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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
September 4	<input type="checkbox"/> Bible Reading	<input type="checkbox"/> Prayer
September 5	<input type="checkbox"/> Bible Reading	<input type="checkbox"/> Prayer
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September 29	<input type="checkbox"/> Bible Reading	<input type="checkbox"/> Prayer
September 30	<input type="checkbox"/> Bible Reading	<input type="checkbox"/> Prayer



**A Lament for Jerusalem – Part 3 (c. September 587 BC)**

## Lamentations 4–5

**The Prophet Speaks:***Aleph*

4:1 How dark the gold has become,  
*How* the pure gold has changed!  
The sacred stones are poured out  
At the corner of every street.

*Beth*

2 The precious sons of Zion,  
Weighed against fine gold,  
How they are regarded as earthen jars,  
The work of a potter's hands!

*Gimel*

3 Even jackals offer the breast,  
They nurse their young;  
*But* the daughter of my people has become cruel  
Like ostriches in the wilderness.

*Daleth*

4 The tongue of the infant cleaves  
To the roof of its mouth because of thirst;  
The little ones ask for bread,  
*But* no one breaks *it* for them.

*He*

5 Those who ate delicacies  
Are desolate in the streets;  
Those reared in purple  
Embrace ash pits.

*Waw*

6 For the iniquity of the daughter of my people  
Is greater than the sin of Sodom,  
Which was overthrown as in a moment,  
And no hands were turned toward her.

*Zayin*

7 Her consecrated ones were purer than snow,  
They were whiter than milk;  
They were more ruddy *in* body than corals,  
Their polishing *was like* lapis lazuli.

*Heth*

8 Their appearance is blacker than soot,  
They are not recognized in the streets;  
Their skin is shriveled on their bones,  
It is withered, it has become like wood.

*Teth*

9 Better are those slain with the sword  
Than those slain with hunger;  
For they pine away, being stricken  
For lack of the fruits of the field.

*Yod*

- 10 The hands of compassionate women  
Boiled their own children;  
They became food for them  
Because of the destruction of the daughter of my people.

*Kaph*

- 11 The LORD has accomplished His wrath,  
He has poured out His fierce anger;  
And He has kindled a fire in Zion  
Which has consumed its foundations.

*Lamed*

- 12 The kings of the earth did not believe,  
Nor *did* any of the inhabitants of the world,  
That the adversary and the enemy  
Could enter the gates of Jerusalem.

*Mem*

- 13 Because of the sins of her prophets  
*And* the iniquities of her priests,  
Who have shed in her midst  
The blood of the righteous;

*Nun*

- 14 They wandered, blind, in the streets;  
They were defiled with blood  
So that no one could touch their garments.

*Samech*

- 15 “Depart! Unclean!” they cried of themselves.  
“Depart, depart, do not touch!”  
So they fled and wandered;  
*Men* among the nations said,  
“They shall not continue to dwell *with us.*”

*Pe*

- 16 The presence of the LORD has scattered them,  
He will not continue to regard them;  
They did not honor the priests,  
They did not favor the elders.

**The People of Jerusalem Lament:***Ayin*

- 17 Yet our eyes failed,  
*Looking* for help was useless;  
In our watching we have watched  
For a nation that could not save.

*Tsade*

- 18 They hunted our steps  
So that we could not walk in our streets;  
Our end drew near,  
Our days were finished  
For our end had come.

*Qoph*

19 Our pursuers were swifter  
 Than the eagles of the sky;  
 They chased us on the mountains,  
 They waited in ambush for us in the wilderness.

*Resh*

20 The breath of our nostrils, the LORD's anointed,  
 Was captured in their pits,  
 Of whom we had said, "Under his shadow  
 We shall live among the nations."

**The Prophet Speaks:***Shin*

21 Rejoice and be glad, O daughter of Edom,  
 Who dwells in the land of Uz;  
*But* the cup will come around to you as well,  
 You will become drunk and make yourself naked.

*Taw*

22 *The punishment* of your iniquity has been completed, O daughter of Zion;  
 He will exile you no longer.  
*But* He will punish your iniquity, O daughter of Edom;  
 He will expose your sins!

**The People of Jerusalem Pray:**

5:1 Remember, O LORD, what has befallen us;  
 Look, and see our reproach!  
 2 Our inheritance has been turned over to strangers,  
 Our houses to aliens.  
 3 We have become orphans without a father,  
 Our mothers are like widows.  
 4 We have to pay for our drinking water,  
 Our wood comes *to us* at a price.  
 5 Our pursuers are at our necks;  
 We are worn out, there is no rest for us.  
 6 We have submitted to Egypt *and* Assyria to get enough bread.  
 7 Our fathers sinned, *and* are no more;  
 It is we who have borne their iniquities.  
 8 Slaves rule over us;  
 There is no one to deliver us from their hand.  
 9 We get our bread at the risk of our lives  
 Because of the sword in the wilderness.  
 10 Our skin has become as hot as an oven,  
 Because of the burning heat of famine.  
 11 They ravished the women in Zion,  
 The virgins in the cities of Judah.  
 12 Princes were hung by their hands;  
 Elders were not respected.  
 13 Young men worked at the grinding mill,  
 And youths stumbled under *loads* of wood.  
 14 Elders are gone from the gate,  
 Young men from their music.  
 15 The joy of our hearts has ceased;  
 Our dancing has been turned into mourning.  
 16 The crown has fallen from our head;  
 Woe to us, for we have sinned!  
 17 Because of this our heart is faint,



- Because of these things our eyes are dim;  
18 Because of Mount Zion which lies desolate,  
Foxes prowl in it.  
19 You, O LORD, rule forever;  
Your throne is from generation to generation.  
20 Why do You forget us forever?  
Why do You forsake us so long?  
21 Restore us to You, O LORD, that we may be restored;  
Renew our days as of old,  
22 Unless You have utterly rejected us  
And are exceedingly angry with us.

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## 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 Now in the eleventh year, on the first of the month, the word of the LORD came to me saying,

2 "Son of man, because Tyre has said concerning Jerusalem, 'Aha, the gateway of the peoples is broken; it has opened to me. I shall be filled, *now that* she is laid waste,'

3 therefore thus says the Lord GOD, 'Behold, I am against you, O Tyre, and I will bring up many nations against you, as the sea brings up its waves.

4 They will destroy the walls of Tyre and break down her towers; and I will scrape her debris from her and make her a bare rock.

5 She will be a place for the spreading of nets in the midst of the sea, for I have spoken,' declares the Lord GOD, 'and she will become spoil for the nations.

6 Also her daughters who are on the mainland will be slain by the sword, and they will know that I am the LORD.'"

### The Agent of God's Judgment

7 For thus says the Lord GOD, "Behold, I will bring upon Tyre from the north Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon, king of kings, with horses, chariots, cavalry and a great army.

8 He will slay your daughters on the mainland with the sword; and he will make siege walls against you, cast up a ramp against you and raise up a large shield against you.

9 The blow of his battering rams he will direct against your walls, and with his axes he will break down your towers.

10 Because of the multitude of his horses, the dust *raised by* them will cover you; your walls will shake at the noise of cavalry and wagons and chariots when he enters your gates as men enter a city that is breached.

11 With the hoofs of his horses he will trample all your streets. He will slay your people with the sword; and your strong pillars will come down to the ground.

12 Also they will make a spoil of your riches and a prey of your merchandise, break down your walls and destroy your pleasant houses, and throw your stones and your timbers and your debris into the water.

13 So I will silence the sound of your songs, and the sound of your harps will be heard no more.

14 I will make you a bare rock; you will be a place for the spreading of nets. You will be built no more, for I the LORD have spoken," declares the Lord GOD.

### The International Impact of Tyre's Demise

15 Thus says the Lord GOD to Tyre, "Shall not the coastlands shake at the sound of your fall when the wounded groan, when the slaughter occurs in your midst?

16 Then all the princes of the sea will go down from their thrones, remove their robes and strip off their embroidered garments. They will clothe themselves with trembling; they will sit on the ground, tremble every moment and be appalled at you.

17 They will take up a lamentation over you and say to you,

'How you have perished, O inhabited one,  
From the seas, O renowned city,  
Which was mighty on the sea,  
She and her inhabitants,  
Who imposed her terror  
On all her inhabitants!

18 'Now the coastlands will tremble  
On the day of your fall;  
Yes, the coastlands which are by the sea  
Will be terrified at your passing.'"

### The Role of Yahweh in Tyre's Demise

19 For thus says the Lord GOD, "When I make you a desolate city, like the cities which are not inhabited, when I bring up the deep over you and the great waters cover you,

20 then I will bring you down with those who go down to the pit, to the people of old, and I will make you dwell in the lower parts of the earth, like the ancient waste places, with those who go down to the pit, so that you will not be inhabited; but I will set glory in the land of the living.

21 I will bring terrors on you and you will be no more; though you will be sought, you will never be found again," declares the Lord GOD.

### Lament over the Shipwreck of Tyre

27:1 Moreover, the word of the LORD came to me saying,

- 2 “And you, son of man, take up a lamentation over Tyre;  
 3 and say to Tyre, who dwells at the entrance to the sea, merchant of the peoples to many coastlands, ‘Thus says the Lord GOD,  
 “O Tyre, you have said, ‘I am perfect in beauty.’  
 4 “Your borders are in the heart of the seas;  
 Your builders have perfected your beauty.  
 5 “They have made all *your* planks of fir trees from Senir;  
 They have taken a cedar from Lebanon to make a mast for you.  
 6 “Of oaks from Bashan they have made your oars;  
 With ivory they have inlaid your deck of boxwood from the coastlands of Cyprus.  
 7 “Your sail was of fine embroidered linen from Egypt  
 So that it became your distinguishing mark;  
 Your awning was blue and purple from the coastlands of Elishah.  
 8 “The inhabitants of Sidon and Arvad were your rowers;  
 Your wise men, O Tyre, were aboard; they were your pilots.  
 9 “The elders of Gebal and her wise men were with you repairing your seams;  
 All the ships of the sea and their sailors were with you in order to deal in your merchandise.  
 10 “Persia and Lud and Put were in your army, your men of war. They hung shield and helmet in you; they set forth your splendor.  
 11 The sons of Arvad and your army were on your walls, *all* around, and the Gammadim were in your towers. They hung their shields  
 on your walls *all* around; they perfected your beauty.  
 12 “Tarshish was your customer because of the abundance of all *kinds* of wealth; with silver, iron, tin and lead they paid for your  
 wares.  
 13 Javan, Tubal and Meshech, they were your traders; with the lives of men and vessels of bronze they paid for your merchandise.  
 14 Those from Beth-togarmah gave horses and war horses and mules for your wares.  
 15 The sons of Dedan were your traders. Many coastlands were your market; ivory tusks and ebony they brought as your payment.  
 16 Aram was your customer because of the abundance of your goods; they paid for your wares with emeralds, purple, embroidered  
 work, fine linen, coral and rubies.  
 17 Judah and the land of Israel, they were your traders; with the wheat of Minnith, cakes, honey, oil and balm they paid for your  
 merchandise.  
 18 Damascus was your customer because of the abundance of your goods, because of the abundance of all *kinds* of wealth, because  
 of the wine of Helbon and white wool.  
 19 Vedan and Javan paid for your wares from Uzal; wrought iron, cassia and sweet cane were among your merchandise.  
 20 Dedan traded with you in saddlecloths for riding.  
 21 Arabia and all the princes of Kedar, they were your customers for lambs, rams and goats; for these they were your customers.  
 22 The traders of Sheba and Raamah, they traded with you; they paid for your wares with the best of all *kinds* of spices, and with all  
*kinds* of precious stones and gold.  
 23 Haran, Canneh, Eden, the traders of Sheba, Asshur *and* Chilmad traded with you.  
 24 They traded with you in choice garments, in clothes of blue and embroidered work, and in carpets of many colors *and* tightly  
 wound cords, *which were* among your merchandise.  
 25 The ships of Tarshish were the carriers for your merchandise.  
 And you were filled and were very glorious  
 In the heart of the seas.  
 26 “Your rowers have brought you  
 Into great waters;  
 The east wind has broken you  
 In the heart of the seas.  
 27 “Your wealth, your wares, your merchandise,  
 Your sailors and your pilots,  
 Your repairers of seams, your dealers in merchandise  
 And all your men of war who are in you,  
 With all your company that is in your midst,  
 Will fall into the heart of the seas  
 On the day of your overthrow.  
 28 “At the sound of the cry of your pilots  
 The pasture lands will shake.  
 29 “All who handle the oar,

- The sailors *and* all the pilots of the sea  
 Will come down from their ships;  
 They will stand on the land,  
 30 And they will make their voice heard over you  
 And will cry bitterly.  
 They will cast dust on their heads,  
 They will wallow in ashes.  
 31 “Also they will make themselves bald for you  
 And gird themselves with sackcloth;  
 And they will weep for you in bitterness of soul  
 With bitter mourning.  
 32 “Moreover, in their wailing they will take up a lamentation for you  
 And lament over you:  
 ‘Who is like Tyre,  
 Like her who is silent in the midst of the sea?  
 33 ‘When your wares went out from the seas,  
 You satisfied many peoples;  
 With the abundance of your wealth and your merchandise  
 You enriched the kings of earth.  
 34 ‘Now that you are broken by the seas  
 In the depths of the waters,  
 Your merchandise and all your company  
 Have fallen in the midst of you.  
 35 ‘All the inhabitants of the coastlands  
 Are appalled at you,  
 And their kings are horribly afraid;  
 They are troubled in countenance.  
 36 ‘The merchants among the peoples hiss at you;  
 You have become terrified  
 And you will cease to be forever.’”

### **Doom for the Prince of Tyre**

28:1 The word of the LORD came again to me, saying,  
 2 “Son of man, say to the leader of Tyre, ‘Thus says the Lord GOD,

- “Because your heart is lifted up  
 And you have said, ‘I am a god,  
 I sit in the seat of gods  
 In the heart of the seas’;  
 Yet you are a man and not God,  
 Although you make your heart like the heart of God—  
 3 Behold, you are wiser than Daniel;  
 There is no secret that is a match for you.  
 4 “By your wisdom and understanding  
 You have acquired riches for yourself  
 And have acquired gold and silver for your treasures.  
 5 “By your great wisdom, by your trade  
 You have increased your riches  
 And your heart is lifted up because of your riches—

6 Therefore thus says the Lord GOD,

- ‘Because you have made your heart  
 Like the heart of God,  
 7 Therefore, behold, I will bring strangers upon you,  
 The most ruthless of the nations.  
 And they will draw their swords  
 Against the beauty of your wisdom

And defile your splendor.

- 8 'They will bring you down to the pit,  
And you will die the death of those who are slain  
In the heart of the seas.
- 9 'Will you still say, "I am a god,"  
In the presence of your slayer,  
Though you are a man and not God,  
In the hands of those who wound you?
- 10 'You will die the death of the uncircumcised  
By the hand of strangers,  
For I have spoken!' declares the Lord God!""

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

- 11 Again the word of the LORD came to me saying,  
12 "Son of man, take up a lamentation over the king of Tyre and say to him, 'Thus says the Lord God,
- "You had the seal of perfection,  
Full of wisdom and perfect in beauty.
- 13 "You were in Eden, the garden of God;  
Every precious stone was your covering:  
The ruby, the topaz and the diamond;  
The beryl, the onyx and the jasper;  
The lapis lazuli, the turquoise and the emerald;  
And the gold, the workmanship of your settings and sockets,  
Was in you.  
On the day that you were created  
They were prepared.
- 14 "You were the anointed cherub who covers,  
And I placed you *there*.  
You were on the holy mountain of God;  
You walked in the midst of the stones of fire.
- 15 "You were blameless in your ways  
From the day you were created  
Until unrighteousness was found in you.
- 16 "By the abundance of your trade  
You were internally filled with violence,  
And you sinned;  
Therefore I have cast you as profane  
From the mountain of God.  
And I have destroyed you, O covering cherub,  
From the midst of the stones of fire.
- 17 "Your heart was lifted up because of your beauty;  
You corrupted your wisdom by reason of your splendor.  
I cast you to the ground;  
I put you before kings,  
That they may see you.
- 18 "By the multitude of your iniquities,  
In the unrighteousness of your trade  
You profaned your sanctuaries.  
Therefore I have brought fire from the midst of you;  
It has consumed you,  
And I have turned you to ashes on the earth  
In the eyes of all who see you.
- 19 "All who know you among the peoples  
Are appalled at you;  
You have become terrified  
And you will cease to be forever.""

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

Ezekiel 28:20–26

20 And the word of the LORD came to me saying,

21 “Son of man, set your face toward Sidon, prophesy against her

22 and say, ‘Thus says the Lord God,

“Behold, I am against you, O Sidon,

And I will be glorified in your midst.

Then they will know that I am the LORD when I execute judgments in her,

And I will manifest My holiness in her.

23 “For I will send pestilence to her

And blood to her streets,

And the wounded will fall in her midst

By the sword upon her on every side;

Then they will know that I am the LORD.

24 And there will be no more for the house of Israel a prickling brier or a painful thorn from any round about them who scorned them; then they will know that I am the Lord GOD.”

25 ‘Thus says the Lord GOD, “When I gather the house of Israel from the peoples among whom they are scattered, and will manifest My holiness in them in the sight of the nations, then they will live in their land which I gave to My servant Jacob.

26 They will live in it securely; and they will build houses, plant vineyards and live securely when I execute judgments upon all who scorn them round about them. Then they will know that I am the LORD 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 the captains of the forces, they and *their* men, heard that the king of Babylon had appointed Gedaliah *governor*,

they came to Gedaliah to Mizpah, namely, Ishmael the son of Nethaniah, and Johanan the son of Kareah, and Seraiah the son of Tanhumeth the Netophathite, and Jaazaniah the son of the Maacathite, they and their men.

24 Gedaliah swore to them and their men and said to them, “Do not be afraid of the servants of the Chaldeans; live in the land and serve the king of Babylon, and it will be well with you.”

Jeremiah 40:7–12

7 Now all the commanders of the forces that were in the field, they and their men, heard that the king of Babylon had appointed Gedaliah the son of Ahikam over the land and that he had put him in charge of the men, women and children, those of the poorest of the land who had not been exiled to Babylon.

8 So they came to Gedaliah at Mizpah, along with Ishmael the son of Nethaniah, and Johanan and Jonathan the sons of Kareah, and Seraiah the son of Tanhumeth, and the sons of Ephai the Netophathite, and Jezaniah the son of the Maacathite, *both* they and their men.

9 Then Gedaliah the son of Ahikam, the son of Shaphan, swore to them and to their men, saying, “Do not be afraid of serving the Chaldeans; stay in the land and serve the king of Babylon, that it may go well with you.

10 Now as for me, behold, I am going to stay at Mizpah to stand *for you* before the Chaldeans who come to us; but as for you, gather in wine and summer fruit and oil and put *them* in your *storage* vessels, and live in your cities that you have taken over.”

11 Likewise, also all the Jews who were in Moab and among the sons of Ammon and in Edom and who were in all the *other* countries, heard that the king of Babylon had left a remnant for Judah, and that he had appointed over them Gedaliah the son of Ahikam, the son of Shaphan.

12 Then all the Jews returned from all the places to which they had been driven away and came to the land of Judah, to Gedaliah at Mizpah, and gathered in wine and summer fruit in great abundance.

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

2 Kings 25:25

25 But it came about in the seventh month, that Ishmael the son of Nethaniah, the son of Elishama, of the royal family,

came with ten men

and struck Gedaliah down so that he died

Jeremiah 40:13–41:3

40:13 Now Johanan the son of Kareah and all the commanders of the forces that were in the field came to Gedaliah at Mizpah

14 and said to him, “Are you well aware that Baalis the king of the sons of Ammon has sent Ishmael the son of Nethaniah to take your life?” But Gedaliah the son of Ahikam did not believe them.

15 Then Johanan the son of Kareah spoke secretly to Gedaliah in Mizpah, saying, “Let me go and kill Ishmael the son of Nethaniah, and not a man will know! Why should he take your life, so that all the Jews who are gathered to you would be scattered and the remnant of Judah would perish?”

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

41:1 In the seventh month Ishmael the son of Nethaniah, the son of Elishama, of the royal family and *one* of the chief officers of the king, along with ten men, came to Mizpah to Gedaliah the son of Ahikam. While they were eating bread together there in Mizpah,

2 Ishmael the son of Nethaniah and the ten men who were with him arose and struck down Gedaliah the son of Ahikam, the son of Shaphan, with the sword and put to death the one whom the

<p>along with the Jews and the Chaldeans who were with him at Mizpah.</p>	<p>king of Babylon had appointed over the land. 3 Ishmael also struck down all the Jews who were with him, <i>that is</i> with Gedaliah at Mizpah, and the Chaldeans who were found there, the men of war.</p>
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### The Ammonite Scheme: Johanan Defeats Ishmael (October 587 BC)

Jeremiah 41:4–15

4 Now it happened on the next day after the killing of Gedaliah, when no one knew about *it*,  
5 that eighty men came from Shechem, from Shiloh, and from Samaria with their beards shaved off and their clothes torn and their bodies gashed, having grain offerings and incense in their hands to bring to the house of the LORD.  
6 Then Ishmael the son of Nethaniah went out from Mizpah to meet them, weeping as he went; and as he met them, he said to them, “Come to Gedaliah the son of Ahikam!”  
7 Yet it turned out that as soon as they came inside the city, Ishmael the son of Nethaniah and the men that were with him slaughtered them *and cast them* into the cistern.  
8 But ten men who were found among them said to Ishmael, “Do not put us to death; for we have stores of wheat, barley, oil and honey hidden in the field.” So he refrained and did not put them to death along with their companions.  
9 Now as for the cistern where Ishmael had cast all the corpses of the men whom he had struck down because of Gedaliah, it was the one that King Asa had made on account of Baasha, king of Israel; Ishmael the son of Nethaniah filled it with the slain.  
10 Then Ishmael took captive all the remnant of the people who were in Mizpah, the king’s daughters and all the people who were left in Mizpah, whom Nebuzaradan the captain of the bodyguard had put under the charge of Gedaliah the son of Ahikam; thus Ishmael the son of Nethaniah took them captive and proceeded to cross over to the sons of Ammon.  
11 But Johanan the son of Kareah and all the commanders of the forces that were with him heard of all the evil that Ishmael the son of Nethaniah had done.  
12 So they took all the men and went to fight with Ishmael the son of Nethaniah and they found him by the great pool that is in Gibeon.  
13 Now as soon as all the people who were with Ishmael saw Johanan the son of Kareah and the commanders of the forces that were with him, they were glad.  
14 So all the people whom Ishmael had taken captive from Mizpah turned around and came back, and went to Johanan the son of Kareah.  
15 But Ishmael the son of Nethaniah escaped from Johanan with eight men and went to the sons of Ammon.

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

2 Kings 25:26

Jeremiah 41:16–18

26 Then all the people,  
both small and great, and the captains of the forces  
arose and went  
to Egypt;  
for they were afraid of the Chaldeans.

16 Then Johanan the son of Kareah and all the commanders of  
the forces that were with him took from Mizpah all the remnant  
of the people whom he had recovered from Ishmael the son of  
Nethaniah, after he had struck down Gedaliah the son of  
Ahikam, *that is*, the men who were soldiers, *the women, the*  
children, and *the eunuchs*, whom he had brought back from  
Gibeon.  
17 And they  
  
went and stayed in Geruth Chimham,  
which is beside Bethlehem, in order to proceed into Egypt  
18 because of the Chaldeans; for they were afraid of them,  
since Ishmael the son of Nethaniah had struck down Gedaliah  
the son of Ahikam, whom the king of Babylon had appointed  
over the land.

### 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 forces, Johanan the son of Kareah, Jezaniah the son of Hoshai, and all the people both small and great approached



2 and said to Jeremiah the prophet, "Please let our petition come before you, and pray for us to the LORD your God, *that is* for all this remnant; because we are left *but* a few out of many, as your own eyes *now* see us,

3 that the LORD your God may tell us the way in which we should walk and the thing that we should do."

4 Then Jeremiah the prophet said to them, "I have heard *you*. Behold, I am going to pray to the LORD your God in accordance with your words; and I will tell you the whole message which the LORD will answer you. I will not keep back a word from you."

### **The People Promise to Obey God**

5 Then they said to Jeremiah, "May the LORD be a true and faithful witness against us if we do not act in accordance with the whole message with which the LORD your God will send you to us.

6 "Whether *it* is pleasant or unpleasant, we will listen to the voice of the LORD our God to whom we are sending you, so that it may go well with us when we listen to the voice of the LORD our God."

### **Jeremiah Tells the People What God Said**

7 Now at the end of ten days the word of the LORD came to Jeremiah.

8 Then he called for Johanan the son of Kareah and all the commanders of the forces that were with him, and for all the people both small and great,

9 and said to them, "Thus says the LORD the God of Israel, to whom you sent me to present your petition before Him:

10 'If you will indeed stay in this land, then I will build you up and not tear you down, and I will plant you and not uproot you; for I will relent concerning the calamity that I have inflicted on you.

11 'Do not be afraid of the king of Babylon, whom you are *now* fearing; do not be afraid of him,' declares the LORD, 'for I am with you to save you and deliver you from his hand.

12 'I will also show you compassion, so that he will have compassion on you and restore you to your own soil.

13 'But if you are going to say, "We will not stay in this land," so as not to listen to the voice of the LORD your God,

14 saying, "No, but we will go to the land of Egypt, where we will not see war or hear the sound of a trumpet or hunger for bread, and we will stay there";

15 then in that case listen to the word of the LORD, O remnant of Judah. Thus says the LORD of hosts, the God of Israel, "If you really set your mind to enter Egypt and go in to reside there,

16 then the sword, which you are afraid of, will overtake you there in the land of Egypt; and the famine, about which you are anxious, will follow closely after you there *in* Egypt, and you will die there.

17 "So all the men who set their mind to go to Egypt to reside there will die by the sword, by famine and by pestilence; and they will have no survivors or refugees from the calamity that I am going to bring on them."'"

18 For thus says the LORD of hosts, the God of Israel, "As My anger and wrath have been poured out on the inhabitants of Jerusalem, so My wrath will be poured out on you when you enter Egypt. And you will become a curse, an object of horror, an imprecation and a reproach; and you will see this place no more."

19 The LORD has spoken to you, O remnant of Judah, "Do not go into Egypt!" You should clearly understand that today I have testified against you.

20 For you have *only* deceived yourselves; for it is you who sent me to the LORD your God, saying, "Pray for us to the LORD our God; and whatever the LORD our God says, tell us so, and we will do it."

21 So I have told you today, but you have not obeyed the LORD your God, even in whatever He has sent me to *tell* you.

22 Therefore you should now clearly understand that you will die by the sword, by famine and by pestilence, in the place where you wish to go to reside.

### **The People Refuse to Believe Jeremiah**

43:1 But as soon as Jeremiah, whom the LORD their God had sent, had finished telling all the people all the words of the LORD their God—that is, all these words—

2 Azariah the son of Hoshaiiah, and Johanan the son of Kareah, and all the arrogant men said to Jeremiah, "You are telling a lie! The LORD our God has not sent you to say, 'You are not to enter Egypt to reside there';

3 but Baruch the son of Neriah is inciting you against us to give us over into the hand of the Chaldeans, so they will put us to death or exile 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 forces, and all the people, did not obey the voice of the LORD to stay in the land of Judah.

5 But Johanan the son of Kareah and all the commanders of the forces took the entire remnant of Judah who had returned from all the nations to which they had been driven away, in order to reside in the land of Judah—

6 the men, the women, the children, the king's daughters and every person that Nebuzaradan the captain of the bodyguard had left with Gedaliah the son of Ahikam and grandson of Shaphan, together with Jeremiah the prophet and Baruch the son of Neriah—

7 and they entered the land of Egypt (for they did not obey the voice of the LORD) and went in as far as 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 Then the word of the LORD came to Jeremiah in Tahpanhes, saying,

9 "Take *some* large stones in your hands and hide them in the mortar in the brick *terrace* which is at the entrance of Pharaoh's palace in Tahpanhes, in the sight of some *of the Jews*;

10 and say to them, 'Thus says the LORD of hosts, the God of Israel, "Behold, I am going to send and get Nebuchadnezzar the king of Babylon, My servant, and I am going to set his throne *right* over these stones that I have hidden; and he will spread his canopy over them.

11 He will also come and strike the land of Egypt; those who are *meant* for death *will be given over* to death, and those for captivity to captivity, and those for the sword to the sword.

12 And I shall set fire to the temples of the gods of Egypt, and he will burn them and take them captive. So he will wrap himself with the land of Egypt as a shepherd wraps himself with his garment, and he will depart from there safely.

13 He will also shatter the obelisks of Heliopolis, which is in the land of Egypt; and the temples of the gods of Egypt he will burn with fire.'""

### Jeremiah Condemns the Jews' Idolatry in Egypt

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

2 "Thus says the LORD of hosts, the God of Israel, 'You yourselves have seen all the calamity that I have brought on Jerusalem and all the cities of Judah; and behold, this day they are in ruins and no one lives in them,

3 because of their wickedness which they committed so as to provoke Me to anger by continuing to burn sacrifices *and* to serve other gods whom they had not known, *neither* they, you, nor your fathers.

4 Yet I sent you all My servants the prophets, again and again, saying, "Oh, do not do this abominable thing which I hate."

5 But they did not listen or incline their ears to turn from their wickedness, so as not to burn sacrifices to other gods.

6 Therefore My wrath and My anger were poured out and burned in the cities of Judah and in the streets of Jerusalem, so they have become a ruin and a desolation as it is this day.

7 Now then thus says the LORD God of hosts, the God of Israel, "Why are you doing great harm to yourselves, so as to cut off from you man and woman, child and infant, from among Judah, leaving yourselves without remnant,

8 provoking Me to anger with the works of your hands, burning sacrifices to other gods in the land of Egypt, where you are entering to reside, so that you might be cut off and become a curse and a reproach among all the nations of the earth?

9 Have you forgotten the wickedness of your fathers, the wickedness of the kings of Judah, and the wickedness of their wives, your own wickedness, and the wickedness of your wives, which they committed in the land of Judah and in the streets of Jerusalem?

10 But they have not become contrite even to this day, nor have they feared nor walked in My law or My statutes, which I have set before you and before your fathers.'"

11 "Therefore thus says the LORD of hosts, the God of Israel, 'Behold, I am going to set My face against you for woe, even to cut off all Judah.

12 And I will take away the remnant of Judah who have set their mind on entering the land of Egypt to reside there, and they will all meet their end in the land of Egypt; they will fall by the sword *and* meet their end by famine. Both small and great will die by the sword and famine; and they will become a curse, an object of horror, an imprecation and a reproach.

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

14 So there will be no refugees or survivors for the remnant of Judah who have entered the land of Egypt to reside there and then to return to the land of Judah, to which they are longing to return and live; for none will return except *a few* refugees.'"

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

15 Then all the men who were aware that their wives were burning sacrifices to other gods, along with all the women who were standing by, *as* a large assembly, including all the people who were living in Pathros in the land of Egypt, responded to Jeremiah, saying,

16 "As for the message that you have spoken to us in the name of the LORD, we are not going to listen to you!

17 But rather we will certainly carry out every word that has proceeded from our mouths, by burning sacrifices to the queen of heaven and pouring out drink offerings to her, just as we ourselves, our forefathers, our kings and our princes did in the cities of Judah and in the streets of Jerusalem; for *then* we had plenty of food and were well off and saw no misfortune.

18 But since we stopped burning sacrifices to the queen of heaven and pouring out drink offerings to her, we have lacked everything and have met our end by the sword and by famine."

19 "And," *said the women*, "when we were burning sacrifices to the queen of heaven and were pouring out drink offerings to her, was it without our husbands that we made for her *sacrificial* cakes in her image and poured out drink offerings to her?"

**Jeremiah Condemns the People's Decision**

20 Then Jeremiah said to all the people, to the men and women—even to all the people who were giving him *such* an answer—saying,

21 “As for the smoking sacrifices that you burned in the cities of Judah and in the streets of Jerusalem, you and your forefathers, your kings and your princes, and the people of the land, did not the LORD remember them and did not *all this* come into His mind?

22 So the LORD was no longer able to endure *it*, because of the evil of your deeds, because of the abominations which you have committed; thus your land has become a ruin, an object of horror and a curse, without an inhabitant, as *it is* this day.

23 Because you have burned sacrifices and have sinned against the LORD and not obeyed the voice of the LORD or walked in His law, His statutes or His testimonies, therefore this calamity has befallen you, as *it has* this day.”

24 Then Jeremiah said to all the people, including all the women, “Hear the word of the LORD, all Judah who are in the land of Egypt,

25 thus says the LORD of hosts, the God of Israel, as follows: ‘As for you and your wives, you have spoken with your mouths and fulfilled *it* with your hands, saying, “We will certainly perform our vows that we have vowed, to burn sacrifices to the queen of heaven and pour out drink offerings to her.” Go ahead and confirm your vows, and certainly perform your vows!’

26 Nevertheless hear the word of the LORD, all Judah who are living in the land of Egypt, ‘Behold, I have sworn by My great name,’ says the LORD, ‘never shall My name be invoked again by the mouth of any man of Judah in all the land of Egypt, saying, “As the Lord GOD lives.”’

27 Behold, I am watching over them for harm and not for good, and all the men of Judah who are in the land of Egypt will meet their end by the sword and by famine until they are completely gone.

28 Those who escape the sword will return out of the land of Egypt to the land of Judah few in number. Then all the remnant of Judah who have gone to the land of Egypt to reside there will know whose word will stand, Mine or theirs.

**A Sign of Coming Punishment**

29 This will be the sign to you,’ declares the LORD, ‘that I am going to punish you in this place, so that you may know that My words will surely stand against you for harm.’

30 Thus says the LORD, ‘Behold, I am going to give over Pharaoh Hophra king of Egypt to the hand of his enemies, to the hand of those who seek his life, just as I gave over Zedekiah king of Judah to the hand of Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon, *who was* his enemy and was seeking 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 Now in the twelfth year of our exile, on the fifth of the tenth month, the refugees from Jerusalem came to me, saying, "The city has been taken."

22 Now the hand of the LORD had been upon me in the evening, before the refugees came. And He opened my mouth at the time they came to me in the morning; so my mouth was opened and I was no longer speechless.

### Those Left in Judah Were Making Claims on the Land

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

24 "Son of man, they who live in these waste places in the land of Israel are saying, 'Abraham was *only* one, yet he possessed the land; so to us who are many the land has been given as a possession.'

### Yahweh Declares Their Claims to be Morally and Religiously Bankrupt

25 Therefore say to them, 'Thus says the Lord GOD, "You eat *meat* with the blood *in it*, lift up your eyes to your idols as you shed blood. Should you then possess the land?

26 You rely on your sword, you commit abominations and each of you defiles his neighbor's wife. Should you then possess the land?"'

27 Thus you shall say to them, 'Thus says the Lord GOD, "As I live, surely those who are in the waste places will fall by the sword, and whoever is in the open field I will give to the beasts to be devoured, and those who are in the strongholds and in the caves will die of pestilence.

28 I will make the land a desolation and a waste, and the pride of her power will cease; and the mountains of Israel will be desolate so that no one will pass through.

29 Then they will know that I am the LORD, when I make the land a desolation and a waste because of all their abominations which they have committed."'

### God's Message to Ezekiel about the Exiles

30 "But as for you, son of man, your fellow citizens who talk about you by the walls and in the doorways of the houses, speak to one another, each to his brother, saying, 'Come now and hear what the message is which comes forth from the LORD.'

31 They come to you as people come, and sit before you *as* My people and hear your words, but they do not do them, for they do the lustful desires *expressed* by their mouth, *and* their heart goes after their gain.

32 Behold, you are to them like a sensual song by one who has a beautiful voice and plays well on an instrument; for they hear your words but they do not practice them.

33 So when it comes to pass—as surely it will—then they will know that a prophet has been in their midst."

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

Ezekiel 34

### Condemnation of the Shepherds

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

2 "Son of man, prophesy against the shepherds of Israel. Prophesy and say to those shepherds, 'Thus says the Lord GOD, "Woe, shepherds of Israel who have been feeding themselves! Should not the shepherds feed the flock?

3 You eat the fat and clothe yourselves with the wool, you slaughter the fat *sheep* without feeding the flock.

4 Those who are sickly you have not strengthened, the diseased you have not healed, the broken you have not bound up, the scattered you have not brought back, nor have you sought for the lost; but with force and with severity you have dominated them.

5 They were scattered for lack of a shepherd, and they became food for every beast of the field and were scattered.

6 My flock wandered through all the mountains and on every high hill; My flock was scattered over all the surface of the earth, and there was no one to search or seek *for them*."'

7 Therefore, you shepherds, hear the word of the LORD:

8 "As I live," declares the Lord GOD, "surely because My flock has become a prey, My flock has even become food for all the beasts of the field for lack of a shepherd, and My shepherds did not search for My flock, but *rather* the shepherds fed themselves and did not feed My flock;

9 therefore, you shepherds, hear the word of the LORD:

10 'Thus says the Lord GOD, "Behold, I am against the shepherds, and I will demand My sheep from them and make them cease from feeding sheep. So the shepherds will not feed themselves anymore, but I will deliver My flock from their mouth, so that they will not be food for them."'

**The Good Shepherd**

11 For thus says the Lord GOD, "Behold, I Myself will search for My sheep and seek them out.

12 As a shepherd cares for his herd in the day when he is among his scattered sheep, so I will care for My sheep and will deliver them from all the places to which they were scattered on a cloudy and gloomy day.

13 I will bring them out from the peoples and gather them from the countries and bring them to their own land; and I will feed them on the mountains of Israel, by the streams, and in all the inhabited places of the land.

14 I will feed them in a good pasture, and their grazing ground will be on the mountain heights of Israel. There they will lie down on good grazing ground and feed in rich pasture on the mountains of Israel.

15 I will feed My flock and I will lead them to rest," declares the Lord GOD.

16 "I will seek the lost, bring back the scattered, bind up the broken and strengthen the sick; but the fat and the strong I will destroy. I will feed them with judgment.

**Judgment Among the Flock**

17 "As for you, My flock, thus says the Lord GOD, 'Behold, I will judge between one sheep and another, between the rams and the male goats.

18 Is it too slight a thing for you that you should feed in the good pasture, that you must tread down with your feet the rest of your pastures? Or that you should drink of the clear waters, that you must foul the rest with your feet?

19 As for My flock, they must eat what you tread down with your feet and drink what you foul with your feet!"

20 Therefore, thus says the Lord GOD to them, "Behold, I, even I, will judge between the fat sheep and the lean sheep.

21 Because you push with side and with shoulder, and thrust at all the weak with your horns until you have scattered them abroad,

22 therefore, I will deliver My flock, and they will no longer be a prey; and I will judge between one sheep and another.

**The Messianic Shepherd**

23 "Then I will set over them one shepherd, My servant David, and he will feed them; he will feed them himself and be their shepherd. [cf. [John 10:11-16](#)]

24 And I, the LORD, will be their God, and My servant David will be prince among them; I the LORD have spoken.

**The Covenant of Peace**

25 "I will make a covenant of peace with them and eliminate harmful beasts from the land so that they may live securely in the wilderness and sleep in the woods.

26 I will make them and the places around My hill a blessing. And I will cause showers to come down in their season; they will be showers of blessing.

27 Also the tree of the field will yield its fruit and the earth will yield its increase, and they will be secure on their land. Then they will know that I am the LORD, when I have broken the bars of their yoke and have delivered them from the hand of those who enslaved them.

28 They will no longer be a prey to the nations, and the beasts of the earth will not devour them; but they will live securely, and no one will make *them* afraid.

29 I will establish for them a renowned planting place, and they will not again be victims of famine in the land, and they will not endure the insults of the nations anymore.

30 Then they will know that I, the LORD their God, am with them, and that they, the house of Israel, are My people," declares the Lord GOD.

31 "As for you, My sheep, the sheep of My pasture, you are men, and I am your God," declares the Lord GOD.

**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 Moreover, the word of the LORD came to me saying,

2 "Son of man, set your face against Mount Seir, and prophesy against it

3 and say to it, 'Thus says the Lord GOD,

"Behold, I am against you, Mount Seir,  
And I will stretch out My hand against you  
And make you a desolation and a waste.

4 "I will lay waste your cities  
And you will become a desolation.  
Then you will know that I am the LORD.

5 Because you have had everlasting enmity and have delivered the sons of Israel to the power of the sword at the time of their calamity, at the time of the punishment of the end,  
 6 therefore as I live," declares the Lord GOD, "I will give you over to bloodshed, and bloodshed will pursue you; since you have not hated bloodshed, therefore bloodshed will pursue you.  
 7 I will make Mount Seir a waste and a desolation and I will cut off from it the one who passes through and returns.  
 8 I will fill its mountains with its slain; on your hills and in your valleys and in all your ravines those slain by the sword will fall.  
 9 I will make you an everlasting desolation and your cities will not be inhabited. Then you will know that I am the LORD.  
 10 "Because you have said, 'These two nations and these two lands will be mine, and we will possess them,' although the LORD was there,  
 11 therefore as I live," declares the Lord GOD, "I will deal *with you* according to your anger and according to your envy which you showed because of your hatred against them; so I will make Myself known among them when I judge you.  
 12 Then you will know that I, the LORD, have heard all your revilings which you have spoken against the mountains of Israel saying, 'They are laid desolate; they are given to us for food.'  
 13 And you have spoken arrogantly against Me and have multiplied your words against Me; I have heard *it*."  
 14 Thus says the Lord GOD, "As all the earth rejoices, I will make you a desolation.  
 15 As you rejoiced over the inheritance of the house of Israel because it was desolate, so I will do to you. You will be a desolation, O Mount Seir, and all Edom, all of it. Then they will know that I am the LORD."

### **The Enemies of the Mountains of Israel**

36:1 "And you, son of man, prophesy to the mountains of Israel and say, 'O mountains of Israel, hear the word of the LORD.  
 2 Thus says the Lord GOD, "Because the enemy has spoken against you, 'Aha!' and, 'The everlasting heights have become our possession,'  
 3 therefore prophesy and say, 'Thus says the Lord GOD, "For good reason they have made you desolate and crushed you from every side, that you would become a possession of the rest of the nations and you have been taken up in the talk and the whispering of the people.'"  
 4 Therefore, O mountains of Israel, hear the word of the Lord GOD. Thus says the Lord GOD to the mountains and to the hills, to the ravines and to the valleys, to the desolate wastes and to the forsaken cities which have become a prey and a derision to the rest of the nations which are round about,  
 5 therefore thus says the Lord GOD, "Surely in the fire of My jealousy I have spoken against the rest of the nations, and against all Edom, who appropriated My land for themselves as a possession with wholehearted joy *and* with scorn of soul, to drive it out for a prey."  
 6 Therefore prophesy concerning the land of Israel and say to the mountains and to the hills, to the ravines and to the valleys, "Thus says the Lord GOD, 'Behold, I have spoken in My jealousy and in My wrath because you have endured the insults of the nations.'  
 7 Therefore thus says the Lord GOD, 'I have sworn that surely the nations which are around you will themselves endure their insults.

### **The Blessing of the Mountains of Israel**

8 But you, O mountains of Israel, you will put forth your branches and bear your fruit for My people Israel; for they will soon come.  
 9 For, behold, I am for you, and I will turn to you, and you will be cultivated and sown.  
 10 I will multiply men on you, all the house of Israel, all of it; and the cities will be inhabited and the waste places will be rebuilt.  
 11 I will multiply on you man and beast; and they will increase and be fruitful; and I will cause you to be inhabited as you were formerly and will treat you better than at the first. Thus you will know that I am the LORD.  
 12 Yes, I will cause men—My people Israel—to walk on you and possess you, so that you will become their inheritance and never again bereave them of children.'  
 13 "Thus says the Lord GOD, 'Because they say to you, "You are a devourer of men and have bereaved your nation of children,"  
 14 therefore you will no longer devour men and no longer bereave your nation of children,' declares the Lord GOD.  
 15 "I will not let you hear insults from the nations anymore, nor will you bear disgrace from the peoples any longer, nor will you cause your nation to stumble any longer," declares the Lord GOD."

## **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 Then the word of the LORD came to me saying,  
 17 "Son of man, when the house of Israel was living in their own land, they defiled it by their ways and their deeds; their way before Me was like the uncleanness of a woman in her impurity.  
 18 Therefore I poured out My wrath on them for the blood which they had shed on the land, because they had defiled it with their idols.  
 19 Also I scattered them among the nations and they were dispersed throughout the lands. According to their ways and their deeds I

judged them.

20 When they came to the nations where they went, they profaned My holy name, because it was said of them, ‘These are the people of the LORD; yet they have come out of His land.’

21 But I had concern for My holy name, which the house of Israel had profaned among the nations where they went.

#### **Yahweh Will Vindicate His Name**

22 “Therefore say to the house of Israel, ‘Thus says the Lord GOD, “It is not for your sake, O house of Israel, that I am about to act, but for My holy name, which you have profaned among the nations where you went.

23 I will vindicate the holiness of My great name which has been profaned among the nations, which you have profaned in their midst. Then the nations will know that I am the LORD,” declares the Lord GOD, “when I prove Myself holy among you in their sight.

24 For I will take you from the nations, gather you from all the lands and bring you into your own land.

25 Then I will sprinkle clean water on you, and you will be clean; I will cleanse you from all your filthiness and from all your idols.

26 Moreover, I will give you a new heart and put a new spirit within you; and I will remove the heart of stone from your flesh and give you a heart of flesh. [cf. [Jer 31:31-34](#); [Ps 51:7-10](#); [John 3:3-10](#)]

27 I will put My Spirit within you [cf. [Joel 2:28-29](#); [Acts 2:1-18](#)] and cause you to walk in My statutes, and you will be careful to observe My ordinances.

28 You will live in the land that I gave to your forefathers; so you will be My people, and I will be your God.

29 Moreover, I will save you from all your uncleanness; and I will call for the grain and multiply it, and I will not bring a famine on you.

30 I will multiply the fruit of the tree and the produce of the field, so that you will not receive again the disgrace of famine among the nations.

31 Then you will remember your evil ways and your deeds that were not good, and you will loathe yourselves in your own sight for your iniquities and your abominations.

32 I am not doing *this* for your sake,” declares the Lord GOD, “let it be known to you. Be ashamed and confounded for your ways, O house of Israel!”

#### **The Nations Will Honor Yahweh after He Restores Israel**

33 ‘Thus says the Lord GOD, “On the day that I cleanse you from all your iniquities, I will cause the cities to be inhabited, and the waste places will be rebuilt.

34 The desolate land will be cultivated instead of being a desolation in the sight of everyone who passes by.

35 They will say, ‘This desolate land has become like the garden of Eden; and the waste, desolate and ruined cities are fortified *and* inhabited.’

36 Then the nations that are left round about you will know that I, the LORD, have rebuilt the ruined places *and* planted that which was desolate; I, the LORD, have spoken and will do it.”

37 ‘Thus says the Lord GOD, “This also I will let the house of Israel ask Me to do for them: I will increase their men like a flock.

38 Like the flock for sacrifices, like the flock at Jerusalem during her appointed feasts, so will the waste cities be filled with flocks of men. Then they will know that I am the LORD.””

### **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 the LORD was upon me, and He brought me out by the Spirit of the LORD and set me down in the middle of the valley; and it was full of bones.

2 He caused me to pass among them round about, and behold, *there were* very many on the surface of the valley; and lo, *they were* very dry.

3 He said to me, “Son of man, can these bones live?” And I answered, “O Lord GOD, You know.”

4 Again He said to me, “Prophecy over these bones and say to them, ‘O dry bones, hear the word of the LORD.’

5 Thus says the Lord GOD to these bones, ‘Behold, I will cause breath to enter you that you may come to life.

6 I will put sinews on you, make flesh grow back on you, cover you with skin and put breath in you that you may come alive; and you will know that I am the LORD.”

7 So I prophesied as I was commanded; and as I prophesied, there was a noise, and behold, a rattling; and the bones came together, bone to its bone.

8 And I looked, and behold, sinews were on them, and flesh grew and skin covered them; but there was no breath in them.

9 Then He said to me, “Prophecy to the breath, prophesy, son of man, and say to the breath, ‘Thus says the Lord GOD, “Come from the four winds, O breath, and breathe on these slain, that they come to life.””

10 So I prophesied as He commanded me, and the breath came into them, and they came to life and stood on their feet, an exceedingly great army.

11 Then He said to me, “Son of man, these bones are the whole house of Israel; behold, they say, ‘Our bones are dried up and our

hope has perished. We are completely cut off.’

12 Therefore prophesy and say to them, ‘Thus says the Lord GOD, “Behold, I will open your graves and cause you to come up out of your graves, My people; and I will bring you into the land of Israel.

13 Then you will know that I am the LORD, when I have opened your graves and caused you to come up out of your graves, My people.

14 I will put My Spirit within you and you will come to life, and I will place you on your own land. Then you will know that I, the LORD, have spoken and done it,” declares the LORD.”

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

Ezekiel 37:15–28

15 The word of the LORD came again to me saying,

16 “And you, son of man, take for yourself one stick and write on it, ‘For Judah and for the sons of Israel, his companions’; then take another stick and write on it, ‘For Joseph, the stick of Ephraim and all the house of Israel, his companions.’

17 Then join them for yourself one to another into one stick, that they may become one in your hand.

18 When the sons of your people speak to you saying, ‘Will you not declare to us what you mean by these?’

19 say to them, ‘Thus says the Lord GOD, “Behold, I will take the stick of Joseph, which is in the hand of Ephraim, and the tribes of Israel, his companions; and I will put them with it, with the stick of Judah, and make them one stick, and they will be one in My hand.”’

20 The sticks on which you write will be in your hand before their eyes.

21 Say to them, ‘Thus says the Lord GOD, “Behold, I will take the sons of Israel from among the nations where they have gone, and I will gather them from every side and bring them into their own land;

22 and I will make them one nation in the land, on the mountains of Israel; and one king will be king for all of them; and they will no longer be two nations and no longer be divided into two kingdoms.

23 They will no longer defile themselves with their idols, or with their detestable things, or with any of their transgressions; but I will deliver them from all their dwelling places in which they have sinned, and will cleanse them. And they will be My people, and I will be their God.

24 “My servant David will be king over them, and they will all have one shepherd; and they will walk in My ordinances and keep My statutes and observe them.

25 They will live on the land that I gave to Jacob My servant, in which your fathers lived; and they will live on it, they, and their sons and their sons’ sons, forever; and David My servant will be their prince forever.

26 I will make a covenant of peace with them; it will be an everlasting covenant with them. And I will place them and multiply them, and will set My sanctuary in their midst forever.

27 My dwelling place also will be with them; and I will be their God, and they will be My people.

28 And the nations will know that I am the LORD who sanctifies Israel, when My sanctuary is in their midst 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 the LORD came to me saying,  
 2 “Son of man, set your face toward Gog of the land of Magog, the prince of Rosh, Meshech and Tubal, and prophesy against him  
 3 and say, ‘Thus says the Lord GOD, “Behold, I am against you, O Gog, prince of Rosh, Meshech and Tubal.  
 4 I will turn you about and put hooks into your jaws, and I will bring you out, and all your army, horses and horsemen, all of them splendidly attired, a great company *with* buckler and shield, all of them wielding swords;  
 5 Persia, Ethiopia and Put with them, all of them *with* shield and helmet;  
 6 Gomer with all its troops; Beth-togarmah *from* the remote parts of the north with all its troops—many peoples with you.  
 7 “Be prepared, and prepare yourself, you and all your companies that are assembled about you, and be a guard for them.  
 8 After many days you will be summoned; in the latter years you will come into the land that is restored from the sword, *whose inhabitants* have been gathered from many nations to the mountains of Israel which had been a continual waste; but its people were brought out from the nations, and they are living securely, all of them.  
 9 You will go up, you will come like a storm; you will be like a cloud covering the land, you and all your troops, and many peoples with you.”  
 10 ‘Thus says the Lord GOD, “It will come about on that day, that thoughts will come into your mind and you will devise an evil plan,  
 11 and you will say, ‘I will go up against the land of unwalled villages. I will go against those who are at rest, that live securely, all of them living without walls and having no bars or gates,  
 12 to capture spoil and to seize plunder, to turn your hand against the waste places which are *now* inhabited, and against the people who are gathered from the nations, who have acquired cattle and goods, who live at the center of the world.’  
 13 Sheba and Dedan and the merchants of Tarshish with all its villages will say to you, ‘Have you come to capture spoil? Have you assembled your company to seize plunder, to carry away silver and gold, to take away cattle and goods, to capture great spoil?’”  
 14 “Therefore prophesy, son of man, and say to Gog, ‘Thus says the Lord GOD, “On that day when My people Israel are living securely, will you not know *it*?  
 15 You will come from your place out of the remote parts of the north, you and many peoples with you, all of them riding on horses, a great assembly and a mighty army;  
 16 and you will come up against My people Israel like a cloud to cover the land. It shall come about in the last days that I will bring you against My land, so that the nations may know Me when I am sanctified through you before their eyes, O Gog.”

#### Yahweh Comes to Israel's Defense

17 ‘Thus says the Lord GOD, “Are you the one of whom I spoke in former days through My servants the prophets of Israel, who prophesied in those days for *many* years that I would bring you against them?  
 18 It will come about on that day, when Gog comes against the land of Israel,” declares the Lord GOD, “that My fury will mount up in My anger.  
 19 In My zeal and in My blazing wrath I declare *that* on that day there will surely be a great earthquake in the land of Israel.  
 20 The fish of the sea, the birds of the heavens, the beasts of the field, all the creeping things that creep on the earth, and all the men who are on the face of the earth will shake at My presence; the mountains also will be thrown down, the steep pathways will collapse and every wall will fall to the ground.  
 21 I will call for a sword against him on all My mountains,” declares the Lord GOD. “Every man's sword will be against his brother.  
 22 With pestilence and with blood I will enter into judgment with him; and I will rain on him and on his troops, and on the many peoples who are with him, a torrential rain, with hailstones, fire and brimstone.  
 23 I will magnify Myself, sanctify Myself, and make Myself known in the sight of many nations; and they will know that I am the LORD.”

## 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 say, ‘Thus says the Lord GOD, “Behold, I am against you, O Gog, prince of Rosh, Meshech and Tubal;  
 2 and I will turn you around, drive you on, take you up from the remotest parts of the north and bring you against the mountains of Israel.  
 3 I will strike your bow from your left hand and dash down your arrows from your right hand.  
 4 You will fall on the mountains of Israel, you and all your troops and the peoples who are with you; I will give you as food to every kind of predatory bird and beast of the field.  
 5 You will fall on the open field; for it is I who have spoken,” declares the Lord GOD.  
 6 “And I will send fire upon Magog and those who inhabit the coastlands in safety; and they will know that I am the LORD.

7 My holy name I will make known in the midst of My people Israel; and I will not let My holy name be profaned anymore. And the nations will know that I am the LORD, the Holy One in Israel.

8 Behold, it is coming and it shall be done," declares the Lord GOD. "That is the day of which I have spoken.

9 Then those who inhabit the cities of Israel will go out and make fires with the weapons and burn *them*, both shields and bucklers, bows and arrows, war clubs and spears, and for seven years they will make fires of them.

10 They will not take wood from the field or gather firewood from the forests, for they will make fires with the weapons; and they will take the spoil of those who despoiled them and seize the plunder of those who plundered them," declares the Lord GOD.

11 "On that day I will give Gog a burial ground there in Israel, the valley of those who pass by east of the sea, and it will block off those who would pass by. So they will bury Gog there with all his horde, and they will call *it* the valley of Hamon-gog.

12 For seven months the house of Israel will be burying them in order to cleanse the land.

13 Even all the people of the land will bury *them*; and it will be to their renown *on* the day that I glorify Myself," declares the Lord GOD.

14 "They will set apart men who will constantly pass through the land, burying those who were passing through, even those left on the surface of the ground, in order to cleanse it. At the end of seven months they will make a search.

15 As those who pass through the land pass through and anyone sees a man's bone, then he will set up a marker by it until the buriers have buried it in the valley of Hamon-gog.

16 And even *the* name of *the* city will be Hamonah. So they will cleanse the land."

### The Great Slaughter

17 "As for you, son of man, thus says the Lord GOD, 'Speak to every kind of bird and to every beast of the field, "Assemble and come, gather from every side to My sacrifice which I am going to sacrifice for you, as a great sacrifice on the mountains of Israel, that you may eat flesh and drink blood.

18 You will eat the flesh of mighty men and drink the blood of the princes of the earth, as *though they were* rams, lambs, goats and bulls, all of them fatlings of Bashan.

19 So you will eat fat until you are glutted, and drink blood until you are drunk, from My sacrifice which I have sacrificed for you.

20 You will be glutted at My table with horses and charioteers, with mighty men and all the men of war," declares the Lord GOD.

21 "And I will set My glory among the nations; and all the nations will see My judgment which I have executed and My hand which I have laid on them.

22 And the house of Israel will know that I am the LORD their God from that day onward.

23 The nations will know that the house of Israel went into exile for their iniquity because they acted treacherously against Me, and I hid My face from them; so I gave them into the hand of their adversaries, and all of them fell by the sword.

24 According to their uncleanness and according to their transgressions I dealt with them, and I hid My face from them."'"

### Israel Restored

25 Therefore thus says the Lord GOD, "Now I will restore the fortunes of Jacob and have mercy on the whole house of Israel; and I will be jealous for My holy name.

26 They will forget their disgrace and all their treachery which they perpetrated against Me, when they live securely on their own land with no one to make *them* afraid.

27 When I bring them back from the peoples and gather them from the lands of their enemies, then I shall be sanctified through them in the sight of the many nations.

28 Then they will know that I am the LORD their God because I made them go into exile among the nations, and then gathered them *again* to their own land; and I will leave none of them there any longer.

29 I will not hide My face from them any longer, for I will have poured out My Spirit on the house of Israel," declares the Lord GOD.

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

Ezekiel 32:1–16

### Judgment on Pharaoh

1 In the twelfth year, in the twelfth *month*, on the first of the month, the word of the LORD came to me saying,

2 "Son of man, take up a lamentation over Pharaoh king of Egypt and say to him,

'You compared yourself to a young lion of the nations,  
Yet you are like the monster in the seas;  
And you burst forth in your rivers  
And muddied the waters with your feet  
And fouled their rivers.'"

3 Thus says the Lord GOD,

“Now I will spread My net over you  
With a company of many peoples,  
And they shall lift you up in My net.

4 “I will leave you on the land;  
I will cast you on the open field.  
And I will cause all the birds of the heavens to dwell on you,  
And I will satisfy the beasts of the whole earth with you.

5 “I will lay your flesh on the mountains  
And fill the valleys with your refuse.

6 “I will also make the land drink the discharge of your blood  
As far as the mountains,  
And the ravines will be full of you.

7 “And when I extinguish you,  
I will cover the heavens and darken their stars;  
I will cover the sun with a cloud  
And the moon will not give its light.

8 “All the shining lights in the heavens  
I will darken over you  
And will set darkness on your land,”  
Declares the Lord GOD.

9 “I will also trouble the hearts of many peoples when I bring your destruction among the nations, into lands which you have not known.

10 I will make many peoples appalled at you, and their kings will be horribly afraid of you when I brandish My sword before them; and they will tremble every moment, every man for his own life, on the day of your fall.”

#### **Babylon’s Role in Egypt’s Fall**

11 For thus says the Lord GOD, “The sword of the king of Babylon will come upon you.

12 By the swords of the mighty ones I will cause your hordes to fall; all of them are tyrants of the nations,

And they will devastate the pride of Egypt,  
And all its hordes will be destroyed.

13 “I will also destroy all its cattle from beside many waters;  
And the foot of man will not muddy them anymore  
And the hoofs of beasts will not muddy them.

14 “Then I will make their waters settle  
And will cause their rivers to run like oil,”  
Declares the Lord GOD.

15 “When I make the land of Egypt a desolation,  
And the land is destitute of that which filled it,  
When I smite all those who live in it,  
Then they shall know that I am the LORD.

16 This is a lamentation and they shall chant it. The daughters of the nations shall chant it. Over Egypt and over all her hordes they shall chant it,” declares the Lord GOD.

### **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 In the twelfth year, on the fifteenth of the month, the word of the LORD came to me saying,

18 “Son of man, wail for the hordes of Egypt and bring it down, her and the daughters of the powerful nations, to the nether world, with those who go down to the pit;

19 ‘Whom do you surpass in beauty?  
Go down and make your bed with the uncircumcised.’

20 They shall fall in the midst of those who are slain by the sword. She is given over to the sword; they have drawn her and all her hordes away.

21 The strong among the mighty ones shall speak of him *and* his helpers from the midst of Sheol, ‘They have gone down, they lie still, the uncircumcised, slain by the sword.’

#### **Assyria in Sheol**

22 “Assyria is there and all her company; her graves are round about her. All of them are slain, fallen by the sword,

23 whose graves are set in the remotest parts of the pit and her company is round about her grave. All of them are slain, fallen by the sword, who spread terror in the land of the living.

#### **Elam in Sheol**

24 “Elam is there and all her hordes around her grave; all of them slain, fallen by the sword, who went down uncircumcised to the lower parts of the earth, who instilled their terror in the land of the living and bore their disgrace with those who went down to the pit.

25 They have made a bed for her among the slain with all her hordes. Her graves are around it, they are all uncircumcised, slain by the sword (although their terror was instilled in the land of the living), and they bore their disgrace with those who go down to the pit; they were put in the midst of the slain.

#### **Meshech, Tubal and Their Followers in Sheol**

26 “Meshech, Tubal and all their hordes are there; their graves surround them. All of them were slain by the sword uncircumcised, though they instilled their terror in the land of the living.

27 Nor do they lie beside the fallen heroes of the uncircumcised, who went down to Sheol with their weapons of war and whose swords were laid under their heads; but the punishment for their iniquity rested on their bones, though the terror of *these* heroes was *once* in the land of the living.

28 But in the midst of the uncircumcised you will be broken and lie with those slain by the sword.

#### **Edom, Prince of the North and Sidon in Sheol**

29 “There also is Edom, its kings and all its princes, who for *all* their might are laid with those slain by the sword; they will lie with the uncircumcised and with those who go down to the pit.

30 There also are the chiefs of the north, all of them, and all the Sidonians, who in spite of the terror resulting from their might, in shame went down with the slain. So they lay down uncircumcised with those slain by the sword and bore their disgrace with those who go down to the pit.

#### **Pharaoh’s Doom**

31 “These Pharaoh will see, and he will be comforted for all his hordes slain by the sword, *even* Pharaoh and all his army,” declares the Lord GOD.

32 “Though I instilled a terror of him in the land of the living, yet he will be made to lie down among *the* uncircumcised *along* with those slain by the sword, *even* Pharaoh and all his hordes,” declares the Lord GOD.

## **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 the LORD came to me, saying,

2 “Son of man, speak to the sons of your people and say to them, ‘If I bring a sword upon a land, and the people of the land take one man from among them and make him their watchman,

3 and he sees the sword coming upon the land and blows on the trumpet and warns the people,

4 then he who hears the sound of the trumpet and does not take warning, and a sword comes and takes him away, his blood will be on his *own* head.

5 He heard the sound of the trumpet but did not take warning; his blood will be on himself. But had he taken warning, he would have delivered his life.

6 But if the watchman sees the sword coming and does not blow the trumpet and the people are not warned, and a sword comes and takes a person from them, he is taken away in his iniquity; but his blood I will require from the watchman’s hand.’

#### **The Function of the Watchman**

7 “Now as for you, son of man, I have appointed you a watchman for the house of Israel; so you will hear a message from My mouth and give them warning from Me.

8 When I say to the wicked, ‘O wicked man, you will surely die,’ and you do not speak to warn the wicked from his way, that wicked

man shall die in his iniquity, but his blood I will require from your hand.

9 But if you on your part warn a wicked man to turn from his way and he does not turn from his way, he will die in his iniquity, but you have delivered your life.

10 “Now as for you, son of man, say to the house of Israel, ‘Thus you have spoken, saying, “Surely our transgressions and our sins are upon us, and we are rotting away in them; how then can we survive?”’

#### **Individual Responsibility**

11 Say to them, ‘As I live!’ declares the Lord God, ‘I take no pleasure in the death of the wicked, but rather that the wicked turn from his way and live. Turn back, turn back from your evil ways! Why then will you die, O house of Israel?’

12 And you, son of man, say to your fellow citizens, ‘The righteousness of a righteous man will not deliver him in the day of his transgression, and as for the wickedness of the wicked, he will not stumble because of it in the day when he turns from his wickedness; whereas a righteous man will not be able to live by his righteousness on the day when he commits sin.’

13 When I say to the righteous he will surely live, and he so trusts in his righteousness that he commits iniquity, none of his righteous deeds will be remembered; but in that same iniquity of his which he has committed he will die.

14 But when I say to the wicked, ‘You will surely die,’ and he turns from his sin and practices justice and righteousness,

15 *if a* wicked man restores a pledge, pays back what he has taken by robbery, walks by the statutes which ensure life without committing iniquity, he shall surely live; he shall not die.

16 None of his sins that he has committed will be remembered against him. He has practiced justice and righteousness; he shall surely live.

17 “Yet your fellow citizens say, ‘The way of the Lord is not right,’ when it is their own way that is not right.

18 When the righteous turns from his righteousness and commits iniquity, then he shall die in it.

19 But when the wicked turns from his wickedness and practices justice and righteousness, he will live by them.

20 Yet you say, ‘The way of the Lord is not right.’ O house of Israel, I will judge each of you according to his ways.”

### **A Fourth Deportation to Babylon (582n BC)**

Jeremiah 52:28a, 30

#### **The Fourth Deportation (retribution for Gedaliah’s murder?)**

28a These are the people whom Nebuchadnezzar carried away into exile:

30a in the twenty-third year of Nebuchadnezzar, Nebuzaradan the captain of the guard carried into exile 745 Jewish people;

#### **Summary and Total**

30b there were 4,600 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 of the month, in the fourteenth year after the city was taken, on that same day the hand of the LORD was upon me and He brought me there.

2 In the visions of God He brought me into the land of Israel and set me on a very high mountain, and on it to the south *there was* a structure like a city.

3 So He brought me there; and behold, there was a man whose appearance was like the appearance of bronze, with a line of flax and a measuring rod in his hand; and he was standing in the gateway.

4 The man said to me, "Son of man, see with your eyes, hear with your ears, and give attention to all that I am going to show you; for you have been brought here in order to show *it* to you. Declare to the house of Israel all that you see."

### The Wall, Gate and Lodges

5 And behold, there was a wall on the outside of the temple all around, and in the man's hand was a measuring rod of six cubits, *each of which was* a cubit and a handbreadth. So he measured the thickness of the wall, one rod; and the height, one rod.

6 Then he went to the gate which faced east, went up its steps and measured the threshold of the gate, one rod in width; and the other threshold *was* one rod in width.

7 The guardroom *was* one rod long and one rod wide; and *there were* five cubits between the guardrooms. And the threshold of the gate by the porch of the gate facing inward *was* one rod.

8 Then he measured the porch of the gate facing inward, one rod.

9 He measured the porch of the gate, eight cubits; and its side pillars, two cubits. And the porch of the gate was faced inward.

10 The guardrooms of the gate toward the east *numbered* three on each side; the three of them had the same measurement. The side pillars also had the same measurement on each side.

11 And he measured the width of the gateway, ten cubits, and the length of the gate, thirteen cubits.

12 *There was* a barrier *wall* one cubit *wide* in front of the guardrooms on each side; and the guardrooms *were* six cubits *square* on each side.

13 He measured the gate from the roof of the one guardroom to the roof of the other, a width of twenty-five cubits from *one* door to *the* door opposite.

14 He made the side pillars sixty cubits *high*; the gate *extended* round about to the side pillar of the courtyard.

15 *From* the front of the entrance gate to the front of the inner porch of the gate *was* fifty cubits.

16 *There were* shuttered windows *looking* toward the guardrooms, and toward their side pillars within the gate all around, and likewise for the porches. And *there were* windows all around inside; and on *each* side pillar *were* palm tree ornaments.

### The Outer and Inner Courts

17 Then he brought me into the outer court, and behold, *there were* chambers and a pavement made for the court all around; thirty chambers faced the pavement.

18 The pavement (*that is*, the lower pavement) *was* by the side of the gates, corresponding to the length of the gates.

19 Then he measured the width from the front of the lower gate to the front of the exterior of the inner court, a hundred cubits on the east and on the north.

20 *As for* the gate of the outer court which faced the north, he measured its length and its width.

21 It had three guardrooms on each side; and its side pillars and its porches had the same measurement as the first gate. Its length *was* fifty cubits and the width twenty-five cubits.

22 Its windows and its porches and its palm tree ornaments *had* the same measurements as the gate which faced toward the east; and it was reached by seven steps, and its porch *was* in front of them.

23 The inner court had a gate opposite the gate on the north as well as *the gate* on the east; and he measured a hundred cubits from gate to gate.

24 Then he led me toward the south, and behold, there was a gate toward the south; and he measured its side pillars and its porches according to those same measurements.

25 The gate and its porches had windows all around like those other windows; the length *was* fifty cubits and the width twenty-five cubits.

26 *There were* seven steps going up to it, and its porches *were* in front of them; and it had palm tree ornaments on its side pillars, one on each side.

27 The inner court had a gate toward the south; and he measured from gate to gate toward the south, a hundred cubits.

28 Then he brought me to the inner court by the south gate; and he measured the south gate according to those same measurements.

29 Its guardrooms also, its side pillars and its porches *were* according to those same measurements. And the gate and its porches had windows all around; it *was* fifty cubits long and twenty-five cubits wide.

30 *There were* porches all around, twenty-five cubits long and five cubits wide.

31 Its porches *were* toward the outer court; and palm tree ornaments *were* on its side pillars, and its stairway *had* eight steps.  
32 He brought me into the inner court toward the east. And he measured the gate according to those same measurements.  
33 Its guardrooms also, its side pillars and its porches *were* according to those same measurements. And the gate and its porches had windows all around; it *was* fifty cubits long and twenty-five cubits wide.  
34 Its porches *were* toward the outer court; and palm tree ornaments *were* on its side pillars, on each side, and its stairway *had* eight steps.  
35 Then he brought me to the north gate; and he measured *it* according to those same measurements,  
36 *with* its guardrooms, its side pillars and its porches. And the gate had windows all around; the length *was* fifty cubits and the width twenty-five cubits.  
37 Its side pillars *were* toward the outer court; and palm tree ornaments *were* on its side pillars on each side, and its stairway had eight steps.

#### **The Chamber for the Priests**

38 A chamber with its doorway *was* by the side pillars at the gates; there they rinse the burnt offering.  
39 In the porch of the gate *were* two tables on each side, on which to slaughter the burnt offering, the sin offering and the guilt offering.  
40 On the outer side, as one went up to the gateway toward the north, *were* two tables; and on the other side of the porch of the gate *were* two tables.  
41 Four tables *were* on each side next to the gate; *or*, eight tables on which they slaughter *sacrifices*.  
42 For the burnt offering *there were* four tables of hewn stone, a cubit and a half long, a cubit and a half wide and one cubit high, on which they lay the instruments with which they slaughter the burnt offering and the sacrifice.  
43 The double hooks, one handbreadth in length, were installed in the house all around; and on the tables *was* the flesh of the offering.  
44 From the outside to the inner gate were chambers for the singers in the inner court, *one of* which was at the side of the north gate, with its front toward the south, and one at the side of the south gate facing toward the north.  
45 He said to me, "This is the chamber which faces toward the south, *intended* for the priests who keep charge of the temple;  
46 but the chamber which faces toward the north is for the priests who keep charge of the altar. These are the sons of Zadok, who from the sons of Levi come near to the LORD to minister to Him."  
47 He measured the court, a *perfect square*, a hundred cubits long and a hundred cubits wide; and the altar was in front of the temple.

#### **The Porch**

48 Then he brought me to the porch of the temple and measured *each* side pillar of the porch, five cubits on each side; and the width of the gate was three cubits on each side.  
49 The length of the porch *was* twenty cubits and the width eleven cubits; and at the stairway by which it was ascended *were* columns belonging to the side pillars, one on each side.

#### **The Posts of the Temple**

41:1 Then he brought me to the nave and measured the side pillars; six cubits wide on each side *was* the width of the side pillar.  
2 The width of the entrance *was* ten cubits and the sides of the entrance *were* five cubits on each side. And he measured the length of the nave, forty cubits, and the width, twenty cubits.  
3 Then he went inside and measured each side pillar of the doorway, two cubits, and the doorway, six cubits *high*; and the width of the doorway, seven cubits.  
4 He measured its length, twenty cubits, and the width, twenty cubits, before the nave; and he said to me, "This is the most holy *place*."

#### **The Wall and Side Chambers**

5 Then he measured the wall of the temple, six cubits; and the width of the side chambers, four cubits, all around about the house on every side.  
6 The side chambers were in three stories, one above another, and thirty in each story; and the side chambers extended to the wall which *stood* on their inward side all around, that they might be fastened, and not be fastened into the wall of the temple *itself*.  
7 The side chambers surrounding the temple were wider at each successive story. Because the structure surrounding the temple went upward by stages on all sides of the temple, therefore the width of the temple *increased* as it went higher; and thus one went up from the lowest *story* to the highest by way of the second *story*.  
8 I saw also that the house had a raised platform all around; the foundations of the side chambers were a full rod of six long cubits *in height*.  
9 The thickness of the outer wall of the side chambers *was* five cubits. But the free space between the side chambers belonging to the temple

10 and the *outer* chambers *was* twenty cubits in width all around the temple on every side.

11 The doorways of the side chambers toward the free space *consisted of* one doorway toward the north and another doorway toward the south; and the width of the free space *was* five cubits all around.

### **The Building Facing the Temple**

12 The building that *was* in front of the separate area at the side toward the west *was* seventy cubits wide; and the wall of the building *was* five cubits thick all around, and its length *was* ninety cubits.

13 Then he measured the temple, a hundred cubits long; the separate area with the building and its walls *were* also a hundred cubits long.

14 Also the width of the front of the temple and *that of* the separate areas along the east *side totaled* a hundred cubits.

### **The Galleries About the Temple**

15 He measured the length of the building along the front of the separate area behind it, with a gallery on each side, a hundred cubits; *he also measured* the inner nave and the porches of the court.

16 The thresholds, the latticed windows and the galleries round about their three stories, opposite the threshold, were paneled with wood all around, and *from* the ground to the windows (but the windows were covered),

17 over the entrance, and to the inner house, and on the outside, and on all the wall all around inside and outside, by measurement.

18 It was carved with cherubim and palm trees; and a palm tree was between cherub and cherub, and every cherub had two faces,

19 a man's face toward the palm tree on one side and a young lion's face toward the palm tree on the other side; they were carved on all the house all around.

20 From the ground to above the entrance cherubim and palm trees were carved, as well as *on* the wall of the nave.

### **The Altar of Incense**

21 The doorposts of the nave were square; as for the front of the sanctuary, the appearance of one doorpost was like that of the other.

22 The altar *was* of wood, three cubits high and its length two cubits; its corners, its base and its sides *were* of wood. And he said to me, "This is the table that is before the LORD."

23 The nave and the sanctuary each had a double door.

24 Each of the doors had two leaves, two swinging leaves; two *leaves* for one door and two leaves for the other.

25 Also there were carved on them, on the doors of the nave, cherubim and palm trees like those carved on the walls; and *there was* a threshold of wood on the front of the porch outside.

26 *There were* latticed windows and palm trees on one side and on the other, on the sides of the porch; thus *were* the side chambers of the house and the thresholds.

### **The Inner Court of the Chamber**

42:1 Then he brought me out into the outer court, the way toward the north; and he brought me to the chamber which *was* opposite the separate area and opposite the building toward the north.

2 Along the length, *which was* a hundred cubits, *was* the north door; the width *was* fifty cubits.

3 Opposite the twenty *cubits* which belonged to the inner court, and opposite the pavement which belonged to the outer court, *was* gallery corresponding to gallery in three stories.

4 Before the chambers *was* an inner walk ten cubits wide, a way of one *hundred* cubits; and their openings *were* on the north.

5 Now the upper chambers *were* smaller because the galleries took more *space* away from them than from the lower and middle ones in the building.

6 For they *were* in three stories and had no pillars like the pillars of the courts; therefore *the upper chambers* were set back from the ground upward, more than the lower and middle ones.

7 As for the outer wall by the side of the chambers, toward the outer court facing the chambers, its length *was* fifty cubits.

8 For the length of the chambers which *were* in the outer court *was* fifty cubits; and behold, *the length of those* facing the temple *was* a hundred cubits.

9 Below these chambers *was* the entrance on the east side, as one enters them from the outer court.

10 In the thickness of the wall of the court toward the east, facing the separate area and facing the building, *there were* chambers.

11 The way in front of them *was* like the appearance of the chambers which *were* on the north, according to their length so was their width, and all their exits *were* both according to their arrangements and openings.

12 Corresponding to the openings of the chambers which were toward the south was an opening at the head of the way, the way in front of the wall toward the east, as one enters them.

### **The Priests' Use of the Chambers**

13 Then he said to me, "The north chambers *and* the south chambers, which are opposite the separate area, they are the holy chambers where the priests who are near to the LORD shall eat the most holy things. There they shall lay the most holy things, the



grain offering, the sin offering and the guilt offering; for the place is holy.

14 When the priests enter, then they shall not go out into the outer court from the sanctuary without laying there their garments in which they minister, for they are holy. They shall put on other garments; then they shall approach that which is for the people.”

#### **Measurements of Outer Wall and Entire Complex**

15 Now when he had finished measuring the inner house, he brought me out by the way of the gate which faced toward the east and measured it all around.

16 He measured on the east side with the measuring reed five hundred reeds by the measuring reed.

17 He measured on the north side five hundred reeds by the measuring reed.

18 On the south side he measured five hundred reeds with the measuring reed.

19 He turned to the west side *and* measured five hundred reeds with the measuring reed.

20 He measured it on the four sides; it had a wall all around, the length five hundred and the width five hundred, to divide between the holy and the profane.

### **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 Then he led me to the gate, the gate facing toward the east;

2 and behold, the glory of the God of Israel was coming from the way of the east. And His voice was like the sound of many waters; and the earth shone with His glory.

3 And *it was* like the appearance of the vision which I saw, like the vision which I saw when He came to destroy the city. And the visions *were* like the vision which I saw by the river Chebar; and I fell on my face.

4 And the glory of the LORD came into the house by the way of the gate facing toward the east.

5 And the Spirit lifted me up and brought me into the inner court; and behold, the glory of the LORD filled the house.

#### **Exhortation to Purity**

6 Then I heard one speaking to me from the house, while a man was standing beside me.

7 He said to me, “Son of man, *this is* the place of My throne and the place of the soles of My feet, where I will dwell among the sons of Israel forever. And the house of Israel will not again defile My holy name, neither they nor their kings, by their harlotry and by the corpses of their kings when they die,

8 by setting their threshold by My threshold and their door post beside My door post, with *only* the wall between Me and them. And they have defiled My holy name by their abominations which they have committed. So I have consumed them in My anger.

9 Now let them put away their harlotry and the corpses of their kings far from Me; and I will dwell among them forever.

#### **Purpose of God’s Revelation of the Millennial Temple**

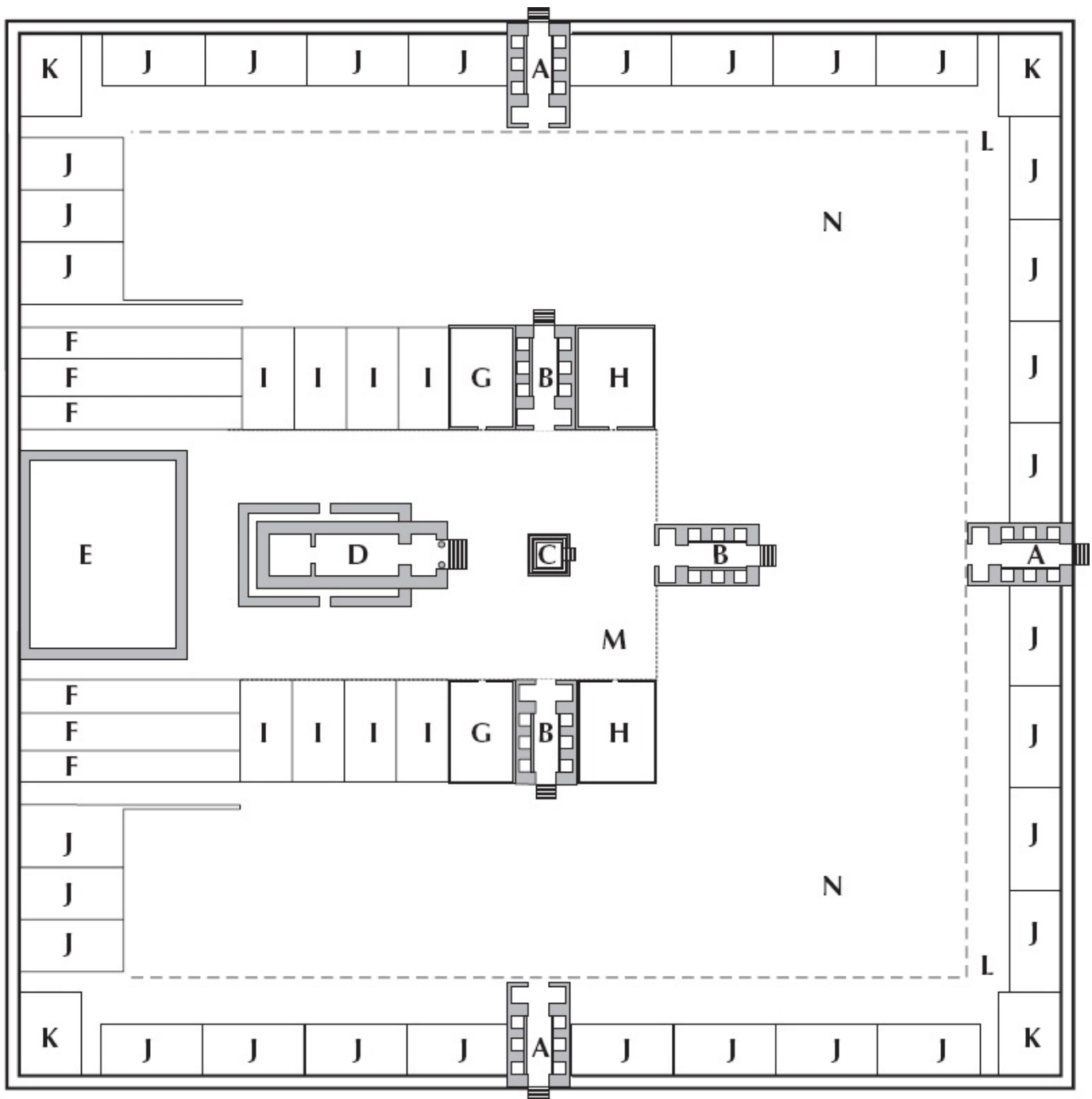
10 “As for you, son of man, describe the temple to the house of Israel, that they may be ashamed of their iniquities; and let them measure the plan.

11 If they are ashamed of all that they have done, make known to them the design of the house, its structure, its exits, its entrances, all its designs, all its statutes, and all its laws. And write *it* in their sight, so that they may observe its whole design and all its statutes and do them.

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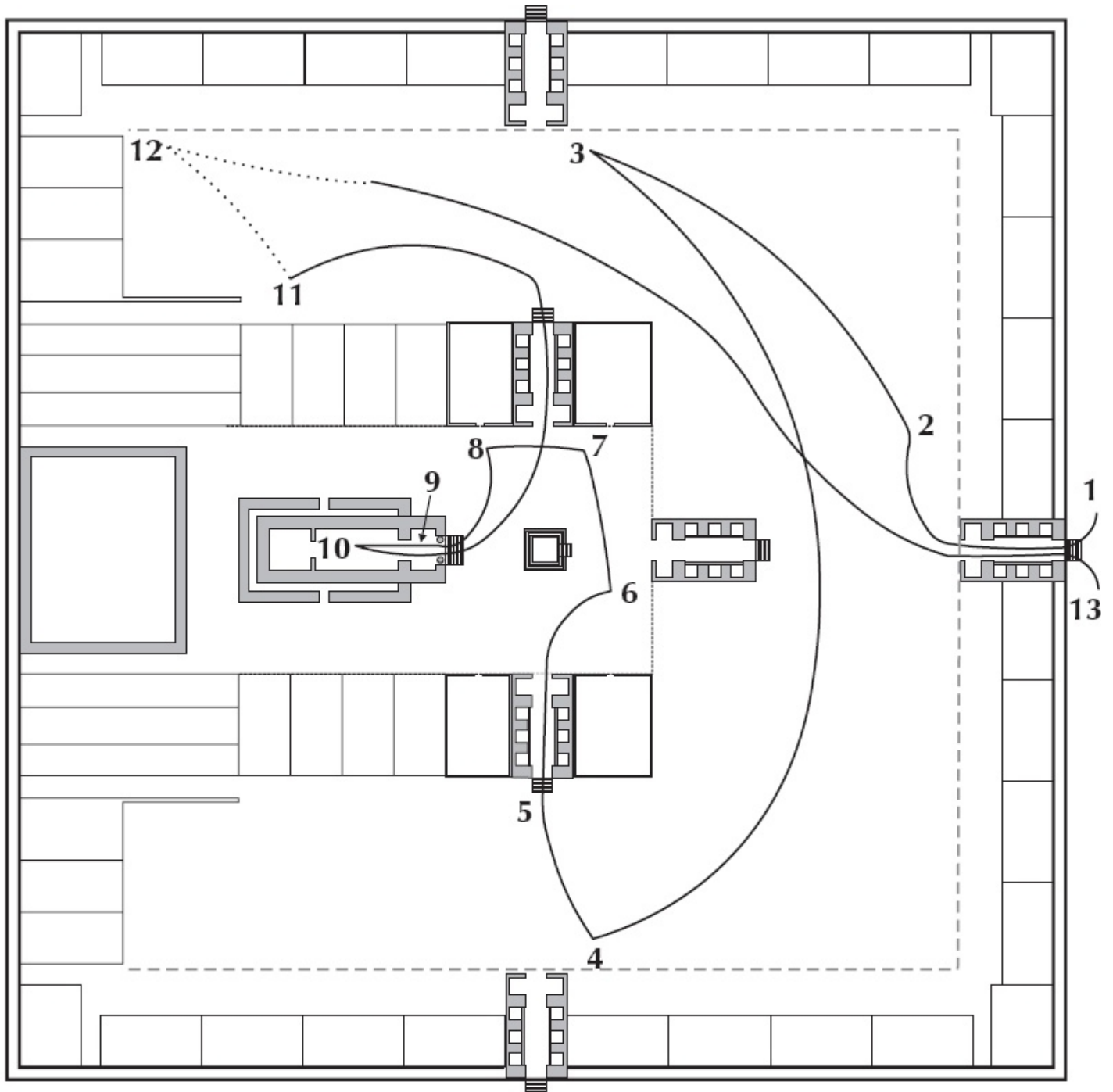
#### **Ezekiel’s Vision of the Millennial Temple**

(see following pages for images)



### Key

- |  |                                       |
|--|---------------------------------------|
| <b>A</b> Outer gates (40:5-16, 20-27)  | <b>H</b> Chamber of offerings (40:38) |
| <b>B</b> Inner gates (40:28-37)        | <b>I</b> Outer chambers (41:9b-10)    |
| <b>C</b> Altar (43:13-17)              | <b>J</b> Worshiper's chambers (40:17) |
| <b>D</b> Temple (40:48–41:11, 15-26)   | <b>K</b> Kitchens (46:19-24)          |
| <b>E</b> Binyān (41:12-14)             | <b>L</b> Lower pavement (40:18)       |
| <b>F</b> Priestly sacristies (42:1-14) | <b>M</b> Inner court (40:44)          |
| <b>G</b> Priestly chambers (40:44-46)  | <b>N</b> 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 house: its entire area on the top of the mountain all around *shall be* most holy. Behold, this is the law of the house.

### Measurements of the Altar

13 “And these are the measurements of the altar by cubits (the cubit being a cubit and a handbreadth): the base *shall be* a cubit and the width a cubit, and its border on its edge round about one span; and this *shall be* the *height* of the base of the altar.

14 From the base on the ground to the lower ledge *shall be* two cubits and the width one cubit; and from the smaller ledge to the larger ledge *shall be* four cubits and the width one cubit.

15 The altar hearth *shall be* four cubits; and from the altar hearth shall extend upwards four horns.

16 Now the altar hearth *shall be* twelve cubits long by twelve wide, square in its four sides.

17 The ledge *shall be* fourteen cubits long by fourteen wide in its four sides, the border around it *shall be* half a cubit and its base *shall be* a cubit round about; and its steps shall face the east.”

### Consecration of the Altar to the Lord

18 And He said to me, “Son of man, thus says the Lord GOD, ‘These are the statutes for the altar on the day it is built, to offer burnt offerings on it and to sprinkle blood on it.

19 You shall give to the Levitical priests who are from the offspring of Zadok, who draw near to Me to minister to Me,’ declares the Lord GOD, ‘a young bull for a sin offering.

20 You shall take some of its blood and put it on its four horns and on the four corners of the ledge and on the border round about; thus you shall cleanse it and make atonement for it.

21 You shall also take the bull for the sin offering, and it *shall be* burned in the appointed place of the house, outside the sanctuary.

22 On the second day you shall offer a male goat without blemish for a sin offering, and they shall cleanse the altar as they cleansed it with the bull.

23 When you have finished cleansing it, you shall present a young bull without blemish and a ram without blemish from the flock.

24 You shall present them before the LORD, and the priests shall throw salt on them, and they shall offer them up as a burnt offering to the LORD.

25 For seven days you shall prepare daily a goat for a sin offering; also a young bull and a ram from the flock, without blemish, shall be prepared.

26 For seven days they shall make atonement for the altar and purify it; so shall they consecrate it.

27 When they have completed the days, it shall be that on the eighth day and onward, the priests shall offer your burnt offerings on the altar, and your peace offerings; and I will accept you,’ declares the Lord GOD.”

### The Prince in the Gate

44:1 Then He brought me back by the way of the outer gate of the sanctuary, which faces the east; and it was shut.

2 The LORD said to me, “This gate shall be shut; it shall not be opened, and no one shall enter by it, for the LORD God of Israel has entered by it; therefore it shall be shut.

3 As for the prince, he shall sit in it as prince to eat bread before the LORD; he shall enter by way of the porch of the gate and shall go out by the same way.”

### The Sanctity of God's House

4 Then He brought me by way of the north gate to the front of the house; and I looked, and behold, the glory of the LORD filled the house of the LORD, and I fell on my face.

5 The LORD said to me, “Son of man, mark well, see with your eyes and hear with your ears all that I say to you concerning all the statutes of the house of the LORD and concerning all its laws; and mark well the entrance of the house, with all exits of the sanctuary.

6 You shall say to the rebellious ones, to the house of Israel, ‘Thus says the Lord GOD, “Enough of all your abominations, O house of Israel,

7 when you brought in foreigners, uncircumcised in heart and uncircumcised in flesh, to be in My sanctuary to profane it, *even* My house, when you offered My food, the fat and the blood; for they made My covenant void—*this* in addition to all your abominations.

8 And you have not kept charge of My holy things yourselves, but you have set *foreigners* to keep charge of My sanctuary.”

### Ministry of the Levites

9 ‘Thus says the Lord GOD, “No foreigner uncircumcised in heart and uncircumcised in flesh, of all the foreigners who are among the sons of Israel, shall enter My sanctuary.

10 But the Levites who went far from Me when Israel went astray, who went astray from Me after their idols, shall bear the punishment for their iniquity.

11 Yet they shall be ministers in My sanctuary, having oversight at the gates of the house and ministering in the house; they shall slaughter the burnt offering and the sacrifice for the people, and they shall stand before them to minister to them.

12 Because they ministered to them before their idols and became a stumbling block of iniquity to the house of Israel, therefore I have sworn against them,” declares the Lord GOD, “that they shall bear *the punishment* for their iniquity.

13 And they shall not come near to Me to serve as a priest to Me, nor come near to any of My holy things, to the things that are most holy; but they will bear their shame and their abominations which they have committed.

14 Yet I will appoint them to keep charge of the house, of all its service and of all that shall be done in it.

### Ministry of the Zadokite Priests

15 “But the Levitical priests, the sons of Zadok, who kept charge of My sanctuary when the sons of Israel went astray from Me, shall come near to Me to minister to Me; and they shall stand before Me to offer Me the fat and the blood,” declares the Lord GOD.

16 “They shall enter My sanctuary; they shall come near to My table to minister to Me and keep My charge.

17 It shall be that when they enter at the gates of the inner court, they shall be clothed with linen garments; and wool shall not be on them while they are ministering in the gates of the inner court and in the house.

18 Linen turbans shall be on their heads and linen undergarments shall be on their loins; they shall not gird themselves with *anything which makes them sweat*.

19 When they go out into the outer court, into the outer court to the people, they shall put off their garments in which they have been ministering and lay them in the holy chambers; then they shall put on other garments so that they will not transmit holiness to the people with their garments.

20 Also they shall not shave their heads, yet they shall not let their locks grow long; they shall only trim *the hair* of their heads.

21 Nor shall any of the priests drink wine when they enter the inner court.

22 And they shall not marry a widow or a divorced woman but shall take virgins from the offspring of the house of Israel, or a widow who is the widow of a priest.

23 Moreover, they shall teach My people *the difference* between the holy and the profane, and cause them to discern between the unclean and the clean.

24 In a dispute they shall take their stand to judge; they shall judge it according to My ordinances. They shall also keep My laws and My statutes in all My appointed feasts and sanctify My sabbaths.

25 They shall not go to a dead person to defile *themselves*; however, for father, for mother, for son, for daughter, for brother, or for a sister who has not had a husband, they may defile themselves.

26 After he is cleansed, seven days shall elapse for him.

27 On the day that he goes into the sanctuary, into the inner court to minister in the sanctuary, he shall offer his sin offering,” declares the Lord GOD.

### Portion of the Priests

28 “And it shall be with regard to an inheritance for them, *that* I am their inheritance; and you shall give them no possession in Israel—I am their possession.

29 They shall eat the grain offering, the sin offering and the guilt offering; and every devoted thing in Israel shall be theirs.

30 The first of all the first fruits of every kind and every contribution of every kind, from all your contributions, shall be for the priests; you shall also give to the priest the first of your dough to cause a blessing to rest on your house.

31 The priests shall not eat any bird or beast that has died a natural death or has been torn to pieces.

### The Holy Portion of the Land

45:1 “And when you divide by lot the land for inheritance, you shall offer an allotment to the LORD, a holy portion of the land; the length shall be the length of 25,000 *cubits*, and the width shall be 20,000. It shall be holy within all its boundary round about.

2 Out of this there shall be for the holy place a square round about five hundred by five hundred *cubits*, and fifty cubits for its open space round about.

3 From this area you shall measure a length of 25,000 *cubits* and a width of 10,000 *cubits*; and in it shall be the sanctuary, the most holy place.

4 It shall be the holy portion of the land; it shall be for the priests, the ministers of the sanctuary, who come near to minister to the LORD, and it shall be a place for their houses and a holy place for the sanctuary.

5 *An area* 25,000 *cubits* in length and 10,000 in width shall be for the Levites, the ministers of the house, *and* for their possession cities to dwell in.

6 “You shall give the city possession of *an area* 5,000 *cubits* wide and 25,000 *cubits* long, alongside the allotment of the holy portion; it shall be for the whole house of Israel.

7 “The prince shall have *land* on either side of the holy allotment and the property of the city, adjacent to the holy allotment and the property of the city, on the west side toward the west and on the east side toward the east, and in length comparable to one of the portions, from the west border to the east border.

8 This shall be his land for a possession in Israel; so My princes shall no longer oppress My people, but they shall give *the rest* of the

land to the house of Israel according to their tribes.”

### Charge to the Princes of Israel

9 ‘Thus says the Lord GOD, “Enough, you princes of Israel; put away violence and destruction, and practice justice and righteousness. Stop your expropriations from My people,” declares the Lord GOD.

10 “You shall have just balances, a just ephah and a just bath.

11 The ephah and the bath shall be the same quantity, so that the bath will contain a tenth of a homer and the ephah a tenth of a homer; their standard shall be according to the homer.

12 The shekel shall be twenty gerahs; twenty shekels, twenty-five shekels, *and* fifteen shekels shall be your maneh.

### Offerings of Israel’s Prince

13 “This is the offering that you shall offer: a sixth of an ephah from a homer of wheat; a sixth of an ephah from a homer of barley; 14 and the prescribed portion of oil (*namely*, the bath of oil), a tenth of a bath from *each* kor (*which is* ten baths *or* a homer, for ten baths are a homer);

15 and one sheep from *each* flock of two hundred from the watering places of Israel—for a grain offering, for a burnt offering and for peace offerings, to make atonement for them,” declares the Lord GOD.

16 “All the people of the land shall give to this offering for the prince in Israel.

17 It shall be the prince’s part *to provide* the burnt offerings, the grain offerings and the drink offerings, at the feasts, on the new moons and on the sabbaths, at all the appointed feasts of the house of Israel; he shall provide the sin offering, the grain offering, the burnt offering and the peace offerings, to make atonement for the house of Israel.”

### Purification of the Sanctuary

18 ‘Thus says the Lord GOD, “In the first *month*, on the first of the month, you shall take a young bull without blemish and cleanse the sanctuary.

19 The priest shall take some of the blood from the sin offering and put *it* on the door posts of the house, on the four corners of the ledge of the altar and on the posts of the gate of the inner court.

20 Thus you shall do on the seventh *day* of the month for everyone who goes astray or is naive; so you shall make atonement for the house.

### The New Passover

21 “In the first *month*, on the fourteenth day of the month, you shall have the Passover, a feast of seven days; unleavened bread shall be eaten.

22 On that day the prince shall provide for himself and all the people of the land a bull for a sin offering.

23 *During* the seven days of the feast he shall provide as a burnt offering to the LORD seven bulls and seven rams without blemish on every day of the seven days, and a male goat daily for a sin offering.

24 He shall provide as a grain offering an ephah with a bull, an ephah with a ram and a hin of oil with an ephah.

25 In the seventh *month*, on the fifteenth day of the month, at the feast, he shall provide like this, seven days for the sin offering, the burnt offering, the grain offering and the oil.”

### Offerings for the Sabbath

46:1 ‘Thus says the Lord GOD, “The gate of the inner court facing east shall be shut the six working days; but it shall be opened on the sabbath day and opened on the day of the new moon.

2 The prince shall enter by way of the porch of the gate from outside and stand by the post of the gate. Then the priests shall provide his burnt offering and his peace offerings, and he shall worship at the threshold of the gate and then go out; but the gate shall not be shut until the evening.

3 The people of the land shall also worship at the doorway of that gate before the LORD on the sabbaths and on the new moons.

4 The burnt offering which the prince shall offer to the LORD on the sabbath day shall be six lambs without blemish and a ram without blemish;

5 and the grain offering shall be an ephah with the ram, and the grain offering with the lambs as much as he is able to give, and a hin of oil with an ephah.

### Offerings for the New Moon

6 On the day of the new moon *he shall offer* a young bull without blemish, also six lambs and a ram, *which* shall be without blemish.

7 And he shall provide a grain offering, an ephah with the bull and an ephah with the ram, and with the lambs as much as he is able, and a hin of oil with an ephah.

8 When the prince enters, he shall go in by way of the porch of the gate and go out by the same way.

**Conduct During the Appointed Feasts**

9 But when the people of the land come before the LORD at the appointed feasts, he who enters by way of the north gate to worship shall go out by way of the south gate. And he who enters by way of the south gate shall go out by way of the north gate. No one shall return by way of the gate by which he entered but shall go straight out.

10 When they go in, the prince shall go in among them; and when they go out, he shall go out.

11 "At the festivals and the appointed feasts the grain offering shall be an ephah with a bull and an ephah with a ram, and with the lambs as much as one is able to give, and a hin of oil with an ephah.

12 When the prince provides a freewill offering, a burnt offering, or peace offerings *as* a freewill offering to the LORD, the gate facing east shall be opened for him. And he shall provide his burnt offering and his peace offerings as he does on the sabbath day. Then he shall go out, and the gate shall be shut after he goes out.

**Daily Sacrifices**

13 "And you shall provide a lamb a year old without blemish for a burnt offering to the LORD daily; morning by morning you shall provide it.

14 Also you shall provide a grain offering with it morning by morning, a sixth of an ephah and a third of a hin of oil to moisten the fine flour, a grain offering to the LORD continually by a perpetual ordinance.

15 Thus they shall provide the lamb, the grain offering and the oil, morning by morning, for a continual burnt offering."

**Regulations Concerning the Prince**

16 'Thus says the Lord GOD, "If the prince gives a gift *out of* his inheritance to any of his sons, it shall belong to his sons; it is their possession by inheritance.

17 But if he gives a gift from his inheritance to one of his servants, it shall be his until the year of liberty; then it shall return to the prince. His inheritance *shall be* only his sons'; it shall belong to them.

18 The prince shall not take from the people's inheritance, thrusting them out of their possession; he shall give his sons inheritance from his own possession so that My people will not be scattered, anyone from his possession."'"

**The Sacrificial Places for the Offerings**

19 Then he brought me through the entrance, which *was* at the side of the gate, into the holy chambers for the priests, which faced north; and behold, there *was* a place at the extreme rear toward the west.

20 He said to me, "This is the place where the priests shall boil the guilt offering and the sin offering *and* where they shall bake the grain offering, in order that they may not bring *them* out into the outer court to transmit holiness to the people."

21 Then he brought me out into the outer court and led me across to the four corners of the court; and behold, in every corner of the court *there was* a *small court*.

22 In the four corners of the court *there were* enclosed courts, forty *cubits* long and thirty wide; these four in the corners *were* the same size.

23 *There was* a row of *masonry* round about in them, around the four of them, and boiling places were made under the rows round about.

24 Then he said to me, "These are the boiling places where the ministers of the house shall boil 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 Then he brought me back to the door of the house; and behold, water was flowing from under the threshold of the house toward the east, for the house faced east. And the water was flowing down from under, from the right side of the house, from south of the altar.

2 He brought me out by way of the north gate and led me around on the outside to the outer gate by way of *the gate* that faces east. And behold, water was trickling from the south side.

### The Man with the Measuring Line

3 When the man went out toward the east with a line in his hand, he measured a thousand cubits, and he led me through the water, water *reaching* the ankles.

4 Again he measured a thousand and led me through the water, water *reaching* the knees. Again he measured a thousand and led me through *the water*, water *reaching* the loins.

5 Again he measured a thousand; *and it was* a river that I could not ford, for the water had risen, *enough* water to swim in, a river that could not be forded.

### The Healing of the Waters

6 He said to me, "Son of man, have you seen *this*?" Then he brought me back to the bank of the river.

7 Now when I had returned, behold, on the bank of the river there *were* very many trees on the one side and on the other.

8 Then he said to me, "These waters go out toward the eastern region and go down into the Arabah; then they go toward the sea, being made to flow into the sea, and the waters *of the sea* become fresh.

9 It will come about that every living creature which swarms in every place where the river goes, will live. And there will be very many fish, for these waters go there and *the others* become fresh; so everything will live where the river goes.

10 And it will come about that fishermen will stand beside it; from Engedi to Eneglaim there will be a place for the spreading of nets. Their fish will be according to their kinds, like the fish of the Great Sea, very many.

11 But its swamps and marshes will not become fresh; they will be left for salt.

12 By the river on its bank, on one side and on the other, will grow all *kinds of* trees for food. Their leaves will not wither and their fruit will not fail. They will bear every month because their water flows from the sanctuary, and their fruit will be for food and their leaves 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 God, "This *shall be* the boundary by which you shall divide the land for an inheritance among the twelve tribes of Israel; Joseph *shall have* two portions.

14 You shall divide it for an inheritance, each one equally with the other; for I swore to give it to your forefathers, and this land shall fall to you as an inheritance.

### Borders of Israel

15 "This *shall be* the boundary of the land: on the north side, from the Great Sea *by* the way of Hethlon, to the entrance of Zedad;

16 Hamath, Berothah, Sibram, which is between the border of Damascus and the border of Hamath; Hazer-hatticon, which is by the border of Hauran.

17 The boundary shall extend from the sea *to* Hazar-enan *at* the border of Damascus, and on the north toward the north is the border of Hamath. This is the north side.

18 "The east side, from between Hauran, Damascus, Gilead and the land of Israel, *shall be* the Jordan; from the *north* border to the eastern sea you shall measure. This is the east side.

19 "The south side toward the south *shall extend* from Tamar as far as the waters of Meribath-kadesh, to the brook *of Egypt and* to the Great Sea. This is the south side toward the south.

20 "The west side *shall be* the Great Sea, from the *south* border to a point opposite Lebo-hamath. This is the west side.

### Instructions for Dividing the Land Among the Tribes

21 "So you shall divide this land among yourselves according to the tribes of Israel.

22 You shall divide it by lot for an inheritance among yourselves and among the aliens who stay in your midst, who bring forth sons in your midst. And they shall be to you as the native-born among the sons of Israel; they shall be allotted an inheritance with you among the tribes of Israel.

23 And in the tribe with which the alien stays, there you shall give *him* his inheritance," declares the Lord God.



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

### Ezekiel 48

#### **Inheritance of the Tribes of Israel**

1 “Now these are the names of the tribes: from the northern extremity, beside the way of Hethlon to Lebo-hamath, *as far as* Hazar-enan *at* the border of Damascus, toward the north beside Hamath, running from east to west, Dan, one *portion*.

2 Beside the border of Dan, from the east side to the west side, Asher, one *portion*.

3 Beside the border of Asher, from the east side to the west side, Naphtali, one *portion*.

4 Beside the border of Naphtali, from the east side to the west side, Manasseh, one *portion*.

5 Beside the border of Manasseh, from the east side to the west side, Ephraim, one *portion*.

6 Beside the border of Ephraim, from the east side to the west side, Reuben, one *portion*.

7 Beside the border of Reuben, from the east side to the west side, Judah, one *portion*.

23 “As for the rest of the tribes: from the east side to the west side, Benjamin, one *portion*.

24 Beside the border of Benjamin, from the east side to the west side, Simeon, one *portion*.

25 Beside the border of Simeon, from the east side to the west side, Issachar, one *portion*.

26 Beside the border of Issachar, from the east side to the west side, Zebulun, one *portion*.

27 Beside the border of Zebulun, from the east side to the west side, Gad, one *portion*.

28 And beside the border of Gad, at the south side toward the south, the border shall be from Tamar to the waters of Meribath-kadesh, to the brook *of Egypt*, to the Great Sea.

29 This is the land which you shall divide by lot to the tribes of Israel for an inheritance, and these are their *several portions*,” declares the Lord God.

#### **The Sacred Reserve—Sanctuary Allotment**

8 “And beside the border of Judah, from the east side to the west side, shall be the allotment which you shall set apart, 25,000 *cubits* in width, and in length like one of the portions, from the east side to the west side; and the sanctuary shall be in the middle of it.

9 The allotment that you shall set apart to the LORD *shall be* 25,000 *cubits* in length and 10,000 in width.

10 The holy allotment shall be for these, *namely* for the priests, toward the north 25,000 *cubits in length*, toward the west 10,000 in width, toward the east 10,000 in width, and toward the south 25,000 in length; and the sanctuary of the LORD shall be in its midst.

11 *It shall be* for the priests who are sanctified of the sons of Zadok, who have kept My charge, who did not go astray when the sons of Israel went astray as the Levites went astray.

12 It shall be an allotment to them from the allotment of the land, a most holy place, by the border of the Levites.

13 Alongside the border of the priests the Levites *shall have* 25,000 *cubits* in length and 10,000 in width. The whole length *shall be* 25,000 *cubits* and the width 10,000.

14 Moreover, they shall not sell or exchange any of it, or alienate this choice *portion* of land; for it is holy to the LORD.

#### **The Sacred Reserve—Public Allotment**

15 “The remainder, 5,000 *cubits* in width and 25,000 in length, shall be for common use for the city, for dwellings and for open spaces; and the city shall be in its midst.

16 These *shall be* its measurements: the north side 4,500 *cubits*, the south side 4,500 *cubits*, the east side 4,500 *cubits*, and the west side 4,500 *cubits*.

17 The city shall have open spaces: on the north 250 *cubits*, on the south 250 *cubits*, on the east 250 *cubits*, and on the west 250 *cubits*.

18 The remainder of the length alongside the holy allotment shall be 10,000 *cubits* toward the east and 10,000 toward the west; and it shall be alongside the holy allotment. And its produce shall be food for the workers of the city.

19 The workers of the city, out of all the tribes of Israel, shall cultivate it.

20 The whole allotment *shall be* 25,000 by 25,000 *cubits*; you shall set apart the holy allotment, a square, with the property of the city.

#### **The Sacred Reserve—Prince Allotment**

21 “The remainder *shall be* for the prince, on the one side and on the other of the holy allotment and of the property of the city; in front of the 25,000 *cubits* of the allotment toward the east border and westward in front of the 25,000 toward the west border, alongside the portions, *it shall be* for the prince. And the holy allotment and the sanctuary of the house shall be in the middle of it.

22 Exclusive of the property of the Levites and the property of the city, *which* are in the middle of that which belongs to the prince, *everything* between the border of Judah and the border of Benjamin shall be for the prince.

#### **The Gates of the New City**

30 “These are the exits of the city: on the north side, 4,500 *cubits* by measurement,

31 shall be the gates of the city, named for the tribes of Israel, three gates toward the north: the gate of Reuben, one; the gate of Judah, one; the gate of Levi, one.

- 32 On the east side, 4,500 *cubits*, shall be three gates: the gate of Joseph, one; the gate of Benjamin, one; the gate of Dan, one.  
 33 On the south side, 4,500 *cubits* by measurement, shall be three gates: the gate of Simeon, one; the gate of Issachar, one; the gate of Zebulun, one.  
 34 On the west side, 4,500 *cubits*, shall be three gates: the gate of Gad, one; the gate of Asher, one; the gate of Naphtali, one.  
 35 *The city shall be 18,000 cubits round about; and the name of the city from that day shall be, 'The LORD 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 Now in the twenty-seventh year, in the first *month*, on the first of the month, the word of the LORD came to me saying,  
 18 "Son of man, Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon made his army labor hard against Tyre; every head was made bald and every shoulder was rubbed bare. But he and his army had no wages from Tyre for the labor that he had performed against it."  
 19 Therefore thus says the Lord GOD, "Behold, I will give the land of Egypt to Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon. And he will carry off her wealth and capture her spoil and seize her plunder; and it will be wages for his army.  
 20 I have given him the land of Egypt *for* his labor which he performed, because they acted for Me," declares the Lord GOD.  
 21 "On that day I will make a horn sprout for the house of Israel, and I will open your mouth in their midst. Then they will know that I am the LORD."

#### Judgment on Egypt and the Nations

- 30:1 The word of the LORD came again to me saying,  
 2 "Son of man, prophesy and say, 'Thus says the Lord GOD,

"Wail, 'Alas for the day!'

- 3 "For the day is near,  
 Even the day of the LORD is near;  
 It will be a day of clouds,  
 A time *of doom* for the nations.  
 4 "A sword will come upon Egypt,  
 And anguish will be in Ethiopia;  
 When the slain fall in Egypt,  
 They take away her wealth,  
 And her foundations are torn down.

- 5 Ethiopia, Put, Lud, all Arabia, Libya and the people of the land that is in league will fall with them by the sword."

#### Desolation of the Land of Egypt

- 6 'Thus says the LORD,  
 "Indeed, those who support Egypt will fall  
 And the pride of her power will come down;  
 From Migdol to Syene  
 They will fall within her by the sword,"  
 Declares the Lord GOD.  
 7 "They will be desolate  
 In the midst of the desolated lands;  
 And her cities will be  
 In the midst of the devastated cities.  
 8 "And they will know that I am the LORD,  
 When I set a fire in Egypt  
 And all her helpers are broken.

- 9 On that day messengers will go forth from Me in ships to frighten secure Ethiopia; and anguish will be on them as on the day of Egypt; for behold, it comes!"

#### God's Instrument of Punishment

- 10 'Thus says the Lord GOD,  
 "I will also make the hordes of Egypt cease

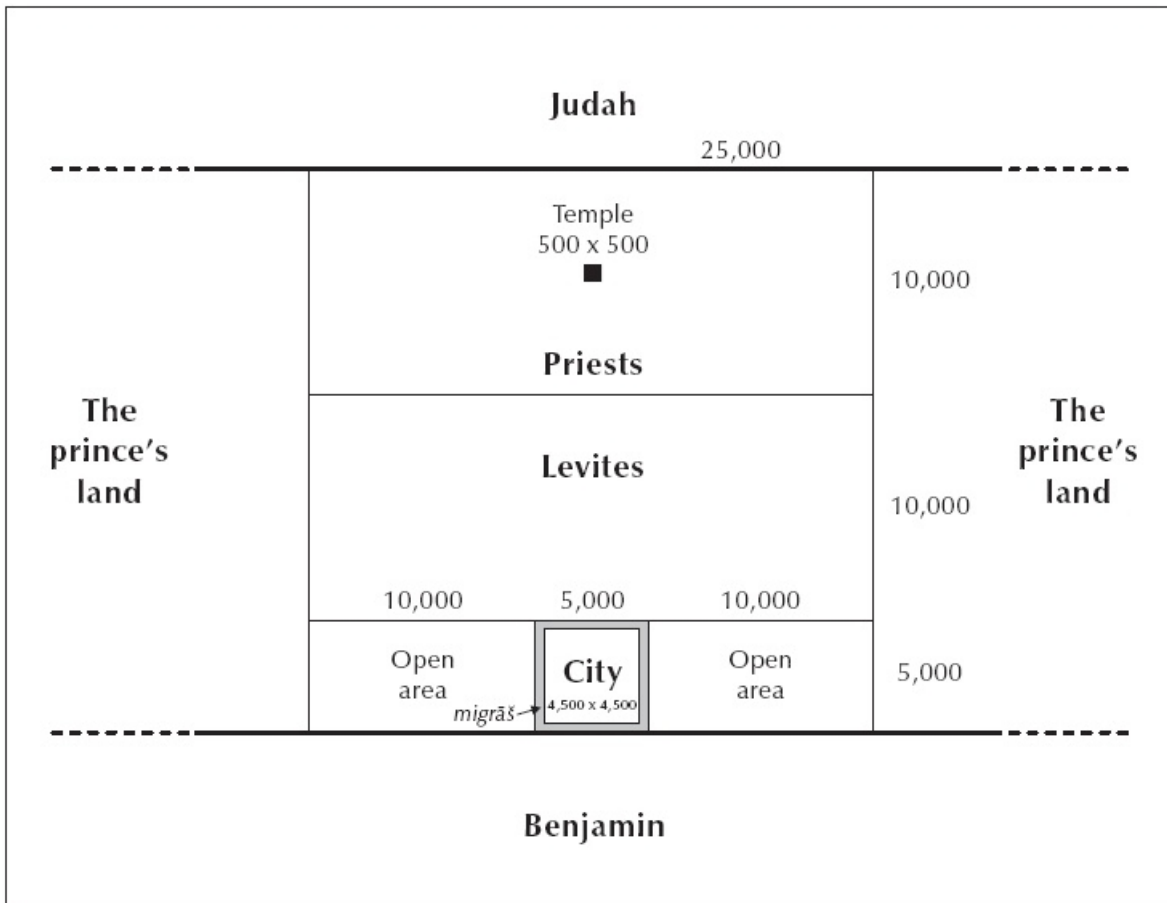
- By the hand of Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon.
- 11 “He and his people with him,  
The most ruthless of the nations,  
Will be brought in to destroy the land;  
And they will draw their swords against Egypt  
And fill the land with the slain.
- 12 “Moreover, I will make the Nile canals dry  
And sell the land into the hands of evil men.  
And I will make the land desolate  
And all that is in it,  
By the hand of strangers; I the LORD have spoken.”

**Visitation on Egypt’s Idolatrous Cities**

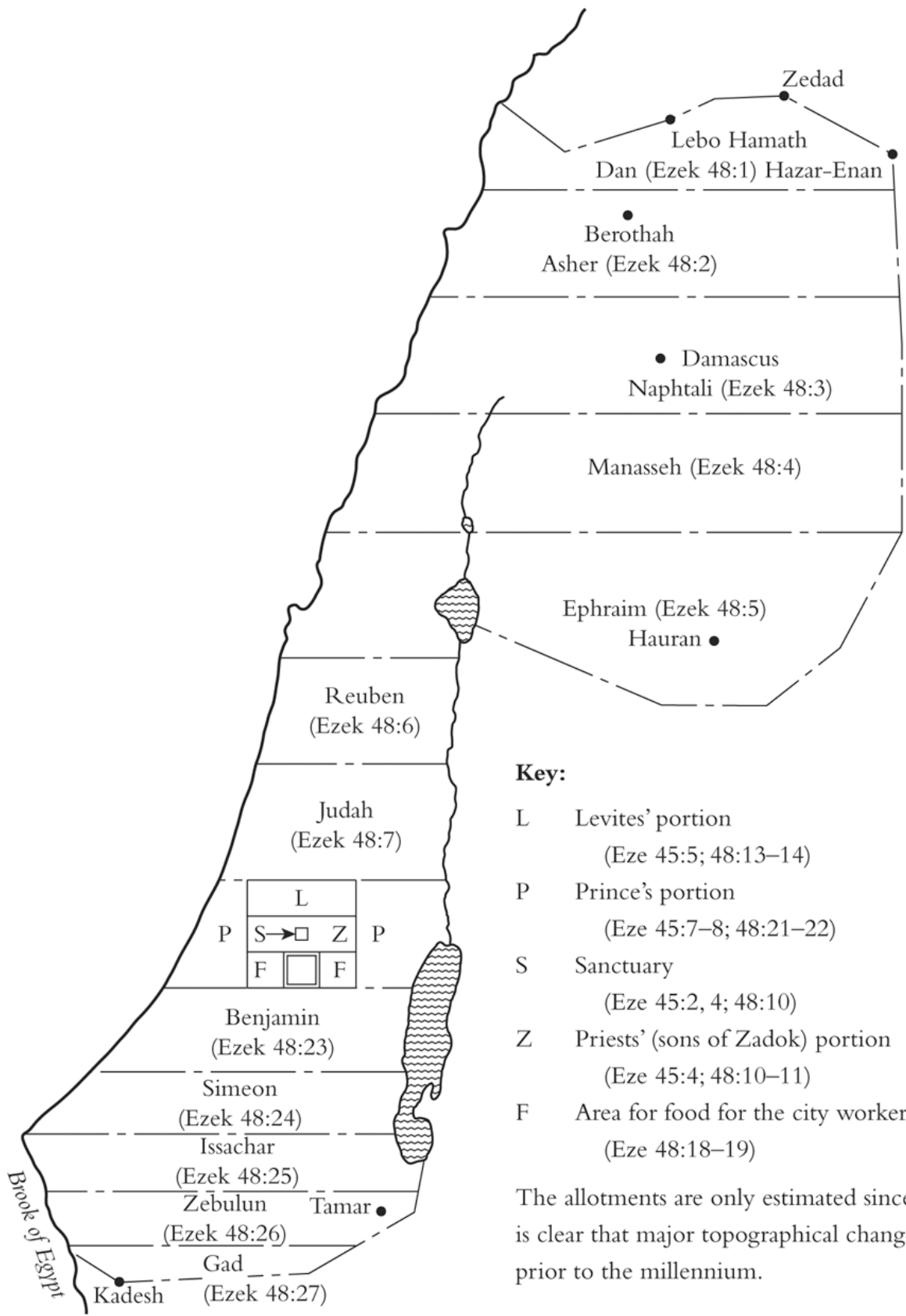
- 13 ‘Thus says the Lord GOD,  
  
“I will also destroy the idols  
And make the images cease from Memphis.  
And there will no longer be a prince in the land of Egypt;  
And I will put fear in the land of Egypt.
- 14 “I will make Pathros desolate,  
Set a fire in Zoan  
And execute judgments on Thebes.
- 15 “I will pour out My wrath on Sin,  
The stronghold of Egypt;  
I will also cut off the hordes of Thebes.
- 16 “I will set a fire in Egypt;  
Sin will writhe in anguish,  
Thebes will be breached  
And Memphis *will have* distresses daily.
- 17 “The young men of On and of Pi-beseth  
Will fall by the sword,  
And the women will go into captivity.
- 18 “In Tehaphnehes the day will be dark  
When I break there the yoke bars of Egypt.  
Then the pride of her power will cease in her;  
A cloud will cover her,  
And her daughters will go into captivity.
- 19 “Thus I will execute judgments on Egypt,  
And they will know that I am the LORD.””

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**Ezekiel's Vision of the Sacred Reserve**



**Ezekiel's Vision of the Boundaries of Millennial Israel**



**Key:**

- L Levites' portion  
(Eze 45:5; 48:13–14)
- P Prince's portion  
(Eze 45:7–8; 48:21–22)
- S Sanctuary  
(Eze 45:2, 4; 48:10)
- Z Priests' (sons of Zadok) portion  
(Eze 45:4; 48:10–11)
- F Area for food for the city workers  
(Eze 48:18–19)

The allotments are only estimated since the Scripture is clear that major topographical changes will occur prior to the millennium.

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

## Daniel 4

**The King's Proclamation**

1 Nebuchadnezzar the king to all the peoples, nations, and *men of every* language that live in all the earth: "May your peace abound!  
2 It has seemed good to me to declare the signs and wonders which the Most High God has done for me.

3 "How great are His signs  
And how mighty are His wonders!  
His kingdom is an everlasting kingdom  
And His dominion is from generation to generation.

**The King's Dream**

4 "I, Nebuchadnezzar, was at ease in my house and flourishing in my palace.  
5 I saw a dream and it made me fearful; and *these fantasies as I lay* on my bed and the visions in my mind kept alarming me.  
6 So I gave orders to bring into my presence all the wise men of Babylon, that they might make known to me the interpretation of the dream.  
7 Then the magicians, the conjurers, the Chaldeans and the diviners came in and I related the dream to them, but they could not make its interpretation known to me.  
8 But finally Daniel came in before me, whose name is Belteshazzar according to the name of my god, and in whom is a spirit of the holy gods; and I related the dream to him, *saying*,  
9 'O Belteshazzar, chief of the magicians, since I know that a spirit of the holy gods is in you and no mystery baffles you, tell *me* the visions of my dream which I have seen, along with its interpretation.  
10 'Now *these were* the visions in my mind *as I lay* on my bed: I was looking, and behold, *there was* a tree in the midst of the earth and its height *was* great.

11 'The tree grew large and became strong  
And its height reached to the sky,  
And it *was* visible to the end of the whole earth.

12 'Its foliage *was* beautiful and its fruit abundant,  
And in it *was* food for all.  
The beasts of the field found shade under it,  
And the birds of the sky dwelt in its branches,  
And all living creatures fed themselves from it.

13 'I was looking in the visions in my mind *as I lay* on my bed, and behold, an *angelic* watcher, a holy one, descended from heaven.

14 'He shouted out and spoke as follows:  
"Chop down the tree and cut off its branches,  
Strip off its foliage and scatter its fruit;  
Let the beasts flee from under it  
And the birds from its branches.  
15 "Yet leave the stump with its roots in the ground,  
But with a band of iron and bronze *around it*  
In the new grass of the field;  
And let him be drenched with the dew of heaven,  
And let him share with the beasts in the grass of the earth.

16 "Let his mind be changed from *that of* a man  
And let a beast's mind be given to him,  
And let seven periods of time pass over him.

17 "This sentence is by the decree of the *angelic* watchers  
And the decision is a command of the holy ones,  
In order that the living may know  
That the Most High is ruler over the realm of mankind,  
And bestows it on whom He wishes  
And sets over it the lowliest of men."

18 This is the dream *which* I, King Nebuchadnezzar, have seen. Now you, Belteshazzar, tell *me* its interpretation, inasmuch as none of the wise men of my kingdom is able to make known to me the interpretation; but you are able, for a spirit of the holy gods is in

you.’

### The Interpretation of the Dream

19 “Then Daniel, whose name is Belteshazzar, was appalled for a while as his thoughts alarmed him. The king responded and said, ‘Belteshazzar, do not let the dream or its interpretation alarm you.’ Belteshazzar replied, ‘My lord, *if only* the dream applied to those who hate you and its interpretation to your adversaries!

20 The tree that you saw, which became large and grew strong, whose height reached to the sky and was visible to all the earth  
21 and whose foliage *was* beautiful and its fruit abundant, and in which *was* food for all, under which the beasts of the field dwelt and in whose branches the birds of the sky lodged—

22 it is you, O king; for you have become great and grown strong, and your majesty has become great and reached to the sky and your dominion to the end of the earth.

23 In that the king saw an *angelic* watcher, a holy one, descending from heaven and saying, “Chop down the tree and destroy it; yet leave the stump with its roots in the ground, but with a band of iron and bronze *around it* in the new grass of the field, and let him be drenched with the dew of heaven, and let him share with the beasts of the field until seven periods of time pass over him,”

24 this is the interpretation, O king, and this is the decree of the Most High, which has come upon my lord the king:

25 that you be driven away from mankind and your dwelling place be with the beasts of the field, and you be given grass to eat like cattle and be drenched with the dew of heaven; and seven periods of time will pass over you, until you recognize that the Most High is ruler over the realm of mankind and bestows it on whomever He wishes.

26 And in that it was commanded to leave the stump with the roots of the tree, your kingdom will be assured to you after you recognize that *it is* Heaven *that* rules.

27 Therefore, O king, may my advice be pleasing to you: break away now from your sins by *doing* righteousness and from your iniquities by showing mercy to *the* poor, in case there may be a prolonging of your prosperity.’

### The Fulfillment of the Dream

28 “All *this* happened to Nebuchadnezzar the king.

29 Twelve months later he was walking on the *roof of* the royal palace of Babylon.

30 The king reflected and said, ‘Is this not Babylon the great, which I myself have built as a royal residence by the might of my power and for the glory of my majesty?’

31 While the word *was* in the king’s mouth, a voice came from heaven, *saying*, ‘King Nebuchadnezzar, to you it is declared: sovereignty has been removed from you,

32 and you will be driven away from mankind, and your dwelling place *will be* with the beasts of the field. You will be given grass to eat like cattle, and seven periods of time will pass over you until you recognize that the Most High is ruler over the realm of mankind and bestows it on whomever He wishes.’

33 Immediately the word concerning Nebuchadnezzar was fulfilled; and he was driven away from mankind and began eating grass like cattle, and his body was drenched with the dew of heaven until his hair had grown like eagles’ *feathers* and his nails like birds’ *claws*.

### Nebuchadnezzar Worships God

34 “But at the end of that period, I, Nebuchadnezzar, raised my eyes toward heaven and my reason returned to me, and I blessed the Most High and praised and honored Him who lives forever;

For His dominion is an everlasting dominion,  
And His kingdom *endures* from generation to generation.

35 “All the inhabitants of the earth are accounted as nothing,  
But He does according to His will in the host of heaven  
And *among* the inhabitants of earth;  
And no one can ward off His hand  
Or say to Him, ‘What have You done?’

36 At that time my reason returned to me. And my majesty and splendor were restored to me for the glory of my kingdom, and my counselors and my nobles began seeking me out; so I was reestablished in my sovereignty, and surpassing greatness was added to me.

37 Now I, Nebuchadnezzar, praise, exalt and honor the King of heaven, for all His works are true and His ways just, and 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 Now it came about in the thirty-seventh year of the exile of Jehoiachin king of Judah, in the twelfth month, on the twenty-seventh *day* of the month, that Evil-merodach king of Babylon, in the year that he became king, released Jehoiachin king of Judah from prison;

28 and he spoke kindly to him and set his throne above the throne of the kings who *were* with him in Babylon.

29 Jehoiachin changed his prison clothes and had his meals in the king's presence regularly all the days of his life;

30 and for his allowance, a regular allowance was given him by the king, a portion for each day, all the days of his life.

Jeremiah 52:31–34

31 Now it came about in the thirty-seventh year of the exile of Jehoiachin king of Judah, in the twelfth month, on the twenty-fifth of the month, that Evil-merodach king of Babylon, in the *first* year of his reign, showed favor to Jehoiachin king of Judah and brought him out of prison.

32 Then he spoke kindly to him and set his throne above the thrones of the kings who *were* with him in Babylon.

33 So Jehoiachin changed his prison clothes, and had his meals in the king's presence regularly all the days of his life.

34 For his allowance, a regular allowance was given him by the king of Babylon, a daily portion all the days of his life until 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 king of Babylon Daniel saw a dream and visions in his mind *as he lay* on his bed; then he wrote the dream down *and* related the *following* summary of it.

#### The Four Beasts

2 Daniel said, "I was looking in my vision by night, and behold, the four winds of heaven were stirring up the great sea.

3 And four great beasts were coming up from the sea, different from one another.

4 The first *was* like a lion and had *the* wings of an eagle. I kept looking until its wings were plucked, and it was lifted up from the ground and made to stand on two feet like a man; a human mind also was given to it.

5 And behold, another beast, a second one, resembling a bear. And it was raised up on one side, and three ribs *were* in its mouth between its teeth; and thus they said to it, 'Arise, devour much meat!'

6 After this I kept looking, and behold, another one, like a leopard, which had on its back four wings of a bird; the beast also had four heads, and dominion was given to it.

7 After this I kept looking in the night visions, and behold, a fourth beast, dreadful and terrifying and extremely strong; and it had large iron teeth. It devoured and crushed and trampled down the remainder with its feet; and it was different from all the beasts that were before it, and it had ten horns.

#### The Little Horn

8 While I was contemplating the horns, behold, another horn, a little one, came up among them, and three of the first horns were pulled out by the roots before it; and behold, this horn possessed eyes like the eyes of a man and a mouth uttering *great boasts*.

#### The Destruction of the Fourth Beast

9 "I kept looking  
Until thrones were set up,  
And the Ancient of Days took *His* seat;  
His vesture *was* like white snow  
And the hair of His head like pure wool.  
His throne *was* ablaze with flames,  
Its wheels *were* a burning fire.

10 "A river of fire was flowing  
And coming out from before Him;  
Thousands upon thousands were attending Him,  
And myriads upon myriads were standing before Him;  
The court sat,  
And the books were opened.

11 Then I kept looking because of the sound of the boastful words which the horn was speaking; I kept looking until the beast was slain, and its body was destroyed and given to the burning fire.

12 As for the rest of the beasts, their dominion was taken away, but an extension of life was granted to them for an appointed period of time.



**The Kingdom of Christ**

- 13 “I kept looking in the night visions,  
And behold, with the clouds of heaven  
One like a Son of Man was coming,  
And He came up 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,  
Glory and a kingdom,  
That all the peoples, nations and *men of every* language  
Might serve Him.  
His dominion is an everlasting dominion  
Which will not pass away;  
And His kingdom is one  
Which will not be destroyed.

**The Interpretation of the Vision**

- 15 “As for me, Daniel, my spirit was distressed within me, and the visions in my mind kept alarming me.  
16 I approached one of those who were standing by and began asking him the exact meaning of all this. So he told me and made known to me the interpretation of these things:  
17 ‘These great beasts, which are four *in number*, are four kings *who* will arise from the earth.  
18 But the saints of the Highest One will receive the kingdom and possess the kingdom forever, for all ages to come.’  
19 “Then I desired to know the exact meaning of the fourth beast, which was different from all the others, exceedingly dreadful, with its teeth of iron and its claws of bronze, *and which* devoured, crushed and trampled down the remainder with its feet,  
20 and *the meaning* of the ten horns that *were* on its head and the other *horn* which came up, and before which three *of them* fell, namely, that horn which had eyes and a mouth uttering great *boasts* and which was larger in appearance than its associates.  
21 I kept looking, and that horn was waging war with the saints and overpowering them  
22 until the Ancient of Days came and judgment was passed in favor of the saints of the Highest One, and the time arrived when the saints took possession of the kingdom.  
23 “Thus he said: ‘The fourth beast will be a fourth kingdom on the earth, which will be different from all the *other* kingdoms and will devour the whole earth and tread it down and crush it.  
24 As for the ten horns, out of this kingdom ten kings will arise; and another will arise after them, and he will be different from the previous ones and will subdue three kings.  
25 He will speak out against the Most High and wear down the saints of the Highest One, and he will intend to make alterations in times and in law; and they will be given into his hand for a time, times, and half a time.  
26 But the court will sit *for judgment*, and his dominion will be taken away, annihilated and destroyed forever.  
27 Then the sovereignty, the dominion and the greatness of *all* the kingdoms under the whole heaven will be given to the people of the saints of the Highest One; His kingdom *will be* an everlasting kingdom, and all the dominions will serve and obey Him.’  
28 “At this point the revelation ended. As for me, Daniel, my thoughts were greatly alarming me and my face grew pale, but I kept the matter to myself.”

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

## Daniel 8

**Setting of the Vision**

- 1 In the third year of the reign of Belshazzar the king a vision appeared to me, Daniel, subsequent to the one which appeared to me previously.  
2 I looked in the vision, and while I was looking I was in the citadel of Susa, which is in the province of Elam; and I looked in the vision and I myself was beside the Ulai Canal.

**The Ram (Media/Persia)**

- 3 Then I lifted my eyes and looked, and behold, a ram which had two horns was standing in front of the canal. Now the two horns *were* long, but one *was* longer than the other, with the longer one coming up last.  
4 I saw the ram butting westward, northward, and southward, and no *other* beasts could stand before him nor was there anyone to rescue from his power, but he did as he pleased and magnified *himself*.

**The Goat (Greece)**

- 5 While I was observing, behold, a male goat was coming from the west over the surface of the whole earth without touching the ground; and the goat *had* a conspicuous horn between his eyes.

6 He came up to the ram that had the two horns, which I had seen standing in front of the canal, and rushed at him in his mighty wrath.

7 I saw him come beside the ram, and he was enraged at him; and he struck the ram and shattered his two horns, and the ram had no strength to withstand him. So he hurled him to the ground and trampled on him, and there was none to rescue the ram from his power.

8 Then the male goat magnified *himself* exceedingly. But as soon as he was mighty, the large horn was broken; and in its place there came up four conspicuous *horns* toward the four winds of heaven.

#### **The Little Horn (Antiochus IV Epiphanes)**

9 Out of one of them came forth a rather small horn which grew exceedingly great toward the south, toward the east, and toward the Beautiful *Land*.

10 It grew up to the host of heaven and caused some of the host and some of the stars to fall to the earth, and it trampled them down.

11 It even magnified *itself* to be equal with the Commander of the host; and it removed the regular sacrifice from Him, and the place of His sanctuary was thrown down.

12 And on account of transgression the host will be given over *to the horn* along with the regular sacrifice; and it will fling truth to the ground and perform *its will* and prosper.

13 Then I heard a holy one speaking, and another holy one said to that particular one who was speaking, "How long will the vision *about* the regular sacrifice apply, while the transgression causes horror, so as to allow both the holy place and the host to be trampled?"

14 He said to me, "For 2,300 evenings *and* mornings; then the holy place will be properly restored."

#### **Gabriel Sent to Interpret the Vision**

15 When I, Daniel, had seen the vision, I sought to understand it; and behold, standing before me was one who looked like a man.

16 And I heard the voice of a man between *the banks of Uлай*, and he called out and said, "Gabriel, give this *man* an understanding of the vision."

17 So he came near to where I was standing, and when he came I was frightened and fell on my face; but he said to me, "Son of man, understand that the vision pertains to the time of the end."

18 Now while he was talking with me, I sank into a deep sleep with my face to the ground; but he touched me and made me stand upright.

#### **The Interpretation of the Vision**

19 He said, "Behold, I am going to let you know what will occur at the final period of the indignation, for *it* pertains to the appointed time of the end.

20 The ram which you saw with the two horns represents the kings of Media and Persia.

21 The shaggy goat *represents* the kingdom of Greece, and the large horn that is between his eyes is the first king.

22 The broken *horn* and the four *horns that* arose in its place *represent* four kingdoms *which* will arise from *his* nation, although not with his power.

23 "In the latter period of their rule,  
When the transgressors have run *their course*,  
A king will arise,  
Insolent and skilled in intrigue.

24 "His power will be mighty, but not by his *own* power,  
And he will destroy to an extraordinary degree  
And prosper and perform *his will*;  
He will destroy mighty men and the holy people.

25 "And through his shrewdness  
He will cause deceit to succeed by his influence;  
And he will magnify *himself* in his heart,  
And he will destroy many while *they are* at ease.  
He will even oppose the Prince of princes,  
But he will be broken without human agency.

26 "The vision of the evenings and mornings  
Which has been told is true;  
But keep the vision secret,  
For *it* pertains to many days *in the future*."

27 Then I, Daniel, was exhausted and sick for days. Then I got up *again* and carried on the king's business; but I was astounded at the vision, and there was none to explain it.

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### Chronological Notes

#### 1) A Possible Historical Setting for Daniel 4.<sup>1</sup>

- 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.<sup>2</sup>
- 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.<sup>3</sup> 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.<sup>4</sup> 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” 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.

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

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

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

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

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

### Daniel 5

#### Belshazzar's Feast

- 1 Belshazzar the king held a great feast for a thousand of his nobles, and he was drinking wine in the presence of the thousand.
- 2 When Belshazzar tasted the wine, he gave orders to bring the gold and silver vessels which Nebuchadnezzar his father had taken out of the temple which *was* in Jerusalem, so that the king and his nobles, his wives and his concubines might drink from them.
- 3 Then they brought the gold vessels that had been taken out of the temple, the house of God which *was* in Jerusalem; and the king and his nobles, his wives and his concubines drank from them.
- 4 They drank the wine and praised the gods of gold and silver, of bronze, iron, wood and stone.

#### The Writing on the Wall

- 5 Suddenly the fingers of a man's hand emerged and began writing opposite the lampstand on the plaster of the wall of the king's palace, and the king saw the back of the hand that did the writing.
- 6 Then the king's face grew pale and his thoughts alarmed him, and his hip joints went slack and his knees began knocking together.
- 7 The king called aloud to bring in the conjurers, the Chaldeans and the diviners. The king spoke and said to the wise men of Babylon, "Any man who can read this inscription and explain its interpretation to me shall be clothed with purple and *have* a necklace of gold around his neck, and have authority as third *ruler* in the kingdom."
- 8 Then all the king's wise men came in, but they could not read the inscription or make known its interpretation to the king.
- 9 Then King Belshazzar was greatly alarmed, his face grew *even* paler, and his nobles were perplexed.

#### Daniel Summoned

- 10 The queen entered the banquet hall because of the words of the king and his nobles; the queen spoke and said, "O king, live forever! Do not let your thoughts alarm you or your face be pale.
- 11 There is a man in your kingdom in whom is a spirit of the holy gods; and in the days of your father, illumination, insight and wisdom like the wisdom of the gods were found in him. And King Nebuchadnezzar, your father, your father the king, appointed him chief of the magicians, conjurers, Chaldeans *and* diviners.
- 12 *This was* because an extraordinary spirit, knowledge and insight, interpretation of dreams, explanation of enigmas and solving of difficult problems were found in this Daniel, whom the king named Belteshazzar. Let Daniel now be summoned and he will declare the interpretation."
- 13 Then Daniel was brought in before the king. The king spoke and said to Daniel, "Are you that Daniel who is one of the exiles from Judah, whom my father the king brought from Judah?"
- 14 Now I have heard about you that a spirit of the gods is in you, and that illumination, insight and extraordinary wisdom have been found in you.
- 15 Just now the wise men *and* the conjurers were brought in before me that they might read this inscription and make its interpretation known to me, but they could not declare the interpretation of the message.
- 16 But I personally have heard about you, that you are able to give interpretations and solve difficult problems. Now if you are able to read the inscription and make its interpretation known to me, you will be clothed with purple and *wear* a necklace of gold around your neck, and you will have authority as the third *ruler* in the kingdom."

#### A Refusal and a Rebuke

- 17 Then Daniel answered and said before the king, "Keep your gifts for yourself or give your rewards to someone else; however, I will read the inscription to the king and make the interpretation known to him.
- 18 O king, the Most High God granted sovereignty, grandeur, glory and majesty to Nebuchadnezzar your father.
- 19 Because of the grandeur which He bestowed on him, all the peoples, nations and *men of every* language feared and trembled before him; whomever he wished he killed and whomever he wished he spared alive; and whomever he wished he elevated and whomever he wished he humbled.
- 20 But when his heart was lifted up and his spirit became so proud that he behaved arrogantly, he was deposed from his royal throne and *his* glory was taken away from him.
- 21 He was also driven away from mankind, and his heart was made like *that of* beasts, and his dwelling place *was* with the wild donkeys. He was given grass to eat like cattle, and his body was drenched with the dew of heaven until he recognized that the Most High God is ruler over the realm of mankind and *that* He sets over it whomever He wishes.
- 22 Yet you, his son, Belshazzar, have not humbled your heart, even though you knew all this,
- 23 but you have exalted yourself against the Lord of heaven; and they have brought the vessels of His house before you, and you and your nobles, your wives and your concubines have been drinking wine from them; and you have praised the gods of silver and gold, of bronze, iron, wood and stone, which do not see, hear or understand. But the God in whose hand are your life-breath and your ways, you have not glorified.
- 24 Then the hand was sent from Him and this inscription was written out.

#### The Writing Explained

- 25 "Now this is the inscription that was written out: 'MENĒ, MENĒ, TEKĒL, UPHARSIN.'

26 This is the interpretation of the message: ‘MENE’—God has numbered your kingdom and put an end to it.

27 ‘TEKĒL’—you have been weighed on the scales and found deficient.

28 ‘PERĒS’—your kingdom has been divided and given over to the Medes and Persians.”

29 Then Belshazzar gave orders, and they clothed Daniel with purple and *put* a necklace of gold around his neck, and issued a proclamation concerning him that he *now* had authority as the third *ruler* in the kingdom.

#### **The Fall of Babylon**

30 That same night Belshazzar the Chaldean king was slain.

31 So Darius the Mede received the kingdom at about the age of sixty-two.

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

Daniel 6:1–2

1 It seemed good to Darius to appoint 120 satraps over the kingdom, that they would be in charge of the whole kingdom,

2 and over them three commissioners (of whom Daniel was one), that these satraps might be accountable to them, and that the king might not suffer loss.

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

Daniel 6:3

3 Then this Daniel began distinguishing himself among the commissioners and satraps because he possessed an extraordinary spirit, and the king planned to appoint him over the entire kingdom.

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

Daniel 6:4–28

#### **The Plot**

4 Then the commissioners and satraps began trying to find a ground of accusation against Daniel in regard to government affairs; but they could find no ground of accusation or *evidence of corruption*, inasmuch as he was faithful, and no negligence or corruption was *to be found* in him.

5 Then these men said, “We will not find any ground of accusation against this Daniel unless we find *it* against him with regard to the law of his God.”

6 Then these commissioners and satraps came by agreement to the king and spoke to him as follows: “King Darius, live forever!

7 All the commissioners of the kingdom, the prefects and the satraps, the high officials and the governors have consulted together that the king should establish a statute and enforce an injunction that anyone who makes a petition to any god or man besides you, O king, for thirty days, shall be cast into the lions’ den.

8 Now, O king, establish the injunction and sign the document so that it may not be changed, according to the law of the Medes and Persians, which may not be revoked.”

9 Therefore King Darius signed the document, that is, the injunction.

#### **The Accusation and Condemnation of Daniel**

10 Now when Daniel knew that the document was signed, he entered his house (now in his roof chamber he had windows open toward Jerusalem); and he continued kneeling on his knees three times a day, praying and giving thanks before his God, as he had been doing previously.

11 Then these men came by agreement and found Daniel making petition and supplication before his God.

12 Then they approached and spoke before the king about the king’s injunction, “Did you not sign an injunction that any man who makes a petition to any god or man besides you, O king, for thirty days, is to be cast into the lions’ den?” The king replied, “The statement is true, according to the law of the Medes and Persians, which may not be revoked.”

13 Then they answered and spoke before the king, “Daniel, who is one of the exiles from Judah, pays no attention to you, O king, or to the injunction which you signed, but keeps making his petition three times a day.”

14 Then, as soon as the king heard this statement, he was deeply distressed and set *his* mind on delivering Daniel; and even until sunset he kept exerting himself to rescue him.

15 Then these men came by agreement to the king and said to the king, “Recognize, O king, that it is a law of the Medes and Persians that no injunction or statute which the king establishes may be changed.”

16 Then the king gave orders, and Daniel was brought in and cast into the lions’ den. The king spoke and said to Daniel, “Your God whom you constantly serve will Himself deliver you.”

17 A stone was brought and laid over the mouth of the den; and the king sealed it with his own signet ring and with the signet rings of his nobles, so that nothing would be changed in regard to Daniel.

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

**The Deliverance of Daniel**

19 Then the king arose at dawn, at the break of day, and went in haste to the lions' den.

20 When he had come near the den to Daniel, he cried out with a troubled voice. The king spoke and said to Daniel, "Daniel, servant of the living God, has your God, whom you constantly serve, been able to deliver you from the lions?"

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

22 My God sent His angel and shut the lions' mouths and they have not harmed me, inasmuch as I was found innocent before Him; and also toward you, O king, I have committed no crime."

23 Then the king was very pleased and gave orders for Daniel to be taken up out of the den. So Daniel was taken up out of the den and no injury whatever was found on him, because he had trusted in his God.

**The Accusers Killed and Daniel's God Honored**

24 The king then gave orders, and they brought those men who had maliciously accused Daniel, and they cast them, their children and their wives into the lions' den; and they had not reached the bottom of the den before the lions overpowered them and crushed all their bones.

25 Then Darius the king wrote to all the peoples, nations and *men of every* language who were living in all the land: "May your peace abound!

26 I make a decree that in all the dominion of my kingdom men are to fear and tremble before the God of Daniel;

For He is the living God and enduring forever,  
And His kingdom is one which will not be destroyed,  
And His dominion *will be* forever.

27 He delivers and rescues and performs signs and wonders  
In heaven and on earth,  
Who has *also* delivered Daniel from the power of the lions."

**Daniel Prospers in the Medo-Persian Empire**

28 So this Daniel enjoyed success in the reign of Darius and in the reign of Cyrus the Persian.

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**Chronological Notes**

- 1) Historical Setting of Daniel 5.<sup>1</sup>
  - 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 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

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

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.<sup>2</sup>

- 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.

<sup>2</sup> 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 by genealogies; and behold, they are 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 *were* Gomer, Magog, Madai, Javan, Tubal, Meshech and Tiras.
- 6 The sons of Gomer *were* Ashkenaz, Diphath, and Togarmah.
- 7 The sons of Javan *were* Elishah, Tarshish, Kittim and Rodanim.

**Ham's Descendants**

- 8 The sons of Ham *were* Cush, Mizraim, Put, and Canaan.
- 9 The sons of Cush *were* Seba, Havilah, Sabta, Raama and Sabteca; and the sons of Raamah *were* Sheba and Dedan.
- 10 Cush became the father of Nimrod; he began to be a mighty one in the earth.
- 11 Mizraim became the father of the people of Lud, Anam, Lehab, Naphtuh,
- 12 Pathrus, Casluh, from which the Philistines came, and Caphtor.
- 13 Canaan became the father of Sidon, his firstborn, 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 *were* Elam, Asshur, Arpachshad, Lud, Aram, Uz, Hul, Gether and Meshech.
- 18 Arpachshad became the father of Shelah and Shelah became the father of Eber.
- 19 Two sons were born to Eber, the name of the one was Peleg, for in his days the earth was divided, and his brother's name was Joktan.
- 20 Joktan became the father of 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, Arpachshad, 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 *were* Isaac and Ishmael.

**Ishmael's Descendants**

- 29 These are their genealogies: the firstborn of Ishmael *was* Nebaioth, then Kedar, Adbeel, Mibsam,
- 30 Mishma, Dumah, Massa, Hadad, Tema,
- 31 Jetur, Naphish and Kedemah; these *were* the sons of Ishmael.

**Abraham's Descendants Through Keturah**

- 32 The sons of Keturah, Abraham's concubine, *whom* she bore, *were* Zimran, Jokshan, Medan, Midian, Ishbak and Shuah. And the sons of Jokshan *were* Sheba and Dedan.



33 The sons of Midian were Ephah, Epher, Hanoch, Abida and Eldaah. All these were the sons of Keturah.

#### Isaac's Descendants

34 Abraham became the father of Isaac. The sons of Isaac were Esau and Israel.

#### The Line of Esau

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

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

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

#### The Line of Seir

38 The sons of Seir were Lotan, Shobal, Zibeon, Anah, Dishon, Ezer and Dishan.

39 The sons of Lotan were Hori and Homam; and Lotan's sister was Timna.

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

41 The son of Anah was Dishon. And the sons of Dishon were Hamran, Eshban, Ithran and Cheran.

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

#### The Edomite Kings and Chiefs

43 Now these are the kings who reigned in the land of Edom before any king of the sons of Israel reigned. Bela was the son of Beor, and the name of his city was Dinhabah.

44 When Bela died, Jobab the son of Zerah of Bozrah became king in his place.

45 When Jobab died, Husham of the land of the Temanites became king in his place.

46 When Husham died, Hadad the son of Bedad, who defeated Midian in the field of Moab, became king in his place; and the name of his city was Avith.

47 When Hadad died, Samlah of Masrekah became king in his place.

48 When Samlah died, Shaul of Rehoboth by the River became king in his place.

49 When Shaul died, Baal-hanan the son of Achbor became king in his place.

50 When Baal-hanan died, Hadad became king in his place; and the name of his city was Pai, and his wife's name was Mehetabel, the daughter of Matred, the daughter of Mezahab.

51 Then Hadad died. Now the chiefs of Edom were: chief Timna, chief Aliah, chief Jetheth,

52 chief Oholibamah, chief Elah, chief Pinon,

53 chief Kenaz, chief Teman, chief Mibzar,

54 chief Magdiel, chief Iram. These were 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 were Er, Onan and Shelah; these three were born to him by Bath-shua the Canaanitess. And Er, Judah's firstborn, was wicked in the sight of the LORD, so He put him to death.

4 Tamar his daughter-in-law bore him Perez and Zerah. Judah had five sons in all.

5 The sons of Perez were Hezron and Hamul.

6 The sons of Zerah were Zimri, Ethan, Heman, Calcol and Dara; five of them in all.

7 The son of Carmi was Achar, the troubler of Israel, who violated the ban.

8 The son of Ethan was Azariah.

9 Now the sons of Hezron, who were born to him were Jerahmeel, Ram and Chelubai.

#### The Descendants of Ram, Son of Hezron

10 Ram became the father of Amminadab, and Amminadab became the father of Nahshon, leader of the sons of Judah;

11 Nahshon became the father of Salma, Salma became the father of Boaz,

12 Boaz became the father of Obed, and Obed became the father of Jesse;

13 and Jesse became the father of Eliab his firstborn, then Abinadab the second, Shimea the third,

14 Nathanel the fourth, Raddai the fifth,  
 15 Ozem the sixth, David the seventh;  
 16 and their sisters *were* Zeruiah and Abigail. And the three sons of Zeruiah *were* Abshai, Joab and Asahel.  
 17 Abigail bore Amasa, and the father of Amasa was Jether the Ishmaelite.

#### **The Descendants of Caleb, Son of Hezron**

18 Now Caleb the son of Hezron had sons by Azubah *his* wife, and by Jerioth; and these were her sons: Jeshur, Shobab, and Ardon.  
 19 When Azubah died, Caleb married Ephrath, who bore him Hur.  
 20 Hur became the father of Uri, and Uri became the father of Bezalel.  
 21 Afterward Hezron went in to the daughter of Machir the father of Gilead, whom he married when he was sixty years old; and she bore him Segub.  
 22 Segub became the father of Jair, who had twenty-three cities in the land of Gilead.  
 23 But Geshur and Aram took the towns of Jair from them, with Kenath and its villages, *even* sixty cities. All these were the sons of Machir, the father of Gilead.  
 24 After the death of Hezron in Caleb-ephraiah, Abijah, Hezron's wife, bore him Ashhur the father of Tekoa.

#### **The Descendants of Jerahmeel, Son of Hezron**

25 Now the sons of Jerahmeel the firstborn of Hezron *were* Ram the firstborn, then Bunah, Oren, Ozem *and* Ahijah.  
 26 Jerahmeel had another wife, whose name was Atarah; she was the mother of Onam.  
 27 The sons of Ram, the firstborn of Jerahmeel, were Maaz, Jamin and Eker.  
 28 The sons of Onam were Shammai and Jada. And the sons of Shammai *were* Nadab and Abishur.  
 29 The name of Abishur's wife *was* Abihail, and she bore him Ahban and Molid.  
 30 The sons of Nadab *were* Seled and Appaim, and Seled died without sons.  
 31 The son of Appaim *was* Ishi. And the son of Ishi *was* Sheshan. And the son of Sheshan *was* Ahlai.  
 32 The sons of Jada the brother of Shammai *were* Jether and Jonathan, and Jether died without sons.  
 33 The sons of Jonathan *were* Peleth and Zaza. These were the sons of Jerahmeel.

#### **Supplementary Material on Jerahmeel**

34 Now Sheshan had no sons, only daughters. And Sheshan had an Egyptian servant whose name was Jarha.  
 35 Sheshan gave his daughter to Jarha his servant in marriage, and she bore him Attai.  
 36 Attai became the father of Nathan, and Nathan became the father of Zabad,  
 37 and Zabad became the father of Ephlal, and Ephlal became the father of Obed,  
 38 and Obed became the father of Jehu, and Jehu became the father of Azariah,  
 39 and Azariah became the father of Helez, and Helez became the father of Eleasah,  
 40 and Eleasah became the father of Sismai, and Sismai became the father of Shallum,  
 41 and Shallum became the father of Jekamiah, and Jekamiah became the father of Elishama.

#### **Supplementary Material on Caleb**

42 Now the sons of Caleb, the brother of Jerahmeel, *were* Mesha his firstborn, who was the father of Ziph; and his son was Mareshah, the father of Hebron.  
 43 The sons of Hebron *were* Korah and Tappuah and Rekem and Shema.  
 44 Shema became the father of Raham, the father of Jorkeam; and Rekem became the father of Shammai.  
 45 The son of Shammai was Maon, and Maon *was* the father of Bethzur.  
 46 Ephah, Caleb's concubine, bore Haran, Moza and Gazez; and Haran became the father of Gazez.  
 47 The sons of Jahdai *were* Regem, Jotham, Geshan, Pelet, Ephah and Shaaph.  
 48 Maacah, Caleb's concubine, bore Sheber and Tirhanah.  
 49 She also bore Shaaph the father of Madmannah, Sheva the father of Machbena and the father of Gibeaz; and the daughter of Caleb *was* Achsah.  
 50 These were the sons of Caleb. The sons of Hur, the firstborn of Ephraiah, *were* Shobal the father of Kiriath-jearim,  
 51 Salma the father of Bethlehem *and* Hareph the father of Beth-gader.  
 52 Shobal the father of Kiriath-jearim had sons: Haroeh, half of the Manahathites,  
 53 and the families of Kiriath-jearim: the Ithrites, the Puthites, the Shumathites and the Mishraites; from these came the Zorathites and the Eshtaolites.  
 54 The sons of Salma *were* Bethlehem and the Netophathites, Atroth-beth-joab and half of the Manahathites, the Zorites.  
 55 The families of scribes who lived at Jabez *were* the Tirathites, the Shimeathites *and* the Sucathites. Those are the Kenites who came from Hammath, the father of the house of Rechab.

**Official Genealogical Records: David's Descendants (c. 538 BC)****1 Chronicles 3:1–9**

1 Now these were the sons of David who were born to him in Hebron: the firstborn *was* Amnon, by Ahinoam the Jezreelitess; the second *was* Daniel, by Abigail the Carmelitess;  
 2 the third *was* Absalom the son of Maacah, the daughter of Talmai king of Geshur; the fourth *was* Adonijah the son of Haggith;  
 3 the fifth *was* Shephathiah, by Abital; the sixth *was* Ithream, by his wife Eglah.  
 4 Six were born to him in Hebron, and there he reigned seven years and six months. And in Jerusalem he reigned thirty-three years.  
 5 These were born to him in Jerusalem: Shimea, Shobab, Nathan and Solomon, four, by Bath-shua the daughter of Ammiel;  
 6 and Ibhah, Elishama, Eliphelet,  
 7 Nogah, Nepheg and 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 Solomon's son *was* Rehoboam, Abijah *was* his son, Asa his son, Jehoshaphat his son,  
 11 Joram his son, Ahaziah his son, Joash his son,  
 12 Amaziah his son, Azariah his son, Jotham his son,  
 13 Ahaz his son, Hezekiah his son, Manasseh his son,  
 14 Amon his son, Josiah his son.  
 15 The sons of Josiah *were* Johanan the firstborn, and the second *was* Jehoiakim, the third Zedekiah, the fourth Shallum.  
 16 The sons of Jehoiakim *were* Jeconiah his son, Zedekiah his son.  
 17 The sons of Jeconiah, the prisoner, *were* Shealtiel his son,  
 18 and Malchiram, Pedaiah, Shenazzar, Jekamiah, Hoshama and Nedabiah.  
 19 The sons of Pedaiah *were* Zerubbabel and Shimei. And the sons of Zerubbabel *were* Meshullam and Hananiah, and Shelomith *was* their sister;  
 20 and Hashubah, Ohel, Berechiah, Hasadiah and Jushab-hesed, five.  
 21 The sons of Hananiah *were* Pelatiah and Jeshaiiah, the sons of Rephaiah, the sons of Arnan, the sons of Obadiah, the sons of Shecaniah.  
 22 The descendants of Shecaniah *were* Shemaiah, and the sons of Shemaiah: Hattush, Igal, Bariah, Neariah and Shaphat, six.  
 23 The sons of Neariah *were* Elioenai, Hizkiah and Azrikam, three.  
 24 The sons of Elioenai *were* 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 *were* Perez, Hezron, Carmi, Hur and Shobal.
- 2 Reaiah the son of Shobal became the father of Jahath, and Jahath became the father of Ahumai and Lahad. These *were* the families of the Zorathites.
- 3 These *were* the sons of Etam: Jezreel, Ishma and Idbash; and the name of their sister *was* Hazzelepni.
- 4 Penuel *was* the father of Gedor, and Ezer the father of Hushah. These *were* the sons of Hur, the firstborn of Ephrathah, the father of Bethlehem.
- 5 Ashhur, the father of Tekoa, had two wives, Helah and Naarah.
- 6 Naarah bore him Ahuzzam, Hephher, Temeni and Haahashtari. These were the sons of Naarah.
- 7 The sons of Helah *were* Zereth, Izhar and Ethnan.
- 8 Koz became the father of Anub and Zobebah, and the families of Aharhel the son of Harum.
- 9 Jabez was more honorable than his brothers, and his mother named him Jabez saying, "Because I bore *him* with pain."
- 10 Now Jabez called on the God of Israel, saying, "Oh that You would bless me indeed and enlarge my border, and that Your hand might be with me, and that You would keep *me* from harm that *it* may not pain me!" And God granted him what he requested.
- 11 Chelub the brother of Shuhah became the father of Mehir, who was the father of Eshton.
- 12 Eshton became the father of Beth-rapha and Paseah, and Tehinnah the father of Ir-nahash. These are the men of Recah.
- 13 Now the sons of Kenaz *were* Othniel and Seraiah. And the sons of Othniel *were* Hathath and Meonothai.
- 14 Meonothai became the father of Ophrah, and Seraiah became the father of Joab the father of Ge-harashim, for they were craftsmen.
- 15 The sons of Caleb the son of Jephunneh *were* Iru, Elah and Naam; and the son of Elah *was* Kenaz.
- 16 The sons of Jehallelel *were* Ziph and Ziphah, Tiria and Asarel.
- 17 The sons of Ezra *were* Jether, Mered, Ephher and Jalon. (And these are the sons of Bithia the daughter of Pharaoh, whom Mered took) and she conceived *and bore* Miriam, Shammai and Ishbah the father of Eshtemoa.
- 18 His Jewish wife bore Jered the father of Gedor, and Heber the father of Soco, and Jekuthiel the father of Zanoah.
- 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 *were* Amnon and Rinnah, Benhanan and Tilon. And the sons of Ishi *were* Zoheth and Ben-zoheth.
- 21 The sons of Shelah the son of Judah *were* Er the father of Lecah and Laadah the father of Mareshah, and the families of the house of the linen workers at Beth-ashbea;
- 22 and Jokim, the men of Cozeba, Joash, Saraph, who ruled in Moab, and Jashubi-lehem. And the records are ancient.
- 23 These were the potters and the inhabitants of Netaim and Gederah; they lived there with the king for his work.

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

1 Chronicles 4:24–43

- 24 The sons of Simeon *were* Nemuel and Jamin, Jarib, Zerah, Shaul;
- 25 Shallum his son, Mibsam his son, Mishma his son.
- 26 The sons of Mishma *were* Hammuel his son, Zaccur his son, Shimei his son.
- 27 Now Shimei had sixteen sons and six daughters; but his brothers did not have many sons, nor did all their family multiply like the sons of Judah.
- 28 They lived at Beersheba, Moladah and Hazar-shual,
- 29 at Bilhah, Ezem, Tolad,
- 30 Bethuel, Hormah, Ziklag,
- 31 Beth-marcaboth, Hazar-susim, Beth-biri and Shaaraim. These *were* their cities until the reign of David.
- 32 Their villages *were* Etam, Ain, Rimmon, Tochen and Ashan, five cities;
- 33 and all their villages that *were* around the same cities as far as Baal. These *were* their settlements, and they have their genealogy.
- 34 Meshobab and Jamlech and Joshah the son of Amaziah,
- 35 and Joel and Jehu the son of Joshibiah, the son of Seraiah, the son of Asiel,
- 36 and Elioenai, Jaakobah, Jeshohaiah, Asaiah, Adiel, Jesimiel, Benaiah,
- 37 Ziza the son of Shiphi, the son of Allon, the son of Jedaiah, the son of Shimri, the son of Shemaiah;
- 38 these mentioned by name *were* leaders in their families; and their fathers' houses increased greatly.
- 39 They went to the entrance of Gedor, even to the east side of the valley, to seek pasture for their flocks.
- 40 They found rich and good pasture, and the land was broad and quiet and peaceful; for those who lived there formerly *were* Hamites.
- 41 These, recorded by name, came in the days of Hezekiah king of Judah, and attacked their tents and the Meunites who were found there, and destroyed them utterly to this day, and lived in their place, because there was pasture there for their flocks.
- 42 From them, from the sons of Simeon, five hundred men went to Mount Seir, with Pelatiah, Neariah, Rephaiah and Uzziel, the sons of Ishi, as their leaders.

43 They destroyed the remnant of the Amalekites who escaped, and have lived there to this day.

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

1 Chronicles 5:1–10

1 Now the sons of Reuben the firstborn of Israel (for he was the firstborn, but because he defiled his father's bed, his birthright was given to the sons of Joseph the son of Israel; so that he is not enrolled in the genealogy according to the birthright.  
 2 Though Judah prevailed over his brothers, and from him *came* the leader, yet the birthright belonged to Joseph),  
 3 the sons of Reuben the firstborn of Israel *were* Hanoch and Pallu, Hezron and Carmi.  
 4 The sons of Joel *were* Shemaiah his son, Gog his son, Shimei his son,  
 5 Micah his son, Reaiah his son, Baal his son,  
 6 Beerah his son, whom Tilgath-pilneser king of Assyria carried away into exile; he was leader of the Reubenites.  
 7 His kinsmen by their families, in the genealogy of their generations, *were* Jeiel the chief, then Zechariah  
 8 and Bela the son of Azaz, the son of Shema, the son of Joel, who lived in Aroer, even to Nebo and Baal-meon.  
 9 To the east he settled as far as the entrance of the wilderness from the river Euphrates, because their cattle had increased in the land of Gilead.  
 10 In the days of Saul they made war with the Hagarites, who fell by their hand, so that they occupied their tents throughout all the land east of Gilead.

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

1 Chronicles 5:11–17

11 Now the sons of Gad lived opposite them in the land of Bashan as far as Salecah.  
 12 Joel *was* the chief and Shapham the second, then Janai and Shaphat in Bashan.  
 13 Their kinsmen of their fathers' households *were* Michael, Meshullam, Sheba, Jorai, Jacan, Zia and Eber, seven.  
 14 These *were* the sons of Abihail, the son of Huri, the son of Jaroah, the son of Gilead, the son of Michael, the son of Jeshishai, the son of Jahdo, the son of Buz;  
 15 Ahi the son of Abdiel, the son of Guni, *was* head of their fathers' households.  
 16 They lived in Gilead, in Bashan and in its towns, and in all the pasture lands of Sharon, as far as their borders.  
 17 All of these were enrolled in the genealogies 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 Now the sons of the half-tribe of Manasseh lived in the land; from Bashan to Baal-hermon and Senir and Mount Hermon they were numerous.  
 24 These were the heads of their fathers' households, even Ephraim, Ishi, Eliel, Azriel, Jeremiah, Hodaviah and Jahdiel, mighty men of valor, famous men, heads of their fathers' households.  
 25 But they acted treacherously against the God of their fathers and played the harlot 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 *were* Gershon, Kohath and Merari.  
 2 The sons of Kohath *were* Amram, Izhar, Hebron and Uzziel.  
 3a The children of Amram *were* Aaron, Moses and Miriam.  
 3b And the sons of Aaron *were* Nadab, Abihu, Eleazar and Ithamar.  
 4 Eleazar became the father of Phinehas, *and* Phinehas became the father of Abishua,  
 5 and Abishua became the father of Bukki, and Bukki became the father of Uzzi,  
 6 and Uzzi became the father of Zerariah, and Zerariah became the father of Meraioth,  
 7 Meraioth became the father of Amariah, and Amariah became the father of Ahitub,  
 8 and Ahitub became the father of Zadok, and Zadok became the father of Ahimaaz,  
 9 and Ahimaaz became the father of Azariah, and Azariah became the father of Johanan,  
 10 and Johanan became the father of Azariah (it was he who served as the priest in the house which Solomon built in Jerusalem),  
 11 and Azariah became the father of Amariah, and Amariah became the father of Ahitub,

12 and Ahitub became the father of Zadok, and Zadok became the father of Shallum,  
13 and Shallum became the father of Hilkiah, and Hilkiah became the father of Azariah,  
14 and Azariah became the father of Seraiah, and Seraiah became the father of Jehozadak;  
15 and Jehozadak went *along* when the LORD carried Judah and Jerusalem away into exile by Nebuchadnezzar.

**Clans of Gershom, Kohath and Merari**

16 The sons of Levi *were* Gershom, Kohath and Merari.  
17 These are the names of the sons of Gershom: Libni and Shimei.  
18 The sons of Kohath *were* Amram, Izhar, Hebron and Uzziel.  
19 The sons of Merari *were* Mahli and Mushi. And these are the families of the Levites according to their fathers' *households*.  
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 *were* Amminadab his son, Korah his son, Assir his son,  
23 Elkanah his son, Ebiasaph his son and Assir his son,  
24 Tahath his son, Uriel his son, Uzziyah his son and Shaul his son.  
25 The sons of Elkanah *were* Amasai and Ahimoth.  
26 *As for* Elkanah, the sons of Elkanah *were* Zophai his son and Nahath his son,  
27 Eliab his son, Jeroham his son, Elkanah his son.  
28 The sons of Samuel *were* Joel the firstborn, and Abijah the second.  
29 The sons of Merari *were* Mahli, Libni his son, Shimei his son, Uzzah his son,  
30 Shimea his son, Haggiah his son, Asaiah his son.

**List of High Priests from Aaron to David**

50 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 Now the sons of Issachar *were* four: Tola, Puah, Jashub and Shimron.
- 2 The sons of Tola *were* Uzzi, Rephaiah, Jeriel, Jahmai, Ibsam and Samuel, heads of their fathers' households. *The sons* of Tola *were* mighty men of valor in their generations; their number in the days of David was 22,600.
- 3 The son of Uzzi *was* Izrahiah. And the sons of Izrahiah *were* Michael, Obadiah, Joel, Isshiah; all five of them *were* chief men.
- 4 With them by their generations according to their fathers' households were 36,000 troops of the army for war, for they had many wives and sons.
- 5 Their relatives among all the families of Issachar *were* mighty men of valor, enrolled by genealogy, in all 87,000.

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

1 Chronicles 7:13

- 13 The sons of Naphtali *were* Jahziel, Guni, Jezer, and Shallum, the sons of Bilhah.

**Official Genealogical Records: West Manasseh's Descendants (c. 538 BC)**

1 Chronicles 7:14–19

- 14 The sons of Manasseh *were* Asriel, whom his Aramean concubine bore; she bore Machir the father of Gilead.
- 15 Machir took a wife for Huppim and Shuppim, whose sister's name was Maacah. And the name of the second was Zelophehad, and Zelophehad had daughters.
- 16 Maacah the wife of Machir bore a son, and she named him Peresh; and the name of his brother *was* Sheresh, and his sons *were* Ulam and Rakem.
- 17 The son of Ulam *was* Bedan. These *were* the sons of Gilead the son of Machir, the son of Manasseh.
- 18 His sister Hammolecheth bore Ishhod and Abiezer and Mahlah.
- 19 The sons of Shemida *were* Ahian and Shechem and Likhi and Aniam.

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

1 Chronicles 7:20–29

- 20 The sons of Ephraim *were* 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 whom the men of Gath who were born in the land killed, because they came down to take their livestock.
- 22 Their father Ephraim mourned many days, and his relatives came to comfort him.
- 23 Then he went in to his wife, and she conceived and bore a son, and he named him Beriah, because misfortune had come upon his house.
- 24 His daughter was Sheerah, who built lower and upper Beth-horon, also Uzen-sheerah.
- 25 Rephah *was* his son *along* with Resheph, Telah his son, Tahan his son,
- 26 Ladan his son, Ammihud his son, Elishama his son,
- 27 Non his son and Joshua his son.
- 28 Their possessions and settlements *were* Bethel with its towns, and to the east Naaran, and to the west Gezer with its towns, and Shechem with its towns as far as Ayyah with its towns,
- 29 and along the borders of the sons of Manasseh, Beth-shean with its towns, Taanach with its towns, Megiddo with its towns, Dor with 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 *were* Imnah, Ishvah, Ishvi and Beriah, and Serah their sister.
- 31 The sons of Beriah *were* Heber and Malchiel, who was the father of Birzaith.
- 32 Heber became the father of Japhlet, Shomer and Hotham, and Shua their sister.
- 33 The sons of Japhlet *were* Pasach, Bimhal and Ashvath. These were the sons of Japhlet.
- 34 The sons of Shemer *were* Ahi and Rohgah, Jehubbah and Aram.
- 35 The sons of his brother Helem *were* Zophah, Imna, Shelesh and Amal.
- 36 The sons of Zophah *were* Suah, Harnepher, Shual, Beri and Imrah,
- 37 Bezer, Hod, Shamma, Shilshah, Ithran and Beera.
- 38 The sons of Jether *were* Jephunneh, Pispah and Ara.

39 The sons of Ulla *were* Arah, Hanniel and Rizia.

40 All these *were* the sons of Asher, heads of the fathers' houses, choice and mighty men of valor, heads of the princes. And the number of them enrolled by genealogy for service in war was 26,000 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 were* three: Bela and Becher and Jediel.

7 The sons of Bela were five: Ezbon, Uzzi, Uzziel, Jerimoth and Iri. They *were* heads of fathers' households, mighty men of valor, and were 22,034 enrolled by genealogy.

8 The sons of Becher *were* Zemirah, Joash, Eliezer, Elioenai, Omri, Jeremoth, Abijah, Anathoth and Alemeth. All these *were* the sons of Becher.

9 They were enrolled by genealogy, according to their generations, heads of their fathers' households, 20,200 mighty men of valor.

10 The son of Jediel *was* Bilhan. And the sons of Bilhan *were* Jeush, Benjamin, Ehud, Chenaanah, Zethan, Tarshish and Ahishahar.

11 All these *were* sons of Jediel, according to the heads of their fathers' households, 17,200 mighty men of valor, who were ready to go out with the army to war.

12 Shuppim and Huppim *were* the sons of Ir; Hushim *was* the son of Aher.

#### Family Leaders

8:1 And Benjamin became the father of Bela his firstborn, Ashbel the second, Aharah the third,

2 Nohah the fourth and Rapha the fifth.

3 Bela had sons: Addar, Gera, Abihud,

4 Abishua, Naaman, Ahoah,

5 Gera, Shephuphan and Huram.

6 These are the sons of Ehud: these are the heads of fathers' *households* of the inhabitants of Geba, and they carried them into exile to Manahath,

7 namely, Naaman, Ahijah and Gera—he carried them into exile; and he became the father of Uzza and Ahihud.

8 Shaharaim became the father of children in the country of Moab after he had sent away Hushim and Baara his wives.

9 By Hodesh his wife he became the father of Jobab, Zibia, Mesha, Malcam,

10 Jeuz, Sachia, Mirmah. These were his sons, heads of fathers' *households*.

11 By Hushim he became the father of Abitub and Elpaal.

12 The sons of Elpaal *were* Eber, Misham, and Shemed, who built Ono and Lod, with its towns;

13 and Beriah and Shema, who were heads of fathers' *households* of the inhabitants of Aijalon, who put to flight the inhabitants of Gath;

14 and Ahio, Shashak and Jeremoth.

15 Zebadiah, Arad, Eder,

16 Michael, Ishpah and Joha *were* the sons of Beriah.

17 Zebadiah, Meshullam, Hizki, Heber,

18 Ishmerai, Izliah and Jobab *were* the sons of Elpaal.

19 Jakim, Zichri, Zabdi,

20 Elienai, Zillethai, Eliel,

21 Adaiah, Beraiah and Shimrath *were* the sons of Shimei.

22 Ishpan, Eber, Eliel,

23 Abdon, Zichri, Hanan,

24 Hananiah, Elam, Anthothijah,

25 Iphdeiah and Penuel *were* the sons of Shashak.

26 Shamsherai, Shehariah, Athaliah,

27 Jaarashiah, Elijah and Zichri *were* the sons of Jeroham.

28 These were heads of the fathers' *households* according to their generations, chief men who 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 Now in Gibeon, *Jeiel*, the father of Gibeon lived, and his wife's name was Maacah;

30 and his firstborn son *was* Abdon, then Zur, Kish, Baal,

35 In Gibeon Jeiel the father of Gibeon lived, and his wife's name was Maacah,

36 and his firstborn son *was* Abdon, then Zur, Kish, Baal, Ner,



<p>Nadab, 31 Gedor, Ahio and Zecher. 32 Mikloth became the father of Shimeah. And they also lived with their relatives in Jerusalem opposite their <i>other</i> relatives. 33a Ner became the father of Kish, and Kish became the father of Saul,</p> <p><b>Saul's Descendants</b> 33b and Saul became the father of Jonathan, Malchi-shua, Abinadab and Eshbaal. 34 The son of Jonathan <i>was</i> Merib-baal, and Merib-baal became the father of Micah. 35 The sons of Micah <i>were</i> Pithon, Melech, Tarea and Ahaz. 36 Ahaz became the father of Jehoaddah, and Jehoaddah became the father of Alemeth, Azmaveth and Zimri; and Zimri became the father of Moza. 37 Moza became the father of Binea; Raphah <i>was</i> his son, Eleasah his son, Azel his son. 38 Azel had six sons, and these <i>were</i> their names: Azrikam, Bocheru, Ishmael, Sheariah, Obadiah and Hanan. All these <i>were</i> the sons of Azel. 39 The sons of Eshek his brother <i>were</i> Ulam his firstborn, Jeush the second and Eliphelet the third. 40 The sons of Ulam were mighty men of valor, archers, and had many sons and grandsons, 150 <i>of them</i>. All these <i>were</i> of the sons of Benjamin.</p>	<p>Nadab, 37 Gedor, Ahio, Zechariah and Mikloth. 38 Mikloth became the father of Shimeam. And they also lived with their relatives in Jerusalem opposite their <i>other</i> relatives. 39 Ner became the father of Kish, and Kish became the father of Saul,</p> <p>39b and Saul became the father of Jonathan, Malchi-shua, Abinadab and Eshbaal. 40 The son of Jonathan <i>was</i> Merib-baal; and Merib-baal became the father of Micah. 41 The sons of Micah <i>were</i> Pithon, Melech, Tahrea <i>and</i> Ahaz. 42 Ahaz became the father of Jarah, and Jarah became the father of Alemeth, Azmaveth and Zimri; and Zimri became the father of Moza, 43 and Moza became the father of Binea and Rephaiah his son, Eleasah his son, Azel his son. 44 Azel had six sons whose names are these: Azrikam, Bocheru and Ishmael and Sheariah and Obadiah and Hanan. These were the sons of Azel.</p>
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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, of Median descent, who was made king over the kingdom of the Chaldeans—  
 2 in the first year of his reign, I, Daniel, observed in the books the number of the years which was *revealed* as the word of the LORD to Jeremiah the prophet for the completion of the desolations of Jerusalem, *namely*, seventy years. [[Jer 25:11–12; 29:10](#)]

#### Daniel's Prayer

3 So I gave my attention to the Lord God to seek *Him* by prayer and supplications, with fasting, sackcloth and ashes.  
 4 I prayed to the LORD my God and confessed and said, “Alas, O Lord, the great and awesome God, who keeps His covenant and lovingkindness for those who love Him and keep His commandments,  
 5 we have sinned, committed iniquity, acted wickedly and rebelled, even turning aside from Your commandments and ordinances. [cf. [1 Kgs 8:47](#)]  
 6 Moreover, we have not listened to Your servants the prophets, who spoke in Your name to our kings, our princes, our fathers and all the people of the land.  
 7 “Righteousness belongs to You, O Lord, but to us open shame, as it is this day—to the men of Judah, the inhabitants of Jerusalem and all Israel, those who are nearby and those who are far away in all the countries to which You have driven them, because of their unfaithful deeds which they have committed against You.  
 8 Open shame belongs to us, O Lord, to our kings, our princes and our fathers, because we have sinned against You.  
 9 To the Lord our God *belong* compassion and forgiveness, for we have rebelled against Him;  
 10 nor have we obeyed the voice of the LORD our God, to walk in His teachings which He set before us through His servants the prophets.  
 11 Indeed all Israel has transgressed Your law and turned aside, not obeying Your voice; so the curse has been poured out on us, along with the oath which is written in the law of Moses the servant of God, for we have sinned against Him.  
 12 Thus He has confirmed His words which He had spoken against us and against our rulers who ruled us, to bring on us great calamity; for under the whole heaven there has not been done *anything* like what was done to Jerusalem.  
 13 As it is written in the law of Moses, all this calamity has come on us; yet we have not sought the favor of the LORD our God by turning from our iniquity and giving attention to Your truth.  
 14 Therefore the LORD has kept the calamity in store and brought it on us; for the LORD our God is righteous with respect to all His deeds which He has done, but we have not obeyed His voice.  
 15 “And now, O Lord our God, who have brought Your people out of the land of Egypt with a mighty hand and have made a name for Yourself, as it is this day—we have sinned, we have been wicked.  
 16 O Lord, in accordance with all Your righteous acts, let now Your anger and Your wrath turn away from Your city Jerusalem, Your holy mountain; for because of our sins and the iniquities of our fathers, Jerusalem and Your people *have become* a reproach to all those around us.  
 17 So now, our God, listen to the prayer of Your servant and to his supplications, and for Your sake, O Lord, let Your face shine on Your desolate sanctuary.  
 18 O my God, incline Your ear and hear! Open Your eyes and see our desolations and the city which is called by Your name; for we are not presenting our supplications before You on account of any merits of our own, but on account of Your great compassion.  
 19 O Lord, hear! O Lord, forgive! O Lord, listen and take action! For Your own sake, O my God, do not delay, because Your city and Your people are called by Your name.”

#### Gabriel Comes in Answer to Daniel's Prayer

20 Now while I was speaking and praying, and confessing my sin and the sin of my people Israel, and presenting my supplication before the LORD my God in behalf of the holy mountain of my God,  
 21 while I was still speaking in prayer, then the man Gabriel, whom I had seen in the vision previously, came to me in *my* extreme weariness about the time of the evening offering.  
 22 He gave *me* instruction and talked with me and said, “O Daniel, I have now come forth to give you insight with understanding.  
 23 At the beginning of your supplications the command was issued, and I have come to tell *you*, for you are highly esteemed; so give heed to the message and gain understanding of the vision.  
 24 “Seventy weeks have been decreed for your people and your holy city, to finish the transgression, to make an end of sin, to make atonement for iniquity, to bring in everlasting righteousness, to seal up vision and prophecy and to anoint the most holy *place*.  
 25 So you are to know and discern *that* from the issuing of a decree to restore and rebuild Jerusalem until Messiah the Prince *there will be* seven weeks and sixty-two weeks; it will be built again, with plaza and moat, even in times of distress.  
 26 Then after the sixty-two weeks the Messiah will be cut off and have nothing, and the people of the prince who is to come will destroy the city and the sanctuary. And its end *will come* with a flood; even to the end there will be war; desolations are determined.  
 27 And he will make a firm covenant with the many for one week, but in the middle of the week he will put a stop to sacrifice and grain offering; and on the wing of abominations *will come* one who makes desolate, even until a complete destruction, one that is

decreed, is poured out on the one who makes desolate.” [\[Matt 24:15; Mark 13:14\]](#)

### Cyrus’ [Persia] Proclamation—the End of the Exile (c. May 538 BC)

2 Chronicles 36:20b–23

20b and they [the Jewish exiles] were servants to him [Nebuchadnezzar] and to his sons until the rule of the kingdom of Persia,  
 21 to fulfill the word of the LORD by the mouth of Jeremiah, until the land had enjoyed its sabbaths. All the days of its desolation it kept sabbath until seventy years were complete.  
 22 Now in the first year of Cyrus king of Persia—in order to fulfill the word of the LORD by the mouth of Jeremiah—the LORD stirred up the spirit of Cyrus king of Persia, so that he sent a proclamation throughout his kingdom, and also *put it* in writing, saying,  
 23 “Thus says Cyrus king of Persia, ‘The LORD, the God of heaven, has given me all the kingdoms of the earth, and He has appointed me to build Him a house in Jerusalem, which is in Judah. Whoever there is among you of all His people, may the LORD his God be with him, and let him go up!’”

Ezra 1:1–4

1 Now in the first year of Cyrus king of Persia, in order to fulfill the word of the LORD by the mouth of Jeremiah, the LORD stirred up the spirit of Cyrus king of Persia, so that he sent a proclamation throughout all his kingdom, and also *put it* in writing, saying:  
 2 “Thus says Cyrus king of Persia, ‘The LORD, the God of heaven, has given me all the kingdoms of the earth and He has appointed me to build Him a house in Jerusalem, which is in Judah.  
 3 Whoever there is among you of all His people, may his God be with him! Let him go up to Jerusalem which is in Judah and rebuild the house of the LORD, the God of Israel; He is the God who is in Jerusalem.  
 4 Every survivor, at whatever place he may live, let the men of that place support him with silver and gold, with goods and cattle, together with a 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 Then the heads of fathers’ *households* of Judah and Benjamin and the priests and the Levites arose, even everyone whose spirit God had stirred to go up and rebuild the house of the LORD which is in Jerusalem.  
 6 All those about them encouraged them with articles of silver, with gold, with goods, with cattle and with valuables, aside from all that was given as a freewill offering.  
 7 Also King Cyrus brought out the articles of the house of the LORD, which Nebuchadnezzar had carried away from Jerusalem and put in the house of his gods;  
 8 and Cyrus, king of Persia, had them brought out by the hand of Mithredath the treasurer, and he counted them out to Sheshbazzar, the prince of Judah.  
 9 Now this *was* their number: 30 gold dishes, 1,000 silver dishes, 29 duplicates;  
 10 30 gold bowls, 410 silver bowls of a second *kind* and 1,000 other articles.  
 11 All the articles of gold and silver *numbered* 5,400. Sheshbazzar brought them all up with the exiles who went up from Babylon to Jerusalem.

### The Return of the Exiles Under Zerubbabel – Part 1 (Spring 537 BC)

Ezra 2:1–35

#### Leadership

1 Now these are the people of the province who came up out of the captivity of the exiles whom Nebuchadnezzar the king of Babylon had carried away to Babylon, and returned to Jerusalem and Judah, each to his city.  
 2a These came with Zerubbabel, Jeshua, Nehemiah, Seraiah, Reelaiah, Mordecai, Bilshan, Mispar, Bigvai,

Nehemiah 7:5b–38

5b Then I found the book of the genealogy of those who came up first in which I found the following record:  
 6 These are the people of the province who came up from the captivity of the exiles whom Nebuchadnezzar the king of Babylon had carried away, and who returned to Jerusalem and Judah, each to his city,  
 7a who came with Zerubbabel, Jeshua, Nehemiah, Azariah, Raamiah, Nahamani, Mordecai, Bilshan, Mispereth, Bigvai,

Rehum <i>and</i> Baanah.	Nehum, Baanah.
<b>General Population</b>	
2b The number of the men of the people of Israel:	7b The number of men of the people of Israel:
3 the sons of Parosh, 2,172;	8 the sons of Parosh, 2,172;
4 the sons of Shephatiah, 372;	9 the sons of Shephatiah, 372;
5 the sons of Arah, 775;	10 the sons of Arah, 652;
6 the sons of Pahath-moab	11 the sons of Pahath-moab
of the sons of Jeshua <i>and</i> Joab, 2,812;	of the sons of Jeshua and Joab, 2,818;
7 the sons of Elam, 1,254;	12 the sons of Elam, 1,254;
8 the sons of Zattu, 945;	13 the sons of Zattu, 845;
9 the sons of Zaccai, 760;	14 the sons of Zaccai, 760;
10 the sons of Bani, 642;	15 the sons of Binnui, 648;
11 the sons of Bebai, 623;	16 the sons of Bebai, 628;
12 the sons of Azgad, 1,222;	17 the sons of Azgad, 2,322;
13 the sons of Adonikam, 666;	18 the sons of Adonikam, 667;
14 the sons of Bigvai, 2,056;	19 the sons of Bigvai, 2,067;
15 the sons of Adin, 454;	20 the sons of Adin, 655;
16 the sons of Ater of Hezekiah, 98;	21 the sons of Ater, of Hezekiah, 98;
17 the sons of Bezai, 323;	23 the sons of Bezai, 324;
18 the sons of Jorah, 112;	24 the sons of Hariph, 112;
19 the sons of Hashum, 223;	22 the sons of Hashum, 328;
20 the sons of Gibbar, 95;	25 the sons of Gibeon, 95;
21 the men of Bethlehem, 123;	26 the men of Bethlehem
22 the men of Netophah, 56;	and Netophah, 188;
23 the men of Anathoth, 128;	27 the men of Anathoth, 128;
24 the sons of Azmaveth, 42;	28 the men of Beth-azmaveth, 42;
25 the sons of Kiriath-arim, Chephirah and Beeroth, 743;	29 the men of Kiriath-jearim, Chephirah and Beeroth, 743;
26 the sons of Ramah and Geba, 621;	30 the men of Ramah and Geba, 621;
27 the men of Michmas, 122;	31 the men of Michmas, 122;
28 the men of Bethel and Ai, 223;	32 the men of Bethel and Ai, 123;
29 the sons of Nebo, 52;	33 the men of the other Nebo, 52;
30 the sons of Magbish, 156;	
31 the sons of the other Elam, 1,254;	34 the sons of the other Elam, 1,254;
32 the sons of Harim, 320;	35 the sons of Harim, 320;
33 the sons of Lod, Hadid and Ono, 725;	37 the sons of Lod, Hadid and Ono, 721;
34 the men of Jericho, 345;	36 the men of Jericho, 345;
35 the sons of Senaah, 3,630.	38 the sons of Senaah, 3,930.

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### **Chronological Notes**

#### 1) Ezra's Calendar.

- A) I am currently of the opinion that Ezra used a Tishri-to-Tishri (Fall-to-Fall) calendar.<sup>1</sup> 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-

<sup>1</sup> 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.

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.<sup>2</sup>

- 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.

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<sup>2</sup> 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* 51.3 (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 sons of Jedaiah of the house of Jeshua, 973;  
 37 the sons of Immer, 1,052;  
 38 the sons of Pashhur, 1,247;  
 39 the sons of Harim, 1,017.

**Levites**

40 The Levites: the sons of Jeshua and Kadmiel,  
 of the sons of Hodaviah, 74.  
 41 The singers: the sons of Asaph, 128.  
 42 The sons of the gatekeepers: the sons of Shallum,  
 the sons of Ater, the sons of Talmon, the sons of Akkub,  
 the sons of Hatita, the sons of Shobai, in all 139.

**Temple Servants**

43 The temple servants: the sons of Ziha, the sons of Hasupha,  
 the sons of Tabbaoth,  
 44 the sons of Keros, the sons of Siaha, the sons of Padon,  
 45 the sons of Lebanah, the sons of Hagabah,  
 the sons of Akkub,  
 46 the sons of Hagab,  
 the sons of Shalmai,  
 the sons of Hanan,  
 47 the sons of Giddel, the sons of Gahar,  
 the sons of Reaiah,  
 48 the sons of Rezin, the sons of Nekoda,  
 the sons of Gazzam,  
 49 the sons of Uzza, the sons of Paseah,  
 the sons of Besai,  
 50 the sons of Asnah,  
 the sons of Meunim, the sons of Nephisim,  
 51 the sons of Bakbuk, the sons of Hakupha, the sons of Harhur,  
 52 the sons of Bazluth, the sons of Mehida, the sons of Harsha,  
 53 the sons of Barkos, the sons of Sisera, the sons of Temah,  
 54 the sons of Neziah, the sons of Hatipha.

**Descendants of Solomon's Servants**

55 The sons of Solomon's servants: the sons of Sotai,  
 the sons of Hassophereth, the sons of Peruda,  
 56 the sons of Jaalah, the sons of Darkon, the sons of Giddel,  
 57 the sons of Shephatiah, the sons of Hattil,  
 the sons of Pochereth-hazzebaim, the sons of Ami.  
 58 All the temple servants and the sons of Solomon's servants  
 were 392.

**Israelites of Doubtful Origin**

59 Now these are those who came up from Tel-melah,  
 Tel-harsha, Cherub, Addan *and* Immer,  
 but they were not able to give evidence of their fathers'  
 households and their descendants, whether they were of Israel:  
 60 the sons of Delaiah, the sons of Tobiah,  
 the sons of Nekoda, 652.

**Priests of Doubtful Origin**

61 Of the sons of the priests: the sons of Habaiah,  
 the sons of Hakkoz, the sons of Barzillai, who took a wife  
 from the daughters of Barzillai the Gileadite,  
 and he was called by their name.

39 The priests: the sons of Jedaiah of the house of Jeshua, 973;  
 40 the sons of Immer, 1,052;  
 41 the sons of Pashhur, 1,247;  
 42 the sons of Harim, 1,017.

43 The Levites: the sons of Jeshua, of Kadmiel,  
 of the sons of Hodevah, 74.  
 44 The singers: the sons of Asaph, 148.  
 45 The gatekeepers: the sons of Shallum,  
 the sons of Ater, the sons of Talmon, the sons of Akkub,  
 the sons of Hatita, the sons of Shobai, 138.

46 The temple servants: the sons of Ziha, the sons of Hasupha,  
 the sons of Tabbaoth,  
 47 the sons of Keros, the sons of Sia, the sons of Padon,  
 48 the sons of Lebana, the sons of Hagaba,

the sons of Shalmai,  
 49 the sons of Hanan,  
 the sons of Giddel, the sons of Gahar,  
 50 the sons of Reaiah,  
 the sons of Rezin, the sons of Nekoda,  
 51 the sons of Gazzam,  
 the sons of Uzza, the sons of Paseah,  
 52 the sons of Besai,

the sons of Meunim, the sons of Nephushesim,  
 53 the sons of Bakbuk, the sons of Hakupha, the sons of Harhur,  
 54 the sons of Bazlith, the sons of Mehida, the sons of Harsha,  
 55 the sons of Barkos, the sons of Sisera, the sons of Temah,  
 56 the sons of Neziah, the sons of Hatipha.

57 The sons of Solomon's servants: the sons of Sotai,  
 the sons of Sophereth, the sons of Perida,  
 58 the sons of Jaala, the sons of Darkon, the sons of Giddel,  
 59 the sons of Shephatiah, the sons of Hattil,  
 the sons of Pochereth-hazzebaim, the sons of Amon.  
 60 All the temple servants and the sons of Solomon's servants  
 were 392.

61 These *were* they who came up from Tel-melah,  
 Tel-harsha, Cherub, Addon and Immer;  
 but they could not show their fathers'  
 houses or their descendants, whether they were of Israel:  
 62 the sons of Delaiah, the sons of Tobiah,  
 the sons of Nekoda, 642.

63 Of the priests: the sons of Hobaiah,  
 the sons of Hakkoz, the sons of Barzillai, who took a wife  
 of the daughters of Barzillai, the Gileadite,  
 and was named after them.

<p>62 These searched <i>among</i> their ancestral registration, but they could not be located; therefore they were considered unclean <i>and excluded</i> from the priesthood.</p> <p>63 The governor said to them that they should not eat from the most holy things until a priest stood up with Urim and Thummim.</p> <p><b>Totals</b></p> <p>64 The whole assembly numbered 42,360, 65 besides their male and female servants who numbered 7,337; and they had 200 singing men and women.</p> <p>66 Their horses were 736; their mules, 245; 67 their camels, 435; <i>their</i> donkeys, 6,720.</p> <p><b>Arrival in Jerusalem</b></p> <p>68 Some of the heads of fathers' <i>households</i>, when they arrived at the house of the LORD which is in Jerusalem, offered willingly for the house of God to restore it on its foundation.</p> <p>69 According to their ability they gave to the treasury for the work 61,000 gold drachmas and 5,000 silver minas and 100 priestly garments.</p> <p>70 Now the priests and the Levites, some of the people, the singers, the gatekeepers and the temple servants lived in their cities, and all Israel in their cities.</p>	<p>64 These searched <i>among</i> their ancestral registration, but it could not be located; therefore they were considered unclean <i>and excluded</i> from the priesthood.</p> <p>65 The governor said to them that they should not eat from the most holy things until a priest arose with Urim and Thummim.</p> <p>66 The whole assembly together <i>was</i> 42,360, 67 besides their male and their female servants, of whom <i>there were</i> 7,337; and they had 245 male and female singers.</p> <p>68 Their horses were 736; their mules, 245; 69 <i>their</i> camels, 435; <i>their</i> donkeys, 6,720.</p> <p>70 Some from among the heads of fathers' <i>households</i> gave to the work.</p> <p>The governor gave to the treasury 1,000 gold drachmas, 50 basins, 530 priests' garments.</p> <p>71 Some of the heads of fathers' <i>households</i> gave into the treasury of the work 20,000 gold drachmas and 2,200 silver minas.</p> <p>72 That which the rest of the people gave was 20,000 gold drachmas and 2,000 silver minas and 67 priests' garments.</p> <p>73a Now the priests, the Levites, the gatekeepers, the singers, some of the people, the temple servants and all Israel, lived in their cities.</p>
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## Altar Rebuilt and Normal Sacrificial Activities Resumed (September 537 BC)

Ezra 3:1–7

### The Rebuilding of the Altar

- 1 Now when the seventh month came, and the sons of Israel *were* in the cities, the people gathered together as one man to Jerusalem.
- 2 Then Jeshua the son of Jozadak and his brothers the priests, and Zerubbabel the son of Shealtiel and his brothers arose and built the altar of the God of Israel to offer burnt offerings on it, as it is written in the law of Moses, the man of God.
- 3 So they set up the altar on its foundation, for they were terrified because of the peoples of the lands; and they offered burnt offerings on it to the LORD, burnt offerings morning and evening.

### The Festival of Booths

- 4 They celebrated the Feast of Booths, as it is written, and *offered* the fixed number of burnt offerings daily, according to the ordinance, as each day required;
- 5 and afterward *there was* a continual burnt offering, also for the new moons and for all the fixed festivals of the LORD that were consecrated, and from everyone who offered a freewill offering to the LORD.
- 6a From the first day of the seventh month they began to offer burnt offerings to the LORD,

### The Beginning of Temple Reconstruction

- 6b but the foundation of the temple of the LORD had not been laid.
- 7 Then they gave money to the masons and carpenters, and food, drink and oil to the Sidonians and to the Tyrians, to bring cedar wood from Lebanon to the sea at Joppa, according to the permission they had from 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 king of Persia a message was revealed to Daniel, who was named Belteshazzar; and the message was true and *one of great conflict*, but he understood the message and had an understanding of the vision.

2 In those days, I, Daniel, had been mourning for three entire weeks.

3 I did not eat any tasty food, nor did meat or wine enter my mouth, nor did I use any ointment at all until the entire three weeks were completed.

## Introduction to Daniel's Final Vision (April 23, 536 BC)

Daniel 10:4–11:1

### Vision of the Heavenly Being

10:4 On the twenty-fourth day of the first month, while I was by the bank of the great river, that is, the Tigris,

5 I lifted my eyes and looked, and behold, there was a certain man dressed in linen, whose waist was girded with *a belt of pure gold of Uphaz*.

6 His body also *was like beryl*, his face had the appearance of lightning, his eyes were like flaming torches, his arms and feet like the gleam of polished bronze, and the sound of his words like the sound of a tumult.

7 Now I, Daniel, alone saw the vision, while the men who were with me did not see the vision; nevertheless, a great dread fell on them, and they ran away to hide themselves.

8 So I was left alone and saw this great vision; yet no strength was left in me, for my natural color turned to a deathly pallor, and I retained no strength.

9 But I heard the sound of his words; and as soon as I heard the sound of his words, I fell into a deep sleep on my face, with my face to the ground.

### The Interpreting Angel's Explanation

10 Then behold, a hand touched me and set me trembling on my hands and knees.

11 He said to me, "O Daniel, man of high esteem, understand the words that I am about to tell you and stand upright, for I have now been sent to you." And when he had spoken this word to me, I stood up trembling.

12 Then he said to me, "Do not be afraid, Daniel, for from the first day that you set your heart on understanding *this* and on humbling yourself before your God, your words were heard, and I have come in response to your words.

13 But the prince of the kingdom of Persia was withstanding me for twenty-one days; then behold, Michael, one of the chief princes, came to help me, for I had been left there with the kings of Persia.

14 Now I have come to give you an understanding of what will happen to your people in the latter days, for the vision pertains to the days yet *future*."

### Daniel Strengthened to Understand the Vision

15 When he had spoken to me according to these words, I turned my face toward the ground and became speechless.

16 And behold, one who resembled a human being was touching my lips; then I opened my mouth and spoke and said to him who was standing before me, "O my lord, as a result of the vision anguish has come upon me, and I have retained no strength.

17 For how can such a servant of my lord talk with such as my lord? As for me, there remains just now no strength in me, nor has any breath been left in me."

18 Then *this* one with human appearance touched me again and strengthened me.

19 He said, "O man of high esteem, do not be afraid. Peace be with you; take courage and be courageous!" Now as soon as he spoke to me, I received strength and said, "May my lord speak, for you have strengthened me."

20 Then he said, "Do you understand why I came to you? But I shall now return to fight against the prince of Persia; so I am going forth, and behold, the prince of Greece is about to come.

21 However, I will tell you what is inscribed in the writing of truth. Yet there is no one who stands firmly with me against these *forces* except Michael your prince.

11:1 "In the first year of Darius the Mede, I arose to be an encouragement and 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 tell you the truth. Behold, three more kings are going to arise in Persia. Then a fourth will gain far more riches than all of *them*; as soon as he becomes strong through his riches, he will arouse the whole *empire* against the realm of Greece.

### Concerning Greece (Alexander the Great)

3 And a mighty king will arise, and he will rule with great authority and do as he pleases.



4 But as soon as he has arisen, his kingdom will be broken up and parceled out toward the four points of the compass, though not to his *own* descendants, nor according to his authority which he wielded, for his sovereignty will be uprooted and *given* to others besides them.

#### Concerning Egypt and Syria (The Ptolemies and the Seleucids)

5 “Then the king of the South will grow strong, along with *one* of his princes who will gain ascendancy over him and obtain dominion; his domain *will be* a great dominion *indeed*.

6 After some years they will form an alliance, and the daughter of the king of the South will come to the king of the North to carry out a peaceful arrangement. But she will not retain her position of power, nor will he remain with his power, but she will be given up, along with those who brought her in and the one who sired her as well as he who supported her in *those* times.

7 But one of the descendants of her line will arise in his place, and he will come against *their* army and enter the fortress of the king of the North, and he will deal with them and display *great* strength.

8 Also their gods with their metal images *and* their precious vessels of silver and gold he will take into captivity to Egypt, and he on his part will refrain from *attacking* the king of the North for *some* years.

9 Then the latter will enter the realm of the king of the South, but will return to his *own* land.

10 “His sons will mobilize and assemble a multitude of great forces; and one of them will keep on coming and overflow and pass through, that he may again wage war up to his *very* fortress.

11 The king of the South will be enraged and go forth and fight with the king of the North. Then the latter will raise a great multitude, but *that* multitude will be given into the hand of the *former*.

12 When the multitude is carried away, his heart will be lifted up, and he will cause tens of thousands to fall; yet he will not prevail.

13 For the king of the North will again raise a greater multitude than the former, and after an interval of some years he will press on with a great army and much equipment.

14 “Now in those times many will rise up against the king of the South; the violent ones among your people will also lift themselves up in order to fulfill the vision, but they will fall down.

15 Then the king of the North will come, cast up a siege ramp and capture a well-fortified city; and the forces of the South will not stand *their ground*, not even their choicest troops, for there will be no strength to make a stand.

16 But he who comes against him will do as he pleases, and no one will *be able to* withstand him; he will also stay *for a time* in the Beautiful Land, with destruction in his hand.

17 He will set his face to come with the power of his whole kingdom, bringing with him a proposal of peace which he will put into effect; he will also give him the daughter of women to ruin it. But she will not take a stand *for him* or be on his side.

18 Then he will turn his face to the coastlands and capture many. But a commander will put a stop to his scorn against him; moreover, he will repay him for his scorn.

19 So he will turn his face toward the fortresses of his own land, but he will stumble and fall and be found no more.

20 “Then in his place one will arise who will send an oppressor through the Jewel of *his* kingdom; yet within a few days he will be shattered, though not in anger nor in battle.

#### Concerning Antiochus IV Epiphanes

21 In his place a despicable person will arise, on whom the honor of kingship has not been conferred, but he will come in a time of tranquility and seize the kingdom by intrigue.

22 The overflowing forces will be flooded away before him and shattered, and also the prince of the covenant.

23 After an alliance is made with him he will practice deception, and he will go up and gain power with a small *force of* people.

24 In a time of tranquility he will enter the richest *parts* of the realm, and he will accomplish what his fathers never did, nor his ancestors; he will distribute plunder, booty and possessions among them, and he will devise his schemes against strongholds, but *only* for a time.

25 He will stir up his strength and courage against the king of the South with a large army; so the king of the South will mobilize an extremely large and mighty army for war; but he will not stand, for schemes will be devised against him.

26 Those who eat his choice food will destroy him, and his army will overflow, but many will fall down slain.

27 As for both kings, their hearts will be *intent* on evil, and they will speak lies *to each other* at the same table; but it will not succeed, for the end is still *to come* at the appointed time.

28 Then he will return to his land with much plunder; but his heart will be *set* against the holy covenant, and he will take action and *then* return to his *own* land.

29 “At the appointed time he will return and come into the South, but this last time it will not turn out the way it did before.

30 For ships of Kittim will come against him; therefore he will be disheartened and will return and become enraged at the holy covenant and take action; so he will come back and show regard for those who forsake the holy covenant.

31 Forces from him will arise, desecrate the sanctuary fortress, and do away with the regular sacrifice. And they will set up the abomination of desolation. [[Matt 24:15](#); [Mark 13:14](#)]

32 By smooth *words* he will turn to godlessness those who act wickedly toward the covenant, but the people who know their God will display strength and take action.

33 Those who have insight among the people will give understanding to the many; yet they will fall by sword and by flame, by

captivity and by plunder for *many* days.

34 Now when they fall they will be granted a little help, and many will join with them in hypocrisy.

35 Some of those who have insight will fall, in order to refine, purge and make them pure until the end time; because *it is still to come* at the appointed time.

#### Concerning the End Times (The Antichrist)

36 “Then the king will do as he pleases, and he will exalt and magnify himself above every god and will speak monstrous things against the God of gods; and he will prosper until the indignation is finished, for that which is decreed will be done.

37 He will show no regard for the gods of his fathers or for the desire of women, nor will he show regard for any *other* god; for he will magnify himself above *them* all.

38 But instead he will honor a god of fortresses, a god whom his fathers did not know; he will honor *him* with gold, silver, costly stones and treasures.

39 He will take action against the strongest of fortresses with *the help of* a foreign god; he will give great honor to those who acknowledge *him* and will cause them to rule over the many, and will parcel out land for a price.

40 “At the end time the king of the South will collide with him, and the king of the North will storm against him with chariots, with horsemen and with many ships; and he will enter countries, overflow *them* and pass through.

41 He will also enter the Beautiful Land, and many *countries* will fall; but these will be rescued out of his hand: Edom, Moab and the foremost of the sons of Ammon.

42 Then he will stretch out his hand against *other* countries, and the land of Egypt will not escape.

43 But he will gain control over the hidden treasures of gold and silver and over all the precious things of Egypt; and Libyans and Ethiopians *will follow* at his heels.

44 But rumors from the East and from the North will disturb him, and he will go forth with great wrath to destroy and annihilate many.

45 He will pitch the tents of his royal pavilion between the seas and the beautiful Holy Mountain; yet he will come to his end, and no one will help him.

12:1 “Now at that time Michael, the great prince who stands *guard* over the sons of your people, will arise. And there will be a time of distress such as never occurred since there was a nation until that time; and at that time your people, everyone who is found written in the book, will be rescued.

2 Many of those who sleep in the dust of the ground will awake, these to everlasting life, but the others to disgrace *and* everlasting contempt.

3 Those who have insight will shine brightly like the brightness of the expanse of heaven, and those who lead the many to righteousness, 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 as for you, Daniel, conceal these words and seal up the book until the end of time; many will go back and forth, and knowledge will increase.”

#### Duration of the “Time of Distress”

5 Then I, Daniel, looked and behold, two others were standing, one on this bank of the river and the other on that bank of the river.

6 And one said to the man dressed in linen, who was above the waters of the river, “How long *will it be* until the end of *these* wonders?”

7 I heard the man dressed in linen, who was above the waters of the river, as he raised his right hand and his left toward heaven, and swore by Him who lives forever that it would be for a time, times, and half *a time*; and as soon as they finish shattering the power of the holy people, all these *events* will be completed.

#### Daniel’s Last Question

8 As for me, I heard but could not understand; so I said, “My lord, what *will be* the outcome of these *events*?”

9 He said, “Go *your way*, Daniel, for *these* words are concealed and sealed up until the end time.

10 Many will be purged, purified and refined, but the wicked will act wickedly; and none of the wicked will understand, but those who have insight will understand.

11 From the time that the regular sacrifice is abolished and the abomination of desolation is set up, *there will be* 1,290 days.

12 How blessed is he who keeps waiting and attains to the 1,335 days! [[Matt 24:15](#); [Mark 13:14](#)]

13 But as for you, go *your way* to the end; then you will enter into rest and rise *again* for your allotted portion at the end of the age.”

## The Foundation of the Second Temple is Laid (May 536 BC)

Ezra 3:8–13

8 Now in the second year of their coming to the house of God at Jerusalem in the second month, Zerubbabel the son of Shealtiel and Jeshua the son of Jozadak and the rest of their brothers the priests and the Levites, and all who came from the captivity to Jerusalem, began *the work* and appointed the Levites from twenty years and older to oversee the work of the house of the LORD.  
 9 Then Jeshua *with* his sons and brothers stood united *with* Kadmiel and his sons, the sons of Judah *and* the sons of Henadad *with* their sons and brothers the Levites, to oversee the workmen in the temple of God.  
 10 Now when the builders had laid the foundation of the temple of the LORD, the priests stood in their apparel with trumpets, and the Levites, the sons of Asaph, with cymbals, to praise the LORD according to the directions of King David of Israel.  
 11 They sang, praising and giving thanks to the LORD, *saying*, “For He is good, for His lovingkindness is upon Israel forever.” And all the people shouted with a great shout when they praised the LORD because the foundation of the house of the LORD was laid.  
 12 Yet many of the priests and Levites and heads of fathers’ *households*, the old men who had seen the first temple, wept with a loud voice when the foundation of this house was laid before their eyes, while many shouted aloud for joy,  
 13 so that the people could not distinguish the sound of the shout of joy from the sound of the weeping of the people, for the people shouted with a loud shout, and the sound was heard far away.

## Restore Us, O Lord (c. May 536 BC)

Psalms 126

### A Song of Ascents.

- 1 When the LORD brought back the captive ones of Zion,  
We were like those who dream.
- 2 Then our mouth was filled with laughter  
And our tongue with joyful shouting;  
Then they said among the nations,  
“The LORD has done great things for them.”
- 3 The LORD has done great things for us;  
We are glad.
- 4 Restore our captivity, O LORD,  
As the streams in the South.
- 5 Those who sow in tears shall reap with joyful shouting.
- 6 He who goes to and fro weeping, carrying *his* bag of seed,  
Shall indeed come again with a shout of joy, bringing his sheaves *with him*.

## Temple Construction Halted by Local Enemies (536–520 BC)

Ezra 4:1–5, 24

1 Now when the enemies of Judah and Benjamin heard that the people of the exile were building a temple to the LORD God of Israel,  
 2 they approached Zerubbabel and the heads of fathers’ *households*, and said to them, “Let us build with you, for we, like you, seek your God; and we have been sacrificing to Him since the days of Esarhaddon king of Assyria, who brought us up here.”  
 3 But Zerubbabel and Jeshua and the rest of the heads of fathers’ *households* of Israel said to them, “You have nothing in common with us in building a house to our God; but we ourselves will together build to the LORD God of Israel, as King Cyrus, the king of Persia has commanded us.”  
 4 Then the people of the land discouraged the people of Judah, and frightened them from building,  
 5 and hired counselors against them to frustrate their counsel all the days of Cyrus king of Persia, even until the reign of Darius king of Persia.  
 24 Then work on the house of God in Jerusalem ceased, and it was stopped 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 When the prophets, Haggai the prophet and Zechariah the son of Iddo, prophesied to the Jews who were in Judah and 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 Darius the king, on the first day of the sixth month, the word of the LORD came by the prophet Haggai to Zerubbabel the son of Shealtiel, governor of Judah, and to Joshua the son of Jehozadak, the high priest, saying,

2 “Thus says the LORD of hosts, ‘This people says, “The time has not come, *even* the time for the house of the LORD to be rebuilt.”’”

3 Then the word of the LORD came by Haggai the prophet, saying,

4 “Is it time for you yourselves to dwell in your paneled houses while this house *lies* desolate?”

5 Now therefore, thus says the LORD of hosts, “Consider your ways!

6 You have sown much, but harvest little; *you* eat, but *there is* not *enough* to be satisfied; *you* drink, but *there is* not *enough* to become drunk; *you* put on clothing, but no one is warm *enough*; and he who earns, earns wages *to put* into a purse with holes.”

7 Thus says the LORD of hosts, “Consider your ways!

8 Go up to the mountains, bring wood and rebuild the temple, that I may be pleased with it and be glorified,” says the LORD.

9 “*You* look for much, but behold, *it comes* to little; when you bring *it* home, I blow it *away*. Why?” declares the LORD of hosts, “Because of My house which *lies* desolate, while each of you runs to his own house.

10 Therefore, because of you the sky has withheld its dew and the earth has withheld its produce.

11 I called for a drought on the land, on the mountains, on the grain, on the new wine, on the oil, on what the ground produces, on men, on cattle, and on all the labor of your hands.”

12 Then Zerubbabel the son of Shealtiel, and Joshua the son of Jehozadak, the high priest, with all the remnant of the people, obeyed the voice of the LORD their God and the words of Haggai the prophet, as the LORD their God had sent him. And the people showed reverence for the LORD.

13 Then Haggai, the messenger of the LORD, spoke by the commission of the LORD to the people saying, “‘I am with you,’ declares the LORD.”

## Work Begins Again on the Temple (September 21, 520 BC)

Haggai 1:14–15

Ezra 5:2

14 So the LORD stirred up the spirit of Zerubbabel the son of Shealtiel, governor of Judah, and the spirit of Joshua the son of Jehozadak, the high priest, and the spirit of all the remnant of the people; and they came and worked on the house of the LORD of hosts, their God,

15 on the twenty-fourth day of the sixth month in the second year of Darius the king.

2 then Zerubbabel the son of Shealtiel and Jeshua the son of Jozadak arose and began to rebuild the house of God which is in Jerusalem; and the prophets of God were with them supporting them.

## Tattenai Questions the Remnant's Authority to Rebuild the Temple (c. October 520 BC)

Ezra 5:3–17

3 At that time Tattenai, the governor of *the province* beyond the River, and Shethar-bozenai and their colleagues came to them and spoke to them thus, “Who issued you a decree to rebuild this temple and to finish this structure?”

4 Then we told them accordingly what the names of the men were who were reconstructing this building.

5 But the eye of their God was on the elders of the Jews, and they did not stop them until a report could come to Darius, and then a written reply be returned concerning it.

6 *This is* the copy of the letter which Tattenai, the governor of *the province* beyond the River, and Shethar-bozenai and his colleagues the officials, who were beyond the River, sent to Darius the king.

7 They sent a report to him in which it was written thus: “To Darius the king, all peace.

8 Let it be known to the king that we have gone to the province of Judah, to the house of the great God, which is being built with huge stones, and beams are being laid in the walls; and this work is going on with great care and is succeeding in their hands.

9 Then we asked those elders and said to them thus, ‘Who issued you a decree to rebuild this temple and to finish this structure?’

10 We also asked them their names so as to inform you, and that we might write down the names of the men who were at their head.

11 Thus they answered us, saying, ‘We are the servants of the God of heaven and earth and are rebuilding the temple that was built many years ago, which a great king of Israel built and finished.

12 But because our fathers had provoked the God of heaven to wrath, He gave them into the hand of Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon, the Chaldean, *who* destroyed this temple and deported the people to Babylon.

13 However, in the first year of Cyrus king of Babylon, King Cyrus issued a decree to rebuild this house of God.

14 Also the gold and silver utensils of the house of God which Nebuchadnezzar had taken from the temple in Jerusalem, and brought them to the temple of Babylon, these King Cyrus took from the temple of Babylon and they were given to one whose name was Sheshbazzar, whom he had appointed governor.

15 He said to him, "Take these utensils, go *and* deposit them in the temple in Jerusalem and let the house of God be rebuilt in its place."

16 Then that Sheshbazzar came *and* laid the foundations of the house of God in Jerusalem; and from then until now it has been under construction and it is not *yet* completed.'

17 "Now if it pleases the king, let a search be conducted in the king's treasure house, which is there in Babylon, if it be that a decree was issued by King Cyrus to rebuild this house of God at Jerusalem; and let the king send to us his decision concerning this *matter*."

### Haggai's Prophecy to the Remnant—Don't Be Discouraged (October 17, 520 BC)

Haggai 2:1–9

1 On the twenty-first of the seventh month, the word of the LORD came by Haggai the prophet saying,

2 "Speak now to Zerubbabel the son of Shealtiel, governor of Judah, and to Joshua the son of Jehozadak, the high priest, and to the remnant of the people saying,

3 'Who is left among you who saw this temple in its former glory? And how do you see it now? Does it not seem to you like nothing in comparison?

4 But now take courage, Zerubbabel,' declares the LORD, 'take courage also, Joshua son of Jehozadak, the high priest, and all you people of the land take courage,' declares the LORD, 'and work; for I am with you,' declares the LORD of hosts.

5 'As for the promise which I made you when you came out of Egypt, My Spirit is abiding in your midst; do not fear!'

6 For thus says the LORD of hosts, 'Once more in a little while, I am going to shake the heavens and the earth, the sea also and the dry land. [[Heb 12:26](#)]

7 I will shake all the nations; and they will come with the wealth of all nations, and I will fill this house with glory,' says the LORD of hosts.

8 'The silver is Mine and the gold is Mine,' declares the LORD of hosts.

9 'The latter glory of this house will be greater than the former,' says the LORD of hosts, 'and in this place I will give peace,' declares the LORD 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 of the second year of Darius, the word of the LORD came to Zechariah the prophet, the son of Berechiah, the son of Iddo saying,

2 "The LORD was very angry with your fathers.

3 "Therefore say to them, 'Thus says the LORD of hosts, "Return to Me," declares the LORD of hosts, "that I may return to you," says the LORD of hosts.

4 "Do not be like your fathers, to whom the former prophets proclaimed, saying, 'Thus says the LORD of hosts, "Return now from your evil ways and from your evil deeds."' But they did not listen or give heed to Me," declares the LORD.

5 "Your fathers, where are they? And the prophets, do they live forever?

6 "But did not My words and My statutes, which I commanded My servants the prophets, overtake your fathers? Then they repented and said, 'As the LORD of hosts purposed to do to us in accordance with our ways and 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 of the ninth *month*, in the second year of Darius, the word of the LORD came to Haggai the prophet, saying,

11 "Thus says the LORD of hosts, 'Ask now the priests *for* a ruling:

12 If a man carries holy meat in the fold of his garment, and touches bread with this fold, or cooked food, wine, oil, or any *other* food, will it become holy?'" And the priests answered, "No."

13 Then Haggai said, "If one who is unclean from a corpse touches any of these, will *the latter* become unclean?" And the priests answered, "It will become unclean."

14 Then Haggai said, "'So is this people. And so is this nation before Me,' declares the LORD, 'and so is every work of their hands; and what they offer there is unclean.

15 But now, do consider from this day onward: before one stone was placed on another in the temple of the LORD,

16 from that time *when* one came to a *grain* heap of twenty *measures*, there would be only ten; and *when* one came to the wine vat

to draw fifty measures, there would be *only* twenty.

17 I smote you *and* every work of your hands with blasting wind, mildew and hail; yet you *did* not *come back* to Me,' declares the LORD.

18 'Do consider from this day onward, from the twenty-fourth day of the ninth *month*; from the day when the temple of the LORD was founded, consider:

19 Is the seed still in the barn? Even including the vine, the fig tree, the pomegranate and the olive tree, it has not borne *fruit*. Yet from this day on I will bless *you*.'"

### Haggai's Prophecy to Zerubbabel—A Message of Encouragement (December 18, 520 BC)

Haggai 2:20–23

20 Then the word of the LORD came a second time to Haggai on the twenty-fourth *day* of the month, saying,

21 "Speak to Zerubbabel governor of Judah, saying, 'I am going to shake the heavens and the earth. [[Heb 12:26](#)]

22 I will overthrow the thrones of kingdoms and destroy the power of the kingdoms of the nations; and I will overthrow the chariots and their riders, and the horses and their riders will go down, everyone by the sword of another.'

23 'On that day,' declares the LORD of hosts, 'I will take you, Zerubbabel, son of Shealtiel, My servant,' declares the LORD, 'and I will make you like a signet *ring*, for I have chosen you,'" declares the LORD 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 a decree, and search was made in the archives, where the treasures were stored in Babylon.

2 In Ecbatana in the fortress, which is in the province of Media, a scroll was found and there was written in it as follows:

"Memorandum—

3 In the first year of King Cyrus, Cyrus the king issued a decree: '*Concerning* the house of God at Jerusalem, let the temple, the place where sacrifices are offered, be rebuilt and let its foundations be retained, its height being 60 cubits and its width 60 cubits;

4 with three layers of huge stones and one layer of timbers. And let the cost be paid from the royal treasury.

5 Also let the gold and silver utensils of the house of God, which Nebuchadnezzar took from the temple in Jerusalem and brought to Babylon, be returned and brought to their places in the temple in Jerusalem; and you shall put *them* in the house of God.'

#### Darius' Order to Tattenai

6 "Now *therefore*, Tattenai, governor of *the province* beyond the River, Shethar-bozenai and your colleagues, the officials of *the provinces* beyond the River, keep away from there.

7 Leave this work on the house of God alone; let the governor of the Jews and the elders of the Jews rebuild this house of God on its site.

8 Moreover, I issue a decree concerning what you are to do for these elders of Judah in the rebuilding of this house of God: the full cost is to be paid to these people from the royal treasury out of the taxes of *the provinces* beyond the River, and that without delay.

9 Whatever is needed, both young bulls, rams, and lambs for a burnt offering to the God of heaven, and wheat, salt, wine and anointing oil, as the priests in Jerusalem request, *it* is to be given to them daily without fail,

10 that they may offer acceptable sacrifices to the God of heaven and pray for the life of the king and his sons.

11 And I issued a decree that any man who violates this edict, a timber shall be drawn from his house and he shall be impaled on it and his house shall be made a refuse heap on account of this.

12 May the God who has caused His name to dwell there overthrow any king or people who attempts to change *it*, so as to destroy this house of God in Jerusalem. I, Darius, have issued *this* decree, let *it* be carried out with all diligence!"

#### Tattenai Immediately Obeyes

13 Then Tattenai, the governor of *the province* beyond the River, Shethar-bozenai and their colleagues carried out *the decree* with all diligence, just as King Darius had sent.

14a And the elders of the Jews were successful in building through the prophesying of Haggai the prophet and Zechariah the 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, which is the month Shebat, in the second year of Darius, the word of the LORD came to Zechariah the prophet, the son of Berechiah, the son of Iddo, as follows:

8 I saw at night, and behold, a man was riding on a red horse, and he was standing among the myrtle trees which were in the ravine, with red, sorrel and white horses behind him.

9 Then I said, "My lord, what are these?" And the angel who was speaking with me said to me, "I will show you what these are."

10 And the man who was standing among the myrtle trees answered and said, "These are those whom the LORD has sent to patrol the earth."

11 So they answered the angel of the LORD who was standing among the myrtle trees and said, "We have patrolled the earth, and behold, all the earth is peaceful and quiet."

12 Then the angel of the LORD said, "O LORD of hosts, how long will You have no compassion for Jerusalem and the cities of Judah, with which You have been indignant these seventy years?"

13 The LORD answered the angel who was speaking with me with gracious words, comforting words.

14 So the angel who was speaking with me said to me, "Proclaim, saying, 'Thus says the LORD of hosts, "I am exceedingly jealous for Jerusalem and Zion.

15 But I am very angry with the nations who are at ease; for while I was only a little angry, they furthered the disaster."

16 Therefore thus says the LORD, "I will return to Jerusalem with compassion; My house will be built in it," declares the LORD of hosts, "and a measuring line will be stretched over Jerusalem."

17 Again, proclaim, saying, 'Thus says the LORD of hosts, "My cities will again overflow with prosperity, and the LORD will again comfort Zion and again choose Jerusalem.'"

### The Second Vision—Four Horns and Four Smiths

18 Then I lifted up my eyes and looked, and behold, *there were* four horns.

19 So I said to the angel who was speaking with me, "What are these?" And he answered me, "These are the horns which have scattered Judah, Israel and Jerusalem."

20 Then the LORD showed me four craftsmen.

21 I said, "What are these coming to do?" And he said, "These are the horns which have scattered Judah so that no man lifts up his head; but these *craftsmen* have come to terrify them, to throw down the horns of the nations who have lifted up *their* horns against the land of Judah in order to scatter it."

### The Third Vision—The Surveyor

2:1 Then I lifted up my eyes and looked, and behold, *there was* a man with a measuring line in his hand.

2 So I said, "Where are you going?" And he said to me, "To measure Jerusalem, to see how wide it is and how long it is."

3 And behold, the angel who was speaking with me was going out, and another angel was coming out to meet him,

4 and said to him, "Run, speak to that young man, saying, 'Jerusalem will be inhabited without walls because of the multitude of men and cattle within it.

5 For I,' declares the LORD, 'will be a wall of fire around her, and I will be the glory in her midst.'"

6 "Ho there! Flee from the land of the north," declares the LORD, "for I have dispersed you as the four winds of the heavens," declares the LORD.

7 "Ho, Zion! Escape, you who are living with the daughter of Babylon."

8 For thus says the LORD of hosts, "After glory He has sent me against the nations which plunder you, for he who touches you, touches the apple of His eye.

9 For behold, I will wave My hand over them so that they will be plunder for their slaves. Then you will know that the LORD of hosts has sent Me.

10 Sing for joy and be glad, O daughter of Zion; for behold I am coming and I will dwell in your midst," declares the LORD.

11 "Many nations will join themselves to the LORD in that day and will become My people. Then I will dwell in your midst, and you will know that the LORD of hosts has sent Me to you.

12 The LORD will possess Judah as His portion in the holy land, and will again choose Jerusalem.

13 "Be silent, all flesh, before the LORD; for He is aroused from His holy habitation."

### The Fourth Vision—The Cleansing of Joshua the High Priest

3:1 Then he showed me Joshua the high priest standing before the angel of the LORD, and Satan standing at his right hand to accuse him.

2 The LORD said to Satan, "The LORD rebuke you, Satan! Indeed, the LORD who has chosen Jerusalem rebuke you! Is this not a brand plucked from the fire?" [cf. [Jude 1:9](#)]

3 Now Joshua was clothed with filthy garments and standing before the angel.

4 He spoke and said to those who were standing before him, saying, “Remove the filthy garments from him.” Again he said to him, “See, I have taken your iniquity away from you and will clothe you with festal robes.”

5 Then I said, “Let them put a clean turban on his head.” So they put a clean turban on his head and clothed him with garments, while the angel of the LORD was standing by.

6 And the angel of the LORD admonished Joshua, saying,

7 “Thus says the LORD of hosts, ‘If you will walk in My ways and if you will perform My service, then you will also govern My house and also have charge of My courts, and I will grant you free access among these who are standing *here*.’

8 Now listen, Joshua the high priest, you and your friends who are sitting in front of you—indeed they are men who are a symbol, for behold, I am going to bring in My servant the Branch.

9 For behold, the stone that I have set before Joshua; on one stone are seven eyes. Behold, I will engrave an inscription on it,’ declares the LORD of hosts, ‘and I will remove the iniquity of that land in one day.

10 ‘In that day,’ declares the LORD of hosts, ‘every one of you will invite his neighbor to *sit* under *his* vine and under *his* fig tree.’”

#### **The Fifth Vision—The Gold Lampstand and Two Olive Trees**

4:1 Then the angel who was speaking with me returned and roused me, as a man who is awakened from his sleep.

2 He said to me, “What do you see?” And I said, “I see, and behold, a lampstand all of gold with its bowl on the top of it, and its seven lamps on it with seven spouts belonging to each of the lamps which are on the top of it;

3 also two olive trees by it, one on the right side of the bowl and the other on its left side.”

4 Then I said to the angel who was speaking with me saying, “What are these, my lord?”

5 So the angel who was speaking with me answered and said to me, “Do you not know what these are?” And I said, “No, my lord.”

6 Then he said to me, “This is the word of the LORD to Zerubbabel saying, ‘Not by might nor by power, but by My Spirit,’ says the LORD of hosts.

7 ‘What are you, O great mountain? Before Zerubbabel *you will become* a plain; and he will bring forth the top stone with shouts of “Grace, grace to it!”’”

8 Also the word of the LORD came to me, saying,

9 “The hands of Zerubbabel have laid the foundation of this house, and his hands will finish *it*. Then you will know that the LORD of hosts has sent me to you.

10 For who has despised the day of small things? But these seven will be glad when they see the plumb line in the hand of Zerubbabel—*these are* the eyes of the LORD which range to and fro throughout the earth.”

11 Then I said to him, “What are these two olive trees on the right of the lampstand and on its left?”

12 And I answered the second time and said to him, “What are the two olive branches which are beside the two golden pipes, which empty the golden *oil* from themselves?”

13 So he answered me, saying, “Do you not know what these are?” And I said, “No, my lord.”

14 Then he said, “These are the two anointed ones who are standing by the Lord of the whole earth.”

#### **The Sixth Vision—The Flying Scroll**

5:1 Then I lifted up my eyes again and looked, and behold, *there was* a flying scroll.

2 And he said to me, “What do you see?” And I answered, “I see a flying scroll; its length is twenty cubits and its width ten cubits.”

3 Then he said to me, “This is the curse that is going forth over the face of the whole land; surely everyone who steals will be purged away according to the writing on one side, and everyone who swears will be purged away according to the writing on the other side.

4 I will make it go forth,” declares the LORD of hosts, “and it will enter the house of the thief and the house of the one who swears falsely by My name; and it will spend the night within that house and consume it with its timber and stones.”

#### **The Seventh Vision—The Woman in the Basket**

5 Then the angel who was speaking with me went out and said to me, “Lift up now your eyes and see what this is going forth.”

6 I said, “What is it?” And he said, “This is the ephah going forth.” Again he said, “This is their appearance in all the land

7 (and behold, a lead cover was lifted up); and this is a woman sitting inside the ephah.”

8 Then he said, “This is Wickedness!” And he threw her down into the middle of the ephah and cast the lead weight on its opening.

9 Then I lifted up my eyes and looked, and there two women were coming out with the wind in their wings; and they had wings like the wings of a stork, and they lifted up the ephah between the earth and the heavens.

10 I said to the angel who was speaking with me, “Where are they taking the ephah?”

11 Then he said to me, “To build a temple for her in the land of Shinar; and when it is prepared, she will be set there on her own pedestal.”

#### **The Eighth Vision—The Four Chariots**

6:1 Now I lifted up my eyes again and looked, and behold, four chariots were coming forth from between the two mountains; and the mountains *were* bronze mountains.

2 With the first chariot *were* red horses, with the second chariot black horses,



3 with the third chariot white horses, and with the fourth chariot strong dappled horses.

4 Then I spoke and said to the angel who was speaking with me, "What are these, my lord?"

5 The angel replied to me, "These are the four spirits of heaven, going forth after standing before the Lord of all the earth,

6 with one of which the black horses are going forth to the north country; and the white ones go forth after them, while the dappled ones go forth to the south country.

7 When the strong ones went out, they were eager to go to patrol the earth." And He said, "Go, patrol the earth." So they patrolled the earth.

8 Then He cried out to me and spoke to me saying, "See, those who are going to the land of the north have appeased My wrath in the land of the north."

#### **Instructions to Zechariah Concerning Joshua the High Priest**

9 The word of the LORD also came to me, saying,

10 "Take *an offering* from the exiles, from Heldai, Tobijah and Jedaiah; and you go the same day and enter the house of Josiah the son of Zephaniah, where they have arrived from Babylon.

11 Take silver and gold, make an *ornate* crown and set *it* on the head of Joshua the son of Jehozadak, the high priest.

12 Then say to him, "Thus says the LORD of hosts, "Behold, a man whose name is Branch, for He will branch out from where He is; and He will build the temple of the LORD.

13 Yes, it is He who will build the temple of the LORD, and He who will bear the honor and sit and rule on His throne. Thus, He will be a priest on His throne, and the counsel of peace will be between the two offices."

14 Now the crown will become a reminder in the temple of the LORD to Helem, Tobijah, Jedaiah and Hen the son of Zephaniah.

15 Those who are far off will come and build the temple of the LORD." Then you will know that the LORD of hosts has sent me to you. And it will take place if you completely obey the LORD 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 In the fourth year of King Darius, the word of the LORD came to Zechariah on the fourth *day* of the ninth month, *which is* Chislev.  
 2 Now *the town of* Bethel had sent Sharezer and Regemmelech and their men to seek the favor of the LORD,  
 3 speaking to the priests who belong to the house of the LORD of hosts, and to the prophets, saying, “Shall I weep in the fifth month and abstain, as I have done these many years?”

#### God's First Response—Examine Your True Motives

4 Then the word of the LORD of hosts came to me, saying,  
 5 “Say to all the people of the land and to the priests, ‘When you fasted and mourned in the fifth and seventh months these seventy years, was it actually for Me that you fasted?’  
 6 When you eat and drink, do you not eat for yourselves and do you not drink for yourselves?  
 7 Are not *these* the words which the LORD proclaimed by the former prophets, when Jerusalem was inhabited and prosperous along with its cities around it, and the Negev and the foothills were inhabited?’” [cf. [Isa 58:1–8](#)]

#### God's Second Response—A Call to Repentance

8 Then the word of the LORD came to Zechariah saying,  
 9 “Thus has the LORD of hosts said, ‘Dispense true justice and practice kindness and compassion each to his brother;  
 10 and do not oppress the widow or the orphan, the stranger or the poor; and do not devise evil in your hearts against one another.’  
 11 But they refused to pay attention and turned a stubborn shoulder and stopped their ears from hearing.  
 12 They made their hearts *like* flint so that they could not hear the law and the words which the LORD of hosts had sent by His Spirit through the former prophets; therefore great wrath came from the LORD of hosts.  
 13 And just as He called and they would not listen, so they called and I would not listen,” says the LORD of hosts;  
 14 “but I scattered them with a storm wind among all the nations whom they have not known. Thus the land is desolated behind them so that no one went back and forth, for they made the pleasant land desolate.”

#### Israel's Future Restoration

8:1 Then the word of the LORD of hosts came, saying,  
 2 “Thus says the LORD of hosts, ‘I am exceedingly jealous for Zion, yes, with great wrath I am jealous for her.’  
 3 Thus says the LORD, ‘I will return to Zion and will dwell in the midst of Jerusalem. Then Jerusalem will be called the City of Truth, and the mountain of the LORD of hosts *will be called* the Holy Mountain.’  
 4 Thus says the LORD of hosts, ‘Old men and old women will again sit in the streets of Jerusalem, each man with his staff in his hand because of age.  
 5 And the streets of the city will be filled with boys and girls playing in its streets.’  
 6 Thus says the LORD of hosts, ‘If it is too difficult in the sight of the remnant of this people in those days, will it also be too difficult in My sight?’ declares the LORD of hosts.  
 7 Thus says the LORD of hosts, ‘Behold, 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 *back* and they will live in the midst of Jerusalem; and they shall be My people, and I will be their God in truth and righteousness.’  
 9 “Thus says the LORD of hosts, ‘Let your hands be strong, you who are listening in these days to these words from the mouth of the prophets, *those who spoke* in the day that the foundation of the house of the LORD of hosts was laid, to the end that the temple might be built.  
 10 For before those days there was no wage for man or any wage for animal; and for him who went out or came in there was no peace because of his enemies, and I set all men one against another.  
 11 But now I will not treat the remnant of this people as in the former days,’ declares the LORD of hosts.  
 12 For *there will be* peace for the seed: the vine will yield its fruit, the land will yield its produce and the heavens will give their dew; and I will cause the remnant of this people to inherit all these *things*.  
 13 It will come about that just as you were a curse among the nations, O house of Judah and house of Israel, so I will save you that you may become a blessing. Do not fear; let your hands be strong.’  
 14 “For thus says the LORD of hosts, ‘Just as I purposed to do harm to you when your fathers provoked Me to wrath,’ says the LORD of hosts, ‘and I have not relented,  
 15 so I have again purposed in these days to do good to Jerusalem and to the house of Judah. Do not fear!  
 16 These are the things which you should do: speak the truth to one another; [[Eph 4:25](#)] judge with truth and judgment for peace in your gates.  
 17 Also let none of you devise evil in your heart against another, and do not love perjury; for all these are what I hate,’ declares the LORD.”  
 18 Then the word of the LORD of hosts came to me, saying,  
 19 “Thus says the LORD of hosts, ‘The fast of the fourth, the fast of the fifth, the fast of the seventh and the fast of the tenth *months*

will become joy, gladness, and cheerful feasts for the house of Judah; so love truth and peace.’

20 “Thus says the LORD of hosts, ‘*It will yet be* that peoples will come, even the inhabitants of many cities.

21 The inhabitants of one will go to another, saying, “Let us go at once to entreat the favor of the LORD, and to seek the LORD of hosts; I will also go.”

22 So many peoples and mighty nations will come to seek the LORD of hosts in Jerusalem and to entreat the favor of the LORD.’

23 Thus says the LORD of hosts, ‘In those days ten men from all the nations will grasp the garment of a Jew, 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 The burden of the word of the LORD is against the land of Hadrach, with Damascus as its resting place (for the eyes of men, especially of all the tribes of Israel, are toward the LORD),

- 2 And Hamath also, which borders on it;  
Tyre and Sidon, though they are very wise.
- 3 For Tyre built herself a fortress  
And piled up silver like dust,  
And gold like the mire of the streets.
- 4 Behold, the Lord will dispossess her  
And cast her wealth into the sea;  
And she will be consumed with fire.
- 5 Ashkelon will see *it* and be afraid.  
Gaza too will writhe in great pain;  
Also Ekron, for her expectation has been confounded.  
Moreover, the king will perish from Gaza,  
And Ashkelon will not be inhabited.
- 6 And a mongrel race will dwell in Ashdod,  
And I will cut off the pride of the Philistines.
- 7 And I will remove their blood from their mouth  
And their detestable things from between their teeth.  
Then they also will be a remnant for our God,  
And be like a clan in Judah,  
And Ekron like a Jebusite.
- 8 But I will camp around My house because of an army,  
Because of him who passes by and returns;  
And no oppressor will pass over them anymore,  
For now I have seen with My eyes.

#### The Coming of the Messiah, Israel’s True King (Historical and Eschatological)

- 9 Rejoice greatly, O daughter of Zion!  
Shout *in triumph*, O daughter of Jerusalem!  
Behold, your king is coming to you;  
He is just and endowed with salvation,  
Humble, and mounted on a donkey,  
Even on a colt, the foal of a donkey. [[Matt 21:5](#); [John 12:15](#)]
- 10 I will cut off the chariot from Ephraim  
And the horse from Jerusalem;  
And the bow of war will be cut off.  
And He will speak peace to the nations;  
And 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 My covenant with you,  
I have set your prisoners free from the waterless pit.
- 12 Return to the stronghold, O prisoners who have the hope;  
This very day I am declaring that I will restore double to you.
- 13 For I will bend Judah as My bow,

- I will fill the bow with Ephraim.  
 And I will stir up your sons, O Zion, against your sons, O Greece;  
 And I will make you like a warrior's sword.
- 14 Then the LORD will appear over them,  
 And His arrow will go forth like lightning;  
 And the Lord God will blow the trumpet,  
 And will march in the storm winds of the south.
- 15 The LORD of hosts will defend them.  
 And they will devour and trample on the sling stones;  
 And they will drink *and* be boisterous as with wine;  
 And they will be filled like a *sacrificial* basin,  
*Drenched* like the corners of the altar.
- 16 And the LORD their God will save them in that day  
 As the flock of His people;  
 For *they are as* the stones of a crown,  
 Sparkling in His land.
- 17 For what comeliness and beauty *will be* theirs!  
 Grain will make the young men flourish, and new wine the virgins.

#### **The King Rejects the Wicked Leaders (Eschatological)**

10:1 Ask rain from the LORD at the time of the spring rain—

- The LORD who makes the storm clouds;  
 And He will give them showers of rain, vegetation in the field to *each* man.
- 2 For the teraphim speak iniquity,  
 And the diviners see lying visions  
 And tell false dreams;  
 They comfort in vain.  
 Therefore *the people* wander like sheep,  
 They are afflicted, because there is no shepherd.
- 3a "My anger is kindled against the shepherds,  
 And I will punish the male goats;

#### **The King Selects the Righteous Leaders (Eschatological)**

- 3b For the LORD of hosts has visited His flock, the house of Judah,  
 And will make them like His majestic horse in battle.
- 4 "From them will come the cornerstone,  
 From them the tent peg,  
 From them the bow of battle,  
 From them every ruler, *all* of them together.
- 5 "They will be as mighty men,  
 Treading down *the enemy* in the mire of the streets in battle;  
 And they will fight, for the LORD *will be* with them;  
 And the riders on horses will be put to shame.
- 6 "I will strengthen the house of Judah,  
 And I will save the house of Joseph,  
 And I will bring them back,  
 Because I have had compassion on them;  
 And they will be as though I had not rejected them,  
 For I am the LORD their God and I will answer them.
- 7 "Ephraim will be like a mighty man,  
 And their heart will be glad as if *from* wine;  
 Indeed, their children will see *it* and be glad,  
 Their heart will rejoice in the LORD.

#### **The King Regathers His People—the Second Exodus (Eschatological)**

- 8 "I will whistle for them to gather them together,  
 For I have redeemed them;  
 And they will be as numerous as they were before.
- 9 "When I scatter them among the peoples,

- They will remember Me in far countries,  
And they with their children will live and come back.
- 10 “I will bring them back from the land of Egypt  
And gather them from Assyria;  
And I will bring them into the land of Gilead and Lebanon  
Until no *room* can be found for them.
- 11 “And they will pass through the sea *of* distress  
And He will strike the waves in the sea,  
So that all the depths of the Nile will dry up;  
And the pride of Assyria will be brought down  
And the scepter of Egypt will depart.
- 12 “And I will strengthen them in the LORD,  
And in His name they will walk,” declares the LORD.

#### **A Lament for the Destruction of the Three Trees/Shepherds/Kings (Historical—Preexilic)**

11:1 Open your doors, O Lebanon,

- That a fire may feed on your cedars.
- 2 Wail, O cypress, for the cedar has fallen,  
Because the glorious *trees* have been destroyed;  
Wail, O oaks of Bashan,  
For the impenetrable forest has come down.
- 3 There is a sound of the shepherds’ wail,  
For their glory is ruined;  
There is a sound of the young lions’ roar,  
For the pride of the Jordan is ruined.

#### **The Rejection of the Messiah as Illustrated by Zechariah’s Role-Playing (Historical—Preexilic and Exilic)**

- 4 Thus says the LORD my God, “Pasture the flock *doomed* to slaughter.  
5 Those who buy them slay them and go unpunished, and *each of* those who sell them says, ‘Blessed be the LORD, for I have become rich!’ And their own shepherds have no pity on them.  
6 For I will no longer have pity on the inhabitants of the land,” declares the LORD; “but behold, I will cause the men to fall, each into another’s power and into the power of his king; and they will strike the land, and I will not deliver *them* from their power.”  
7 So I pastured the flock *doomed* to slaughter, hence the afflicted of the flock. And I took for myself two staffs: the one I called Favor and the other I called Union; so I pastured the flock.  
8 Then I annihilated the three shepherds in one month, for my soul was impatient with them, and their soul also was weary of me.  
9 Then I said, “I will not pasture you. What is to die, let it die, and what is to be annihilated, let it be annihilated; and let those who are left eat one another’s flesh.”  
10 I took my staff Favor and cut it in pieces, to break my covenant which I had made with all the peoples.  
11 So it was broken on that day, and thus the afflicted of the flock who were watching me realized that it was the word of the LORD.  
12 I said to them, “If it is good in your sight, give *me* my wages; but if not, never mind!” So they weighed out thirty *shekels* of silver as my wages.  
13 Then the LORD said to me, “Throw it to the potter, *that* magnificent price at which I was valued by them.” So I took the thirty *shekels* of silver and threw them to the potter in the house of the LORD. [cf. [Matt 26:14–16; 27:3–10](#)]  
14 Then I cut in pieces my second staff Union, to break the brotherhood between Judah and Israel.

#### **The Evil Shepherd/King to Come (Eschatological)**

- 15 The LORD said to me, “Take again for yourself the equipment of a foolish shepherd.  
16 For behold, I am going to raise up a shepherd in the land who will not care for the perishing, seek the scattered, heal the broken, or sustain the one standing, but will devour the flesh of the fat *sheep* and tear off their hoofs.
- 17 “Woe to the worthless shepherd  
Who leaves the flock!  
A sword will be on his arm  
And on his right eye!  
His arm will be totally withered  
And his right eye will be blind.”

## 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 The burden of the word of the LORD concerning Israel. *Thus* declares the LORD who stretches out the heavens, lays the foundation of the earth, and forms the spirit of man within him,

2 “Behold, I am going to make Jerusalem a cup that causes reeling to all the peoples around; and when the siege is against Jerusalem, it will also be against Judah.

3 It will come about in that day that I will make Jerusalem a heavy stone for all the peoples; all who lift it will be severely injured. And all the nations of the earth will be gathered against it.

4 In that day,” declares the LORD, “I will strike every horse with bewilderment and his rider with madness. But I will watch over the house of Judah, while I strike every horse of the peoples with blindness.

5 Then the clans of Judah will say in their hearts, ‘A strong support for us are the inhabitants of Jerusalem through the LORD of hosts, their God.’

6 “In that day I will make the clans of Judah like a firepot among pieces of wood and a flaming torch among sheaves, so they will consume on the right hand and on the left all the surrounding peoples, while the inhabitants of Jerusalem again dwell on their own sites in Jerusalem.

7 The LORD also will save the tents of Judah first, so that the glory of the house of David and the glory of the inhabitants of Jerusalem will not be magnified above Judah.

8 In that day the LORD will defend the inhabitants of Jerusalem, and the one who is feeble among them in that day will be like David, and the house of David *will be* like God, like the angel of the LORD before them.

#### Israel Weeps Over the One They Pierced (Eschatological)

9 And in that day I will set about to destroy all the nations that come against Jerusalem.

10 “I will pour out on the house of David and on the inhabitants of Jerusalem, the Spirit of grace and of supplication, so that they will look on Me whom they have pierced; and they will mourn for Him, as one mourns for an only son, and they will weep bitterly over Him like the bitter weeping over a firstborn. [[John 19:37](#); [Rev 1:7](#)]

11 In that day there will be great mourning in Jerusalem, like the mourning of Hadadrimmon in the plain of Megiddo.

12 The land will mourn, every family by itself; the family of the house of David by itself and their wives by themselves; the family of the house of Nathan by itself and their wives by themselves;

13 the family of the house of Levi by itself and their wives by themselves; the family of the Shimeites by itself and their wives by themselves;

14 all the families that remain, every family by itself and their wives by themselves.

#### Israel Cleansed of Sin, Idols, and False Prophets (Eschatological)

13:1 “In that day a fountain will be opened for the house of David and for the inhabitants of Jerusalem, for sin and for impurity.

2 “It will come about in that day,” declares the LORD of hosts, “that I will cut off the names of the idols from the land, and they will no longer be remembered; and I will also remove the prophets and the unclean spirit from the land.

3 And if anyone still prophesies, then his father and mother who gave birth to him will say to him, ‘You shall not live, for you have spoken falsely in the name of the LORD’; and his father and mother who gave birth to him will pierce him through when he prophesies.

4 Also it will come about in that day that the prophets will each be ashamed of his vision when he prophesies, and they will not put on a hairy robe in order to deceive;

5 but he will say, ‘I am not a prophet; I am a tiller of the ground, for a man sold me as a slave in my youth.’

6 And one will say to him, ‘What are these wounds between your arms?’ Then he will say, ‘*Those* with which I was wounded in the house of my friends.’

#### The Shepherd Smitten, a Remnant Spared (Historical and Eschatological)

7 “Awake, O sword, against My Shepherd,  
And against the man, My Associate,”  
Declares the LORD of hosts.

“Strike the Shepherd that the sheep may be scattered; [[Matt 26:31](#); [Mark 14:27](#)]

And I will turn My hand against the little ones.

8 “It will come about in all the land,”

Declares the LORD,

“That two parts in it will be cut off *and* perish;

But the third will be left in it.

9 “And I will bring the third part through the fire,  
Refine them as silver is refined,

And test them as gold is tested.  
 They will call on My name,  
 And I will answer them;  
 I will say, 'They are My people,'  
 And they will say, 'The LORD is my God.'"

#### **The Day of the Battle for Jerusalem (Eschatological)**

14:1 Behold, a day is coming for the LORD when the spoil taken from you will be divided among you.

2 For I will gather all the nations against Jerusalem to battle, and the city will be captured, the houses plundered, the women ravished and half of the city exiled, but the rest of the people will not be cut off from the city.

3 Then the LORD will go forth and fight against those nations, as when He fights on a day of battle.

4 In that day His feet will stand on the Mount of Olives, which is in front of Jerusalem on the east; and the Mount of Olives will be split in its middle from east to west by a very large valley, so that half of the mountain will move toward the north and the other half toward the south.

5 You will flee by the valley of My mountains, for the valley of the mountains will reach to Azel; yes, you will flee just as you fled before the earthquake in the days of Uzziah king of Judah. Then the LORD, my God, will come, *and* all the holy ones with Him!

#### **The Establishment of the Messianic Kingdom (Eschatological)**

6 In that day there will be no light; the luminaries will dwindle.

7 For it will be a unique day which is known to the LORD, neither day nor night, but it will come about that at evening time there will be light.

8 And in that day living waters will flow out of Jerusalem, half of them toward the eastern sea and the other half toward the western sea; it will be in summer as well as in winter.

9 And the LORD will be king over all the earth; in that day the LORD will be *the only one*, and His name *the only one*.

10 All the land will be changed into a plain from Geba to Rimmon south of Jerusalem; but Jerusalem will rise and remain on its site from Benjamin's Gate as far as the place of the First Gate to the Corner Gate, and from the Tower of Hananel to the king's wine presses.

11 People will live in it, and there will no longer be a curse, for Jerusalem will dwell in security.

#### **The Destruction of Israel's Enemies (Eschatological)**

12 Now this will be the plague with which the LORD will strike all the peoples who have gone to war against Jerusalem; their flesh will rot while they stand on their feet, and their eyes will rot in their sockets, and their tongue will rot in their mouth.

13 It will come about in that day that a great panic from the LORD will fall on them; and they will seize one another's hand, and the hand of one will be lifted against the hand of another.

14 Judah also will fight at Jerusalem; and the wealth of all the surrounding nations will be gathered, gold and silver and garments in great abundance.

15 So also like this plague will be the plague on the horse, the mule, the camel, the donkey and all the cattle that will be in those camps.

#### **The King is Worshipped by the Nations During the Millennium (Eschatological)**

16 Then it will come about that any who are left of all the nations that went against Jerusalem will go up from year to year to worship the King, the LORD of hosts, and to celebrate the Feast of Booths.

17 And it will be that whichever of the families of the earth does not go up to Jerusalem to worship the King, the LORD of hosts, there will be no rain on them.

18 If the family of Egypt does not go up or enter, then no *rain will fall* on them; it will be the plague with which the LORD smites the nations who 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 who do not go up to celebrate the Feast of Booths.

20 In that day there will *be inscribed* on the bells of the horses, "HOLY TO THE LORD." And the cooking pots in the LORD's house will be like the bowls before the altar.

21 Every cooking pot in Jerusalem and in Judah will be holy to the LORD of hosts; and all who sacrifice will come and take of them and boil in them. And there will no longer be a Canaanite in the house of the LORD of hosts in that day.

### **The Temple Completed (March 12, 515 BC)**

Ezra 6:14b-18

14b And they finished building according to the command of the God of Israel and the decree of Cyrus, Darius, and Artaxerxes king of Persia.

15 This temple was completed on the third day of the month Adar; it was the sixth year of the reign of King Darius.

16 And the sons of Israel, the priests, the Levites and the rest of the exiles, celebrated the dedication of this house of God with joy.  
 17 They offered for the dedication of this temple of God 100 bulls, 200 rams, 400 lambs, and as a sin offering for all Israel 12 male goats, corresponding to the number of the tribes of Israel.  
 18 Then they appointed the priests to their divisions and the Levites in their orders for the service 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 The exiles observed the Passover on the fourteenth of the first month.  
 20 For the priests and the Levites had purified themselves together; all of them were pure. Then they slaughtered the Passover *lamb* for all the exiles, both for their brothers the priests and for themselves.  
 21 The sons of Israel who returned from exile and all those who had separated themselves from the impurity of the nations of the land to *join* them, to seek the LORD God of Israel, ate *the Passover*.  
 22 And they observed the Feast of Unleavened Bread seven days with joy, for the LORD had caused them to rejoice, and had turned the heart of the king of Assyria toward them to encourage them in the work of the house of God, the God of Israel.

### He Heals the Brokenhearted (c. May 515 BC)

Psalms 147

1 Praise the LORD!  
 For it is good to sing praises to our God;  
 For it is pleasant *and* praise is becoming.

2 The LORD builds up Jerusalem;  
 He gathers the outcasts of Israel.

3 He 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 strength;  
 His understanding is infinite.

6 The LORD supports the afflicted;  
 He brings down the wicked to the ground.

7 Sing to the LORD with thanksgiving;  
 Sing praises to our God on the lyre,

8 Who covers the heavens with clouds,  
 Who provides rain for the earth,  
 Who makes grass to grow on the mountains.

9 He gives to the beast its food,  
*And* to the young ravens which cry.

10 He does not delight in the strength of the horse;  
 He does not take pleasure in the legs of a man.

11 The LORD favors those who fear Him,  
 Those who wait for His lovingkindness.

12 Praise the LORD, O Jerusalem!  
 Praise your God, O Zion!

13 For He has strengthened the bars of your gates;  
 He has blessed your sons within you.

14 He makes peace in your borders;  
 He satisfies you with the finest of the wheat.

15 He sends forth His command to the earth;  
 His word runs very swiftly.

16 He gives snow like wool;  
 He scatters the frost like ashes.

17 He casts forth His ice as fragments;  
 Who can stand before His cold?

18 He sends forth His word and melts them;  
 He causes His wind to blow and the waters to flow.



- |    |  |
|----|--|
| 19 | He declares His words to Jacob,<br>His statutes and His ordinances to Israel.                                      |
| 20 | He has not dealt thus with any nation;<br>And as for His ordinances, they have not known them.<br>Praise the LORD! |

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### Opposition to the Remnant During Ahasuerus' [Xerxes] Reign (c. 486/485 BC)

Ezra 4:6

6 Now in the reign of Ahasuerus, in 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 Now it took place in the days of Ahasuerus, the Ahasuerus who reigned from India to Ethiopia over 127 provinces,  
 2 in those days as King Ahasuerus sat on his royal throne which *was* at the citadel in Susa,  
 3 in the third year of his reign he gave a banquet for all his princes and attendants, the army *officers* of Persia and Media, the nobles and the princes of his provinces being in his presence.  
 4 And he displayed the riches of his royal glory and the splendor of his great majesty for many days, 180 days.

### The Seven Day Banquet in Susa (April 3–9, 482 BC)

Esther 1:5–9

5 When these days were completed, the king gave a banquet lasting seven days for all the people who were present at the citadel in Susa, from the greatest to the least, in the court of the garden of the king's palace.  
 6 *There were hangings of* fine white and violet linen held by cords of fine purple linen on silver rings and marble columns, *and* couches of gold and silver on a mosaic pavement of porphyry, marble, mother-of-pearl and precious stones.  
 7 Drinks were served in golden vessels of various kinds, and the royal wine was plentiful according to the king's bounty.  
 8 The drinking was *done* according to the law, there was no compulsion, for so the king had given orders to each official of his household that he should do according to the desires of each person.  
 9 Queen Vashti also gave a banquet for the women in the palace which 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 commanded Mehuman, Biztha, Harbona, Bigtha, Abagtha, Zethar and Carkas, the seven eunuchs who served in the presence of King Ahasuerus,  
 11 to bring Queen Vashti before the king with *her* royal crown in order to display her beauty to the people and the princes, for she was beautiful.  
 12 But Queen Vashti refused to come at the king's command delivered by the eunuchs. Then the king became very angry and his wrath burned within him.  
 13 Then the king said to the wise men who understood the times—for it was the custom of the king so *to speak* before all who knew law and justice  
 14 and were close to him: Carshena, Shethar, Admatha, Tarshish, Meres, Marsena and Memucan, the seven princes of Persia and Media who had access to the king's presence and sat in the first place in the kingdom—  
 15 "According to law, what is to be done with Queen Vashti, because she did not obey the command of King Ahasuerus *delivered* by the eunuchs?"  
 16 In the presence of the king and the princes, Memucan said, "Queen Vashti has wronged not only the king but *also* all the princes and all the peoples who are in all the provinces of King Ahasuerus.  
 17 For the queen's conduct will become known to all the women causing them to look with contempt on their husbands by saying, 'King Ahasuerus commanded Queen Vashti to be brought in to his presence, but she did not come.'  
 18 This day the ladies of Persia and Media who have heard of the queen's conduct will speak in *the same way* to all the king's princes, and there will be plenty of contempt and anger.  
 19 If it pleases the king, let a royal edict be issued by him and let it be written in the laws of Persia and Media so that it cannot be repealed, that Vashti may no longer come into the presence of King Ahasuerus, and let the king give her royal position to another who is more worthy than she.  
 20 When the king's edict which he will make is heard throughout all his kingdom, great as it is, then all women will give honor to their husbands, great and small."  
 21 *This* word pleased the king and the princes, and the king did as Memucan proposed.  
 22 So he sent letters to all the king's provinces, to each province according to its script and to every people according to their language, that every man should be the master in his own house and the one who speaks in the language of his own 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 had subsided, he remembered Vashti and what she had done and what had been decreed against her.
- 2 Then the king's attendants, who served him, said, "Let beautiful young virgins be sought for the king.
- 3 Let the king appoint overseers in all the provinces of his kingdom that they may gather every beautiful young virgin to the citadel of Susa, to the harem, into the custody of Hegai, the king's eunuch, who is in charge of the women; and let their cosmetics be given *them*.
- 4 Then let the young lady who pleases the king be queen in place of Vashti." And the matter pleased the king, and he did accordingly.
- 5 Now there was at the citadel in Susa a Jew whose name was Mordecai, the son of Jair, the son of Shimei, the son of Kish, a Benjamite,
- 6 who had been taken into exile from Jerusalem with the captives who had been exiled with Jeconiah king of Judah, whom Nebuchadnezzar the king of Babylon had exiled.
- 7 He was bringing up Hadassah, that is Esther, his uncle's daughter, for she had no father or mother. Now the young lady was beautiful of form and face, and when her father and her mother died, Mordecai took her as his own daughter.
- 8 So it came about when the command and decree of the king were heard and many young ladies were gathered to the citadel of Susa into the custody of Hegai, that Esther was taken to the king's palace into the custody of Hegai, who was in charge of the women.
- 9 Now the young lady pleased him and found favor with him. So he quickly provided her with her cosmetics and food, gave her seven choice maids from the king's palace and transferred her and her maids to the best place in the harem.

### Esther's Twelve Month Beauty Treatment (February–December 479 BC)

Esther 2:10–14

- 10 Esther did not make known her people or her kindred, for Mordecai had instructed her that she should not make *them* known.
- 11 Every day Mordecai walked back and forth in front of the court of the harem to learn how Esther was and how she fared.
- 12 Now when the turn of each young lady came to go in to King Ahasuerus, after the end of her twelve months under the regulations for the women—for the days of their beautification were completed as follows: six months with oil of myrrh and six months with spices and the cosmetics for women—
- 13 the young lady would go in to the king in this way: anything that she desired was given her to take with her from the harem to the king's palace.
- 14 In the evening she would go in and in the morning she would return to the second harem, to the custody of Shaashgaz, the king's eunuch who was in charge of the concubines. She would not again go in to the king unless the king delighted in her and she was summoned by name.

### Ahasuerus Chooses Esther as the New Queen of Persia (December 479/January 478 BC)

Esther 2:15–18

- 15 Now when the turn of Esther, the daughter of Abihail the uncle of Mordecai who had taken her as his daughter, came to go in to the king, she did not request anything except what Hegai, the king's eunuch who was in charge of the women, advised. And Esther found favor in the eyes of all who saw her.
- 16 So Esther was taken to King Ahasuerus to his royal palace in the tenth month which is the month Tebeth, in the seventh year of his reign.
- 17 The king loved Esther more than all the women, and she found favor and kindness with him more than all the virgins, so that he set the royal crown on her head and made her queen instead of Vashti.
- 18 Then the king gave a great banquet, Esther's banquet, for all his princes and his servants; he also made a holiday for the provinces and gave gifts according to the king's bounty.

### Mordecai Discovers a Plot Against Ahasuerus (c. 478–475 BC)

Esther 2:19–23

- 19 When the virgins were gathered together the second time, then Mordecai was sitting at the king's gate.
- 20 Esther had not yet made known her kindred or her people, even as Mordecai had commanded her; for Esther did what Mordecai told her as she had done when under his care.
- 21 In those days, while Mordecai was sitting at the king's gate, Bigthan and Teresh, two of the king's officials from those who guarded the door, became angry and sought to lay hands on King Ahasuerus.

22 But the plot became known to Mordecai and he told Queen Esther, and Esther informed the king in Mordecai's name.

23 Now when the plot was investigated and found *to be so*, they were both hanged on a gallows; and it was written in the Book of the Chronicles in the king's presence.

### Haman Sets Out to Destroy the Jews (April 5, 474 BC)

Esther 3:1–11

1 After these events King Ahasuerus promoted Haman, the son of Hammedatha the Agagite, and advanced him and established his authority over all the princes who *were* with him.

2 All the king's servants who were at the king's gate bowed down and paid homage to Haman; for so the king had commanded concerning him. But Mordecai neither bowed down nor paid homage.

3 Then the king's servants who were at the king's gate said to Mordecai, "Why are you transgressing the king's command?"

4 Now it was when they had spoken daily to him and he would not listen to them, that they told Haman to see whether Mordecai's reason would stand; for he had told them that he was a Jew.

5 When Haman saw that Mordecai neither bowed down nor paid homage to him, Haman was filled with rage.

6 But he disdained to lay hands on Mordecai alone, for they had told him *who* the people of Mordecai *were*; therefore Haman sought to destroy all the Jews, the people of Mordecai, who *were* throughout the whole kingdom of Ahasuerus.

7 In the first month, which is the month Nisan, in the twelfth year of King Ahasuerus, Pur, that is the lot, was cast before Haman from day to day and from month *to month*, until the twelfth month, that is the month Adar.

8 Then Haman said to King Ahasuerus, "There is a certain people scattered and dispersed among the peoples in all the provinces of your kingdom; their laws are different from *those* of all *other* people and they do not observe the king's laws, so it is not in the king's interest to let them remain.

9 If it is pleasing to the king, let it be decreed that they be destroyed, and I will pay ten thousand talents of silver into the hands of those who carry on the *king's* business, to put into the king's treasuries."

10 Then the king took his signet ring from his hand and gave it to Haman, the son of Hammedatha the Agagite, the enemy of the Jews.

11 The king said to Haman, "The silver is yours, and the people *also*, to do with them as you please."

### The Edict to Kill the Jews is Sent Throughout the Kingdom (April 17, 474 BC)

Esther 3:12–15

12 Then the king's scribes were summoned on the thirteenth day of the first month, and it was written just as Haman commanded to the king's satraps, to the governors who were over each province and to the princes of each people, each province according to its script, each people according to its language, being written in the name of King Ahasuerus and sealed with the king's signet ring.

13 Letters were sent by couriers to all the king's provinces to destroy, to kill and to annihilate all the Jews, both young and old, women and children, in one day, the thirteenth *day* of the twelfth month, which is the month Adar, and to seize their possessions as plunder.

14 A copy of the edict to be issued as law in every province was published to all the peoples so that they should be ready for this day.

15 The couriers went out impelled by the king's command while the decree was issued at the citadel in Susa; and while the king and Haman sat down to drink, the city of Susa was in confusion.

### Mordecai Tells Esther the Terrible News (April/May 474 BC)

Esther 4:1–14

1 When Mordecai learned all that had been done, he tore his clothes, put on sackcloth and ashes, and went out into the midst of the city and wailed loudly and bitterly.

2 He went as far as the king's gate, for no one was to enter the king's gate clothed in sackcloth.

3 In each and every province where the command and decree of the king came, there was great mourning among the Jews, with fasting, weeping and wailing; and many lay on sackcloth and ashes.

4 Then Esther's maidens and her eunuchs came and told her, and the queen writhed in great anguish. And she sent garments to clothe Mordecai that he might remove his sackcloth from him, but he did not accept *them*.

5 Then Esther summoned Hathach from the king's eunuchs, whom the king had appointed to attend her, and ordered him *to go* to Mordecai to learn what this *was* and why it *was*.

6 So Hathach went out to Mordecai to the city square in front of the king's gate.

7 Mordecai told him all that had happened to him, and the exact amount of money that Haman had promised to pay to the king's treasuries for the destruction of the Jews.

8 He also gave him a copy of the text of the edict which had been issued in Susa for their destruction, that he might show Esther and inform her, and to order her to go in to the king to implore his favor and to plead with him for her people.

9 Hathach came back and related Mordecai's words to Esther.

10 Then Esther spoke to Hathach and ordered him *to reply* to Mordecai:

11 "All the king's servants and the people of the king's provinces know that for any man or woman who comes to the king to the inner court who is not summoned, he has but one law, that he be put to death, unless the king holds out to him the golden scepter so that he may live. And I have not been summoned to come to the king for these thirty days."

12 They related Esther's words to Mordecai.

13 Then Mordecai told *them* to reply to Esther, "Do not imagine that you in the king's palace can escape any more than all the Jews.

14 For if you remain silent at this time, relief and deliverance will arise for the Jews from another place and you and your father's house will perish. And who knows whether you have not attained royalty for such a time as this?"

### Esther Asks for Three Days of Fasting (June 22–24, 474 BC)

Esther 4:15–17

15 Then Esther told *them* to reply to Mordecai,

16 "Go, assemble all the Jews who are found in Susa, and fast for me; do not eat or drink for three days, night or day. I and my maidens also will fast in the same way. And thus I will go in to the king, which is not according to the law; and if I perish, I perish."

17 So Mordecai went away and did just as Esther had 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 3<sup>rd</sup> year of Ahasuerus' reign (483).<sup>1</sup>
- (2) 1:4 – Ahasuerus displays his power for 180 days (October 4, 483 to April 2, 482).<sup>2</sup>
- (3) 1:5 – Ahasuerus gives a 7 day feast (April 3–9, 482).
- (4) 1:10 – on the 7<sup>th</sup> 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).<sup>3</sup>
- (6) 2:16 – Esther taken to Ahasuerus during the 10<sup>th</sup> month of the 7<sup>th</sup> year of his reign (December 479 /January 478)
- (7) 3:7 – Haman casts the lot against the Jews in the 1<sup>st</sup> month of the 12<sup>th</sup> year of Ahasuerus' reign (April 5, 474).
- (8) 3:7 – the lot fell in the 12<sup>th</sup> month of that year.
- (9) 3:12 – Haman's scheme made official in the 12<sup>th</sup> year, 1<sup>st</sup> month, 13<sup>th</sup> day (April 17, 474).
- (10) 3:13 – the execution day is set for the 12<sup>th</sup> year, 12<sup>th</sup> month, 13<sup>th</sup> day (April 5, 473).

<sup>1</sup> 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](http://www.staff.science.uu.nl/~gent0113/babylon/babycal_converter.htm#converter).

<sup>2</sup> "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," *AUSJ* 14 (1976): 227–246 and Andrew E. Steinmann, *From Abraham to Paul* (Concordia Publishing House, 2011): 192–195.

<sup>3</sup> 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.

- (11) 4:16 – Esther’s 3 day fast during the 12<sup>th</sup> year (June 22–24, 474).<sup>4</sup>
- (12) 5:1 – on the 3<sup>rd</sup> day of the fast, Esther approaches Ahasuerus (June 24, 474).
- (13) 5:4 – Ahasuerus and Haman are Esther’s guests on the 3<sup>rd</sup> day (June 24, 474).
- (14) 5:8 – Esther invites Haman and the king back for another feast on the 4<sup>th</sup> 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 4<sup>th</sup> 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 12<sup>th</sup> year, 3<sup>rd</sup> month, 23<sup>rd</sup> day (June 25, 474).
- (20) 9:1 – the Jews defend themselves on the 12<sup>th</sup> year, 12<sup>th</sup> month, 13<sup>th</sup> day (April 5, 473).
- (21) 9:15 – the Jews in Susa kill 300 men on the 14<sup>th</sup> day (April 6, 473).
- (22) 9:17 – Jews in the provinces fight on the 13<sup>th</sup> day and rest on the 14<sup>th</sup> day (April 5–6, 473).
- (23) 9:18 – Jews in Susa fight on the 13<sup>th</sup> and 14<sup>th</sup> day and rest on the 15<sup>th</sup> day (April 5–7, 473).
- (24) 9:19 – holiday for Jews in the provinces is on the 14<sup>th</sup> day (April 6, 473).
- (25) 9:21 – holiday officially declared for the 14<sup>th</sup> and 15<sup>th</sup> days (April 6–7, 473).

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<sup>4</sup> 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.

## Esther Invites Ahasuerus and Haman to a Banquet (June 24, 474 BC)

### Esther 5

- 1 Now it came about on the third day that Esther put on her royal robes and stood in the inner court of the king's palace in front of the king's rooms, and the king was sitting on his royal throne in the throne room, opposite the entrance to the palace.
- 2 When the king saw Esther the queen standing in the court, she obtained favor in his sight; and the king extended to Esther the golden scepter which *was* in his hand. So Esther came near and touched the top of the scepter.
- 3 Then the king said to her, "What is *troubling* you, Queen Esther? And what is your request? Even to half of the kingdom it shall be given to you."
- 4 Esther said, "If it pleases the king, may the king and Haman come this day to the banquet that I have prepared for him."
- 5 Then the king said, "Bring Haman quickly that we may do as Esther desires." So the king and Haman came to the banquet which Esther had prepared.
- 6 As they drank their wine at the banquet, the king said to Esther, "What is your petition, for it shall be granted to you. And what is your request? Even to half of the kingdom it shall be done."
- 7 So Esther replied, "My petition and my request is:
- 8 if I have found favor in the sight of the king, and if it pleases the king to grant my petition and do what I request, may the king and Haman come to the banquet which I will prepare for them, and tomorrow I will do as the king says."
- 9 Then Haman went out that day glad and pleased of heart; but when Haman saw Mordecai in the king's gate and that he did not stand up or tremble before him, Haman was filled with anger against Mordecai.
- 10 Haman controlled himself, however, went to his house and sent for his friends and his wife Zeresh.
- 11 Then Haman recounted to them the glory of his riches, and the number of his sons, and every *instance* where the king had magnified him and how he had promoted him above the princes and servants of the king.
- 12 Haman also said, "Even Esther the queen let no one but me come with the king to the banquet which she had prepared; and tomorrow also I am invited by her with the king.
- 13 Yet all of this does not satisfy me every time I see Mordecai the Jew sitting at the king's gate."
- 14 Then Zeresh his wife and all his friends said to him, "Have a gallows fifty cubits high made and in the morning ask the king to have Mordecai hanged on it; then go joyfully with the king to the banquet." And 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 could not sleep so he gave an order to bring the book of records, the chronicles, and they were read before the king.
- 2 It was found written what Mordecai had reported concerning Bigthana and Teresh, two of the king's eunuchs who were doorkeepers, that they had sought to lay hands on King Ahasuerus.
- 3 The king said, "What honor or dignity has been bestowed on Mordecai for this?" Then the king's servants who attended him said, "Nothing has been done for him."
- 4 So the king said, "Who is in the court?" Now Haman had just entered the outer court of the king's palace in order to speak to the king about hanging Mordecai on the gallows which he had prepared for him.
- 5 The king's servants said to him, "Behold, Haman is standing in the court." And the king said, "Let him come in."
- 6 So Haman came in and the king said to him, "What is to be done for the man whom the king desires to honor?" And Haman said to himself, "Whom would the king desire to honor more than me?"
- 7 Then Haman said to the king, "For the man whom the king desires to honor,
- 8 let them bring a royal robe which the king has worn, and the horse on which the king has ridden, and on whose head a royal crown has been placed;
- 9 and let the robe and the horse be handed over to one of the king's most noble princes and let them array the man whom the king desires to honor and lead him on horseback through the city square, and proclaim before him, 'Thus it shall be done to the man whom the king desires to honor.'"
- 10 Then the king said to Haman, "Take quickly the robes and the horse as you have said, and do so for Mordecai the Jew, who is sitting at the king's gate; do not fall short in anything of all that you have said."
- 11 So Haman took the robe and the horse, and arrayed Mordecai, and led him *on horseback* through the city square, and proclaimed before him, "Thus it shall be done to the man whom the king desires to honor."
- 12 Then Mordecai returned to the king's gate. But Haman hurried home, mourning, with *his* head covered.
- 13 Haman recounted to Zeresh his wife and all his friends everything that had happened to him. Then his wise men and Zeresh his wife said to him, "If Mordecai, before whom you have begun to fall, is of Jewish origin, you will not overcome him, but will surely fall before him."
- 14 While they were still talking with him, the king's eunuchs arrived and hastily brought Haman to the banquet which Esther had prepared.

## A Fateful Banquet (June 25, 474 BC)

Esther 7–8

### Esther's Request

7:1 Now the king and Haman came to drink *wine* with Esther the queen.

2 And the king said to Esther on the second day also as they drank their wine at the banquet, "What is your petition, Queen Esther? It shall be granted you. And what is your request? Even to half of the kingdom it shall be done."

3 Then Queen Esther replied, "If I have found favor in your sight, O king, and if it pleases the king, let my life be given me as my petition, and my people as my request;

4 for we have been sold, I and my people, to be destroyed, to be killed and to be annihilated. Now if we had only been sold as slaves, men and women, I would have remained silent, for the trouble would not be commensurate with the annoyance to the king."

5 Then King Ahasuerus asked Queen Esther, "Who is he, and where is he, who would presume to do thus?"

6 Esther said, "A foe and an enemy is this wicked Haman!" Then Haman became terrified before the king and queen.

7 The king arose in his anger from drinking wine *and went* into the palace garden; but Haman stayed to beg for his life from Queen Esther, for he saw that harm had been determined against him by the king.

### Haman Hanged

8 Now when the king returned from the palace garden into the place where they were drinking wine, Haman was falling on the couch where Esther was. Then the king said, "Will he even assault the queen with me in the house?" As the word went out of the king's mouth, they covered Haman's face.

9 Then Harbonah, one of the eunuchs who *were* before the king said, "Behold indeed, the gallows standing at Haman's house fifty cubits high, which Haman made for Mordecai who spoke good on behalf of the king!" And the king said, "Hang him on it."

10 So they hanged Haman on the gallows which he had prepared for Mordecai, and the king's anger subsided.

### Esther Rewarded and Mordecai Promoted

8:1 On that day King Ahasuerus gave the house of Haman, the enemy of the Jews, to Queen Esther; and Mordecai came before the king, for Esther had disclosed what he was to her.

2 The king took off his signet ring which he had taken away from Haman, and gave it to Mordecai. And Esther set Mordecai over the house of Haman.

### Esther's Request to Save the Jews

3 Then Esther spoke again to the king, fell at his feet, wept and implored him to avert the evil *scheme* of Haman the Agagite and his plot which he had devised against the Jews.

4 The king extended the golden scepter to Esther. So Esther arose and stood before the king.

5 Then she said, "If it pleases the king and if I have found favor before him and the matter *seems* proper to the king and I am pleasing in his sight, let it be written to revoke the letters devised by Haman, the son of Hammedatha the Agagite, which he wrote to destroy the Jews who are in all the king's provinces.

6 For how can I endure to see the calamity which will befall my people, and how can I endure to see the destruction of my kindred?"

### Ahasuerus Authorizes Esther and Mordecai to Issue a Decree in His Name

7 So King Ahasuerus said to Queen Esther and to Mordecai the Jew, "Behold, I have given the house of Haman to Esther, and him they have hanged on the gallows because he had stretched out his hands against the Jews.

8 Now you write to the Jews as you see fit, in the king's name, and seal *it* with the king's signet ring; for a decree which is written in the name of the king and sealed with the king's signet ring may not be revoked."

### Mordecai Decrees that the Jews May Defend Themselves

9 So the king's scribes were called at that time in the third month (that is, the month Sivan), on the twenty-third day; and it was written according to all that Mordecai commanded to the Jews, the satraps, the governors and the princes of the provinces which *extended* from India to Ethiopia, 127 provinces, to every province according to its script, and to every people according to their language as well as to the Jews according to their script and their language.

10 He wrote in the name of King Ahasuerus, and sealed it with the king's signet ring, and sent letters by couriers on horses, riding on steeds sired by the royal stud.

11 In them the king granted the Jews who were in each and every city *the right* to assemble and to defend their lives, to destroy, to kill and to annihilate the entire army of any people or province which might attack them, including children and women, and to plunder their spoil,

12 on one day in all the provinces of King Ahasuerus, the thirteenth *day* of the twelfth month (that is, the month Adar).

13 A copy of the edict to be issued as law in each and every province was published to all the peoples, so that the Jews would be ready for this day to avenge themselves on their enemies.

14 The couriers, hastened and impelled by the king's command, went out, riding on the royal steeds; and the decree was given out



at the citadel in Susa.

### The Jews Rejoice

15 Then Mordecai went out from the presence of the king in royal robes of blue and white, with a large crown of gold and a garment of fine linen and purple; and the city of Susa shouted and rejoiced.

16 For the Jews there was light and gladness and joy and honor.

17 In each and every province and in each and every city, wherever the king's commandment and his decree arrived, there was gladness and joy for the Jews, a feast and a holiday. And many among the peoples of the land became Jews, for the dread of the Jews had fallen on them.

## The Jews Soundly Defeat Their Enemies (April 5–7, 473 BC)

Esther 9:1–19

1 Now in the twelfth month (that is, the month Adar), on the thirteenth day when the king's command and edict were about to be executed, on the day when the enemies of the Jews hoped to gain the mastery over them, it was turned to the contrary so that the Jews themselves gained the mastery over those who hated them.

2 The Jews assembled in their cities throughout all the provinces of King Ahasuerus to lay hands on those who sought their harm; and no one could stand before them, for the dread of them had fallen on all the peoples.

3 Even all the princes of the provinces, the satraps, the governors and those who were doing the king's business assisted the Jews, because the dread of Mordecai had fallen on them.

4 Indeed, Mordecai was great in the king's house, and his fame spread throughout all the provinces; for the man Mordecai became greater and greater.

5 Thus the Jews struck all their enemies with the sword, killing and destroying; and they did what they pleased to those who hated them.

6 At the citadel in Susa the Jews killed and destroyed five hundred men,

7 and Parshandatha, Dalphon, Aspatha,

8 Poratha, Adalia, Aridatha,

9 Parmashta, Arisai, Aridai and Vaizatha,

10 the ten sons of Haman the son of Hammedatha, the Jews' enemy; but they did not lay their hands on the plunder.

11 On that day the number of those who were killed at the citadel in Susa was reported to the king.

12 The king said to Queen Esther, "The Jews have killed and destroyed five hundred men and the ten sons of Haman at the citadel in Susa. What then have they done in the rest of the king's provinces! Now what is your petition? It shall even be granted you. And what is your further request? It shall also be done."

13 Then said Esther, "If it pleases the king, let tomorrow also be granted to the Jews who are in Susa to do according to the edict of today; and let Haman's ten sons be hanged on the gallows."

14 So the king commanded that it should be done so; and an edict was issued in Susa, and Haman's ten sons were hanged.

15 The Jews who were in Susa assembled also on the fourteenth day of the month Adar and killed three hundred men in Susa, but they did not lay their hands on the plunder.

16 Now the rest of the Jews who *were* in the king's provinces assembled, to defend their lives and rid themselves of their enemies, and kill 75,000 of those who hated them; but they did not lay their hands on the plunder.

17 *This was done* on the thirteenth day of the month Adar, and on the fourteenth day they rested and made it a day of feasting and rejoicing.

18 But the Jews who were in Susa assembled on the thirteenth and the fourteenth of the same month, and they rested on the fifteenth day and made it a day of feasting and rejoicing.

19 Therefore the Jews of the rural areas, who live in the rural towns, make the fourteenth day of the month Adar *a* holiday for rejoicing and feasting and sending portions *of food* to one another.

## The Feast of Purim (April 6–7, 473 BC)

Esther 9:20–32

20 Then Mordecai recorded these events, and he sent letters to all the Jews who were in all the provinces of King Ahasuerus, both near and far,

21 obliging them to celebrate the fourteenth day of the month Adar, and the fifteenth day of the same month, annually,

22 because on those days the Jews rid themselves of their enemies, and *it was a* month which was turned for them from sorrow into gladness and from mourning into a holiday; that they should make them days of feasting and rejoicing and sending portions *of food* to one another and gifts to the poor.

23 Thus the Jews undertook what they had started to do, and what Mordecai had written to them.

24 For Haman the son of Hammedatha, the Agagite, the adversary of all the Jews, had schemed against the Jews to destroy them

and had cast Pur, that is the lot, to disturb them and destroy them.

25 But when it came to the king's attention, he commanded by letter that his wicked scheme which he had devised against the Jews, should return on his own head and that he and his sons should be hanged on the gallows.

26 Therefore they called these days Purim after the name of Pur. And because of the instructions in this letter, both what they had seen in this regard and what had happened to them,

27 the Jews established and made a custom for themselves and for their descendants and for all those who allied themselves with them, so that they would not fail to celebrate these two days according to their regulation and according to their appointed time annually.

28 So these days were to be remembered and celebrated throughout every generation, every family, every province and every city; and these days of Purim were not to fail from among the Jews, or their memory fade from their descendants.

29 Then Queen Esther, daughter of Abihail, with Mordecai the Jew, wrote with full authority to confirm this second letter about Purim.

30 He sent letters to all the Jews, to the 127 provinces of the kingdom of Ahasuerus, *namely*, words of peace and truth,

31 to establish these days of Purim at their appointed times, just as Mordecai the Jew and Queen Esther had established for them, and just as they had established for themselves and for their descendants with instructions for their times of fasting and their lamentations.

32 The command of Esther established these customs for Purim, and it was written in the book.

### Mordecai Honored (c. 473–465 BC)

#### Esther 10

1 Now King Ahasuerus laid a tribute on the land and on the coastlands of the sea.

2 And all the accomplishments of his authority and strength, and the full account of the greatness of Mordecai to which the king advanced him, are they not written in the Book of the Chronicles of the Kings of Media and Persia?

3 For Mordecai the Jew was second *only* to King Ahasuerus, and great among the Jews and in favor with his many kinsmen, one who sought the good of his people and one who spoke for the welfare of his whole nation.

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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 his colleagues wrote to Artaxerxes king of Persia; and the text of 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 Now after these things, in the reign of Artaxerxes king of Persia,

### Ezra's Priestly Lineage

1b *there went up* Ezra 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 Babylon, and he was a scribe skilled in the law of Moses, which the LORD God of Israel had given;

### Ezra's Mission

6b and the king granted him all he requested because the hand of the LORD his God *was* upon him.

7 Some of the sons of Israel and some of the priests, the 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 of the first month he began to go up from Babylon;

10 For Ezra had set his heart to study the law of the LORD and to practice *it*, and to teach *His* statutes and ordinances in Israel.

### Artaxerxes' Letter of Authorization

11 Now this is the copy of the decree which King Artaxerxes gave to Ezra the priest, the scribe, learned in the words of the commandments of the LORD and His statutes to Israel:

12 "Artaxerxes, king of kings, to Ezra the priest, the scribe of the law of the God of heaven, perfect *peace*. And now

13 I have issued a decree that any of the people of Israel and their priests and the Levites in my kingdom who are willing to go to Jerusalem, may go with you.

14 Forasmuch as you are sent by the king and his seven counselors to inquire concerning Judah and Jerusalem according to the law of your God which is in your hand,

15 and to bring the silver and gold, which the king and his counselors have freely offered to the God of Israel, whose dwelling is in Jerusalem,

16 with all the silver and gold which you find in the whole province of Babylon, along with the freewill offering of the people and of the priests, who offered willingly for the house of their God which is in Jerusalem;

17 with this money, therefore, you shall diligently buy bulls, rams and lambs, with their grain offerings and their drink offerings and offer them on the altar of the house of your God which is in Jerusalem.

18 Whatever seems good to you and to your brothers to do with the rest of the silver and gold, you may do according to the will of your God.

19 Also the utensils which are given to you for the service of the house of your God, deliver in full before the God of Jerusalem.

20 The rest of the needs for the house of your God, for which you may have occasion to provide, provide *for it* from the royal treasury.

21 "I, even I, King Artaxerxes, issue a decree to all the treasurers who are *in the provinces* beyond the River, that whatever Ezra the priest, the scribe of the law of the God of heaven, may require of you, it shall be done diligently,

22 *even* up to 100 talents of silver, 100 kors of wheat, 100 baths of wine, 100 baths of oil, and salt as needed.

23 Whatever is commanded by the God of heaven, let it be done with zeal for the house of the God of heaven, so that there will not be wrath against the kingdom of the king and his sons.

24 We also inform you that it is not allowed to impose tax, tribute or toll *on* any of the priests, Levites, singers, doorkeepers, Nethinim or servants of this house of God.

25 "You, Ezra, according to the wisdom of your God which is in your hand, appoint magistrates and judges that they may judge all the people who are *in the province* beyond the River, *even* all those who know the laws of your God; and you may teach anyone who is ignorant *of them*.

26 Whoever will not observe the law of your God and the law of the king, let judgment be executed upon him strictly, whether for death or for banishment or for confiscation of goods or for imprisonment."

**Ezra's Personal Note of Thanksgiving**

27 Blessed be the LORD, the God of our fathers, who has put *such a thing* as this in the king's heart, to adorn the house of the LORD which is in Jerusalem,

28 and has extended lovingkindness to me before the king and his counselors and before all the king's mighty princes. Thus I was strengthened according to the hand of the LORD my God upon me, and I gathered leading men from Israel to go up with me.

**List of Family Heads Who Accompanied Ezra**

8:1 Now these are the heads of their fathers' *households* and the genealogical enrollment of those who went up with me from Babylon in the reign of King Artaxerxes:

2 of the sons of Phinehas, Gershom; of the sons of Ithamar, Daniel; of the sons of David, Hattush;

3 of the sons of Shecaniah *who was* of the sons of Parosh, Zechariah and with him 150 males *who were in* the genealogical list;

4 of the sons of Pahath-moab, Eliehoenai the son of Zerariah and 200 males with him;

5 of the sons of Zattu, Shecaniah, the son of Jahaziel and 300 males with him;

6 and of the sons of Adin, Ebed the son of Jonathan and 50 males with him;

7 and of the sons of Elam, Jeshaiiah the son of Athaliah and 70 males with him;

8 and of the sons of Shephatiah, Zebadiah the son of Michael and 80 males with him;

9 of the sons of Joab, Obadiah the son of Jehiel and 218 males with him;

10 and of the sons of Bani, Shelomith, the son of Josiphiah and 160 males with him;

11 and of the sons of Bebai, Zechariah the son of Bebai and 28 males with him;

12 and of the sons of Azgad, Johanan the son of Hakkatan and 110 males with him;

13 and of the sons of Adonikam, the last ones, these being their names, Eliphelet, Jeuel and Shemaiah, and 60 males with them;

14 and of the sons of Bigvai, Uthai and Zabbud, and 70 males with them.

**At the Ahava Canal (April 8–18, 457 BC)**

Ezra 8:15–30

**Enlistment of Temple Personnel**

15 Now I assembled them at the river that runs to Ahava, where we camped for three days; and when I observed the people and the priests, I did not find any Levites there.

16 So I sent for Eliezer, Ariel, Shemaiah, Elnathan, Jarib, Elnathan, Nathan, Zechariah and Meshullam, leading men, and for Joarib and Elnathan, teachers.

17 I sent them to Iddo the leading man at the place Casiphia; and I told them what to say to Iddo *and* his brothers, the temple servants at the place Casiphia, *that is*, to bring ministers to us for the house of our God.

18 According to the good hand of our God upon us they brought us a man of insight of the sons of Mahli, the son of Levi, the son of Israel, namely Sherebiah, and his sons and brothers, 18 men;

19 and Hashabiah and Jeshaiiah of the sons of Merari, with his brothers and their sons, 20 men;

20 and 220 of the temple servants, whom David and the princes had given for the service of the Levites, all of them designated by name.

**Prayer and Fasting**

21 Then I proclaimed a fast there at the river of Ahava, that we might humble ourselves before our God to seek from Him a safe journey for us, our little ones, and all our possessions.

22 For I was ashamed to request from the king troops and horsemen to protect us from the enemy on the way, because we had said to the king, "The hand of our God is favorably disposed to all those who seek Him, but His power and His anger are against all those who forsake Him."

23 So we fasted and sought our God concerning this *matter*, and He listened to our entreaty.

**Treasure Bearers**

24 Then I set apart twelve of the leading priests, Sherebiah, Hashabiah, and with them ten of their brothers;

25 and I weighed out to them the silver, the gold and the utensils, the offering for the house of our God which the king and his counselors and his princes and all Israel present *there* had offered.

26 Thus I weighed into their hands 650 talents of silver, and silver utensils *worth* 100 talents, *and* 100 gold talents,

27 and 20 gold bowls *worth* 1,000 darics, and two utensils of fine shiny bronze, precious as gold.

28 Then I said to them, "You are holy to the LORD, and the utensils are holy; and the silver and the gold are a freewill offering to the LORD God of your fathers.

29 Watch and keep *them* until you weigh *them* before the leading priests, the Levites and the heads of the fathers' *households* of Israel at Jerusalem, *in* the chambers of the house of the LORD."

30 So the priests and the Levites accepted the weighed out silver and gold and the utensils, to bring *them* to Jerusalem to the house of our God.

**Journey to Jerusalem (April 19–August 4, 457 BC)**

Ezra 7:8–9b; 8:31

8:31 Then we journeyed from the river Ahava on the twelfth of the first month to go to Jerusalem; and the hand of our God was over us, and He delivered us from the hand of the enemy and the ambushes by the way.

7:8 He came to Jerusalem in the fifth month, which was in the seventh year of the king.

7:9b and on the first of the fifth month he came to Jerusalem, because the good hand of his God *was* upon him.

**At Jerusalem (August 4–6, 457 BC)**

Ezra 8:32

32 Thus 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 and the gold and the utensils were weighed out in the house of our God into the hand of Meremoth the son of Uriah the priest, and with him *was* Eleazar the son of Phinehas; and with them *were* the Levites, Jozabad the son of Jeshua and Noadiah the son of Binnui.

34 Everything *was* numbered and weighed, and all the weight was recorded at that time.

35 The exiles who had come from the captivity offered burnt offerings to the God of Israel: 12 bulls for all Israel, 96 rams, 77 lambs, 12 male goats for a sin offering, all as a burnt offering to the LORD.

36 Then they delivered the king's edicts to the king's satraps and to the governors *in the provinces* beyond the River, and they supported the people and 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 Now when these things had been completed, the princes approached me, saying, “The people of Israel and the priests and the Levites have not separated themselves from the peoples of the lands, according to their abominations, *those* of the Canaanites, the Hittites, the Perizzites, the Jebusites, the Ammonites, the Moabites, the Egyptians and the Amorites.  
 2 For they have taken some of their daughters *as wives* for themselves and for their sons, so that the holy race has intermingled with the peoples of the lands; indeed, the hands of the princes and the rulers have been foremost in this unfaithfulness.”  
 3 When I heard about this matter, I tore my garment and my robe, and pulled some of the hair from my head and my beard, and sat down appalled.  
 4 Then everyone who trembled at the words of the God of Israel on account of the unfaithfulness of the exiles gathered to me, and I sat appalled until the evening offering.

### Ezra’s Prayer

5 But at the evening offering I arose from my humiliation, even with my garment and my robe torn, and I fell on my knees and stretched out my hands to the LORD my God;  
 6 and I said, “O my God, I am ashamed and embarrassed to lift up my face to You, my God, for our iniquities have risen above our heads and our guilt has grown even to the heavens.  
 7 Since the days of our fathers to this day we *have been* in great guilt, and on account of our iniquities we, our kings *and* our priests have been given into the hand of the kings of the lands, to the sword, to captivity and to plunder and to open shame, as *it is* this day.  
 8 But now for a brief moment grace has been *shown* from the LORD our God, to leave us an escaped remnant and to give us a peg in His holy place, that our God may enlighten our eyes and grant us a little reviving in our bondage.  
 9 For we are slaves; yet in our bondage our God has not forsaken us, but has extended lovingkindness to us in the sight of the kings of Persia, to give us reviving to raise up the house of our God, to restore its ruins and to give us a wall in Judah and Jerusalem.  
 10 “Now, our God, what shall we say after this? For we have forsaken Your commandments,  
 11 which You have commanded by Your servants the prophets, saying, ‘The land which you are entering to possess is an unclean land with the uncleanness of the peoples of the lands, with their abominations which have filled it from end to end *and* with their impurity. [cf. [Lev 18:25](#)]  
 12 So now do not give your daughters to their sons nor take their daughters to your sons, and never seek their peace or their prosperity, that you may be strong and eat the good *things* of the land and leave *it* as an inheritance to your sons forever.’ [cf. [Deut 7:1–5](#)]  
 13 After all that has come upon us for our evil deeds and our great guilt, since You our God have requited *us* less than our iniquities *deserve*, and have given us an escaped remnant as this,  
 14 shall we again break Your commandments and intermarry with the peoples who commit these abominations? Would You not be angry with us to the point of destruction, until there is no remnant nor any who escape?  
 15 O LORD God of Israel, You are righteous, for we have been left an escaped remnant, as *it is* this day; behold, we are before You in our guilt, for no one can stand before You because of this.”

### Covenant to Divorce the Foreign Women

10:1 Now while Ezra was praying and making confession, weeping and prostrating himself before the house of God, a very large assembly, men, women and children, gathered to him from Israel; for the people wept bitterly.  
 2 Shecaniah the son of Jehiel, one of the sons of Elam, said to Ezra, “We have been unfaithful to our God and have married foreign women from the peoples of the land; yet now there is hope for Israel in spite of this.  
 3 So now let us make a covenant with our God to put away all the wives and their children, according to the counsel of my lord and of those who tremble at the commandment of our God; and let it be done according to the law.  
 4 Arise! For *this* matter is your responsibility, but we will be with you; be courageous and act.”  
 5 Then Ezra rose and made the leading priests, the Levites and all Israel, take oath that they would do according to this proposal; so they took the oath.  
 6 Then Ezra rose from before the house of God and went into the chamber of Jehohanan the son of Eliashib. Although he went there, he did not eat bread nor drink water, for he was mourning over the unfaithfulness of the exiles.

### A Proclamation is Circulated Calling the Men to Jerusalem

7 They made a proclamation throughout Judah and Jerusalem to all the exiles, that they should assemble at Jerusalem,  
 8 and that whoever would not come within three days, according to the counsel of the leaders and the elders, all his possessions should be forfeited and he himself excluded from the assembly of the exiles.

### A Course of Action is Decided (December 19, 457 BC)

Ezra 10:9–15

9 So all the men of Judah and Benjamin assembled at Jerusalem within the three days. It was the ninth month on the twentieth of the month, and all the people sat in the open square *before* the house of God, trembling because of this matter and the heavy rain.

10 Then Ezra the priest stood up and said to them, “You have been unfaithful and have married foreign wives adding to the guilt of Israel.

11 Now therefore, make confession to the LORD God of your fathers and do His will; and separate yourselves from the peoples of the land and from the foreign wives.”

12 Then all the assembly replied with a loud voice, “That’s right! As you have said, so it is our duty to do.

13 But there are many people; it is the rainy season and we are not able to stand in the open. Nor *can* the task *be done* in one or two days, for we have transgressed greatly in this matter.

14 Let our leaders represent the whole assembly and let all those in our cities who have married foreign wives come at appointed times, together with the elders and judges of each city, until the fierce anger of our God on account of this matter is turned away from us.”

15 Only Jonathan the son of Asahel and Jahzeiah the son of Tikvah opposed this, with Meshullam and Shabbethai the Levite supporting them.

### Inquiry Into Unlawful Marriages (December 29, 457–March 27, 456 BC)

Ezra 10:16–44

16 But the exiles did so. And Ezra the priest selected men *who were* heads of fathers’ households for *each of* their father’s households, all of them by name. So they convened on the first day of the tenth month to investigate the matter.

17 They finished *investigating* all the men who had married foreign wives by the first day of the first month.

18 Among the sons of the priests who had married foreign wives were found of the sons of Jeshua the son of Jozadak, and his brothers: Maaseiah, Eliezer, Jarib and Gedaliah.

19 They pledged to put away their wives, and being guilty, *they offered* a ram of the flock for their offense.

20 Of the sons of Immer *there were* Hanani and Zebadiah;

21 and of the sons of Harim: Maaseiah, Elijah, Shemaiah, Jehiel and Uziah;

22 and of the sons of Pashhur: Eliezer, Maaseiah, Ishmael, Nethanel, Jozabad and Elasaah.

23 Of Levites *there were* Jozabad, Shimei, Kelaiah (that is, Kelita), Pethahiah, Judah and Eliezer.

24 Of the singers *there was* Eliashib; and of the gatekeepers: Shallum, Telem and Uri.

25 Of Israel, of the sons of Parosh *there were* Ramiah, Izziah, Malchijah, Mijamin, Eleazar, Malchijah and Benaiah;

26 and of the sons of Elam: Mattaniah, Zechariah, Jehiel, Abdi, Jeremoth and Elijah;

27 and of the sons of Zattu: Eliezer, Eliashib, Mattaniah, Jeremoth, Zabad and Aziza;

28 and of the sons of Bebai: Jehohanan, Hananiah, Zabbai *and* Athlai;

29 and of the sons of Bani: Meshullam, Malluch and Adaiah, Jashub, Sheal *and* Jeremoth;

30 and of the sons of Pahath-moab: Adna, Chelal, Benaiah, Maaseiah, Mattaniah, Bezalel, Binnui and Manasseh;

31 and of the sons of Harim: Eliezer, Isshijah, Malchijah, Shemaiah, Shimeon,

32 Benjamin, Malluch *and* Shemariah;

33 of the sons of Hashum: Mattenai, Mattattah, Zabad, Eliphelet, Jeremai, Manasseh *and* Shimei;

34 of the sons of Bani: Maadai, Amram, Uel,

35 Benaiah, Bedeiah, Cheluhi,

36 Vaniah, Meremoth, Eliashib,

37 Mattaniah, Mattenai, Jaasu,

38 Bani, Binnui, Shimei,

39 Shelemiah, Nathan, Adaiah,

40 Machnadebai, Shashai, Sharai,

41 Azarel, Shelemiah, Shemariah,

42 Shallum, Amariah *and* Joseph.

43 Of the sons of Nebo *there were* Jeiel, Mattithiah, Zabad, Zebina, Jaddai, Joel *and* Benaiah.

44 All these had married foreign wives, and some of them had wives *by whom* they had 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 commander and Shimshai the scribe wrote a letter against Jerusalem to King Artaxerxes, as follows—

9 then *wrote* Rehum the commander and Shimshai the scribe and the rest of their colleagues, the judges and the lesser governors, the officials, the secretaries, the men of Erech, the Babylonians, the men of Susa, that is, the Elamites,

10 and the rest of the nations which the great and honorable Osnappar deported and settled in the city of Samaria, and in the rest of the region beyond the River. Now

11 this is the copy of the letter which they sent to him: "To King Artaxerxes: Your servants, the men in the region beyond the River, and now

12 let it be known to the king that the Jews who came up from you have come to us at Jerusalem; they are rebuilding the rebellious and evil city and are finishing the walls and repairing the foundations.

13 Now let it be known to the king, that if that city is rebuilt and the walls are finished, they will not pay tribute, custom or toll, and it will damage the revenue of the kings.

14 Now because we are in the service of the palace, and it is not fitting for us to see the king's dishonor, therefore we have sent and informed the king,

15 so that a search may be made in the record books of your fathers. And you will discover in the record books and learn that that city is a rebellious city and damaging to kings and provinces, and that they have incited revolt within it in past days; therefore that city was laid waste.

16 We inform the king that if that city is rebuilt and the walls finished, as a result you will have no possession in *the province* beyond the River."

### Artaxerxes' Reply

17 *Then* the king sent an answer to Rehum the commander, to Shimshai the scribe, and to the rest of their colleagues who live in Samaria and in the rest of *the provinces* beyond the River: "Peace. And now

18 the document which you sent to us has been translated and read before me.

19 A decree has been issued by me, and a search has been made and it has been discovered that that city has risen up against the kings in past days, that rebellion and revolt have been perpetrated in it,

20 that mighty kings have ruled over Jerusalem, governing all *the provinces* beyond the River, and that tribute, custom and toll were paid to them.

21 So, now issue a decree to make these men stop *work*, that this city may not be rebuilt until a decree is issued by me.

22 Beware of being negligent in carrying out this *matter*; why should damage increase to the detriment of the kings?"

### Rehum Brings Work on Jerusalem's Walls to a Halt

23 Then as soon as the copy of King Artaxerxes' document was read before Rehum and Shimshai the scribe and their colleagues, they went in haste to Jerusalem to the Jews and stopped them by force of arms.

## Nehemiah Learns of the Remnant's Adversity (Kislev [December] 445 BC)

Nehemiah 1

1 The words of Nehemiah the son of Hacaliah. Now it happened in the month Chislev, *in* the twentieth year, while I was in Susa the capitol,

2 that Hanani, one of my brothers, and some men from Judah came; and I asked them concerning the Jews who had escaped *and* had survived the captivity, and about Jerusalem.

3 They said to me, "The remnant there in the province who survived the captivity are in great distress and reproach, and the wall of Jerusalem is broken down and its gates are burned with fire."

4 When I heard these words, I sat down and wept and mourned for days; and I was fasting and praying before the God of heaven.

5 I said, "I beseech You, O LORD God of heaven, the great and awesome God, who preserves the covenant and lovingkindness for those who love Him and keep His commandments,

6 let Your ear now be attentive and Your eyes open to hear the prayer of Your servant which I am praying before You now, day and night, on behalf of the sons of Israel Your servants, confessing the sins of the sons of Israel which we have sinned against You; I and my father's house have sinned.

7 We have acted very corruptly against You and have not kept the commandments, nor the statutes, nor the ordinances which You commanded Your servant Moses.

8 Remember the word which You commanded Your servant Moses, saying, 'If you are unfaithful I will scatter you among the peoples;

9 but *if* you return to Me and keep My commandments and do them, though those of you who have been scattered were in the most remote part of the heavens, I will gather them from there and will bring them to the place where I have chosen to cause My



name to dwell.’ [cf. [Deut 4:25–31; 30:1–10](#)]

10 They are Your servants and Your people whom You redeemed by Your great power and by Your strong hand. [[Deut 9:29](#)]

11 O Lord, I beseech You, may Your ear be attentive to the prayer of Your servant and the prayer of Your servants who delight to revere Your name, and make Your servant successful today and grant him compassion before this man.” Now I was the cupbearer to the king.

### Artaxerxes Authorizes Nehemiah to Rebuild Jerusalem’s Walls (Nisan [April] 444 BC)

Nehemiah 2:1–8

1 And it came about in the month Nisan, in the twentieth year of King Artaxerxes, that wine *was* before him, and I took up the wine and gave it to the king. Now I had not been sad in his presence.

2 So the king said to me, “Why is your face sad though you are not sick? This is nothing but sadness of heart.” Then I was very much afraid.

3 I said to the king, “Let the king live forever. Why should my face not be sad when the city, the place of my fathers’ tombs, lies desolate and its gates have been consumed by fire?”

4 Then the king said to me, “What would you request?” So I prayed to the God of heaven.

5 I said to the king, “If it please the king, and if your servant has found favor before you, send me to Judah, to the city of my fathers’ tombs, that I may rebuild it.”

6 Then the king said to me, the queen sitting beside him, “How long will your journey be, and when will you return?” So it pleased the king to send me, and I gave him a definite time.

7 And I said to the king, “If it please the king, let letters be given me for the governors *of the provinces* beyond the River, that they may allow me to pass through until I come to Judah,

8 and a letter to Asaph the keeper of the king’s forest, that he may give me timber to make beams for the gates of the fortress which is by the temple, for the wall of the city and for the house to which I will go.” And the king granted *them* to me because the good hand of my God *was* on me.

### Nehemiah’s Nocturnal Inspection (July 444 BC)

Nehemiah 2:9–20

9 Then I came to the governors *of the provinces* beyond the River and gave them the king’s letters. Now the king had sent with me officers of the army and horsemen.

10 When Sanballat the Horonite and Tobiah the Ammonite official heard *about it*, it was very displeasing to them that someone had come to seek the welfare of the sons of Israel.

11 So I came to Jerusalem and was there three days.

12 And I arose in the night, I and a few men with me. I did not tell anyone what my God was putting into my mind to do for Jerusalem and there was no animal with me except the animal on which I was riding.

13 So I went out at night by the Valley Gate in the direction of the Dragon’s Well and *on* to the Refuse Gate, inspecting the walls of Jerusalem which were broken down and its gates which were consumed by fire.

14 Then I passed on to the Fountain Gate and the King’s Pool, but there was no place for my mount to pass.

15 So I went up at night by the ravine and inspected the wall. Then I entered the Valley Gate again and returned.

16 The officials did not know where I had gone or what I had done; nor had I as yet told the Jews, the priests, the nobles, the officials or the rest who did the work.

17 Then I said to them, “You see the bad situation we are in, that Jerusalem is desolate and its gates burned by fire. Come, let us rebuild the wall of Jerusalem so that we will no longer be a reproach.”

18 I told them how the hand of my God had been favorable to me and also about the king’s words which he had spoken to me. Then they said, “Let us arise and build.” So they put their hands to the good *work*.

19 But when Sanballat the Horonite and Tobiah the Ammonite official, and Geshem the Arab heard *it*, they mocked us and despised us and said, “What is this thing you are doing? Are you rebelling against the king?”

20 So I answered them and said to them, “The God of heaven will give us success; therefore we His servants will arise and build, but you have no portion, 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 arose with his brothers the priests and built the Sheep Gate; they consecrated it and hung its doors. They consecrated the wall to the Tower of the Hundred *and* the Tower of Hananel.

- 2 Next to him the men of Jericho built, and next to them Zaccur the son of Imri built.
- 3 Now the sons of Hassenaah built the Fish Gate; they laid its beams and hung its doors with its bolts and bars.
- 4 Next to them Meremoth the son of Uriah the son of Hakkoz made repairs. And next to him Meshullam the son of Berechiah the son of Meshezabel made repairs. And next to him Zadok the son of Baana *also* made repairs.
- 5 Moreover, next to him the Tekoites made repairs, but their nobles did not support the work of their masters.
- 6 Joiada the son of Paseah and Meshullam the son of Besodeiah repaired the Old Gate; they laid its beams and hung its doors with its bolts and its bars.
- 7 Next to them Melatiah the Gibeonite and Jadon the Meronothite, the men of Gibeon and of Mizpah, also made repairs for the official seat of the governor *of the province* beyond the River.
- 8 Next to him Uzziel the son of Harhaiah of the goldsmiths made repairs. And next to him Hananiah, one of the perfumers, made repairs, and they restored Jerusalem as far as the Broad Wall.
- 9 Next to them Rephaiah the son of Hur, the official of half the district of Jerusalem, made repairs.
- 10 Next to them Jedaiah the son of Harumaph made repairs opposite his house. And next to him Hattush the son of Hashabneiah made repairs.
- 11 Malchijah the son of Harim and Hasshub the son of Pahath-moab repaired another section and the Tower of Furnaces.
- 12 Next to him Shallum the son of Hallohesh, the official of half the district of Jerusalem, made repairs, he and his daughters.
- 13 Hanun and the inhabitants of Zanoah repaired the Valley Gate. They built it and hung its doors with its bolts and its bars, and a thousand cubits of the wall to the Refuse Gate.
- 14 Malchijah the son of Rechab, the official of the district of Beth-haccherem repaired the Refuse Gate. He built it and hung its doors with its bolts and its bars.
- 15 Shallum the son of Col-hozeh, the official of the district of Mizpah, repaired the Fountain Gate. He built it, covered it and hung its doors with its bolts and its bars, and the wall of the Pool of Shelah at the king's garden as far as the steps that descend from the city of David.
- Construction of the Eastern Wall**
- 16 After him Nehemiah the son of Azbuk, official of half the district of Beth-zur, made repairs as far as *a point* opposite the tombs of David, and as far as the artificial pool and the house of the mighty men.
- 17 After him the Levites carried out repairs *under* Rehum the son of Bani. Next to him Hashabiah, the official of half the district of Keilah, carried out repairs for his district.
- 18 After him their brothers carried out repairs *under* Bavvai the son of Henadad, official of *the other* half of the district of Keilah.
- 19 Next to him Ezer the son of Jeshua, the official of Mizpah, repaired another section in front of the ascent of the armory at the Angle.
- 20 After him Baruch the son of Zabbai zealously repaired another section, from the Angle to the doorway of the house of Eliashib the high priest.
- 21 After him Meremoth the son of Uriah the son of Hakkoz repaired another section, from the doorway of Eliashib's house even as far as the end of his house.
- 22 After him the priests, the men of the valley, carried out repairs.
- 23 After them Benjamin and Hasshub carried out repairs in front of their house. After them Azariah the son of Maaseiah, son of Ananiah, carried out repairs beside his house.
- 24 After him Binnui the son of Henadad repaired another section, from the house of Azariah as far as the Angle and as far as the corner.
- 25 Palal the son of Uzai *made repairs* in front of the Angle and the tower projecting from the upper house of the king, which is by the court of the guard. After him Pedaiah the son of Parosh *made repairs*.
- 26 The temple servants living in Ophel *made repairs* as far as the front of the Water Gate toward the east and the projecting tower.
- 27 After them the Tekoites repaired another section in front of the great projecting tower and as far as the wall of Ophel.
- 28 Above the Horse Gate the priests carried out repairs, each in front of his house.
- 29 After them Zadok the son of Immer carried out repairs in front of his house. And after him Shemaiah the son of Shecaniah, the keeper of the East Gate, carried out repairs.
- 30 After him Hananiah the son of Shelemiah, and Hanun the sixth son of Zalaph, repaired another section. After him Meshullam the son of Berechiah carried out repairs in front of his own quarters.
- 31 After him Malchijah, one of the goldsmiths, carried out repairs as far as the house of the temple servants and of the merchants, in front of the Inspection Gate and as far as the upper room of the corner.
- 32 Between the upper room of the corner and the Sheep Gate the goldsmiths and the merchants carried out repairs.

## Sanballat Tries to Hinder Nehemiah (July 31–September 21, 444 BC)

### Nehemiah 4

#### Opposition by Ridicule

1 Now it came about that when Sanballat heard that we were rebuilding the wall, he became furious and very angry and mocked the Jews.

2 He spoke in the presence of his brothers and the wealthy *men* of Samaria and said, “What are these feeble Jews doing? Are they going to restore *it* for themselves? Can they offer sacrifices? Can they finish in a day? Can they revive the stones from the dusty rubble even the burned ones?”

3 Now Tobiah the Ammonite *was* near him and he said, “Even what they are building—if a fox should jump on *it*, he would break their stone wall down!”

4 Hear, O our God, how we are despised! Return their reproach on their own heads and give them up for plunder in a land of captivity.

5 Do not forgive their iniquity and let not their sin be blotted out before You, for they have demoralized the builders.

6 So we built the wall and the whole wall was joined together to half its *height*, for the people had a mind to work.

#### Opposition by Plot

7 Now when Sanballat, Tobiah, the Arabs, the Ammonites and the Ashdodites heard that the repair of the walls of Jerusalem went on, *and* that the breaches began to be closed, they were very angry.

8 All of them conspired together to come *and* fight against Jerusalem and to cause a disturbance in it.

9 But we prayed to our God, and because of them we set up a guard against them day and night.

#### Internal Opposition: Discouragement and Fear

10 Thus in Judah it was said,

“The strength of the burden bearers is failing,  
Yet there is much rubbish;  
And we ourselves are unable  
To rebuild the wall.”

11 Our enemies said, “They will not know or see until we come among them, kill them and put a stop to the work.”

12 When the Jews who lived near them came and told us ten times, “They will come up against us from every place where you may turn,”

13 then I stationed *men* in the lowest parts of the space behind the wall, the exposed places, and I stationed the people in families with their swords, spears and bows.

14 When I saw *their fear*, I rose and spoke to the nobles, the officials 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 When our enemies heard that it was known to us, and that God had frustrated their plan, then all of us returned to the wall, each one to his work.

#### Diligence and Readiness in the Work

16 From that day on, half of my servants carried on the work while half of them held the spears, the shields, the bows and the breastplates; and the captains *were* behind the whole house of Judah.

17 Those who were rebuilding the wall and those who carried burdens took *their* load with one hand doing the work and the other holding a weapon.

18 As for the builders, each *wore* his sword girded at his side as he built, while the trumpeter *stood* near me.

19 I said to the nobles, the officials and the rest of the people, “The work is great and extensive, and we are separated on the wall far from one another.

20 At whatever place you hear the sound of the trumpet, rally to us there. Our God will fight for us.”

21 So we carried on the work with half of them holding spears from dawn until the stars appeared.

22 At that time I also said to the people, “Let each man with his servant spend the night within Jerusalem so that they may be a guard for us by night and a laborer by day.”

23 So neither I, my brothers, my servants, nor the men of the guard who followed me, none of us removed our clothes, each *took* his weapon *even to* the water.

## Oppression Within the Remnant (July 31–September 21, 444 BC)

### Nehemiah 5

#### Extortion by the Rich

- 1 Now there was a great outcry of the people and of their wives against their Jewish brothers.  
 2 For there were those who said, “We, our sons and our daughters are many; therefore let us get grain that we may eat and live.”  
 3 There were others who said, “We are mortgaging our fields, our vineyards and our houses that we might get grain because of the famine.”  
 4 Also there were those who said, “We have borrowed money for the king’s tax *on* our fields and our vineyards.  
 5 Now our flesh is like the flesh of our brothers, our children like their children. Yet behold, we are forcing our sons and our daughters to be slaves, and some of our daughters are forced into bondage *already*, and we are helpless because our fields and vineyards belong to others.”

#### Nehemiah Rebukes the Creditors

- 6 Then I was very angry when I had heard their outcry and these words.  
 7 I consulted with myself and contended with the nobles and the rulers and said to them, “You are exacting usury, each from his brother!” Therefore, I held a great assembly against them.  
 8 I said to them, “We according to our ability have redeemed our Jewish brothers who were sold to the nations; now would you even sell your brothers that they may be sold to us?” Then they were silent and could not find a word *to say*.  
 9 Again I said, “The thing which you are doing is not good; should you not walk in the fear of our God because of the reproach of the nations, our enemies?  
 10 And likewise I, my brothers and my servants are lending them money and grain. Please, let us leave off this usury.  
 11 Please, give back to them this very day their fields, their vineyards, their olive groves and their houses, also the hundredth *part* of the money and of the grain, the new wine and the oil that you are exacting from them.”

#### The Creditors Heed Nehemiah’s Rebuke

- 12 Then they said, “We will give *it* back and will require nothing from them; we will do exactly as you say.” So I called the priests and took an oath from them that they would do according to this promise.  
 13 I also shook out the front of my garment and said, “Thus may God shake out every man from his house and from his possessions who does not fulfill this promise; even thus may he be shaken out and emptied.” And all the assembly said, “Amen!” And they praised the LORD. Then the people did according to this promise.

#### Nehemiah’s Unselfish Leadership

- 14 Moreover, from the day that I was appointed to be their governor in the land of Judah, from the twentieth year to the thirty-second year of King Artaxerxes, *for* twelve years, neither I nor my kinsmen have eaten the governor’s food *allowance*.  
 15 But the former governors who were before me laid burdens on the people and took from them bread and wine besides forty shekels of silver; even their servants domineered the people. But I did not do so because of the fear of God.  
 16 I also applied myself to the work on this wall; we did not buy any land, and all my servants were gathered there for the work.  
 17 Moreover, *there were* at my table one hundred and fifty Jews and officials, besides those who came to us from the nations that were around us.  
 18 Now that which was prepared for each day was one ox *and* six choice sheep, also birds were prepared for me; and once in ten days all sorts of wine *were furnished* in abundance. Yet for all this I did not demand the governor’s food *allowance*, because the servitude was heavy on this people.  
 19 Remember me, O my God, for good, *according to* 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, to Geshem the Arab and to the rest of our enemies that I had rebuilt the wall, and *that* no breach remained in it, although at that time I had not set up the doors in the gates,  
 2 then Sanballat and Geshem sent *a message* to me, saying, “Come, let us meet together at Chephirim in the plain of Ono.” But they were planning to harm me.  
 3 So I sent messengers to them, saying, “I am doing a great work and I cannot come down. Why should the work stop while I leave it and come down to you?”  
 4 They sent *messages* to me four times in this manner, and I answered them in the same way.  
 5 Then Sanballat sent his servant to me in the same manner a fifth time with an open letter in his hand.  
 6 In it was written, “It is reported among the nations, and Gashmu says, that you and the Jews are planning to rebel; therefore you are rebuilding the wall. And you are to be their king, according to these reports.”

7 You have also appointed prophets to proclaim in Jerusalem concerning you, ‘A king is in Judah!’ And now it will be reported to the king according to these reports. So come now, let us take counsel together.”

8 Then I sent *a message* to him saying, “Such things as you are saying have not been done, but you are inventing them in your own mind.”

9 For all of them were *trying* to frighten us, thinking, “They will become discouraged with the work and it will not be done.” But now, *O God*, strengthen my hands.

#### **Opposition by Intimidation**

10 When I entered the house of Shemaiah the son of Delaiah, son of Mehetabel, who was confined at home, he said, “Let us meet together in the house of God, within the temple, and let us close the doors of the temple, for they are coming to kill you, and they are coming to kill you at night.”

11 But I said, “Should a man like me flee? And could one such as I go into the temple to save his life? I will not go in.”

12 Then I perceived that surely God had not sent him, but he uttered *his* prophecy against me because Tobiah and Sanballat had hired him.

13 He was hired for this reason, that I might become frightened and act accordingly and sin, so that they might have an evil report in order that they could reproach me.

14 Remember, *O my God*, Tobiah and Sanballat according to these works of theirs, and also Noadiah the prophetess and the rest of the prophets who were *trying* to frighten me.

### Jerusalem’s Walls Completed (September 21, 444 BC)

Nehemiah 6:15–19

#### **The Walls Completed**

15 So the wall was completed on the twenty-fifth of *the month* Elul, in fifty-two days.

16 When all our enemies heard *of it*, and all the nations surrounding us saw *it*, they lost their confidence; for they recognized that this work had been accomplished with the help of our God.

#### **Opposition Still Continues**

17 Also in those days many letters went from the nobles of Judah to Tobiah, and Tobiah’s *letters* came to them.

18 For many in Judah were bound by oath to him because he was the son-in-law of Shecaniah the son of Arah, and his son Jehohanan had married the daughter of Meshullam the son of Berechiah.

19 Moreover, they were speaking about his good deeds in my presence and reported my words to him. Then Tobiah sent letters to frighten 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 was rebuilt and I had set up the doors, and the gatekeepers and the singers and the Levites were appointed, 2 then I put Hanani my brother, and Hananiah the commander of the fortress, in charge of Jerusalem, for he was a faithful man and feared God more than many.

3 Then I said to them, “Do not let the gates of Jerusalem be opened until the sun is hot, and while they are standing *guard*, let them shut and bolt the doors. Also appoint guards from the inhabitants of Jerusalem, each at his post, and each in front of his own house.”

### The Registration of the People

4 Now the city was large and spacious, but the people in it were few and the houses were not built.

5a Then my God put it into my heart to assemble the nobles, the officials and the people to be enrolled by genealogies.

## Ezra Reads the Law and Explains It to the People (September 26, 444 BC)

Nehemiah 7:73b–8:12

7:73b And when the seventh month came, the sons of Israel *were* in their cities.

8:1 And all the people gathered as one man at the square which was in front of the Water Gate, and they asked Ezra the scribe to bring the book of the law of Moses which the LORD had given to Israel.

2 Then Ezra the priest brought the law before the assembly of men, women and all who *could* listen with understanding, on the first day of the seventh month.

3 He read from it before the square which was in front of the Water Gate from early morning until midday, in the presence of men and women, those who could understand; and all the people were attentive to the book of the law.

4 Ezra the scribe stood at a wooden podium which they had made for the purpose. And beside him stood Mattithiah, Shema, Anaiah, Uriah, Hilkiyah, and Maaseiah on his right hand; and Pedaiah, Mishael, Malchijah, Hashum, Hashbaddanah, Zechariah *and* Meshullam on his left hand.

5 Ezra opened the book in the sight of all the people for he was standing above all the people; and when he opened it, all the people stood up.

6 Then Ezra blessed the LORD the great God. And all the people answered, “Amen, Amen!” while lifting up their hands; then they bowed low and worshiped the LORD with *their* faces to the ground.

7 Also Jeshua, Bani, Sherebiah, Jamin, Akkub, Shabbethai, Hodiah, Maaseiah, Kelita, Azariah, Jozabad, Hanan, Pelaiah, the Levites, explained the law to the people while the people *remained* in their place.

8 They read from the book, from the law of God, translating to give the sense so that they understood the reading.

9 Then Nehemiah, who was the governor, and Ezra the priest *and* scribe, and the Levites who taught the people said to all the people, “This day is holy to the LORD your God; do not mourn or weep.” For all the people were weeping when they heard the words of the law.

10 Then he said to them, “Go, eat of the fat, drink of the sweet, and send portions to him who has nothing prepared; for this day is holy to our Lord. Do not be grieved, for the joy of the LORD is your strength.”

11 So the Levites calmed all the people, saying, “Be still, for the day is holy; do not be grieved.”

12 All the people went away to eat, to drink, to send portions and to celebrate a great festival, because they understood the words which had been made known to them.

## Discovery of the Forgotten Feast (September 27, 444 BC)

Nehemiah 8:13–15

13 Then on the second day the heads of fathers’ *households* of all the people, the priests and the Levites were gathered to Ezra the scribe that they might gain insight into the words of the law.

14 They found written in the law how the LORD had commanded through Moses that the sons of Israel should live in booths during the feast of the seventh month.

15 So they proclaimed and circulated a proclamation in all their cities and in Jerusalem, saying, “Go out to the hills, and bring olive branches and wild olive branches, myrtle branches, palm branches and branches of *other* leafy trees, 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, and in their courts and in the courts of the house of God, and in the square at the Water Gate and in the square at the Gate of Ephraim.

17 The entire assembly of those who had returned from the captivity made booths and lived in them. The sons of Israel had indeed not done so from the days of Joshua the son of Nun to that day. And there was great rejoicing.

18 He read from the book of the law of God daily, from the first day to the last day. And they celebrated the feast seven days, and on the eighth day *there was* a solemn assembly according to the ordinance.

## The Israelites' Prayer of Confession (October 20, 444 BC)

Nehemiah 9:1–37

### Assembly for Confession and Worship

1 Now on the twenty-fourth day of this month the sons of Israel assembled with fasting, in sackcloth and with dirt upon them.

2 The descendants of Israel separated themselves from all foreigners, and stood and confessed their sins and the iniquities of their fathers.

3 While they stood in their place, they read from the book of the law of the LORD their God for a fourth of the day; and for *another* fourth they confessed and worshiped the LORD their God.

4 Now on the Levites' platform stood Jeshua, Bani, Kadmiel, Shebaniah, Bunni, Sherebiah, Bani *and* Chenani, and they cried with a loud voice to the LORD their God.

5a Then the Levites, Jeshua, Kadmiel, Bani, Hashabneiah, Sherebiah, Hodiah, Shebaniah *and* Pethahiah, said, "Arise, bless the LORD your God forever and ever!

### Prayer of Confession

5b O may Your glorious name be blessed  
And exalted above all blessing and praise!

6 "You alone are the LORD.  
You have made the heavens,  
The heaven of heavens with all their host,  
The earth and all that is on it,  
The seas and all that is in them.  
You give life to all of them  
And the heavenly host bows down before You.

7 "You are the LORD God,  
Who chose Abram  
And brought him out from Ur of the Chaldees,  
And gave him the name Abraham.

8 "You found his heart faithful before You,  
And made a covenant with him  
To give *him* the land of the Canaanite,  
Of the Hittite and the Amorite,  
Of the Perizzite, the Jebusite and the Girgashite—  
To give *it* to his descendants.  
And You have fulfilled Your promise,  
For You are righteous.

9 "You saw the affliction of our fathers in Egypt,  
And heard their cry by the Red Sea.

10 "Then You performed signs and wonders against Pharaoh,  
Against all his servants and all the people of his land;  
For You knew that they acted arrogantly toward them,  
And made a name for Yourself as *it is* this day.

11 "You divided the sea before them,  
So they passed through the midst of the sea on dry ground;  
And their pursuers You hurled into the depths,  
Like a stone into raging waters.

12 "And with a pillar of cloud You led them by day,  
And with a pillar of fire by night  
To light for them the way

- In which they were to go.
- 13 “Then You came down on Mount Sinai,  
And spoke with them from heaven;  
You gave them just ordinances and true laws,  
Good statutes and commandments.
- 14 “So You made known to them Your holy sabbath,  
And laid down for them commandments, statutes and law,  
Through Your servant Moses.
- 15 “You provided bread from heaven for them for their hunger,  
You brought forth water from a rock for them for their thirst,  
And You told them to enter in order to possess  
The land which You swore to give them.
- 16 “But they, our fathers, acted arrogantly;  
They became stubborn and would not listen to Your commandments.
- 17 “They refused to listen,  
And did not remember Your wondrous deeds which You had performed among them;  
So they became stubborn and appointed a leader to return to their slavery in Egypt.  
But You are a God of forgiveness,  
Gracious and compassionate,  
Slow to anger and abounding in lovingkindness;  
And You did not forsake them.
- 18 “Even when they made for themselves  
A calf of molten metal  
And said, ‘This is your God Who brought you up from Egypt,’  
And committed great blasphemies,
- 19 You, in Your great compassion,  
Did not forsake them in the wilderness;  
The pillar of cloud did not leave them by day,  
To guide them on their way,  
Nor the pillar of fire by night, to light for them the way in which they were to go.
- 20 “You gave Your good Spirit to instruct them,  
Your manna You did not withhold from their mouth,  
And You gave them water for their thirst.
- 21 “Indeed, forty years You provided for them in the wilderness *and* they were not in want;  
Their clothes did not wear out, nor did their feet swell.
- 22 “You also gave them kingdoms and peoples,  
And allotted *them* to them as a boundary.  
They took possession of the land of Sihon the king of Heshbon  
And the land of Og the king of Bashan.
- 23 “You made their sons numerous as the stars of heaven,  
And You brought them into the land  
Which You had told their fathers to enter and possess.
- 24 “So their sons entered and possessed the land.  
And You subdued before them the inhabitants of the land, the Canaanites,  
And You gave them into their hand, with their kings and the peoples of the land,  
To do with them as they desired.
- 25 “They captured fortified cities and a fertile land.  
They took possession of houses full of every good thing,  
Hewn cisterns, vineyards, olive groves,  
Fruit trees in abundance.  
So they ate, were filled and grew fat,  
And reveled in Your great goodness.
- 26 “But they became disobedient and rebelled against You,  
And cast Your law behind their backs  
And killed Your prophets who had admonished them  
So that they might return to You,  
And they committed great blasphemies.
- 27 “Therefore You delivered them into the hand of their oppressors who oppressed them,



- But when they cried to You in the time of their distress,  
 You heard from heaven, and according to Your great compassion  
 You gave them deliverers who delivered them from the hand of their oppressors.
- 28 “But as soon as they had rest, they did evil again before You;  
 Therefore You abandoned them to the hand of their enemies, so that they ruled over them.  
 When they cried again to You, You heard from heaven,  
 And many times You rescued them according to Your compassion,
- 29 And admonished them in order to turn them back to Your law.  
 Yet they acted arrogantly and did not listen to Your commandments but sinned against Your ordinances,  
 By which if a man observes them he shall live.  
 And they turned a stubborn shoulder and stiffened their neck, and would not listen.
- 30 “However, You bore with them for many years,  
 And admonished them by Your Spirit through Your prophets,  
 Yet they would not give ear.  
 Therefore You gave them into the hand of the peoples of the lands.
- 31 “Nevertheless, in Your great compassion You did not make an end of them or forsake them,  
 For You are a gracious and compassionate God.
- 32 “Now therefore, our God, the great, the mighty, and the awesome God, who keeps covenant and lovingkindness,  
 Do not let all the hardship seem insignificant before You,  
 Which has come upon us, our kings, our princes, our priests, our prophets, our fathers and on all Your people,  
 From the days of the kings of Assyria to this day.
- 33 “However, You are just in all that has come upon us;  
 For You have dealt faithfully, but we have acted wickedly.
- 34 “For our kings, our leaders, our priests and our fathers have not kept Your law  
 Or paid attention to Your commandments and Your admonitions with which You have admonished them.
- 35 “But they, in their own kingdom,  
 With Your great goodness which You gave them,  
 With the broad and rich land which You set before them,  
 Did not serve You or turn from their evil deeds.
- 36 “Behold, we are slaves today,  
 And as to the land which You gave to our fathers to eat of its fruit and its bounty,  
 Behold, we are slaves in it.
- 37 “Its abundant produce is for the kings  
 Whom You have set over us because of our sins;  
 They also rule over our bodies  
 And over our cattle as they please,  
 So we are in great distress.

## A Signed National Covenant (October 20, 444 BC)

Nehemiah 9:38–10:39

### Introduction

9:38 Now because of all this

We are making an agreement in writing;

And on the sealed document *are the names of* our leaders, our Levites *and* our priests.”

### The Chief Leaders and Priests Who Signed

10:1 Now on the sealed document *were the names of*: Nehemiah the governor, the son of Hacaliah, and Zedekiah,

2 Seraiah, Azariah, Jeremiah,

3 Pashhur, Amariah, Malchijah,

4 Hattush, Shebaniah, Malluch,

5 Harim, Meremoth, Obadiah,

6 Daniel, Ginnethon, Baruch,

7 Meshullam, Abijah, Mijamin,

8 Maaziah, Bilgai, Shemaiah. These *were* the priests.

### The Levites Who Signed

9 And the Levites: Jeshua the son of Azaniah, Binnui of the sons of Henadad, Kadmiel;

10 also their brothers Shebaniah, Hodiah, Kelita, Pelaiiah, Hanan,  
 11 Mica, Rehob, Hashabiah,  
 12 Zaccur, Sherebiah, Shebaniah,  
 13 Hodiah, Bani, Beninu.

#### **The Other Leaders Who Signed**

14 The leaders 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, Nebai,  
 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 Ahiah, Hanan, Anan,  
 27 Malluch, Harim, Baanah.

#### **The Solemn Promise**

28 Now the rest of the people, the priests, the Levites, the gatekeepers, the singers, the temple servants and all those who had separated themselves from the peoples of the lands to the law of God, their wives, their sons and their daughters, all those who had knowledge and understanding,  
 29 are joining with their kinsmen, their nobles, and are taking on themselves a curse and an oath to walk in God's law, which was given through Moses, God's servant, and to keep and to observe all the commandments of God our Lord, and His ordinances and His statutes;

#### **Specific Examples of Separation**

30 and that we will not give our daughters to the peoples of the land or take their daughters for our sons.  
 31 As for the peoples of the land who bring wares or any grain on the sabbath day to sell, we will not buy from them on the sabbath or a holy day; and we will forego *the crops* the seventh year and the exaction of every debt.

#### **Temple Taxes**

32 We also placed ourselves under obligation to contribute yearly one third of a shekel for the service of the house of our God:  
 33 for the showbread, for the continual grain offering, for the continual burnt offering, the sabbaths, the new moon, for the appointed times, for the holy things and for the sin offerings to make atonement for Israel, and all the work of the house of our God.

#### **Offerings in Kind**

34 Likewise we cast lots for the supply of wood *among* the priests, the Levites and the people so that they might bring it to the house of our God, according to our fathers' households, at fixed times annually, to burn on the altar of the LORD our God, as it is written in the law;  
 35 and that they might bring the first fruits of our ground and the first fruits of all the fruit of every tree to the house of the LORD annually,  
 36 and bring to the house of our God the firstborn of our sons and of our cattle, and the firstborn of our herds and our flocks as it is written in the law, for the priests who are ministering in the house of our God.  
 37 We will also bring the first of our dough, our contributions, the fruit of every tree, the new wine and the oil to the priests at the chambers of the house of our God, and the tithe of our ground to the Levites, for the Levites are they who receive the tithes in all the rural towns.  
 38 The priest, the son of Aaron, shall be with the Levites when the Levites receive tithes, and the Levites shall bring up the tenth of the tithes to the house of our God, to the chambers of the storehouse.  
 39 For the sons of Israel and the sons of Levi shall bring the contribution of the grain, the new wine and the oil to the chambers; there are the utensils of the sanctuary, the priests who are ministering, the gatekeepers and the singers. Thus we will not neglect the house of our God.

## The Repopulation of Jerusalem (late 444 BC)

Nehemiah 11:1–24

1 Chronicles 9:1b–34

### Summary Statement

1 Now the leaders of the people lived in Jerusalem, but the rest of the people cast lots to bring one out of ten to live in Jerusalem, the holy city, while nine-tenths *remained* in the *other* cities.

2 And the people blessed all the men who volunteered to live in Jerusalem.

### Heading

3 Now these are the heads of the provinces who lived in Jerusalem, but in the cities of Judah each lived on his own property in their cities—the Israelites, the priests, the Levites, the temple servants and the descendants of Solomon’s servants.

### Judah

4 Some of the sons of Judah and some of the sons of Benjamin lived in Jerusalem. From the sons of Judah: Athaiah the son of Uziah, the son of Zechariah, the son of Amariah, the son of Shephatiah, the son of Mahalalel, of the sons of Perez;  
5 and Maaseiah the son of Baruch, the son of Col-hozeh, the son of Hazaiah, the son of Adaiah, the son of Joiarib, the son of Zechariah, the son of the Shilonite.

6 All the sons of Perez who lived in Jerusalem were 468 able men.

### Benjamin

7 Now these are the sons of Benjamin: Sallu the son of Meshullam, the son of Joed, the son of Pedaiah, the son of Kolaiah, the son of Maaseiah, the son of Ithiel, the son of Jeshaiah;

8 and after him Gabbai *and* Sallai, 928.

9 Joel the son of Zichri was their overseer, and Judah the son of Hassenuah was second in command of the city.

### Priests

10 From the priests: Jedaiah the son of Joiarib, Jachin,  
11 Seraiah the son of Hilkiah, the son of Meshullam, the son of Zadok, the son of Meraioth, the son of Ahitub, the leader of the house of God,

12 and their kinsmen who performed the work of the temple, 822; and Adaiah the son of Jeroham, the son of Pelaliah, the son of Amzi, the son of Zechariah, the son of Pashhur, the son of Malchijah,

13 and his kinsmen, heads of fathers’ *households*, 242; and Amashsai the son of Azarel, the son of Ahzai, the son of Meshillemoth, the son of Immer,

14 and their brothers, valiant warriors, 128. And their overseer was Zabdiel, the son of Hagedolim.

### Levites

15 Now from the Levites: Shemaiah the son of Hasshub, the son of Azrikam, the son of Hashabiah, the son of Bunni;

16 and Shabbethai and Jozabad, from the leaders of the Levites, who were in charge of the outside work of the house of God;

17 and Mattaniah the son of Mica, the son of Zabdi, the son of

1b And Judah was carried away into exile to Babylon for their unfaithfulness.

2 Now the first who lived in their possessions in their cities *were* Israel, the priests, the Levites and the temple servants.

3 Some of the sons of Judah, of the sons of Benjamin and of the sons of Ephraim and Manasseh lived in Jerusalem:

4 Uthai the son of Ammihud, the son of Omri, the son of Imri, the son of Bani, from the sons of Perez the son of Judah.

5 From the Shilonites *were* Asaiah the firstborn and his sons.

6 From the sons of Zerah *were* Jeuel and their relatives, 690 *of them*.

7 From the sons of Benjamin *were* Sallu the son of Meshullam, the son of Hodaviah, the son of Hassenuah,

8 and Ibneiah the son of Jeroham, and Elah the son of Uzzi, the son of Michri, and Meshullam the son of Shephatiah, the son of Reuel, the son of Ibnijah;

9 and their relatives according to their generations, 956. All these *were* heads of fathers’ *households* according to their fathers’ houses.

10 From the priests *were* Jedaiah, Jehoiarib, Jachin,

11 and Azariah the son of Hilkiah, the son of Meshullam, the son of Zadok, the son of Meraioth, the son of Ahitub, the chief officer of the house of God;

12 and Adaiah the son of Jeroham, the son of Pashhur, the son of Malchijah, and Maasai the son of Adiel, the son of Jahzerah, the son of Meshullam, the son of Meshillemith, the son of Immer;

13 and their relatives, heads of their fathers’ households, 1,760 very able men for the work of the service of the house of God.

14 Of the Levites *were* Shemaiah the son of Hasshub, the son of Azrikam, the son of Hashabiah, of the sons of Merari;

15 and Bakbakkar, Heresh and Galal and Mattaniah the son of Mica, the son of Zichri, the son of Asaph,

16 and Obadiah the son of Shemaiah, the son of Galal, the son of

Asaph, who was the leader in beginning the thanksgiving at prayer, and Bakbukiah, the second among his brethren; and Abda the son of Shammua, the son of Galal, the son of Jeduthun.  
18 All the Levites in the holy city *were* 284.

#### Gatekeepers

19 Also the gatekeepers, Akkub, Talmon and their brethren who kept watch at the gates, *were* 172.

#### Duties

#### Levitical Singers

Jeduthun, and Berechiah the son of Asa, the son of Elkanah, who lived in the villages of the Netophathites.

17 Now the gatekeepers *were* Shallum and Akkub and Talmon and Ahiman and their relatives (Shallum the chief  
18 *being stationed* until now at the king's gate to the east). These *were* the gatekeepers for the camp of the sons of Levi.  
19 Shallum the son of Kore, the son of Ebiasaph, the son of Korah, and his relatives of his father's house, the Korahites, *were* over the work of the service, keepers of the thresholds of the tent; and their fathers had been over the camp of the LORD, keepers of the entrance.  
20 Phinehas the son of Eleazar was ruler over them previously, *and* the LORD was with him.  
21 Zechariah the son of Meshelemiah was gatekeeper of the entrance of the tent of meeting.  
22 All these who were chosen to be gatekeepers at the thresholds were 212. These were enrolled by genealogy in their villages, whom David and Samuel the seer appointed in their office of trust.

23 So they and their sons had charge of the gates of the house of the LORD, *even* the house of the tent, as guards.  
24 The gatekeepers were on the four sides, to the east, west, north and south.  
25 Their relatives in their villages *were* to come in every seven days from time to time *to be* with them;  
26 for the four chief gatekeepers who *were* Levites, were in an office of trust, and were over the chambers and over the treasuries in the house of God.  
27 They spent the night around the house of God, because the watch was committed to them; and they *were* in charge of opening *it* morning by morning.  
28 Now some of them had charge of the utensils of service, for they counted them when they brought them in and when they took them out.  
29 Some of them also were appointed over the furniture and over all the utensils of the sanctuary and over the fine flour and the wine and the oil and the frankincense and the spices.  
30 Some of the sons of the priests prepared the mixing of the spices.  
31 Mattithiah, one of the Levites, who was the firstborn of Shallum the Korahite, had the responsibility over the things which were baked in pans.  
32 Some of their relatives of the sons of the Kohathites *were* over the showbread to prepare it every sabbath.

33 Now these are the singers, heads of fathers' *households* of the Levites, *who lived* in the chambers *of the temple* free from *other service*; for they were engaged in their work day and night.

<p><b>Summary</b></p> <p><b>The Rest</b> 20 The rest of Israel, of the priests <i>and</i> of the Levites, <i>were</i> in all the cities of Judah, each on his own inheritance.</p> <p><b>Temple Servants</b> 21 But the temple servants were living in Ophel, and Ziha and Gishpa were in charge of the temple servants.</p> <p><b>Levitical Overseers</b> 22 Now the overseer of the Levites in Jerusalem was Uzzi the son of Bani, the son of Hashabiah, the son of Mattaniah, the son of Mica, from the sons of Asaph, who were the singers for the service of the house of God. 23 For <i>there was</i> a commandment from the king concerning them and a firm regulation for the song leaders day by day.</p> <p><b>Liaison with the King</b> 24 Pethahiah the son of Meshezabel, of the sons of Zerah the son of Judah, was the king's representative in all matters concerning the people.</p>	<p>34 These were heads of fathers' <i>households</i> of the Levites according to their generations, chief men, who lived in Jerusalem.</p>
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### The Repopulation of the Surrounding Villages (late 444 BC)

Nehemiah 11:25–36

25 Now as for the villages with their fields, some of the sons of Judah lived in Kiriath-arba and its towns, in Dibon and its towns, and in Jekabzeel and its villages,  
 26 and in Jeshua, in Moladah and Beth-pelet,  
 27 and in Hazar-shual, in Beersheba and its towns,  
 28 and in Ziklag, in Meconah and in its towns,  
 29 and in En-rimmon, in Zorah and in Jarmuth,  
 30 Zanoah, Adullam, and their villages, Lachish and its fields, Azekah and its towns. So they encamped from Beersheba as far as the valley of Hinnom.  
 31 The sons of Benjamin also *lived* from Geba *onward*, at Michmash and Aija, at Bethel and its towns,  
 32 at Anathoth, Nob, Ananiah,  
 33 Hazor, Ramah, Gittaim,  
 34 Hadid, Zeboim, Neballat,  
 35 Lod and Ono, the valley of craftsmen.  
 36 From the Levites, *some* divisions in Judah belonged 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 Now these are the priests and the Levites who came up with Zerubbabel the 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 and Joiarib, Jedaiah,  
 7 Sallu, Amok, Hilkiyah and Jedaiah. These were the heads of the priests and their kinsmen in the days of Jeshua.  
 8 The Levites *were* Jeshua, Binnui, Kadmiel, Sherebiah, Judah, *and* Mattaniah *who was* in charge of the songs of thanksgiving, he and his brothers.  
 9 Also Bakbukiah and Unni, their brothers, stood opposite them in *their* service divisions.

**The Line of High Priests (c. 537 – c. 330)**

10 Jeshua became the father of Joiakim, and Joiakim became the father of Eliashib, and Eliashib became the father of Joiada, 11 and Joiada became the father of Jonathan, and Jonathan became the father of Jaddua.

**Heads of Priestly Families in Joiakim's Day (c. 500 – c. 470)**

12 Now in the days of Joiakim, the priests, the heads of fathers' *households* were: of Seraiah, Meraiah; of Jeremiah, Hananiah; 13 of Ezra, Meshullam; of Amariah, Jehohanan; 14 of Malluchi, Jonathan; of Shebaniah, Joseph; 15 of Harim, Adna; of Meraioth, Helkai; 16 of Iddo, Zechariah; of Ginnethon, Meshullam; 17 of Abijah, Zichri; of Miniamin, of Moadiah, Piltai; 18 of Bilgah, Shammua; of Shemaiah, Jehonathan; 19 of Joiarib, Mattenai; of Jedaiah, Uzzi; 20 of Sallai, Kallai; of Amok, Eber; 21 of Hilkiyah, Hashabiah; of Jedaiah, Nethanel.

**Recording of Levitical and Priestly Families up to the Time of Darius III (c. 470 – c. 330)**

22 As for the Levites, the heads of fathers' *households* were registered in the days of Eliashib, Joiada, and Johanan and Jaddua; so *were* the priests in the reign of Darius the Persian.

23 The sons of Levi, the heads of fathers' *households*, were registered in the Book of the Chronicles up to the days of Johanan the son of Eliashib.

**Heads of Levitical Families in Joiakim's and Nehemiah's Day (c. 500 – c. 425)**

24 The heads of the Levites *were* Hashabiah, Sherebiah and Jeshua the son of Kadmiel, with their brothers opposite them, to praise *and* give thanks, as prescribed by David the man of God, division corresponding to division.

25 Mattaniah, Bakbukiah, Obadiah, Meshullam, Talmon *and* Akkub *were* gatekeepers keeping watch at the storehouses of the gates.

26 These *served* in the days of Joiakim the son of Jeshua, the son of Jozadak, and in the days of Nehemiah the governor and of Ezra the priest *and* scribe.

**Dedication of the Walls (late 444 BC)**

Nehemiah 12:27–47

**Gathering Participants for the Dedication**

27 Now at the dedication of the wall of Jerusalem they sought out the Levites from all their places, to bring them to Jerusalem so that they might celebrate the dedication with gladness, with hymns of thanksgiving and with songs *to the accompaniment* of cymbals, harps and lyres.

28 So the sons of the singers were assembled from the district around Jerusalem, and from the villages of the Netophathites, 29 from Beth-gilgal and from *their* fields in Geba and Azmaveth, for the singers had built themselves villages around Jerusalem.

30 The priests and the Levites purified themselves; they also purified the people, the gates and the wall.

**Two Processions on the Wall**

31 Then I had the leaders of Judah come up on top of the wall, and I appointed two great choirs, the first proceeding to the right on top of the wall toward the Refuse Gate.

32 Hoshaiah and half of the leaders of Judah followed them,

33 with Azariah, Ezra, Meshullam,

34 Judah, Benjamin, Shemaiah, Jeremiah,

35 and some of the sons of the priests with trumpets; *and* Zechariah the son of Jonathan, the son of Shemaiah, the son of Mattaniah, the son of Micaiah, the son of Zaccur, the son of Asaph,

36 and his kinsmen, Shemaiah, Azarel, Milalai, Gilalai, Maai, Nethanel, Judah *and* Hanani, with the musical instruments of David the man of God. And Ezra the scribe went before them.

37 At the Fountain Gate they went directly up the steps of the city of David by the stairway of the wall above the house of David to the Water Gate on the east.

38 The second choir proceeded to the left, while I followed them with half of the people on the wall, above the Tower of Furnaces, to the Broad Wall,

39 and above the Gate of Ephraim, by the Old Gate, by the Fish Gate, the Tower of Hananel and the Tower of the Hundred, as far as the Sheep Gate; and they stopped at the Gate of the Guard.

**The Ceremonies at the Temple**

40 Then the two choirs took their stand in the house of God. So did I and half of the officials with me;  
 41 and the priests, Eliakim, Maaseiah, Miniamin, Micaiah, Elioenai, Zechariah and Hananiah, with the trumpets;  
 42 and Maaseiah, Shemaiah, Eleazar, Uzzi, Jehohanan, Malchijah, Elam and Ezer. And the singers sang, with Jezrahiah *their* leader,  
 43 and on that day they offered great sacrifices and rejoiced because God had given them great joy, even the women and children rejoiced, so that the joy of Jerusalem was heard from afar.

**Provisions for the Temple Storerooms**

44 On that day men were also appointed over the chambers for the stores, the contributions, the first fruits and the tithes, to gather into them from the fields of the cities the portions required by the law for the priests and Levites; for Judah rejoiced over the priests and Levites who served.

45 For they performed the worship of their God and the service of purification, together with the singers and the gatekeepers in accordance with the command of David *and* of his son Solomon.

46 For in the days of David and Asaph, in ancient times, *there were* leaders of the singers, songs of praise and hymns of thanksgiving to God.

47 So all Israel in the days of Zerubbabel and Nehemiah gave the portions due the singers and the gatekeepers as each day required, and set apart the consecrated *portion* for the Levites, and the Levites set apart the consecrated *portion* for the sons of Aaron.

<b>Nehemiah Returns to Babylon (c. 433–429 BC)</b>
Nehemiah 13:6a
6a But during all this <i>time</i> I was not in Jerusalem, for in the thirty-second year of Artaxerxes king of Babylon I had gone 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 The oracle of the word of the LORD to Israel through Malachi.

#### Israel Questions God's Claim of Love

2 "I have loved you," says the LORD. But you say, "How have You loved us?" "*Was not Esau Jacob's brother?*" declares the LORD. "Yet I have loved Jacob;

3 but I have hated Esau, and I have made his mountains a desolation and *appointed* his inheritance for the jackals of the wilderness." [[Rom 9:13](#)]

4 Though Edom says, "We have been beaten down, but we will return and build up the ruins"; thus says the LORD of hosts, "They may build, but I will tear down; and *men* will call them the wicked territory, and the people toward whom the LORD is indignant forever."

5 Your eyes will see this and you will say, "The LORD be magnified beyond the border of Israel!"

#### Israel Questions God's Charge of Disrespect

6 "A son honors *his* father, and a servant his master. Then if I am a father, where is My honor? And if I am a master, where is My respect?" says the LORD 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 upon My altar. But you say, 'How have we defiled You?' In that you say, 'The table of the LORD is to be despised.'

8 But when you present the blind for sacrifice, is it not evil? And when you present the lame and sick, is it not evil? Why not offer it to your governor? Would he be pleased with you? Or would he receive you kindly?" says the LORD of hosts.

9 "But now will you not entreat God's favor, that He may be gracious to us? With such an offering on your part, will He receive any of you kindly?" says the LORD of hosts.

10 "Oh that there were one among you who would shut the gates, that you might not uselessly kindle *fire on* My altar! I am not pleased with you," says the LORD of hosts, "nor will I accept an offering from you.

11 For from the rising of the sun even to its setting, My name *will be great* among the nations, and in every place incense is going to be offered to My name, and a grain offering *that is pure*; for My name *will be great* among the nations," says the LORD of hosts.

12 "But you are profaning it, in that you say, 'The table of the Lord is defiled, and as for its fruit, its food is to be despised.'

13 You also say, 'My, how tiresome it is!' And you disdainfully sniff at it," says the LORD of hosts, "and you bring what was taken by robbery and *what is lame or sick*; so you bring the offering! Should I receive that from your hand?" says the LORD.

14 "But cursed be the swindler who has a male in his flock and vows it, but sacrifices a blemished animal to the Lord, for I am a great King," says the LORD of hosts, "and My name is feared among the nations."

#### Warning to the Priests

2:1 "And now this commandment is for you, O priests.

2 If you do not listen, and if you do not take it to heart to give honor to My name," says the LORD of hosts, "then I will send the curse upon you and I will curse your blessings; and indeed, I have cursed them *already*, because you are not taking *it* to heart.

3 Behold, I am going to rebuke your offspring, and I will spread refuse on your faces, the refuse of your feasts; and you will be taken away with it.

4 Then you will know that I have sent this commandment to you, that My covenant may continue with Levi," says the LORD of hosts.

5 "My covenant with him was *one of life and peace*, and I gave them to him *as an object of reverence*; so he revered Me and stood in awe of My name.

6 True instruction was in his mouth and unrighteousness was not found on his lips; he walked with Me in peace and uprightness, and he turned many back from iniquity.

7 For the lips of a priest should preserve knowledge, and men should seek instruction from his mouth; for he is the messenger of the LORD of hosts.

8 But as for you, you have turned aside from the way; you have caused many to stumble by the instruction; you have corrupted the covenant of Levi," says the LORD of hosts.

9 "So I also have made you despised and abased before all the people, just as you are not keeping My ways but are showing partiality in the instruction.

#### God Charges Israel With Unfaithfulness

10 "Do we not all have one father? Has not one God created us? Why do we deal treacherously each against his brother so as to profane the covenant of our fathers?

11 Judah has dealt treacherously, and an abomination has been committed in Israel and in Jerusalem; for Judah has profaned the sanctuary of the LORD which He loves and has married the daughter of a foreign god.

12 As for the man who does this, may the LORD cut off from the tents of Jacob *everyone* who awakes and answers, or who presents



an offering to the LORD of hosts.

13 “This is another thing you do: you cover the altar of the LORD with tears, with weeping and with groaning, because He no longer regards the offering or accepts *it with* favor from your hand.

14 Yet you say, ‘For what reason?’ Because the LORD has been a witness between you and the wife of your youth, against whom you have dealt treacherously, though she is your companion and your wife by covenant.

15 But not one has done *so* who has a remnant of the Spirit. And what did *that* one *do* while he was seeking a godly offspring? Take heed then to your spirit, and let no one deal treacherously against the wife of your youth.

16 For I hate divorce,” says the LORD, the God of Israel, “and him who covers his garment with wrong,” says the LORD of hosts. “So take heed to your spirit, that you do not deal treacherously.”

#### Israel Questions God’s Charge of Wearsome Words

17 You have wearied the LORD with your words. Yet you say, “How have we wearied *Him*?” In that you say, “Everyone who does evil is good in the sight of the LORD, and He delights in them,” or, “Where is the God of justice?”

3:1 “Behold, I am going to send My messenger, and he will clear the way before Me. And the Lord, whom you seek, will suddenly come to His temple; and the messenger of the covenant, in whom you delight, behold, He is coming,” says the LORD of hosts. [[Matt 11:10](#); [Mark 1:2](#); [Luke 7:27](#)]

2 “But who can endure the day of His coming? And who can stand when He appears? For He is like a refiner’s fire and like fullers’ soap.

3 He will sit as a smelter and purifier of silver, and He will purify the sons of Levi and refine them like gold and silver, so that they may present to the LORD offerings in righteousness.

4 Then the offering of Judah and Jerusalem will be pleasing to the LORD as in the days of old and as in former years.

5 “Then I will draw near to 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 those who oppress the wage earner in his wages, the widow and the orphan, and those who turn aside the alien and do not fear Me,” says the LORD of hosts.

6 “For I, the LORD, do not change; therefore you, O sons of Jacob, are not consumed.

#### Israel Questions God’s Charge of Disobedience

7 “From the days of your fathers you have turned aside from My statutes and have not kept *them*. Return to Me, and I will return to you,” says the LORD of hosts. “But you say, ‘How shall we return?’

8 “Will a man rob God? Yet you are robbing Me! But you say, ‘How have we robbed You?’ In tithes and offerings.

9 You are cursed with a curse, for you are robbing Me, the whole nation *of you*!

10 Bring the whole tithe into the storehouse, so that there may be food in My house, and test Me now in this,” says the LORD of hosts, “if I will not open for you the windows of heaven and pour out for you a blessing until it overflows.

11 Then I will rebuke the devourer for you, so that it will not destroy the fruits of the ground; nor will your vine in the field cast *its grapes*,” says the LORD of hosts.

12 “All the nations will call you blessed, for you shall be a delightful land,” says the LORD of hosts.

#### Israel Questions God’s Charge of Hard Words

13 “Your words have been arrogant against Me,” says the LORD. “Yet you say, ‘What have we spoken against You?’

14 You have said, ‘It is vain to serve God; and what profit is it that we have kept His charge, and that we have walked in mourning before the LORD of hosts?’

15 So now we call the arrogant blessed; not only are the doers of wickedness built up but they also test God and escape.”

16 Then those who feared the LORD spoke to one another, and the LORD gave attention and heard *it*, and a book of remembrance was written before Him for those who fear the LORD and who esteem His name.

17 “They will be Mine,” says the LORD of hosts, “on the day that I prepare *My* own possession, and I will spare them as a man spares his own son who serves him.”

18 So you will again distinguish between the righteous and the wicked, between one who serves God and one who does not serve Him.

#### Remember the Coming “Day of the Lord”

4:1 “For behold, the day is coming, burning like a furnace; and all the arrogant and every evildoer will be chaff; and the day that is coming will set them ablaze,” says the LORD of hosts, “so that it will leave them neither root nor branch.”

2 “But for you who fear My name, the sun of righteousness will rise with healing in its wings; and you will go forth and skip about like calves from the stall.

3 You will tread down the wicked, for they will be ashes under the soles of your feet on the day which I am preparing,” says the LORD of hosts.

4 “Remember the law of Moses My servant, *even the* statutes and ordinances which I commanded him in Horeb for all Israel.

5 “Behold, I am going to send you Elijah the prophet before the coming of the great and terrible day of the

LORD. [\[Matt 17:10; Mark 9:11\]](#)

6 He will restore the hearts of the fathers to *their* children and the hearts of the children to their fathers, so that I will not come and smite the land with a curse.”

## 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 they read aloud from the book of Moses in the hearing of the people; and there was found written in it that no Ammonite or Moabite should ever enter the assembly of God,

2 because they did not meet the sons of Israel with bread and water, but hired Balaam against them to curse them. However, our God turned the curse into a blessing.

3 So when they heard the law, they excluded all foreigners from Israel.

### Tobiah’s Presence in the Temple Chambers (occurred during Nehemiah’s absence)

4 Now prior to this, Eliashib the priest, who was appointed over the chambers of the house of our God, being related to Tobiah, had prepared a large room for him, where formerly they put the grain offerings, the frankincense, the utensils and the tithes of grain, wine and oil prescribed for the Levites, the singers and the gatekeepers, and the contributions for the priests.

### Nehemiah Cleanses the Temple of Tobiah’s Influence

6 But during all this *time* I was not in Jerusalem, for in the thirty-second year of Artaxerxes king of Babylon I had gone to the king. After some time, however, I asked leave from the king,

7 and I came to Jerusalem and learned about the evil that Eliashib had done for Tobiah, by preparing a room for him in the courts of the house of God.

8 It was very displeasing to me, so I threw all of Tobiah’s household goods out of the room.

9 Then I gave an order and they cleansed the rooms; and I returned there the utensils of the house of God with the grain offerings and the frankincense.

### Nehemiah Restores the Tithes to the Levites

10 I also discovered that the portions of the Levites had not been given *them*, so that the Levites and the singers who performed the service had gone away, each to his own field.

11 So I reprimanded the officials and said, “Why is the house of God forsaken?” Then I gathered them together and restored them to their posts.

12 All Judah then brought the tithe of the grain, wine and oil into the storehouses.

13 In charge of the storehouses I appointed Shelemiah the priest, Zadok the scribe, and Pedaiah of the Levites, and in addition to them was Hanan the son of Zaccur, the son of Mattaniah; for they were considered reliable, and it was their task to distribute to their kinsmen.

14 Remember me for this, O my God, and do not blot out my loyal deeds which I have performed for the house of my God and its services.

### Nehemiah Enforces Observance of the Sabbath

15 In those days I saw in Judah some who were treading wine presses on the sabbath, and bringing in sacks of grain and loading *them* on donkeys, as well as wine, grapes, figs and all kinds of loads, and they brought *them* into Jerusalem on the sabbath day. So I admonished *them* on the day they sold food.

16 Also men of Tyre were living there *who* imported fish and all kinds of merchandise, and sold *them* to the sons of Judah on the sabbath, even in Jerusalem.

17 Then I reprimanded the nobles of Judah and said to them, “What is this evil thing you are doing, by profaning the sabbath day?

18 Did not your fathers do the same, so that our God brought on us and on this city all this trouble? Yet you are adding to the wrath on Israel by profaning the sabbath.”

19 It came about that just as it grew dark at the gates of Jerusalem before the sabbath, I commanded that the doors should be shut and that they should not open them until after the sabbath. Then I stationed some of my servants at the gates *so that* no load would enter on the sabbath day.

20 Once or twice the traders and merchants of every kind of merchandise spent the night outside Jerusalem.

21 Then I warned them and said to them, “Why do you spend the night in front of the wall? If you do so again, I will use force against you.” From that time on they did not come on the sabbath.

22 And I commanded the Levites that they should purify themselves and come as gatekeepers to sanctify the sabbath day. *For* this also remember me, O my God, and have compassion on me according to the greatness of Your lovingkindness.

**Nehemiah Punishes Those Who Had Married Foreign Women**

23 In those days I also saw that the Jews had married women from Ashdod, Ammon *and* Moab.

24 As for their children, half spoke in the language of Ashdod, and none of them was able to speak the language of Judah, but the language of his own people.

25 So I contended with them and cursed them and struck some of them and pulled out their hair, and made them swear by God, “You shall not give your daughters to their sons, nor take of their daughters for your sons or for yourselves.

26 Did not Solomon king of Israel sin regarding these things? Yet among the many nations there was no king like him, and he was loved by his God, and God made him king over all Israel; nevertheless the foreign women caused even him to sin.

27 Do we then hear about you that you have committed all this great evil by acting unfaithfully against our God by marrying foreign women?”

28 Even one of the sons of Joiada, the son of Eliashib the high priest, was a son-in-law of Sanballat the Horonite, so I drove him away from me.

29 Remember them, O my God, because they have defiled the priesthood and the covenant of the priesthood and the Levites.

30 Thus I purified them from everything foreign and appointed duties for the priests and the Levites, each in his task,

31 and *I arranged* for the supply of wood at appointed times and for the first fruits. Remember me, O my God, for good.

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**Chronological Notes**

1) Malachi.<sup>1</sup>

- 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.<sup>2</sup>
- 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.<sup>3</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Thomas L. Constable, “Notes on Malachi,” Online: <http://www.sonlight.com/constable/notes/pdf/malachi.pdf>.

<sup>2</sup> *Yoma* 9b; *Sukkah* 44a; *Rosh Hashannah* 19b; *Megillah* 3a, 15a, et al.

<sup>3</sup> 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 Inasmuch as many have undertaken to compile an account of the things accomplished among us,  
 2 just as they were handed down to us by those who from the beginning were eyewitnesses and servants of the word,  
 3 it seemed fitting for me as well, having investigated everything carefully from the beginning, to write *it* out for you in consecutive order, most excellent Theophilus;  
 4 so that you may know the exact truth about the things you have been 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 He was in the beginning with God.  
 3 All things came into being through Him, and apart from Him nothing came into being that has come into being.  
 4 In Him was life, and the life was the Light of men.  
 5 The Light shines in the darkness, and the darkness did not comprehend it.  
 6 There came a man sent from God, whose name was John.  
 7 He came as a witness, to testify about the Light, so that all might believe through him.  
 8 He was not the Light, but *he came* to testify about the Light.  
 9 There was the true Light which, coming into the world, enlightens every man.  
 10 He was in the world, and the world was made through Him, and the world did not know Him.  
 11 He came to His own, and those who were His own did not receive Him.  
 12 But as many as received Him, to them He gave the right to become children of God, *even* to those who believe in His name,  
 13 who were born, not of blood nor of the will of the flesh nor of the will of man, but of God.  
 14 And the Word became flesh, and dwelt among us, and we saw His glory, glory as of the only begotten from the Father, full of grace and truth.  
 15 John testified about Him and cried out, saying, “This was He of whom I said, ‘He who comes after me has a higher rank than I, for He existed before me.’”  
 16 For of His fullness we have all received, and grace upon grace.  
 17 For the Law was given through Moses; grace and truth were realized through Jesus Christ.  
 18 No one has seen God at any time; the only begotten God who is in the bosom of the Father, He has explained *Him*.

## John’s Birth Foretold to Zacharias (c. 5/4 BC)

Luke 1:5–23

5 In the days of Herod, king of Judea, there was a priest named Zacharias, 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 They were both righteous in the sight of God, walking blamelessly in all the commandments and requirements of the Lord.  
 7 But they had no child, because Elizabeth was barren, and they were both advanced in years.  
 8 Now it happened *that* while he was performing his priestly service before God in the *appointed* order of his division,  
 9 according to the custom of the priestly office, he was chosen by lot to enter the temple of the Lord and burn incense.  
 10 And the whole multitude of the people were in prayer outside at the hour of the incense offering.  
 11 And an angel of the Lord appeared to him, standing to the right of the altar of incense.  
 12 Zacharias was troubled when he saw *the angel*, and fear gripped him.  
 13 But the angel said to him, “Do not be afraid, Zacharias, for your petition has been heard, and your wife Elizabeth will bear you a son, and you will give him the name John.  
 14 You will have joy and gladness, and many will rejoice at his birth.  
 15 For he will be great in the sight of the Lord; and he will drink no wine or liquor, and he will be filled with the Holy Spirit while yet in his mother’s womb.  
 16 And he will turn many of the sons of Israel back to the Lord their God.  
 17 It is he who will go *as a forerunner* before Him in the spirit and power of Elijah, TO TURN THE HEARTS OF THE FATHERS BACK TO THE CHILDREN, and the disobedient to the attitude of the righteous, so as to make ready a people prepared for the Lord.” [[Mal 4:5–6](#)]  
 18 Zacharias said to the angel, “How will I know this *for certain*? For I am an old man and my wife is advanced in years.”  
 19 The angel answered and said to him, “I am Gabriel, who stands in the presence of God, and I have been sent to speak to you and to bring you this good news.  
 20 And behold, you shall be silent and unable to speak until the day when these things take place, because you did not believe my words, which will be fulfilled in their proper time.”  
 21 The people were waiting for Zacharias, and were wondering at his delay in the temple.  
 22 But when he came out, he was unable 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 mute.  
23 When the days of his priestly service were ended, he went back home.

### John's Conception (4 BC)

Luke 1:24–25

24 After these days Elizabeth his wife became pregnant, and she kept herself in seclusion for five months, saying,  
25 "This is the way the Lord has dealt with me in the days when He looked *with favor* upon *me*, to take away my disgrace among men."

### 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 city in Galilee called Nazareth,  
27 to a virgin engaged to a man whose name was Joseph, of the descendants of David; and the virgin's name was Mary.  
28 And coming in, he said to her, "Greetings, favored one! The Lord *is* with you."  
29 But she was very perplexed at *this* statement, and kept pondering what kind of salutation this was.  
30 The angel said to her, "Do not be afraid, Mary; for you have found favor with God.  
31 And behold, you will conceive in your womb and bear a son, and you shall name Him Jesus.  
32 He will be great and 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 His kingdom will have no end." [cf. [1 Chr 17:7–14](#)]  
34 Mary said to the angel, "How can this be, since I am a virgin?"  
35 The angel answered and said to her, "The Holy Spirit will come upon you, and the power of the Most High will overshadow you; and for that reason the holy Child shall be called the Son of God.  
36 And behold, even your relative Elizabeth has also conceived a son in her old age; and she who was called barren is now in her sixth month.  
37 For nothing will be impossible with God." [cf. [Gen 18:14](#)]  
38 And Mary said, "Behold, the bondservant of the Lord; may it be done 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 at this time Mary arose and went in a hurry to the hill country, to a city of Judah,  
40 and entered the house of Zacharias and greeted Elizabeth.  
41 When Elizabeth heard Mary's greeting, the baby leaped in her womb; and Elizabeth was filled with the Holy Spirit.  
42 And she cried out with a loud voice and said, "Blessed *are* you among women, and blessed *is* the fruit of your womb!  
43 And how has it *happened* to me, that the mother of my Lord would come to me?  
44 For behold, when the sound of your greeting reached my ears, the baby leaped in my womb for joy.  
45 And blessed *is* she who believed that there would be a fulfillment of what had been spoken to her by 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 in God my Savior.  
48 "For He has had regard for the humble state of His bondservant;  
For behold, from this time on all generations will count me blessed.  
49 "For the Mighty One has done great things for me;  
And holy is His name.  
50 "AND HIS MERCY IS UPON GENERATION AFTER GENERATION  
TOWARD THOSE WHO FEAR HIM.

- 51 “He has done mighty deeds with His arm;  
He has scattered *those who were* proud in the thoughts of their heart.
- 52 “He has brought down rulers from *their* thrones,  
And has exalted those who were humble.
- 53 “HE HAS FILLED THE HUNGRY WITH GOOD THINGS;  
And sent away the rich empty-handed.
- 54 “He has given help to Israel His servant,  
In remembrance of His mercy,
- 55 As He spoke to our fathers,  
To Abraham and his descendants forever.” [cf. [Ps 98:3](#)]
- 56 And Mary stayed with her about three months, and *then* returned to her home.

### The Birth of John (mid 3 BC)

Luke 1:57–66

- 57 Now the time had come for Elizabeth to give birth, and she gave birth to a son.
- 58 Her neighbors and her relatives heard that the Lord had displayed His great mercy toward her; and they were rejoicing with her.
- 59 And it happened that on the eighth day they came to circumcise the child, and they were going to call him Zacharias, after his father.
- 60 But his mother answered and said, “No indeed; but he shall be called John.”
- 61 And they said to her, “There is no one among your relatives who is called by that name.”
- 62 And they made signs to his father, as to what he wanted him called.
- 63 And he asked for a tablet and wrote as follows, “His name is John.” And they were all astonished.
- 64 And at once his mouth was opened and his tongue *loosed*, and he *began* to speak in praise of God.
- 65 Fear came on all those living around them; and all these matters were being talked about in all the hill country of Judea.
- 66 All who heard them kept them in mind, saying, “What then will this child *turn out to* be?” For the hand of the Lord was certainly with him.

### Zacharias’ Song of Praise—The *Benedictus* (mid 3 BC)

Luke 1:67–79

- 67 And his father Zacharias was filled with the Holy Spirit, and prophesied, saying:
- 68 “Blessed *be* the Lord God of Israel,  
For He has visited us and accomplished redemption for His people,
- 69 And has raised up a horn of salvation for us  
In the house of David His servant—
- 70 As He spoke by the mouth of His holy prophets from of old—
- 71 Salvation FROM OUR ENEMIES,  
And FROM THE HAND OF ALL WHO HATE US;
- 72 To show mercy toward our fathers,  
And to remember His holy covenant,
- 73 The oath which He swore to Abraham our father,  
74 To grant us that we, being rescued from the hand of our enemies,  
Might serve Him without fear,
- 75 In holiness and righteousness before Him all our days.
- 76 “And 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 to His people *the* knowledge of salvation  
By the forgiveness of their sins,
- 78 Because of the tender mercy of our God,  
With which the Sunrise from on high will visit us,
- 79 TO SHINE UPON THOSE WHO SIT IN DARKNESS AND THE SHADOW OF DEATH,  
To guide our feet into the way of peace.”

## 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.<sup>1</sup> 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*<sup>2</sup> of Jesus' birth (cf. Matt 2:1–3).
- B) A minority position which has been gaining ground recently<sup>3</sup> dates Jesus' birth to sometime during 3–2 BC, with preference given to mid-winter of 3/2 BC.<sup>4</sup> This position was first proposed by Filmer in 1966 (see fn. 4 below). Steinmann summarizes 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.

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<sup>1</sup> 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).

<sup>2</sup> A *terminus post quem* is the earliest time an event may have happened, and a *terminus ante quem* is the latest.

<sup>3</sup> 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.

<sup>4</sup> 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 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,” *I'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.