stone amid the shouts of “Grace, grace to it!” ’”

8 And the word of Yahweh came to me, saying,

9 “The hands of Zerubbabel have founded this house, and his hands will finish it. And you will know that Yahweh of hosts has sent me to you.

10 For whoever has despised the day of small *things* will rejoice and will see the plumb line in the hand of Zerubbabel.” These seven *are* the eyes of Yahweh which *are* ranging throughout the whole earth.

11 And I answered and said to him, “What *are* these two olive trees on the right of the lampstand and on its left?”

12 And I replied a second *time* and asked him, “What *are* these two twigs of olive trees on the right of the lampstand and on its left?”

13 And he replied to me, “Do you not know what these *are*?” And I said, “No, my lord.”

14 And he said, “These *are* the two anointed ones standing by the Lord of the whole earth.”

The Sixth Vision—The Flying Scroll

5:1 I looked up again, and I saw, and look!—a flying scroll!

2 And he asked me, “What *are* you seeing?” And I said, “I *am* seeing a flying scroll twenty cubits long and ten cubits wide.”

3 And he said to me, “This *is* the curse going out over the surface of the whole earth. For everyone who steals has gone unpunished according to it, and *likewise* everyone who swears *falsely* has gone unpunished according to it.

4 ‘I have sent it out,’ declares Yahweh of hosts, ‘and it will go into the house of the thief and into the house of the one swearing falsely by my name, and it will spend the night in that house and will destroy it, with its timber and its stone.’”

The Seventh Vision—The Woman in the Basket

5 And the angel who was speaking to me went out, and he said to me, “Please look up! See what this *is* going out.”

6 And I asked, “What *is* it?” And he said, “This *is* a basket going out. And he said, “This *is* their iniquity throughout all the earth.

7 And look, the lead cover was lifted and a woman *was* sitting inside the basket.

8 And he said, “This *is* Wickedness!” And he thrust her *back down* into the basket, and threw the lead cover on top of it.

9 And I looked up and saw, and look!—two women coming forward, and *the* wind *was* in their wings, and they had wings like those of a stork, and they lifted up the basket between the earth and the sky.

10 And I asked the angel who was talking to me, “Where *are* they taking the basket?”

11 And he said to me, “To build for it a house in the land of Shinar, and *when* it is put in place, it will be placed there on its site.”

The Eighth Vision—The Four Chariots

6:1 I looked up again, and I saw, and look!—four chariots coming out from between two mountains, and the mountains *were* mountains of bronze.

2 With the first chariot *there were* red horses, and with the second chariot *there were* black horses.

3 And with the third chariot *there were* white horses, and with the fourth chariot *there were* strong dappled horses.

4 And I answered and said to the angel *that was* talking to me, “What *are* these, my lord?”

5 And the angel answered and said to me, “These *are* the four winds of the heavens going out after presenting themselves before the Lord of all the earth.

6 The one with the black horses *is* going out to *the* north country, and the white *horses* go after them, while the dappled *ones* go to the south country.”

7 When the strong *horses* went out, they were anxious to go to patrol the earth. And he said, “Go, patrol the earth.” And they patrolled the earth.

8 And he cried out to me and said to me, “See those going out to *the* north country have set my spirit at rest in the north country.”

Instructions to Zechariah Concerning Joshua the High Priest

9 And the word of Yahweh came to me, saying,

10 “Collect from the exiles—from Heldai, Tobijah, and from Jedaiah, *all of* whom came from Babylon—and go on that day, go to *the* house of Josiah son of Zephaniah.

11 Take *the* silver and gold and make a crown, and set *it* on the head of Joshua son of Jehozadak, the high priest.

12 And say to him, ‘Thus says Yahweh of hosts: “Look, *here is* a man whose name *is* Branch, and from his place he will sprout, and he will build the temple of Yahweh.

13 And he will build the temple of Yahweh, and he will bear majesty and will sit and rule on his throne. And he shall be a priest on his throne, and the counsel of peace will be between the two of them.”’

14 And the crown will be for Helem, for Tobijah, for Jedaiah, and for Hen son of Zephaniah, as a memorial in the temple of Yahweh.

15 And those who are far off will come and build the temple of Yahweh, and you will know that Yahweh of hosts has sent me to you.

And it will happen if you will listen diligently to the voice of Yahweh your God.”

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Zechariah's Prophecy to the Remnant—Hypocritical Fasting (December 7, 518 BC)

Zechariah 7–8

Question About Fasting

7:1 And then, in the fourth year of King Darius, the word of Yahweh came to Zechariah on *the fourth day* of the ninth month, *which is Kislev*.

2 And *the people of Bethel* sent Sharezer and Regem-Melech, and their men, to entreat the favor of Yahweh,

3 saying to the priests of the house of Yahweh of hosts and to the prophets, “Should I mourn in the fifth month and keep myself separate as I have done for these many years?”

God's First Response—Examine Your True Motives

4 And the word of Yahweh of hosts came to me, saying,

5 “Say to all the people of the land and to the priests: ‘When you fasted and lamented in the fifth and seventh months for these seventy years, did you really fast for me?’

6 And when you eat and drink, are you not eating and drinking *for yourselves*?

7 *Are not these* the words that Yahweh proclaimed through the former prophets, when Jerusalem and its surrounding towns were inhabited and at ease, and the Negev and the Shephelah were inhabited?” [cf. [Isa 58:1–8](#)]

God's Second Response—A Call to Repentance

8 And the word of Yahweh came to Zechariah, saying,

9 “Thus says Yahweh of hosts: ‘Judge *with* trustworthy justice, and show steadfast love and compassion to one another.

10 You must not oppress *the widow, the orphan, the foreigner, and the needy*. You must not devise evil in your heart against one another.’

11 But they refused to listen, and turned a stubborn shoulder and stopped their ears from listening.

12 They made their hearts adamant in order not to hear the law and the words that Yahweh of hosts had sent by his spirit through the former prophets; *therefore* great wrath came from Yahweh of hosts.

13 ‘Thus, just as I called and they would not hear, so they will call and I will not hear,’ says Yahweh of hosts.

14 ‘And I scattered them with a wind among all the nations that they had not known; the land was made desolate behind them—no one crossing through *it* or returning—and they made the desirable land a desolation.’”

Israel's Future Restoration

8:1 And the word of Yahweh of hosts came, saying,

2 “Thus says Yahweh of hosts: ‘I am exceedingly jealous for Zion; I am jealous for it *with* great wrath.’

3 Thus says Yahweh: ‘I have returned to Zion, and I will dwell in the midst of Jerusalem; and Jerusalem will be called the faithful city, and the mountain of Yahweh of hosts *will be called* the holy mountain.’

4 Thus says Yahweh of hosts: ‘Old men and old women shall again sit in the public squares of Jerusalem, each with staff in hand because of great age.

5 And the public squares of the city will be filled *with* boys and girls playing in its public squares.’

6 Thus says Yahweh of hosts: ‘*Even* if it seems impossible to the remnant of this people in those days, should it also seem impossible to me?’ declares Yahweh of hosts.

7 Thus says Yahweh of hosts: ‘Look! I *am* going to save my people from the land of the east, and from the land of the west,

8 and I will bring them and they will dwell in the midst of Jerusalem. They will be my people and I will be their God in faithfulness and in righteousness.’

9 “Thus says Yahweh of hosts: ‘Let your hands be strong, you who are hearing in these days these words from the mouth of the prophets *who were present on the day* the foundation was laid for the rebuilding of the temple, the house of Yahweh of hosts.

10 For before those days there was no wage for people or for animals, and there was no safety from the enemy for those who went out or those who came in, and I sent each person against one another.

11 But now I will not deal with the remnant of this people as in the former days,’ declares Yahweh of hosts.

12 ‘For *there will be* a sowing of peace; the vine will give its fruit, and the soil will give its produce, and the heavens will give their dew. And I will cause the remnant of this people to inherit all these *things*.

13 And then, just as you were a curse among the nations, O house of Judah and house of Israel, so will I save you, and you will be a blessing. You must not be afraid; let your hands be strong!’”

14 For thus says Yahweh of hosts: “Just as I planned to bring disaster on you when your ancestors provoked me to anger,” says Yahweh of hosts, “and I did not regret *it*,

15 so again I have planned in these days to do good to Jerusalem and the house of Judah. Do not be afraid!

16 These *are* the things that you must do: speak truth, each *of you*, with his neighbor; [[Eph 4:25](#)] practice trustworthy judgment and peace in your gates.

17 Do not devise evil in your hearts *against* your neighbor, and do not love a false oath, because all these *are* things I hate,” declares Yahweh.

18 And the word of Yahweh of hosts came to me, saying

19 “Thus says Yahweh of hosts: ‘The fast of the fourth *month*, the fifth *month*, the seventh *month*, and the tenth *month* will be for the house of Judah jubilation and joy and merry festivals; therefore love truth and peace.’

20 Thus says Yahweh of hosts: ‘*It will happen* again that nations and the inhabitants of many cities will come.

21 And the inhabitants of one city will go to another *city*, saying, “Let us go immediately to entreat the favor of Yahweh, to seek Yahweh of hosts—I also will go!”

22 And many peoples and powerful nations will come to seek Yahweh of hosts in Jerusalem, and to entreat the favor of Yahweh.’

23 Thus says Yahweh of hosts: ‘In those days ten men from all the nations of every language will take hold of the hem of a Judean man, saying, “Let us go with you, for we have heard *that God is with you!*” ’”

Zechariah’s Prophecy to the Remnant—The Anointed King Rejected (c. 517–516 BC)

Zechariah 9–11

Judgment on the Nations Surrounding Israel (Historical and Eschatological)

9:1 An oracle.

The word of Yahweh *is* against the land of Hadrach,
and Damascus *is* its resting place.

For to Yahweh belongs the eye of humankind,
and all the tribes of Israel,

2 and also Hamath, *which* borders on it;
Tyre and Sidon—yes, they are very wise!

3 Tyre has built a fortification for itself,
and it heaped up silver like dust,
and gold like *the* mud of *the* streets.

4 Look! The Lord will drive it out
and will hurl its outer ramparts into the sea,
and it will be consumed by fire.

5 Ashkelon will see and will be afraid,
and Gaza will writhe exceedingly,
and Ekron *also*, because its hope is ruined.
And the king from Gaza will perish,
and Ashkelon will not be inhabited.

6 A mongrel people will dwell in Ashdod,
and I will cut down the pride of *the* Philistines.

7 I will remove its blood from its mouth,
and its abominations from between its teeth.
And it too will be a remnant for our God;
and it will be like a tribal chief in Judah,
and Ekron *will be* like *the* Jebusite.

8 But I will encamp at my temple *like a guard*,
against those crossing through and returning;
no oppressor will cross through them again,
for now I have seen with my *own* eyes.

The Coming of the Messiah, Israel’s True King (Historical and Eschatological)

9 Rejoice greatly, O daughter of Zion!
Shout aloud, O daughter of Jerusalem!
Look! Your king comes to you;
he *is* righteous and victorious,
humble and riding on a donkey,
and on a male donkey, the foal of a female donkey! [[Matt 21:5](#); [John 12:15](#)]

10 And I will cut off *the* chariot from Ephraim,
and *the* horse from Jerusalem;
the battle bow will be cut down,
and he will announce peace to the nations.
His dominion *will be* from sea to sea,
and from *the* River to *the* ends of *the* earth.

The King Delivers Israel (Eschatological)

- 11 *As for* you also, because of the blood of your covenant,
I will release your prisoners from the waterless pit.
- 12 Return to *the* fortress,
O prisoners of hope;
today *I am* declaring *that* I will repay you double.
- 13 For I have bent Judah *as* my bow;
I have set Ephraim *as an* arrow.
I will set in motion your sons, O Zion,
against your sons, O Javan.
I will wield you like the sword of a warrior.
- 14 Then Yahweh will appear over them,
and his arrow will go forth like lightning;
and my Lord Yahweh will blow the trumpet,
and he shall go out in the storm winds of *the* south.
- 15 Yahweh of hosts will defend them,
and they will devour and subdue the sling-stones;
they will drink, they will make noise like wine,
and they will be full like the sacrificial basin,
drenched like the corners of an altar.
- 16 And Yahweh their God will save them on that day,
as the flock of his people;
for *they are like* the stones of a diadem,
glittering on his land.
- 17 For how *great is* his goodness, and how *great is* his beauty!
Grain will make the young men thrive,
and new wine *the* young women.

The King Rejects the Wicked Leaders (Eschatological)

- 10:1 Ask rain from Yahweh in the season of *the* spring rain—
Yahweh, who makes storm clouds,
and he gives showers of rain to them,
to everyone vegetation in the field.
- 2 Because the household gods speak deceit,
and those who practice divination see a lie,
and the dreamers of vanity speak in vain.
Therefore *the people* wander like sheep;
they are afflicted because there is no shepherd.
- 3a My anger burns against the shepherds,
and I will punish the leaders,

The King Selects the Righteous Leaders (Eschatological)

- 3b because Yahweh of hosts watches over his flock,
the house of Judah;
and he will make them like his majestic horse in war.
- 4 From them *the* cornerstone will go out,
from them *the* tent peg,
from them *the* battle bow,
from them every ruler,
all together.
- 5 And they will be like warriors,
trampling in the mud of *the* streets in the battle.
They will fight, because Yahweh *is* with them,
and they will put to shame *the* riders on horses.
- 6 And I will strengthen the house of Judah,
and the house of Joseph I will save.
And I will bring them back, because I have compassion on them,
and they will be as if I had not rejected them,

for I *am* Yahweh their God, and I will answer them.

- 7 And *the people of* Ephraim will be like a warrior,
and their heart will be glad as *with* wine.
And their children will see and rejoice;
their heart will shout in exultation in Yahweh.

The King Regathers His People—the Second Exodus (Eschatological)

- 8 I will whistle to them and gather them,
for I have redeemed them,
and they will become numerous as they have been numerous *before*.
- 9 Though I sow them among the nations,
in the distant places they will remember me,
and they will stay alive with their children, and they will return.
- 10 And I will bring them back from the land of Egypt,
and from Assyria I will gather them.
To the land of Gilead and Lebanon I will bring them,
until no *room* will be found for them *there*.
- 11 And he will pass through the sea of distress,
and he will strike the waves of the sea,
and all *the* depths of the Nile will dry up.
The pride of Assyria will be brought low,
and the scepter of Egypt will depart.
- 12 I will make them strong in Yahweh,
and in his name they will walk,
declares Yahweh.

A Lament for the Destruction of the Three Trees/Shepherds/Kings (Historical—Preexilic)

- 11:1 Open your doors, *O* Lebanon,
so that fire will devour your cedars!
- 2 Wail, *O* juniper, for *the* cedar has fallen,
for *the* magnificent *trees* are ruined!
Wail, oaks of Bashan,
for the impenetrable forest has come down!
- 3 *Listen to* the wailing of the shepherds,
for their splendor is ruined!
Listen to the roar of *the* young lions,
for the thickets of the Jordan are ruined!

The Rejection of the Messiah as Illustrated by Zechariah’s Role-Playing (Historical—Preexilic and Exilic)

- 4 Thus says Yahweh my God: “Shepherd the flock *doomed* to slaughter.
- 5 The ones buying them kill them and go unpunished, and the ones selling them say, ‘Blessed *be* Yahweh, for I have become rich.’
Their own shepherds have no compassion for them.
- 6 For I will no longer have compassion on the inhabitants of the land,” declares Yahweh. “Look, I *am* going to cause humankind to fall, each into the hand of his neighbor, and into the hand of his king; and they will devastate the land, and I will not deliver *anyone* from their hand.”
- 7 And I shepherded the flock *doomed* to slaughter, even the afflicted of the flock. I took two staffs, one I called Kindness, and the other I called Unity, and I shepherded the flock.
- 8 And I got rid of three shepherds in one month, for I grew impatient with them, and they also became tired of me.
- 9 So I said, “I will not shepherd you! The *one* dying will die, and the *one* to be destroyed will be destroyed. And the *ones* remaining, let them devour the flesh of each other.”
- 10 And I took my staff Kindness and broke it, to break my covenant that I had made with all the peoples.
- 11 And it was broken on that day. Then the afflicted of the flock, the *ones who were* watching me, knew that it *was* the word of Yahweh.
- 12 And I said to them, “If it seems right to you, give *me* my wages, but if not, keep them.” And they weighed out my wages, thirty silver *shekels*.
- 13 And Yahweh said to me, “Throw it to the potter,” this noble price *at* which I was valued by them!” So I took the thirty silver *shekels* and I threw them to the potter *in* the house of Yahweh. [cf. [Matt 26:14–16; 27:3–10](#)]
- 14 Then I broke my second staff Unity to break the family ties between Judah and Israel.

The Evil Shepherd/King to Come (Eschatological)

15 And Yahweh said to me, “Take again the implements of a foolish shepherd.

16 For look, I *am* raising up a shepherd in the land who will not attend to the *ones that are* perishing; he will not seek the young man, he will not heal the *ones that are* crushed and he will not sustain the healthy *ones*; he will devour the flesh of the fattened ones and tear apart *even* their hoofs.

17 “Woe, my worthless shepherd who deserts the flock! *May* a sword *fall* on his arm and on his right eye! *May* his arm wither completely and his right eye be utterly blinded!”

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Zechariah's Prophecy to the Remnant—The Rejected King Enthroned (c. 517–516 BC)

Zechariah 12–14

The Nations of the Earth Assemble to Attack Jerusalem (Eschatological)

12:1 An oracle. The word of Yahweh concerning Israel. "Thus declares Yahweh, who stretches out *the* heavens, founds *the* earth, and forms the spirit of humankind in its midst:

2 'Look, I *am* going to make Jerusalem a cup of reeling for all the surrounding nations; it will also be against Judah in the siege against Jerusalem.

3 And then on that day I will make Jerusalem a stone weight for all the peoples. All those lifting it up will grievously hurt themselves, and all the nations of the earth will assemble against it.

4 On that day,' declares Yahweh, 'I will strike every horse with confusion, and the one riding it with madness; but over the house of Judah I will keep my eyes open, and I will strike every horse of the peoples with blindness.

5 And the clans of Judah will say to themselves, "The inhabitants of Jerusalem are a strength to us, through Yahweh of hosts, their God."

6 " 'On that day I will make the clans of Judah like a pan of fire among *sticks of* wood, and like a torch of fire among stalks of grain, and they will devour to *the* right and to *the* left all the surrounding peoples, and Jerusalem will be inhabited again *in* its place, in Jerusalem.

7 And Yahweh will save the tents of Judah first, so that the glory of the house of David and the glory of the inhabitants of Jerusalem may not be exalted over Judah.

8 On that day Yahweh will put a shield around the inhabitants of Jerusalem, and the one who stumbles among them on that day will be like David, and the house of David *will be* like God, like the angel of Yahweh, before them.

Israel Weeps Over the One They Pierced (Eschatological)

9 And then on that day I will seek to destroy all the nations coming against Jerusalem.

10 " 'I will pour on the house of David and on the inhabitants of Jerusalem a spirit of grace and supplication, and they will look to me whom they pierced, and they shall mourn over him, as one wails over an only child, and they will grieve bitterly over him as *one* grieves bitterly over a firstborn. [[John 19:37](#); [Rev 1:7](#)]

11 On that day the wailing will be great in Jerusalem, like the wailing for Hadad Rimmon in the plain of Megiddo.

12 And the land shall mourn, each clan by itself; the clan of the house of David by itself, and their wives by themselves; the clan of the house of Nathan by itself, and their wives by themselves;

13 the clan of the house of Levi by itself, and their wives by themselves; the clan of the Shimeites by itself, and their wives by themselves;

14 and all those clans remaining, each clan by itself, and their wives by themselves."

Israel Cleansed of Sin, Idols, and False Prophets (Eschatological)

13:1 " 'On that day a well will be opened for the house of David and for the inhabitants of Jerusalem, to cleanse them from sin and from impurity.

2 And then, on that day,' declares Yahweh of hosts, 'I will cut off the names of the idols from the land, and they will no longer be remembered; and also the prophets and the spirit of uncleanness I will banish from the land.

3 And then, if anyone prophesies again, his father and his mother who bore him will say to him, "You shall not live, because you have spoken a lie in the name of Yahweh!" And his father and his mother who bore him will pierce him through when he prophesies.

4 And then on that day, each of the prophets will be ashamed because of his vision when he was prophesying, and they will not put on a cloak of hair in order to deceive,

5 but he will say, "I *am* not a prophet; I am a tiller of the soil, for a man has acquired me since my youth."

6 And someone shall say to him, "What *are* these wounds between your arms?" and he will say, "Those I have received *in* the house of *the ones who love me.*" "

The Shepherd Smitten, a Remnant Spared (Historical and Eschatological)

7 "O sword, awake against my shepherd,
against *the man who is* my associate,"
declares Yahweh of hosts.
"Strike the shepherd,
so that the sheep may be scattered, [[Matt 26:31](#); [Mark 14:27](#)]
and I will turn my hand against the small *ones*.

8 And then in all the land," declares Yahweh,
"two thirds will be cut off and perish,
and one third will be left alive in it.

9 And I will bring the *remaining* third into the fire,
and I will refine them like *one* refines silver,
and I will test them like *one* tests gold.

They will call my name,
and I will answer them.
I will say, ‘They are my people,’
and they will say, ‘Yahweh is my God.’”

The Day of the Battle for Jerusalem (Eschatological)

14:1 Look! A day is coming for Yahweh, when your plunder will be divided in your midst.

2 I will gather all the nations against Jerusalem to battle, and the city will be captured, and they will loot the houses, and the women will be raped; half of the city will go into exile, but the remainder of the people will not be cut off from the city.

3 Then Yahweh will go forth and fight against those nations, like when he fights on a day of battle.

4 On that day his feet will stand on the Mount of Olives, which faces Jerusalem on *the* east; and the Mount of Olives will be split in half, from east to west, *by* a very great valley; and half of the mountain will withdraw toward the north, and the other half toward the south.

5 And you will flee *by* the valley of my mountains, because the valley of *the* mountains will reach to Azal, and you will flee like you fled from the earthquake in the days of King Uzziah of Judah. And Yahweh my God will come, *and* all *the* holy ones with him.

The Establishment of the Messianic Kingdom (Eschatological)

6 And then on that day there will not be light, the precious things will congeal.

7 There shall be continuous day—it is known to Yahweh—not day and not night; and at evening time there will be light.

8 And then on that day, living waters will flow out from Jerusalem, half of them to the eastern sea, and the other half to the western sea; it will happen *both* in the summer and in the winter.

9 And Yahweh will be king over all the earth; on that day Yahweh will be one and his name one.

10 All the land will be transformed into a desert plateau from Geba to Rimmon south of Jerusalem. But it will rise up high and it will stay in its place from the Gate of Benjamin to the place of *the* former gate, up to the Corner Gate and from the Tower of Hananel to the king’s winepresses.

11 And they will dwell in it, and there will be no more ban imposed, and Jerusalem will dwell in security.

The Destruction of Israel’s Enemies (Eschatological)

12 And this will be the plague *with* which Yahweh will strike all the peoples that fight against Jerusalem: their flesh will rot while they *are* standing on their feet; their eyes will rot in their sockets, and their tongues will rot in their mouths.

13 And then on that day a great panic from Yahweh will fall on them, and they will seize one another’s hand, and the hand of the one will be raised against the hand of another.

14 And Judah also will fight at Jerusalem. And the wealth of all the surrounding nations will be collected—gold and silver, and garments in great abundance.

15 Like this plague will be the plague on the horse, the mule, the camel, and the donkey, and every kind of animal in those camps.

The King is Worshipped by the Nations During the Millennium (Eschatological)

16 And then every survivor from all those nations coming against Jerusalem will go up year after year to worship *the* king, Yahweh of hosts, and celebrate the Feast of Booths.

17 And then whoever of the clans of the earth does not go up to Jerusalem to worship the king, Yahweh of hosts, it will not rain on them.

18 And if the clan of Egypt will not go up and come in, on them will be that plague Yahweh inflicts on the nations that do not go up to celebrate the Feast of Booths.

19 This will be the punishment of Egypt and the punishment of all the nations that do not go up to celebrate the Feast of Booths.

20 On that day there will be *inscribed* on the bells of the horses, “Holy to Yahweh.” And the cooking pots in the house of Yahweh will be *holy* like the sacrificial basins before the altar.

21 And every cooking pot in Jerusalem and in Judah will be holy to Yahweh of hosts, and all those who sacrifice will come and will take from them, and will cook in them, and there will be no longer a trader in the house of Yahweh of hosts on that day.

The Temple Completed (March 12, 515 BC)

Ezra 6:14b–18

14b They finished building by the command of the God of Israel and by the decree of Cyrus, Darius, and King Artaxerxes of Persia.

15 This house was completed on the third day of the month of Adar, which was in the sixth year of the reign of King Darius.

16 And the Israelites, the priests, the Levites, and the rest of the returned exiles celebrated the dedication of this house of God with joy.

17 And they offered during the dedication of this house of God one hundred young bulls, two hundred young rams, four hundred lambs, and twelve male goats as a sin offering for Israel *according to* the number of the tribes of Israel.

18 Then they set the priests in their divisions and the Levites in their sections for the work of God in Jerusalem, as it is written in the book of Moses.

Passover Celebrated (April 21–27, 515 BC)

Ezra 6:19–22

19 On the fourteenth day of the first month the returned exiles observed the Passover feast.

20 For the priests and Levites together had consecrated themselves; all of them were clean. And they slaughtered the Passover sacrifice for all of the returned exiles, for their brothers the priests, and for themselves.

21 The Israelites who returned from the exile and all those who separated themselves from the uncleanness of the nations of the earth to seek Yahweh the God of Israel, ate.

22 With joy they celebrated the festival of unleavened bread *for* seven days, because Yahweh had made them joyful and had turned the heart of the king of Assyria toward them in order to help them with the work of their hands on the house of the God of Israel.

He Heals the Brokenhearted (c. May 515 BC)

Psalm 147

- 1 Praise Yah.
For *it is* good to sing praises *to* our God;
for *it is* pleasant; praise is fitting.
- 2 Yahweh *is* building Jerusalem;
he gathers *the* scattered ones of Israel.
- 3 *He is* the one who heals the brokenhearted,
and binds up their wounds.
- 4 *He counts the* number of the stars;
he gives names to all of them.
- 5 Great *is* our Lord, and abundant in power;
his understanding is unlimited.
- 6 Yahweh helps the afflicted up;
he brings *the* wicked down to *the* ground.
- 7 Sing to Yahweh with thanksgiving;
sing praises to our God with lyre,
- 8 who covers *the* heavens with clouds,
who provides rain for the earth,
who causes grass to grow on the mountains.
- 9 *He* gives to *the* animal its food,
and to *the* young ravens that cry.
- 10 He does not delight in the strength of the horse;
he takes no pleasure in the legs of the man.
- 11 Yahweh takes pleasure in those who fear him,
the ones who hope for his loyal love.
- 12 Laud Yahweh, O Jerusalem;
praise your God, O Zion,
- 13 for he strengthens the bars of your gates.
He blesses your children within you;
- 14 *he* makes your border peaceful;
he satisfies you with *the* finest of wheat.
- 15 *He* sends out his command to *the* earth;
his word runs swiftly.
- 16 *He* gives snow like wool;
he scatters frost like ashes;
- 17 *he* throws his hail like crumbs.
Who can stand before his cold?
- 18 He sends out his word and melts them;
he blows his breath, the water flows.
- 19 *He* declares his word to Jacob,
his statutes and his ordinances to Israel.
- 20 He has not done so for any nation,
and they do not know *his* ordinances.
Praise Yah.

Opposition to the Remnant During Ahasuerus' [Xerxes] Reign (c. 486/485 BC)

Ezra 4:6

6 In the reign of Ahasuerus, at the beginning of his reign, they [*the local residents*] wrote an accusation against the inhabitants of Judah and Jerusalem.

Ahasuerus Displays His Power and Glory for 180 Days (October 4, 483–April 2, 482 BC)

Esther 1:1–4

1 And it happened in the days of Ahasuerus, the Ahasuerus who reigned from India to Cush—*over* one hundred and twenty-seven provinces.
 2 In those days as King Ahasuerus was sitting on the throne of his kingdom, which *was* in the citadel of Susa,
 3 he gave a banquet in the third year of his reign for all his officials and servants. The army of Persia and Media and the nobles and officials of the provinces were in his presence
 4 as he displayed the wealth of the glory of his kingdom and the glorious splendor of his greatness *for* many days, one hundred and eighty days.

The Seven Day Banquet in Susa (April 3–9, 482 BC)

Esther 1:5–9

5 And when those days were completed, the king gave for all the people that were present at the citadel of Susa, both great and small, a banquet in the courtyard of the king's palace garden that lasted seven days.
 6 There were curtains of finely woven linen and blue cloth tied with cords of fine white linen and purple cloth to silver curtain rings and pillars of alabaster, *and* couches of gold and silver on a paved floor of alabaster, precious stone, mother-of-pearl, and costly stones.
 7 Drinks were served in goblets of gold and goblets of different kinds, and *there was* plentiful royal wine according to the bounty of the king.
 8 There were no restrictions on the drinking, for the king had instructed every official of his palace to do as each one pleased.
 9 Furthermore, Queen Vashti gave a banquet for the women *in* the palace that belonged to King Ahasuerus.

Vashti Defies Ahasuerus (April 9, 482 BC)

Esther 1:10–22

10 On the seventh day, when the heart of the king was merry with wine, he said to Mehuman, Biztha, Harbona, Bigtha, Abagtha, Zethar, and Carcas, seven of the eunuchs attending King Ahasuerus,
 11 to bring Queen Vashti before the king with her royal crown to show the people and the officials her beauty, for she was very attractive.
 12 But Queen Vashti refused to come at the word of the king that *was* conveyed by the eunuchs. And the king became very angry, and his anger burned in him.
 13 And the king said to the wise men, the ones who know the times—for it *was* the procedure of the king before all those who knew law and rights;
 14 and those next to him were Carshena, Shethar, Admatha, Tarshish, Meres, Marsena, Memucan, the seven officials of Persia and Media who had access to the king and sat first in the kingdom—
 15 "According to *the* law, what is to be done with Queen Vashti, because she has not done the command of King Ahasuerus conveyed by the eunuchs?
 16 And Memucan said before the king and the officials, "Not only has Queen Vashti done wrong to the king, but to all the officials and all of the people who *are* in all the provinces of King Ahasuerus.
 17 For this deed of the queen will be known to all the women, causing them to look with contempt on their husbands, as they will say, 'King Ahasuerus commanded Queen Vashti to be brought before him but she did not come!'
 18 This day the women of nobility from Persia and Media will respond to all the officials of the king and there will be no end to contempt and anger.
 19 If it pleases the king, let a royal edict go out from him, and let it be written among the laws of Persia and Media so that it will not be altered, that Vashti cannot come before King Ahasuerus; and let the king give her royal position to her neighbor who *is* better than she.
 20 And let the king's decree that he will make be proclaimed in all his kingdom, because it *is* vast and all the women will honor their husbands, great and small."
 21 This advice pleased the king and the officials, and the king acted according to the word of Memucan.
 22 And he sent letters to all the provinces of the king, to each province according to its own script, and to every people in their own

language, that every man should be the master of his house and who speaks in the language of his people.

Ahasuerus Searches for a New Queen (c. 482–480 BC)

Esther 2:1–9

1 After these things, when the anger of King Ahasuerus subsided, he remembered Vashti and what she had done and what had been decreed against her.
 2 And the king's servants attending him said, "Let them seek attractive young virgins for the king.
 3 Let the king appoint chief officers in all the provinces of his kingdom, and let them gather every attractive young virgin to the harem in the citadel of Susa under the care of Hegai, the king's eunuch, who is in charge of the women; and let him give *them* their beauty treatment.
 4 And let the young woman who is pleasing in the king's eyes become queen in place of Vashti. The thing was good in the king's eyes, and he acted accordingly.
 5 There was a Jew in the citadel of Susa whose name *was* Mordecai son of Jair, son of Shimei, son of Kish, a Benjaminite,
 6 who was deported from Jerusalem with the exiles who were deported with Jeconiah the king of Judah, whom King Nebuchadnezzar of Babylon had deported.
 7 He was raising Hadassah, that *is* Esther, his uncle's daughter, for she did not have a father or a mother; the young woman *had* a beautiful figure and *was* very attractive. When her father and mother died, Mordecai had taken her as his daughter.
 8 And it happened, at the proclaiming of the edict of the king and his law, when many young women were being gathered to the citadel of Susa under Hegai's care, Esther was taken to the king's palace under the care of Hegai who was in charge of the women.
 9 The young woman pleased him and she won favor in his presence, and he quickly provided for her beauty treatment and her portion of food, with seven chosen maids to give to her from the king's palace, and he advanced her and her maids to the best part of the harem.

Esther's Twelve Month Beauty Treatment (February–December 479 BC)

Esther 2:10–14

10 Esther did not disclose her people and her family because Mordecai had charged her that she must not tell.
 11 And every day Mordecai would walk up and down in front of the courtyard of the harem to learn how Esther was doing.
 12 When the turn came for each girl to go to King Ahasuerus, after the end of twelve months of being under the regulations of the women—for the days of their beauty treatments had to be filled, six months with the oil of myrrh and six months with perfumes and women's cosmetics—
 13 in this way, the girl goes to the king and all that she asks is given to her to take with her from the harem to the king's palace.
 14 In the evening she would go and in the morning she would return to the second harem under the care of Shaashgaz, the king's eunuch in charge of the concubines. She would not go back to the king unless the king delighted in her and she was called by name.

Ahasuerus Chooses Esther as the New Queen of Persia (December 479/January 478 BC)

Esther 2:15–18

15 When the turn came near for Esther daughter of Abihail the uncle of Mordecai, who had taken *her* as a daughter, to go to the king, she did not ask anything except what Hegai the eunuch of the king who was in charge of the women, advised. And Esther carried favor in the eyes of everyone that saw her.
 16 Esther was taken to King Ahasuerus, to his palace, in the tenth month that is Tebeth in the seventh year of his reign.
 17 And the king loved Esther more than all the women, and she won his favor and loyalty more than all the virgins, so he put a royal crown on her head and made her queen instead of Vashti.
 18 And the king gave a great banquet, Esther's banquet, for all his officials and servants. And he granted a tax amnesty to the provinces and he gave gifts with royal liberality.

Mordecai Discovers a Plot Against Ahasuerus (c. 478–475 BC)

Esther 2:19–23

19 When *the* virgins were gathered a second time, Mordecai *was* sitting at the gate of the king.
 20 Esther had not made known her family and her people, just as Mordecai had instructed her; for Esther did what Mordecai told her, just as when she was brought up by him.
 21 In those days Mordecai *was* sitting at the gate of the king. Bigthana and Teresh, two of the king's eunuchs from the keepers of the threshold, became angry and they conspired to assassinate King Ahasuerus.
 22 And the matter became known to Mordecai and he told *it* to Queen Esther, and Esther told *it* to the king in the name of

Mordecai.

23 And the matter was investigated and found *to be so*; and the two of them were hanged on *the* gallows, and it was written in the scroll of the events of the days before the presence of the king.

Haman Sets Out to Destroy the Jews (April 5, 474 BC)

Esther 3:1–11

- 1 After these things King Ahasuerus promoted Haman son of Hammedatha the Agagite, and he exalted him and set his position above all the officials who *were* with him.
- 2 And all of the king's servants who *were* at the gate of the king *were* kneeling and bowing down to Haman; for so the king had commanded concerning him, but Mordecai did not kneel and bow down.
- 3 And the king's servants who *were* at the gate of the king said to Mordecai, "Why *are* you transgressing the command of the king?"
- 4 They spoke to him day after day, but he did not listen to them, and they informed Haman to see if Mordecai's resolve would prevail; for he had told them that he *was* a Jew.
- 5 And Haman saw that Mordecai was not kneeling and bowing down to him, and he was filled *with* anger.
- 6 But he considered it beneath him to lay hands on Mordecai only, for they told him of Mordecai's people, and Haman sought to destroy all the Jews, the people of Mordecai, who *were* in the kingdom of Ahasuerus.
- 7 In the first month, that *is*, the month of Nisan, in the twelfth year of King Ahasurus, he cast pur—that *is*, the lot—before the presence of Haman for the day and for the month, until the twelfth month, that *is*, the month of Adar.
- 8 And Haman said to King Ahasuerus, "There is a certain people scattered and separated among the peoples in all of the provinces of your kingdom; their laws *are* different from every *other* people, and they do not observe the laws of the king; it is not appropriate for the king to tolerate them.
- 9 If it pleases the king, let a *decree* be issued to destroy them, and I will pay ten thousand talents of silver to those who do the job, to bring to the treasury of the king."
- 10 So the king removed his signet ring from his hand and gave it to Haman son of Hammedatha the Agagite, the enemy of the Jews.
- 11 And the king said to Haman, "The money *is* given to you and to the people to do with it as you see fit.

The Edict to Kill the Jews is Sent Throughout the Kingdom (April 17, 474 BC)

Esther 3:12–15

- 12 And the king's secretaries were called in the first month on the thirteenth day, and a *decree* was issued, according to all that Haman commanded, to the satraps of the king and to the governors who *were* over all the provinces, and to *the* officials of all the people, to each province according to *its own* script and to all people according to their own language; *it was* written in the name of King Ahasuerus and *was* sealed with the king's ring.
- 13 Letters *were* sent by couriers to all the provinces of the king to destroy, to kill, and to annihilate all the Jews, both young and old, women and children, on one day, the thirteenth day of the month, that *is* Adar, and to plunder their goods.
- 14 A copy of the edict *was* presented *as* law in every province making *it* known to all the people to be ready for that day.
- 15 The couriers went out quickly by order of the king, and the law was issued in the citadel of Susa. The king and Haman sat down to drink; and the city of Susa was bewildered.

Mordecai Tells Esther the Terrible News (April/May 474 BC)

Esther 4:1–14

- 1 Mordecai learned all that had been done and he tore his clothes and put on sackcloth and ashes. And he went through the middle of the city and cried out a loud and bitter cry;
- 2 he went up to the entrance of the gate of the king, for he could not go to the gate of the king in sackcloth.
- 3 In every province *each* place where the king's edict and his law came, there *was* great mourning for the Jews with fasting, crying, wailing, *and* sackcloth; and ashes were spread out as a bed for them.
- 4 And Esther's maids and her eunuchs came and they told her, and the queen was deeply distressed; she sent garments to clothe Mordecai so that he might remove his sackcloth—but he did not accept *them*.
- 5 Then Esther called Hathach from the king's eunuchs who regularly attended to her, and she ordered him *to go* to Mordecai to learn what was happening and why.
- 6 So Hathach went out to Mordecai, to the public square of the city, which *was* in front of the gate of the king,
- 7 and Mordecai told him all that had happened to him, and the exact amount of money that Haman has promised to pay to the treasury of the king for the destruction of the Jews.
- 8 And he gave him a copy of the edict of the law that had been issued in Susa for their destruction to show Esther, and to inform her, and to charge her to go to the king and make supplication to him and entreat before him for her people.

9 And Hathach went *back* and told Esther the words of Mordecai.

10 And Esther spoke to Hathach and she gave him a message for Mordecai:

11 “All the king’s servants and the people of the king’s provinces know that *if* any man or woman who goes to the king to the inner courtyard, who is not called, he has one law, to be killed, except if the king extends to him the gold scepter so that he may live. I have not been called to come to the king for thirty days.”

12 And they told Mordecai the words of Esther.

13 Then Mordecai told *them* to reply to Esther: “Do not think that your life will be saved *in* the palace of the king more than all the Jews.

14 For if indeed you keep silent at this time, relief and deliverance will arise for the Jews from another place, and you and the family of your father will perish. Who knows? *Perhaps* you have come to a royal position for a time such as this.”

Esther Asks for Three Days of Fasting (June 22–24, 474 BC)

Esther 4:15–17

15 Esther replied to Mordecai:

16 “Go, gather all the Jews that are found in Susa and fast for me; do not eat or drink *for* three days, both night and day. I and my young girls will fast likewise, and then I will go to the king, which *is* not according to the law; if I perish, I perish.

17 And Mordecai went away and he did everything that Esther commanded him.

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Chronological Notes

1) Temporal Notations in Esther.

A) Ahasuerus (Xerxes I) was king of Persia from 485 BC to 465 BC. The book of Esther, which takes place during this time, dates itself in terms of the year of Ahasuerus’ reign. The following is a list of the temporal notations within the book:

- (1) 1:1–3 – the 3rd year of Ahasuerus’ reign (483).¹
- (2) 1:4 – Ahasuerus displays his power for 180 days (October 4, 483 to April 2, 482).²
- (3) 1:5 – Ahasuerus gives a 7 day feast (April 3–9, 482).
- (4) 1:10 – on the 7th day of the feast, Vashti refuses the king’s command (April 9, 482).
- (5) 2:12 – Esther begins 12 months of beauty treatments (February–December 479).³
- (6) 2:16 – Esther taken to Ahasuerus during the 10th month of the 7th year of his reign (December 479 /January 478)
- (7) 3:7 – Haman casts the lot against the Jews in the 1st month of the 12th year of Ahasuerus’ reign (April 5, 474).
- (8) 3:7 – the lot fell in the 12th month of that year.
- (9) 3:12 – Haman’s scheme made official in the 12th year, 1st month, 13th day (April 17, 474).
- (10) 3:13 – the execution day is set for the 12th year, 12th month, 13th day (April 5, 473).
- (11) 4:16 – Esther’s 3 day fast during the 12th year (June 22–24, 474).⁴

¹ All Julian dates are based on the computation of Richard A. Parker and Waldo H. Dubberstein, *Babylonian Chronology 626 B.C.–A.D. 75*, BUS 19 (Providence: Brown University Press, 1956): 31. See also the online Babylonian Calendar Converter available at http://www.staff.science.uu.nl/~gent0113/babylon/babycal_converter.htm#converter.

² “Since inscriptions in Egypt dated to Xerxes began to appear early in 484, his suppression of the Egyptian revolt (which began during Darius I’s reign) can be dated to 485. With Egypt under control again, Xerxes was free to direct his attention to the campaign against Greece. With good reason, then, it has been suggested that the 180-day “banquet” in Xerxes’ third year was connected with laying plans for that Greek campaign. Because of the intense heat at Susa in the summer time, it is possible that this lengthy conference took place in the winter, or from the fall to the spring according to the chronology of Esther. Since it seems reasonable to conclude that these six months from Esther would have ended in the spring, the seven-day celebration that followed it could also fit well with the New Year’s festival.” For more detail, see William H. Shea, “Esther and History,” *AUSS* 14 (1976): 227–246 and Andrew E. Steinmann, *From Abraham to Paul* (Concordia Publishing House, 2011): 192–195.

³ Since Esther was presented to Xerxes in the tenth month of the seventh year, she entered into the preparations no later than Shebat (February) of 479.

⁴ Esther’s fast took place some time between April 17, 474 and June 25, 474. I have chosen to connect the fast with the events of June 25 rather than earlier in April or May.

- (12) 5:1 – on the 3rd day of the fast, Esther approaches Ahasuerus (June 24, 474).
- (13) 5:4 – Ahasuerus and Haman are Esther’s guests on the 3rd day (June 24, 474).
- (14) 5:8 – Esther invites Haman and the king back for another feast on the 4th day (June 24, 474).
- (15) 5:9 – Haman builds Mordecai’s gallows (June 24, 474).
- (16) 6:1 – during the night (early morning of the 4th day) Ahasuerus can’t sleep (June 25, 474).
- (17) 7:2 – Esther reveals Haman’s scheme (June 25, 474).
- (18) 8:1 – Ahasuerus gives Esther Haman’s estate (June 25, 474).
- (19) 8:9 – Mordecai issues an edict on the 12th year, 3rd month, 23rd day (June 25, 474).
- (20) 9:1 – the Jews defend themselves on the 12th year, 12th month, 13th day (April 5, 473).
- (21) 9:15 – the Jews in Susa kill 300 men on the 14th day (April 6, 473).
- (22) 9:17 – Jews in the provinces fight on the 13th day and rest on the 14th day (April 5–6, 473).
- (23) 9:18 – Jews in Susa fight on the 13th and 14th day and rest on the 15th day (April 5–7, 473).
- (24) 9:19 – holiday for Jews in the provinces is on the 14th day (April 6, 473).
- (25) 9:21 – holiday officially declared for the 14th and 15th days (April 6–7, 473).

Esther Invites Ahasuerus and Haman to a Banquet (June 24, 474 BC)

Esther 5

1 And it happened, on the third day, and Esther put on royal clothes, and she stood in the inner courtyard of the king's palace, opposite the king's palace; the king *was* sitting on his royal throne in the throne room opposite the doorway of the palace.

2 When the king saw Queen Esther standing in the courtyard she found favor in his eyes, and the king held out the gold scepter that *was* in his hand to Esther, and Esther approached and touched the top of the scepter.

3 And the king said to her, "What *is* it, Queen Esther? What *is* your request? It will be given to you—even half the kingdom."

4 And Esther said, "If it is good to the king, let the king and Haman come today to the banquet that I have prepared for him."

5 And the king said, "Bring Haman quickly to fulfill the request of Esther." So the king and Haman came to the banquet that Esther had prepared.

6 And the king said to Esther while they were drinking wine, "What *is* your petition? It will be given to you. What *is* your request? Even half the kingdom, it will done.

7 And Esther answered and said, "*This is* my petition and my request.

8 If I have found favor in the eyes of the king, and if it is good to the king to grant my petition and fulfill my request, let the king and Haman come to the banquet that I will prepare for them tomorrow, and I will do according to the word of the king.

9 And Haman went out on that day rejoicing and feeling good. But when Haman saw Mordecai at the gate of the king, and he did not rise or tremble before him, Haman was filled with rage toward Mordecai.

10 But Haman controlled himself and went to his house, and he sent *for* and brought his friends and Zeresh his wife.

11 And Haman recounted to them the splendor of his wealth and the number of his sons and all *the ways* that the king had honored him and promoted him above the officials and king's servants.

12 And Haman added, "Esther the Queen did not let *just anyone* come to the banquet that she prepared with the king except me, and I am also invited tomorrow to her *banquet* with the king.

13 But all this fails to satisfy me when I see Mordecai the Jew setting at the gate of the king."

14 And Zeresh his wife and all of his friends said to him, "Let them make a gallows fifty cubits high, and in the morning tell the king, "Let them hang Mordecai on it; then go with the king to the banquet happily." The advice pleased Haman, so he had the gallows made.

Ahasuerus Orders Haman to Honor Mordecai (June 25, 474 BC)

Esther 6

1 During that night the king's sleep escaped *him*, and he gave orders to bring the scroll of records and chronicles, and they were read before the king.

2 And it was found written how Mordecai had reported concerning Bigthana and Teresh, two of the king's eunuchs from the keepers of the threshold who had conspired to assassinate King Ahasuerus.

3 And the king asked, "What has been done to bestow honor to Mordecai for this?" And the king's servants who attended him said, "Nothing has been done for him."

4 And the king asked, "Who *is* in the courtyard?" Haman had just come to the courtyard of the king's outer palace to tell the king to hang Mordecai on the gallows that he had prepared for him.

5 And the king's servants said to him, "Look! Haman *is* standing in the courtyard." And the king said, "Let him come."

6 And Haman came, and the king said to him, "What *is* to be done for the man whom the king wishes to honor?" And Haman thought to himself, "Whom would the king wish to honor more than me?"

7 So Haman said to the king, "For a man whom the king wishes to honor,

8 let them bring royal clothing with which the king has clothed himself, and a horse that the king has ridden, and on whose head a royal head-dress has been given.

9 And let the clothing and the horse be given to the man by the officials of the king's nobles; let them cloth the man whom the king wishes to honor, and let him ride on his horse through the public square of the city, and let them proclaim before him, "Thus, it will be done for the man whom the king wishes to honor.""

10 Then the king said to Haman, "Quickly, take the clothing and the horse, just as you have said, and do so to Mordecai the Jew who sits at the gate of the king; you must not leave out anything from what you have said."

11 So Haman took the clothing and the horse, and he clothed Mordecai and let him ride through the public square of the city; and he proclaimed before him, "Thus, it is done to the man whom the king wishes to honor."

12 Then Mordecai returned to the gate of the king, and Haman rushed to his house mournful and with his head covered.

13 And Haman told Zeresh his wife and all his friends all that had happened to him. And his advisers and Zeresh his wife said to him, "If Mordecai, before whom you have begun to fall, *is* from the descendants of the Jews, you will not prevail against him, but will certainly fall before him."

14 As they *were* still speaking with him the king's eunuchs arrived and hurried to bring Haman to the banquet that Esther had prepared.

A Fateful Banquet (June 25, 474 BC)

Esther 7–8

Esther's Request

7:1 So the king and Haman went to dine with Queen Esther.

2 And the king again said to Esther, on the second day while they were drinking, "What *is* your petition, Queen Esther? It will be given to you. What *is* your request? It will be given *to you*—even half the kingdom."

3 Then Queen Esther answered, and she said, "If I have found favor in your eyes, O king, and if it is good to the king, let my life be given to me at my petition and my people at my request;

4 I and my people have been sold to be destroyed and killed, to be annihilated. If we had been sold as male and female slaves I would have kept quiet, because this is not a need sufficient to trouble the king."

5 And King Ahasuerus said to Queen Esther, "Who *is* he, and where *is* he, who gave himself the right to do this?"

6 And Esther said, "The adversary and enemy *is* this evil Haman!" And Haman was terrified before the king and queen.

7 The king rose in his anger from the banquet *and went* to the palace garden, and Haman stood to beg for his life from Queen Esther, for he realized that the king was determined to make an end to his life.

Haman Hanged

8 And the king returned from the palace garden to the banquet hall, *where* Haman *was* lying prostrate on the couch that Esther *was* on, and the king said, "Will he also molest the queen with me in the house?" As the words went from the king's mouth they covered Haman's face.

9 And Habrona, one of the eunuchs in the presence of the king, said, "Look, the same gallows that Haman had prepared for Mordecai who spoke good *for the sake* of the king stands at Haman's house, fifty cubits high." And the king said, "Hang him on it."

10 And they hanged Haman on the gallows that he had prepared for Mordecai, and the anger of the king was abated.

Esther Rewarded and Mordecai Promoted

8:1 On that day King Ahasuerus gave Queen Esther the house of Haman, the enemy of the Jews; and Mordecai came before the king, for Esther had told what he *was* to her.

2 And the king removed his signet ring that he had taken away from Haman, and he gave it to Mordecai. So Esther set Mordecai over the house of Haman.

Esther's Request to Save the Jews

3 And Esther again spoke before the king, and she fell before his feet and wept, pleading for his grace to avert Haman the Agagite's evil *plan* and the plot that he devised against the Jews.

4 And the king held out to Esther the scepter of gold, and Esther rose and stood before the king,

5 and she said, "If it is good to the king, and if I have found favor before him, and if the king is pleased with this matter, and I have his approval, let *an edict* be written to revoke the letters of the plans of Haman son of Hammedatha the Agagite, which he wrote to destroy the Jews that *are* in all the provinces of the king.

6 For how can I bear to look on the disaster that will find my people, and how can I bear to look on the destruction of my family?"

Ahasuerus Authorizes Esther and Mordecai to Issue a Decree in His Name

7 And King Ahasuerus said to Queen Esther and to Mordecai the Jew, "Look, I have given Haman's house to Esther, and they have hanged him on the gallows because he plotted against the Jews.

8 Write as you see fit concerning the Jews in the name of the king, and seal *it* with the king's signet ring; for a decree that is written in the name of the king and sealed with the king's signet ring cannot be revoked."

Mordecai Decrees that the Jews May Defend Themselves

9 And the secretaries of the king were summoned at that time, in the third month, which *is* in the month of Sivan on the twenty-third *day*, and *an edict* was written according to all that Mordecai commanded, to the Jews and to the governors and satraps and officials of the provinces from India to Cush—one hundred and twenty-seven provinces—each province according to its own script and to every people in their own language, and to the Jews in their own script and language.

10 And he wrote in the name of King Ahasuerus, and he sealed *the letters* with the king's signet ring and sent them by couriers on horses, riding on royal horses bred by racing mares.

11 *In them* the king allowed the Jews who *were* in every city to assemble and defend their lives, to destroy and kill and annihilate any army of any people or province attacking them, including women and children, and to plunder their spoil,

12 in one day in all the provinces of King Ahasuerus, on the thirteenth *day* of the twelfth month, which is the month of Adar.

13 A copy of the edict *was* to be given *as law* in each province to inform all the people, so that the Jews would be ready on that day to avenge themselves from their enemies.

14 The mounted couriers on the royal horses went out without delay, urged by the king's word. The law was given in the citadel of

Susa.

The Jews Rejoice

15 Mordecai went out from the presence of the king in royal clothing of blue cloth and white linen, and a great crown of gold and a robe of fine white linen and purple, and the city of Susa was shouting and rejoicing.

16 For the Jews, there was light and gladness, joy and honor.

17 In every province and city, wherever the king's edict and his law came, there was gladness and joy for the Jews, a banquet and a holiday, and many of the people from the country *were* posing as Jews because the fear of the Jews had fallen on them.

The Jews Soundly Defeat Their Enemies (April 5–7, 473 BC)

Esther 9:1–19

1 In the twelfth month, that *is* the month of Adar, on the thirteenth day, on which the edict of the king arrived and his law was enacted, on the day in which the enemies of the Jews had hoped to gain power over them but was overturned, *and* the Jews gained power against their enemies,

2 the Jews gathered in their cities in all the provinces of King Ahasuerus to strike against those who sought their destruction, and no one could withstand them, as the fear of them fell on all the people.

3 All the officials of the provinces, the satraps, governors, and those who did the work of the king *were* supporting the Jews, because the fear of Mordecai had fallen on them.

4 For Mordecai *was* high-ranking in the king's palace and his fame spread throughout all the provinces as Mordecai grew more and more powerful.

5 The Jews struck down all their enemies with the sword, killing and destroying *them*; and they did as they pleased with those that hated them.

6 And in the citadel of Susa the Jews killed and destroyed five hundred men,

7 and Parshandatha, Dalphon, Aspatha,

8 Portha, Adalia, Aridatha,

9 Parmashta, Arisai, Aridai, and Vaizatha,

10 the ten sons of Haman, the son of Hammedatha, the enemy of the Jews; but they did not touch the plunder.

11 On that day the number of those being killed in the citadel of Susa was reported to the king.

12 And the king said to Queen Esther, "In the citadel of Susa the Jews killed and destroyed five hundred men and the ten sons of Haman. What have they done in the rest of the king's provinces? What *is* your petition? It will be granted to you. And what further *is* your request? It will be done."

13 Esther replied, "If it is good to the king, let tomorrow also be granted to the Jews who *are* in Susa to do according to the edict of today; and let them hang Haman's ten sons on the gallows."

14 And the king said to do so. And a decree was issued in Susa and Haman's ten sons were hanged.

15 And the Jews were gathered who *were* in Susa, and on the fourteenth day of the month of Adar and they killed in Susa three hundred men, but they did not touch the plunder.

16 The rest of the Jews who *were* in the king's provinces gathered and defended their lives and found repose from their enemies. And they killed seventy-five thousand of those that hated them, but they did not touch the plunder.

17 *This was* on the thirteenth day of the month of Adar. *They* rested on the fourteenth *day* and made it a day of feasting and joy.

18 But the Jews who *were* in Susa gathered on the thirteenth and on the fourteenth day, and rested on the fifteenth day. And they made it a day of feasting and joy.

19 Therefore the Jews in the rural *areas*, living in the rural towns, made the fourteenth month of Adar a day of joy and feasting, a festive day of giving gifts to each other.

The Feast of Purim (April 6–7, 473 BC)

Esther 9:20–32

20 Mordecai wrote down these things and he sent letters to all the Jews who *were* in all *of* the provinces of King Ahasuerus, *both* near and far,

21 to impose on them to keep the fourteenth day of the month of Adar, and the fifteenth *day*, every year,

22 as the day that the Jews found relief from their enemies, and the month which changed for them from sorrow to joy, and from a mourning ceremony to a festive day; to make them days of feasting and joy, and giving gifts to each other and to the poor.

23 And the Jews adopted what they had begun to do and what Mordecai had written to them.

24 For Haman the son of Hammedatha the Agagite, the enemy of all the Jews had plotted against the Jews to destroy them, and he had cast pur, that *is* the lot, to rout them out and destroy them.

25 But when it came to the attention of the king, he gave orders in writing *that* his evil plot that he had devised against the Jews should return on his head, and they hung him and his sons on the gallows.

26 Therefore they called these days Purim, because of the name Pur. Thus because of all the words of this letter, and of what they faced concerning this, and of what had happened to them,
27 the Jews established and adopted *it* for themselves and for their offspring, and for all who joined them. They did not neglect to observe these two days every year as it was written and appointed to them.
28 These days *are* to be remembered and *are* to be kept in every generation, and in family, province, and city; and these days of Purim are not *to be* neglected among the Jews, and their memory shall not come to an end among their offspring.
29 So Queen Esther the daughter of Abihail and Mordecai the Jew wrote in full authority to confirm this second letter of Purim.
30 He sent letters of words of peace and truth to all the Jews, to the one hundred and twenty-seven provinces of Ahasuerus' kingdom,
31 to establish these days of Purim at their appointed times, just as Mordecai the Jew and Queen Esther had imposed, and just as they had imposed on themselves and their offspring regulations of the fast and their lament.
32 And the command of Esther established these practices of Purim, and *it was* written on the scroll.

Mordecai Honored (c. 473–465 BC)

Esther 10

1 King Ahasuerus imposed forced labor on the land and islands of the sea.
2 All the work of his authority and his powerful deeds, and the full accounting of the greatness of Mordecai, to which the king advanced him, are they not written on the scroll of the chronicles of the kings of Media and Persia?
3 For Mordecai the Jew *was* second-in-command to King Ahasuerus. *He was* great for the Jews and popular with many of his brothers, for he sought good for his people, interceding for the welfare of all his descendants.

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Opposition to the Remnant During Artaxerxes' Reign (c. 465–458 BC)

Ezra 4:7

7 And in the days of Artaxerxes, Bishlam, Mithredath, Tabeel, and the rest of their colleagues wrote to Artaxerxes king of Persia. The letter was written in Aramaic and translated from Aramaic.

Ezra's Mission to Jerusalem (April 8, 457 BC)

Ezra 7:1–7, 9a, 10–28; 8:1–14

Introduction

7:1a After these things *during* the reign of King Artaxerxes of Persia,

Ezra's Priestly Lineage

1b Ezra the son of Seraiah, son of Azariah, son of Hilkiah,

2 son of Shallum, son of Zadok, son of Ahitub,

3 son of Amariah, son of Azariah, son of Meraioth,

4, son of Zerariah, son of Uzzi, son of Bukki,

5 son of Abishua, son of Phinehas, son of Eleazar, son of Aaron the chief priest—

6a this Ezra went up from Babylonia. He was a scribe skilled in the law of Moses, which Yahweh the God of Israel gave.

Ezra's Mission

6b The king granted him all his requests, for the hand of Yahweh was upon him.

7 Some of the Israelites, some priests and Levites, the singers, the gatekeepers, and the temple servants went up to Jerusalem in the seventh year of King Artaxerxes.

9a For on the first day of the first month he began the journey from Babylonia;

10 For Ezra had set his heart to seek the law of Yahweh, to do *it*, and to teach the regulations and judgments in Israel.

Artaxerxes' Letter of Authorization

11 This is the copy of the letter that King Artaxerxes gave to Ezra the priest, the scribe of the scroll of the words of the commands of Yahweh and his statutes for Israel:

12 "Artaxerxes, the king of kings, to Ezra the priest, the scribe of the law of the God of the heavens. Peace. And now

13 I issue forth a decree that any of the people of Israel, their priests, or their Levites in my kingdom who are willing to go to Jerusalem may go with you.

14 For you are sent from the king and his seven counselors to enquire about Judah and Jerusalem concerning the law of your God, which is in your hand.

15 Also, bring the silver and gold that the king and his advisors have freely offered to the God of Israel whose dwelling is in Jerusalem,

16 and all of the silver and gold that you will find in the whole province of Babylonia, with the freewill offerings of the people and the priests giving willingly for the house of their God in Jerusalem.

17 With this money, then, with diligence you must buy young bulls, young rams, lambs, and their offerings and libations. You must offer them on the altar that is in the house of your God in Jerusalem.

18 You may do whatever seems best to you and your brothers to do with the remainder of the silver and gold according to the desire of your God.

19 And the vessels that were given to you for the service of the house of your God you shall deliver before the God of Jerusalem.

20 And the remainder of the needs for the house of your God that falls to you to provide, you may provide from the house of the king's treasury."

21 "I, even I, King Artaxerxes, issue forth a decree to all the treasurers who are in *the province* Beyond the River. Whatever the priest Ezra, the scribe of the law of the God of heaven, may ask of you, let it be done with diligence,

22 up to one hundred talents of silver, one hundred measures of wheat, one hundred baths of wine, one hundred baths of oil, and unlimited salt.

23 All that is commanded by the God of heaven, let it be done with diligence for the house of the God of heaven, otherwise wrath will come on the kingdom of the king and his sons.

24 You also should be aware that it is not permitted to place tax, tribute, or duty upon all of the priests, the Levites, the singers, the doorkeepers, the temple servants, and other servants of the house of God.

25 "You, Ezra, according to the wisdom of your God that you possess, appoint magistrates and judges who can judge all of the people *in the province* Beyond the River who know the laws of your God. And you will teach those who do not know.

26 All who do not obey the law of your God and the law of the king, let judgment be executed on him with diligence, whether for death or for banishment or for confiscation of goods and for imprisonment."

Ezra's Personal Note of Thanksgiving

27 Blessed be Yahweh the God of our ancestors, who put this in the heart of the king to glorify the house of Yahweh in Jerusalem and who extended to me loyal love before the king and his counselors, and before all of the mighty officials of the king. I took courage, for the hand of Yahweh my God was upon me, and I gathered leaders from Israel to go up with me.

List of Family Heads Who Accompanied Ezra

8:1 These were the heads of their families and the register of those returnees from Babylonia who *came up* with me in the reign of King Artaxerxes:

2 From the descendants of Phinehas: Gershom. From the descendants of Ithamar: Daniel. From the descendants of David: Hattush.

3 From the descendants of Shecaniah, from the descendants of Parosh: Zechariah and with him one hundred and fifty registered males.

4 From the descendants of Pahath-Moab: Eliehoenai son of Zerariah and with him two hundred males.

5 From the descendants of *Zattu*: Shecaniah son of Jahaziel, and with him three hundred males.

6 From the descendants of Adin: Ebed son of Jehonathan, and with him fifty males.

7 From the descendants of Elam: Jeshaiiah son of Athaliah, and with him seventy males.

8 From the descendants of Shephatiah: Zebadiah son of Michael, and with him eighty males.

9 From the descendants of Joab: Obadiah son of Jehiel, and with him two hundred and eighteen males.

10 From the descendants of *Bani*: Shelomith son of Josiphiah, and with him one hundred and sixty males.

11 From the descendants of Bebai: Zechariah son of Bebai, and with him twenty-eight males.

12 From the descendants of Azgad: Jehohanan son of Haqqatan, and with him one hundred and ten males.

13 From the descendants of Adonikam, those who came last, these were their names: Eliphelet, Jeiel, Shemaiah, and with them sixty males.

14 From the descendants of Bigvai: Uthai son of Zabud, and with him seventy males.

At the Ahava Canal (April 8–18, 457 BC)

Ezra 8:15–30

Enlistment of Temple Personnel

15 I gathered them by the river that goes to Ahava and we camped there for three days. And I looked at the people and the priests, I found no one there from the sons of Levi.

16 And I sent for Eliezer, Ariel, Shemaiah, Elnathan, Jarib, Elnathan, Nathan, Zechariah, and Meshullam, who were family heads, and for Jehoiarib and Elnathan who were wise.

17 I sent them to Iddo, the head of the place called Casiphia, and I placed in their mouths what words to say to Iddo and his brothers the temple servants in Casiphia, to send to us ministers for the house of our God.

18 With the good hand of our God before us, they brought us a man of understanding from the sons of Mahli, son of Levi, son of Israel—Sherebiah and his sons and brothers, eighteen *in total*.

19 Also Hashabiah and with him Jeshaiiah, the sons of Merari, with his brothers and their sons, twenty *in total*.

20 And from the temple servants, whom David and *his* officials had set up to serve the Levites, two hundred and twenty *in total*. All of them were registered by name.

Prayer and Fasting

21 I proclaimed a fast there at the river Ahava to humble ourselves before our God in order to seek from him a safe journey for us, our children, and our possessions.

22 For I was ashamed to ask the king for troops and horses to protect us from enemies on the way because we said to the king, “the hand of our God is favorable to all who seek him, but his strength and anger are against all who forsake them.”

23 So we fasted and sought our God for this and he responded to our prayer.

Treasure Bearers

24 I set apart twelve of the official priests: Sherebiah, Hashabiah, and ten of their brothers with them.

25 Then I weighed out to them silver and gold and the vessels, the offering of the house of our God that the king, his counselors, his commanders, and all of Israel who was present offered.

26 I weighed out into their hand six hundred and fifty talents of silver, one hundred vessels of silver, one hundred talents of gold,

27 twenty gold bowls worth one thousand darics, and two vessels of good polished bronze as precious as gold.

28 And I said to them, “You are holy to Yahweh and the vessels are holy. The silver and gold are a freewill offering to Yahweh, God of your ancestors.

29 Guard and look after *them* until you weigh *them* before the chief priests, the Levites, and the heads of the families of Israel in Jerusalem, in the chamber of the house of Yahweh.”

30 So the priests and Levites took over the weighed silver, gold, and the vessels to bring to Jerusalem for the house of our God.

Journey to Jerusalem (April 19–August 4, 457 BC)

Ezra 8:31; 7:8, 9b

8:31 On the twelfth day of the first month we set out from the river of Ahava to go to Jerusalem. The hand of our God was on us and he delivered us from the hand of the enemy and from ambushing on the way.

7:8 He came to Jerusalem in the fifth month, which was in the seventh year of the king.

9b and on the first day of the fifth month he came to Jerusalem, for the good hand of his God *was* on him.

At Jerusalem (August 4–6, 457 BC)

Ezra 8:32

32 We came to Jerusalem and remained there three days.

Delivery of the Temple Vessels (August 7, 457 BC)

Ezra 8:33–36

33 On the fourth day, the silver, gold, and vessels were weighed in the house of our God into the hand of priest Meremoth, the son of Uriah, and with him Eleazar son of Phinehas. With them were the Levites, Jehozabad son of Jeshua and Noadiah son of Binnui.

34 The amount and weight of all the weighed *items* was recorded at that time.

35 The exiles that returned from captivity offered burnt offerings to the God of Israel; twelve bulls for all Israel, ninety-six rams, seventy-seven lambs, and twelve goats as a sin offering. All was a burnt offering to Yahweh.

36 They delivered the customs of the king to the king's satraps and to the governor of *the province* Beyond the River. And they supported the people of the house of God.

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Ezra Discovers the Remnant Has Intermarried Unlawfully (December 16, 457 BC)

Ezra 9:1–10:8

Ezra Told of the Sin of the Remnant

9:1 After finishing these things the officials approached me saying, “The people of Israel, the priests, and the Levites have not separated from the people of the lands with their detestable things, and from the Canaanites, Hittites, Perizzites, Jebusites, Ammonites, Moabites, Egyptians, and Amorites.
 2 For they have taken from their daughters for themselves and their sons. So the holy seed has mixed itself with the peoples of the lands, and the hand of the officials and prefects were foremost in this sin.
 3 When I heard this I tore my garment and my robe, and I pulled the hair out from my head and beard, and I sat appalled.
 4 Then all who trembled at the words of the God of Israel because of the sin of the returned exiles were gathered around me and I sat appalled until the evening offering.

Ezra’s Prayer

5 At the evening offering I got up from my mourning posture and, with my garment and robe torn, I fell down on my knees and I spread out my palms to Yahweh my God
 6 and said, “My God, I am ashamed and embarrassed to lift my face to you, my God. For our sins have risen above our heads and our guilt has grown up to the heavens.
 7 From the days of our ancestors until this day we have been in great guilt, and because of our sins we ourselves, our kings, and our priests have been handed into the hand of the kings of the lands, to the sword, to captivity, to plunder, and to utter shame, as it is this day.
 8 But now for a brief moment mercy has been shown by Yahweh our God, who left behind for us a remnant, and given us security in his holy place—for our God to brighten our eyes and to give us brief relief in our bondage.
 9 For we are slaves and in our bondage our God did not forsake us, and he has extended to us loyal love in the presence of the kings of Persia, to give to us deliverance *and* to set up the house of our God, to repair its ruins, and to give us a wall in Judea and Jerusalem.
 10 “And now our God what shall we say after this? For we have forsaken your commandments,
 11 which you commanded by the hand of your servants the prophets saying, ‘The land that you are entering to possess is a land of impurity with the impurity of the peoples of the lands, with their detestable things which they have filled from end to end with their uncleanness. [cf. [Lev 18:25](#)]
 12 Therefore, do not give your daughters to their sons, and do not take their daughters for your sons. Do not seek their peace and prosperity so that forever you may be strong and eat the good of the land and may give it as an inheritance to your sons.’ [cf. [Deut 7:1–5](#)]
 13 After all that has come upon us for our evil practices and for our great guilt—you, our God, have held back less than our guilt *deserved* and you have given us a remainder such as this.
 14 Shall we again break your commandments and intermarry with the peoples who practice these detestable things? Would you not be angry with us until you destroy us with no remnant or remainder?
 15 Yahweh, God of Israel, you are righteous, for we have been left this day as a remnant. Here we are before you in our guilt, for none can stand before you because of this.”

Covenant to Divorce the Foreign Women

10:1 While Ezra was praying and confessing, weeping and throwing himself down before the house of God, a very great assembly of men, women, and children from Israel gathered to him. And the people wept bitterly.
 2 Shecaniah son of Jehiel, of the sons of Elam, answered and said to Ezra, “We ourselves have broken faith with our God and have married foreign women from the peoples of the land, and even now there is hope for Israel in spite of this.
 3 So now let us make a covenant with our God to send away all of these women and their offspring, according to the advice of my lord and those who tremble at the commandment of our God. Let it be done according to the law.
 4 Arise, for it is your task and we are with you. Be strong and do it.”
 5 Then Ezra stood up and made the chief priests, Levites, and all of Israel swear to do according to what was said. So they swore this oath.
 6 Ezra rose from before the house of God and went to the chamber of Jehohanan son of Eliashib. He did not eat food nor drink water because he was mourning over the sin of the exiles.

A Proclamation is Circulated Calling the Men to Jerusalem

7 And they sent a proclamation through Judah and Jerusalem to all the returned exiles to assemble in Jerusalem.
 8 Anyone who did not come within three days, by decision of the officials and elders, all of his possessions would be devoted to God, and he himself would be excluded from the assembly of exiles.

A Course of Action is Decided (December 19, 457 BC)

Ezra 10:9–15

9 Then all the men of Judah and Benjamin assembled in Jerusalem within the three days. It was the ninth month on the twentieth day of the month. All the people sat in the public square of the house of God trembling because of this matter and from the rains.

10 Then Ezra the priest stood up and said to them, “You have broke faith and married foreign women, increasing the guilt of Israel.

11 Now make a confession to Yahweh the God of your ancestors and do his will. Separate yourselves from the peoples of the land and from the foreign women.”

12 Then all the assembly answered with a great voice and said, “It is so. We must do according to your words.

13 But the people are many, and it is the time of rain; we are unable to stand outside. The task is not for one day or two, for we greatly rebelled in this matter.

14 Please let our leaders stand for the whole assembly, and let all that are in our cities who have married foreign women come at set times, and with them the elders of and judges of each city, until the fierce wrath of our God because of this matter is averted from us.”

15 Only Jehonathan son of Asahel and Jahzeiah son of Tikvah stood against this, and the Levites Meshullam and Shabbethai supported them.

Inquiry Into Unlawful Marriages (December 29, 457–March 27, 456 BC)

Ezra 10:16–44

16 The returned exiles did so. Ezra the priest selected men, the heads of the families according to the house of their fathers, all of them by name. They sat down to examine the matter on the first day of the tenth month.

17 They finished *investigating* all the men who married foreign women by the first day of the first month.

18 There was found from the sons of the priests those who had married foreign women, from the sons of Jeshua son of Jehozadak and his brothers: Maaseiah, Eliezer, Jarib, and Gedaliah.

19 They pledged themselves to put away their wives, and their guilt offering was a ram of the flock for their guilt.

20 From the sons of Immer: Hanani and Zebadiah.

21 From the sons of Harim: Maaseiah, Elijah, Shemaiah, Jehiel, and Uziah.

22 From the sons of Pashhur: Elioenai, Maaseiah, Ishmael, Nethanel, Jozabad, and Eleasah.

23 From the Levites: Jozabad, Shimei, Kelaiah (that is, Kelita), Pethahiah, Judah, and Eliezer.

24 From the singers: Eliashib. From the gatekeepers: Shallum, Telem, and Uri.

25 And from Israel, the sons of Parosh: Ramiah, Izziah, Malkijah, Mijamin, Eleazar, Malkijah, and Benaiah.

26 From the sons of Elam: Mattaniah, Zechariah, Jehiel, Abdi, Jeremoth, and Elijah.

27 From the sons of Zattu: Elioenai, Eliashib, Mattaniah, Jeremoth, Zabad, and Aziza.

28 From the sons of Bebai: Jehohanan, Hananiah, Zabbai, and Athlai.

29 From the sons of Bani: Meshullam, Malluch, Adaiah, Jashub, Sheal, and Jeremoth.

30 From the sons of Pahath-Moab: Adna, Kelal, Benaiah, Maaseiah, Mattaniah, Bezalel, Binnui, and Manasseh.

31 From the sons of Harim: Eliezer, Isshiah, Malkijah, Shemaiah, Simeon,

32 Benjamin, Malluch, and Shemariah.

33 From the sons of Hashum: Mattenai, Mattattah, Zabad, Eliphelet, Jeremai, Manasseh, and Shimei.

34 From the sons of Bani: Maadai, Amram, Uel,

35 Benaiah, Bedeiah, Keluhi,

36 Vaniah, Meremoth, Eliashib,

37 Mattaniah, Mattenai, Jaasu,

38 Bani, Binnui, Shimei,

39 Shelemiah, Nathan, Adaiah,

40 Macnadebai, Shashai, Sharai,

41 Azarel, Shelemiah, Shemariah,

42 Shallum, Amariah, and Joseph.

43 From the sons of Nebo: Jeiel, Mattithiah, Zabad, Zebina, Iddo, Joel, and Benaiah.

44 All of these had married foreign wives, and some from among the wives bore children.

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More Opposition to the Remnant During Artaxerxes' Reign (c. 456–446 BC)

Ezra 4:8–23

Rehum's Letter to Artaxerxes

8 Rehum the royal officer and Shimshai the scribe wrote a letter against Jerusalem to King Artaxerxes as follows
 9 (then Rehum the royal officer, Shimshai the scribe, and the rest of their associates, the judges, the envoys, the officials, the Persians, the Erechs, the Babylonians, the Susians (that is the Elamites)
 10 and the rest of the nations whom the great and noble Osnappar deported and settled in the cities of Samaria and the rest of *the province Beyond the River*) and now
 11 this is the copy of the letter which they sent to him: "To King Artaxerxes *from* your servants, the men of *the province Beyond the River*. And now,
 12 be it known to the king that the Jews who have come up from near you to us have gone to Jerusalem. They are building the rebellious and wicked city. They are finishing the wall and repairing the foundation.
 13 Now be it known to the king that if this city is built and the walls are finished, they will not pay tribute and toll, and the royal revenue will be reduced.
 14 Now since we eat the salt of the palace and the dishonor of the king is not proper for us to see, we send and make *this* known to the king,
 15 so that it may be investigated in the book of records of your ancestors. You will find in the book of records and learn that this city is a rebellious city, hurtful to kings and provinces, and they have rebelled in its midst from ancient times. Because of that this city was destroyed.
 16 We make known to the king that if this city is built and the walls are finished, you will have nothing in *the province Beyond the River*."

Artaxerxes' Reply

17 The king sent a reply: "To Rehum the royal officer, Shimshai the scribe, and the rest of their associates who live in Samaria and the rest of *the province Beyond the River*, greetings. And now
 18 the letter that you sent to us has been translated *and* read before me.
 19 And I issued a decree, and they searched and found that this city from ancient days revolted against kings, and rebellion and sedition has been made in it.
 20 Mighty kings have ruled over Jerusalem, *governing all the province Beyond the River*, to whom tribute, duty, and tax has been given.
 21 So now, issue forth a decree that these men stop and this city not be built, until a decree is issued from me.
 22 And be careful not to be negligent on this matter. Why should damage grow to hurt kings?"

Rehum Brings Work on Jerusalem's Walls to a Halt

23 Then when a copy of the letter of King Artaxerxes was read before Rehum, Shimshai the scribe, and their associates they returned in a hurry to Jerusalem against the Jews and they stopped them by force and power.

Nehemiah Learns of the Remnant's Adversity (Kislev [December] 445 BC)

Nehemiah 1

1 The words of Nehemiah son of Hacaliah. It happened in the month of Kislev, in the twentieth year, that I myself was in the citadel in Susa,
 2 and one of my brothers, Hanani, came with some men from Judah. I asked them about the Jews who had escaped the captivity and about Jerusalem.
 3 They replied to me, "The survivors in the province who have survived the captivity are in great trouble and disgrace. The wall of Jerusalem is broken down, and its gates have been burned in the fire."
 4 When I heard these words, I sat and wept and mourned for days, and I was fasting and praying before the God of the heavens.
 5 I said, "O Yahweh God of the heavens, the great and awesome one who keeps the covenant and loyal love for the ones who love him and for those who keep his commands.
 6 Please, let your ear be attentive and your eyes open to hear the prayer of your servant that I am praying before you by day and by night for your servants, the Israelites, and confessing the sins of the Israelites that we have sinned against you. I and my father's house have sinned.
 7 We have certainly offended you and have not kept the commands, regulations, and judgments that you have commanded your servant Moses.
 8 Please, remember the word that you have commanded to your servant Moses, saying, 'If you act unfaithfully I will scatter you all among the nations.
 9 But if you return to me and keep my commandments and do them, even though all of your outcasts are at the furthest parts of heaven, I will gather them and bring them to the place which I have chosen to make my name dwell.' [cf. [Deut 4:25–31](#); [30:1–10](#)]

10 They are your servants and your people whom you have redeemed by your great power and by your strong hand. [\[Deut 9:29\]](#)
 11 O Lord, please let your ear be attentive to the prayer of your servant and to the prayer of your servants who delight to revere in your name. Please, let your servant be successful this day and give him compassion before this man." I was cupbearer for the king.

Artaxerxes Authorizes Nehemiah to Rebuild Jerusalem's Walls (Nisan [April] 444 BC)

Nehemiah 2:1–8

1 It happened in the month of Nisan, in the twentieth year of King Artaxerxes, when wine was before him, I carried the wine and gave it to the king. And I had never been sad before the king.
 2 So the king said to me, "Why is your face sad since you are not sick? This is nothing but sadness of the heart." And I was very much afraid.
 3 I said to the king, "May the king live forever! Why should my face not be sad when the city of my ancestors' burial site is ruined and her gates are consumed by fire?"
 4 Then the king said to me, "What is your request?" So I prayed to the God of the heavens.
 5 Then I said to the king, "If it pleases the king, and if your servant has *found* favor in your presence, *I ask* that you send me to Judah, to the city of my ancestors' burial sites, so that I may rebuild it."
 6 With the queen sitting beside him, the king said to me, "How long will your journey be and when will you return?" So it pleased the king and he sent me, and I set for him an appointed time.
 7 Then I said to the king, "If it is good for the king, let letters be given to me for the governors *in the province* Beyond the River, that they may let me pass until I come to Judah.
 8 Also, a letter to Asaph, keeper of the king's land reserve, that he should give me timber for laying the beams for the gates of the citadel of the house and for the walls of the city, and for the house which I will enter." And the king gave *permission* to me, according to the good hand of God on me.

Nehemiah's Nocturnal Inspection (July 444 BC)

Nehemiah 2:9–20

9 I came to the governors of *the province* Beyond the River, and I gave them the letters of the king. Then the king sent troop commanders and horses with me.
 10 But when Sanballat the Horonite and the Ammonite servant Tobiah heard *this*, they were greatly displeased that a person had come to seek the welfare of the Israelites.
 11 I came to Jerusalem and was there for three days.
 12 I got up during the night, I and a few men with me. I did not tell anybody what my God put in my heart to do for Jerusalem. No animal *was* with me except the animal that I was riding on.
 13 I went out during the night at the gate of the valley by the Dragon spring and to the Dung Gate. And I examined the walls in Jerusalem and its gates that had been destroyed by the fire.
 14 I crossed over to the Fountain Gate and to the King's Pool, but there was no place for my mount to cross over.
 15 So I went up by the valley during the night and was examining the wall. Then I returned and came to the Valley Gate and returned.
 16 The prefects did not know where I had gone and what I was doing. I had not yet told the Jews, the priests, the nobles, the prefects, and the rest of the workers.
 17 Then I said to them, "You see the misery that we are in, that Jerusalem is ruined and its gates burned by the fire. Come, build the walls of Jerusalem and we shall no longer be a disgrace."
 18 I told them of the good hand of my God that was upon me and surely the words of the king that were spoken to me. And they said, "Let us arise and build!" And they strengthened their hands for *this* good work.
 19 But Sanballat the Horonite, the Ammonite servant Tobiah, and Geshem the Arab heard it, and they mocked and despised us, saying, "What is this thing that you are doing? Are you rebelling against the king?"
 20 Then I answered and said to them, "The God of the heavens himself will let us succeed, and we his servants shall arise and build. But for you there is no share, right, or memorial in Jerusalem."

Rebuilding the Walls of Jerusalem (July 31–September 21, 444 BC)

Nehemiah 3

Repairing the Northern and Western Walls

1 Then Eliashib the high priest and his brothers the priests arose and rebuilt the Sheep Gate. They consecrated it and erected its doors. They consecrated it up to the Tower of the Hundred and up to the Tower of Hananel.
 2 And next to him the men of Jericho built, and next to him Zaccur son of Imri built.

- 3 The sons of Hassenaah built the Fish Gate. They laid its beams and erected its doors, its bolts, and its bars.
- 4 Next to them Meremoth son of Uriah, son of Hakkoz, repaired. Next to them Meshullam son of Berekiah, son of Meshezabel, repaired. Next to them Zadok son of Baana repaired.
- 5 Next to them the Tekoites repaired, but their nobles did not put their neck to the work of their lord.
- 6 Jehoiada the son of Paseah and Meshullam repaired the old Yeshanah Gate. They laid its beams and erected its doors, its bolts, and its bars.
- 7 Next to them Melatiah the Gibeonite and Jadon the Meronothite, the men of Gibeon and Mizpah who were under the rule of the governor of *the province* Beyond the River, repaired.
- 8 Next to him Uzziel son of Harhaiah (goldsmiths) repaired. Next to him Hananiah son of the perfume-makers repaired. They restored Jerusalem up to the Broad Wall.
- 9 Next to them Rephaiah son of Hur, commander of half the district of Jerusalem, repaired.
- 10 Next to them Jedaiah son of Harumaph repaired opposite his house. Next to him Hattush son of Hashabneiah repaired.
- 11 Malkijah son of Harim and Hasshub son of Pahath-Moab repaired another section and the Tower of the Ovens.
- 12 Next to him Shallum son of Hallohesh, commander of half of the district of Jerusalem, repaired with his daughters.
- 13 Hanun and the inhabitants of Zanoah repaired the Valley Gate. They rebuilt it and erected its doors, its bolts, and its bars, and a thousand cubits of the wall up to the Dung Gate.
- 14 Malkijah son of Recab, commander of the district of Beth-haccherem, repaired the Dung Gate. He rebuilt it and erected its doors, its bolts, and its bars.
- 15 Shallun son of Col-Hozeh, the commander of the district of Mizpah, repaired the Fountain Gate. He rebuilt it and covered it and erected its doors, its bolts, its bars, and *he built* the wall of the Pool of Shelah of the king's garden, right up to the steps going down from the city of David.

Construction of the Eastern Wall

- 16 After him Nehemiah son of Azbuk, commander of half of the district of Beth Zur, repaired up to *a point* opposite the burial sites of David, and up to the artificial pool and to the house of the mighty warriors.
- 17 After him the Levites repaired; Rehum son of Bani, and next to him Hashabiah, commander of half of the district of Keilah, repaired his district.
- 18 After him their brothers repaired: Bavvai son of Henadad, commander of half of the district of Keilah,
- 19 next to him Ezer son of Jeshua, commander of Mizpah, repaired a second section of a wall opposite of the ascent of the armory at the angle.
- 20 After him Baruch son of Zabbai zealously repaired a second section of a wall from the angle up to the doorway of the house of Eliashib the high priest.
- 21 After him Meremoth son of Uriah, son of Hakkoz, repaired a second section of a wall from the doorway of the house of Eliashib up to the end of the house of Eliashib.
- 22 After him the priests, men from the vicinity, repaired.
- 23 After them Benjamin and Hasshub repaired opposite their house. After them Azariah son of Maaseiah, son of Ananiah, repaired beside his house.
- 24 After him Binnui son of Henadad repaired a second section of a wall from the house of Azariah up to the angle up to the corner.
- 25 Palal son of Uzai *repaired* opposite the Angle at the tower that juts out from the upper house of the king, at the courtyard of the guard. After him Pedaiah son of Parosh
- 26 and the temple servants who were living on Ophel *repaired* up to opposite the Water Gate on the east and the projecting tower.
- 27 After him the Tekoites repaired a second section of a wall opposite the projecting tower that goes out as far as the wall of Ophel.
- 28 Above the Horse Gate the priests repaired, each one opposite his house.
- 29 After them Zadok son of Immer repaired opposite his house. After him Shemaiah son of Shecaniah, keeper of the East Gate, repaired.
- 30 After him Hananiah son of Shelemiah and Hanun the sixth son of Zalaph repaired another section. After him Meshullam son of Berekiah repaired *the wall* opposite his room.
- 31 After him Malkijah, one of the goldsmiths, repaired up to the house of the temple servants and the merchants, opposite the Enrollment Gate and up to the upper room of the corner.
- 32 Between the upper room of the corner to the Sheep Gate the goldsmiths and merchants repaired.

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Sanballat Tries to Hinder Nehemiah (July 31–September 21, 444 BC)

Nehemiah 4

Opposition by Ridicule

1 Now it happened when Sanballat heard that we were building the wall, *he* became angry and greatly provoked, and he mocked the Jews.

2 Then he said before his brothers and the army of Samaria, “What are the feeble Jews doing? Will they restore *these things* for themselves? Will they sacrifice? Will they finish it in a day? Will they revive the stones from the piles of rubble—even those burned up?”

3 Tobiah the Ammonite was beside him and said, “Their wall of stone that they are building would break down if a fox went on it!”

4 Hear, our God, for we are despised. Turn their scorn on their head and give them over to plunder in the land of captivity.

5 Do not cover their guilt, and do not let their sin be blotted out from before you. They have provoked the builders to anger.

6 So we rebuilt the wall, and all of the wall was joined up to half *its height*. For the people had a heart to do *it*.

Opposition by Plot

7 Now when Sanballat, Tobiah, the Arabs, the Ammonites, and the Ashdodites heard that the restoration of the walls of Jerusalem were going forward and the gaps were being closed, they were very angry.

8 So all of them plotted together to come fight against Jerusalem and to make trouble for it.

9 So we prayed to our God and set up a guard against them day and night.

Internal Opposition: Discouragement and Fear

10 But Judah said, “The strength of the carriers is failing, and there is too much dirt, and we are not able to build at the wall.”

11 Then our enemies said, “They will not know nor see until we come upon them and will kill them and stop the work.”

12 When the Jews who lived beside them came, they said to us ten times, “From all of the places where they live, *they will come up* against us.”

13 I stationed the people behind the deepest part of the wall in the open places according to their families, with their swords, spears, and bows.

14 And I looked, got up, and said to the nobles, prefects, and the rest of the people, “Do not be afraid of them. Remember the Lord, who is great and awesome, and fight for your brothers, your sons, your daughters, your wives, and your houses.”

15 It happened when our enemies heard that their plan was known to us, that God had frustrated *it*, and we all returned to the wall—each to his work.

Diligence and Readiness in the Work

16 From that day, half of my servants were working on craftsmanship, half were holding spears, small shields, bows, and breastplates. The commanders were behind the whole house of Judah.

17 The ones who were building the wall and the ones who carried the materials were carrying in one hand while doing the task, and with the other hand were grasping a weapon.

18 Each of the builders had his sword tied to his side while building. And the man who sounded the trumpet was beside me.

19 I said to the nobles, to the prefects, and to the rest of the people, “The work is great and widespread, and we are spread out over the wall far from each other.

20 Wherever you hear the sound of the trumpet, come together to us there. Our God will fight for us.”

21 So we labored at the work, and half of them were holding the spears from dawn until the stars came out.

22 At the time I also said to the people, “Let each man and his servant spend the night inside Jerusalem, so that they will be a guard for us in the night and work in the day.”

23 So neither I nor my brothers nor my young men nor the men of the guard who were behind me took off our clothes. Each one *kept* his weapon *even* in the water.

Oppression Within the Remnant (July 31–September 21, 444 BC)

Nehemiah 5

Extortion by the Rich

1 Now there was a great cry of distress of the people and of their wives *against* their Jewish brothers.

2 There were those who were saying, “Our sons and daughters, we are many. We must get grain so that we may eat and live.”

3 There were also those saying, “We have pledged our fields and our vineyards and our houses so that we can get grain in the famine.”

4 And there were those who were saying, “We have borrowed money on our fields and our vineyards for the tax of the king.

5 Now our flesh is like the flesh of our brothers, our sons are like their sons. Look, we are subduing our sons and our daughters to be slaves, and there are some from our daughters being molested. We are powerless, and our fields and vineyards *belong* to others.”

Nehemiah Rebukes the Creditors

6 I was very angry when I heard their shouts and these words.

7 I thought over this in my heart, and then I quarreled with the nobles and the prefects. I said to them, “You yourselves are taking interest from your own brother!” So I called the great assembly against them,

8 and I said to them: “We ourselves have bought back our brothers the Jews who were sold to the nations as we were able. But now you yourselves have sold your brothers so they may be sold to us!” They were silent and could not find a word *to say*.

9 So I said, “The thing that you are doing is not good. Should you not walk in the fear of our God *to prevent* the disgrace from the nations, our enemies?”

10 Also, I and my brothers and my servants are lending them money and grain. Please stop *taking* this interest.

11 Please restore to them this day their fields, their vineyards, their olive groves, their houses, and the interest on the money, the grain, the grape juice, and the olive oil that you have been taking from them.”

The Creditors Heed Nehemiah’s Rebuke

12 So they said, “We will restore it and will not request *anything more*. So we will do as you say.” Then I called the priests and made them take an oath to do this promise.

13 I also shook out my garment and said, “This is how God will shake out everyone from his house who will not keep this promise. So this is how his possessions will be shaken out and emptied.” And all the assembly said, “Amen!” And they praised Yahweh, and the people kept this promise.

Nehemiah’s Unselfish Leadership

14 Moreover, from the appointed day I was made their governor in the land of Judah, from the twentieth year until the thirty-second year of King Artaxerxes—twelve years. My brothers and I did not eat the food *allowance* of the governor.

15 The former governors who were before me laid burdens on the people, and they took food and wine from them, besides forty shekels. Also, their servants controlled the people, but I did not do so because of the fear of God.

16 I also devoted myself to the work of this wall, and we did not buy land. All of my servants were gathered for the work.

17 One hundred and fifty men, prefects and Jews, and those who came to us from the nations around us, *were* at my table.

18 Now what was prepared each day for me was one ox, six choice sheep, and birds. And every ten days all *kinds of* wine were made. But for this I did not demand the food *allowance* of the governor because the slavery was too heavy on this people.

19 Remember me for good, my God, all that I have done for this people.

Sanballat’s Final Attempt to Thwart Nehemiah (July 31–September 21, 444 BC)

Nehemiah 6:1–14

Opposition by Trickery

1 Now when it was reported to Sanballat, Tobiah, Geshem the Arab, and to the rest of our enemies that I had built the wall and that no gap was left in it—though up to that time I had not erected doors in the gates—

2 Sanballat and Geshem sent to me, saying, “Come and let us meet together in *one of* the villages in the plain of Ono.” But they planned to do evil to me.

3 So I sent messengers to them, saying, “I am doing a great work and I am not able to come down. Why should the work stop while I leave it and come down to you all?”

4 And they sent a message to me four times like this, and I returned an answer like this to them.

5 And Sanballat sent his servant with an open letter, *another* word like this to me a fifth time, in his hand.

6 In it was written, “It has been reported among the nations, and Gashmu also is saying it, that you and the Jews are considering rebellion. Therefore, truly you are building the wall and you are becoming their king, according to these words.

7 You have also set up prophets to proclaim in Jerusalem concerning you, saying, ‘*There is a king in Judah.*’ And now it will be proclaimed to the king according to these words. Now, come and we will plan together.”

8 So I sent to him saying, “None of these words you have spoken has happened. You are indeed saying *things* created in your own mind”—

9 for all of them *sought* to frighten us, saying, “their hands will not do the work.” And now, *God*, strengthen my hands.

Opposition by Intimidation

10 Now I went into the house of Shemaiah son of Delaiah, son of Mehetabel, who was confined *at home*, and he said, “Let us meet in the house of God, inside the temple, and let us close the doors of the temple; for they are coming to kill you—during the night they are coming to kill you.”

11 But I said, “Should a man like me run away? And would a man like me go into the temple so that he can save his life? I will not go in!”

12 Then I look and realized God had not sent him; rather, he had spoken the prophecy against me *because* Tobiah and Sanballat had hired him.

13 For this reason he was hired: to frighten *me* so that I would act and sin, so that they would have a bad report so they could taunt me.

14 Remember, O my God, Tobiah and Sanballat according to their works, and also Noadiah the prophetess, and the remainder of the prophets who were frightening me.

Jerusalem's Walls Completed (September 21, 444 BC)

Nehemiah 6:15–19

The Walls Completed

15 So the wall was finished on the twenty-fifth day of Elul, in fifty-two days.

16 When our enemies heard of this, all of the nations surrounding us were afraid and lost their confidence. They knew that this work had been done with *the help of our God*.

Opposition Still Continues

17 Also, in those days the nobles of Judah increasingly sent their letters to Tobiah, and *letters* from Tobiah returned to them.

18 For many in Judah were bound by oath to him because he was the son-in-law of Shecaniah son of Arah. His son Jehohanan took as a wife the daughter of Meshullam son of Berekiah.

19 They also were speaking of his good deeds in my presence, and they were sending my words out to him. Tobiah sent letters to intimidate me.

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Nehemiah Organizes the Community (September 22–25, 444 BC)

Nehemiah 7:1–5a

Organization for Conservation

1 Now when the wall had been built and I had erected the doors and appointed the gatekeepers, singers, and the Levites,

2 I gave command over Jerusalem to my brother Hanani and Hananiah the commander of the citadel. For he was a faithful man and feared God more than many.

3 I said to them, “Do not open the gates of Jerusalem until the sun is hot. While they are standing guard let them shut and fasten the doors. And appoint guards from the inhabitants of Jerusalem, one at his post and another opposite his house.”

The Registration of the People

4 The city *was* widespread and large, but the people in it were few and no houses were rebuilt.

5a Then my God put into my heart to assemble the nobles, the prefects, and the people to be enrolled.

Ezra Reads the Law and Explains It to the People (September 26, 444 BC)

Nehemiah 7:73b–8:12

7:73b When the seventh month came, the Israelites *were* in their cities.

8:1 All of the people gathered as one to the public square before the Water Gate. They asked Ezra the scribe to bring the book of the law of Moses that Yahweh had commanded Israel.

2 So Ezra the priest brought the law before the assembly for *each* man and woman to hear with understanding, on the first day of the seventh month.

3 He read from it facing the public square before the Water Gate from dawn until noon that day, opposite the men, women, and those with understanding. The ears of all the people *were attentive* to the book of the law.

4 Then Ezra the scribe stood on a wooden podium that had been made for the occasion. And beside him stood Mattithiah, Shema, Anaiah, Uriah, Hilkiah, and Maaseiah on his right. On his left *was* Pedaiah, Mishael, Malkijah, Hashum, Hashbaddanah, Zechariah, and Meshullam.

5 Ezra opened the book in the sight of all the people, because he was above all of the people. When he opened it all the people stood up.

6 Then Ezra blessed Yahweh the great God, and all of the people answered, “Amen! Amen!” while lifting their hands. Then they bowed down and worshiped Yahweh *with their* noses to the ground.

7 And Jeshua, Bani, Sherebiah, Jamin, Akkub, Shabbethai, Hodiah, Maaseiah, Kelita, Azariah, Jozabad, Hanan, Pelaiah, and the Levites were teaching the people from the law while the people were in their places.

8 So they read the book from the law of God, making it clear and giving the meaning so that they could understand the reading.

9 Nehemiah the governor, Ezra the priest and scribe, and the Levites who taught the people said to all of the people, “This day is holy to Yahweh your God. Do not mourn nor weep.” For all of the people wept when they heard the words of the law.

10 Then he said to them, “Go, eat festive food and drink sweet drinks, and send a share to those for whom nothing is prepared; for this day is holy to our lord. Do not be grieved because the joy of Yahweh is your refuge.”

11 So the Levites silenced all of the people, saying, “Silence, for this day is holy. Do not be grieved.”

12 All of the people went to eat, to drink, to send a share, and to have great joy because they understood the words that they had made known to them.

Discovery of the Forgotten Feast (September 27, 444 BC)

Nehemiah 8:13–15

13 On the second day the heads of the families of all the people, the priests, and the Levites gathered together to Ezra the scribe to study the words of the law.

14 They found written in the law, which Yahweh had commanded by the hand of Moses, that the Israelites should live in booths during the festival of the seventh month,

15 and that they should proclaim and give voice in all of their cities in Jerusalem, saying, “Go out to the hill and bring olive tree branches, olive oil wood branches, myrtle shrub branches, palm tree branches, and other leafy tree branches to make booths, as it is written.”

Celebration of the Feast of Tabernacles (October 11–17, 444 BC)

Nehemiah 8:16–18

16 So the people went out and brought them and made booths for themselves, each on his roof, in their courtyards, in the courtyards of the house of God, in the public square of the Water Gate, and in the public square of the Gate of Ephraim.

17 And all of the assembly of those who returned from captivity made booths and lived in the booths because the Israelites had not done it from the days of Jeshua son of Nun until that day. And there was very great joy.

18 And he read from the scroll of the law of God day by day from the first day up to the last day. They celebrated the festival for seven days, and on the eighth day there was an assembly according to the rule.

The Israelites' Prayer of Confession (October 20, 444 BC)

Nehemiah 9:1–37

Assembly for Confession and Worship

1 On the twenty-fourth day of this month the Israelites gathered in fasting, in sackcloths, and with soil on them.

2 Those of the seed of Israel separated themselves from all of the foreigners and stood and confessed their sins and the iniquities of their ancestors.

3 They stood up in their place and read from the book of the law of Yahweh their God for a fourth part of the day, and for a fourth they were confessing and worshiping Yahweh their God.

4 Then Jeshua, Bani, Kadmiel, Shebaniah, Bunni, Sherebiah, Bani, and Kenani stood on the platform of the Levites and cried out with a loud voice to Yahweh their God.

5 Then the Levites, Jeshua, Kadmiel, Bani, Hashabneiah, Sherebiah, Hodiah, Shebaniah, and Pethahiah said, "Stand up, bless Yahweh your God from everlasting until everlasting.

Prayer of Confession

5b Blessed be your glorious name that is being exalted above all blessing and praise!

6 "You alone are Yahweh. You alone have made the heavens, the heavens of the heavens, and all of their army, the earth and all that is in it, the waters and all that is in them. You give life to all of them, and the army of the heavens worship you.

7 You are Yahweh, the God who chose Abram and brought him from Ur of the Chaldeans and named him Abraham.

8 You found his heart faithful before you and made a covenant with him to give the land of the Canaanite, the Hittite, the Amorite, the Perizzite, the Jebusite and the Girgashite—to give *it* to his seed. And you have kept your word because you are righteous.

9 "You saw the misery of our ancestors in Egypt, and you heard their shout at the Red Sea.

10 You gave signs and wonders against Pharaoh, all of his servants, and all of the people of his land because you knew that they acted arrogantly against them. You made a name for yourself, as it is this day.

11 And you divided the sea before them, and they passed through the sea on dry ground, but their pursuers you threw into the depths like a stone into mighty waters.

12 You led them by day with a column of cloud and with a column of fire by night, to give them light on the way that they were to go.

13 Then you came down on Mount Sinai and spoke with them from heaven and gave them right judgments and true teachings, good regulations and commandments.

14 You made known your holy Sabbath to them and gave them commandments, regulations, and law by the hand of your servant Moses.

15 You gave them bread from heaven for their starvation, and you caused water to go out from a rock for their thirst. You told them to go in order to take into possession the land that you have sworn by your hand to give to them.

16 "But they and our ancestors acted arrogantly and stiffened their neck and did not listen to your commandments.

17 They refused to listen and did not remember your wonders that you did among them. They stiffened their neck and in their rebellion determined to return to their slavery. But you are a God of forgiveness, gracious and compassionate, slow to anger, abundant in loyal love, so you did not abandon them.

18 Even when they made for themselves a molten idol of a calf and said, 'This is your God who brought you out from Egypt,' and committed great blasphemies.

19 But you in your many mercies did not abandon them in the desert. The column of cloud *that was* over them in the day did not cease to leave them on the way, and the column of fire by night *that* gave light to them on the way that they went.

20 And you gave your good Spirit to instruct them and did not withhold your manna from their mouth and gave them water for their thirst.

21 Forty years you sustained them in the desert—they were not in need. Their clothing did not wear out and their feet did not swell.

22 And you gave them kingdoms and nations and allotted them a portion. They took into possession the land of Sihon king of Heshbon and the land of Og king of Bashan.

23 You made their children numerous like the stars of the heavens and brought them to the land that you told their ancestors to enter in order to take possession.

24 So the children went in and took possession of the land. You subdued before them the inhabitants of the land, the Canaanites; you gave them into their hand, and their kings and the nations of the land to do with them according to their pleasure.

25 And they captured fortified cities and a fertile land and took possession of houses filled with every good thing: hewn cisterns, vineyards, olive groves, and many *fruit* trees. They ate and became full, and they became fat and took delight in your great

goodness.

26 “But they rebelled and were rebellious against you and cast your law behind their back and killed your prophets, who had warned them to turn back to you, and they did great blasphemies.

27 Therefore you gave them into the hand of their enemy, and they brought trouble to them. Then in the time of their trouble they cried out to you, and you heard from the heavens, and according to your great compassions, you gave them saviors, and you saved them from the hand of their enemies.

28 But when they had rest they returned to doing evil before you, and you abandoned them in the hand of their enemies, and they ruled over them. Then they returned and cried out to you, and from the heavens you heard and many times rescued them according to your compassions.

29 You warned them so that they would return to your law. Yet they acted arrogantly and did not listen to your commandments but sinned against your judgments that a person must do so that they may live. They turned a stubborn shoulder and stiffened their neck and would not listen.

30 You were patient toward them for many years, and you have warned them by your spirit through the hand of your prophets, but they did not listen. So you gave them into the hand of the nations of the lands.

31 But in your great compassions you did not put an end to them, and you did not abandon them. For you are a gracious and compassionate God.

32 “And now our God, the great, mighty, and awesome God who keeps *his* covenant and loyal love, do not belittle in your presence all of the hardship that is found in us, our kings, our officials, our priests, our prophets, our ancestors, and all of our people, from the days of the kings of Assyria until this day.

33 You are righteous in everything that has come on us, for you dealt faithfully, and we have acted wickedly.

34 Our kings, our officials, our priests, and our ancestors did not keep your law and did not listen to your commandments and statutes that you declared to them.

35 And in their kingdom and in the greatness you gave to them, and in the wide and fertile land that you gave before them, they did not serve you and did not turn from their evil deeds.

36 Behold, we are slaves to this day, and the land that you have given to our ancestors to eat its fruits and *enjoy* its goodness— behold, we are slaves in it!

37 Its rich yield goes to the kings whom you have given over us because of our sins, and *they are* ruling over our dead bodies and our livestock at their pleasure. We are in great trouble.

A Signed National Covenant (October 20, 444 BC)

Nehemiah 9:38–10:39

Introduction

9:38 “Now because of all of this we make a binding written agreement and are writing on the sealed documents *the names of* our commanders, our Levites, and our priests.”

The Chief Leaders and Priests Who Signed

10:1 Upon the sealed documents: Nehemiah the governor, son of Hacaliah and Zedekiah;

2 Seraiah, Azariah, Jeremiah,

3 Pashhur, Amariah, Malkijah,

4 Hattush, Shebaniah, Malluch,

5 Harim, Meremoth, Obadiah,

6 Daniel, Ginnethon, Baruch,

7 Meshullam, Abijah, Mijamin,

8 Maaziah, Bilgai, Shemaiah—these are the priests.

The Levites Who Signed

9 And the Levites: Jeshua son of Azaniah, Binnui from the sons of Henadad, Kadmiel;

10 their brothers Shebaniah, Hodiah, Kelita, Pelaiah, Hanan,

11 Mica, Rehob, Hashabiah,

12 Zaccur, Shereiah, Shebanaih,

13 Hodiah, Bani, Beninu.

The Other Leaders Who Signed

14 The heads of the people: Parosh, Pahath-Moab, Elam, Zattu, Bani,

15 Bunni, Azgad, Bebai,

16 Adonijah, Bigvai, Adin,

17 Ater, Hezekiah, Azzur,

18 Hodiah, Hashum, Bezai,
 19 Hariph, Anathoth, Nobai,
 20 Magpiash, Meshullam, Hezir,
 21 Meshezabel, Zadok, Jaddua,
 22 Pelatiah, Hanan, Anaiah,
 23 Hoshea, Hananiah, Hasshub,
 24 Hallohesh, Pilha, Shobek,
 25 Rehum, Hashabnah, Maaseiah,
 26 Ahijah, Hanan, Anan,
 27 Malluch, Harim, Baanah.

The Solemn Promise

28 “The rest of the people, the priests, the Levites, the gatekeepers, the singers, the temple servants, and all who separated themselves from the peoples of the lands to *observe* the law of God—their wives, their sons, their daughters, and all who know and understand—

29 *are* helping their brothers, their nobles, and entering into a solemn oath to walk in the law of God which was given by the hand of Moses the servant of God, and to observe and do all of the commandments of Yahweh our Lord and his judgments and regulations.

Specific Examples of Separation

30 We will not give our daughters to the peoples of the land nor take their daughters for our sons.

31 And the peoples of the land who bring merchandise and any grain on the Sabbath day to sell, we will not accept it from them on the Sabbath or on a holy day. We will forego *the crops of* the seventh year and *cancel* every debt.

Temple Taxes

32 “We put on ourselves the commandment upon us to yearly give a third of a shekel for the service of the house of our God:

33 for the rows of bread, the offering of the daily sacrifice, the continual *burnt* sacrifice, the Sabbaths, the new moon festivals, the appointed *festival* times, the holy objects, the sin offerings that make atonement for Israel, and for all the work of the house of our God.

Offerings in Kind

34 And we have cast lots for the contributions of the wood offering of the priests, the Levites, and the people to bring *it* to the house of our God, by our fathers’ houses, at designated times, year by year, to burn on the altar of Yahweh our God—as it is written in the law.

35 We *also* bring the first fruits of our soil and the first fruits of all the fruit trees, year by year, for the house of Yahweh.

36 And the firstborn of our sons and beasts—as it is written in the law—and the firstborn of our cattle and sheep, to bring to the house of our God *and* to the priests serving in the house of our God.

37 And we bring the best of our dough, our offerings, the fruit of every tree, new wine, and olive oil to the priests, to the chambers of the house of our God; and *to bring* the tithe of our soil to the Levites, for the Levites *receive* the tithes in all of our rural towns.

38 And the priest, the descendant of Aaron, will be with the Levites during the tithe the Levites receive. The Levites will bring up a tithe of the tithes for the house of our God to the chambers of the storehouse.

39 For the Israelites and the Levites will bring to the storerooms the offering of grain, new wine, and olive oil. These are the objects of the sanctuary and the priests who minister and the gatekeepers and singers. We will not neglect the house of our God.”

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The Repopulation of Jerusalem (late 444 BC)

Nehemiah 11:1–24

1 Chronicles 9:1b–34

Summary Statement

1 Now the commanders of the people lived in Jerusalem, but the remainder of the people cast lots to bring one out of ten to live in the holy city of Jerusalem, the *other* nine's place *was in the other* cities.

2 And the people blessed all the men who willingly offered to live in Jerusalem.

Heading

3 These are the heads of the province who lived in Jerusalem, but in the cities of Judah each one lived on his property in their cities: Israel, the priests, the Levites, the temple servants, and the descendants of Solomon's servants.

Judah

4 And *some* from the descendants of Judah and Benjamin lived in Jerusalem. From the descendants of Judah: Athaiah son of Uziah, son of Zechariah, son of Amariah, son of Shephatiah, son of Mahalalel, from the descendants of Perez;

5 and Maaseiah son of Baruch, son of Col-Hozeh, son of Hazaiah, son of Adaiah, son of Jehoiarib, son of Zechariah, son of the Shilonite.

6 All of the descendants of Perez who were living in Jerusalem *were* four hundred and sixty-eight able-bodied men.

Benjamin

7 These are the descendants of Benjamin: Sallu son of Meshullam, son of Joed, son of Pedaiah, son of Kolaiah, son of Maaseiah, son of Ithiel, son of Jeshaiiah.

8 And *following* after him Gabbai, Sallai, nine hundred and twenty-eight.

9 And Joel son of Zicri, their chief officer; and Judah son of Hassenuah, second *in command* over the city.

Priests

10 From the priests: Jedaiah son of Jehoiarib, Jakin,

11 Seraiah son of Hilkiah, son of Meshullam, son of Zadok, son of Meraioth, son of Ahitub—the leader of the house of God—
12 and their brothers who did the work of the house, eight hundred and twenty-two. And Adaiah son of Jeroham, son of Pelaliah, son of Amzi, son of Zechariah, son of Pashhur, son of Malkijah,

13 and his brothers, heads of the families, two hundred and forty-two. And Amashai son of Azarel, son of Ahzai, son of Meshillemoth, son of Immer,

14 and their brothers; mighty warriors of strength, one hundred and twenty-eight. The chief officer over them *was* Zabdiel son of Hagedolim.

Levites

15 Now from the Levites: Shemaiah son of Hasshub, son of Azrikam, son of Hashabiah, son of Bunni;

16 and Shabbethai and Jehozabad, leaders over the work of the Levites outside of the house of God;

1b And Judah was taken away to Babylon on account of their sin.

2 Now the first inhabitants who *were settled* on their property in their cities *in Israel were* the priests, the Levites, and the temple servants.

3 And some of the people of Judah, Benjamin, Ephraim, and Manasseh lived in Jerusalem:

4 Uthai the son of Ammihud, son of Omri, son of Imri, son of Bani, from the sons of Perez, the son of Judah.

5 And from the Shilonites: Asaiah the firstborn and his sons.

6 And from the sons of Zerach: Jeuel and their brethren, six hundred and ninety.

7 And from the sons of Benjamin: Sallu the son of Meshullam, son of Hodaviah, the son of Hassenuah;

8 Ibneah the son of Jeroham; Elah the son of Uzzi, son of Michri; Meshullam the son of Shephatiah, son of Reuel, son of Ibnijah;

9 and their brethren according to their generations, nine hundred and fifty-six. All these men *were* the heads of the families in the house of their fathers.

10 And from the priests: Jedaiah; Jehoiarib; Jakin;

11 Azariah son of Hilkiah, son of Meshullam, son of Zadok, son of Meraioth, son of Ahitub, the commander of the house of God;

12 Adaiah son of Jeroham, son of Pashhur, son of Malkijah; Maasai the son of Adiel, son of Jahzerah, son of Meshullam, son of Meshillemith, son of Immer;

13 and their kinsmen, heads of the house of their fathers, one thousand seven hundred and sixty mighty men *for* the work of the service of the house of God.

14 And from the Levites: Shemaiah son of Hasshub, son of Azrikam, son of Hashabiah, from the sons of Merari;

15 Bakbakkar; Heresh; Galal; Mattaniah the son of Mica, son of Zicri, son of Asaph;

17 Mattaniah son of Micah, son of Zabdi, son of Asaph, *who was* the leader to begin the thanksgiving prayer, and Bakbukiah the second of his brothers; Abda son of Shammua, son of Galal, son of Jeduthun.

18 All of the Levites in the holy city *were* two hundred and eighty-four.

Gatekeepers

19 The gatekeepers: Akkub, Talmon, and their brothers, the keepers of the gates, one hundred and seventy-two.

Duties

Levitical Singers

16 Obadiah the son of Shemaiah, son of Galal, son of Jeduthun; and Berechiah the son of Asa, son of Elkanah, who lived in the villages of Netophathite.

17 And the gatekeepers *were* Shallum, Akkub, Talmon, Ahiman, and their brethren (Shallum *was* the chief);

18 until then they *were* gatekeepers at the gate of the king on the east *side* toward the camps of the Levites.

19 And Shallum the son of Kore, son of Ebiasaph, son of Korah, and his kinsmen of the house of his fathers, the Korahites, *were* over the work of the service, the guardians of the entrances to the tent, and their fathers *were* over the camp of Yahweh, guardians of the entrance.

20 And Phinehas the son of Eleazar was the leader over them in time past; Yahweh *was* with him.

21 Zechariah the son of Meshelemiah *was* gatekeeper at the doorway to the tent of assembly.

22 All of them were chosen as gatekeepers at the entrances, two hundred and twelve. They were enrolled by genealogies in their villages. They *were* established *by* David and Samuel the seer on account of their faithfulness.

23 So they and their sons *were* over the gates of the house of Yahweh at the house of the tent as guards.

24 The gatekeepers *were* on four sides: east, west, north, and south.

25 And their brethren in their villages *were* to come *every* seven days by turn *to be* with these.

26 For the four mighty gatekeepers, they who *were* Levites, were entrusted and *were* over the chambers and over the storerooms of the house of God.

27 And they lodged all around the house of God, for upon them *was* a responsibility. And they had charge of opening *the house of God* every morning.

28 And some of them *were* over the utensils of the service, for they count them *when* they are brought in and they count them *when* they are brought out.

29 And some of them were appointed over the objects, over the objects of the sanctuary, and over the wheat flour and the wine, the olive oil, the frankincense, and the spices.

30 And some of the sons of the priests mixed the fragrant ointment for the spices.

31 And Mattithiah, one of the Levites, was the firstborn of Shallum the Korahite and was entrusted with the work of the pan breads.

32 And from the sons of the Kohathites, some of their kinsmen *were* over the showbread to prepare *it* every Sabbath.

33 Now these *were* the singers; the heads of the families of the Levites *were* in the chambers free from other service, for day and night *they were* over them on the service.

<p>Summary</p> <p>The Rest 20 And the remainder of Israel, the priests and the Levites, in all of the cities of Judah, each in his inheritance.</p> <p>Temple Servants 21 But the temple servants were living on the Ophel; Ziha and Gishpa <i>were</i> over the temple servants.</p> <p>Levitical Overseers 22 The chief officer of the Levites in Jerusalem <i>was</i> Uzzi son of Bani, son of Hashabiah, son of Mattaniah, son of Mica, from the descendants of Asaph, the singers over the work of the house of God. 23 For <i>there was</i> a command of the king concerning them and a regulation concerning the singers, required day by day.</p> <p>Liaison with the King 24 And Pethahiah son of Meshezabel, from the descendants of Zerah the son of Judah, <i>was</i> at the hand of the king in all matters concerning the people.</p>	<p>34 These <i>were</i> the heads of the families of the Levites according to their genealogies, leaders. These lived in Jerusalem.</p>
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The Repopulation of the Surrounding Villages (late 444 BC)

Nehemiah 11:25–36

25 As for the villages in their territories, *some* from the descendants of Judah lived in Kiriath-Arba and its settlements, Dibon and its settlements, Jekabzeel and its settlements,
 26 Jeshua, Moladah, Beth Pelet,
 27 Hazar Shual, Beersheba and its settlements,
 28 Ziklad, Meconah and its settlements,
 29 En-Rimmon, Zorah, Jarmuch,
 30 Zanoah, Adullam and their settlements, Lachish and its fields, and Azekah and its settlements. So they camped from Beersheba up to *the* Valley of Hinnom.
 31 The descendants of Benjamin from Geba, Micmash, Aija, Bethel and their settlements,
 32 Anathoth, Nob, Ananiah,
 33 Hazor, Ramah, Gittaim,
 34 Hadid, Zeboim, Neballat,
 35 Lod, and Ono the valley of the artisans.
 36 And from the Levites the working groups of Judah *were assigned* to Benjamin.

Priests and Levites During the Persian Empire (c. 537 – c. 330 BC)

Nehemiah 12:1–26

Priests and Levites Who Returned with Zerubbabel (c. 537)

1 These *are* the priests and the Levites who came up with Zerubbabel son of Shealtiel and Jeshua: Seraiah, Jeremiah, Ezra,
 2 Amariah, Malluch, Hattush,
 3 Shecaniah, Rehum, Meremoth,
 4 Iddo, Ginnethoi, Abijah,
 5 Mijamin, Maadiah, Bilgah,
 6 Shemaiah, Jehoiarib, Jedaiah,
 7 Sallu, Amok, Hilkiyah, Jedaiah. These *are* the heads of the priests and their brothers in the days of Jeshua.
 8 And the Levites: Jeshua, Binnui, Kadmiel, Sherebiah, Judah, and Mattaniah and his brothers *who were* in charge of the songs of thanksgiving.
 9 And Bakbukiah, Unno, their brothers *stood* opposite them during service.

The Line of High Priests (c. 537 – c. 330)

10 Jeshua fathered Jehoiakim; Jehoiakim fathered Eliashib; Eliashib *fathered* Jehoiada;
 11 Jehoiada fathered Jehonathan; Jehonathan fathered Jaddua.

Heads of Priestly Families in Joiakim's Day (c. 500 – c. 470)

12 Now in the days of Jehoiakim the priests and the heads of the families were: of Seraiah, Meraiah; of Jeremiah, Hananiah;
 13 of Ezra, Meshullam; of Amariah, Jehohanan;
 14 of Melichu, Jonathan; of Shebaniah, Joseph;
 15 of Harim, Adna; of Meraioth, Helkai;
 16 of Adaia, Zechariah; of Ginnethon, Meshullam;
 17 of Abijah, Zicri; of Miniamin; of Moadiah, Piltai;
 18 of Bilgah, Shammua; of Shemaiah, Jehonathan;
 19 of Jehoiarib, Mattenai; of Jedaiah, Uzzi;
 20 of Sallu, Kallai; of Amok, Eber;
 21 of Hilkiyah, Hashabiah; *and* of Jedaiah, Nethanel.

Recording of Levitical and Priestly Families up to the Time of Darius III (c. 470 – c. 330)

22 In the days of Eliashib, Jehoiada, Jehohanan, and Jaddua the Levites were recorded as heads of the families. So *these were* the priests *during* the reign of Darius the Persian.
 23 The descendants of Levi and the heads of the families were recorded in the scroll of the Annals until the days of Jehohanan son of Eliashib.

Heads of Levitical Families in Joiakim's and Nehemiah's Day (c. 500 – c. 425)

24 And the heads of the Levites: Hashabiah, Sherebiah, Jeshua son of Kadmiel, and their brothers opposite them, to praise and to give thanks by the command of David the man of God, section alongside section.
 25 Mattaniah, Bakbukiah, Obadiah, Meshullam, Talmon, and Akkub were gatekeepers standing guard at the storerooms of the gates.
 26 These were in the days of Jehoiakim son of Jeshua, son of Jehozadak, and in the days of Nehemiah the governor and Ezra the priest and scribe.

Dedication of the Walls (late 444 BC)

Nehemiah 12:27–47

Gathering Participants for the Dedication

27 At the dedication of the wall of Jerusalem they sought the Levites from all of their places in order to bring them to Jerusalem to do the dedication with joy, thanksgivings, song and cymbals, stringed instruments and lyres.
 28 The singers were gathered from the circuit all around Jerusalem and from the villages of Netophathite,
 29 from Beth Gilgal, from the field of Geba and Azmaveth; for the singers built for themselves villages all around Jerusalem.
 30 And the priests and the Levites purified themselves and purified the people, the gates, and the wall.

Two Processions on the Wall

31 Then I brought the commanders of Judah up on to the wall. I appointed two great choirs; *one went in* a procession to the right on the wall to the Dung Gate.
 32 After them went Hoshaiiah, half of the commanders of Judah,
 33 Azariah, Ezra, Meshullam,
 34 Judah, Benjamin, Shemaiah, Jeremiah,
 35 and the priests with trumpets; Zechariah son of Jehonathan, son of Shemaiah, son of Mattaniah, son of Micaiah, son of Zaccur, son of Asaph;
 36 and his brothers Shemaiah, Azarel, Milalai, Gilalai, Maai, Nethanel, Judah, and Hanani with the instruments of the songs of David the man of God; and Ezra the scribe *went* before them.
 37 At the Fountain Gate opposite them they went up the steps of the city of David, at the ascent to the wall, over the house of David, and up to the Water Gate to the east.
 38 Then the second choir went the opposite *way*. I *followed* after them with half of the people on the wall, from over the Tower of the Ovens up to the Wide Wall
 39 and over the Gate of Ephraim, at the Old Gate, at the Fish Gate, the Tower of Hananel and the Tower of the Hundred, and to the Sheep Gate. And they *stopped and* stood at the Gate of the Guard.

The Ceremonies at the Temple

40 So the two choirs stood in the house of God, and I and half of the prefects with me;

41 and the priests Eliakim, Maaseiah, Miniamin, Micaiah, Elioenai, Zechariah, and Hananiah with the trumpets;

42 Maaseiah, Shemaiah, Eleazar, Uzzi, Jehohanan, Malkijah, Elam, and Ezer. And the singers sang with Jizrahiah the chief officer.

43 They offered on that day great sacrifices and rejoiced because God brought great joy to them. And the women and children also rejoiced. The joy of Jerusalem was heard from afar.

Provisions for the Temple Storerooms

44 On that day men were appointed for the storehouse rooms, the offerings, the first fruits, and the tithes, in order to gather in them from the fields of the cities the requirements of the law for the priests and Levites; for the joy of Judah was upon the priests and Levites standing there.

45 They kept the responsibility of their God and the responsibility of cleansing, and the singers and gatekeepers, according to the command of David and his son Solomon.

46 For in the days of David and Asaph from ancient times there was the head of the singers and a song of praise and thanksgiving to God.

47 So all of Israel in the days of Zerubbabel and in the days of Nehemiah gave the daily food portions of the singers and gatekeepers. And they set apart *that which was for* the Levites, and the Levites set apart *that which was for* the descendants of Aaron.

Nehemiah Returns to Babylon (c. 433–429 BC)
Nehemiah 13:6a
6a During all of this, I was not in Jerusalem because in the thirty-second year of Artaxerxes king of Babylon I went to the king.

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Textual Notes

- 1) My arrangement and harmonization of Nehemiah 11 and 1 Chronicles 9 follows the division as set out by Knoppers (cf. Gary N. Knoppers, "Sources, Revisions, and Editions: The List of Jerusalem's Residents in MT and LXX Nehemiah 11 and 1 Chronicles 9," *Textus* 20 (2000): 141–68). Since the differences between the two texts are significant, I did not make any attempt to harmonize the actual words of the two passages.

Malachi's Prophecy to the Remnant (c. 432/431 BC)

Malachi 1–4

Title

1:1 An oracle. The word of Yahweh to Israel through Malachi.

Israel Questions God's Claim of Love

2 "I have loved you," says Yahweh, but you say, "How have you loved us?" "Is Esau not Jacob's brother?" declares Yahweh. "I have loved Jacob,

3 but Esau I have hated. I have made his mountain ranges a desolation, and *given* his inheritance to the jackals of *the* desert." [Rom 9:13]

4 If Edom says, "We are shattered, but we will return and rebuild *the* ruins," Yahweh of hosts says this: "They may build, but I will tear down; and they will be called a territory of wickedness, and the people *with* whom Yahweh is angry forever."

5 Your eyes will see *this*, and you will say, "Yahweh is great beyond the borders of Israel."

Israel Questions God's Charge of Disrespect

6 "A son honors *his* father, and a slave his master; but if I *am* a father, where *is* my honor, and if I *am* a master, where *is* my reverence?" says Yahweh of hosts to you, O priests, who despise my name. "But you say, 'How have we despised your name?'

7 *You are* presenting defiled food on my altar! But you ask, 'How have we defiled you?' By saying *that* the table of Yahweh is despised!

8 When you offer a blind *animal* for sacrifice, is that not wrong? And when you offer *the* lame and the one who is ill, is that not wrong? Present it, please, to your governor! Will he be pleased with you? Will he show you favor?" says Yahweh of hosts.

9 So then, implore the favor of God so that he will be gracious to us. "This is what you have done. Will he show favor to any of you?" says Yahweh of hosts.

10 "Who also among you will shut *the temple* doors so that you will not kindle fire in vain *on* my altar? I take no pleasure in you," says Yahweh of hosts, "and I will not accept an offering from your hand.

11 From the rising of the sun to its setting, my name *is* great among the nations, and in every place incense *is* being presented to my name, and a pure offering. For my name *is* great among the nations," says Yahweh of hosts.

12 "But you *are* profaning it by saying the table of the Lord *is* defiled, and its fruit—its food—is despised!

13 And you say, 'Look! *This is* a weariness,' and you sniff *with disdain* at it," says Yahweh of hosts. "And you bring *the* stolen, the lame, and the one that is sick—*this* you bring as the offering! Should I accept it from your hand?" says Yahweh.

14 "Cursed is the one who cheats, who has in his flock a male and vows *it*, but *instead* sacrifices a blemished one to the Lord! For I *am* a great king," says Yahweh of hosts, "and my name *is* awesome among the nations."

Warning to the Priests

2:1 "And so then, O priests, this command *is* for you:

2 If you will not listen, and if you will not take it to heart to give glory to my name," says Yahweh of hosts, "then I will send the curse on you, and I will curse your blessings; moreover I have *already* cursed them because you are not taking it to heart.

3 Look! I *am* going to rebuke your offspring, and I will scatter offal on your faces, *the* offal of your religious feasts, and you will be carried to it.

4 "Then you will know that I have sent to you this command, that my covenant with Levi continues," says Yahweh of hosts.

5 "My covenant with him was *one of* life and peace, and I gave them to him. *This required* reverence, and he revered me and stood in awe before my name.

6 *The* instruction of truth was in his mouth, and wickedness was not found on his lips. In peace and in uprightness he walked with me, and he brought back many from sin.

7 For the lips of *the* priest should guard knowledge, and they should seek instruction from his mouth, for he *is* the messenger of Yahweh of hosts.

8 But you, you have turned from the way; you have caused many to stumble by *your* instruction; you have ruined the covenant of Levi," says Yahweh of hosts.

9 "And in turn I have made you despised and humbled before all the people, inasmuch as you *are* not keeping my way, but are favoring your own instruction."

God Charges Israel With Unfaithfulness

10 Do we not all have one father? Has not one God created us? Why *then* are we unfaithful to one another, profaning the covenant of our ancestors?

11 Judah has been faithless, and a detestable thing has been done in Israel and in Jerusalem. Judah has profaned the sanctuary of Yahweh which he loves, and has married the daughter of a foreign god.

12 May Yahweh cut off from the tents of Jacob the man who does this, *the* one who is awake and *who* answers, and *the one who* brings an offering to Yahweh of hosts!

13 And this you do as well: *you* cover the altar of Yahweh *with* tears, *with* weeping and *with* groaning, because he no longer regards the offering or accepts *it with* favor from your hand.

14 But you ask, “For what reason?” Because Yahweh stands as a witness between you and the wife of your youth, against whom you have been unfaithful, even though she *is* your marriage partner and your wife by covenant.

15 Did not one God make them? But a remnant of *the* spirit is his. And what does the one *God* desire? An offspring of God. You must be attentive to your spirit, and you must not be unfaithful to the wife of your youth.

16 “For I hate divorce,” says Yahweh, the God of Israel, “and he *who* covers his clothing *with* violence,” says Yahweh of hosts. “You must be attentive to your spirit and you must not be unfaithful.”

Israel Questions God’s Charge of Wearisome Words

17 You have wearied Yahweh with your words, but you ask, “With what have we wearied *him*?” *You have done so* when you say, “Everyone who does evil *is* good in the sight of Yahweh, and in them he delights,” or “Where *is* the God of justice?”

3:1 “Look! I *am* going to send my messenger, and he will prepare *the* way before me. And the Lord whom you *are* seeking will come suddenly to his temple, and the messenger of the covenant, *in* whom you *are* taking pleasure—look!—*he is* about to come,” says Yahweh of hosts. [Matt 11:10; Mark 1:2; Luke 7:27]

2 And who *can* endure the day of his coming? And who *is* the one who can stand when he appears? For he *is* like a refiner’s fire, like launderers’ alkali.

3 He will sit *as* a refiner and purifier of silver; he will purify the children of Levi, and he will refine them like gold and like silver, and they will present to Yahweh offerings in righteousness.

4 And the offering of Judah and Jerusalem will be pleasing to Yahweh, like *in the* days of old and like *in* former years.

5 “Then I will approach you for judgment, and I will be a swift witness against the sorcerers and against the adulterers, and against those who swear falsely, and against the oppressors of *the* hired worker *with his* wages, *the* widow and *the* orphan, and the abusers of *the* alien, and *yet* do not fear me,” says Yahweh of hosts.

6 “For I, Yahweh, have not changed, and you, O children of Jacob, have not perished.

Israel Questions God’s Charge of Disobedience

7 From the days of your ancestors you have turned aside from my rules, and have not kept *them*! Return to me and I will return to you,” says Yahweh of hosts, “but you say, ‘How shall we return?’

8 Will a human *dare to* rob God? Yet you *are* robbing me! And you say, ‘How have we robbed you?’ In the tithes and the contributions!

9 You *are* being cursed with *a* curse, for you *are* robbing me, the whole nation *of you*!

10 Bring the whole tithe to the storehouse, so that there will be food in my house, and test me please in this,” says Yahweh of hosts, “if I will not open for you the windows of heaven, and pour forth for you an overflowing blessing.

11 I will rebuke the devourer for you; it will not destroy the fruit of your soil; your vine in the field will not be unfruitful,” says Yahweh of hosts.

12 “And all the nations will call you blessed, because you will be a land in which one takes joy,” says Yahweh of hosts.

Israel Questions God’s Charge of Hard Words

13 “Your words have been harsh against me,” says Yahweh. “But you say, ‘How have we spoken together against you?’

14 You have said, ‘*It is* useless to serve God! What *is the* gain if we keep his requirements, and if we walk as mourners before Yahweh of hosts?’

15 And now we *are* calling *the* arrogant blessed! Not only do those who do wickedness prosper; they also test God and they escape!”

16 Then those who revered Yahweh spoke with one another. And Yahweh listened attentively and heard, and a scroll of remembrance was written before him of those who revere Yahweh and ponder his name.

17 “They will be mine,” says Yahweh of hosts, “on the day that I *am* acting, *my* treasured possession. I will have compassion on them as a man has compassion on his son who serves him.

18 You will return and see *the difference* between *the* righteous and *the* wicked, between *the one who* serves God and the one who does not serve him.

Remember the Coming “Day of the Lord”

4:1 “For look! The day *is* about to come, burning like an oven, and all the arrogant and every evildoer will be stubble. The coming day will consume them,” says Yahweh of hosts. “It will not leave behind for them root or branch.

2 But for you who revere my name, the sun of righteousness will rise, with healing in its wings, and you will go out and leap like fattened calves.

3 You will trample down the wicked, for they will be ashes under the soles of your feet on the day that I *am* going to act,” says Yahweh of hosts.

4 “Remember the instruction of my servant Moses, which I commanded him at Horeb to all Israel, the rules and regulations.

5 Look! I *am* going to send to you Elijah the prophet before the coming of the great and awesome day of Yahweh! [[Matt 17:10](#); [Mark 9:11](#)]

6 And he will bring back *the* hearts of *the* fathers to *the* sons, and the hearts of *the* sons to their fathers, so that I will not come and strike the land *with* a ban.”

Nehemiah Returns to Jerusalem (c. 429/428 BC)

Nehemiah 13:1–31

Ammonites and Moabites Expelled from the Temple (occurred during Nehemiah's absence)

1 On that day the book of Moses was read in the hearing of the people and it was found written in it that no Ammonite or Moabite should ever come into the assembly of God

2 because they did not come to meet the Israelites with bread and water, but hired Balaam against them in order to curse them—but our God changed the curse into a blessing.

3 So it happened when they heard the law that they separated all of the foreign people from Israel.

Tobiah's Presence in the Temple Chambers (occurred during Nehemiah's absence)

4 Before this, Eliashib the priest who was appointed over the chambers of the house of our God—the one related to Tobiah—

5 prepared for *Tobiah* a large chamber where they had formerly put the grain offering, the frankincense, the *temple* objects, tithes of grain, wine, and oil commanded for the Levites, the singers, the gatekeepers, and the offerings of the priests.

Nehemiah Cleanses the Temple of Tobiah's Influence

6 During all of this, I was not in Jerusalem because in the thirty-second year of Artaxerxes king of Babylon I went to the king. At the end of *some* days I asked permission from the king *to leave*.

7 So I came to Jerusalem. And I came to learn of the wrong that Eliashib had done for Tobiah by making him a room in the courtyard of the house of God.

8 It was very displeasing for me, and I threw all of the objects from the house of Tobiah outside of the chamber.

9 And I spoke *in order*, and they cleansed the chambers. Then I returned the objects of the house of God—the grain offering and the frankincense.

Nehemiah Restores the Tithes to the Levites

10 And then I came to learn that the food of the Levites had not been given to them, so that the Levites and the singers, the doers of the work, had gone back each to his field.

11 So I quarreled with the prefects, and I said, “Why is the house of God forsaken?” And I gathered them and set them at their station.

12 So all of Judah brought the tithe of grain, new wine, and olive oil into the storehouses.

13 I appointed as treasurer over the storehouses Shelemiah the priest, Zadok the scribe, Pedaiah from the Levites, and as their hand Hanan son of Zaccur, son of Mattaniah, for they were considered faithful. *The responsibility given* to them was to distribute to their brothers.

14 Remember me, my God, concerning this, and do not wipe out my loyal acts which I have done in the house of my God and in his service.

Nehemiah Enforces Observance of the Sabbath

15 In those days I saw in Judah *people* treading the wine press on the Sabbath, bringing in heaps *of grain* and loading them on donkeys along with wine, grapes and figs, and every kind of burden and bringing *it all* to Jerusalem on the day of the Sabbath. And I warned them at that time against selling food.

16 Tyrian men who lived in *Jerusalem* brought fish and every kind of merchandise and sold *it* on the Sabbath to the descendants of Judah and in Jerusalem.

17 So I quarreled with the nobles of Judah and said to them, “What is this evil thing that you are doing, profaning the day of the Sabbath?”

18 Did not your ancestors do this also, and our God brought on us all of this disaster and on this city *too*? Now you are adding fierce wrath on Israel by profaning the Sabbath!”

19 So when it became dark at the gates of Jerusalem before the Sabbath, I commanded that the doors be shut and said that they should not be opened until after the Sabbath. And I appointed some of my young men over the gates *to prevent* any goods being brought in on the day of the Sabbath.

20 So the merchants and the sellers of merchandise spent the night outside of Jerusalem once or twice.

21 But I warned them and said to them, “Why are you spending the night opposite the wall? If you do *it again*, I will lay hands against you.” From that time on they did not come on the Sabbath.

22 And then I told two Levites that they must purify themselves and come to guard the gates in order to consecrate the day of the

Sabbath. Remember this also, my God, and take pity on me according to the greatness of your loyal love.

Nehemiah Punishes Those Who Had Married Foreign Women

23 Also in those days I saw Jews who had married women of Ashdod, Ammon, and Moab.

24 Half of their children spoke Ashdodite and could not speak Judean, but *only* the tongues of other nations.

25 So I quarreled with them and cursed them and beat some of their men and pulled out their hair. I made them take an oath by God: “Do not give your daughters to their sons or take their daughters for your sons or for yourselves.

26 Did not King Solomon of Israel sin in this way? And among the many nations there was no king like him, and he was beloved by his God, and God made him king over all Israel. Yet the foreign women made even him sin.

27 Should we listen to you all and do this great evil, acting unfaithfully against our God by marrying foreign women?”

28 One from the sons of Jehoiada, son of the high priest Eliashib, *who* was the son-in-law of Sanballat the Horonote *was there*. I chased him away from me.

29 Remember them, my God, because of their defilements of the priesthood and the covenant of the priesthood and the Levites.

30 So I cleansed them from everything foreign, and I established responsibilities for the priests and Levites, each in his own work,

31 a contribution of the wood offering at appointed times, and for the first fruits. Remember me, my God, for good.

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Chronological Notes

1) Malachi.¹

- A) Malachi’s prophecy is difficult to date because there are no references to any dateable persons or events. Thus we must draw our conclusions from clues in the text and other external witnesses. Malachi’s place at the end of the twelve Minor Prophets in the Hebrew Bible and modern translations argues for a late date. The Talmud grouped Malachi with Haggai and Zechariah as postexilic prophets.²
- B) Malachi’s reference to “your governor” (1:8) indicates that he wrote after 538 BC when Cyrus the Persian allowed the Jews to return to their land, which was under Persian control. The word translated “governor” is *pehah*, a Persian title (cf. Ezra 5:3, 6, 14; 6:6–7, 13; Dan 3:2–3, 27; 6:7). Zerubbabel bore this title (Hag 1:1, 14; 2:2, 21), as did Nehemiah (Neh 5:14; 12:26). Malachi must have written after the temple had been rebuilt since he referred to worship there (1:6–14; 2:7–9, 13; 3:7–10). This would imply a date after 515 BC when work on the temple was complete.
- C) Since Malachi addressed many of the same matters that Nehemiah tried to reform, it is tempting to date Malachi during Nehemiah’s governorship. Both Malachi and Nehemiah dealt with priestly laxity (Mal 1:6; Neh 13:4–9), neglect of tithes (Mal 3:7–12; Neh 13:10–13), and intermarriage between Israelites and foreigners (Mal 2:10–16; Neh 13:23–28). In the twelfth year of his governorship, Nehemiah returned to Persia for an unknown period of time (Neh 5:14; 13:6). When he returned, he dealt decisively with many of the issues raised by Malachi. Thus I have chosen to place Malachi during the time period when Nehemiah was back in Persia.³

¹ Thomas L. Constable, “Notes on Malachi,” Online: <http://www.soniclight.com/constable/notes/pdf/malachi.pdf>.

² *Yoma* 9b; *Sukkah* 44a; *Rosh Hashannah* 19b; *Megillah* 3a, 15a, et al.

³ E.g., Robert L. Alden, “Malachi,” in *Daniel-Minor Prophets*, vol. 7 of *The Expositor’s Bible Commentary*, pp. 701–2. Other commentators have suggested a wide range of dates. For example, Craig Blasing suggested a date between 450 and 430 BC. Eugene Merrill preferred a date between 480 and 470 BC. Douglas Stuart believed Malachi wrote about 460 BC. R. K. Harrison and John Bright estimated a date close to 450 BC. Gleason Archer Jr. and Ray Clendenen concluded that Malachi wrote about 435 BC. Hobart Freeman was more specific: shortly after 433 BC. Leon Wood was quite general: during the last half of the fifth century BC, though contemporaneously with Nehemiah.

The Gospel of Jesus Christ—Luke’s Preface (c. 5/4 BC)

Luke 1:1–4

- 1 Since many have attempted to compile an account concerning the events that have been fulfilled among us,
- 2 just as those who were eyewitnesses and servants of the word from the beginning passed on to us,
- 3 it seemed best to me also—*because I have followed all things carefully from the beginning—to write them down in orderly sequence for you, most excellent Theophilus,*
- 4 so that you may know the certainty concerning the things about which you were taught.

“In the beginning”—John’s Preface (c. 5/4 BC)

John 1:1–18

- 1 In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God.
- 2 This one was in the beginning with God.
- 3 All *things* came into being through him, and apart from him not one *thing* came into being that has come into being.
- 4 In him was life, and the life was the light of humanity.
- 5 And the light shines in the darkness, and the darkness did not overcome it.
- 6 A man came, sent from God, whose name was John.
- 7 This one came for a witness, in order that he could testify about the light, so that all would believe through him.
- 8 That one was not the light, but *came* in order that he could testify about the light.
- 9 The true light, who gives light to every person, was coming into the world.
- 10 He was in the world, and the world came into being through him, and the world did not recognize him.
- 11 He came to his own *things*, and his own *people* did not receive him.
- 12 But as many as received him—to those who believe in his name—he gave to them authority to become children of God,
- 13 who were born not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of a husband, but of God.
- 14 And the Word became flesh and took up residence among us, and we saw his glory, glory as of the one and only from the Father, full of grace and truth.
- 15 John testified about him and cried out, saying, “This one was *he about* whom I said, ‘The one who comes after me is ahead of me, because he existed before me.’”
- 16 For from his fullness we have all received, and grace after grace.
- 17 For the law was given through Moses; grace and truth came about through Jesus Christ.
- 18 No one has seen God at any time; the one and only, God, the one who is in the bosom of the Father—that one has made *him* known.

John’s Birth Foretold to Zacharias (c. 5/4 BC)

Luke 1:5–23

- 5 It happened that in the days of Herod, king of Judea, *there was* a certain priest, Zechariah by name, of the division of Abijah. And he had a wife from the daughters of Aaron, and her name was Elizabeth. [cf. [1 Chr 24:1–19](#)]
- 6 And they were both righteous in the sight of God, living blamelessly in all the commandments and regulations of the Lord.
- 7 And they did not have a child, because Elizabeth was barren. And they were both advanced in years.
- 8 And it happened that *while* he was serving as priest before God in the order of his division,
- 9 according to the custom of the priesthood he was chosen by lot to enter into the temple of the Lord to burn incense.
- 10 And the whole crowd of the people were praying outside at the hour of the incense offering.
- 11 And an angel of the Lord appeared to him, standing at the right side of the altar of incense.
- 12 And Zechariah was terrified *when he saw the angel*, and fear fell upon him.
- 13 But the angel said to him,
 - “Do not be afraid, Zechariah,
 - because your prayer has been heard,
 - and your wife Elizabeth will bear you a son,
 - and you will call his name John.
- 14 And you will experience joy and exultation,
- and many will rejoice at his birth.
- 15 For he will be great in the sight of the Lord,
- and he must never drink wine or beer,
- and he will be filled with the Holy Spirit
- while he is still in his mother’s womb.*

- 16 And he will turn many of the sons of Israel to the Lord their God.
- 17 And he will go on before him in the spirit and power of Elijah, to turn the hearts of the fathers to the children, and the disobedient to the wisdom of the righteous, to prepare for the Lord a people made ready." [[Mal 4:5–6](#)]

18 And Zechariah said to the angel, "By what will I know this? For I am an old man, and my wife is advanced in years!"

19 And the angel answered *and* said to him, "I am Gabriel, who stands in the presence of God, and I was sent to speak to you and to announce to you this good news.

20 And behold, you will be silent and not able to speak until the day these *things* take place, because you did not believe my words, which will be fulfilled in their time."

21 And the people were waiting for Zechariah, and began to wonder *when* he was delayed in the temple.

22 And *when* he came out he was not able to speak to them, and they realized that he had seen a vision in the temple. And he kept making signs to them, and remained unable to speak.

23 And it happened that when the days of his service came to an end, he went away to his home.

John's Conception (4 BC)

Luke 1:24–25

- 24 Now after these days, his wife Elizabeth conceived, and she kept herself in seclusion *for* five months, saying,
25 "Thus the Lord has done for me in the days in which he has concerned himself with *me*, to take away my disgrace among people."

Jesus' Birth Foretold to Mary—The Annunciation (early 3 BC)

Luke 1:26–38

- 26 Now in the sixth month, the angel Gabriel was sent from God to a town of Galilee named Nazareth,
27 to a virgin legally promised in marriage to a man named Joseph of the house of David. And the name of the virgin *was* Mary.
28 And he came to her *and* said, "Greetings, favored one! The Lord *is* with you."
29 But she was greatly perplexed at the statement, and was pondering what sort of greeting this might be.
30 And the angel said to her,

"Do not be afraid, Mary, for you have found favor with God.

- 31 And behold, you will conceive in the womb and will give birth to a son, and you will call his name Jesus.
32 This one will be great, and he will be called the Son of the Most High, and the Lord God will give him the throne of his father David.
33 And he will reign over the house of Jacob forever, and of his kingdom there will be no end. [cf. [1 Chr 17:7–14](#)]

34 And Mary said to the angel, "How will this be, since I have not had sexual relations with a man?"

35 And the angel answered *and* said to her,

"The Holy Spirit will come upon you, and the power of the Most High will overshadow you. Therefore also the one to be born will be called holy, the Son of God.

36 And behold, your relative Elizabeth—she also has conceived a son in her old age, and this is the sixth month for her who was called barren.

37 For nothing will be impossible with God." [cf. [Gen 18:14](#)]

38 So Mary said, "Behold, the Lord's female slave! May it happen to me according to your word." And the angel departed from her.

Jesus' Conception (early 3 BC)

John 1:14a

- 14a And the Word became flesh...

Mary Visits Her Relative Elizabeth (early to mid 3 BC)

Luke 1:39–45

39 Now in those days Mary set out *and* traveled with haste into the hill country, to a town of Judah,
40 and entered into the house of Zechariah, and greeted Elizabeth.

41 And it happened that when Elizabeth heard the greeting of Mary, the baby in her womb leaped and Elizabeth was filled with the Holy Spirit.

42 And she cried out with a loud shout and said,

“Blessed *are* you among women,
and blessed *is* the fruit of your womb!

43 And why *is* this *granted* to me, that the mother of my Lord should come to me?

44 For behold, when the sound of your greeting came to my ears, the baby in my womb leaped for joy!

45 And blessed *is* she who believed that *there* will be a fulfillment to what was spoken to her from the Lord!”

Mary’s Song of Praise—The *Magnificat* (early to mid 3 BC)

Luke 1:46–56

46 And Mary said,

“My soul exalts the Lord,

47 and my spirit has rejoiced greatly in God my Savior,

48 because he has looked upon the humble state of his female slave,
for behold, from now on all generations will consider me blessed,

49 because the Mighty *One* has done great *things* for me,
and holy *is* his name.

50 And his mercy *is* for generation after generation
to those who fear him.

51 He has done a mighty deed with his arm;
he has dispersed the proud in the thoughts of their hearts.

52 He has brought down rulers from *their* thrones,
and has exalted the lowly.

53 He has filled those who are hungry with good *things*,
and those who are rich he has sent away empty-handed.

54 He has helped Israel his servant,
remembering *his* mercy,

55 just as he spoke to our fathers,
to Abraham and to his descendants forever.” [cf. [Ps 98:3](#)]

56 And Mary stayed with her about three months, and returned to her home.

The Birth of John (mid 3 BC)

Luke 1:57–66

57 Now the time came for Elizabeth that she should give birth, and she gave birth to a son.

58 And her neighbors and relatives heard that the Lord had shown his great mercy to her, and they rejoiced with her.

59 And it happened that on the eighth day they came to circumcise the child, and they were wanting to name him after his father Zechariah.

60 And his mother answered *and* said, “No, but he will be named John.”

61 And they said to her, “There is no one of your relatives who is called by this name.”

62 So they made signs to his father *asking* what he wanted him to be named,

63 and he asked for a writing tablet *and* wrote, saying, “John is his name.” And they were all astonished.

64 And his mouth and his tongue were opened immediately, and he began to speak, praising God.

65 And fear came on all those who lived near them, and in all the hill country of Judea all these events were discussed.

66 And all those who heard kept *these things* in their hearts, saying, “What then will this child be? For indeed the hand of the Lord was with him!”

Zacharias' Song of Praise—The *Benedictus* (mid 3 BC)

Luke 1:67–79

67 And his father Zechariah was filled with the Holy Spirit and prophesied, saying,

68 “Blessed be the Lord, the God of Israel,
because he has visited to help and has redeemed his people,
69 and has raised up a horn of salvation for us
in the house of his servant David,
70 just as he spoke through the mouth of his holy prophets from earliest times—
71 salvation from our enemies and from the hand of all those who hate us,
72 to show mercy to our fathers
and to remember his holy covenant,
73 the oath that he swore to Abraham our father,
to grant us 74 *that* we, being rescued from the hand of *our* enemies,
could serve him without fear 75 in holiness and righteousness
before him all our days.
76 And so you, child, will be called the prophet of the Most High,
for you will go on before the Lord to prepare his ways,
77 to give knowledge of salvation to his people
by the forgiveness of their sins,
78 because of the merciful compassion of our God
by which the dawn will visit to help us from on high,
79 to give light to those who sit in darkness and in the shadow of death,
to direct our feet into the way of peace.”

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Chronological Notes

1) Date of Jesus' Birth.

- A) The current majority position on the date of the birth of Jesus is that it occurred sometime during 6–4 BC, with preference given to mid-winter of 5/4 BC.¹ This is due to the fact that most historians believe Herod the Great died in 4 BC—thus 4 BC becomes the *terminus ante quem*² of Jesus' birth (cf. Matt 2:1–3).
- B) A minority position which has been gaining ground recently³ dates Jesus' birth to sometime during 3–2 BC, with preference given to mid-winter of 3/2 BC.⁴ This position was first proposed by Filmer in 1966 (see fn. 4 below). Steinmann summarizes

¹ Timothy D. **Barnes**, “The Date of Herod's Death,” *JTS* 19 (1968), 204–219; Renald E. **Showers**, “New Testament Chronology and the Decree of Daniel 9,” *Grace Journal* 11:1 (Winter 1970): 31–38; Harold W. **Hoehner**, *Chronological Aspects of the Life of Christ*, (Zondervan, 1978); Robert L. **Thomas** & Stanley N. **Gundry**, *A Harmony of the Gospels: New American Standard Edition*, (Moody Press 1978); P. M. **Bernegger**, “Affirmation of Herod's Death in 4 B.C.,” *JTS* 34.2 (1983): 526–531; Wayne **Brindle**, “The Census and Quirinius: Luke 2:2,” *JETS* 27:1 (Mar 1984): 44–52; Colin J. **Humphreys**, “The Star of Bethlehem, A Comet in 5 BC and the Date of Christ's Birth,” *Tyndale Bulletin* 43:1 (1992): 32–56; Paul L. **Maier**, “The Date of the Nativity and the Chronology of Jesus' Life,” *Chronos, Kairos and Christos*, edited by E. Jerry Vardaman (MUP, 1998): 113–130; Darrell L. **Bock**, *Studying the Historical Jesus: A Guide to Sources and Methods*, (Baker Academic, 2002): 65–78; Walter A. **Elwell** & Robert W. **Yarbrough**, *Encountering the New Testament: A Historical and Theological Survey*, (Baker Academic, 2005): 119; D. A. **Carson** & Douglas J. **Moo**, *An Introduction to the New Testament*, Second Ed., (Zondervan, 2005): 124–127; Andreas J. **Kostenberger**, L. Scott Kellum, Charles L. Quarles, *The Cradle, the Cross, and the Crown*, (B&H Academic, 2009): 136–143; David **Wenham** & Steve **Walton**, *Exploring the New Testament, Volume 1: A Guide to the Gospels and Acts*, (IVP Academic, 2011).

² A *terminus post quem* is the earliest time an event may have happened, and a *terminus ante quem* is the latest.

³ The proponents of this view were able to convince none other than Jack Finegan, who adopted this position in the revised edition of his *Handbook*: Jack Finegan, *Handbook of Biblical Chronology*, Rev. Ed., (Hendrickson Publishers, 1998): 301.

⁴ W. E. **Filmer**, “The Chronology of the Reign of Herod the Great,” *JTS* 17 (1966); Ormond **Edwards**, “Herodian Chronology,” *Palestine Exploration Quarterly* 1982: 29–42; Paul **Keresztes**, *Imperial Rome and the Christians, Volume I: From Herod the Great to about 200*

the current discussion well in the abstract of his 2009 *Novum Testamentum* article titled “When Did Herod the Great Reign?”: “For about 100 years there has been a consensus among scholars that Herod the Great reigned from 37 to 4 BCE. However, there have been several challenges to this consensus over the past four decades, the most notable being the objection raised by W. E. Filmer. This paper argues that Herod most likely reigned from late 39 BCE to early 1 BCE, and that this reconstruction of his reign can account for all of the surviving historical references to the events of Herod’s reign more logically than the current consensus can. Moreover, the reconstruction of Herod’s reign proposed in this paper accounts for all of the datable evidence relating to Herod’s reign, whereas the current consensus is unable to explain some of the evidence that it dismisses as ancient errors or that it simply ignores.”

- C) Personally speaking, I grew up believing the majority position of 5 BC, and so I have been reluctant to change my view. However, the research I’ve conducted for this project has caused me to reevaluate several of my positions on various NT chronological issues. Thus I will be using 3/2 BC for the date of Jesus’ birth.

A.D., (UPA, 1989); David W. **Beyer**, “Josephus Reexamined: Unraveling the Twenty-Second Year of Tiberius,” *Chronos, Kairos and Christos II*, edited by E. Jerry Vardaman (MUP, 1998): 85–96; Ernest L. **Martin**, “The Nativity and Herod’s Death,” *Chronos, Kairos and Christos*, edited by E. Jerry Vardaman (MUP, 1998): 85–92; Jack **Finegan**, *Handbook of Biblical Chronology*, Rev. Ed., (Hendrickson Publishers, 1998) 279–325; Gerard **Gertoux**, “Herod’s Death on January 26, 1 BCE Owing to Synchronized Chronology,” *l’Histoire* (2000), Online: <http://www.chronosynchro.net/>; Paul R. **Finch**, *Beyond Acts: New Perspectives in New Testament History*, Sunrise Pub., (2004); Andrew E. **Steinmann**, “When Did Herod the Great Reign?” *Novum Testamentum* 51 (2009): 1–29; *From Abraham to Paul* (Concordia Publishing House, 2011): 219–251.