

COMEAFTERME.COM

# 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
September 6	<input type="checkbox"/> Bible Reading	<input type="checkbox"/> Prayer
September 7	<input type="checkbox"/> Bible Reading	<input type="checkbox"/> Prayer
September 8	<input type="checkbox"/> Bible Reading	<input type="checkbox"/> Prayer
September 9	<input type="checkbox"/> Bible Reading	<input type="checkbox"/> Prayer
September 10	<input type="checkbox"/> Bible Reading	<input type="checkbox"/> Prayer
September 11	<input type="checkbox"/> Bible Reading	<input type="checkbox"/> Prayer
September 12	<input type="checkbox"/> Bible Reading	<input type="checkbox"/> Prayer
September 13	<input type="checkbox"/> Bible Reading	<input type="checkbox"/> Prayer
September 14	<input type="checkbox"/> Bible Reading	<input type="checkbox"/> Prayer
September 15	<input type="checkbox"/> Bible Reading	<input type="checkbox"/> Prayer
September 16	<input type="checkbox"/> Bible Reading	<input type="checkbox"/> Prayer
September 17	<input type="checkbox"/> Bible Reading	<input type="checkbox"/> Prayer
September 18	<input type="checkbox"/> Bible Reading	<input type="checkbox"/> Prayer
September 19	<input type="checkbox"/> Bible Reading	<input type="checkbox"/> Prayer
September 20	<input type="checkbox"/> Bible Reading	<input type="checkbox"/> Prayer
September 21	<input type="checkbox"/> Bible Reading	<input type="checkbox"/> Prayer
September 22	<input type="checkbox"/> Bible Reading	<input type="checkbox"/> Prayer
September 23	<input type="checkbox"/> Bible Reading	<input type="checkbox"/> Prayer
September 24	<input type="checkbox"/> Bible Reading	<input type="checkbox"/> Prayer
September 25	<input type="checkbox"/> Bible Reading	<input type="checkbox"/> Prayer
September 26	<input type="checkbox"/> Bible Reading	<input type="checkbox"/> Prayer
September 27	<input type="checkbox"/> Bible Reading	<input type="checkbox"/> Prayer
September 28	<input type="checkbox"/> Bible Reading	<input type="checkbox"/> Prayer
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 Alas! Gold has lost its luster;  
pure gold loses value.  
Jewels are scattered  
on every street corner.

*Beth*

2 The precious sons of Zion  
were worth their weight in gold—  
Alas!—but now they are treated like broken clay pots,  
made by a potter.

*Gimel*

3 Even the jackals nurse their young  
at their breast,  
but my people are cruel,  
like ostriches in the desert.

*Daleth*

4 The infant's tongue sticks  
to the roof of its mouth due to thirst;  
little children beg for bread,  
but no one gives them even a morsel.

*He*

5 Those who once feasted on delicacies  
are now starving to death in the streets.  
Those who grew up wearing expensive clothes  
are now dying amid garbage.

*Waw*

6 The punishment of my people  
exceeded that of Sodom,  
which was overthrown in a moment  
with no one to help her.

*Zayin*

7 Her consecrated ones were brighter than snow,  
whiter than milk;  
their bodies more ruddy than corals,  
their hair like lapis lazuli.

*Heth*

8 Now their appearance is darker than soot;  
they are not recognized in the streets.  
Their skin has shriveled on their bones;  
it is dried up, like tree bark.

*Teth*

9 Those who died by the sword are better off  
than those who die of hunger,  
those who waste away,  
struck down from lack of food.

*Yod*

10 The hands of tenderhearted women  
cooked their own children,  
who became their food,  
when my people were destroyed.

*Kaph*

11 The Lord fully vented his wrath;  
he poured out his fierce anger.  
He started a fire in Zion;  
it consumed her foundations.

*Lamed*

12 Neither the kings of the earth  
nor the people of the lands ever thought  
that enemy or foe would enter  
the gates of Jerusalem.

*Mem*

13 But it happened due to the sins of her prophets  
and the iniquities of her priests,  
who poured out in her midst  
the blood of the righteous.

*Nun*

14 They wander blindly through the streets,  
defiled by the blood they shed,  
while no one dares  
to touch their garments.

*Samech*

15 People cry to them, "Turn away! You are unclean!  
Turn away! Turn away! Don't touch us!"  
So they have fled and wander about;  
but the nations say, "They may not stay here any longer."

*Pe*

16 The Lord himself has scattered them;  
he no longer watches over them.  
They did not honor the priests;  
they did not show favor to the elders.

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

17 Our eyes continually failed us  
as we looked in vain for help.  
From our watchtowers we watched  
for a nation that could not rescue us

*Tsade*

18 Our enemies hunted us down at every step  
so that we could not walk about in our streets.  
Our end drew near, our days were numbered,  
for our end had come!

*Qoph*

19 Those who pursued us were swifter  
than eagles in the sky.



They chased us over the mountains;  
they ambushed us in the wilderness.

*Resh*

20 Our very life breath—the Lord’s anointed king—  
was caught in their traps,  
of whom we thought,  
“Under his protection we will survive among the nations.”

**The Prophet Speaks:**

*Shin*

21 Rejoice and be glad for now, O people of Edom,  
who reside in the land of Uz.  
But the cup of judgment will pass to you also;  
you will get drunk and take off your clothes.

*Taw*

22 O people of Zion, your punishment will come to an end;  
he will not prolong your exile.  
But, O people of Edom, he will punish your sin  
and reveal your offenses!

**The People of Jerusalem Pray:**

5:1 O Lord, reflect on what has happened to us;  
consider and look at our disgrace.  
2 Our inheritance is turned over to strangers;  
foreigners now occupy our homes.  
3 We have become fatherless orphans;  
our mothers have become widows.  
4 We must pay money for our own water;  
we must buy our own wood at a steep price.  
5 We are pursued—they are breathing down our necks;  
we are weary and have no rest.  
6 We have submitted to Egypt and Assyria  
in order to buy food to eat.  
7 Our forefathers sinned and are dead,  
but we suffer their punishment.  
8 Slaves rule over us;  
there is no one to rescue us from their power.  
9 At the risk of our lives we get our food  
because robbers lurk in the countryside.  
10 Our skin is hot as an oven  
due to a fever from hunger.  
11 They raped women in Zion,  
virgins in the towns of Judah.  
12 Princes were hung by their hands;  
elders were mistreated.  
13 The young men perform menial labor;  
boys stagger from their labor.  
14 The elders are gone from the city gate;  
the young men have stopped playing their music.  
15 Our hearts no longer have any joy;  
our dancing is turned to mourning.  
16 The crown has fallen from our head;  
woe to us, for we have sinned!  
17 Because of this, our hearts are sick;  
because of these things, we can hardly see through our tears.  
18 For wild animals are prowling over Mount Zion,

which lies desolate.

- 19 But you, O Lord, reign forever;  
your throne endures from generation to generation.
- 20 Why do you keep on forgetting us?  
Why do you forsake us so long?
- 21 Bring us back to yourself, O Lord, so that we may return to you;  
renew our life as in days before,
- 22 unless you have utterly rejected us  
and are angry with us beyond measure.

*Scripture quoted by permission. All scripture quotations, unless otherwise indicated, are taken from the NET Bible® copyright ©1996–2006 by Biblical Studies Press, L.L.C. <http://bible.org> All rights reserved. This material is available in its entirety as a free download or online web use at <http://netbible.org/>.*

## 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 In the eleventh year, on the first day of the month, the word of the LORD came to me:

2 "Son of man, because Tyre has said about Jerusalem, 'Aha, the gateway of the peoples is broken; it has swung open to me. I will become rich, now that she has been destroyed,'

3 therefore this is what the sovereign LORD says: Look, I am against you, O Tyre! 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. I will scrape her soil from her and make her a bare rock.

5 She will be a place where fishing nets are spread, surrounded by the sea. For I have spoken, declares the sovereign LORD. She will become plunder for the nations,

6 and her daughters who are in the field will be slaughtered by the sword. Then they will know that I am the LORD.

### The Agent of God's Judgment

7 "For this is what the sovereign LORD says: Take note that I am about to bring King Nebuchadnezzar of Babylon, king of kings, against Tyre from the north, with horses, chariots, and horsemen, an army and hordes of people.

8 He will kill your daughters in the field with the sword. He will build a siege wall against you, erect a siege ramp against you, and raise a great shield against you.

9 He will direct the blows of his battering rams against your walls and tear down your towers with his weapons.

10 He will cover you with the dust kicked up by his many horses. Your walls will shake from the noise of the horsemen, wheels, and chariots when he enters your gates like those who invade through a city's broken walls.

11 With his horses' hoofs he will trample all your streets. He will kill your people with the sword, and your strong pillars will tumble down to the ground.

12 They will steal your wealth and loot your merchandise. They will tear down your walls and destroy your luxurious homes. Your stones, your trees, and your soil he will throw into the water.

13 I will silence the noise of your songs; the sound of your harps will be heard no more.

14 I will make you a bare rock; you will be a place where fishing nets are spread. You will never be built again, for I, the LORD, have spoken, declares the sovereign LORD.

### The International Impact of Tyre's Demise

15 "This is what the sovereign LORD says to Tyre: Oh, how the coastlands will shake at the sound of your fall, when the wounded groan, at the massive slaughter in your midst!

16 All the princes of the sea will vacate their thrones. They will remove their robes and strip off their embroidered clothes; they will clothe themselves with trembling. They will sit on the ground; they will tremble continually and be shocked at what has happened to you.

17 They will sing this lament over you:

"How you have perished—you have vanished from the seas,  
O renowned city, once mighty in the sea,  
she and her inhabitants, who spread their terror!

18 Now the coastlands will tremble on the day of your fall;  
the coastlands by the sea will be terrified by your passing.'

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

19 "For this is what the sovereign LORD says: When I make you desolate like the uninhabited cities, when I bring up the deep over you and the surging waters overwhelm you,

20 then I will bring you down to bygone people, to be with those who descend to the pit. I will make you live in the lower parts of the earth, among the primeval ruins, with those who descend to the pit, so that you will not be inhabited or stand in the land of the living.

21 I will bring terrors on you, and you will be no more! Though you are sought after, you will never be found again, declares the sovereign LORD."

### Lament over the Shipwreck of Tyre

27:1 The word of the LORD came to me:

2 "You, son of man, sing a lament for Tyre.

3 Say to Tyre, who sits at the entrance of the sea, merchant to the peoples on many coasts, 'This is what the sovereign LORD says:

"O Tyre, you have said, "I am perfectly beautiful."



- 4 Your borders are in the heart of the seas;  
your builders have perfected your beauty.
- 5 They crafted all your planks out of fir trees from Senir;  
they took a cedar from Lebanon to make your mast.
- 6 They made your oars from oaks of Bashan;  
they made your deck with cypresses from the Kittean isles.
- 7 Fine linen from Egypt, woven with patterns, was used for your sail  
to serve as your banner;  
blue and purple from the coastlands of Elishah was used for your deck's awning.
- 8 The leaders of Sidon and Arvad were your rowers;  
your skilled men, O Tyre, were your captains.
- 9 The elders of Gebal and her skilled men were within you, mending cracks;  
all the ships of the sea and their mariners were within you to trade for your merchandise.
- 10 Men of Persia, Lud, and Put were in your army, men of war.  
They hung shield and helmet on you; they gave you your splendor.
- 11 The Arvadites joined your army on your walls all around,  
and the Gammadites were in your towers.  
They hung their quivers on your walls all around;  
they perfected your beauty.
- 12 "Tarshish was your trade partner because of your abundant wealth; they exchanged silver, iron, tin, and lead for your products.  
13 Javan, Tubal, and Meshech were your clients; they exchanged slaves and bronze items for your merchandise.  
14 Beth Togarmah exchanged horses, chargers, and mules for your products.  
15 The Dedanites were your clients. Many coastlands were your customers; they paid you with ivory tusks and ebony.  
16 Edom was your trade partner because of the abundance of your goods; they exchanged turquoise, purple, embroidered work,  
fine linen, coral, and rubies for your products.  
17 Judah and the land of Israel were your clients; they traded wheat from Minnith, millet, honey, olive oil, and balm for your  
merchandise.  
18 Damascus was your trade partner because of the abundance of your goods and of all your wealth: wine from Helbon, white wool  
from Zahar,  
19 and casks of wine from Izal they exchanged for your products. Wrought iron, cassia, and sweet cane were among your  
merchandise.  
20 Dedan was your client in saddlecloths for riding.  
21 Arabia and all the princes of Kedar were your trade partners; for lambs, rams, and goats they traded with you.  
22 The merchants of Sheba and Raamah engaged in trade with you; they traded the best kinds of spices along with precious stones  
and gold for your products.  
23 Haran, Kanneh, Eden, merchants from Sheba, Asshur, and Kilmad were your clients.  
24 They traded with you choice garments, purple clothes and embroidered work, and multicolored carpets, bound and reinforced  
with cords; these were among your merchandise.  
25 The ships of Tarshish were the transports for your merchandise.
- "So you were filled and weighed down in the heart of the seas.
- 26 Your rowers have brought you into surging waters.  
The east wind has wrecked you in the heart of the seas.
- 27 Your wealth, products, and merchandise, your sailors and captains,  
your ship's carpenters, your merchants,  
and all your fighting men within you,  
along with all your crew who are in you,  
will fall into the heart of the seas on the day of your downfall.
- 28 At the sound of your captains' cry the waves will surge;  
29 They will descend from their ships—all who handle the oar,  
the sailors and all the sea captains—they will stand on the land.
- 30 They will lament loudly over you and cry bitterly.  
They will throw dust on their heads and roll in the ashes;
- 31 they will tear out their hair because of you and put on sackcloth,  
and they will weep bitterly over you with intense mourning.
- 32 As they wail they will lament over you, chanting:  
"Who was like Tyre, like a tower in the midst of the sea?"

- 33 When your products went out from the seas,  
you satisfied many peoples;  
with the abundance of your wealth and merchandise  
you enriched the kings of the earth.
- 34 Now you are wrecked by the seas, in the depths of the waters;  
your merchandise and all your company have sunk along with you.
- 35 All the inhabitants of the coastlands are shocked at you,  
and their kings are horribly afraid—their faces are troubled.
- 36 The traders among the peoples hiss at you;  
you have become a horror, and will be no more.”

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

28:1 The word of the LORD came to me:

2 “Son of man, say to the prince of Tyre, ‘This is what the sovereign LORD says:

- “Your heart is proud and you 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 a god,  
though you think you are godlike.
- 3 Look, you are wiser than Daniel;  
no secret is hidden from you.
- 4 By your wisdom and understanding you have gained wealth for yourself;  
you have amassed gold and silver in your treasuries.
- 5 By your great skill in trade you have increased your wealth,  
and your heart is proud because of your wealth.
- 6 “Therefore this is what the sovereign LORD says:  
Because you think you are godlike,
- 7 I am about to bring foreigners against you, the most terrifying of nations.  
They will draw their swords against the grandeur made by your wisdom,  
and they will defile your splendor.
- 8 They will bring you down to the pit, and you will die violently in the heart of the seas.
- 9 Will you still say, ‘I am a god,’ before the one who kills you—  
though you are a man and not a god—  
when you are in the power of those who wound you?
- 10 You will die the death of the uncircumcised by the hand of foreigners;  
for I have spoken, declares the sovereign LORD.”

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

11 The word of the LORD came to me:

12 “Son of man, sing a lament for the king of Tyre, and say to him, ‘This is what the sovereign LORD says:

- “You were the sealer 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, topaz, and emerald,  
the chrysolite, onyx, and jasper,  
the sapphire, turquoise, and beryl;  
your settings and mounts were made of gold.  
On the day you were created they were prepared.
- 14 I placed you there with an anointed guardian cherub;  
you were on the holy mountain of God;  
you walked about amidst fiery stones.
- 15 You were blameless in your behavior from the day you were created,  
until sin was discovered in you.
- 16 In the abundance of your trade you were filled with violence, and you sinned;  
so I defiled you and banished you from the mountain of God—  
the guardian cherub expelled you from the midst of the stones of fire.

- 17 Your heart was proud because of your beauty;  
you corrupted your wisdom on account of your splendor.  
I threw you down to the ground;  
I placed you before kings, that they might see you.
- 18 By the multitude of your iniquities, through the sinfulness of your trade,  
you desecrated your sanctuaries.  
So I drew fire out from within you;  
it consumed you,  
and I turned you to ashes on the earth  
before the eyes of all who saw you.
- 19 All who know you among the peoples are shocked at you;  
you have become terrified and will be no more.”

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

Ezekiel 28:20–26

- 20 The word of the LORD came to me:  
21 “Son of man, turn toward Sidon and prophesy against it.  
22 Say, ‘This is what the sovereign LORD says:
- “Look, I am against you, Sidon,  
and I will magnify myself in your midst.  
Then they will know that I am the LORD  
when I execute judgments on her  
and reveal my sovereign power in her.
- 23 I will send a plague into the city and bloodshed into its streets;  
the slain will fall within it, by the sword that attacks it from every side.  
Then they will know that I am the LORD.
- 24 “No longer will Israel suffer from the sharp briars or painful thorns of all who surround and scorn them. Then they will know that I am the sovereign LORD.  
25 “This is what the sovereign LORD says: When I regather the house of Israel from the peoples where they are dispersed, I will reveal my sovereign power over them in the sight of the nations, and they will live in their land that I gave to my servant Jacob.  
26 They will live securely in it; they will build houses and plant vineyards. They will live securely when I execute my judgments on all those who scorn them and surround them. Then they will know that I am the LORD their God.”

*Scripture quoted by permission. All scripture quotations, unless otherwise indicated, are taken from the NET Bible® copyright ©1996–2006 by Biblical Studies Press, L.L.C. <http://bible.org> All rights reserved. This material is available in its entirety as a free download or online web use at <http://netbible.org/>.*



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

2 Kings 25:23–24	Jeremiah 40:7–12
<p>23 All of the officers of the Judahite army and their troops heard that the king of Babylon had appointed Gedaliah to govern.</p> <p>So they came to Gedaliah at Mizpah. The officers who came were Ishmael son of Nethaniah, Johanan son of Kareah, Seraiah son of Tanhumeth the Netophathite, and Jaazaniah son of the Maacathite.</p> <p>24 Gedaliah took an oath so as to give them and their troops some assurance of safety. He said, “You don’t need to be afraid to submit to the Babylonian officials. Settle down in the land and submit to the king of Babylon. Then things will go well for you.”</p>	<p>7 Now some of the officers of the Judean army and their troops had been hiding in the countryside. They heard that the king of Babylon had appointed Gedaliah son of Ahikam to govern the country. They also heard that he had been put in charge over the men, women, and children from the poorer classes of the land who had not been carried off into exile in Babylon.</p> <p>8 So all these officers and their troops came to Gedaliah at Mizpah. The officers who came were Ishmael son of Nethaniah, Johanan and Jonathan the sons of Kareah, Seraiah son of Tanhumeth, the sons of Ephai the Netophathite, and Jezaniah son of the Maacathite.</p> <p>9 Gedaliah, the son of Ahikam and grandson of Shaphan, took an oath so as to give them and their troops some assurance of safety. “Do not be afraid to submit to the Babylonians. Settle down in the land and submit to the king of Babylon. Then things will go well for you.</p> <p>10 I for my part will stay at Mizpah to represent you before the Babylonians whenever they come to us. You for your part go ahead and harvest the wine, the dates, the figs, and the olive oil, and store them in jars. Go ahead and settle down in the towns that you have taken over.”</p> <p>11 Moreover, all the Judeans who were in Moab, Ammon, Edom, and all the other countries heard what had happened. They heard that the king of Babylon had allowed some people to stay in Judah and that he had appointed Gedaliah, the son of Ahikam and grandson of Shaphan, to govern them.</p> <p>12 So all these Judeans returned to the land of Judah from the places where they had been scattered. They came to Gedaliah at Mizpah. Thus they harvested a large amount of wine and dates and figs.</p>

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

2 Kings 25:25	Jeremiah 40:13–41:3
<p>25 But in the seventh month Ishmael son of Nethaniah, son of Elishama, who was a member of the royal family, came with ten of his men</p>	<p>40:13 Johanan and all the officers of the troops that had been hiding in the open country came to Gedaliah at Mizpah.</p> <p>14 They said to him, “Are you at all aware that King Baalis of Ammon has sent Ishmael son of Nethaniah to kill you?” But Gedaliah son of Ahikam would not believe them.</p> <p>15 Then Johanan son of Kareah spoke privately to Gedaliah there at Mizpah, “Let me go and kill Ishmael the son of Nethaniah before anyone knows about it. Otherwise he will kill you and all the Judeans who have rallied around you will be scattered. Then what remains of Judah will disappear.”</p> <p>16 But Gedaliah son of Ahikam said to Johanan son of Kareah, “Do not do that because what you are saying about Ishmael is not true.”</p> <p>41:1 But in the seventh month Ishmael, the son of Nethaniah and grandson of Elishama who was a member of the royal family and had been one of Zedekiah’s chief officers, came with ten of his men to Gedaliah son of Ahikam at Mizpah. While they were eating a meal together with him there at Mizpah,</p> <p>2 Ishmael son of Nethaniah and the ten men who were with him</p>

<p>and murdered Gedaliah,</p> <p>as well as the Judeans and Babylonians who were with him at Mizpah.</p>	<p>stood up, pulled out their swords, and killed Gedaliah, the son of Ahikam and grandson of Shaphan. Thus Ishmael killed the man that the king of Babylon had appointed to govern the country.</p> <p>3 Ishmael also killed all the Judeans who were with Gedaliah at Mizpah and the Babylonian soldiers who happened to be there.</p>
--	---

### The Ammonite Scheme: Johanan Defeats Ishmael (October 587 BC)

Jeremiah 41:4–15

- 4 On the day after Gedaliah had been murdered, before anyone even knew about it,
- 5 eighty men arrived from Shechem, Shiloh, and Samaria. They had shaved off their beards, torn their clothes, and cut themselves to show they were mourning. They were carrying grain offerings and incense to present at the temple of the LORD in Jerusalem.
- 6 Ishmael son of Nethaniah went out from Mizpah to meet them. He was pretending to cry as he walked along. When he met them, he said to them, “Come with me to meet Gedaliah son of Ahikam.”
- 7 But as soon as they were inside the city, Ishmael son of Nethaniah and the men who were with him slaughtered them and threw their bodies in a cistern.
- 8 But there were ten men among them who said to Ishmael, “Do not kill us. For we will give you the stores of wheat, barley, olive oil, and honey we have hidden in a field. So he spared their lives and did not kill them along with the rest.
- 9 Now the cistern where Ishmael threw all the dead bodies of those he had killed was a large one that King Asa had constructed as part of his defenses against King Baasha of Israel. Ishmael son of Nethaniah filled it with dead bodies.
- 10 Then Ishmael took captive all the people who were still left alive in Mizpah. This included the royal princesses and all the rest of the people in Mizpah that Nebuzaradan, the captain of the royal guard, had put under the authority of Gedaliah son of Ahikam. Ishmael son of Nethaniah took all these people captive and set out to cross over to the Ammonites.
- 11 Johanan son of Kareah and all the army officers who were with him heard about all the atrocities that Ishmael son of Nethaniah had committed.
- 12 So they took all their troops and went to fight against Ishmael son of Nethaniah. They caught up with him near the large pool at Gibeon.
- 13 When all the people that Ishmael had taken captive saw Johanan son of Kareah and all the army officers with him, they were glad.
- 14 All those people that Ishmael had taken captive from Mizpah turned and went over to Johanan son of Kareah.
- 15 But Ishmael son of Nethaniah managed to escape from Johanan along with eight of his men, and he went on over to Ammon.

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

2 Kings 25:26

Jeremiah 41:16–18

- |   |  |
|---|--|
| <p>26 Then all the people, from the youngest to the oldest, as well as the army officers, left for Egypt,</p> <p>because they were afraid of what the Babylonians might do.</p> | <p>16 Johanan son of Kareah and all the army officers who were with him led off all the people who had been left alive at Mizpah. They had rescued them from Ishmael son of Nethaniah after he killed Gedaliah son of Ahikam. They led off the men, women, children, soldiers, and court officials whom they had brought away from Gibeon.</p> <p>17 They</p> <p>set out to go to Egypt to get away from the Babylonians, but stopped at Geruth Kimham near Bethlehem.</p> <p>18 They were afraid of what the Babylonians might do because Ishmael son of Nethaniah had killed Gedaliah son of Ahikam, whom the king of Babylon had appointed to govern the country.</p> |
|---|--|

### 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 army officers, including Johanan son of Kareah and Jezaniah son of Hoshaiah and all the people of every class, went to the prophet Jeremiah.

2 They said to him, "Please grant our request and pray to the LORD your God for all those of us who are still left alive here. For, as you yourself can see, there are only a few of us left out of the many there were before.

3 Pray that the LORD your God will tell us where we should go and what we should do."

4 The prophet Jeremiah answered them, "Agreed! I will indeed pray to the LORD your God as you have asked. I will tell you everything the LORD replies in response to you. I will not keep anything back from you."

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

5 They answered Jeremiah, "May the LORD be a true and faithful witness against us if we do not do just as the LORD sends you to tell us to do.

6 We will obey what the LORD our God to whom we are sending you tells us to do. It does not matter whether we like what he tells us or not. We will obey what he tells us to do so that things will go well for us."

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

7 Ten days later the LORD spoke to Jeremiah.

8 So Jeremiah summoned Johanan son of Kareah and all the army officers who were with him and all the people of every class.

9 Then Jeremiah said to them, "You sent me to the LORD God of Israel to make your request known to him. Here is what he says to you:

10 'If you will just stay in this land, I will build you up. I will not tear you down. I will firmly plant you. I will not uproot you. For I am filled with sorrow because of the disaster that I have brought on you.

11 Do not be afraid of the king of Babylon whom you now fear. Do not be afraid of him because I will be with you to save you and to rescue you from his power. I, the LORD, affirm it!

12 I will have compassion on you so that he in turn will have mercy on you and allow you to return to your land.'

13 "You must not disobey the LORD your God by saying, 'We will not stay in this land.'

14 You must not say, 'No, we will not stay. Instead we will go and live in the land of Egypt where we will not face war, or hear the enemy's trumpet calls, or starve for lack of food.'

15 If you people who remain in Judah do that, then listen to what the LORD says. The LORD God of Israel who rules over all says, 'If you are so determined to go to Egypt that you go and settle there,

16 the wars you fear will catch up with you there in the land of Egypt. The starvation you are worried about will follow you there to Egypt. You will die there.

17 All the people who are determined to go and settle in Egypt will die from war, starvation, or disease. No one will survive or escape the disaster I will bring on them.'

18 For the LORD God of Israel who rules over all says, 'If you go to Egypt, I will pour out my wrath on you just as I poured out my anger and wrath on the citizens of Jerusalem. You will become an object of horror and ridicule, an example of those who have been cursed and that people use in pronouncing a curse. You will never see this place again.'

19 "The LORD has told you people who remain in Judah, 'Do not go to Egypt.' Be very sure of this: I warn you here and now.

20 You are making a fatal mistake. For you sent me to the LORD your God and asked me, 'Pray to the LORD our God for us. Tell us what the LORD our God says and we will do it.'

21 This day I have told you what he said. But you do not want to obey the LORD by doing what he sent me to tell you.

22 So now be very sure of this: You will die from war, starvation, or disease in the place where you want to go and live."

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

43:1 Jeremiah finished telling all the people all these things the LORD their God had sent him to tell them.

2 Then Azariah son of Hoshaiiah, Johanan son of Kareah, and other arrogant men said to Jeremiah, "You are telling a lie! The LORD our God did not send you to tell us, 'You must not go to Egypt and settle there.'

3 But Baruch son of Neriah is stirring you up against us. He wants to hand us over to the Babylonians so that they will kill us or carry us off into exile in Babylon."

### **The People Travel to Egypt and Take Jeremiah With Them**

4 So Johanan son of Kareah, all the army officers, and all the rest of the people did not obey the LORD's command to stay in the land.

5 Instead Johanan son of Kareah and all the army officers led off all the Judean remnant who had come back to live in the land of Judah from all the nations where they had been scattered.

6 They also led off all the men, women, children, and royal princesses that Nebuzaradan, the captain of the royal guard, had left with Gedaliah, the son of Ahikam and grandson of Shaphan. This included the prophet Jeremiah and Baruch son of Neriah.

7 They went on to Egypt because they refused to obey the LORD, and came to Tahpanhes.



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

Jeremiah 43:8–44:30

### Jeremiah's Prophecy of Nebuchadnezzar's Triumph over Egypt

43:8 At Tahpanhes the LORD spoke to Jeremiah.

9 "Take some large stones and bury them in the mortar of the clay pavement at the entrance of Pharaoh's residence here in Tahpanhes. Do it while the people of Judah present there are watching.

10 Then tell them, 'The LORD God of Israel who rules over all says, "I will bring my servant King Nebuchadnezzar of Babylon. I will set his throne over these stones which I have buried. He will pitch his royal tent over them.

11 He will come and attack Egypt. Those who are destined to die of disease will die of disease. Those who are destined to be carried off into exile will be carried off into exile. Those who are destined to die in war will die in war.

12 He will set fire to the temples of the gods of Egypt. He will burn their gods or carry them off as captives. He will pick Egypt clean like a shepherd picks the lice from his clothing. He will leave there unharmed.

13 He will demolish the sacred pillars in the temple of the sun in Egypt and will burn down the temples of the gods of Egypt.'"

### Jeremiah Condemns the Jews' Idolatry in Egypt

44:1 The LORD spoke to Jeremiah concerning all the Judeans who were living in the land of Egypt, those in Migdol, Tahpanhes, Memphis, and in the region of southern Egypt.

2 "The LORD God of Israel who rules over all says, 'You have seen all the disaster I brought on Jerusalem and all the towns of Judah. Indeed, they now lie in ruins and are deserted.

3 This happened because of the wickedness the people living there did. They made me angry by worshiping and offering sacrifice to other gods whom neither they nor you nor your ancestors previously knew.

4 I sent my servants the prophets to you people over and over again warning you not to do this disgusting thing I hate.

5 But the people of Jerusalem and Judah would not listen or pay any attention. They would not stop the wickedness they were doing nor quit sacrificing to other gods.

6 So my anger and my wrath were poured out and burned like a fire through the towns of Judah and the streets of Jerusalem. That is why they have become the desolate ruins that they are today.'

7 "So now the LORD, the God who rules over all, the God of Israel, asks, 'Why will you do such great harm to yourselves? Why should every man, woman, child, and baby of yours be destroyed from the midst of Judah? Why should you leave yourselves without a remnant?

8 That is what will result from your making me angry by what you are doing. You are making me angry by sacrificing to other gods here in the land of Egypt where you live. You will be destroyed for doing that! You will become an example used in curses and an object of ridicule among all the nations of the earth.

9 Have you forgotten all the wicked things that have been done in the towns of Judah and in the streets of Jerusalem by your ancestors, by the kings of Judah and their wives, by you and your wives?

10 To this day your people have shown no contrition! They have not revered me nor followed the laws and statutes I commanded you and your ancestors.'

11 "Because of this, the LORD God of Israel who rules over all says, 'I am determined to bring disaster on you, even to the point of destroying all the Judeans here.

12 I will see to it that all the Judean remnant that was determined to go and live in the land of Egypt will be destroyed. Here in the land of Egypt they will fall in battle or perish from starvation. People of every class will die in war or from starvation. They will become an object of horror and ridicule, an example of those who have been cursed and that people use in pronouncing a curse.

13 I will punish those who live in the land of Egypt with war, starvation, and disease just as I punished Jerusalem.

14 None of the Judean remnant who have come to live in the land of Egypt will escape or survive to return to the land of Judah. Though they long to return and live there, none of them shall return except a few fugitives.'"

### 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 sacrificing to other gods, as well as all their wives, answered Jeremiah. There was a great crowd of them representing all the people who lived in northern and southern Egypt. They answered,

16 "We will not listen to what you claim the LORD has spoken to us!

17 Instead we will do everything we vowed we would do. We will sacrifice and pour out drink offerings to the goddess called the Queen of Heaven just as we and our ancestors, our kings, and our leaders previously did in the towns of Judah and in the streets of Jerusalem. For then we had plenty of food, were well-off, and had no troubles.

18 But ever since we stopped sacrificing and pouring out drink offerings to the Queen of Heaven, we have been in great need. Our people have died in wars or of starvation."

19 The women added, "We did indeed sacrifice and pour out drink offerings to the Queen of Heaven. But it was with the full knowledge and approval of our husbands that we made cakes in her image and poured out drink offerings to her."

**Jeremiah Condemns the People's Decision**

20 Then Jeremiah replied to all the people, both men and women, who responded to him in this way.

21 “The LORD did indeed remember and call to mind what you did! He remembered the sacrifices you and your ancestors, your kings, your leaders, and all the rest of the people of the land offered to other gods in the towns of Judah and in the streets of Jerusalem.

22 Finally the LORD could no longer endure your wicked deeds and the disgusting things you did. That is why your land has become the desolate, uninhabited ruin that it is today. That is why it has become a proverbial example used in curses.

23 You have sacrificed to other gods! You have sinned against the LORD! You have not obeyed the LORD! You have not followed his laws, his statutes, and his decrees! That is why this disaster that is evident to this day has happened to you.”

24 Then Jeremiah spoke to all the people, particularly to all the women. “Listen to what the LORD has to say all you people of Judah who are in Egypt.

25 The LORD God of Israel who rules over all says, ‘You women have confirmed by your actions what you vowed with your lips! You said, “We will certainly carry out our vows to sacrifice and pour out drink offerings to the Queen of Heaven.” Well, then fulfill your vows! Carry them out!’

26 But listen to what the LORD has to say, all you people of Judah who are living in the land of Egypt. The LORD says, ‘I hereby swear by my own great name that none of the people of Judah who are living anywhere in Egypt will ever again invoke my name in their oaths! Never again will any of them use it in an oath saying, “As surely as the Lord GOD lives....”’

27 I will indeed see to it that disaster, not prosperity, happens to them. All the people of Judah who are in the land of Egypt will die in war or from starvation until not one of them is left.

28 Some who survive in battle will return to the land of Judah from the land of Egypt. But they will be very few indeed! Then the Judean remnant who have come to live in the land of Egypt will know whose word proves true, mine or theirs.’

**A Sign of Coming Punishment**

29 Moreover the LORD says, ‘I will make something happen to prove that I will punish you in this place. I will do it so that you will know that my threats to bring disaster on you will prove true.

30 I, the LORD, promise that I will hand Pharaoh Hophra king of Egypt over to his enemies who are seeking to kill him. I will do that just as surely as I handed King Zedekiah of Judah over to King Nebuchadnezzar of Babylon, his enemy who was seeking to kill him.”

*Scripture quoted by permission. All scripture quotations, unless otherwise indicated, are taken from the NET Bible® copyright ©1996–2006 by Biblical Studies Press, L.L.C. <http://bible.org> All rights reserved. This material is available in its entirety as a free download or online web use at <http://netbible.org/>.*

## 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 In the twelfth year of our exile, in the tenth month, on the fifth of the month, a refugee came to me from Jerusalem saying, "The city has been defeated!"

22 Now the hand of the LORD had been on me the evening before the refugee reached me, but the LORD opened my mouth by the time the refugee arrived in the morning; he opened my mouth and I was no longer unable to speak.

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

23 The word of the LORD came to me:

24 "Son of man, the ones living in these ruins in the land of Israel are saying, 'Abraham was only one man, yet he possessed the land, but we are many; surely the land has been given to us for a possession.'

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

25 Therefore say to them, 'This is what the sovereign LORD says: You eat the meat with the blood still in it, pray to your idols, and shed blood. Do you really think you will possess the land?'

26 You rely on your swords and commit abominable deeds; each of you defiles his neighbor's wife. Will you possess the land?'

27 "This is what you must say to them, 'This is what the sovereign LORD says: As surely as I live, those living in the ruins will die by the sword, those in the open field I will give to the wild beasts for food, and those who are in the strongholds and caves will die of disease.'

28 I will turn the land into a desolate ruin; her confident pride will come to an end. The mountains of Israel will be so desolate no one will pass through them.

29 Then they will know that I am the LORD when I turn the land into a desolate ruin because of all the abominable deeds they have committed.'

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

30 "But as for you, son of man, your people (who are talking about you by the walls and at the doors of the houses) say to one another, 'Come hear the word that comes from the LORD.'

31 They come to you in crowds, and they sit in front of you as my people. They hear your words, but do not obey them. For they talk lustfully, and their heart is set on their own advantage.

32 Realize that to them you are like a sensual song, a beautiful voice and skilled musician. They hear your words, but they do not obey them.

33 When all this comes true—and it certainly will—then they will know that a prophet was among them."

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

Ezekiel 34

### Condemnation of the Shepherds

1 The word of the LORD came to me:

2 "Son of man, prophesy against the shepherds of Israel; prophesy, and say to them—to the shepherds: 'This is what the sovereign LORD says: Woe to the shepherds of Israel who have been feeding themselves! Should not shepherds feed the flock?'

3 You eat the fat, you clothe yourselves with the wool, you slaughter the choice animals, but you do not feed the sheep!

4 You have not strengthened the weak, healed the sick, bandaged the injured, brought back the strays, or sought the lost, but with force and harshness you have ruled over them.

5 They were scattered because they had no shepherd, and they became food for every wild beast.

6 My sheep wandered over all the mountains and on every high hill. My sheep were scattered over the entire face of the earth with no one looking or searching for them.

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

8 As surely as I live, declares the sovereign LORD, my sheep have become prey and have become food for all the wild beasts. There was no shepherd, and my shepherds did not search for my flock, but fed themselves and did not feed my sheep,

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

10 This is what the sovereign LORD says: Look, I am against the shepherds, and I will demand my sheep from their hand. I will no longer let them be shepherds; the shepherds will not feed themselves anymore. I will rescue my sheep from their mouth, so that they will no longer be food for them.

### The Good Shepherd

11 "For this is what the sovereign LORD says: Look, I myself will search for my sheep and seek them out.

12 As a shepherd seeks out his flock when he is among his scattered sheep, so I will seek out my flock. I will rescue them from all the

places where they have been scattered on a cloudy, dark day.

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

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

15 I myself will feed my sheep and I myself will make them lie down, declares the sovereign LORD.

16 I will seek the lost and bring back the strays; I will bandage the injured 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 sheep, this is what the sovereign LORD says: Look, I am about to judge between one sheep and another, between rams and goats.

18 Is it not enough for you to feed on the good pasture, that you must trample the rest of your pastures with your feet? When you drink clean water, must you muddy the rest of the water by trampling it with your feet?

19 As for my sheep, they must eat what you trampled with your feet, and drink what you have muddied with your feet!

20 “Therefore, this is what the sovereign LORD says to them: Look, I myself will judge between the fat sheep and the lean sheep.

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

22 I will save my sheep; they will no longer be prey. I will judge between one sheep and another.

#### **The Messianic Shepherd**

23 I will set one shepherd over them, and he will feed them—namely, my servant David. He will feed them and will be their shepherd. [cf. [John 10:11–16](#)]

24 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 will rid the land of wild beasts, so that they can live securely in the wilderness and even sleep in the woods.

26 I will turn them and the regions around my hill into a blessing. I will make showers come down in their season; they will be showers that bring blessing.

27 The trees of the field will yield their fruit and the earth will yield its crops. They will live securely on their land; they will know that I am the LORD, when I break the bars of their yoke and rescue them from the hand of those who enslaved them.

28 They will no longer be prey for the nations and the wild beasts will not devour them. They will live securely and no one will make them afraid.

29 I will prepare for them a healthy planting. They will no longer be victims of famine in the land and will no longer bear the insults of the nations.

30 Then they will know that I, the LORD their God, am with them, and that they are my people, the house of Israel, declares the sovereign LORD.

31 And you, my sheep, the sheep of my pasture, are my people, and I am your God, declares the sovereign LORD.”

## **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 The word of the LORD came to me:

2 “Son of man, turn toward Mount Seir, and prophesy against it.

3 Say to it, ‘This is what the sovereign LORD says:

“Look, I am against you, Mount Seir;  
I will stretch out my hand against you  
and turn you into a desolate ruin.

4 I will lay waste your cities;  
and you will become desolate.  
Then you will know that I am the LORD!

5 “You have shown unrelenting hostility and poured the people of Israel onto the blades of a sword at the time of their calamity, at the time of their final punishment.

6 Therefore, as surely as I live, declares the sovereign LORD, I will subject you to bloodshed, and bloodshed will pursue you. Since you did not hate bloodshed, bloodshed will pursue you.



7 I will turn Mount Seir into a desolate ruin; I will cut off from it the one who passes through or returns.  
 8 I will fill its mountains with its dead; on your hills and in your valleys and in all your ravines, those killed by the sword will fall.  
 9 I will turn you into a perpetual desolation, and your cities will not be inhabited. Then you will know that I am the LORD.  
 10 “You said, “These two nations, these two lands will be mine, and we will possess them,”—although the LORD was there—  
 11 therefore, as surely as I live, declares the sovereign LORD, I will deal with you according to your anger, and according to your envy, by which you acted spitefully against them. I will reveal myself to them when I judge you.  
 12 Then you will know that I, the LORD, have heard all the insults you spoke against the mountains of Israel, saying, “They are desolate, they have been given to us for food.”  
 13 You exalted yourselves against me with your speech and hurled many insults against me—I have heard them all!  
 14 This is what the sovereign LORD says: While the whole earth rejoices, I will turn you into a desolation.  
 15 As you rejoiced over the inheritance of the house of Israel because it was desolate, so will I deal with you—you will be desolate, Mount Seir, and all of Edom—all of it! Then they will know that I am the LORD.”

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

36:1 “As for you, son of man, prophesy to the mountains of Israel, and say: ‘O mountains of Israel, hear the word of the LORD!  
 2 This is what the sovereign LORD says: The enemy has spoken against you, saying “Aha!” and, “The ancient heights have become our property!”’  
 3 So prophesy and say: ‘This is what the sovereign LORD says: Surely because they have made you desolate and crushed you from all directions, so that you have become the property of the rest of the nations, and have become the subject of gossip and slander among the people,  
 4 therefore, O mountains of Israel, hear the word of the sovereign LORD: This is what the sovereign LORD says to the mountains and hills, the ravines and valleys, and to the desolate ruins and the abandoned cities that have become prey and an object of derision to the rest of the nations round about—  
 5 therefore this is what the sovereign LORD says: Surely I have spoken in the fire of my zeal against the rest of the nations, and against all Edom, who with great joy and utter contempt have made my land their property and prey, because of its pasture.’  
 6 “Therefore prophesy concerning the land of Israel, and say to the mountains and hills, the ravines and valleys, ‘This is what the sovereign LORD says: Look, I have spoken in my zeal and in my anger, because you have endured the insults of the nations.  
 7 So this is what the sovereign LORD says: I vow that the nations around you will endure insults as well.

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

8 “But you, mountains of Israel, will grow your branches, and bear your fruit for my people Israel; for they will arrive soon.  
 9 For indeed, I am on your side; I will turn to you, and you will be plowed and planted.  
 10 I will multiply your people—the whole house of Israel, all of it. The cities will be populated and the ruins rebuilt.  
 11 I will increase the number of people and animals on you; they will increase and be fruitful. I will cause you to be inhabited as in ancient times, and will do more good for you than at the beginning of your history. Then you will know that I am the LORD.  
 12 I will lead people, my people Israel, across you; they will possess you and you will become their inheritance. No longer will you bereave them of their children.  
 13 “This is what the sovereign LORD says: Because they are saying to you, “You are a devourer of men, and bereave your nation of children,”  
 14 therefore you will no longer devour people and no longer bereave your nation of children, declares the sovereign LORD.  
 15 I will no longer subject you to the nations’ insults; no longer will you bear the shame of the peoples, and no longer will you bereave your nation, declares the sovereign LORD.”

## **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 The word of the LORD came to me:  
 17 “Son of man, when the house of Israel was living on their own land, they defiled it by their behavior and their deeds. In my sight their behavior was like the uncleanness of a woman having her monthly period.  
 18 So I poured my anger on them because of the blood they shed on the land and because of the idols with which they defiled it.  
 19 I scattered them among the nations; they were dispersed throughout foreign countries. In accordance with their behavior and their deeds I judged them.  
 20 But when they arrived in the nations where they went, they profaned my holy name. It was said of them, ‘These are the people of the LORD, yet they have departed from his land.’  
 21 I was concerned for my holy reputation which the house of Israel profaned among the nations where they went.

**Yahweh Will Vindicate His Name**

22 “Therefore say to the house of Israel, ‘This is what the sovereign LORD says: It is not for your sake that I am about to act, O house of Israel, but for the sake of my holy reputation which you profaned among the nations where you went.

23 I will magnify my great name that has been profaned among the nations, that you have profaned among them. The nations will know that I am the LORD, declares the sovereign LORD, when I magnify myself among you in their sight.

24 “‘I will take you from the nations and gather you from all the countries; then I will bring you to your land.

25 I will sprinkle you with pure water and you will be clean from all your impurities. I will purify you from all your idols.

26 I will give you a new heart, and I will put a new spirit within you. I will remove the heart of stone from your body 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](#)] I will take the initiative and you will obey my statutes and carefully observe my regulations.

28 Then you will live in the land I gave to your fathers; you will be my people, and I will be your God.

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

30 I will multiply the fruit of the trees and the produce of the fields, so that you will never again suffer the disgrace of famine among the nations.

31 Then you will remember your evil behavior and your deeds which were not good; you will loathe yourselves on account of your sins and your abominable deeds.

32 Understand that it is not for your sake I am about to act, declares the sovereign LORD. Be ashamed and embarrassed by your behavior, O house of Israel.

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

33 “‘This is what the sovereign LORD says: In the day I cleanse you from all your sins, I will populate the cities and the ruins will be rebuilt.

34 The desolate land will be plowed, instead of being desolate in the sight of everyone who passes by.

35 They will say, “This desolate land has become like the garden of Eden; the ruined, desolate, and destroyed cities are now fortified and inhabited.”

36 Then the nations which remain around you will know that I, the LORD, have rebuilt the ruins and replanted what was desolate. I, the LORD, have spoken—and I will do it!’

37 “‘This is what the sovereign LORD says: I will allow the house of Israel to ask me to do this for them: I will multiply their people like sheep.

38 Like the sheep for offerings, like the sheep of Jerusalem during her appointed feasts, so will the ruined cities be filled with flocks of people. 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 on me, and he brought me out by the Spirit of the LORD and placed me in the midst of the valley, and it was full of bones.

2 He made me walk all around among them. I realized there were a great many bones in the valley and they were very dry.

3 He said to me, “Son of man, can these bones live?” I said to him, “Sovereign Lord, you know.”

4 Then he said to me, “Prophecy over these bones, and tell them: ‘Dry bones, hear the word of the LORD.

5 This is what the sovereign LORD says to these bones: Look, I am about to infuse breath into you and you will live.

6 I will put tendons on you and muscles over you and will cover you with skin; I will put breath in you and you will live. Then you will know that I am the LORD.”

7 So I prophesied as I was commanded. There was a sound when I prophesied—I heard a rattling, and the bones came together, bone to bone.

8 As I watched, I saw tendons on them, then muscles appeared, and skin covered over them from above, but there was no breath in them.

9 He said to me, “Prophecy to the breath—prophecy, son of man—and say to the breath: ‘This is what the sovereign LORD says: Come from the four winds, O breath, and breathe on these corpses so that they may live.’”

10 So I prophesied as I was commanded, and the breath came into them; they lived and stood on their feet, an extremely great army.

11 Then he said to me, “Son of man, these bones are all the house of Israel. Look, they are saying, ‘Our bones are dry, our hope has perished; we are cut off.’

12 Therefore prophecy, and tell them, ‘This is what the sovereign LORD says: Look, I am about to open your graves and will raise you from your graves, my people. I will bring you to the land of Israel.

13 Then you will know that I am the LORD, when I open your graves and raise you from your graves, my people.

14 I will place my breath in you and you will live; I will give you rest in your own land. Then you will know that I am the LORD—I have spoken and I will act, 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 to me:

16 “As for you, son of man, take one branch, and write on it, ‘For Judah, and for the Israelites associated with him.’ Then take another branch and write on it, ‘For Joseph, the branch of Ephraim and all the house of Israel associated with him.’

17 Join them as one stick; they will be as one in your hand.

18 When your people say to you, ‘Will you not tell us what these things mean?’

19 tell them, ‘This is what the sovereign LORD says: Look, I am about to take the branch of Joseph which is in the hand of Ephraim and the tribes of Israel associated with him, and I will place them on the stick of Judah, and make them into one stick—they will be one in my hand.’

20 The sticks you write on will be in your hand in front of them.

21 Then tell them, ‘This is what the sovereign LORD says: Look, I am about to take the Israelites from among the nations where they have gone. I will gather them from round about and bring them to their land.

22 I will make them one nation in the land, on the mountains of Israel, and one king will rule over them all. They will never again be two nations and never again be divided into two kingdoms.

23 They will not defile themselves with their idols, their detestable things, and all their rebellious deeds. I will save them from all their unfaithfulness by which they sinned. I will purify them; they will become my people and I will become their God.

24 “‘My servant David will be king over them; there will be one shepherd for all of them. They will follow my regulations and carefully observe my statutes.

25 They will live in the land I gave to my servant Jacob, in which your fathers lived; they will live in it—they and their children and their grandchildren forever. David my servant will be prince over them forever.

26 I will make a covenant of peace with them; it will be a perpetual covenant with them. I will establish them, increase their numbers, and place my sanctuary among them forever.

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

28 Then, when my sanctuary is among them forever, the nations will know that I, the LORD, sanctify Israel.’”

*Scripture quoted by permission. All scripture quotations, unless otherwise indicated, are taken from the NET Bible® copyright ©1996–2006 by Biblical Studies Press, L.L.C. <http://bible.org> All rights reserved. This material is available in its entirety as a free download or online web use at <http://netbible.org/>.*

## 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 The word of the LORD came to me:
- 2 “Son of man, turn toward Gog, of the land of Magog, the chief prince of Meshech and Tubal. Prophesy against him
- 3 and say: ‘This is what the sovereign LORD says: Look, I am against you, Gog, chief prince of Meshech and Tubal.
- 4 I will turn you around, put hooks into your jaws, and bring you out with all your army, horses and horsemen, all of them fully armed, a great company with shields of different types, all of them armed with swords.
- 5 Persia, Ethiopia, and Put are with them, all of them with shields and helmets.
- 6 They are joined by Gomer with all its troops, and by Beth Togarmah from the remote parts of the north with all its troops—many peoples are with you.
- 7 “‘Be ready and stay ready, you and all your companies assembled around you, and be a guard for them.
- 8 After many days you will be summoned; in the latter years you will come to a land restored from the ravages of war, with many peoples gathered on the mountains of Israel that had long been in ruins. Its people were brought out from the peoples, and all of them will be living securely.
- 9 You will advance; you will come like a storm. You will be like a cloud covering the earth, you, all your troops, and the many other peoples with you.
- 10 “‘This is what the sovereign LORD says: On that day thoughts will come into your mind, and you will devise an evil plan.
- 11 You will say, “I will invade a land of unwalled towns; I will advance against those living quietly in security—all of them living without walls and barred gates—
- 12 to loot and plunder, to attack the inhabited ruins and the people gathered from the nations, who are acquiring cattle and goods, who live at the center of the earth.”
- 13 Sheba and Dedan and the traders of Tarshish with all its young warriors will say to you, “Have you come to loot? Have you assembled your armies to plunder, to carry away silver and gold, to take away cattle and goods, to haul away a great amount of spoils?”
- 14 “Therefore, prophesy, son of man, and say to Gog: ‘This is what the sovereign LORD says: On that day when my people Israel are living securely, you will take notice
- 15 and come from your place, from the remote parts of the north, you and many peoples with you, all of them riding on horses, a great company and a vast army.
- 16 You will advance against my people Israel like a cloud covering the earth. In the latter days I will bring you against my land so that the nations may acknowledge me, when before their eyes I magnify myself through you, O Gog.

#### Yahweh Comes to Israel's Defense

- 17 “‘This is what the sovereign LORD says: Are you the one of whom I spoke in former days by my servants the prophets of Israel, who prophesied in those days that I would bring you against them?
- 18 On that day, when Gog invades the land of Israel, declares the sovereign LORD, my rage will mount up in my anger.
- 19 In my zeal, in the fire of my fury, I declare that on that day there will be a great earthquake in the land of Israel.
- 20 The fish of the sea, the birds of the sky, the wild beasts, all the things that creep on the ground, and all people who live on the face of the earth will shake at my presence. The mountains will topple, the cliffs will fall, and every wall will fall to the ground.
- 21 I will call for a sword to attack Gog on all my mountains, declares the sovereign LORD; every man's sword will be against his brother.
- 22 I will judge him with plague and bloodshed. I will rain down on him, his troops and the many peoples who are with him a torrential downpour, hailstones, fire, and brimstone.
- 23 I will exalt and magnify myself; I will reveal myself before many nations. Then 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 “As for you, son of man, prophesy against Gog, and say: ‘This is what the sovereign LORD says: Look, I am against you, O Gog, chief prince of Meshech and Tubal!
- 2 I will turn you around and drag you along; I will lead you up from the remotest parts of the north and bring you against the mountains of Israel.
- 3 I will knock your bow out of your left hand and make your arrows fall from your right hand.
- 4 You will fall dead on the mountains of Israel, you and all your troops and the people who are with you. I give you as food to every kind of bird and every wild beast.
- 5 You will fall dead in the open field; for I have spoken, declares the sovereign LORD.
- 6 I will send fire on Magog and those who live securely in the coastlands; then they will know that I am the LORD.

- 7 “I will make my holy name known in the midst of my people Israel; I will not let my holy name be profaned anymore. Then the nations will know that I am the LORD, the Holy One of Israel.
- 8 Realize that it is coming and it will be done, declares the sovereign LORD. It is the day I have spoken about.
- 9 “Then those who live in the cities of Israel will go out and use the weapons for kindling—the shields, bows and arrows, war clubs and spears—they will burn them for seven years.
- 10 They will not need to take wood from the field or cut down trees from the forests, because they will make fires with the weapons. They will take the loot from those who looted them and seize the plunder of those who plundered them, declares the sovereign LORD.
- 11 “On that day I will assign Gog a grave in Israel. It will be the valley of those who travel east of the sea; it will block the way of the travelers. There they will bury Gog and all his horde; they will call it the valley of Hamon-Gog.
- 12 For seven months Israel will bury them, in order to cleanse the land.
- 13 All the people of the land will bury them, and it will be a memorial for them on the day I magnify myself, declares the sovereign LORD.
- 14 They will designate men to scout continually through the land, burying those who remain on the surface of the ground, in order to cleanse it. They will search for seven full months.
- 15 When the scouts survey the land and see a human bone, they will place a sign by it, until those assigned to burial duty have buried it in the valley of Hamon-Gog.
- 16 (A city by the name of Hamonah will also be there.) They will cleanse the land.’

### The Great Slaughter

- 17 “As for you, son of man, this is what the sovereign LORD says: Tell every kind of bird and every wild beast: ‘Assemble and come! Gather from all around to my slaughter which I am going to make for you, a great slaughter on the mountains of Israel! You will eat flesh and drink blood.
- 18 You will eat the flesh of warriors and drink the blood of the princes of the earth—the rams, lambs, goats, and bulls, all of them fattened animals of Bashan.
- 19 You will eat fat until you are full, and drink blood until you are drunk, at my slaughter which I have made for you.
- 20 You will fill up at my table with horses and charioteers, with warriors and all the soldiers,’ declares the sovereign LORD.
- 21 “I will display my majesty among the nations. All the nations will witness the judgment I have executed, and the power I have exhibited among them.
- 22 Then the house of Israel will know that I am the LORD their God, from that day forward.
- 23 The nations will know that the house of Israel went into exile due to their iniquity, for they were unfaithful to me. So I hid my face from them and handed them over to their enemies; all of them died by the sword.
- 24 According to their uncleanness and rebellion I have dealt with them, and I hid my face from them.

### Israel Restored

- 25 “Therefore this is what the sovereign LORD says: Now I will restore the fortunes of Jacob, and I will have mercy on the entire house of Israel. I will be zealous for my holy name.
- 26 They will bear their shame for all their unfaithful acts against me, when they live securely on their land with no one to make them afraid.
- 27 When I have brought them back from the peoples and gathered them from the countries of their enemies, I will magnify myself among them in the sight of many nations.
- 28 Then they will know that I am the LORD their God, because I sent them into exile among the nations, and then gathered them into their own land. I will not leave any of them in exile any longer.
- 29 I will no longer hide my face from them, when I pour out my Spirit on the house of Israel, declares the sovereign LORD.”

## 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:  
 2 “Son of man, sing a lament for Pharaoh king of Egypt, and say to him:

“You were like a lion among the nations,  
 but you are a monster in the seas;  
 you thrash about in your streams,  
 stir up the water with your feet,  
 and muddy your streams.

3 “This is what the sovereign LORD says:

“I will throw my net over you in the assembly of many peoples;  
and they will haul you up in my dragnet.

- 4 I will leave you on the ground,  
I will fling you on the open field,  
I will allow all the birds of the sky to settle on you,  
and I will permit all the wild animals to gorge themselves on you.
- 5 I will put your flesh on the mountains,  
and fill the valleys with your maggot-infested carcass.
- 6 I will drench the land with the flow  
of your blood up to the mountains,  
and the ravines will be full of your blood.
- 7 When I extinguish you, I will cover the sky;  
I will darken its stars.  
I will cover the sun with a cloud,  
and the moon will not shine.
- 8 I will darken all the lights in the sky over you,  
and I will darken your land,  
declares the sovereign LORD.
- 9 I will disturb many peoples,  
when I bring about your destruction among the nations,  
among countries you do not know.
- 10 I will shock many peoples with you,  
and their kings will shiver with horror because of you.  
When I brandish my sword before them,  
every moment each one will tremble for his life, on the day of your fall.

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

11 “For this is what the sovereign LORD says:

“The sword of the king of Babylon will attack you.

- 12 By the swords of the mighty warriors I will cause your hordes to fall—  
all of them are the most terrifying among the nations.  
They will devastate the pride of Egypt,  
and all its hordes will be destroyed.
- 13 I will destroy all its cattle beside the plentiful waters;  
and no human foot will disturb the waters again,  
nor will the hooves of cattle disturb them.
- 14 Then I will make their waters calm,  
and will make their streams flow like olive oil, declares the sovereign LORD.
- 15 When I turn the land of Egypt into desolation  
and the land is destitute of everything that fills it,  
when I strike all those who live in it,  
then they will know that I am the LORD.’
- 16 This is a lament; they will chant it.  
The daughters of the nations will chant it.  
They will chant it over Egypt and over all her hordes,  
declares the sovereign LORD.”

### **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 day of the month, the word of the LORD came to me:

18 “Son of man, wail over the horde of Egypt. Bring it down; bring her and the daughters of powerful nations down to the lower parts of the earth, along with those who descend to the pit.

19 Say to them, ‘Whom do you surpass in beauty? Go down and be laid to rest with the uncircumcised!’



20 They will fall among those killed by the sword. The sword is drawn; they carry her and all her hordes away.

21 The bravest of the warriors will speak to him from the midst of Sheol along with his allies, saying: ‘The uncircumcised have come down; they lie still, killed by the sword.’

#### **Assyria in Sheol**

22 “Assyria is there with all her assembly around her grave, all of them struck down by the sword.

23 Their graves are located in the remote slopes of the pit. Her assembly is around her grave, all of them struck down by the sword, those who spread terror in the land of the living.

#### **Elam in Sheol**

24 “Elam is there with all her hordes around her grave; all of them struck down by the sword. They went down uncircumcised to the lower parts of the earth, those who spread terror in the land of the living. Now they will bear their shame with those who descend to the pit.

25 Among the dead they have made a bed for her, along with all her hordes around her grave. All of them are uncircumcised, killed by the sword, for their terror had spread in the land of the living. They bear their shame along with those who descend to the pit; they are placed among the dead.

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

26 “Meshech-Tubal is there, along with all her hordes around her grave. All of them are uncircumcised, killed by the sword, for they spread their terror in the land of the living.

27 They do not lie with the fallen warriors of ancient times, who went down to Sheol with their weapons of war, having their swords placed under their heads and their shields on their bones, when the terror of these warriors was in the land of the living.

28 “But as for you, in the midst of the uncircumcised you will be broken, and you will lie with those killed by the sword.

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

29 “Edom is there with her kings and all her princes. Despite their might they are laid with those killed by the sword; they lie with the uncircumcised and those who descend to the pit.

30 “All the leaders of the north are there, along with all the Sidonians; despite their might they have gone down in shameful terror with the dead. They lie uncircumcised with those killed by the sword, and bear their shame with those who descend to the pit.

#### **Pharaoh’s Doom**

31 “Pharaoh will see them and be consoled over all his hordes who were killed by the sword, Pharaoh and all his army, declares the sovereign LORD.

32 Indeed, I terrified him in the land of the living, yet he will lie in the midst of the uncircumcised with those killed by the sword, Pharaoh and all his hordes, declares the sovereign LORD.”

## **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 The word of the LORD came to me:

2 “Son of man, speak to your people, and say to them, ‘Suppose I bring a sword against the land, and the people of the land take one man from their borders and make him their watchman.

3 He sees the sword coming against the land, blows the trumpet, and warns the people,

4 but there is one who hears the sound of the trumpet yet does not heed the warning. Then the sword comes and sweeps him away. He will be responsible for his own death.

5 He heard the sound of the trumpet but did not heed the warning, so he is responsible for himself. If he had heeded the warning, he would have saved his life.

6 But suppose the watchman sees the sword coming and does not blow the trumpet to warn the people. Then the sword comes and takes one of their lives. He is swept away for his iniquity, but I will hold the watchman accountable for that person’s death.’

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

7 “As for you, son of man, I have made you a watchman for the house of Israel. Whenever you hear a word from my mouth, you must warn them on my behalf.

8 When I say to the wicked, ‘O wicked man, you must certainly die,’ and you do not warn the wicked about his behavior, the wicked man will die for his iniquity, but I will hold you accountable for his death.

9 But if you warn the wicked man to change his behavior, and he refuses to change, he will die for his iniquity, but you have saved your own life.

10 “And you, son of man, say to the house of Israel, ‘This is what you have said: “Our rebellious acts and our sins have caught up with us, and we are wasting away because of them. How then can we live?”’”

#### **Individual Responsibility**

11 Say to them, ‘As surely as I live, declares the sovereign LORD, I take no pleasure in the death of the wicked, but prefer that the wicked change his behavior and live. Turn back, turn back from your evil deeds! Why should you die, O house of Israel?’

12 “And you, son of man, say to your people, ‘The righteousness of the righteous will not deliver him if he rebels. As for the wicked, his wickedness will not make him stumble if he turns from it. The righteous will not be able to live by his righteousness if he sins.’

13 Suppose I tell the righteous that he will certainly live, but he becomes confident in his righteousness and commits iniquity. None of his righteous deeds will be remembered; because of the iniquity he has committed he will die.

14 Suppose I say to the wicked, ‘You must certainly die,’ but he turns from his sin and does what is just and right.

15 He returns what was taken in pledge, pays back what he has stolen, and follows the statutes that give life, committing no iniquity. He will certainly live—he will not die.

16 None of the sins he has committed will be counted against him. He has done what is just and right; he will certainly live.

17 “Yet your people say, ‘The behavior of the Lord is not right,’ when it is their behavior that is not right.

18 When a righteous man turns from his godliness and commits iniquity, he will die for it.

19 When the wicked turns from his sin and does what is just and right, he will live because of it.

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

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

Jeremiah 52:28a, 30

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

28a Here is the official record of the number of people Nebuchadnezzar carried into exile:

30a in Nebuchadnezzar’s twenty-third year, Nebuzaradan, the captain of the royal guard, carried into exile 745 Judeans.

#### **Summary and Total**

30b In all 4,600 people went into exile.

*Scripture quoted by permission. All scripture quotations, unless otherwise indicated, are taken from the NET Bible® copyright ©1996–2006 by Biblical Studies Press, L.L.C. <http://bible.org> All rights reserved. This material is available in its entirety as a free download or online web use at <http://netbible.org/>.*

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

Ezekiel 40–42

### The Man With the Measuring Rod

40:1 In the twenty-fifth year of our exile, at the beginning of the year, on the tenth day of the month, in the fourteenth year after the city was struck down, on this very day, the hand of the LORD was on me, and he brought me there.

2 By means of divine visions he brought me to the land of Israel and placed me on a very high mountain, and on it was a structure like a city, to the south.

3 When he brought me there, I saw a man whose appearance was like bronze, with a linen cord and a measuring stick in his hand. He was standing in the gateway.

4 The man said to me, "Son of man, watch closely, listen carefully, and pay attention to everything I show you, for you have been brought here so that I can show it to you. Tell the house of Israel everything you see."

### The Wall, Gate and Lodges

5 I saw a wall all around the outside of the temple. In the man's hand was a measuring stick  $10\frac{1}{2}$  feet long. He measured the thickness of the wall as  $10\frac{1}{2}$  feet, and its height as  $10\frac{1}{2}$  feet.

6 Then he went to the gate facing east. He climbed its steps and measured the threshold of the gate as  $10\frac{1}{2}$  feet deep.

7 The alcoves were  $10\frac{1}{2}$  feet long and  $10\frac{1}{2}$  feet wide; between the alcoves were  $8\frac{3}{4}$  feet. The threshold of the gate by the porch of the gate facing inward was  $10\frac{1}{2}$  feet.

8 Then he measured the porch of the gate facing inward as  $10\frac{1}{2}$  feet.

9 He measured the porch of the gate as 14 feet, and its jambs as  $3\frac{1}{2}$  feet; the porch of the gate faced inward.

10 There were three alcoves on each side of the east gate; the three had the same measurement, and the jambs on either side had the same measurement.

11 He measured the width of the entrance of the gateway as  $17\frac{1}{2}$  feet, and the length of the gateway as  $22\frac{3}{4}$  feet.

12 There was a barrier in front of the alcoves,  $1\frac{3}{4}$  feet on either side; the alcoves were  $10\frac{1}{2}$  feet on either side.

13 He measured the gateway from the roof of one alcove to the roof of the other, a width of  $43\frac{3}{4}$  feet from one entrance to the opposite one.

14 He measured the porch at 105 feet high; the gateway went all around to the jamb of the courtyard.

15 From the front of the entrance gate to the porch of the inner gate was  $87\frac{1}{2}$  feet.

16 There were closed windows toward the alcoves and toward their jambs within the gate all around, and likewise for the porches. There were windows all around the inside, and on each jamb were decorative palm trees.

### The Outer and Inner Courts

17 Then he brought me to the outer court. I saw chambers there, and a pavement made for the court all around; thirty chambers faced the pavement.

18 The pavement was beside the gates, corresponding to the length of the gates; this was the lower pavement.

19 Then he measured the width from before the lower gate to the front of the exterior of the inner court as 175 feet on the east and on the north.

20 He measured the length and width of the gate of the outer court which faces north.

21 Its alcoves, three on each side, and its jambs and porches had the same measurement as the first gate;  $87\frac{1}{2}$  feet long and  $43\frac{3}{4}$  feet wide.

22 Its windows, its porches, and its decorative palm trees had the same measurement as the gate which faced east. Seven steps led up to it, and its porch was in front of them.

23 Opposite the gate on the north and the east was a gate of the inner court; he measured the distance from gate to gate at 175 feet.

24 Then he led me toward the south. I saw a gate on the south. He measured its jambs and its porches; they had the same dimensions as the others.

25 There were windows all around it and its porches, like the windows of the others;  $87\frac{1}{2}$  feet long and  $43\frac{3}{4}$  feet wide.

26 There were seven steps going up to it; its porches were in front of them. It had decorative palm trees on its jambs, one on either side.

27 The inner court had a gate toward the south; he measured it from gate to gate toward the south as 175 feet.

28 Then he brought me to the inner court by the south gate. He measured the south gate; it had the same dimensions as the others.

29 Its alcoves, its jambs, and its porches had the same dimensions as the others, and there were windows all around it and its porches; its length was  $87\frac{1}{2}$  feet and its width  $43\frac{3}{4}$  feet.

30 There were porches all around,  $43\frac{3}{4}$  feet long and  $8\frac{3}{4}$  feet wide.

31 Its porches faced the outer court, and decorative palm trees were on its jambs, and its stairway had eight steps.

32 Then he brought me to the inner court on the east side. He measured the gate; it had the same dimensions as the others.

33 Its alcoves, its jambs, and its porches had the same dimensions as the others, and there were windows all around it and its porches; its length was  $87\frac{1}{2}$  feet and its width  $43\frac{3}{4}$  feet.

- 34 Its porches faced the outer court, it had decorative palm trees on its jambs, and its stairway had eight steps.  
35 Then he brought me to the north gate, and he measured it; it had the same dimensions as the others—  
36 its alcoves, its jambs, and its porches. It had windows all around it; its length was  $87\frac{1}{2}$  feet and its width  $43\frac{3}{4}$  feet.  
37 Its jambs faced the outer court, and it had decorative palm trees on its jambs, on either side, and its stairway had eight steps.

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

- 38 There was a chamber with its door by the porch of the gate; there they washed the burnt offering.  
39 In the porch of the gate were two tables on either side on which to slaughter the burnt offering, the sin offering, and the guilt offering.  
40 On the outside of the porch as one goes up at the entrance of the north gate were two tables, and on the other side of the porch of the gate were two tables.  
41 Four tables were on each side of the gate, eight tables on which the sacrifices were to be slaughtered.  
42 The four tables for the burnt offering were of carved stone, 32 inches long, 32 inches wide, and 21 inches high. They would put the instruments which they used to slaughter the burnt offering and the sacrifice on them.  
43 There were hooks three inches long, fastened in the house all around, and on the tables was the flesh of the offering.  
44 On the outside of the inner gate were chambers for the singers of the inner court, one at the side of the north gate facing south, and the other at the side of the south gate facing north.  
45 He said to me, "This chamber which faces south is for the priests who keep charge of the temple,  
46 and the chamber which faces north is for the priests who keep charge of the altar. These are the descendants of Zadok, from the descendants of Levi, who may approach the LORD to minister to him."  
47 He measured the court as a square 175 feet long and 175 feet wide; the altar was in front of the temple.

#### **The Porch**

- 48 Then he brought me to the porch of the temple and measured the jambs of the porch as  $8\frac{3}{4}$  feet on either side, and the width of the gate was  $24\frac{1}{2}$  feet and the sides were  $5\frac{1}{4}$  feet on each side.  
49 The length of the porch was 35 feet and the width  $19\frac{1}{4}$  feet; steps led up to it, and there were pillars beside the jambs on either side.

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

- 41:1 Then he brought me to the outer sanctuary, and measured the jambs; the jambs were  $10\frac{1}{2}$  feet wide on each side.  
2 The width of the entrance was  $17\frac{1}{2}$  feet, and the sides of the entrance were  $8\frac{3}{4}$  feet on each side. He measured the length of the outer sanctuary as 70 feet, and its width as 35 feet.  
3 Then he went into the inner sanctuary and measured the jambs of the entrance as  $3\frac{1}{2}$  feet, the entrance as  $10\frac{1}{2}$  feet, and the width of the entrance as  $12\frac{1}{4}$  feet  
4 Then he measured its length as 35 feet, and its width as 35 feet, before the outer sanctuary. He said to me, "This is the most holy place."

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

- 5 Then he measured the wall of the temple as  $10\frac{1}{2}$  feet, and the width of the side chambers as 7 feet, all around the temple.  
6 The side chambers were in three stories, one above the other, thirty in each story. There were offsets in the wall all around to serve as supports for the side chambers, so that the supports were not in the wall of the temple.  
7 The side chambers surrounding the temple were wider at each successive story; for the structure surrounding the temple went up story by story all around the temple. For this reason the width of the temple increased as it went up, and one went up from the lowest story to the highest by the way of the middle story.  
8 I saw that the temple had a raised platform all around; the foundations of the side chambers were a full measuring stick of  $10\frac{1}{2}$  feet high.  
9 The width of the outer wall of the side chambers was  $8\frac{3}{4}$  feet, and the open area between the side chambers of the temple  
10 and the chambers of the court was 35 feet in width all around the temple on every side.  
11 There were entrances from the side chambers toward the open area, one entrance toward the north, and another entrance toward the south; the width of the open area was  $8\frac{3}{4}$  feet all around.

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

- 12 The building that was facing the temple courtyard at the west side was  $122\frac{1}{2}$  feet wide; the wall of the building was  $8\frac{3}{4}$  feet all around, and its length  $157\frac{1}{2}$  feet.  
13 Then he measured the temple as 175 feet long, the courtyard of the temple and the building and its walls as 175 feet long,  
14 and also the width of the front of the temple and the courtyard on the east as 175 feet.

**The Galleries About the Temple**

15 Then he measured the length of the building facing the courtyard at the rear of the temple, with its galleries on either side as 175 feet. The interior of the outer sanctuary and the porch of the court,

16 as well as the thresholds, narrow windows and galleries all around on three sides facing the threshold were paneled with wood all around, from the ground up to the windows (now the windows were covered),

17 to the space above the entrance, to the inner room, and on the outside, and on all the walls in the inner room and outside, by measurement.

18 It was made with cherubim and decorative palm trees, with a palm tree between each cherub. Each cherub had two faces:

19 a human face toward the palm tree on one side and a lion's face toward the palm tree on the other side. They were carved on the whole temple all around;

20 from the ground to the area above the entrance, cherubim and decorative palm trees were carved on the wall of the outer sanctuary.

**The Altar of Incense**

21 The doorposts of the outer sanctuary were square. In front of the sanctuary one doorpost looked just like the other.

22 The altar was of wood, 5¼ feet high, with its length 3½ feet; its corners, its length, and its walls were of wood. He said to me, "This is the table that is before the LORD."

23 The outer sanctuary and the inner 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 On the doors of the outer sanctuary were carved cherubim and palm trees, like those carved on the walls, and there was a canopy of wood on the front of the outside porch.

26 There were narrow windows and decorative palm trees on either side of the side walls of the porch; this is what the side chambers of the temple and the canopies were like.

**The Inner Court of the Chamber**

42:1 Then he led me out to the outer court, toward the north, and brought me to the chamber which was opposite the courtyard and opposite the building on the north.

2 Its length was 175 feet on the north side, and its width 87½ feet.

3 Opposite the 35 feet that belonged to the inner court, and opposite the pavement which belonged to the outer court, gallery faced gallery in the three stories.

4 In front of the chambers was a walkway on the inner side, 17½ feet wide at a distance of 1¾ feet, and their entrances were on the north.

5 Now the upper chambers were narrower, because the galleries took more space from them than from the lower and middle chambers of 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 more than the lower and upper ones.

7 As for the outer wall by the side of the chambers, toward the outer court facing the chambers, it was 87½ feet long.

8 For the chambers on the outer court were 87½ feet long, while those facing the temple were 175 feet long.

9 Below these chambers was a passage on the east side as one enters from the outer court.

10 At the beginning of the wall of the court toward the south, facing the courtyard and the building, were chambers

11 with a passage in front of them. They looked like the chambers on the north. Of the same length and width, and all their exits according to their arrangements and entrances

12 were the chambers which were toward the south. There was an opening at the head of the passage, the passage in front of the corresponding wall toward the east when one enters.

**The Priests' Use of the Chambers**

13 Then he said to me, "The north chambers and the south chambers which face the courtyard are holy chambers where the priests who approach the LORD will eat the most holy offerings. There they will place the most holy offerings—the grain offering, the sin offering, and the guilt offering, because the place is holy.

14 When the priests enter, then they will not go out from the sanctuary to the outer court without taking off their garments in which they minister, for these are holy; they will put on other garments, then they will go near the places where the people are."

**Measurements of Outer Wall and Entire Complex**

15 Now when he had finished measuring the interior of the temple, he led me out by the gate which faces east and measured all around.

16 He measured the east side with the measuring stick as 875 feet by the measuring stick.

17 He measured the north side as 875 feet by the measuring stick.

18 He measured the south side as 875 feet by the measuring stick.

19 He turned to the west side and measured 875 feet by the measuring stick.

20 He measured it on all four sides. It had a wall around it, 875 feet long and 875 feet wide, to separate the holy and common places.

## 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 brought me to the gate that faced toward the east.

2 I saw the glory of the God of Israel coming from the east; the sound was like that of rushing water; and the earth radiated his glory.

3 It was like the vision I saw when he came to destroy the city, and the vision I saw by the Kebar River. I threw myself face down.

4 The glory of the LORD came into the temple by way of the gate that faces east.

5 Then a wind lifted me up and brought me to the inner court; I watched the glory of the LORD filling the temple.

### Exhortation to Purity

6 I heard someone speaking to me from the temple, while the man was standing beside me.

7 He said to me: "Son of man, this is the place of my throne and the place for the soles of my feet, where I will live among the people of Israel forever. The house of Israel will no longer profane my holy name, neither they nor their kings, by their spiritual prostitution or by the pillars of their kings set up when they die.

8 When they placed their threshold by my threshold and their doorpost by my doorpost, with only the wall between me and them, they profaned my holy name by the abominable deeds they committed. So I consumed them in my anger.

9 Now they must put away their spiritual prostitution and the pillars of their kings far from me, and then I will live 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, so that they will be ashamed of their sins and measure the pattern.

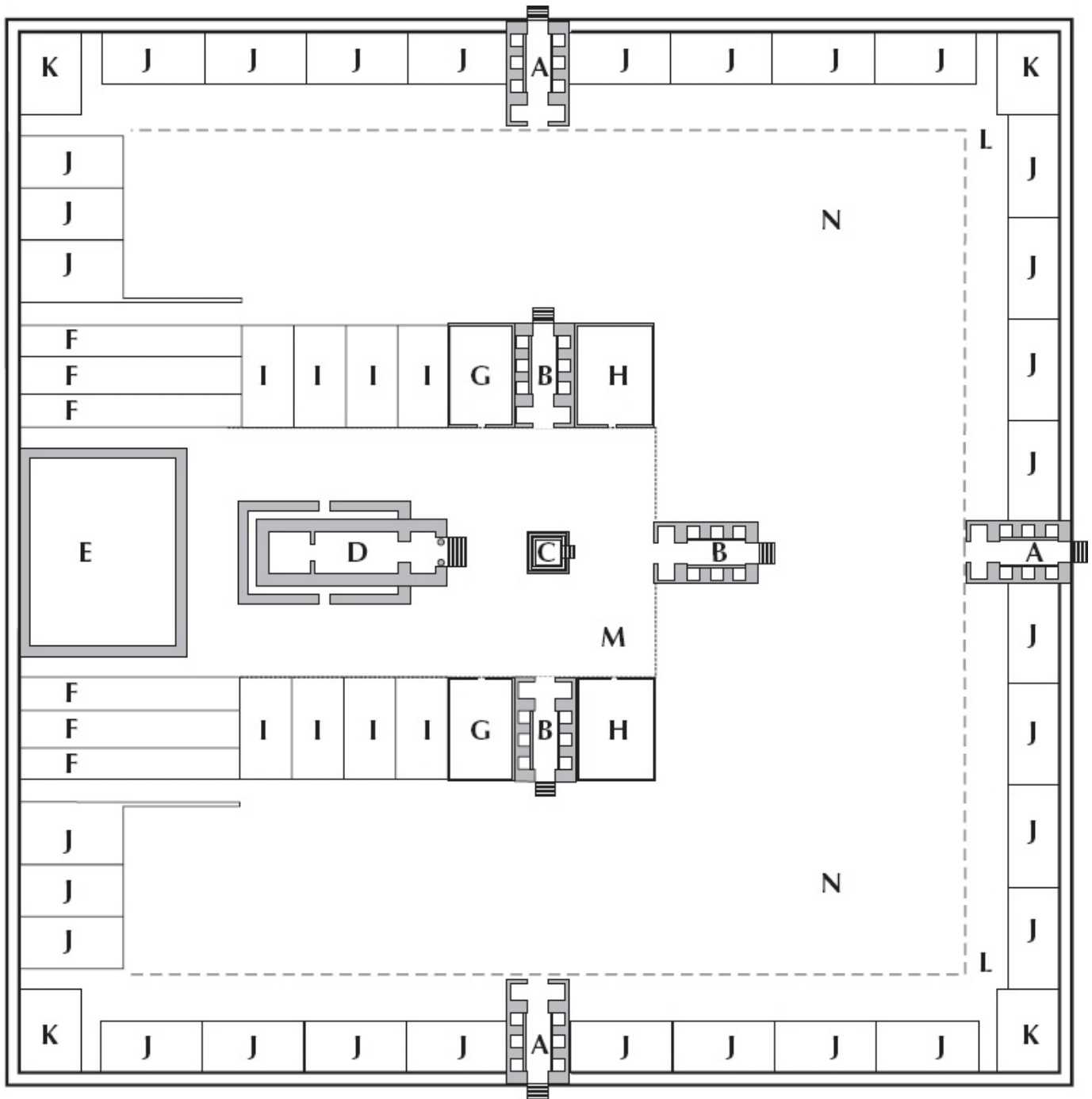
11 When they are ashamed of all that they have done, make known to them the design of the temple, its pattern, its exits and entrances, and its whole design—all its statutes, its entire design, and all its laws; write it all down in their sight, so that they may observe its entire design and all its statutes and do them.

*Scripture quoted by permission. All scripture quotations, unless otherwise indicated, are taken from the NET Bible® copyright ©1996–2006 by Biblical Studies Press, L.L.C. <http://bible.org> All rights reserved. This material is available in its entirety as a free download or online web use at <http://netbible.org/>.*

### 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)       |



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

Ezekiel 43:12–27; 44–46

### The Law of the Temple

43:12 “This is the law of the temple: The entire area on top of the mountain all around will be most holy. Indeed, this is the law of the temple.

### Measurements of the Altar

13 “And these are the measurements of the altar: Its base is 1¾ feet high, and 1¾ feet wide, and its border nine inches on its edge. This is to be the height of the altar.

14 From the base of the ground to the lower edge is 3½ feet, and the width 1¾ feet; and from the smaller ledge to the larger edge, 7 feet, and the width 1¾ feet;

15 and the altar hearth, 7 feet, and from the altar hearth four horns projecting upward.

16 Now the altar hearth is a perfect square, 21 feet long and 21 feet wide.

17 The ledge is 24½ feet long and 24½ feet wide on four sides; the border around it is 10½ inches, and its surrounding base 1¾ feet. Its steps face east.”

### Consecration of the Altar to the Lord

18 Then he said to me: “Son of man, this is what the sovereign LORD says: These are the statutes of the altar: On the day it is built to offer up burnt offerings on it and to sprinkle blood on it,

19 you will give a young bull for a sin offering to the Levitical priests who are descended from Zadok, who approach me to minister to me, declares the sovereign LORD.

20 You will take some of its blood, and place it on the four horns of the altar, on the four corners of the ledge, and on the border all around; you will cleanse it and make atonement for it.

21 You will also take the bull for the sin offering, and it will be burned in the appointed place in the temple, outside the sanctuary.

22 “On the second day, you will offer a male goat without blemish for a sin offering. They will purify the altar just as they purified it with the bull.

23 When you have finished purifying it, you will offer an unblemished young bull and an unblemished ram from the flock.

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

25 “For seven days you will provide every day a goat for a sin offering; a young bull and a ram from the flock, both without blemish, will be provided.

26 For seven days they will make atonement for the altar and cleanse it, so they will consecrate it.

27 When the prescribed period is over, on the eighth day and thereafter the priests will offer up on the altar your burnt offerings and your peace offerings; I will accept you, declares the sovereign LORD.”

### The Prince in the Gate

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

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

3 Only the prince may sit in it to eat a sacrificial meal before the LORD; he will enter by way of the porch of the gate and will 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 temple. As I watched, I noticed the glory of the LORD filling the LORD's temple, and I threw myself face down.

5 The LORD said to me: “Son of man, pay attention, watch closely and listen carefully to everything I tell you concerning all the statutes of the LORD's house and all its laws. Pay attention to the entrances to the temple with all the exits of the sanctuary.

6 Say to the rebellious, to the house of Israel, ‘This is what the sovereign LORD says: Enough of all your abominable practices, O house of Israel!

7 When you bring foreigners, those uncircumcised in heart and in flesh, into my sanctuary, you desecrate it—even my house—when you offer my food, the fat and the blood. You have broken my covenant by all your abominable practices.

8 You have not kept charge of my holy things, but you have assigned foreigners to keep charge of my sanctuary for you.

### Ministry of the Levites

9 This is what the sovereign LORD says: No foreigner, who is uncircumcised in heart and flesh among all the foreigners who are among the people of Israel, will enter into my sanctuary.

10 “But the Levites who went far from me, straying off from me after their idols when Israel went astray, will be responsible for their sin.

11 Yet they will be ministers in my sanctuary, having oversight at the gates of the temple, and serving the temple. They will slaughter

the burnt offerings and the sacrifices for the people, and they will stand before them to minister to them.

12 Because they used to minister to them before their idols, and became a sinful obstacle to the house of Israel, consequently I have made a vow concerning them, declares the sovereign LORD, that they will be responsible for their sin.

13 They will not come near me to serve me as priest, nor will they come near any of my holy things, the things which are most sacred. They will bear the shame of the abominable deeds they have committed.

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

#### **Ministry of the Zadokite Priests**

15 “But the Levitical priests, the descendants of Zadok who kept the charge of my sanctuary when the people of Israel went astray from me, will approach me to minister to me; they will stand before me to offer me the fat and the blood, declares the sovereign LORD.

16 They will enter my sanctuary, and approach my table to minister to me; they will keep my charge.

17 “When they enter the gates of the inner court, they must wear linen garments; they must not have any wool on them when they minister in the inner gates of the court and in the temple.

18 Linen turbans will be on their heads and linen undergarments will be around their waists; they must not bind themselves with anything that causes sweat.

19 When they go out to the outer court to the people, they must remove the garments they were ministering in, and place them in the holy chambers; they must put on other garments so that they will not transmit holiness to the people with their garments.

20 “They must not shave their heads nor let their hair grow long; they must only trim their heads.

21 No priest may drink wine when he enters the inner court.

22 They must not marry a widow or a divorcee, but they may marry a virgin from the house of Israel or a widow who is a priest’s widow.

23 Moreover, they will teach my people the difference between the holy and the common, and show them how to distinguish between the ceremonially unclean and the clean.

24 “In a controversy they will act as judges; they will judge according to my ordinances. They will keep my laws and my statutes regarding all my appointed festivals and will observe my Sabbaths.

25 “They must not come near a dead person or they will be defiled; however, for father, mother, son, daughter, brother or sister, they may defile themselves.

26 After a priest has become ceremonially clean, they must count off a period of seven days for him.

27 On the day he enters the sanctuary, into the inner court to serve in the sanctuary, he must offer his sin offering, declares the sovereign LORD.

#### **Portion of the Priests**

28 “This will be their inheritance: I am their inheritance, and you must give them no property in Israel; I am their property.

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

30 The first of all the first fruits and all contributions of any kind will be for the priests; you will also give to the priest the first portion of your dough, so that a blessing may rest on your house.

31 The priests will not eat any bird or animal that has died a natural death or was torn to pieces by a wild animal.

#### **The Holy Portion of the Land**

45:1 “When you allot the land as an inheritance, you will offer an allotment to the LORD, a holy portion from the land; the length will be eight and a quarter miles and the width three and one-third miles. This entire area will be holy.

2 Of this area a square 875 feet by 875 feet will be designated for the sanctuary, with 87½ feet set aside for its open space round about.

3 From this measured area you will measure a length of eight and a quarter miles and a width of three and one-third miles; in it will be the sanctuary, the most holy place.

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

5 An area eight and a quarter miles in length and three and one-third miles in width will be for the Levites, who minister at the temple, as the place for the cities in which they will live.

6 “Alongside the portion set apart as the holy allotment, you will allot for the city an area one and two-thirds miles wide and eight and a quarter miles long; it will be for the whole house of Israel.

7 “For the prince there will be land on both sides of the holy allotment and the allotted city, alongside the holy allotment and the allotted city, on the west side and on the east side; it will be comparable in length to one of the portions, from the west border to the east border

8 of the land. This will be his property in Israel. My princes will no longer oppress my people, but the land will be allotted to the house of Israel according to their tribes.

**Charge to the Princes of Israel**

9 “This is what the sovereign LORD says: Enough, you princes of Israel! Put away violence and destruction, and do what is just and right. Put an end to your evictions of my people, declares the sovereign LORD.

10 You must use just balances, a just dry measure (an ephah), and a just liquid measure (a bath).

11 The dry and liquid measures will be the same, the bath will contain a tenth of a homer, and the ephah a tenth of a homer; the homer will be the standard measure.

12 The shekel will be twenty gerahs. Sixty shekels will be a mina for you.

**Offerings of Israel's Prince**

13 “This is the offering you must offer: a sixth of an ephah from a homer of wheat; a sixth of an ephah from a homer of barley, 14 and as the prescribed portion of olive oil, one tenth of a bath from each kor (which is ten baths or a homer, for ten baths make a homer);

15 and one sheep from each flock of two hundred, from the watered places of Israel, for a grain offering, burnt offering, and peace offering, to make atonement for them, declares the sovereign LORD.

16 All the people of the land will contribute to this offering for the prince of Israel.

17 It will be the duty of the prince to provide the burnt offerings, the grain offering, and the drink offering at festivals, on the new moons and Sabbaths, at all the appointed feasts of the house of Israel; he will 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 “This is what the sovereign LORD says: In the first month, on the first day of the month, you must take an unblemished young bull and purify the sanctuary.

19 The priest will take some of the blood of the sin offering and place it on the doorpost of the temple, on the four corners of the ledge of the altar, and on the doorpost of the gate of the inner court.

20 This is what you must do on the seventh day of the month for anyone who sins inadvertently or through ignorance; so you will make atonement for the temple.

**The New Passover**

21 “In the first month, on the fourteenth day of the month, you will celebrate the Passover, and for seven days bread made without yeast will be eaten.

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

23 And during the seven days of the feast he will provide as a burnt offering to the LORD seven bulls and seven rams, all without blemish, on each of the seven days, and a male goat daily for a sin offering.

24 He will provide as a grain offering an ephah for each bull, an ephah for each ram, and a gallon of olive oil for each ephah of grain.

25 In the seventh month, on the fifteenth day of the month, at the feast, he will make the same provisions for the sin offering, burnt offering, and grain offering, and for the olive oil, for the seven days.

**Offerings for the Sabbath**

46:1 “This is what the sovereign LORD says: The gate of the inner court that faces east will be closed six working days, but on the Sabbath day it will be opened and on the day of the new moon it will be opened.

2 The prince will enter by way of the porch of the gate from the outside, and will stand by the doorpost of the gate. The priests will provide his burnt offering and his peace offerings, and he will bow down at the threshold of the gate and then go out. But the gate will not be closed until evening.

3 The people of the land will bow down at the entrance of that gate before the LORD on the Sabbaths and on the new moons.

4 The burnt offering which the prince will offer to the LORD on the Sabbath day will be six unblemished lambs and one unblemished ram.

5 The grain offering will be an ephah with the ram, and the grain offering with the lambs will be as much as he is able to give, and a gallon of olive oil with an ephah.

**Offerings for the New Moon**

6 On the day of the new moon he will offer an unblemished young bull, and six lambs and a ram, all without blemish.

7 He will provide a grain offering: an ephah with the bull and an ephah with the ram, and with the lambs as much as he wishes, and a gallon of olive oil with each ephah of grain.

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

**Conduct During the Appointed Feasts**

9 “When the people of the land come before the LORD at the appointed feasts, whoever enters by way of the north gate to worship will go out by way of the south gate; whoever enters by way of the south gate will go out by way of the north gate. No one will

return by way of the gate they entered but will go out straight ahead.

10 When they come in, the prince will come in with them, and when they go out, he will go out.

11 “At the festivals and at the appointed feasts the grain offering will be an ephah with the bull and an ephah with the ram, and with the lambs as much as one is able, and a gallon of olive oil with each ephah of grain.

12 When the prince provides a freewill offering, a burnt offering, or peace offerings as a voluntary offering to the LORD, the gate facing east will be opened for him, and he will provide his burnt offering and his peace offerings just as he did on the Sabbath. Then he will go out, and the gate will be closed after he goes out.

#### **Daily Sacrifices**

13 “You will provide a lamb a year old without blemish for a burnt offering daily to the LORD; morning by morning he will provide it.

14 And you will provide a grain offering with it morning by morning, a sixth of an ephah, and a third of a gallon of olive oil to moisten the choice flour, as a grain offering to the LORD; this is a perpetual statute.

15 Thus they will provide the lamb, the grain offering, and the olive oil morning by morning, as a perpetual burnt offering.

#### **Regulations Concerning the Prince**

16 “This is what the sovereign LORD says: If the prince should give a gift to one of his sons as his inheritance, it will belong to his sons, it is their property by inheritance.

17 But if he gives a gift from his inheritance to one of his servants, it will be his until the year of liberty; then it will revert to the prince. His inheritance will only remain with his sons.

18 The prince will not take away any of the people’s inheritance by oppressively removing them from their property. He will give his sons an inheritance from his own possessions so that my people will not be scattered, each from his own property.”

#### **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. There I saw a place at the extreme western end.

20 He said to me, “This is the place where the priests will boil the guilt offering and the sin offering, and where they will bake the grain offering, so that they do not bring them out to the outer court to transmit holiness to the people.”

21 Then he brought me out to the outer court and led me past the four corners of the court, and I noticed that in every corner of the court there was a court.

22 In the four corners of the court were small courts, 70 feet in length and 52½ feet in width; the four were all the same size.

23 There was a row of masonry around each of the four courts, and places for boiling offerings were made under the rows all around.

24 Then he said to me, “These are the houses for boiling, where the ministers of the temple boil the sacrifices of the people.”

*Scripture quoted by permission. All scripture quotations, unless otherwise indicated, are taken from the NET Bible® copyright ©1996–2006 by Biblical Studies Press, L.L.C. <http://bible.org> All rights reserved. This material is available in its entirety as a free download or online web use at <http://netbible.org/>.*

## 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 entrance of the temple. I noticed that water was flowing from under the threshold of the temple toward the east (for the temple faced east). The water was flowing down from under the right side of the temple, from south of the altar.

2 He led me out by way of the north gate and brought me around the outside of the outer gate that faces toward the east; I noticed that the water was trickling out from the south side.

### The Man with the Measuring Line

3 When the man went out toward the east with a measuring line in his hand, he measured 1,750 feet, and then he led me through water, which was ankle deep.

4 Again he measured 1,750 feet and led me through the water, which was now knee deep. Once more he measured 1,750 feet and led me through the water, which was waist deep.

5 Again he measured 1,750 feet and it was a river I could not cross, for the water had risen; it was deep enough to swim in, a river that could not be crossed.

### The Healing of the Waters

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

7 When I had returned, I noticed a vast number of trees on the banks of the river, on both sides.

8 He said to me, "These waters go out toward the eastern region and flow down into the Arabah; when they enter the Dead Sea, where the sea is stagnant, the waters become fresh.

9 Every living creature which swarms where the river flows will live; there will be many fish, for these waters flow there. It will become fresh and everything will live where the river flows.

10 Fishermen will stand beside it; from Engedi to En-eglaim they will spread nets. They will catch many kinds of fish, like the fish of the Great Sea.

11 But its swamps and its marshes will not become fresh; they will remain salty.

12 On both sides of the river's banks, every kind of tree will grow for food. Their leaves will not wither nor will their fruit fail, but they will bear fruit every month, because their water source flows from the sanctuary. 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 This is what the sovereign LORD says: "Here are the borders you will observe as you allot the land to the twelve tribes of Israel. (Joseph will have two portions.)

14 You must divide it equally just as I vowed to give it to your forefathers; this land will be assigned as your inheritance.

### Borders of Israel

15 "This will be the border of the land: On the north side, from the Great Sea by way of Hethlon to the entrance of Zedad;

16 Hamath, Berothah, Sibram, which is between the border of Damascus and the border of Hamath, as far as Hazer-hattikon, which is on the border of Hauran.

17 The border will run from the sea to Hazar-enan, at the border of Damascus, and on the north is the border of Hamath. This is the north side.

18 On the east side, between Hauran and Damascus, and between Gilead and the land of Israel, will be the Jordan. You will measure from the border to the eastern sea. This is the east side.

19 On the south side it will run from Tamar to the waters of Meribath Kadesh, the river, to the Great Sea. This is the south side.

20 On the west side the Great Sea will be the boundary to a point opposite Lebo-hamath. This is the west side.

### Instructions for Dividing the Land Among the Tribes

21 "This is how you will divide this land for yourselves among the tribes of Israel.

22 You must allot it as an inheritance among yourselves and for the foreigners who reside among you, who have fathered sons among you. You must treat them as native-born among the people of Israel; they will be allotted an inheritance with you among the tribes of Israel.

23 In whatever tribe the foreigner resides, there you will give him his inheritance," declares the sovereign LORD.



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

### Ezekiel 48

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

1 “These are the names of the tribes: From the northern end beside the road of Hethlon to Lebo-hamath, as far as Hazar-enan (which is on the border of Damascus, toward the north beside Hamath), extending from the east side to the west, Dan will have one portion.

2 Next to the border of Dan, from the east side to the west, Asher will have one portion.

3 Next to the border of Asher from the east side to the west, Naphtali will have one portion.

4 Next to the border of Naphtali from the east side to the west, Manasseh will have one portion.

5 Next to the border of Manasseh from the east side to the west, Ephraim will have one portion.

6 Next to the border of Ephraim from the east side to the west, Reuben will have one portion.

7 Next to the border of Reuben from the east side to the west, Judah will have one portion.

23 “As for the rest of the tribes: From the east side to the west side, Benjamin will have one portion.

24 Next to the border of Benjamin, from the east side to the west side, Simeon will have one portion.

25 Next to the border of Simeon, from the east side to the west side, Issachar will have one portion.

26 Next to the border of Issachar, from the east side to the west side, Zebulun will have one portion.

27 Next to the border of Zebulun, from the east side to the west side, Gad will have one portion.

28 Next to the border of Gad, at the south side, the border will run from Tamar to the waters of Meribath Kadesh, to the Stream of Egypt and on to the Great Sea.

29 This is the land which you will allot to the tribes of Israel, and these are their portions, declares the sovereign LORD.

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

8 “Next to the border of Judah from the east side to the west will be the allotment you must set apart. It is to be eight and a quarter miles wide, and the same length as one of the tribal portions, from the east side to the west; the sanctuary will be in the middle of it.

9 The allotment you set apart to the LORD will be eight and a quarter miles in length and three and one-third miles in width.

10 These will be the allotments for the holy portion: for the priests, toward the north eight and a quarter miles in length, toward the west three and one-third miles in width, toward the east three and one-third miles in width, and toward the south eight and a quarter miles in length; the sanctuary of the LORD will be in the middle.

11 This will be for the priests who are set apart from the descendants of Zadok who kept my charge and did not go astray when the people of Israel strayed off, like the Levites did.

12 It will be their portion from the allotment of the land, a most holy place, next to the border of the Levites.

13 “Alongside the border of the priests, the Levites will have an allotment eight and a quarter miles in length and three and one-third miles in width. The whole length will be eight and a quarter miles and the width three and one-third miles.

14 They must not sell or exchange any of it; they must not transfer this choice portion of land, for it is set apart to the LORD.

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

15 “The remainder, one and two-thirds miles in width and eight and a quarter miles in length, will be for common use by the city, for houses and for open space. The city will be in the middle of it;

16 these will be its measurements: The north side will be one and one-half miles, the south side one and one-half miles, the east side one and one-half miles, and the west side one and one-half miles.

17 The city will have open spaces: On the north there will be 437½ feet, on the south 437½ feet, on the east 437½ feet, and on the west 437½ feet.

18 The remainder of the length alongside the holy allotment will be three and one-third miles to the east and three and one-third miles toward the west, and it will be beside the holy allotment. Its produce will be for food for the workers of the city.

19 The workers of the city from all the tribes of Israel will cultivate it.

20 The whole allotment will be eight and a quarter miles square, you must set apart the holy allotment with the possession of the city.

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

21 “The rest, on both sides of the holy allotment and the property of the city, will belong to the prince. Extending from the eight and a quarter miles of the holy allotment to the east border, and westward from the eight and a quarter miles to the west border, alongside the portions, it will belong to the prince. The holy allotment and the sanctuary of the temple will be in the middle of it.

22 The property of the Levites and of the city will be in the middle of that which belongs to the prince. The portion between the border of Judah and the border of Benjamin will be for the prince.

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

30 “These are the exits of the city: On the north side, one and one-half miles by measure,

31 the gates of the city will be named for the tribes of Israel; there will be three gates to the north: one gate for Reuben, one gate

for Judah, and one gate for Levi.

32 On the east side, one and one-half miles in length, there will be three gates: one gate for Joseph, one gate for Benjamin, and one gate for Dan.

33 On the south side, one and one-half miles by measure, there will be three gates: one gate for Simeon, one gate for Issachar, and one gate for Zebulun.

34 On the west side, one and one-half miles in length, there will be three gates: one gate for Gad, one gate for Asher, and one gate for Naphtali.

35 The circumference of the city will be six miles. The name of the city from that day forward will 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 In the twenty-seventh year, in the first month, on the first day of the month, the word of the LORD came to me:

18 “Son of man, King Nebuchadnezzar of Babylon made his army labor hard against Tyre. Every head was rubbed bald and every shoulder rubbed bare; yet he and his army received no wages from Tyre for the work he carried out against it.

19 Therefore this is what the sovereign LORD says: Look, I am about to give the land of Egypt to King Nebuchadnezzar of Babylon. He will carry off her wealth, capture her loot, and seize her plunder; it will be his army’s wages.

20 I have given him the land of Egypt as his compensation for attacking Tyre, because they did it for me, declares the sovereign LORD.

21 On that day I will make Israel powerful, and I will give you the right to be heard among them. Then they will know that I am the LORD.”

### Judgment on Egypt and the Nations

30:1 The word of the LORD came to me:

2 “Son of man, prophesy and say, ‘This is what the sovereign LORD says:

“Wail, “Alas, the day is here!”

3 For the day is near,  
the day of the LORD is near;  
it will be a day of storm clouds,  
it will be a time of judgment for the nations.

4 A sword will come against Egypt  
and panic will overtake Ethiopia  
when the slain fall in Egypt  
and they carry away her wealth  
and dismantle her foundations.

5 Ethiopia, Put, Lud, all the foreigners,  
Libya, and the people of the covenant land  
will die by the sword along with them.

### Desolation of the Land of Egypt

6 “This is what the LORD says:

Egypt’s supporters will fall;  
her confident pride will crumble.  
From Migdol to Syene they will die by the sword within her,  
declares the sovereign LORD.

7 They will be desolate among desolate lands,  
and their cities will be among ruined cities.

8 They will know that I am the LORD  
when I ignite a fire in Egypt  
and all her allies are defeated.

9 On that day messengers will go out from me in ships  
to frighten overly confident Ethiopia;  
panic will overtake them on the day of Egypt’s doom;  
for beware—it is coming!

**God's Instrument of Punishment**

10 “This is what the sovereign LORD says:

I will put an end to the hordes of Egypt,  
by the hand of King Nebuchadnezzar of Babylon.

11 He and his people with him,  
the most terrifying of the nations,  
will be brought there to destroy the land.  
They will draw their swords against Egypt,  
and fill the land with corpses.

12 I will dry up the waterways  
and hand the land over to evil men.  
I will make the land and everything in it desolate by the hand of foreigners.  
I, the LORD, have spoken!

**Visitation on Egypt's Idolatrous Cities**

13 “This is what the sovereign LORD says:

I will destroy the idols,  
and put an end to the gods of Memphis.  
There will no longer be a prince from the land of Egypt;  
so I will make the land of Egypt fearful.

14 I will desolate Pathros,  
I will ignite a fire in Zoan,  
and I will execute judgments on Thebes.

15 I will pour out my anger upon Pelusium,  
the stronghold of Egypt;  
I will cut off the hordes of Thebes.

16 I will ignite a fire in Egypt;  
Syene will writhe in agony,  
Thebes will be broken down,  
and Memphis will face enemies every day.

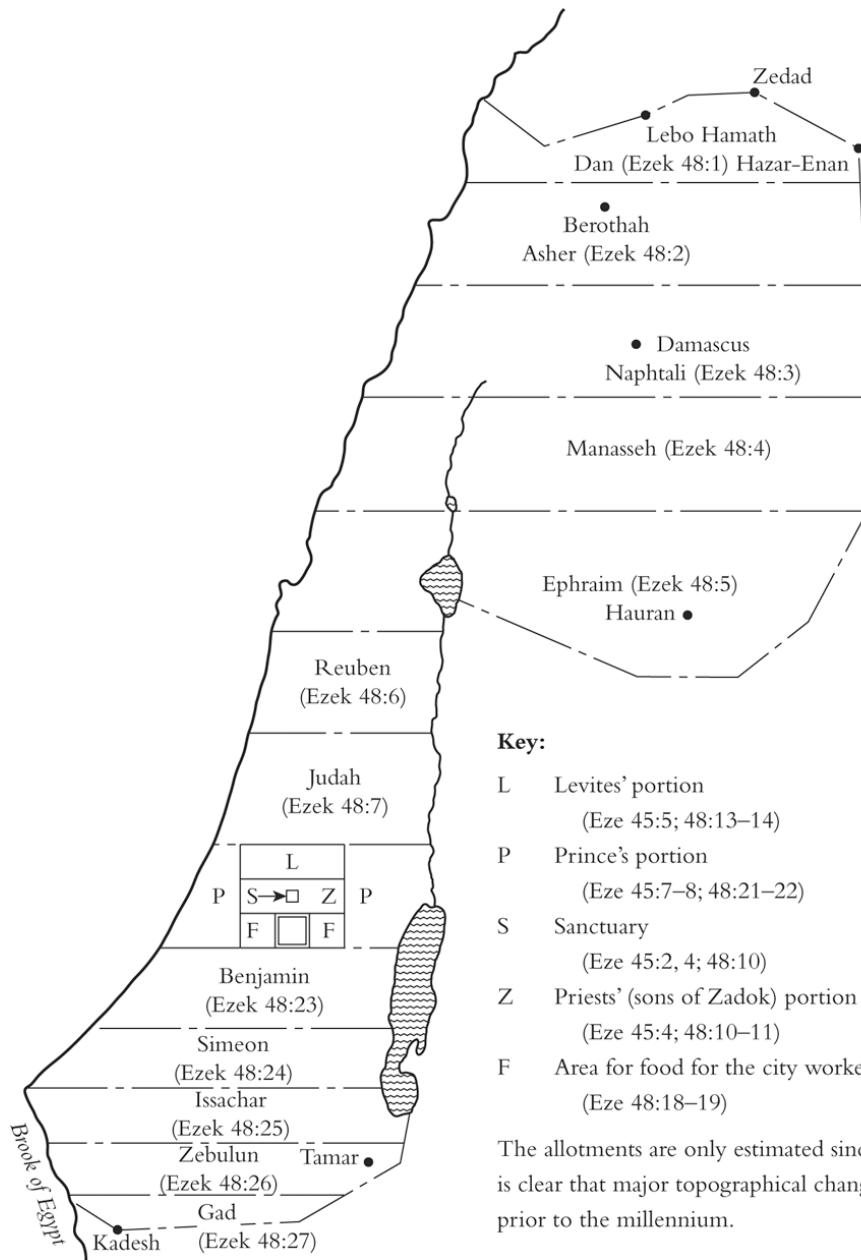
17 The young men of On and of Pi-beseth will die by the sword;  
and the cities will go into captivity.

18 In Tahpanhes the day will be dark  
when I break the yoke of Egypt there.  
Her confident pride will cease within her;  
a cloud will cover her, and her daughters will go into captivity.

19 I will execute judgments on Egypt.  
Then they will know that I am the LORD.”

*Scripture quoted by permission. All scripture quotations, unless otherwise indicated, are taken from the NET Bible® copyright ©1996–2006 by Biblical Studies Press, L.L.C. <http://bible.org> All rights reserved. This material is available in its entirety as a free download or online web use at <http://netbible.org/>.*

**The Holy Land**

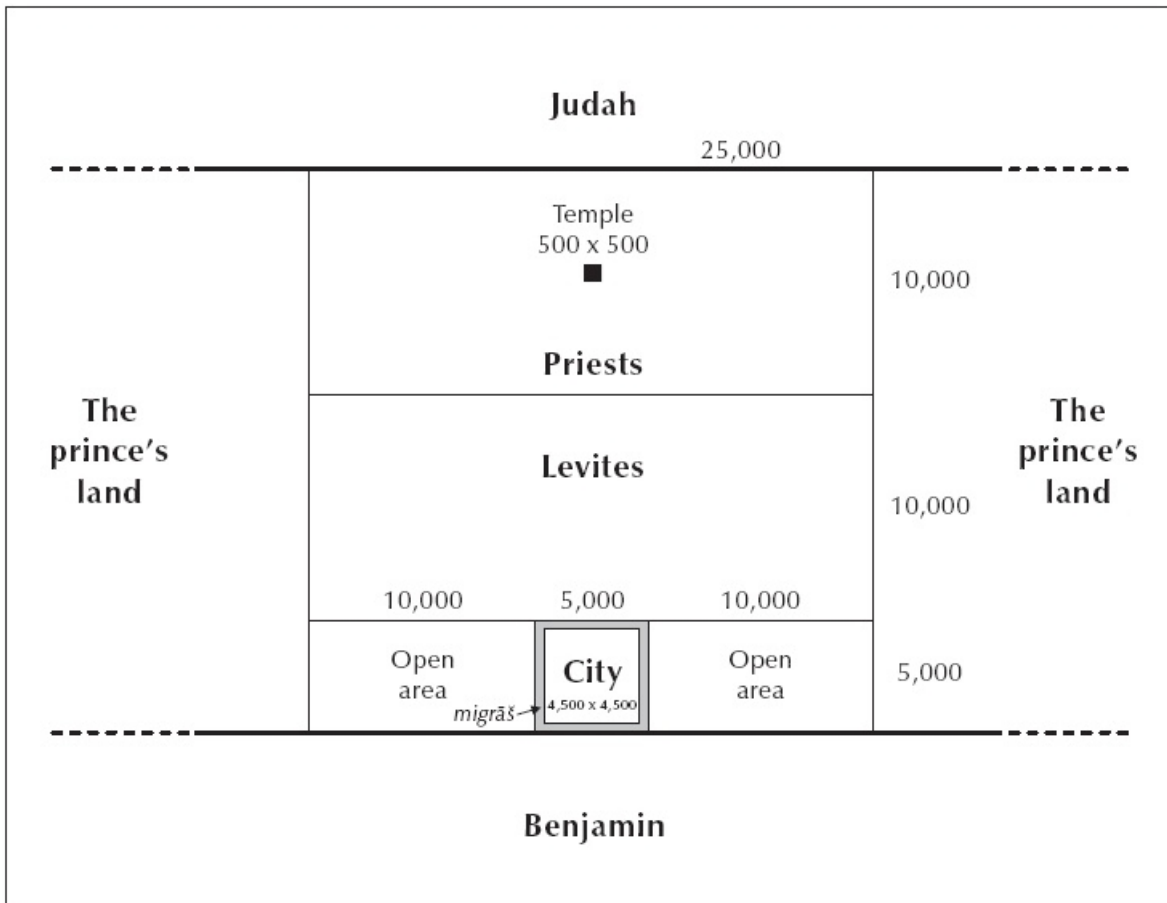


**Key:**

- 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.

**The Sacred Reserve**



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

### Daniel 4

#### The King's Proclamation

1 “King Nebuchadnezzar, to all peoples, nations, and language groups that live in all the land: Peace and prosperity!  
2 I am delighted to tell you about the signs and wonders that the most high God has done for me.

3 “How great are his signs!  
How mighty are his wonders!  
His kingdom will last forever,  
and his authority continues from one generation to the next.”

#### The King's Dream

4 I, Nebuchadnezzar, was relaxing in my home, living luxuriously in my palace.  
5 I saw a dream that frightened me badly. The things I imagined while lying on my bed—these visions of my mind—were terrifying me.  
6 So I issued an order for all the wise men of Babylon to be brought before me so that they could make known to me the interpretation of the dream.  
7 When the magicians, astrologers, wise men, and diviners entered, I recounted the dream for them. But they were unable to make known its interpretation to me.  
8 Later Daniel entered (whose name is Belteshazzar after the name of my god, and in whom there is a spirit of the holy gods). I recounted the dream for him as well,  
9 saying, “Belteshazzar, chief of the magicians, in whom I know there to be a spirit of the holy gods and whom no mystery baffles, consider my dream that I saw and set forth its interpretation!  
10 Here are the visions of my mind while I was on my bed.

While I was watching,  
there was a tree in the middle of the land.  
It was enormously tall.

11 The tree grew large and strong.  
Its top reached far into the sky;  
it could be seen from the borders of all the land.  
12 Its foliage was attractive and its fruit plentiful;  
on it there was food enough for all.  
Under it the wild animals used to seek shade,  
and in its branches the birds of the sky used to nest.  
All creatures used to feed themselves from it.  
13 While I was watching in my mind's visions on my bed,  
a holy sentinel came down from heaven.  
14 He called out loudly as follows:  
'Chop down the tree and lop off its branches!  
Strip off its foliage and scatter its fruit!  
Let the animals flee from under it  
and the birds from its branches!  
15 But leave its taproot in the ground,  
with a band of iron and bronze around it  
surrounded by the grass of the field.  
Let it become damp with the dew of the sky,  
and let it live with the animals in the grass of the land.  
16 Let his mind be altered from that of a human being,  
and let an animal's mind be given to him,  
and let seven periods of time go by for him.  
17 This announcement is by the decree of the sentinels;  
this decision is by the pronouncement of the holy ones,  
so that those who are alive may understand  
that the Most High has authority over human kingdoms,  
and he bestows them on whomever he wishes.  
He establishes over them even the lowliest of human beings.'

18 “This is the dream that I, King Nebuchadnezzar, saw. Now you, Belteshazzar, declare its interpretation, for none of the wise men in my kingdom are able to make known to me the interpretation. But you can do so, for a spirit of the holy gods is in you.”

### **The Interpretation of the Dream**

19 Then Daniel (whose name is also Belteshazzar) was upset for a brief time; his thoughts were alarming him. The king said, “Belteshazzar, don’t let the dream and its interpretation alarm you.” But Belteshazzar replied, “Sir, if only the dream were for your enemies and its interpretation applied to your adversaries!

20 The tree that you saw that grew large and strong, whose top reached to the sky, and which could be seen in all the land,

21 whose foliage was attractive and its fruit plentiful, and from which there was food available for all, under whose branches wild animals used to live, and in whose branches birds of the sky used to nest—

22 it is you, O king! For you have become great and strong. Your greatness is such that it reaches to heaven, and your authority to the ends of the earth.

23 As for the king seeing a holy sentinel coming down from heaven and saying, ‘Chop down the tree and destroy it, but leave its taproot in the ground, with a band of iron and bronze around it, surrounded by the grass of the field. Let it become damp with the dew of the sky, and let it live with the wild animals, until seven periods of time go by for him’—

24 this is the interpretation, O king! It is the decision of the Most High that this has happened to my lord the king.

25 You will be driven from human society, and you will live with the wild animals. You will be fed grass like oxen, and you will become damp with the dew of the sky. Seven periods of time will pass by for you, before you understand that the Most High is ruler over human kingdoms and gives them to whomever he wishes.

26 They said to leave the taproot of the tree, for your kingdom will be restored to you when you come to understand that heaven rules.

27 Therefore, O king, may my advice be pleasing to you. Break away from your sins by doing what is right, and from your iniquities by showing mercy to the poor. Perhaps your prosperity will be prolonged.”

### **The Fulfillment of the Dream**

28 Now all of this happened to King Nebuchadnezzar.

29 After twelve months, he happened to be walking around on the battlements of the royal palace of Babylon.

30 The king uttered these words: “Is this not the great Babylon that I have built for a royal residence by my own mighty strength and for my majestic honor?”

31 While these words were still on the king’s lips, a voice came down from heaven: “It is hereby announced to you, King Nebuchadnezzar, that your kingdom has been removed from you!

32 You will be driven from human society, and you will live with the wild animals. You will be fed grass like oxen, and seven periods of time will pass by for you before you understand that the Most High is ruler over human kingdoms and gives them to whomever he wishes.”

33 Now in that very moment this pronouncement about Nebuchadnezzar came true. He was driven from human society, he ate grass like oxen, and his body became damp with the dew of the sky, until his hair became long like an eagle’s feathers, and his nails like a bird’s claws.

### **Nebuchadnezzar Worships God**

34 But at the end of the appointed time I, Nebuchadnezzar, looked up toward heaven, and my sanity returned to me.

I extolled the Most High,  
and I praised and glorified the one who lives forever.  
For his authority is an everlasting authority,  
and his kingdom extends from one generation to the next.

35 All the inhabitants of the earth are regarded as nothing.  
He does as he wishes with the army of heaven  
and with those who inhabit the earth.  
No one slaps his hand  
and says to him, ‘What have you done?’

36 At that time my sanity returned to me. I was restored to the honor of my kingdom, and my splendor returned to me. My ministers and my nobles were seeking me out, and I was reinstated over my kingdom. I became even greater than before.

37 Now I, Nebuchadnezzar, praise and exalt and glorify the King of heaven, for all his deeds are right and his ways are just. He is able to bring down those who live in pride.



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

2 Kings 25:27–30

27 In the thirty-seventh year of the exile of King Jehoiachin of Judah, on the twenty-seventh day of the twelfth month, King Evil-Merodach of Babylon, in the first year of his reign, pardoned King Jehoiachin of Judah and released him from prison.

28 He spoke kindly to him and gave him a more prestigious position than the other kings who were with him in Babylon.

29 Jehoiachin took off his prison clothes and ate daily in the king's presence for the rest of his life.

30 He was given daily provisions by the king for the rest of his life until the day he died.

Jeremiah 52:31–34

31 In the thirty-seventh year of the exile of King Jehoiachin of Judah, on the twenty-fifth day of the twelfth month, Evil-Merodach, in the first year of his reign, pardoned King Jehoiachin of Judah and released him from prison.

32 He spoke kindly to him and gave him a more prestigious position than the other kings who were with him in Babylon.

33 Jehoiachin took off his prison clothes and ate daily in the king's presence for the rest of his life.

34 He was given daily provisions by the king of Babylon for the rest of his life until the day he died.

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

Daniel 7

### Setting of the Vision

1 In the first year of King Belshazzar of Babylon, Daniel had a dream filled with visions while he was lying on his bed. Then he wrote down the dream in summary fashion.

### The Four Beasts

2 Daniel explained: "I was watching in my vision during the night as the four winds of the sky were stirring up the great sea.

3 Then four large beasts came up from the sea; they were different from one another.

4 "The first one was like a lion with eagles' wings. As I watched, its wings were pulled off and it was lifted up from the ground. It was made to stand on two feet like a human being, and a human mind was given to it.

5 "Then a second beast appeared, like a bear. It was raised up on one side, and there were three ribs in its mouth between its teeth. It was told, 'Get up and devour much flesh!'

6 "After these things, as I was watching, another beast like a leopard appeared, with four bird-like wings on its back. This beast had four heads, and ruling authority was given to it.

7 "After these things, as I was watching in the night visions a fourth beast appeared—one dreadful, terrible, and very strong. It had two large rows of iron teeth. It devoured and crushed, and anything that was left it trampled with its feet. It was different from all the beasts that came before it, and it had ten horns.

### The Little Horn

8 "As I was contemplating the horns, another horn—a small one—came up between them, and three of the former horns were torn out by the roots to make room for it. This horn had eyes resembling human eyes and a mouth speaking arrogant things.

### The Destruction of the Fourth Beast

9 "While I was watching, thrones were set up, and the Ancient of Days took his seat. His attire was white like snow; the hair of his head was like lamb's wool. His throne was ablaze with fire and its wheels were all aflame.

10 A river of fire was streaming forth and proceeding from his presence. Many thousands were ministering to him; Many tens of thousands stood ready to serve him. The court convened and the books were opened.

11 "Then I kept on watching because of the arrogant words of the horn that was speaking. I was watching until the beast was killed and its body destroyed and thrown into the flaming fire.

12 As for the rest of the beasts, their ruling authority had already been removed, though they were permitted to go on living for a time and a season.

### The Kingdom of Christ

13 I was watching in the night visions, "And with the clouds of the sky one like a son of man was approaching. He went up to the Ancient of Days and was escorted before him. [[Matt 16:27](#); [24:30](#); [26:64](#); [Mark 13:26](#); [14:62](#); [Luke 21:27](#); [Rev 1:7](#)]

14 To him was given ruling authority, honor, and sovereignty. All peoples, nations, and language groups were serving him. His authority is eternal and will not pass away. His kingdom will not be destroyed.

### The Interpretation of the Vision

15 "As for me, Daniel, my spirit was distressed, and the visions of my mind were alarming me.

16 I approached one of those standing nearby and asked him about the meaning of all this. So he spoke with me and revealed to me the interpretation of the vision:

17 'These large beasts, which are four in number, represent four kings who will arise from the earth.  
 18 The holy ones of the Most High will receive the kingdom and will take possession of the kingdom forever and ever.'  
 19 "Then I wanted to know the meaning of the fourth beast, which was different from all the others. It was very dreadful, with two rows of iron teeth and bronze claws, and it devoured, crushed, and trampled anything that was left with its feet.  
 20 I also wanted to know the meaning of the ten horns on its head, and of that other horn which came up and before which three others fell. This was the horn that had eyes and a mouth speaking arrogant things, whose appearance was more formidable than the others.  
 21 While I was watching, that horn began to wage war against the holy ones and was defeating them,  
 22 until the Ancient of Days arrived and judgment was rendered in favor of the holy ones of the Most High. Then the time came for the holy ones to take possession of the kingdom.  
 23 "This is what he told me: 'The fourth beast means that there will be a fourth kingdom on earth that will differ from all the other kingdoms. It will devour all the earth and will trample and crush it.  
 24 The ten horns mean that ten kings will arise from that kingdom. Another king will arise after them, but he will be different from the earlier ones. He will humiliate three kings.  
 25 He will speak words against the Most High. He will harass the holy ones of the Most High continually. His intention will be to change times established by law. They will be delivered into his hand for a time, times, and half a time.  
 26 But the court will convene, and his ruling authority will be removed—destroyed and abolished forever!  
 27 Then the kingdom, authority, and greatness of the kingdoms under all of heaven will be delivered to the people of the holy ones of the Most High. His kingdom is an eternal kingdom; all authorities will serve him and obey him.'  
 28 "This is the conclusion of the matter. As for me, Daniel, my thoughts troubled me greatly, and the color drained from my face. 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 King Belshazzar's reign, a vision appeared to me, Daniel, after the one that had appeared to me previously.  
 2 In this vision I saw myself in Susa the citadel, which is located in the province of Elam. In the vision I saw myself at the Ulai Canal.

#### The Ram (Media/Persia)

3 I looked up and saw a ram with two horns standing at the canal. Its two horns were both long, but one was longer than the other. The longer one was coming up after the shorter one.  
 4 I saw that the ram was butting westward, northward, and southward. No animal was able to stand before it, and there was none who could deliver from its power. It did as it pleased and acted arrogantly.

#### The Goat (Greece)

5 While I was contemplating all this, a male goat was coming from the west over the surface of all the land without touching the ground. This goat had a conspicuous horn between its eyes.  
 6 It came to the two-horned ram that I had seen standing beside the canal and rushed against it with raging strength.  
 7 I saw it approaching the ram. It went into a fit of rage against the ram and struck it and broke off its two horns. The ram had no ability to resist it. The goat hurled the ram to the ground and trampled it. No one could deliver the ram from its power.  
 8 The male goat acted even more arrogantly. But no sooner had the large horn become strong than it was broken, and there arose four conspicuous horns in its place, extending toward the four winds of the sky.

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

9 From one of them came a small horn. But it grew to be very big, toward the south and the east and toward the beautiful land.  
 10 It grew so big it reached the army of heaven, and it brought about the fall of some of the army and some of the stars to the ground, where it trampled them.  
 11 It also acted arrogantly against the Prince of the army, from whom the daily sacrifice was removed and whose sanctuary was thrown down.  
 12 The army was given over, along with the daily sacrifice, in the course of his sinful rebellion. It hurled truth to the ground and enjoyed success.  
 13 Then I heard a holy one speaking. Another holy one said to the one who was speaking, "To what period of time does the vision pertain—this vision concerning the daily sacrifice and the destructive act of rebellion and the giving over of both the sanctuary and army to be trampled?"  
 14 He said to me, "To 2,300 evenings and mornings; then the sanctuary will be put right again."

**Gabriel Sent to Interpret the Vision**

15 While I, Daniel, was watching the vision, I sought to understand it. Now one who appeared to be a man was standing before me.  
 16 Then I heard a human voice coming from between the banks of the Ulai. It called out, “Gabriel, enable this person to understand the vision.”

17 So he approached the place where I was standing. As he came, I felt terrified and fell flat on the ground. Then he said to me, “Understand, son of man, that the vision pertains to the time of the end.”

18 As he spoke with me, I fell into a trance with my face to the ground. But he touched me and stood me upright.

**The Interpretation of the Vision**

19 Then he said, “I am going to inform you about what will happen in the latter time of wrath, for the vision pertains to the appointed time of the end.

20 The ram that you saw with the two horns stands for the kings of Media and Persia.

21 The male goat is the king of Greece, and the large horn between its eyes is the first king.

22 The horn that was broken and in whose place there arose four others stands for four kingdoms that will arise from his nation, though they will not have his strength.

23 Toward the end of their rule, when rebellious acts are complete, a rash and deceitful king will arise.

24 His power will be great, but it will not be by his strength alone. He will cause terrible destruction. He will be successful in what he undertakes. He will destroy powerful people and the people of the holy ones.

25 By his treachery he will succeed through deceit. He will have an arrogant attitude, and he will destroy many who are unaware of his schemes. He will rise up against the Prince of princes, yet he will be broken apart—but not by human agency.

26 The vision of the evenings and mornings that was told to you is correct. But you should seal up the vision, for it refers to a time many days from now.”

27 I, Daniel, was exhausted and sick for days. Then I got up and again carried out the king’s business. But I was astonished at the vision, and there was no one to explain it.

*Scripture quoted by permission. All scripture quotations, unless otherwise indicated, are taken from the NET Bible® copyright ©1996–2006 by Biblical Studies Press, L.L.C. <http://bible.org> All rights reserved. This material is available in its entirety as a free download or online web use at <http://netbible.org/>.*

**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

<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*.

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

**Belshazzar's Feast and the Fall of Babylon (October 11, 539 BC)****Daniel 5****Belshazzar's Feast**

1 King Belshazzar prepared a great banquet for a thousand of his nobles, and he was drinking wine in front of them all.

2 While under the influence of the wine, Belshazzar issued an order to bring in the gold and silver vessels—the ones that Nebuchadnezzar his father had confiscated from the temple in Jerusalem—so that the king and his nobles, together with his wives and his concubines, could drink from them.

3 So they brought the gold and silver vessels that had been confiscated from the temple, the house of God in Jerusalem, and the king and his nobles, together with his wives and concubines, drank from them.

4 As they drank wine, they praised the gods of gold and silver, bronze, iron, wood, and stone.

**The Writing on the Wall**

5 At that very moment the fingers of a human hand appeared and wrote on the plaster of the royal palace wall, opposite the lampstand. The king was watching the back of the hand that was writing.

6 Then all the color drained from the king's face and he became alarmed. The joints of his hips gave way, and his knees began knocking together.

7 The king called out loudly to summon the astrologers, wise men, and diviners. The king proclaimed to the wise men of Babylon that anyone who could read this inscription and disclose its interpretation would be clothed in purple and have a golden collar placed on his neck and be third ruler in the kingdom.

8 So all the king's wise men came in, but they were unable to read the writing or to make known its interpretation to the king.

9 Then King Belshazzar was very terrified, and he was visibly shaken. His nobles were completely dumbfounded.

**Daniel Summoned**

10 Due to the noise caused by the king and his nobles, the queen mother then entered the banquet room. She said, "O king, live forever! Don't be alarmed! Don't be shaken!"

11 There is a man in your kingdom who has within him a spirit of the holy gods. In the days of your father, he proved to have insight, discernment, and wisdom like that of the gods. King Nebuchadnezzar your father appointed him chief of the magicians, astrologers, wise men, and diviners.

12 Thus there was found in this man Daniel, whom the king renamed Belteshazzar, an extraordinary spirit, knowledge, and skill to interpret dreams, solve riddles, and decipher knotty problems. Now summon Daniel, and he will disclose the interpretation."

13 So Daniel was brought in before the king. The king said to Daniel, "Are you that Daniel who is one of the captives of Judah, whom my father the king brought from Judah?"

14 I have heard about you, how there is a spirit of the gods in you, and how you have insight, discernment, and extraordinary wisdom.

15 Now the wise men and astrologers were brought before me to read this writing and make known to me its interpretation. But they were unable to disclose the interpretation of the message.

16 However, I have heard that you are able to provide interpretations and to decipher knotty problems. Now if you are able to read this writing and make known to me its interpretation, you will wear purple and have a golden collar around your neck and be third ruler in the kingdom."

**A Refusal and a Rebuke**

17 But Daniel replied to the king, "Keep your gifts, and give your rewards to someone else! However, I will read the writing for the king and make known its interpretation.

18 As for you, O king, the most high God bestowed on your father Nebuchadnezzar a kingdom, greatness, honor, and majesty.

19 Due to the greatness that he bestowed on him, all peoples, nations, and language groups were trembling with fear before him. He killed whom he wished, he spared whom he wished, he exalted whom he wished, and he brought low whom he wished.

20 And when his mind became arrogant and his spirit filled with pride, he was deposed from his royal throne and his honor was removed from him.

21 He was driven from human society, his mind was changed to that of an animal, he lived with the wild donkeys, he was fed grass like oxen, and his body became damp with the dew of the sky, until he came to understand that the most high God rules over human kingdoms, and he appoints over them whomever he wishes.

22 "But you, his son Belshazzar, have not humbled yourself, although you knew all this.

23 Instead, you have exalted yourself against the Lord of heaven. You brought before you the vessels from his temple, and you and your nobles, together with your wives and concubines, drank wine from them. You praised the gods of silver, gold, bronze, iron, wood, and stone—gods that cannot see or hear or comprehend! But you have not glorified the God who has in his control your very breath and all your ways!

24 Therefore the palm of a hand was sent from him, and this writing was inscribed.

**The Writing Explained**

25 “This is the writing that was inscribed: MENE, MENE, TEQEL, and PHARSIN.

26 This is the interpretation of the words: As for mene—God has numbered your kingdom’s days and brought it to an end.

27 As for teqel—you are weighed on the balances and found to be lacking.

28 As for peres—your kingdom is divided and given over to the Medes and Persians.”

29 Then, on Belshazzar’s orders, Daniel was clothed in purple, a golden collar was placed around his neck, and he was proclaimed third ruler in the kingdom.

**The Fall of Babylon**

30 And in that very night Belshazzar, the Babylonian king, was killed.

31 So Darius the Mede took control of the kingdom when he was about sixty-two years old.

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

Daniel 6:1–2

1 It seemed like a good idea to Darius to appoint over the kingdom 120 satraps who would be in charge of the entire kingdom.

2 Over them would be three supervisors, one of whom was Daniel. These satraps were accountable to them, so that the king’s interests might not incur damage.

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

Daniel 6:3

3 Now this Daniel was distinguishing himself above the other supervisors and the satraps, for he had an extraordinary spirit. In fact, the king intended to appoint him over the entire kingdom.

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

Daniel 6:4–28

**The Plot**

4 Consequently the supervisors and satraps were trying to find some pretext against Daniel in connection with administrative matters. But they were unable to find any such damaging evidence, because he was trustworthy and guilty of no negligence or corruption.

5 So these men concluded, “We won’t find any pretext against this man Daniel unless it is in connection with the law of his God.”

6 So these supervisors and satraps came by collusion to the king and said to him, “O King Darius, live forever!

7 To all the supervisors of the kingdom, the prefects, satraps, counselors, and governors it seemed like a good idea for a royal edict to be issued and an interdict to be enforced. For the next thirty days anyone who prays to any god or human other than you, O king, should be thrown into a den of lions.

8 Now let the king issue a written interdict so that it cannot be altered, according to the law of the Medes and Persians, which cannot be changed.

9 So King Darius issued the written interdict.

**The Accusation and Condemnation of Daniel**

10 When Daniel realized that a written decree had been issued, he entered his home, where the windows in his upper room opened toward Jerusalem. Three times daily he was kneeling and offering prayers and thanks to his God just as he had been accustomed to do previously.

11 Then those officials who had gone to the king came by collusion and found Daniel praying and asking for help before his God.

12 So they approached the king and said to him, “Did you not issue an edict to the effect that for the next thirty days anyone who prays to any god or human other than to you, O king, would be thrown into a den of lions?” The king replied, “That is correct, according to the law of the Medes and Persians, which cannot be changed.”

13 Then they said to the king, “Daniel, who is one of the captives from Judah, pays no attention to you, O king, or to the edict that you issued. Three times daily he offers his prayer.”

14 When the king heard this, he was very upset and began thinking about how he might rescue Daniel. Until late afternoon he was struggling to find a way to rescue him.

15 Then those men came by collusion to the king and said to him, “Recall, O king, that it is a law of the Medes and Persians that no edict or decree that the king issues can be changed.”

16 So the king gave the order, and Daniel was brought and thrown into a den of lions. The king consoled Daniel by saying, “Your God whom you continually serve will rescue you!”

17 Then a stone was brought and placed over the opening to the den. The king sealed it with his signet ring and with those of his nobles so that nothing could be changed with regard to Daniel.

18 Then the king departed to his palace. But he spent the night without eating, and no diversions were brought to him. He was unable to sleep.

### **The Deliverance of Daniel**

19 In the morning, at the earliest sign of daylight, the king got up and rushed to the lions' den.

20 As he approached the den, he called out to Daniel in a worried voice, "Daniel, servant of the living God, was your God whom you continually serve able to rescue you from the lions?"

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

22 My God sent his angel and closed the lions' mouths so that they have not harmed me, because I was found to be innocent before him. Nor have I done any harm to you, O king."

23 Then the king was delighted and gave an order to haul Daniel up from the den. So Daniel was hauled up out of the den. He had no injury of any kind, because he had trusted in his God.

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

24 The king gave another order, and those men who had maliciously accused Daniel were brought and thrown into the lions' den—they, their children, and their wives. They did not even reach the bottom of the den before the lions overpowered them and crushed all their bones.

25 Then King Darius wrote to all the peoples, nations, and language groups who were living in all the land: "Peace and prosperity!

26 I have issued an edict that throughout all the dominion of my kingdom people are to revere and fear the God of Daniel. "For he is the living God; he endures forever. His kingdom will not be destroyed; his authority is forever.

27 He rescues and delivers and performs signs and wonders in the heavens and on the earth. He has rescued Daniel from the power of the lions!"

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

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

*Scripture quoted by permission. All scripture quotations, unless otherwise indicated, are taken from the NET Bible® copyright ©1996–2006 by Biblical Studies Press, L.L.C. <http://bible.org> All rights reserved. This material is available in its entirety as a free download or online web use at <http://netbible.org/>.*

### **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,

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



although there is good evidence that it did not begin until 550. Nabonidus was in Babylon again in 539. With the Persian army approaching Babylon, Nabonidus left the city and met Cyrus in battle at Sippar two days before the fall of Babylon. The Babylonian troops were routed by the Persians, and Nabonidus fled. He later returned to Babylon after its fall to the Persians and surrendered himself. Cyrus allowed him to live the remainder of his life in Carmania according to Berosus. Therefore the sequence of Babylonian rulers after Nebuchadnezzar's death in 562 to the fall of Babylon in 539 is as follows:

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

## 2) Historical Setting of Daniel 6.<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 Genealogical records were kept for all Israel; they are recorded in the Scroll 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, Jered,
- 3 Enoch, Methuselah, Lamech,
- 4 Noah, Shem, Ham, and Japheth.

**Japheth's Descendants**

- 5 The sons of Japheth: Gomer, Magog, Madai, Javan, Tubal, Meshech, and Tiras.
- 6 The sons of Gomer: Ashkenaz, Riphath, and Togarmah.
- 7 The sons of Javan: Elishah, Tarshish, the Kittites, and the Rodanites.

**Ham's Descendants**

- 8 The sons of Ham: Cush, Mizraim, Put, and Canaan.
- 9 The sons of Cush: Seba, Havilah, Sabta, Raamah, and Sabteca. The sons of Raamah: Sheba and Dedan.
- 10 Cush was the father of Nimrod, who established himself as a mighty warrior on earth.
- 11 Mizraim was the father of the Ludites, Anamites, Lehabites, Naphtuhites,
- 12 Pathrusites, Casluhites (from whom the Philistines descended), and the Caphtorites.
- 13 Canaan was the father of Sidon—his firstborn—and Heth,
- 14 as well as the Jebusites, Amorites, Girgashites,
- 15 Hivites, Arkites, Sinites,
- 16 Arvadites, Zemarites, and Hamathites.

**Shem's Descendants**

- 17 The sons of Shem: Elam, Asshur, Arphaxad, Lud, and Aram. The sons of Aram: Uz, Hul, Gether, and Meshech.
- 18 Arphaxad was the father of Shelah, and Shelah was the father of Eber.
- 19 Two sons were born to Eber: the first was named Peleg, for during his lifetime the earth was divided; his brother's name was Joktan.
- 20 Joktan was 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, Arphaxad, Shelah,
- 25 Eber, Peleg, Reu,
- 26 Serug, Nahor, Terah,
- 27 Abram (that is, Abraham).

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

1 Chronicles 1:28–54

**Abraham's Two Sons**

- 28 The sons of Abraham: Isaac and Ishmael.

**Ishmael's Descendants**

- 29 These were their descendants: Ishmael's firstborn son was Nebaioth; the others were 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 to whom Keturah, Abraham's concubine, gave birth: Zimran, Jokshan, Medan, Midian, Ishbak, Shuah. The sons of Jokshan: Sheba and Dedan.

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

#### Isaac's Descendants

34 Abraham was the father of Isaac. The sons of Isaac: Esau and Israel.

#### The Line of Esau

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

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

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

#### The Line of Seir

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

39 The sons of Lotan: Hori and Homam. (Timna was Lotan's sister.)

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

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

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

#### The Edomite Kings and Chiefs

43 These were the kings who reigned in the land of Edom before any king ruled over the Israelites: Bela son of Beor; the name of his city was Dinhabah.

44 When Bela died, Jobab son of Zerah from Bozrah, succeeded him.

45 When Jobab died, Husham from the land of the Temanites succeeded him.

46 When Husham died, Hadad son of Bedad succeeded him. He struck down the Midianites in the plains of Moab; the name of his city was Avith.

47 When Hadad died, Samlah from Masrekah succeeded him.

48 When Samlah died, Shaul from Rehoboth on the river succeeded him.

49 When Shaul died, Baal-Hanan son of Achbor succeeded him.

50 When Baal-Hanan died, Hadad succeeded him; the name of his city was Pai. His wife was Mehetabel, daughter of Matred, daughter of Me-Zahab.

51 Hadad died. The tribal chiefs of Edom were: Timna, Alvah, Jetheth,

52 Oholibamah, Elah, Pinon,

53 Kenaz, Teman, Mibzar,

54 Magdiel, Iram. These were the tribal chiefs of Edom.

### Official Genealogical Records: Israel's Twelve Sons (c. 538 BC)

1 Chronicles 2:1–2

1 These were the sons of Israel: Reuben, Simeon, Levi, and Judah; Issachar and Zebulun;

2 Dan, Joseph, and Benjamin; Naphtali, Gad, and Asher.

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

1 Chronicles 2:3–55

#### Judah's Sons Through Hezron

3 The sons of Judah: Er, Onan, and Shelah. These three were born to him by Bathshua, a Canaanite woman. Er, Judah's firstborn, displeased the LORD, so the LORD killed him.

4 Tamar, Judah's daughter-in-law, bore to him Perez and Zerah. Judah had five sons in all.

5 The sons of Perez: Hezron and Hamul.

6 The sons of Zerah: Zimri, Ethan, Heman, Kalkol, Dara—five in all.

7 The son of Carmi: Achan, who brought the disaster on Israel when he stole what was devoted to God.

8 The son of Ethan: Azariah.

9 The sons born to Hezron: Jerahmeel, Ram, and Caleb.

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

10 Ram was the father of Amminadab, and Amminadab was the father of Nahshon, the tribal chief of Judah.

11 Nahshon was the father of Salma, and Salma was the father of Boaz.

12 Boaz was the father of Obed, and Obed was the father of Jesse.

13 Jesse was the father of Eliab, his firstborn; Abinadab was born second, Shimea third,

- 14 Nathanel fourth, Raddai fifth,  
 15 Ozem sixth, David seventh.  
 16 Their sisters were Zeruiah and Abigail. Zeruiah's three sons were Abshai, Joab, and Asahel.  
 17 Abigail bore Amasa, whose father was Jether the Ishmaelite.

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

- 18 Caleb son of Hezron fathered sons by his wife Azubah (also known as Jerioth). Her sons were Jeshur, Shobab, and Ardon.  
 19 When Azubah died, Caleb married Ephrath, who bore him Hur.  
 20 Hur was the father of Uri, and Uri was the father of Bezalel.  
 21 Later Hezron had sexual relations with the daughter of Makir, the father of Gilead. (He had married her when he was sixty years old.) She bore him Segub.  
 22 Segub was the father of Jair, who owned twenty-three cities in the land of Gilead.  
 23 (Geshur and Aram captured the towns of Jair, along with Kenath and its sixty surrounding towns.) All these were descendants of Makir, the father of Gilead.  
 24 After Hezron's death, Caleb had sexual relations with Ephrath, his father Hezron's widow, and she bore to him Ashhur the father of Tekoa.

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

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

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

- 34 Sheshan had no sons, only daughters. Sheshan had an Egyptian servant named Jarha.  
 35 Sheshan gave his daughter to his servant Jarha as a wife; she bore him Attai.  
 36 Attai was the father of Nathan, and Nathan was the father of Zabad.  
 37 Zabad was the father of Ephlal, and Ephlal was the father of Obed.  
 38 Obed was the father of Jehu, and Jehu was the father of Azariah.  
 39 Azariah was the father of Helez, and Helez was the father of Eleasah.  
 40 Eleasah was the father of Sismai, and Sismai was the father of Shallum.  
 41 Shallum was the father of Jekamiah, and Jekamiah was the father of Elishama.

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

- 42 The sons of Caleb, Jerahmeel's brother: His firstborn Mesha, the father of Ziph, and his second son Mareshah, the father of Hebron.  
 43 The sons of Hebron: Korah, Tappuah, Rekem, and Shema.  
 44 Shema was the father of Raham, the father of Jorkeam. Rekem was the father of Shammai.  
 45 Shammai's son was Maon, who was the father of Beth-Zur.  
 46 Caleb's concubine Ephah bore Haran, Moza, and Gazez. Haran was the father of Gazez.  
 47 The sons of Jahdai: Regem, Jotham, Geshan, Pelet, Ephah, and Shaaph.  
 48 Caleb's concubine Maacah bore Sheber and Tirhanah.  
 49 She also bore Shaaph the father of Madmannah and Sheva the father of Machbenah and Gibeah. Caleb's daughter was Achsah.  
 50 These were the descendants of Caleb. The sons of Hur, the firstborn of Ephrath: Shobal, the father of Kiriath Jearim,  
 51 Salma, the father of Bethlehem, Hareph, the father of Beth-Gader.  
 52 The sons of Shobal, the father of Kiriath Jearim, were Haroeh, half of the Manahathites,  
 53 the clans of Kiriath Jearim—the Ithrites, Puthites, Shumathites, and Mishraitites. (The Zorathites and Eshtaolites descended from these groups.)  
 54 The sons of Salma: Bethlehem, the Netophathites, Atroth Beth-Joab, half the Manahathites, the Zorites,  
 55 and the clans of the scribes who lived in Jabez: the Tirathites, Shimeathites, and Sucathites. These are the Kenites who descended from Hammath, the father of Beth-Rechab.

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

1 Chronicles 3:1–9

- 1 These were the sons of David who were born to him in Hebron: The firstborn was Amnon, whose mother was Ahinoam from Jezreel; the second was Daniel, whose mother was Abigail from Carmel;
- 2 the third was Absalom whose mother was Maacah, daughter of King Talmai of Geshur; the fourth was Adonijah, whose mother was Haggith;
- 3 the fifth was Shephatiah, whose mother was Abital; the sixth was Ithream, whose mother was Eglah.
- 4 These six were born to David in Hebron, where he ruled for seven years and six months. He ruled thirty-three years in Jerusalem.
- 5 These were the sons born to him in Jerusalem: Shimea, Shobab, Nathan, and Solomon—the mother of these four was Bathsheba the daughter of Ammiel.
- 6 The other nine were Ibhar, Elishua, Elpelet,
- 7 Nogah, Nepheg, Japhia,
- 8 Elishama, Eliada, and Eliphelet.
- 9 These were all the sons of David, not counting the sons of his concubines. Tamar was their sister.

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

1 Chronicles 3:10–24

- 10 Solomon's son was Rehoboam, followed by Abijah 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: Johanan was the firstborn; Jehoiakim was born second; Zedekiah third; and Shallum fourth.
- 16 The sons of Jehoiakim: his son Jehoiachin and his son Zedekiah.
- 17 The sons of Jehoiachin the exile: Shealtiel his son,
- 18 Malkiram, Pedaiah, Shenazzar, Jekamiah, Hoshama, and Nedabiah.
- 19 The sons of Pedaiah: Zerubbabel and Shimei. The sons of Zerubbabel: Meshullam and Hananiah. Shelomith was their sister.
- 20 The five others were Hashubah, Ohel, Berechiah, Hasadiah, and Jushab-Hesed.
- 21 The descendants of Hananiah: Pelatiah, Jeshaiiah, the sons of Rephaiah, of Arnan, of Obadiah, and of Shecaniah.
- 22 The descendants of Shecaniah: Shemaiah and his sons: Hattush, Igal, Bariah, Neariah, and Shaphat—six in all.
- 23 The sons of Neariah: Elioenai, Hizkiah, and Azrikam—three in all.
- 24 The sons of Elioenai: Hodaviah, Eliashib, Pelaiah, Akkub, Johanan, Delaiah, and Anani—seven in all.

*Scripture quoted by permission. All scripture quotations, unless otherwise indicated, are taken from the NET Bible® copyright ©1996–2006 by Biblical Studies Press, L.L.C. <http://bible.org> All rights reserved. This material is available in its entirety as a free download or online web use at <http://netbible.org/>.*

#### **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 descendants of Judah: Perez, Hezron, Carmi, Hur, and Shobal.
- 2 Reaiah the son of Shobal was the father of Jahath, and Jahath was the father of Ahumai and Lahad. These were the clans of the Zorathites.
- 3 These were the sons of Etam: Jezreel, Ishma, and Idbash. Their sister was Hazzelepni.
- 4 Penuel was the father of Gedor, and Ezer was the father of Hushah. These were the descendants of Hur, the firstborn of Ephrathah and 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: Zereth, Zohar, Ethnan,
- 8 and Koz, who was the father of Anub, Hazzobebah, and the clans of Aharhel the son of Harum.
- 9 Jabez was more respected than his brothers. His mother had named him Jabez, for she said, "I experienced pain when I gave birth to him."
- 10 Jabez called out to the God of Israel, "If only you would greatly bless me and expand my territory! May your hand be with me! Keep me from harm so I might not endure pain!" God answered his prayer.
- 11 Kelub, the brother of Shuhah, was the father of Mehir, who was the father of Eshton.
- 12 Eshton was the father of Beth-Rapha, Paseah, and Tehinnah, the father of Ir Nahash. These were the men of Recah.
- 13 The sons of Kenaz: Othniel and Seraiah. The sons of Othniel: Hathath and Meonothai.
- 14 Meonothai was the father of Ophrah. Seraiah was the father of Joab, the father of those who live in Ge Harashim, who were craftsmen.
- 15 The sons of Caleb son of Jephunneh: Iru, Elah, and Naam. The son of Elah: Kenaz.
- 16 The sons of Jehallelel: Ziph, Ziphah, Tiria, and Asarel.
- 17 The sons of Ezra: Jether, Mered, Epher, and Jalon. Mered's wife Bithiah gave birth to Miriam, Shammai, and Ishbah, the father of Eshtemoa.
- 18 (His Judahite wife gave birth to Jered the father of Gedor, Heber the father of Soco, and Jekuthiel the father of Zanoah.) These were the sons of Pharaoh's daughter Bithiah, whom Mered married.
- 19 The sons of Hodiah's wife, the sister of Naham: the father of Keilah the Garmite, and Eshtemoa the Maacathite.
- 20 The sons of Shimon: Amnon, Rinnah, Ben-Hanan, and Tilon. The descendants of Ishi: Zoheth and Ben Zoheth.
- 21 The sons of Shelah son of Judah: Er the father of Lecah, Laadah the father of Mareshah, the clans of the linen workers at Beth-Ashbea,
- 22 Jokim, the men of Cozeba, and Joash and Saraph, both of whom ruled in Moab and Jashubi Lehem. (This information is from ancient records.)
- 23 They were the potters who lived in Netaim and Gederah; they lived there and worked for the king.

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

1 Chronicles 4:24–43

- 24 The descendants of Simeon: Nemuel, Jamin, Jarib, Zerah, Shaul,
- 25 his son Shallum, his son Mibsam, and his son Mishma.
- 26 The descendants of Mishma: His son Hammuel, his son Zaccur, and his son Shimei.
- 27 Shimei had sixteen sons and six daughters. But his brothers did not have many sons, so their whole clan was not as numerous as the sons of Judah.
- 28 They lived in Beer Sheba, Moladah, Hazar Shual,
- 29 Bilhah, Ezem, Tolad,
- 30 Bethuel, Hormah, Ziklag,
- 31 Beth Marcaboth, Hazar Susim, Beth Biri, and Shaaraim. These were their towns until the reign of David.
- 32 Their settlements also included Etam, Ain, Rimmon, Tochen, and Ashan—five towns.
- 33 They also lived in all the settlements that surrounded these towns as far as Baal. These were their settlements; they kept genealogical records.
- 34 Their clan leaders were: Meshobab, Jamlech, Joshah son of Amaziah,
- 35 Joel, Jehu son of Joshibiah (son of Seraiah, son of Asiel),
- 36 Eleoenai, Jaakobah, Jeshohaiah, Asaiah, Adiel, Jesimiel, Benaiah,
- 37 Ziza son of Shipi (son of Allon, son of Jedaiah, son of Shimri, son of Shemaiah).
- 38 These who are named above were the leaders of their clans. Their extended families increased greatly in numbers.
- 39 They went to the entrance of Gedor, to the east of the valley, looking for pasture for their sheep.
- 40 They found fertile and rich pasture; the land was very broad, undisturbed and peaceful. Indeed some Hamites had been living there prior to that.

41 The men whose names are listed came during the time of King Hezekiah of Judah and attacked the Hamites' settlements, as well as the Meunites they discovered there, and they wiped them out to this very day. They dispossessed them, for they found pasture for their sheep there.

42 Five hundred men of Simeon, led by Pelatiah, Neariah, Rephaiah, and Uzziel, the sons of Ishi, went to the hill country of Seir  
43 and defeated the rest of the Amalekite refugees; they live there to this very day.

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

1 Chronicles 5:1–10

1 The sons of Reuben, Israel's firstborn—(Now he was the firstborn, but when he defiled his father's bed, his rights as firstborn were given to the sons of Joseph, Israel's son. So Reuben is not listed as firstborn in the genealogical records.

2 Though Judah was the strongest among his brothers and a leader descended from him, the right of the firstborn belonged to Joseph.)

3 The sons of Reuben, Israel's firstborn: Hanoch, Pallu, Hezron, and Carmi.

4 The descendants of Joel: His son Shemaiah, his son Gog, his son Shimei,

5 his son Micah, his son Reaiah, his son Baal,

6 and his son Beerah, whom King Tiglath-pileser of Assyria carried into exile. Beerah was the tribal leader of Reuben.

7 His brothers by their clans, as listed in their genealogical records: The leader Jeiel, Zechariah,

8 and Bela son of Azaz, son of Shema, son of Joel. They lived in Aroer as far as Nebo and Baal Meon.

9 In the east they settled as far as the entrance to the desert that stretches to the Euphrates River, for their cattle had increased in numbers in the land of Gilead.

10 During the time of Saul they attacked the Hagrites and defeated them. They took over their territory in the entire eastern region of Gilead.

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

1 Chronicles 5:11–17

11 The descendants of Gad lived near them in the land of Bashan, as far as Salecah.

12 They included Joel the leader, Shapham the second in command, Janai, and Shaphat in Bashan.

13 Their relatives, listed according to their families, included Michael, Meshullam, Sheba, Jorai, Jacan, Zia, and Eber—seven in all.

14 These were the sons of Abihail son of Huri, son of Jaroah, son of Gilead, son of Michael, son of Jeshishai, son of Jahdo, son of Buz.

15 Ahi son of Abdiel, son of Guni, was the leader of the family.

16 They lived in Gilead, in Bashan and its surrounding settlements, and in the pasturelands of Sharon to their very borders.

17 All of them were listed in the genealogical records in the time of King Jotham of Judah and in the time of King Jeroboam of Israel.

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

1 Chronicles 5:23–25

23 The half-tribe of Manasseh settled in the land from Bashan as far as Baal Hermon, Senir, and Mount Hermon. They grew in number.

24 These were the leaders of their families: Ephraim, Ishi, Eliel, Azriel, Jeremiah, Hodaviah, and Jahdiel. They were skilled warriors, men of reputation, and leaders of their families.

25 But they were unfaithful to the God of their ancestors and worshiped instead the gods of the native peoples whom God had destroyed before them.

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

1 Chronicles 6:1–30, 50–53

#### The High Priestly Line Through Aaron

1 The sons of Levi: Gershon, Kohath, and Merari.

2 The sons of Kohath: Amram, Izhar, Hebron, and Uzziel.

3a The children of Amram: Aaron, Moses, and Miriam.

3b The sons of Aaron: Nadab, Abihu, Eleazar, and Ithamar.

4 Eleazar was the father of Phinehas, and Phinehas was the father of Abishua.

5 Abishua was the father of Bukki, and Bukki was the father of Uzzi.

6 Uzzi was the father of Zerariah, and Zerariah was the father of Meraioth.

7 Meraioth was the father of Amariah, and Amariah was the father of Ahitub.



- 8 Ahitub was the father of Zadok, and Zadok was the father of Ahimaaz.  
9 Ahimaaz was the father of Azariah, and Azariah was the father of Johanan.  
10 Johanan was the father of Azariah, who served as a priest in the temple Solomon built in Jerusalem.  
11 Azariah was the father of Amariah, and Amariah was the father of Ahitub.  
12 Ahitub was the father of Zadok, and Zadok was the father of Shallum.  
13 Shallum was the father of Hilkiah, and Hilkiah was the father of Azariah.  
14 Azariah was the father of Seraiah, and Seraiah was the father of Jehozadak.  
15 Jehozadak went into exile when the LORD sent the people of Judah and Jerusalem into exile by the hand of Nebuchadnezzar.

**Clans of Gershom, Kohath and Merari**

- 16 The sons of Levi: Gershom, Kohath, and Merari.  
17 These are the names of the sons Gershom: Libni and Shimei.  
18 The sons of Kohath: Amram, Izhar, Hebron, and Uzziel.  
19 The sons of Merari: Mahli and Mushi. These are the clans of the Levites by their families.  
20 To Gershom: His son Libni, his son Jahath, his son Zimmah,  
21 his son Joah, his son Iddo, his son Zerah, and his son Jeatherai.  
22 The sons of Kohath: His son Amminadab, his son Korah, his son Assir,  
23 his son Elkanah, his son Ebiasaph, his son Assir,  
24 his son Tahath, his son Uriel, his son Uzziel, and his son Shaul.  
25 The sons of Elkanah: Amasai, Ahimoth,  
26 his son Elkanah, his son Zophai, his son Nahath,  
27 his son Eliab, his son Jeroham, and his son Elkanah.  
28 The sons of Samuel: Joel the firstborn and Abijah the second oldest.  
29 The descendants of Merari: Mahli, his son Libni, his son Shimei, his son Uzzah,  
30 his son Shimea, his son Haggiah, and his son Asaiah.

**List of High Priests from Aaron to David**

- 50 These were the descendants of Aaron: His son Eleazar, his son Phinehas, his son Abishua,  
51 his son Bukki, his son Uzzi, his son Zerahiah,  
52 his son Meraioth, his son Amariah, his son Ahitub,  
53 his son Zadok, and his son Ahimaaz.

*Scripture quoted by permission. All scripture quotations, unless otherwise indicated, are taken from the NET Bible® copyright ©1996–2006 by Biblical Studies Press, L.L.C. <http://bible.org> All rights reserved. This material is available in its entirety as a free download or online web use at <http://netbible.org/>.*

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

1 Chronicles 7:1–5

- 1 The sons of Issachar: Tola, Puah, Jashub, and Shimron—four in all.
- 2 The sons of Tola: Uzzi, Rephaiah, Jeriel, Jahmai, Jibsam, and Samuel. They were leaders of their families. In the time of David there were 22,600 warriors listed in Tola's genealogical records.
- 3 The son of Uzzi: Izrachiah. The sons of Izrahiah: Michael, Obadiah, Joel, and Isshiah. All five were leaders.
- 4 According to the genealogical records of their families, they had 36,000 warriors available for battle, for they had numerous wives and sons.
- 5 Altogether the genealogical records of the clans of Issachar listed 87,000 warriors.

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

1 Chronicles 7:13

- 13 The sons of Naphtali: Jahziel, Guni, Jezer, and Shallum—sons of Bilhah.

**Official Genealogical Records: West Manasseh's Descendants (c. 538 BC)**

1 Chronicles 7:14–19

- 14 The sons of Manasseh: Asriel, who was born to Manasseh's Aramean concubine. She also gave birth to Makir the father of Gilead.
- 15 Now Makir married a wife from the Huppites and Shuppites. (His sister's name was Maacah.) Zelophehad was Manasseh's second son; he had only daughters.
- 16 Maacah, Makir's wife, gave birth to a son, whom she named Peresh. His brother was Sheresh, and his sons were Ulam and Rekem.
- 17 The son of Ulam: Bedan. These were the sons of Gilead, son of Makir, son of Manasseh.
- 18 His sister Hammoleketh gave birth to Ishhod, Abiezer, and Mahlah.
- 19 The sons of Shemida were Ahian, Shechem, Likhi, and Aniam.

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

1 Chronicles 7:20–29

- 20 The descendants of Ephraim: Shuthelah, his son Bered, his son Tahath, his son Eleadah, his son Tahath,
- 21 his son Zabad, his son Shuthelah (Ezer and Elead were killed by the men of Gath, who were natives of the land, when they went down to steal their cattle.
- 22 Their father Ephraim mourned for them many days and his brothers came to console him.
- 23 He had sexual relations with his wife; she became pregnant and gave birth to a son. Ephraim named him Beriah because tragedy had come to his family.
- 24 His daughter was Sheerah, who built Lower and Upper Beth Horon, as well as Uzzen Sheerah),
- 25 his son Rephah, his son Resheph, his son Telah, his son Tahan,
- 26 his son Ladan, his son Ammihud, his son Elishama,
- 27 his son Nun, and his son Joshua.
- 28 Their property and settlements included Bethel and its surrounding towns, Naaran to the east, Gezer and its surrounding towns to the west, and Shechem and its surrounding towns as far as Ayyah and its surrounding towns.
- 29 On the border of Manasseh's territory were Beth-Shean and its surrounding towns, Taanach and its surrounding towns, Megiddo and its surrounding towns, and Dor and its surrounding towns. The descendants of Joseph, Israel's son, lived here.

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

1 Chronicles 7:30–40

- 30 The sons of Asher: Imnah, Ishvah, Ishvi, and Beriah. Serah was their sister.
- 31 The sons of Beriah: Heber and Malkiel, who was the father of Birzaith.
- 32 Heber was the father of Japhlet, Shomer, Hotham, and Shua their sister.
- 33 The sons of Japhlet: Pasach, Bimhal, and Ashvath. These were Japhlet's sons.
- 34 The sons of his brother Shemer: Rohgah, Hubbah, and Aram.
- 35 The sons of his brother Helem: Zophah, Imna, Shelesh, and Amal.
- 36 The sons of Zophah: Suah, Harnepher, Shual, Beri, Imrah,
- 37 Bezer, Hod, Shamma, Shilshah, Ithran, and Beera.
- 38 The sons of Jether: Jephunneh, Pispah, and Ara.

39 The sons of Ulla: Arah, Hanniel, and Rizia.

40 All these were the descendants of Asher. They were the leaders of their families, the most capable men, who were warriors and served as head chiefs. There were 26,000 warriors listed in their genealogical records as capable of doing battle.

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

1 Chronicles 7:6–12; 8:1–28

#### Introduction

7:6 The sons of Benjamin: Bela, Beker, and Jediael—three in all.

7 The sons of Bela: Ezbon, Uzzi, Uzziel, Jerimoth, and Iri. The five of them were leaders of their families. There were 22,034 warriors listed in their genealogical records.

8 The sons of Beker: Zemirah, Joash, Eliezer, Elioenai, Omri, Jeremoth, Abijah, Anathoth, and Alameth. All these were the sons of Beker.

9 There were 20,200 family leaders and warriors listed in their genealogical records.

10 The son of Jediael: Bilhan. The sons of Bilhan: Jeush, Benjamin, Ehud, Kenaanah, Zethan, Tarshish, and Ahishahar.

11 All these were the sons of Jediael. Listed in their genealogical records were 17,200 family leaders and warriors who were capable of marching out to battle.

12 The Shuppites and Huppites were descendants of Ir; the Hushites were descendants of Aher.

#### Family Leaders

8:1 Benjamin was the father of Bela, his firstborn; Ashbel was born second, Aharah third,

2 Nohah fourth, and Rapha fifth.

3 Bela's sons were Addar, Gera, Abihud,

4 Abishua, Naaman, Ahoah,

5 Gera, Shephuphan, and Huram.

6 These were the descendants of Ehud who were leaders of the families living in Geba who were forced to move to Manahath:

7 Naaman, Ahijah, and Gera, who moved them. Gera was the father of Uzzah and Ahihud.

8 Shahraraim fathered sons in Moab after he divorced his wives Hushim and Baara.

9 By his wife Hodesh he fathered Jobab, Zibia, Mesha, Malkam,

10 Jeuz, Sakia, and Mirmah. These were his sons; they were family leaders.

11 By Hushim he fathered Abitub and Elpaal.

12 The sons of Elpaal: Eber, Misham, Shemed (who built Ono and Lod, as well as its surrounding towns),

13 Beriah, and Shema. They were leaders of the families living in Aijalon and chased out the inhabitants of Gath.

14 Ahio, Shashak, 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, Zikri, Zabdi,

20 Elienai, Zillethai, Eliel,

21 Adaiah, Beraiah, and Shimrath were the sons of Shimei.

22 Ishpan, Eber, Eliel,

23 Abdon, Zikri, Hanan,

24 Hananiah, Elam, Anthothijah,

25 Iphdeiah, and Penuel were the sons of Shashak.

26 Shamsherai, Shechariah, Athaliah,

27 Jaareshiah, Elijah, and Zikri were the sons of Jeroham.

28 These were the family leaders listed in the genealogical records; they 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 The father of Gibeon lived in Gibeon; his wife's name was Maacah.

30 His firstborn son was Abdon, followed by Zur, Kish, Baal, Nadab,

31 Gedor, Ahio, Zeker, and Mikloth.

35 Jeiel (the father of Gibeon) lived in Gibeon. His wife was Maacah.

36 His firstborn son was Abdon, followed by Zur, Kish, Baal, Ner, Nadab,

37 Gedor, Ahio, Zechariah, and Mikloth.

<p>32 Mikloth was the father of Shimeah. They also lived near their relatives in Jerusalem.</p> <p>33a Ner was the father of Kish, and Kish was the father of Saul.</p> <p><b>Saul's Descendants</b></p> <p>33b Saul was the father of Jonathan, Malki-Shua, Abinadab, and Eshbaal.</p> <p>34 The son of Jonathan: Meribbaal. Meribbaal was the father of Micah.</p> <p>35 The sons of Micah: Pithon, Melech, Tarea, and Ahaz.</p> <p>36 Ahaz was the father of Jehoaddah, and Jehoaddah was the father of Alemeth, Azmaveth, and Zimri. Zimri was the father of Moza,</p> <p>37 and Moza was the father of Binea. His son was Raphah, whose son was Eleasah, whose son was Azel.</p> <p>38 Azel had six sons: Azrikam his firstborn, followed by Ishmael, Sheariah, Obadiah, and Hanan. All these were the sons of Azel.</p> <p>39 The sons of his brother Eshek: Ulam was his firstborn, Jeush second, and Eliphelet third.</p> <p>40 The sons of Ulam were warriors who were adept archers. They had many sons and grandsons, a total of 150. All these were the descendants of Benjamin.</p>	<p>38 Mikloth was the father of Shimeam. They also lived near their relatives in Jerusalem.</p> <p>39a Ner was the father of Kish, and Kish was the father of Saul.</p> <p>39b Saul was the father of Jonathan, Malki-Shua, Abinadab, and Eshbaal.</p> <p>40 The son of Jonathan: Meribbaal, who was the father of Micah.</p> <p>41 The sons of Micah: Pithon, Melech, Tahrea, and Ahaz.</p> <p>42 Ahaz was the father of Jarah, and Jarah was the father of Alemeth, Azmaveth, and Zimri. Zimri was the father of Moza,</p> <p>43 and Moza was the father of Binea. His son was Rephaiah, whose son was Eleasah, whose son was Azel.</p> <p>44 Azel had six sons: Azrikam his firstborn, followed by Ishmael, Sheariah, Obadiah, and Hanan. These were the sons of Azel.</p>
--	---

*Scripture quoted by permission. All scripture quotations, unless otherwise indicated, are taken from the NET Bible® copyright ©1996–2006 by Biblical Studies Press, L.L.C. <http://bible.org> All rights reserved. This material is available in its entirety as a free download or online web use at <http://netbible.org/>.*

## 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 son of Ahasuerus, who was of Median descent and who had been appointed king over the Babylonian empire—

2 in the first year of his reign I, Daniel, came to understand from the sacred books that, according to the word of the LORD disclosed to the prophet Jeremiah, the years for the fulfilling of the desolation of Jerusalem were seventy in number. [[Jer 25:11–12; 29:10](#)]

#### Daniel's Prayer

3 So I turned my attention to the Lord God to implore him by prayer and requests, with fasting, sackcloth, and ashes.

4 I prayed to the LORD my God, confessing in this way: "O Lord, great and awesome God who is faithful to his covenant with those who love him and keep his commandments,

5 we have sinned! We have done what is wrong and wicked; we have rebelled by turning away from your commandments and standards. [cf. [1 Kgs 8:47](#)]

6 We have not paid attention to your servants the prophets, who spoke by your authority to our kings, our leaders, and our ancestors, and to all the inhabitants of the land as well.

7 "You are righteous, O Lord, but we are humiliated this day—the people of Judah and the inhabitants of Jerusalem and all Israel, both near and far away in all the countries in which you have scattered them, because they have behaved unfaithfully toward you.

8 O LORD, we have been humiliated—our kings, our leaders, and our ancestors—because we have sinned against you.

9 Yet the Lord our God is compassionate and forgiving, even though we have rebelled against him.

10 We have not obeyed the LORD our God by living according to his laws that he set before us through his servants the prophets.

11 "All Israel has broken your law and turned away by not obeying you. Therefore you have poured out on us the judgment solemnly threatened in the law of Moses the servant of God, for we have sinned against you.

12 He has carried out his threats against us and our rulers who were over us by bringing great calamity on us—what has happened to Jerusalem has never been equaled under all heaven!

13 Just as it is written in the law of Moses, so all this calamity has come on us. Still we have not tried to pacify the LORD our God by turning back from our sin and by seeking wisdom from your reliable moral standards.

14 The LORD was mindful of the calamity, and he brought it on us. For the LORD our God is just in all he has done, and we have not obeyed him.

15 "Now, O Lord our God, who brought your people out of the land of Egypt with great power and made a name for yourself that is remembered to this day—we have sinned and behaved wickedly.

16 O Lord, according to all your justice, please turn your raging anger away from your city Jerusalem, your holy mountain. For due to our sins and the iniquities of our ancestors, Jerusalem and your people are mocked by all our neighbors.

17 "So now, our God, accept the prayer and requests of your servant, and show favor to your devastated sanctuary for your own sake.

18 Listen attentively, my God, and hear! Open your eyes and look on our desolated ruins and the city called by your name. For it is not because of our own righteous deeds that we are praying to you, but because your compassion is abundant.

19 O Lord, hear! O Lord, forgive! O Lord, pay attention, and act! Don't delay, for your own sake, O my God! For your city and your people are called by your name."

#### Gabriel Comes in Answer to Daniel's Prayer

20 While I was still speaking and praying, confessing my sin and the sin of my people Israel and presenting my request before the LORD my God concerning his holy mountain—

21 yes, while I was still praying, the man Gabriel, whom I had seen previously in a vision, was approaching me in my state of extreme weariness, around the time of the evening offering.

22 He spoke with me, instructing me as follows: "Daniel, I have now come to impart understanding to you.

23 At the beginning of your requests a message went out, and I have come to convey it to you, for you are of great value in God's sight. Therefore consider the message and understand the vision:

24 "Seventy weeks have been determined concerning your people and your holy city to put an end to rebellion, to bring sin to completion, to atone for iniquity, to bring in perpetual righteousness, to seal up the prophetic vision, and to anoint a most holy place.

25 So know and understand:

From the issuing of the command to restore and rebuild Jerusalem until an anointed one, a prince arrives, there will be a period of seven weeks and sixty-two weeks. It will again be built, with plaza and moat, but in distressful times.

26 Now after the sixty-two weeks, an anointed one will be cut off and have nothing. As for the city and the sanctuary, the people of the coming prince will destroy them. But his end will come speedily like a flood. Until the end of the war that has been decreed there will be destruction.

27 He will confirm a covenant with many for one week. But in the middle of that week he will bring sacrifices and offerings to a halt. On the wing of abominations will come one who destroys, until the decreed end is poured out on the one who destroys.” [\[Matt 24:15; Mark 13:14\]](#)

### Cyrus' [Persia] Proclamation—the End of the Exile (c. May 538 BC)

2 Chronicles 36:20b–23

Ezra 1:1–4

20b They [*the Jewish exiles*] served him [*Nebuchadnezzar*] and his sons until the Persian kingdom rose to power.  
 21 This took place to fulfill the LORD's message delivered through Jeremiah. The land experienced its sabbatical years; it remained desolate for seventy years, as prophesied.  
 22 In the first year of the reign of King Cyrus of Persia, in fulfillment of the promise he delivered through Jeremiah, the LORD moved King Cyrus of Persia to issue a written decree throughout his kingdom.  
 23 It read:  
 “This is what King Cyrus of Persia says: ‘The LORD God of the heavens has given to me all the kingdoms of the earth. He has appointed me to build for him a temple in Jerusalem in Judah.  
 May the LORD your God energize you who belong to his people, so you may be able to go back there!’”

1 In the first year of King Cyrus of Persia, in order to fulfill the LORD's message spoken through Jeremiah, the LORD stirred the mind of King Cyrus of Persia. He disseminated a proclamation throughout his entire kingdom, announcing in a written edict the following:  
 2 “Thus says King Cyrus of Persia: “The LORD God of heaven has given me all the kingdoms of the earth. He has instructed me to build a temple for him in Jerusalem, which is in Judah.  
 3 Anyone from his people among you (may his God be with him!) may go up to Jerusalem, which is in Judah, and may build the temple of the LORD God of Israel—he is the God who is in Jerusalem.  
 4 Anyone who survives in any of those places where he is a resident foreigner must be helped by his neighbors with silver, gold, equipment, and animals, along with voluntary offerings for the temple 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 leaders of Judah and Benjamin, along with the priests and the Levites—all those whose mind God had stirred—got ready to go up in order to build the temple of the LORD in Jerusalem.  
 6 All their neighbors assisted them with silver utensils, gold, equipment, animals, and expensive gifts, not to mention all the voluntary offerings.  
 7 Then King Cyrus brought out the vessels of the LORD's temple which Nebuchadnezzar had brought from Jerusalem and had displayed in the temple of his gods.  
 8 King Cyrus of Persia entrusted them to Mithredath the treasurer, who counted them out to Sheshbazzar the leader of the Judahite exiles.  
 9 The inventory of these items was as follows:

30 gold basins,

1,000 silver basins,  
29 silver utensils,  
10 30 gold bowls,  
410 other silver bowls,  
and 1,000 other vessels.

11 All these gold and silver vessels totaled 5,400. Sheshbazzar brought them all along when the captives were brought up from Babylon to Jerusalem.

### The Return of the Exiles Under Zerubbabel – Part 1 (Spring 537 BC)

Ezra 2:1–35

Nehemiah 7:5b–38

#### Leadership

1 These are the people of the province who were going up, from the captives of the exile whom King Nebuchadnezzar of Babylon had forced into exile in Babylon. They returned to Jerusalem and Judah, each to his own city.

2a They came with Zerubbabel, Jeshua, Nehemiah, Seraiah, Reelaiah, Mordecai, Bilshan, Mispar, Bigvai, Rehum, and Baanah.

#### General Population

2b The number of Israelites was as follows:

3 the descendants of Parosh: 2,172;

4 the descendants of Shephatiah: 372;

5 the descendants of Arah: 775;

6 the descendants of Pahath-Moab

(from the line of Jeshua and Joab): 2,812;

7 the descendants of Elam: 1,254;

8 the descendants of Zattu: 945;

9 the descendants of Zaccai: 760;

10 the descendants of Bani: 642;

11 the descendants of Bebai: 623;

12 the descendants of Azgad: 1,222;

13 the descendants of Adonikam: 666;

14 the descendants of Bigvai: 2,056;

15 the descendants of Adin: 454;

16 the descendants of Ater (through Hezekiah): 98;

17 the descendants of Bezai: 323;

18 the descendants of Jorah: 112;

19 the descendants of Hashum: 223;

20 the descendants of Gibbar: 95.

21 The men of Bethlehem: 123;

22 the men of Netophah: 56;

23 the men of Anathoth: 128;

24 the men of the family of Azmaveth: 42;

25 the men of Kiriath Jearim, Kephirah and Beeroth: 743;

26 the men of Ramah and Geba: 621;

27 the men of Micmash: 122;

28 the men of Bethel and Ai: 223;

29 the descendants of Nebo: 52;

30 the descendants of Magbish: 156;

31 the descendants of the other Elam: 1,254;

32 the descendants of Harim: 320;

33 the men of Lod, Hadid, and Ono: 725;

34 the men of Jericho: 345;

5b I found the genealogical records of those who had formerly returned. Here is what I found written in that record:

6 These are the people of the province who returned from the captivity of the exiles, whom King Nebuchadnezzar of Babylon had forced into exile. They returned to Jerusalem and to Judah, each to his own city.

7a They came with Zerubbabel, Jeshua, Nehemiah, Azariah, Raamiah, Nahamani, Mordecai, Bilshan, Mispereth, Bigvai, Nehum, and Baanah.

7b The number of Israelite men was as follows:

8 the descendants of Parosh, 2,172;

9 the descendants of Shephatiah, 372;

10 the descendants of Arah, 652;

11 the descendants of Pahath-Moab

(from the line of Jeshua and Joab), 2,818;

12 the descendants of Elam, 1,254;

13 the descendants of Zattu, 845;

14 the descendants of Zaccai, 760;

15 the descendants of Binnui, 648;

16 the descendants of Bebai, 628;

17 the descendants of Azgad, 2,322;

18 the descendants of Adonikam, 667;

19 the descendants of Bigvai, 2,067;

20 the descendants of Adin, 655;

21 the descendants of Ater (through Hezekiah), 98;

23 the descendants of Bezai, 324;

24 the descendants of Harif, 112;

22 the descendants of Hashum, 328;

25 the descendants of Gibeon, 95;

26 The men of Bethlehem and Netophah, 188;

27 the men of Anathoth, 128;

28 the men of the family of Azmaveth, 42;

29 the men of Kiriath Jearim, Kephirah, and Beeroth, 743;

30 the men of Ramah and Geba, 621;

31 the men of Micmash, 122;

32 the men of Bethel and Ai, 123;

33 the men of the other Nebo, 52;

34 the descendants of the other Elam, 1,254;

35 the descendants of Harim, 320;

37 the descendants of Lod, Hadid, and Ono, 721;

36 the descendants of Jericho, 345;



35 the descendants of Senaah: 3,630.

38 the descendants of Senaah, 3,930.

Scripture quoted by permission. All scripture quotations, unless otherwise indicated, are taken from the NET Bible® copyright ©1996–2006 by Biblical Studies Press, L.L.C. <http://bible.org> All rights reserved. This material is available in its entirety as a free download or online web use at <http://netbible.org/>.

### 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-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.

<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.

<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 (2008): 513–22.

## The Return of the Exiles Under Zerubbabel – Part 2 (Spring 537 BC)

Ezra 2:36–70

Nehemiah 7:39–73a

**Priests**

36 The priests: the descendants of Jedaiah (through the family of Jeshua): 973;  
 37 the descendants of Immer: 1,052;  
 38 the descendants of Pashhur: 1,247;  
 39 the descendants of Harim: 1,017.

**Levites**

40 The Levites: the descendants of Jeshua and Kadmiel (through the line of Hodaviah): 74.  
 41 The singers: the descendants of Asaph: 128.  
 42 The gatekeepers: the descendants of Shallum, the descendants of Ater, the descendants of Talmon, the descendants of Akkub, the descendants of Hatita, and the descendants of Shobai: 139.

**Temple Servants**

43 The temple servants: the descendants of Ziha, the descendants of Hasupha, the descendants of Tabbaoth,  
 44 the descendants of Keros, the descendants of Siaha, the descendants of Padon,  
 45 the descendants of Lebanah, the descendants of Hagabah, the descendants of Akkub,  
 46 the descendants of Hagab, the descendants of Shalmal, the descendants of Hanan,  
 47 the descendants of Giddel, the descendants of Gahar, the descendants of Reaiah,  
 48 the descendants of Rezin, the descendants of Nekoda, the descendants of Gazzam,  
 49 the descendants of Uzzah, the descendants of Paseah, the descendants of Besai,  
 50 the descendants of Asnah, the descendants of Meunim, the descendants of Nephussim,  
 51 the descendants of Bakbuk, the descendants of Hakupha, the descendants of Harhur,  
 52 the descendants of Bazluth, the descendants of Mehida, the descendants of Harsha,  
 53 the descendants of Barkos, the descendants of Sisera, the descendants of Temah,  
 54 the descendants of Nezhiah, and the descendants of Hatipha.

**Descendants of Solomon's Servants**

55 The descendants of the servants of Solomon: the descendants of Sotai, the descendants of Hassophereth, the descendants of Peruda,  
 56 the descendants of Jaala, the descendants of Darkon, the descendants of Giddel,  
 57 the descendants of Shephatiah, the descendants of Hattil, the descendants of Pokereth-Hazzebaim, and the descendants of Ami.  
 58 All the temple servants and the descendants of the servants of Solomon: 392.

39 The priests: the descendants of Jedaiah (through the family of Jeshua), 973;  
 40 the descendants of Immer, 1,052;  
 41 the descendants of Pashhur, 1,247;  
 42 the descendants of Harim, 1,017.

43 The Levites: the descendants of Jeshua (through Kadmiel, through the line of Hodaviah), 74.  
 44 The singers: the descendants of Asaph, 148.  
 45 The gatekeepers: the descendants of Shallum, the descendants of Ater, the descendants of Talmon, the descendants of Akkub, the descendants of Hatita, and the descendants of Shobai, 138.

46 The temple servants: the descendants of Ziha, the descendants of Hasupha, the descendants of Tabbaoth,  
 47 the descendants of Keros, the descendants of Sia, the descendants of Padon,  
 48 the descendants of Lebanah, the descendants of Hagabah,

the descendants of Shalmal,  
 49 the descendants of Hanan, the descendants of Giddel, the descendants of Gahar,  
 50 the descendants of Reaiah, the descendants of Rezin, the descendants of Nekoda,  
 51 the descendants of Gazzam, the descendants of Uzzah, the descendants of Paseah,  
 52 the descendants of Besai,

the descendants of Meunim, the descendants of Nephussim,  
 53 the descendants of Bakbuk, the descendants of Hakupha, the descendants of Harhur,  
 54 the descendants of Bazluth, the descendants of Mehida, the descendants of Harsha,  
 55 the descendants of Barkos, the descendants of Sisera, the descendants of Temah,  
 56 the descendants of Nezhiah, the descendants of Hatipha.

57 The descendants of the servants of Solomon: the descendants of Sotai, the descendants of Sophereth, the descendants of Perida,  
 58 the descendants of Jaala, the descendants of Darkon, the descendants of Giddel,  
 59 the descendants of Shephatiah, the descendants of Hattil, the descendants of Pokereth-Hazzebaim, and the descendants of Amon.

60 All the temple servants and the descendants of the servants of Solomon, 392.

<p><b>Israelites of Doubtful Origin</b> 59 These are the ones that came up from Tel Melah, Tel Harsha, Kerub, Addon, and Immer (although they were unable to certify their family connection or their ancestry, as to whether they really were from Israel): 60 the descendants of Delaiah, the descendants of Tobiah, and the descendants of Nekoda: 652.</p> <p><b>Priests of Doubtful Origin</b> 61 And from among the priests: the descendants of Hobaiah, the descendants of Hakkoz, and the descendants of Barzillai (who had taken a wife from the daughters of Barzillai the Gileadite and was called by that name). 62 They searched for their records in the genealogical materials, but did not find them. They were therefore excluded from the priesthood. 63 The governor instructed them not to eat any of the sacred food until there was a priest who could consult the Urim and Thummim.</p> <p><b>Totals</b> 64 The entire group numbered 42,360, 65 not counting their male and female servants, who numbered 7,337. They also had 200 male and female singers 66 and 736 horses, 245 mules, 67 435 camels, and 6,720 donkeys.</p> <p><b>Arrival in Jerusalem</b> 68 When they came to the LORD's temple in Jerusalem, some of the family leaders offered voluntary offerings for the temple of God in order to rebuild it on its site. 69 As they were able, they gave to the treasury for this work 61,000 drachmas of gold, 5,000 minas of silver, and 100 priestly robes.</p> <p>70 The priests, the Levites, some of the people, the singers, the gatekeepers, and the temple servants lived in their towns, and all the rest of Israel lived in their towns.</p>	<p>61 These are the ones who came up from Tel Melah, Tel Harsha, Kerub, Addon, and Immer (although they were unable to certify their family connection or their ancestry, as to whether they were really from Israel): 62 the descendants of Delaiah, the descendants of Tobiah, and the descendants of Nekoda, 642.</p> <p>63 And from among the priests: the descendants of Hobaiah, the descendants of Hakkoz, and the descendants of Barzillai (who had married a woman from the daughters of Barzillai the Gileadite and was called by that name). 64 They searched for their records in the genealogical materials, but none were found. They were therefore excluded from the priesthood. 65 The governor instructed them not to eat any of the sacred food until there was a priest who could consult the Urim and Thummim.</p> <p>66 The entire group numbered 42,360, 67 not counting their 7,337 male and female servants. They also had 245 male and female singers. 68 They had 736 horses, 245 mules, 69 435 camels, and 6,720 donkeys.</p> <p>70 Some of the family leaders contributed to the work.</p> <p>The governor contributed to the treasury 1,000 gold drachmas, 50 bowls, and 530 priestly garments. 71 Some of the family leaders gave to the project treasury 20,000 gold drachmas and 2,200 silver minas. 72 What the rest of the people gave amounted to 20,000 gold drachmas, 2,000 silver minas, and 67 priestly garments. 73a The priests, the Levites, the gatekeepers, the singers, some of the people, the temple servants, and all the rest of Israel lived in their cities.</p>
--	--

## Altar Rebuilt and Normal Sacrificial Activities Resumed (September 537 BC)

Ezra 3:1-7

### **The Rebuilding of the Altar**

1 When the seventh month arrived and the Israelites were living in their towns, the people assembled in Jerusalem.  
2 Then Jeshua the son of Jozadak and his priestly colleagues and Zerubbabel son of Shealtiel and his colleagues started to build the altar of the God of Israel so they could offer burnt offerings on it as required by the law of Moses the man of God.  
3 They established the altar on its foundations, even though they were in terror of the local peoples, and they offered burnt offerings on it to the LORD, both the morning and the evening offerings.

### **The Festival of Booths**

4 They observed the Festival of Temporary Shelters as required and offered the proper number of daily burnt offerings according to the requirement for each day.

5 Afterward they offered the continual burnt offerings and those for the new moons and those for all the holy assemblies of the LORD and all those that were being voluntarily offered 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 However, the LORD's temple was not at that time established.

7 So they provided money for the masons and carpenters, and food, beverages, and olive oil for the people of Sidon and Tyre, so that they would bring cedar timber from Lebanon to the seaport at Joppa, in accord with the edict of King Cyrus of Persia.

*Scripture quoted by permission. All scripture quotations, unless otherwise indicated, are taken from the NET Bible® copyright ©1996–2006 by Biblical Studies Press, L.L.C. <http://bible.org> All rights reserved. This material is available in its entirety as a free download or online web use at <http://netbible.org/>.*

## Daniel's Three Week Fast (April 2–22, 536 BC)

Daniel 10:1–3

- 1 In the third year of King Cyrus of Persia a message was revealed to Daniel (who was also called Belteshazzar). This message was true and concerned a great war. He understood the message and gained insight by the vision.
- 2 In those days I, Daniel, was mourning for three whole weeks.
- 3 I ate no choice food; no meat or wine came to my lips, nor did I anoint myself with oil until the end of those three weeks.

## 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 I was beside the great river, the Tigris.
- 5 I looked up and saw a man clothed in linen; around his waist was a belt made of gold from Upaz.
- 6 His body resembled yellow jasper, and his face had an appearance like lightning. His eyes were like blazing torches; his arms and feet had the gleam of polished bronze. His voice thundered forth like the sound of a large crowd.
- 7 Only I, Daniel, saw the vision; the men who were with me did not see it. On the contrary, they were overcome with fright and ran away to hide.
- 8 I alone was left to see this great vision. My strength drained from me, and my vigor disappeared; I was without energy.
- 9 I listened to his voice, and as I did so I fell into a trance-like sleep with my face to the ground.

### The Interpreting Angel's Explanation

- 10 Then a hand touched me and set me on my hands and knees.
- 11 He said to me, "Daniel, you are of great value. Understand the words that I am about to speak to you. So stand up, for I have now been sent to you." When he said this to me, I stood up shaking.
- 12 Then he said to me, "Don't be afraid, Daniel, for from the very first day you applied your mind to understand and to humble yourself before your God, your words were heard. I have come in response to your words.
- 13 However, the prince of the kingdom of Persia was opposing me for twenty-one days. But Michael, one of the leading princes, came to help me, because I was left there with the kings of Persia.
- 14 Now I have come to help you understand what will happen to your people in the latter days, for the vision pertains to future days."

### Daniel Strengthened to Understand the Vision

- 15 While he was saying this to me, I was flat on the ground and unable to speak.
- 16 Then one who appeared to be a human being was touching my lips. I opened my mouth and started to speak, saying to the one who was standing before me, "Sir, due to the vision, anxiety has gripped me and I have no strength.
- 17 How, sir, am I able to speak with you? My strength is gone, and I am breathless."
- 18 Then the one who appeared to be a human being touched me again and strengthened me.
- 19 He said to me, "Don't be afraid, you who are valued. Peace be to you! Be strong! Be really strong!" When he spoke to me, I was strengthened. I said, "Sir, you may speak now, for you have given me strength."
- 20 He said, "Do you know why I have come to you? Now I am about to return to engage in battle with the prince of Persia. When I go, the prince of Greece is coming.
- 21 However, I will first tell you what is written in a dependable book. (There is no one who strengthens me against these princes, except Michael your prince.
- 11:1 And in the first year of Darius the Mede, I stood to strengthen him and to provide 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 Now I will tell you the truth. "Three more kings will arise for Persia. Then a fourth king will be unusually rich, more so than all who preceded him. When he has amassed power through his riches, he will stir up everyone against the kingdom of Greece.

### Concerning Greece (Alexander the Great)

- 3 Then a powerful king will arise, exercising great authority and doing as he pleases.
- 4 Shortly after his rise to power, his kingdom will be broken up and distributed toward the four winds of the sky—but not to his posterity or with the authority he exercised, for his kingdom will be uprooted and distributed to others besides these.

**Concerning Egypt and Syria (The Ptolemies and the Seleucids)**

5 “Then the king of the south and one of his subordinates will grow strong. His subordinate will resist him and will rule a kingdom greater than his.

6 After some years have passed, they will form an alliance. Then the daughter of the king of the south will come to the king of the north to make an agreement, but she will not retain her power, nor will he continue in his strength. She, together with the one who brought her, her child, and her benefactor will all be delivered over at that time.

7 “There will arise in his place one from her family line who will come against their army and will enter the stronghold of the king of the north and will move against them successfully.

8 He will also take their gods into captivity to Egypt, along with their cast images and prized utensils of silver and gold. Then he will withdraw for some years from the king of the north.

9 Then the king of the north will advance against the empire of the king of the south, but will withdraw to his own land.

10 His sons will wage war, mustering a large army which will advance like an overflowing river and carrying the battle all the way to the enemy’s fortress.

11 “Then the king of the south will be enraged and will march out to fight against the king of the north, who will also muster a large army, but that army will be delivered into his hand.

12 When the army is taken away, the king of the south will become arrogant. He will be responsible for the death of thousands and thousands of people, but he will not continue to prevail.

13 For the king of the north will again muster an army, one larger than before. At the end of some years he will advance with a huge army and enormous supplies.

14 “In those times many will oppose the king of the south. Those who are violent among your own people will rise up in confirmation of the vision, but they will falter.

15 Then the king of the north will advance and will build siege mounds and capture a well-fortified city. The forces of the south will not prevail, not even his finest contingents. They will have no strength to prevail.

16 The one advancing against him will do as he pleases, and no one will be able to stand before him. He will prevail in the beautiful land, and its annihilation will be within his power.

17 His intention will be to come with the strength of his entire kingdom, and he will form alliances. He will give the king of the south a daughter in marriage in order to destroy the kingdom, but it will not turn out to his advantage.

18 Then he will turn his attention to the coastal regions and will capture many of them. But a commander will bring his shameful conduct to a halt; in addition, he will make him pay for his shameful conduct.

19 He will then turn his attention to the fortresses of his own land, but he will stumble and fall, not to be found again.

20 There will arise after him one who will send out an exactor of tribute to enhance the splendor of the kingdom, but after a few days he will be destroyed, though not in anger or battle.

**Concerning Antiochus IV Epiphanes**

21 “Then there will arise in his place a despicable person to whom the royal honor has not been rightfully conferred. He will come on the scene in a time of prosperity and will seize the kingdom through deceit.

22 Armies will be suddenly swept away in defeat before him; both they and a covenant leader will be destroyed.

23 After entering into an alliance with him, he will behave treacherously; he will ascend to power with only a small force.

24 In a time of prosperity for the most productive areas of the province he will come and accomplish what neither his fathers nor their fathers accomplished. He will distribute loot, spoils, and property to his followers, and he will devise plans against fortified cities, but not for long.

25 He will rouse his strength and enthusiasm against the king of the south with a large army. The king of the south will wage war with a large and very powerful army, but he will not be able to prevail because of the plans devised against him.

26 Those who share the king’s fine food will attempt to destroy him, and his army will be swept away; many will be killed in battle.

27 These two kings, their minds filled with evil intentions, will trade lies with one another at the same table. But it will not succeed, for there is still an end at the appointed time.

28 Then the king of the north will return to his own land with much property. His mind will be set against the holy covenant. He will take action, and then return to his own land.

29 At an appointed time he will again invade the south, but this latter visit will not turn out the way the former one did.

30 The ships of Kittim will come against him, leaving him disheartened. He will turn back and direct his indignation against the holy covenant. He will return and honor those who forsake the holy covenant.

31 His forces will rise up and profane the fortified sanctuary, stopping the daily sacrifice. In its place they will set up the abomination that causes desolation. [[Matt 24:15](#); [Mark 13:14](#)]

32 Then with smooth words he will defile those who have rejected the covenant. But the people who are loyal to their God will act valiantly.

33 These who are wise among the people will teach the masses. However, they will fall by the sword and by the flame, and they will be imprisoned and plundered for some time.

34 When they stumble, they will be granted some help. But many will unite with them deceitfully.

35 Even some of the wise will stumble, resulting in their refinement, purification, and cleansing until the time of the end, for it is still for the appointed time.

### Concerning the End Times (The Antichrist)

36 “Then the king will do as he pleases. He will exalt and magnify himself above every deity and he will utter presumptuous things against the God of gods. He will succeed until the time of wrath is completed, for what has been decreed must occur.

37 He will not respect the gods of his fathers—not even the god loved by women. He will not respect any god; he will elevate himself above them all.

38 What he will honor is a god of fortresses—a god his fathers did not acknowledge he will honor with gold, silver, valuable stones, and treasured commodities.

39 He will attack mighty fortresses, aided by a foreign deity. To those who recognize him he will grant considerable honor. He will place them in authority over many people, and he will parcel out land for a price.

40 “At the time of the end the king of the south will attack him. Then the king of the north will storm against him with chariots, horsemen, and a large armada of ships. He will invade lands, passing through them like an overflowing river.

41 Then he will enter the beautiful land. Many will fall, but these will escape: Edom, Moab, and the Ammonite leadership.

42 He will extend his power against other lands; the land of Egypt will not escape.

43 He will have control over the hidden stores of gold and silver, as well as all the treasures of Egypt. Libyans and Ethiopians will submit to him.

44 But reports will trouble him from the east and north, and he will set out in a tremendous rage to destroy and wipe out many.

45 He will pitch his royal tents between the seas toward the beautiful holy mountain. But he will come to his end, with no one to help him.

12:1 “At that time Michael, the great prince who watches over your people, will arise. There will be a time of distress unlike any other from the nation’s beginning up to that time. But at that time your own people, all those whose names are found written in the book, will escape.

2 Many of those who sleep in the dusty ground will awake—some to everlasting life, and others to shame and everlasting abhorrence.

3 But the wise will shine like the brightness of the heavenly expanse. And those bringing many to righteousness will be like the stars forever and ever.

## Final Instructions to Daniel (April 23, 536 BC)

Daniel 12:4–13

### Instruction to Preserve the Message

4 “But you, Daniel, close up these words and seal the book until the time of the end. Many will dash about, and knowledge will increase.”

### Duration of the “Time of Distress”

5 I, Daniel, watched as two others stood there, one on each side of the river.

6 One said to the man clothed in linen who was above the waters of the river, “When will the end of these wondrous events occur?”

7 Then I heard the man clothed in linen who was over the waters of the river as he raised both his right and left hands to the sky and made an oath by the one who lives forever: “It is for a time, times, and half a time. Then, when the power of the one who shatters the holy people has been exhausted, all these things will be finished.”

### Daniel’s Last Question

8 I heard, but I did not understand. So I said, “Sir, what will happen after these things?”

9 He said, “Go, Daniel. For these matters are closed and sealed until the time of the end.

10 Many will be purified, made clean, and refined, but the wicked will go on being wicked. None of the wicked will understand, though the wise will understand.

11 From the time that the daily sacrifice is removed and the abomination that causes desolation is set in place, there are 1,290 days. [[Matt 24:15](#); [Mark 13:14](#)]

12 Blessed is the one who waits and attains to the 1,335 days.

13 But you should go your way until the end. You will rest and then at the end of the days you will arise to receive what you have been allotted.”



## The Foundation of the Second Temple is Laid (May 536 BC)

Ezra 3:8–13

8 In the second year after they had come to the temple of God in Jerusalem, in the second month, Zerubbabel the son of Shealtiel and Jeshua the son of Jozadak initiated the work, along with the rest of their associates, the priests and the Levites, and all those who were coming to Jerusalem from the exile. They appointed the Levites who were at least twenty years old to take charge of the work on the LORD's temple.

9 So Jeshua appointed both his sons and his relatives, Kadmiel and his sons (the sons of Yehudah), to take charge of the workers in the temple of God, along with the sons of Henadad, their sons, and their relatives the Levites.

10 When the builders established the LORD's temple, the priests, ceremonially attired and with their clarions, and the Levites (the sons of Asaph) with their cymbals, stood to praise the LORD according to the instructions left by King David of Israel.

11 With antiphonal response they sang, praising and glorifying the LORD:

“For he is good;  
his loyal love toward Israel is forever.”

All the people gave a loud shout as they praised the LORD when the temple of the LORD was established.

12 Many of the priests, the Levites, and the leaders—older people who had seen with their own eyes the former temple while it was still established—were weeping loudly, and many others raised their voice in a joyous shout.

13 People were unable to tell the difference between the sound of joyous shouting and the sound of the people's weeping, for the people were shouting so loudly that the sound was heard a long way off.

## Restore Us, O Lord (c. May 536 BC)

Psalms 126

### A song of ascents.

- 1 When the LORD restored the well-being of Zion,  
we thought we were dreaming.
- 2 At that time we laughed loudly and shouted for joy.  
At that time the nations said,  
“The LORD has accomplished great things for these people.”
- 3 The LORD did indeed accomplish great things for us.  
We were happy.
- 4 O LORD, restore our well-being,  
just as the streams in the arid south are replenished.
- 5 Those who shed tears as they plant  
will shout for joy when they reap the harvest.
- 6 The one who weeps as he walks along, carrying his bag of seed,  
will certainly come in with a shout of joy, carrying his sheaves of grain.

## Temple Construction Halted by Local Enemies (536–520 BC)

Ezra 4:1–5, 24

1 When the enemies of Judah and Benjamin learned that the former exiles were building a temple for the LORD God of Israel,  
2 they came to Zerubbabel and the leaders and said to them, “Let us help you build, for like you we seek your God and we have been sacrificing to him from the time of King Esarhaddon of Assyria, who brought us here.”

3 But Zerubbabel, Jeshua, and the rest of the leaders of Israel said to them, “You have no right to help us build the temple of our God. We will build it by ourselves for the LORD God of Israel, just as King Cyrus, the king of Persia, has commanded us.”

4 Then the local people began to discourage the people of Judah and to dishearten them from building.

5 They were hiring advisers to oppose them, so as to frustrate their plans, throughout the time of King Cyrus of Persia until the reign of King Darius of Persia.

24 So the work on the temple of God in Jerusalem came to a halt. It remained halted until the second year of the reign of King Darius of Persia.



## Temple Construction Restarted Through Preaching of Haggai and Zechariah (520 BC)

Ezra 5:1

1 Then the prophets Haggai and Zechariah son of Iddo prophesied concerning 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 On the first day of the sixth month of King Darius' second year, the LORD spoke this message through the prophet Haggai to Zerubbabel son of Shealtiel, governor of Judah, and to the high priest Joshua son of Jehozadak:

2 The LORD who rules over all says this: "These people have said, 'The time for rebuilding the LORD's temple has not yet come.'"

3 So the LORD spoke through the prophet Haggai as follows:

4 "Is it right for you to live in richly paneled houses while my temple is in ruins?

5 Here then is what the LORD who rules over all says: 'Think carefully about what you are doing.

6 You have planted much, but have harvested little. You eat, but are never filled. You drink, but are still thirsty. You put on clothes, but are not warm. Those who earn wages end up with holes in their money bags.'"

7 "Moreover, the LORD who rules over all says: 'Pay close attention to these things also.

8 Go up to the hill country and bring back timber to build the temple. Then I will be pleased and honored,' says the LORD.

9 'You expected a large harvest, but instead there was little, and when you brought it home it disappeared right away. Why?' asks the LORD who rules over all. 'Because my temple remains in ruins, thanks to each of you favoring his own house!

10 This is why the sky has held back its dew and the earth its produce.

11 Moreover, I have called for a drought that will affect the fields, the hill country, the grain, new wine, fresh olive oil, and everything that grows from the ground; it also will harm people, animals, and everything they produce.'"

12 Then Zerubbabel son of Shealtiel and the high priest Joshua son of Jehozadak, along with the whole remnant of the people, obeyed the LORD their God. They responded favorably to the message of the prophet Haggai, who spoke just as the LORD their God had instructed him, and the people began to respect the LORD.

13 Then Haggai, the LORD's messenger, spoke the LORD's word to the people: "I am with you!" says the LORD.

## Work Begins Again on the Temple (September 21, 520 BC)

Haggai 1:14–15

Ezra 5:2

14 So the LORD energized and encouraged Zerubbabel son of Shealtiel, governor of Judah, the high priest Joshua son of Jehozadak, and the whole remnant of the people. They came and worked on the temple of their God, the LORD who rules over all.

15 This took place on the twenty-fourth day of the sixth month of King Darius' second year.

2 Then Zerubbabel the son of Shealtiel and Jeshua the son of Jozadak began to rebuild the temple of God in Jerusalem. 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 governor of Trans-Euphrates, Shethar-Bozenai, and their colleagues came to them and asked, "Who gave you authority to rebuild this temple and to complete this structure?"

4 They also asked them, "What are the names of the men who are building this edifice?"

5 But God was watching over the elders of Judah, and they were not stopped until a report could be dispatched to Darius and a letter could be sent back concerning this.

6 This is a copy of the letter that Tattenai governor of Trans-Euphrates, Shethar-Bozenai, and his colleagues who were the officials of Trans-Euphrates sent to King Darius.

7 The report they sent to him was written as follows: "To King Darius: All greetings!

8 Let it be known to the king that we have gone to the province of Judah, to the temple of the great God. It is being built with large stones, and timbers are being placed in the walls. This work is being done with all diligence and is prospering in their hands.

9 We inquired of those elders, asking them, 'Who gave you the authority to rebuild this temple and to complete this structure?'

10 We also inquired of their names in order to inform you, so that we might write the names of the men who were their leaders.

11 They responded to us in the following way: 'We are servants of the God of heaven and earth. We are rebuilding the temple which

was previously built many years ago. A great king of Israel built it and completed it.

12 But after our ancestors angered the God of heaven, he delivered them into the hands of King Nebuchadnezzar of Babylon, the Chaldean, who destroyed this temple and exiled the people to Babylon.

13 But in the first year of King Cyrus of Babylon, King Cyrus enacted a decree to rebuild this temple of God.

14 Even the gold and silver vessels of the temple of God that Nebuchadnezzar had taken from the temple in Jerusalem and had brought to the palace of Babylon—even those things King Cyrus brought from the palace of Babylon and presented to a man by the name of Sheshbazzar whom he had appointed as governor.

15 He said to him, “Take these vessels and go deposit them in the temple in Jerusalem, and let the house of God be rebuilt in its proper location.”

16 Then this Sheshbazzar went and laid the foundations of the temple of God in Jerusalem. From that time to the present moment it has been in the process of being rebuilt, although it is not yet finished.’

17 “Now if the king is so inclined, let a search be conducted in the royal archives there in Babylon in order to determine whether King Cyrus did in fact issue orders for this temple of God to be rebuilt in Jerusalem. Then let the king send us a 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 day of the seventh month, the LORD spoke again through the prophet Haggai:

2 “Ask the following questions to Zerubbabel son of Shealtiel, governor of Judah, the high priest Joshua son of Jehozadak, and the remnant of the people:

3 ‘Who among you survivors saw the former splendor of this temple? How does it look to you now? Isn’t it nothing by comparison?

4 Even so, take heart, Zerubbabel,’ says the LORD. ‘Take heart, Joshua son of Jehozadak, the high priest, and all you citizens of the land,’ says the LORD, ‘and begin to work. For I am with you,’ says the LORD who rules over all.

5 ‘Do not fear, because I made a promise to your ancestors when they left Egypt, and my spirit even now testifies to you.’

6 Moreover, the LORD who rules over all says: ‘In just a little while I will once again shake the sky and the earth, the sea and the dry ground. [[Heb 12:26](#)]

7 I will also shake up all the nations, and they will offer their treasures; then I will fill this temple with glory,’ says the LORD who rules over all.

8 ‘The silver and gold will be mine,’ says the LORD who rules over all.

9 ‘The future splendor of this temple will be greater than that of former times,’ the LORD who rules over all declares, ‘and in this place I will give peace.’”

### 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 Darius’ second year, the word of the LORD came to the prophet Zechariah, son of Berechiah son of Iddo, as follows:

2 The LORD was very angry with your ancestors.

3 Therefore say to the people: The LORD who rules over all says, “Turn to me,” says the LORD who rules over all, “and I will turn to you,” says the LORD who rules over all.

4 “Do not be like your ancestors, to whom the former prophets called out, saying, ‘The LORD who rules over all says, “Turn now from your evil wickedness,”’ but they would by no means obey me,” says the LORD.

5 “As for your ancestors, where are they? And did the prophets live forever?

6 But have my words and statutes, which I commanded my servants the prophets, not outlived your fathers? Then they paid attention and confessed, ‘The LORD who rules over all has indeed done what he said he would do to us, because of our sinful ways.’”

### Haggai’s Prophecy to the Remnant—Sin’s Corrupting Influence (December 18, 520 BC)

Haggai 2:10–19

10 On the twenty-fourth day of the ninth month of Darius’ second year, the LORD spoke again to the prophet Haggai:

11 “The LORD who rules over all says, ‘Ask the priests about the law.

12 If someone carries holy meat in a fold of his garment and that fold touches bread, a boiled dish, wine, olive oil, or any other food, will that item become holy?’” The priests answered, “It will not.”

13 Then Haggai asked, “If a person who is ritually unclean because of touching a dead body comes in contact with one of these items, will it become unclean?” The priests answered, “It will be unclean.”

14 Then Haggai responded, “‘The people of this nation are unclean in my sight,’ says the LORD. ‘And so is all their effort; everything

they offer is also unclean.

15 Now therefore reflect carefully on the recent past, before one stone was laid on another in the LORD's temple.

16 From that time when one came expecting a heap of twenty measures, there were only ten; when one came to the wine vat to draw out fifty measures from it, there were only twenty.

17 I struck all the products of your labor with blight, disease, and hail, and yet you brought nothing to me,' says the LORD.

18 'Think carefully about the past: from today, the twenty-fourth day of the ninth month, to the day work on the temple of the LORD was resumed, think about it.

19 The seed is still in the storehouse, isn't it? And the vine, fig tree, pomegranate, and olive tree have not produced. Nevertheless, from today 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 LORD spoke again to Haggai on the twenty-fourth day of the month:

21 Tell Zerubbabel governor of Judah: 'I am ready to shake the sky and the earth. [[Heb 12:26](#)]

22 I will overthrow royal thrones and shatter the might of earthly kingdoms. I will overthrow chariots and those who ride them, and horses and their riders will fall as people kill one another.

23 On that day,' says the LORD who rules over all, 'I will take you, Zerubbabel son of Shealtiel, my servant,' says the LORD, 'and I will make you like a signet ring, for I have chosen you,' says the LORD who rules over all."

### Darius Sends His Approval for the Temple to be Rebuilt (c. January 519 BC)

Ezra 6:1–14a

#### Discovery of Cyrus' Edict

1 So Darius the king issued orders, and they searched in the archives of the treasury which were deposited there in Babylon.

2 A scroll was found in the citadel of Ecbatana which is in the province of Media, and it was inscribed as follows: "Memorandum:

3 In the first year of his reign, King Cyrus gave orders concerning the temple of God in Jerusalem: 'Let the temple be rebuilt as a place where sacrifices are offered. Let its foundations be set in place. Its height is to be ninety feet and its width ninety feet,

4 with three layers of large stones and one layer of timber. The expense is to be subsidized by the royal treasury.

5 Furthermore let the gold and silver vessels of the temple of God, which Nebuchadnezzar brought from the temple in Jerusalem and carried to Babylon, be returned and brought to their proper place in the temple in Jerusalem. Let them be deposited in the temple of God.'

#### Darius' Order to Tattenai

6 "Now Tattenai governor of Trans-Euphrates, Shethar Bozenai, and their colleagues, the officials of Trans-Euphrates—all of you stay far away from there!

7 Leave the work on this temple of God alone. Let the governor of the Jews and the elders of the Jews rebuild this temple of God in its proper place.

8 "I also hereby issue orders as to what you are to do with those elders of the Jews in order to rebuild this temple of God. From the royal treasury, from the taxes of Trans-Euphrates the complete costs are to be given to these men, so that there may be no interruption of the work.

9 Whatever is needed—whether oxen or rams or lambs or burnt offerings for the God of heaven or wheat or salt or wine or oil, as required by the priests who are in Jerusalem—must be given to them daily without any neglect,

10 so that they may be offering incense to the God of heaven and may be praying for the good fortune of the king and his family.

11 "I hereby give orders that if anyone changes this directive a beam is to be pulled out from his house and he is to be raised up and impaled on it, and his house is to be reduced to a rubbish heap for this indiscretion.

12 May God who makes his name to reside there overthrow any king or nation who reaches out to cause such change so as to destroy this temple of God in Jerusalem. I, Darius, have given orders. Let them be carried out with precision!"

#### Tattenai Immediately Obey

13 Then Tattenai governor of Trans-Euphrates, Shethar-Bozenai, and their colleagues acted accordingly—with precision, just as Darius the king had given instructions.

14a The elders of the Jews continued building and prospering, while at the same time Haggai the prophet and Zechariah the son of Iddo continued prophesying.

## Zechariah's Eight Night Visions (February 15, 519 BC)

Zechariah 1:7–6:15

### The First Vision—The Horsemen

1:7 On the twenty-fourth day of the eleventh month, the month Shebat, in Darius' second year, the word of the LORD came to the prophet Zechariah son of Berechiah son of Iddo, as follows:

8 I was attentive that night and saw a man seated on a red horse that stood among some myrtle trees in the ravine. Behind him were red, sorrel, and white horses.

9 Then I asked one nearby, "What are these, sir?" The angelic messenger who replied to me said, "I will show you what these are."

10 Then the man standing among the myrtle trees spoke up and said, "These are the ones whom the LORD has sent to walk about on the earth."

11 The riders then agreed with the angel of the LORD, who was standing among the myrtle trees, "We have been walking about on the earth, and now everything is at rest and quiet."

12 The angel of the LORD then asked, "LORD who rules over all, how long before you have compassion on Jerusalem and the other cities of Judah which you have been so angry with for these seventy years?"

13 The LORD then addressed good, comforting words to the angelic messenger who was speaking to me.

14 Turning to me, the messenger then said, "Cry out that the LORD who rules over all says, 'I am very much moved for Jerusalem and for Zion.'

15 But I am greatly displeased with the nations that take my grace for granted. I was a little displeased with them, but they have only made things worse for themselves.

16 "'Therefore,' says the LORD, 'I have become compassionate toward Jerusalem and will rebuild my temple in it,' says the LORD who rules over all. 'Once more a surveyor's measuring line will be stretched out over Jerusalem.'

17 Speak up again with the message of the LORD who rules over all: 'My cities will once more overflow with prosperity, and once more the LORD will comfort Zion and validate his choice of Jerusalem.'"

### The Second Vision—Four Horns and Four Smiths

18 Once again I looked and this time I saw four horns.

19 So I asked the angelic messenger who spoke with me, "What are these?" He replied, "These are the horns that have scattered Judah, Israel, and Jerusalem."

20 Next the LORD showed me four blacksmiths.

21 I asked, "What are these going to do?" He answered, "These horns are the ones that have scattered Judah so that there is no one to be seen. But the blacksmiths have come to terrify Judah's enemies and cut off the horns of the nations that have thrust themselves against the land of Judah in order to scatter its people."

### The Third Vision—The Surveyor

2:1 I looked again, and there was a man with a measuring line in his hand.

2 I asked, "Where are you going?" He replied, "To measure Jerusalem in order to determine its width and its length."

3 At this point the angelic messenger who spoke to me went out, and another messenger came to meet him

4 and said to him, "Hurry, speak to this young man as follows: 'Jerusalem will no longer be enclosed by walls because of the multitude of people and animals there.'

5 But I (the LORD says) will be a wall of fire surrounding Jerusalem and the source of glory in her midst.'"

6 "You there! Flee from the northland!" says the LORD, "for like the four winds of heaven I have scattered you," says the LORD.

7 "Escape, Zion, you who live among the Babylonians!"

8 For the LORD who rules over all says to me that for his own glory he has sent me to the nations that plundered you—for anyone who touches you touches the pupil of his eye.

9 "I am about to punish them in such a way," he says, "that they will be looted by their own slaves." Then you will know that the LORD who rules over all has sent me.

10 "Sing out and be happy, Zion my daughter! For look, I have come; I will settle in your midst," says the LORD.

11 "Many nations will join themselves to the LORD on the day of salvation, and they will also be my people. Indeed, I will settle in the midst of you all." Then you will know that the LORD who rules over all has sent me to you.

12 The LORD will take possession of Judah as his portion in the holy land and he will choose Jerusalem once again.

13 Be silent in the LORD's presence, all people everywhere, for he is being moved to action in his holy dwelling place.

### The Fourth Vision—The Cleansing of Joshua the High Priest

3:1 Next I saw Joshua the high priest standing before the angel of the LORD, with Satan standing at his right hand to accuse him.

2 The LORD said to Satan, "May the LORD rebuke you, Satan! May the LORD, who has chosen Jerusalem, rebuke you! Isn't this man like a burning stick snatched from the fire?" [cf. [Jude 1:9](#)]

3 Now Joshua was dressed in filthy clothes as he stood there before the angel.

4 The angel spoke up to those standing all around, "Remove his filthy clothes." Then he said to Joshua, "I have freely forgiven your

iniquity and will dress you in fine clothing.”

5 Then I spoke up, “Let a clean turban be put on his head.” So they put a clean turban on his head and clothed him, while the angel of the LORD stood nearby.

6 Then the angel of the LORD exhorted Joshua solemnly:

7 “The LORD who rules over all says, ‘If you live and work according to my requirements, you will be able to preside over my temple and attend to my courtyards, and I will allow you to come and go among these others who are standing by you.’

8 Listen now, Joshua the high priest, both you and your colleagues who are sitting before you, all of you are a symbol that I am about to introduce my servant, the Branch.

9 As for the stone I have set before Joshua—on the one stone there are seven eyes. I am about to engrave an inscription on it,’ says the LORD who rules over all, ‘to the effect that I will remove the iniquity of this land in a single day.

10 In that day,’ says the LORD who rules over all, ‘everyone will invite his friend to fellowship under his vine and under his fig tree.’”

#### **The Fifth Vision—The Gold Lampstand and Two Olive Trees**

4:1 The angelic messenger who had been speaking with me then returned and woke me, as a person is wakened from sleep.

2 He asked me, “What do you see?” I replied, “I see a menorah of pure gold with a receptacle at the top and seven lamps, with fourteen pipes going to the lamps.

3 There are also two olive trees beside it, one on the right of the receptacle and the other on the left.”

4 Then I asked the messenger who spoke with me, “What are these, sir?”

5 He replied, “Don’t you know what these are?” So I responded, “No, sir.”

6 Therefore he told me, “These signify the word of the LORD to Zerubbabel: ‘Not by strength and not by power, but by my Spirit,’ says the LORD who rules over all.”

7 “What are you, you great mountain? Because of Zerubbabel you will become a level plain! And he will bring forth the temple capstone with shoutings of ‘Grace! Grace!’ because of this.”

8 Moreover, the word of the LORD came to me as follows:

9 “The hands of Zerubbabel have laid the foundations of this temple, and his hands will complete it.” Then you will know that the LORD who rules over all has sent me to you.

10 For who dares make light of small beginnings? These seven eyes will joyfully look on the [plumb line] in Zerubbabel’s hand. (These are the eyes of the LORD, which constantly range across the whole earth.)

11 Next I asked the messenger, “What are these two olive trees on the right and the left of the menorah?”

12 Before he could reply I asked again, “What are these two extensions of the olive trees, which are emptying out the golden oil through the two golden pipes?”

13 He replied, “Don’t you know what these are?” And I said, “No, sir.”

14 So he said, “These are the two anointed ones who stand by the Lord of the whole earth.”

#### **The Sixth Vision—The Flying Scroll**

5:1 Then I turned to look, and there was a flying scroll!

2 Someone asked me, “What do you see?” I replied, “I see a flying scroll thirty feet long and fifteen feet wide.”

3 The speaker went on to say, “This is a curse traveling across the whole earth. For example, according to the curse whoever steals will be removed from the community; or on the other hand (according to the curse) whoever swears falsely will suffer the same fate.”

4 “I will send it out,” says the LORD who rules over all, “and it will enter the house of the thief and of the person who swears falsely in my name. It will land in the middle of his house and destroy both timber and stones.”

#### **The Seventh Vision—The Woman in the Basket**

5 After this the angelic messenger who had been speaking to me went out and said, “Look, see what is leaving.”

6 I asked, “What is it?” And he replied, “It is a basket for measuring grain that is moving away from here.” Moreover, he said, “This is their ‘eye’ throughout all the earth.”

7 Then a round lead cover was raised up, revealing a woman sitting inside the basket.

8 He then said, “This woman represents wickedness,” and he pushed her down into the basket and placed the lead cover on top.

9 Then I looked again and saw two women going forth with the wind in their wings (they had wings like those of a stork) and they lifted up the basket between the earth and the sky.

10 I asked the messenger who was speaking to me, “Where are they taking the basket?”

11 He replied, “To build a temple for her in the land of Babylonia. When it is finished, she will be placed there in her own residence.”

#### **The Eighth Vision—The Four Chariots**

6:1 Once more I looked, and this time I saw four chariots emerging from between two mountains of bronze.

2 Harnessed to the first chariot were red horses, to the second black horses,

3 to the third white horses, and to the fourth spotted horses, all of them strong.

4 Then I asked the angelic messenger who was speaking with me, "What are these, sir?"

5 The messenger replied, "These are the four spirits of heaven that have been presenting themselves before the Lord of all the earth.

6 The chariot with the black horses is going to the north country and the white ones are going after them, but the spotted ones are going to the south country.

7 All these strong ones are scattering; they have sought permission to go and walk about over the earth." The Lord had said, "Go! Walk about over the earth!" So they are doing so.

8 Then he cried out to me, "Look! The ones going to the northland have brought me peace about the northland."

#### **Instructions to Zechariah Concerning Joshua the High Priest**

9 The word of the LORD came to me as follows:

10 "Choose some people from among the exiles, namely, Heldai, Tobijah, and Jedaiah, all of whom have come from Babylon, and when you have done so go to the house of Josiah son of Zephaniah.

11 Then take some silver and gold to make a crown and set it on the head of Joshua son of Jehozadak, the high priest.

12 Then say to him, "The LORD who rules over all says, "Look—here is the man whose name is Branch, who will sprout up from his place and build the temple of the LORD.

13 Indeed, he will build the temple of the LORD, and he will be clothed in splendor, sitting as king on his throne. Moreover, there will be a priest with him on his throne and they will see eye to eye on everything.

14 The crown will then be turned over to Helem, Tobijah, Jedaiah, and Hen son of Zephaniah as a memorial in the temple of the LORD.

15 Then those who are far away will come and build the temple of the LORD so that you may know that the LORD who rules over all has sent me to you. This will all come to pass if you completely obey the voice of the LORD your God.'"

*Scripture quoted by permission. All scripture quotations, unless otherwise indicated, are taken from the NET Bible® copyright ©1996–2006 by Biblical Studies Press, L.L.C. <http://bible.org> All rights reserved. This material is available in its entirety as a free download or online web use at <http://netbible.org/>.*

## Zechariah's Prophecy to the Remnant—Hypocritical Fasting (December 7, 518 BC)

Zechariah 7–8

### Question About Fasting

7:1 In King Darius' fourth year, on the fourth day of Kislev, the ninth month, the word of the LORD came to Zechariah.

2 Now the people of Bethel had sent Sharezer and Regem-Melech and their companions to seek the LORD's favor

3 by asking both the priests of the temple of the LORD [of hosts] and the prophets, "Should we weep in the fifth month, fasting as we have done over the years?"

### God's First Response—Examine Your True Motives

4 The word of the LORD who rules over all then came to me,

5 "Speak to all the people and priests of the land as follows: 'When you fasted and lamented in the fifth and seventh months through all these seventy years, did you truly fast for me—for me, indeed?'

6 And now when you eat and drink, are you not doing so for yourselves?'"

7 Should you not have obeyed the words that the LORD cried out through the former prophets when Jerusalem was peacefully inhabited and her surrounding cities, the Negev, and the Shephelah were also populated? [cf. [Isa 58:1–8](#)]

### God's Second Response—A Call to Repentance

8 Again the word of the LORD came to Zechariah:

9 "The LORD [of hosts] said, 'Exercise true judgment and show brotherhood and compassion to each other.

10 You must not oppress the widow, the orphan, the foreigner, or the poor, nor should anyone secretly plot evil against his fellow human being.'

11 "But they refused to pay attention, turning away stubbornly and stopping their ears so they could not hear.

12 Indeed, they made their heart as hard as diamond, so that they could not obey the Torah and the other words the LORD who rules over all had sent by his Spirit through the former prophets. Therefore, the LORD who rules over all had poured out great wrath.

13 "'It then came about that just as I cried out, but they would not obey, so they will cry out, but I will not listen,' the LORD [of hosts] had said.

14 'Rather, I will sweep them away in a storm into all the nations they are not familiar with.' Thus the land had become desolate because of them, with no one crossing through or returning, for they had made the fruitful land a waste."

### Israel's Future Restoration

8:1 Then the word of the LORD who rules over all came to me as follows:

2 "The LORD who rules over all says, 'I am very much concerned for Zion; indeed, I am so concerned for her that my rage will fall on those who hurt her.'

3 The Lord says, 'I have returned to Zion and will live within Jerusalem. Now Jerusalem will be called "truthful city," "mountain of the LORD who rules over all," "holy mountain."'

4 Moreover, the LORD who rules over all says, 'Old men and women will once more live in the plazas of Jerusalem, each one leaning on a cane because of advanced age.

5 And the streets of the city will be full of boys and girls playing.

6 And,' says the LORD who rules over all, 'though such a thing may seem to be difficult in the opinion of the small community of those days, will it also appear difficult to me?' asks the LORD who rules over all.

7 "The LORD who rules over all asserts, 'I am about to save my people from the lands of the east and the west.

8 And I will bring them to settle within Jerusalem. They will be my people, and I will be their God, in truth and righteousness.'

9 "The LORD who rules over all also says, 'Gather strength, you who are listening to these words today from the mouths of the prophets who were there at the founding of the house of the LORD who rules over all, so that the temple might be built.

10 Before that time there was no compensation for man or animal, nor was there any relief from adversity for those who came and went, because I had pitted everybody—each one—against everyone else.

11 But I will be different now to this remnant of my people from the way I was in those days,' says the LORD who rules over all,

12 'for there will be a peaceful time of sowing, the vine will produce its fruit and the ground its yield, and the skies will rain down dew. Then I will allow the remnant of my people to possess all these things.

13 And it will come about that just as you (both Judah and Israel) were a curse to the nations, so I will save you and you will be a blessing. Do not be afraid! Instead, be strong!'

14 "For the LORD who rules over all says, 'As I had planned to hurt you when your fathers made me angry,' says the LORD who rules over all, 'and I was not sorry,

15 so, to the contrary, I have planned in these days to do good to Jerusalem and Judah—do not fear!

16 These are the things you must do: Speak the truth, each of you, to one another. [[Eph 4:25](#)] Practice true and righteous judgment in your courts.

17 Do not plan evil in your hearts against one another. Do not favor a false oath—these are all things that I hate,' says the LORD."

18 The word of the LORD who rules over all came to me as follows:



19 “The LORD who rules over all says, ‘The fast of the fourth, fifth, seventh, and tenth months will become joyful and happy, pleasant feasts for the house of Judah, so love truth and peace.’

20 The LORD who rules over all says, ‘It will someday come to pass that people—residents of many cities—will come.

21 The inhabitants of one will go to another and say, “Let’s go up at once to ask the favor of the LORD, to seek the LORD who rules over all. Indeed, I’ll go with you.”

22 Many peoples and powerful nations will come to Jerusalem to seek the LORD who rules over all and to ask his favor.

23 The LORD who rules over all says, ‘In those days ten people from all languages and nations will grasp hold of—indeed, grab—the robe of one Jew and say, “Let us go with you, for we have heard that God is with you.”’”

## Zechariah’s Prophecy to the Remnant—The Anointed King Rejected (c. 517–516 BC)

### Zechariah 9–11

#### Judgment on the Nations Surrounding Israel (Historical and Eschatological)

9:1 An oracle of the word of the LORD concerning the land of Hadrach, with its focus on Damascus: The eyes of all humanity, especially of the tribes of Israel, are toward the LORD,

2 as are those of Hamath also, which adjoins Damascus, and Tyre and Sidon, though they consider themselves to be very wise.

3 Tyre built herself a fortification and piled up silver like dust and gold like the mud of the streets!

4 Nevertheless the Lord will evict her and shove her fortifications into the sea—she will be consumed by fire.

5 Ashkelon will see and be afraid; Gaza will be in great anguish, as will Ekron, for her hope will have been dried up. Gaza will lose her king, and Ashkelon will no longer be inhabited.

6 A mongrel people will live in Ashdod, for I will greatly humiliate the Philistines.

7 I will take away their abominable religious practices; then those who survive will become a community of believers in our God, like a clan in Judah, and Ekron will be like the Jebusites.

8 Then I will surround my temple to protect it like a guard from anyone crossing back and forth; so no one will cross over against them anymore as an oppressor, for now I myself have seen it.

#### The Coming of the Messiah, Israel’s True King (Historical and Eschatological)

9 Rejoice greatly, daughter of Zion!

Shout, daughter of Jerusalem!

Look! Your king is coming to you:

he is legitimate and victorious,  
humble and riding on a donkey—

on a young donkey, the foal of a female donkey. [[Matt 21:5](#); [John 12:15](#)]

10 I will remove the chariot from Ephraim

and the warhorse from Jerusalem,

and the battle bow will be removed.

Then he will announce peace to the nations.

His dominion will be from sea to sea

and from the Euphrates River to the ends of the earth.

#### The King Delivers Israel (Eschatological)

11 Moreover, as for you, because of our covenant relationship secured with blood, I will release your prisoners from the waterless pit.

12 Return to the stronghold, you prisoners, with hope; today I declare that I will return double what was taken from you.

13 I will bend Judah as my bow; I will load the bow with Ephraim, my arrow! I will stir up your sons, Zion, against yours, Greece, and I will make you, Zion, like a warrior’s sword.

14 Then the LORD will appear above them, and his arrow will shoot forth like lightning; the Lord God will blow the trumpet and will sally forth on the southern storm winds.

15 The LORD who rules over all will guard them, and they will prevail and overcome with sling stones. Then they will drink, and will become noisy like drunkards, full like the sacrificial basin or like the corners of the altar.

16 On that day the LORD their God will deliver them as the flock of his people, for they are the precious stones of a crown sparkling over his land.

17 How precious and fair! Grain will make the young men flourish and new wine the young women.

#### The King Rejects the Wicked Leaders (Eschatological)

10:1 Ask the LORD for rain in the season of the late spring rains—the LORD who causes thunderstorms—and he will give everyone showers of rain and green growth in the field.

2 For the household gods have spoken wickedness, the soothsayers have seen a lie, and as for the dreamers, they have disclosed

emptiness and give comfort in vain. Therefore the people set out like sheep and become scattered because they have no shepherd.  
3a I am enraged at the shepherds and will punish the lead-goats.

#### **The King Selects the Righteous Leaders (Eschatological)**

3b For the LORD who rules over all has brought blessing to his flock, the house of Judah, and will transform them into his majestic warhorse.

4 From him will come the cornerstone, the wall peg, the battle bow, and every ruler.

5 And they will be like warriors trampling the mud of the streets in battle. They will fight, for the LORD will be with them, and will defeat the enemy cavalry.

6 “I (says the LORD) will strengthen the kingdom of Judah and deliver the people of Joseph and will bring them back because of my compassion for them. They will be as though I had never rejected them, for I am the LORD their God and therefore I will hear them.

7 The Ephraimites will be like warriors and will rejoice as if they had drunk wine. Their children will see it and rejoice; they will celebrate in the things of the LORD.

#### **The King Regathers His People—the Second Exodus (Eschatological)**

8 I will signal for them and gather them, for I have already redeemed them; then they will become as numerous as they were before.  
9 Though I scatter them among the nations, they will remember in far-off places—they and their children will sprout forth and return.

10 I will bring them back from Egypt and gather them from Assyria. I will bring them to the lands of Gilead and Lebanon, for there will not be enough room for them in their own land.

11 The LORD will cross the sea of storms and will calm its turbulence. The depths of the Nile will dry up, the pride of Assyria will be humbled, and the domination of Egypt will be no more.

12 Thus I will strengthen them by my power, and they will walk about in my name,” says the LORD.

#### **A Lament for the Destruction of the Three Trees/Shepherds/Kings (Historical—Preexilic)**

- 11:1 Open your gates, Lebanon,  
so that the fire may consume your cedars.
- 2 Howl, fir tree, because the cedar has fallen;  
the majestic trees have been destroyed.  
Howl, oaks of Bashan,  
because the impenetrable forest has fallen.
- 3 Listen to the howling of shepherds,  
because their magnificence has been destroyed.  
Listen to the roaring of young lions,  
because the thickets of the Jordan have been devastated.

#### **The Rejection of the Messiah as Illustrated by Zechariah’s Role-Playing (Historical—Preexilic and Exilic)**

4 The LORD my God says this: “Shepherd the flock set aside for slaughter.

5 Those who buy them slaughter them and are not held guilty; those who sell them say, ‘Blessed be the LORD, for I am rich.’ Their own shepherds have no compassion for them.

6 Indeed, I will no longer have compassion on the people of the land,” says the LORD, “but instead I will turn every last person over to his neighbor and his king. They will devastate the land, and I will not deliver it from them.”

7 So I began to shepherd the flock destined for slaughter, the most afflicted of all the flock. Then I took two staffs, calling one “Pleasantness” and the other “Binders,” and I tended the flock.

8 Next I eradicated the three shepherds in one month, for I ran out of patience with them and, indeed, they detested me as well.

9 I then said, “I will not shepherd you. What is to die, let it die, and what is to be eradicated, let it be eradicated. As for those who survive, let them eat each other’s flesh!”

10 Then I took my staff “Pleasantness” and cut it in two to annul my covenant that I had made with all the people.

11 So it was annulled that very day, and then the most afflicted of the flock who kept faith with me knew that that was the word of the LORD.

12 Then I said to them, “If it seems good to you, pay me my wages, but if not, forget it.” So they weighed out my payment—thirty pieces of silver.

13 The LORD then said to me, “Throw to the potter that exorbitant sum at which they valued me!” So I took the thirty pieces of silver and threw them to the potter at the temple of the LORD. [cf. [Matt 26:14–16; 27:3–10](#)]

14 Then I cut the second staff “Binders” in two in order to annul the covenant of brotherhood between Judah and Israel.

#### **The Evil Shepherd/King to Come (Eschatological)**

15 Again the LORD said to me, “Take up once more the equipment of a foolish shepherd.

16 Indeed, I am about to raise up a shepherd in the land who will not take heed to the sheep headed to slaughter, will not seek the scattered, and will not heal the injured. Moreover, he will not nourish the one that is healthy but instead will eat the meat of the fat sheep and tear off their hooves.

17 Woe to the worthless shepherd  
who abandons the flock!  
May a sword fall on his arm and his right eye!  
May his arm wither completely away,  
and his right eye become completely blind!”

*Scripture quoted by permission. All scripture quotations, unless otherwise indicated, are taken from the NET Bible® copyright ©1996–2006 by Biblical Studies Press, L.L.C. <http://bible.org> All rights reserved. This material is available in its entirety as a free download or online web use at <http://netbible.org/>.*

## 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 revelation of the word of the LORD concerning Israel: The LORD—he who stretches out the heavens and lays the foundations of the earth, who forms the human spirit within a person—says,

2 “I am about to make Jerusalem a cup that brings dizziness to all the surrounding nations; indeed, Judah will also be included when Jerusalem is besieged.

3 Moreover, on that day I will make Jerusalem a heavy burden for all the nations, and all who try to carry it will be seriously injured; yet all the peoples of the earth will be assembled against it.

4 In that day,” says the LORD, “I will strike every horse with confusion and its rider with madness. I will pay close attention to the house of Judah, but will strike all the horses of the nations with blindness.

5 Then the leaders of Judah will say to themselves, ‘The inhabitants of Jerusalem are a means of strength to us through their God, the LORD who rules over all.’

6 On that day I will make the leaders of Judah like an igniter among sticks and a burning torch among sheaves, and they will burn up all the surrounding nations right and left. Then the people of Jerusalem will settle once more in their place, the city of Jerusalem.

7 The LORD also will deliver the homes of Judah first, so that the splendor of the kingship of David and of the people of Jerusalem may not exceed that of Judah.

8 On that day the LORD himself will defend the inhabitants of Jerusalem, so that the weakest among them will be like mighty David, and the dynasty of David will be like God, like the angel of the LORD before them.

#### **Israel Weeps Over the One They Pierced (Eschatological)**

9 So on that day I will set out to destroy all the nations that come against Jerusalem.”

10 “I will pour out on the kingship of David and the population of Jerusalem a spirit of grace and supplication so that they will look to me, the one they have pierced. They will lament for him as one laments for an only son, and there will be a bitter cry for him like the bitter cry for a firstborn. [[John 19:37](#); [Rev 1:7](#)]

11 On that day the lamentation in Jerusalem will be as great as the lamentation at Hadad-Rimmon in the plain of Megiddo.

12 The land will mourn, clan by clan—the clan of the royal household of David by itself and their wives by themselves; the clan of the family of Nathan by itself and their wives by themselves;

13 the clan of the descendants of Levi by itself and their wives by themselves; and the clan of the Shimeites by itself and their wives by themselves—

14 all the clans that remain, each separately with their wives.”

#### **Israel Cleansed of Sin, Idols, and False Prophets (Eschatological)**

13:1 “In that day there will be a fountain opened up for the dynasty of David and the people of Jerusalem to cleanse them from sin and impurity.

2 And also on that day,” says the LORD who rules over all, “I will remove the names of the idols from the land and they will never again be remembered. Moreover, I will remove the prophets and the unclean spirit from the land.

3 Then, if anyone prophesies in spite of this, his father and mother to whom he was born will say to him, ‘You cannot live, for you lie in the name of the LORD.’ Then his father and mother to whom he was born will run him through with a sword when he prophesies.

4 “Therefore, on that day each prophet will be ashamed of his vision when he prophesies and will no longer wear the hairy garment of a prophet to deceive the people.

5 Instead he will say, ‘I am no prophet—indeed, I am a farmer, for a man has made me his indentured servant since my youth.’

6 Then someone will ask him, ‘What are these wounds on your chest?’ and he will answer, ‘Some that I received in the house of my friends.’

#### **The Shepherd Smitten, a Remnant Spared (Historical and Eschatological)**

7 “Awake, sword, against my shepherd,  
against the man who is my associate,”  
says the LORD who rules over all.

Strike the shepherd that the flock may be scattered; [[Matt 26:31](#); [Mark 14:27](#)]

I will turn my hand against the insignificant ones.

8 It will happen in all the land, says the LORD,  
that two-thirds of the people in it will be cut off and die,  
but one-third will be left in it.

9 Then I will bring the remaining third into the fire;  
I will refine them like silver is refined  
and will test them like gold is tested.  
They will call on my name and I will answer;

I will say, ‘These are my people,’  
and they will say, ‘The LORD is my God.’”

#### **The Day of the Battle for Jerusalem (Eschatological)**

14:1 A day of the LORD is about to come when your possessions will be divided as plunder in your midst.

2 For I will gather all the nations against Jerusalem to wage war; the city will be taken, its houses plundered, and the women raped. Then half of the city will go into exile, but the remainder of the people will not be taken away.

3 Then the LORD will go to battle and fight against those nations, just as he fought battles in ancient days.

4 On that day his feet will stand on the Mount of Olives which lies to the east of Jerusalem, and the Mount of Olives will be split in half from east to west, leaving a great valley. Half the mountain will move northward and the other half southward.

5 Then you will escape through my mountain valley, for the mountains will extend to Azal. Indeed, you will flee as you fled from the earthquake in the days of King Uzziah of Judah. Then the LORD my God will come with all his holy ones with him.

#### **The Establishment of the Messianic Kingdom (Eschatological)**

6 On that day there will be no light—the sources of light in the heavens will congeal.

7 It will happen in one day (a day known to the LORD); not in the day or the night, but in the evening there will be light.

8 Moreover, on that day living waters will flow out from Jerusalem, half of them to the eastern sea and half of them to the western sea; it will happen both in summer and in winter.

9 The LORD will then be king over all the earth. In that day the LORD will be seen as one with a single name.

10 All the land will change and become like the Arabah from Geba to Rimmon, south of Jerusalem; and Jerusalem will be raised up and will stay in its own place from the Benjamin Gate to the site of the First Gate and on to the Corner Gate, and from the Tower of Hananel to the royal winepresses.

11 And people will settle there, and there will no longer be the threat of divine extermination—Jerusalem will dwell in security.

#### **The Destruction of Israel’s Enemies (Eschatological)**

12 But this will be the nature of the plague with which the LORD will strike all the nations that have fought against Jerusalem: Their flesh will decay while they stand on their feet, their eyes will rot away in their sockets, and their tongues will dissolve in their mouths.

13 On that day there will be great confusion from the LORD among them; they will seize each other and attack one another violently.

14 Moreover, Judah will fight at Jerusalem, and the wealth of all the surrounding nations will be gathered up—gold, silver, and clothing in great abundance.

15 This is the kind of plague that will devastate horses, mules, camels, donkeys, and all the other animals in those camps.

#### **The King is Worshipped by the Nations During the Millennium (Eschatological)**

16 Then all who survive from all the nations that came to attack Jerusalem will go up annually to worship the King, the LORD who rules over all, and to observe the Feast of Tabernacles.

17 But if any of the nations anywhere on earth refuse to go up to Jerusalem to worship the King, the LORD who rules over all, they will get no rain.

18 If the Egyptians will not do so, they will get no rain—instead there will be the kind of plague which the LORD inflicts on any nations that do not go up to celebrate the Feast of Tabernacles.

19 This will be the punishment of Egypt and of all nations that do not go up to celebrate the Feast of Tabernacles.

20 On that day the bells of the horses will bear the inscription “HOLY TO THE LORD.” The cooking pots in the LORD’s temple will be as holy as the bowls in front of the altar.

21 Every cooking pot in Jerusalem and Judah will become holy in the sight of the LORD who rules over all, so that all who offer sacrifices may come and use some of them to boil their sacrifices in them. On that day there will no longer be a Canaanite in the house of the LORD who rules over all.

### **The Temple Completed (March 12, 515 BC)**

Ezra 6:14b–18

14b They built and brought it to completion by the command of the God of Israel and by the command of Cyrus and Darius and Artaxerxes king of Persia.

15 They finished this temple on the third day of the month Adar, which is the sixth year of the reign of King Darius.

16 The people of Israel—the priests, the Levites, and the rest of the exiles—observed the dedication of this temple of God with joy.

17 For the dedication of this temple of God they offered one hundred bulls, two hundred rams, four hundred lambs, and twelve male goats for the sin of all Israel, according to the number of the tribes of Israel.

18 They appointed the priests by their divisions and the Levites by their divisions over the worship of God at Jerusalem, in accord with the book of Moses.

### Passover Celebrated (April 21–27, 515 BC)

Ezra 6:19–22

19 The exiles observed the Passover on the fourteenth day of the first month.

20 The priests and the Levites had purified themselves, every last one, and they all were ceremonially pure. They sacrificed the Passover lamb for all the exiles, for their colleagues the priests, and for themselves.

21 The Israelites who were returning from the exile ate it, along with all those who had joined them in separating themselves from the uncleanness of the nations of the land to seek the LORD God of Israel.

22 They observed the Feast of Unleavened Bread for seven days with joy, for the LORD had given them joy and had changed the opinion of the king of Assyria toward them, so that he assisted them in the work on the temple 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!  
Yes, praise is pleasant and appropriate!
- 2 The LORD rebuilds Jerusalem,  
and gathers the exiles of Israel.
- 3 He heals the brokenhearted,  
and bandages their wounds.
- 4 He counts the number of the stars;  
he names all of them.
- 5 Our Lord is great and has awesome power;  
there is no limit to his wisdom.
- 6 The LORD lifts up the oppressed,  
but knocks the wicked to the ground.
- 7 Offer to the LORD a song of thanks!  
Sing praises to our God to the accompaniment of a harp!
- 8 He covers the sky with clouds,  
provides the earth with rain,  
and causes grass to grow on the hillsides.
- 9 He gives food to the animals,  
and to the young ravens when they chirp.
- 10 He is not enamored with the strength of a horse,  
nor is he impressed by the warrior's strong legs.
- 11 The LORD takes delight in his faithful followers,  
and in those who wait for his loyal love.
- 12 Extol the LORD, O Jerusalem!  
Praise your God, O Zion!
- 13 For he makes the bars of your gates strong.  
He blesses your children within you.
- 14 He brings peace to your territory.  
He abundantly provides for you the best grain.
- 15 He sends his command through the earth;  
swiftly his order reaches its destination.
- 16 He sends the snow that is white like wool;  
he spreads the frost that is white like ashes.
- 17 He throws his hailstones like crumbs.  
Who can withstand the cold wind he sends?
- 18 He then orders it all to melt;  
he breathes on it, and the water flows.
- 19 He proclaims his word to Jacob,  
his statutes and regulations to Israel.
- 20 He has not done so with any other nation;  
they are not aware of his regulations.  
Praise the LORD!

### Opposition to the Remnant During Ahasuerus' [Xerxes] Reign (c. 486/485 BC)

Ezra 4:6

6 At the beginning of the reign of Ahasuerus they [*the local residents*] filed 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 The following events happened in the days of Ahasuerus. (I am referring to that Ahasuerus who used to rule over a hundred and twenty-seven provinces extending all the way from India to Ethiopia.)  
 2 In those days, as King Ahasuerus sat on his royal throne in Susa the citadel,  
 3 in the third year of his reign he provided a banquet for all his officials and his servants. The army of Persia and Media was present, as well as the nobles and the officials of the provinces.  
 4 He displayed the riches of his royal glory and the splendor of his majestic greatness for a lengthy period of time—a hundred and eighty days, to be exact!

### The Seven Day Banquet in Susa (April 3–9, 482 BC)

Esther 1:5–9

5 When those days were completed, the king then provided a seven-day banquet for all the people who were present in Susa the citadel, for those of highest standing to the most lowly. It was held in the court located in the garden of the royal palace.  
 6 The furnishings included linen and purple curtains hung by cords of the finest linen and purple wool on silver rings, alabaster columns, gold and silver couches displayed on a floor made of valuable stones of alabaster, mother-of-pearl, and mineral stone.  
 7 Drinks were served in golden containers, all of which differed from one another. Royal wine was available in abundance at the king's expense.  
 8 There were no restrictions on the drinking, for the king had instructed all of his supervisors that they should do as everyone so desired.  
 9 Queen Vashti also gave a banquet for the women in King Ahasuerus' royal palace.

### Vashti Defies Ahasuerus (April 9, 482 BC)

Esther 1:10–22

10 On the seventh day, as King Ahasuerus was feeling the effects of the wine, he ordered Mehuman, Biztha, Harbona, Bigtha, Abagtha, Zethar, and Carcas, the seven eunuchs who attended him,  
 11 to bring Queen Vashti into the king's presence wearing her royal high turban. He wanted to show the people and the officials her beauty, for she was very attractive.  
 12 But Queen Vashti refused to come at the king's bidding conveyed through the eunuchs. Then the king became extremely angry, and his rage consumed him.  
 13 The king then inquired of the wise men who were discerners of the times—for it was the royal custom to confer with all those who were proficient in laws and legalities.  
 14 Those who were closest to him were Carshena, Shethar, Admatha, Tarshish, Meres, Marsena, and Memucan. These men were the seven officials of Persia and Media who saw the king on a regular basis and had the most prominent offices in the kingdom.  
 15 The king asked, "By law, what should be done to Queen Vashti in light of the fact that she has not obeyed the instructions of King Ahasuerus conveyed through the eunuchs?"  
 16 Memucan then replied to the king and the officials, "The wrong of Queen Vashti is not against the king alone, but against all the officials and all the people who are throughout all the provinces of King Ahasuerus.  
 17 For the matter concerning the queen will spread to all the women, leading them to treat their husbands with contempt, saying, 'When King Ahasuerus gave orders to bring Queen Vashti into his presence, she would not come.'  
 18 And this very day the noble ladies of Persia and Media who have heard the matter concerning the queen will respond in the same way to all the royal officials, and there will be more than enough contempt and anger!  
 19 If the king is so inclined, let a royal edict go forth from him, and let it be written in the laws of Persia and Media that cannot be repealed, that Vashti may not come into the presence of King Ahasuerus, and let the king convey her royalty to another who is more deserving than she.  
 20 And let the king's decision which he will enact be disseminated throughout all his kingdom, vast though it is. Then all the women will give honor to their husbands, from the most prominent to the lowly."  
 21 The matter seemed appropriate to the king and the officials. So the king acted on the advice of Memucan.  
 22 He sent letters throughout all the royal provinces, to each province according to its own script and to each people according to its



own language, that every man should be ruling his family and should be speaking the language of his own people.

### Ahasuerus Searches for a New Queen (c. 482–480 BC)

Esther 2:1–9

- 1 When these things had been accomplished and the rage of King Ahasuerus had diminished, he remembered Vashti and what she had done and what had been decided against her.
- 2 The king’s servants who attended him said, “Let a search be conducted in the king’s behalf for attractive young women.
- 3 And let the king appoint officers throughout all the provinces of his kingdom to gather all the attractive young women to Susa the citadel, to the harem under the authority of Hegai, the king’s eunuch who oversees the women, and let him provide whatever cosmetics they desire.
- 4 Let the young woman whom the king finds most attractive become queen in place of Vashti.” This seemed like a good idea to the king, so he acted accordingly.
- 5 Now there happened to be a Jewish man in Susa the citadel whose name was Mordecai. He was the son of Jair, the son of Shimei, the son of Kish, a Benjaminite,
- 6 who had been taken into exile from Jerusalem with the captives who had been carried into exile with Jeconiah king of Judah, whom Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon had taken into exile.
- 7 Now he was acting as the guardian of Hadassah (that is, Esther), the daughter of his uncle, for neither her father nor her mother was alive. This young woman was very attractive and had a beautiful figure. When her father and mother died, Mordecai had raised her as if she were his own daughter.
- 8 It so happened that when the king’s edict and his law became known many young women were taken to Susa the citadel to be placed under the authority of Hegai. Esther also was taken to the royal palace to be under the authority of Hegai, who was overseeing the women.
- 9 This young woman pleased him, and she found favor with him. He quickly provided her with her cosmetics and her rations; he also provided her with the seven specially chosen young women who were from the palace. He then transferred her and her young women to the best quarters in the harem.

### Esther’s Twelve Month Beauty Treatment (February–December 479 BC)

Esther 2:10–14

- 10 Now Esther had not disclosed her people or her lineage, for Mordecai had instructed her not to do so.
- 11 And day after day Mordecai used to walk back and forth in front of the court of the harem in order to learn how Esther was doing and what might happen to her.
- 12 At the end of the twelve months that were required for the women, when the turn of each young woman arrived to go to King Ahasuerus—for in this way they had to fulfill their time of cosmetic treatment: six months with oil of myrrh, and six months with perfume and various ointments used by women—
- 13 the woman would go to the king in the following way: Whatever she asked for would be provided for her to take with her from the harem to the royal palace.
- 14 In the evening she went, and in the morning she returned to a separate part of the harem, to the authority of Shaashgaz the king’s eunuch who was overseeing the concubines. She would not go back to the king unless the king was pleased with her and she was requested by name.

### Ahasuerus Chooses Esther as the New Queen of Persia (December 479/January 478 BC)

Esther 2:15–18

- 15 When it became the turn of Esther daughter of Abihail the uncle of Mordecai (who had raised her as if she were his own daughter) to go to the king, she did not request anything except what Hegai the king’s eunuch, who was overseer of the women, had recommended. Yet Esther met with the approval of all who saw her.
- 16 Then Esther was taken to King Ahasuerus at his royal residence in the tenth month (that is, the month of Tebeth) in the seventh year of his reign.
- 17 And the king loved Esther more than all the other women, and she met with his loving approval more than all the other young women. So he placed the royal high turban on her head and appointed her queen in place of Vashti.
- 18 Then the king prepared a large banquet for all his officials and his servants—it was actually Esther’s banquet. He also set aside a holiday for the provinces, and he provided for offerings at the king’s expense.

### Mordecai Discovers a Plot Against Ahasuerus (c. 478–475 BC)

Esther 2:19–23

19 Now when the young women were being gathered again, Mordecai was sitting at the king's gate.  
 20 Esther was still not divulging her lineage or her people, just as Mordecai had instructed her. Esther continued to do whatever Mordecai said, just as she had done when he was raising her.  
 21 In those days while Mordecai was sitting at the king's gate, Bigthan and Teresh, two of the king's eunuchs who protected the entrance, became angry and plotted to assassinate King Ahasuerus.  
 22 When Mordecai learned of the conspiracy, he informed Queen Esther, and Esther told the king in Mordecai's behalf.  
 23 The king then had the matter investigated and, finding it to be so, had the two conspirators hanged on a gallows. It was then recorded in the daily chronicles in the king's presence.

### Haman Sets Out to Destroy the Jews (April 5, 474 BC)

Esther 3:1–11

1 Some time later King Ahasuerus promoted Haman the son of Hammedatha, the Agagite, exalting him and setting his position above that of all the officials who were with him.  
 2 As a result, all the king's servants who were at the king's gate were bowing and paying homage to Haman, for the king had so commanded. However, Mordecai did not bow, nor did he pay him homage.  
 3 Then the servants of the king who were at the king's gate asked Mordecai, "Why are you violating the king's commandment?"  
 4 And after they had spoken to him day after day without his paying any attention to them, they informed Haman to see whether this attitude on Mordecai's part would be permitted. Furthermore, he had disclosed to them that he was a Jew.  
 5 When Haman saw that Mordecai was not bowing or paying homage to him, he was filled with rage.  
 6 But the thought of striking out against Mordecai alone was repugnant to him, for he had been informed of the identity of Mordecai's people. So Haman sought to destroy all the Jews (that is, the people of Mordecai) who were in all the kingdom of Ahasuerus.  
 7 In the first month (that is, the month of Nisan), in the twelfth year of King Ahasuerus' reign, pur (that is, the lot) was cast before Haman in order to determine a day and a month. It turned out to be the twelfth month (that is, the month of Adar).  
 8 Then Haman said to King Ahasuerus, "There is a particular people that is dispersed and spread among the inhabitants throughout all the provinces of your kingdom whose laws differ from those of all other peoples. Furthermore, they do not observe the king's laws. It is not appropriate for the king to provide a haven for them.  
 9 If the king is so inclined, let an edict be issued to destroy them. I will pay ten thousand talents of silver to be conveyed to the king's treasuries for the officials who carry out this business."  
 10 So the king removed his signet ring from his hand and gave it to Haman the son of Hammedatha, the Agagite, who was hostile toward the Jews.  
 11 The king replied to Haman, "Keep your money, and do with those people whatever you wish."

### The Edict to Kill the Jews is Sent Throughout the Kingdom (April 17, 474 BC)

Esther 3:12–15

12 So the royal scribes were summoned in the first month, on the thirteenth day of the month. Everything Haman commanded was written to the king's satraps and governors who were in every province and to the officials of every people, province by province according to its script and people by people according to its language. In the name of King Ahasuerus it was written and sealed with the king's signet ring.  
 13 Letters were sent by the runners to all the king's provinces stating that they should destroy, kill, and annihilate all the Jews, from youth to elderly, both women and children, on a particular day, namely the thirteenth day of the twelfth month (that is, the month of Adar), and to loot and plunder their possessions.  
 14 A copy of this edict was to be presented as law throughout every province; it was to be made known to all the inhabitants, so that they would be prepared for this day.  
 15 The messengers scurried forth with the king's order. The edict was issued in Susa the citadel. While the king and Haman sat down to drink, the city of Susa was in an uproar!

### Mordecai Tells Esther the Terrible News (April/May 474 BC)

Esther 4:1–14

1 Now when Mordecai became aware of all that had been done, he tore his garments and put on sackcloth and ashes. He went out into the city, crying out in a loud and bitter voice.  
 2 But he went no further than the king's gate, for no one was permitted to enter the king's gate clothed in sackcloth.

3 Throughout each and every province where the king's edict and law were announced there was considerable mourning among the Jews, along with fasting, weeping, and sorrow. Sackcloth and ashes were characteristic of many.

4 When Esther's female attendants and her eunuchs came and informed her about Mordecai's behavior, the queen was overcome with anguish. Although she sent garments for Mordecai to put on so that he could remove his sackcloth, he would not accept them.

5 So Esther called for Hathach, one of the king's eunuchs who had been placed at her service, and instructed him to find out the cause and reason for Mordecai's behavior.

6 So Hathach went to Mordecai at the plaza of the city in front of the king's gate.

7 Then Mordecai related to him everything that had happened to him, even the specific amount of money that Haman had offered to pay to the king's treasuries for the Jews to be destroyed.

8 He also gave him a written copy of the law that had been disseminated in Susa for their destruction so that he could show it to Esther and talk to her about it. He also gave instructions that she should go to the king to implore him and petition him on behalf of her people.

9 So Hathach returned and related Mordecai's instructions to Esther.

10 Then Esther replied to Hathach with instructions for Mordecai:

11 "All the servants of the king and the people of the king's provinces know that there is only one law applicable to any man or woman who comes uninvited to the king in the inner court—that person will be put to death, unless the king extends to him the gold scepter, permitting him to be spared. Now I have not been invited to come to the king for some thirty days!"

12 When Esther's reply was conveyed to Mordecai,

13 he said to take back this answer to Esther:

14 "Don't imagine that because you are part of the king's household you will be the one Jew who will escape. If you keep quiet at this time, liberation and protection for the Jews will appear from another source, while you and your father's household perish. It may very well be that you have achieved royal status 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 sent this reply to Mordecai:

16 "Go, assemble all the Jews who are found in Susa and fast in my behalf. Don't eat and don't drink for three days, night or day. My female attendants and I will also fast in the same way. Afterward I will go to the king, even though it violates the law. If I perish, I perish!"

17 So Mordecai set out to do everything that Esther had instructed him.

*Scripture quoted by permission. All scripture quotations, unless otherwise indicated, are taken from the NET Bible® copyright ©1996–2006 by Biblical Studies Press, L.L.C. <http://bible.org> All rights reserved. This material is available in its entirety as a free download or online web use at <http://netbible.org/>.*

#### 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>

<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," *AUSS* 14 (1976): 227–246 and Andrew E. Steinmann, *From Abraham to Paul* (Concordia Publishing House, 2011): 192–195.

- (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).
- (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).

---

<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.

<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 It so happened that on the third day Esther put on her royal attire and stood in the inner court of the palace, opposite the king's quarters. The king was sitting on his royal throne in the palace, opposite the entrance.

2 When the king saw Queen Esther standing in the court, she met with his approval. The king extended to Esther the gold scepter that was in his hand, and Esther approached and touched the end of the scepter.

3 The king said to her, "What is on your mind, Queen Esther? What is your request? Even as much as half the kingdom will be given to you!"

4 Esther replied, "If the king is so inclined, let the king and Haman come today to the banquet that I have prepared for him."

5 The king replied, "Find Haman quickly so that we can do as Esther requests." So the king and Haman went to the banquet that Esther had prepared.

6 While at the banquet of wine, the king said to Esther, "What is your request? It shall be given to you. What is your petition? Ask for as much as half the kingdom, and it shall be done!"

7 Esther responded, "My request and my petition is this:

8 If I have found favor in the king's sight and if the king is inclined to grant my request and perform my petition, let the king and Haman come tomorrow to the banquet that I will prepare for them. At that time I will do as the king wishes.

9 Now Haman went forth that day pleased and very much encouraged. But when Haman saw Mordecai at the king's gate, and he did not rise nor tremble in his presence, Haman was filled with rage toward Mordecai.

10 But Haman restrained himself and went on to his home. He then sent for his friends to join him, along with his wife Zeresh.

11 Haman then recounted to them his fabulous wealth, his many sons, and how the king had magnified him and exalted him over the king's other officials and servants.

12 Haman said, "Furthermore, Queen Esther invited only me to accompany the king to the banquet that she prepared! And also tomorrow I am invited along with the king.

13 Yet all of this fails to satisfy me so long as I have to see Mordecai the Jew sitting at the king's gate."

14 Haman's wife Zeresh and all his friends said to him, "Have a gallows seventy-five feet high built, and in the morning tell the king that Mordecai should be hanged on it. Then go with the king to the banquet contented." It seemed like a good idea to Haman, so he had the gallows built.

## Ahasuerus Orders Haman to Honor Mordecai (June 25, 474 BC)

### Esther 6

1 Throughout that night the king was unable to sleep, so he asked for the book containing the historical records to be brought. As the records were being read in the king's presence,

2 it was found written that Mordecai had disclosed that Bigthana and Teresh, two of the king's eunuchs who guarded the entrance, had plotted to assassinate King Ahasuerus.

3 The king asked, "What great honor was bestowed on Mordecai because of this?" The king's attendants who served him responded, "Not a thing was done for him."

4 Then the king said, "Who is that in the courtyard?" Now Haman had come to the outer courtyard of the palace to suggest that the king hang Mordecai on the gallows that he had constructed for him.

5 The king's attendants said to him, "It is Haman who is standing in the courtyard." The king said, "Let him enter."

6 So Haman came in, and the king said to him, "What should be done for the man whom the king wishes to honor?" Haman thought to himself, "Who is it that the king would want to honor more than me?"

7 So Haman said to the king, "For the man whom the king wishes to honor,

8 let them bring royal attire which the king himself has worn and a horse on which the king himself has ridden—one bearing the royal insignia!

9 Then let this clothing and this horse be given to one of the king's noble officials. Let him then clothe the man whom the king wishes to honor, and let him lead him about through the plaza of the city on the horse, calling before him, 'So shall it be done to the man whom the king wishes to honor!'"

10 The king then said to Haman, "Go quickly! Take the clothing and the horse, just as you have described, and do as you just indicated to Mordecai the Jew who sits at the king's gate. Don't neglect a single thing of all that you have said."

11 So Haman took the clothing and the horse, and he clothed Mordecai. He led him about on the horse throughout the plaza of the city, calling before him, "So shall it be done to the man whom the king wishes to honor!"

12 Then Mordecai again sat at the king's gate, while Haman hurried away to his home, mournful and with a veil over his head.

13 Haman then related to his wife Zeresh and to all his friends everything that had happened to him. These wise men, along with his wife Zeresh, said to him, "If indeed this Mordecai before whom you have begun to fall is Jewish, you will not prevail against him. No, you will surely fall before him!"

14 While they were still speaking with him, the king's eunuchs arrived. They quickly brought Haman to the banquet that Esther had prepared.

## A Fateful Banquet (June 25, 474 BC)

Esther 7–8

### Esther's Request

7:1 So the king and Haman came to dine with Queen Esther.

2 On the second day of the banquet of wine the king asked Esther, "What is your request, Queen Esther? It shall be granted to you. And what is your petition? Ask up to half the kingdom, and it shall be done!"

3 Queen Esther replied, "If I have met with your approval, O king, and if the king is so inclined, grant me my life as my request, and my people as my petition.

4 For we have been sold—both I and my people—to destruction and to slaughter and to annihilation! If we had simply been sold as male and female slaves, I would have remained silent, for such distress would not have been sufficient for troubling the king."

5 Then King Ahasuerus responded to Queen Esther, "Who is this individual? Where is this person to be found who is presumptuous enough to act in this way?"

6 Esther replied, "The oppressor and enemy is this evil Haman!" Then Haman became terrified in the presence of the king and queen.

7 In rage the king arose from the banquet of wine and withdrew to the palace garden. Meanwhile, Haman stood to beg Queen Esther for his life, for he realized that the king had now determined a catastrophic end for him.

### Haman Hanged

8 When the king returned from the palace garden to the banquet of wine, Haman was throwing himself down on the couch where Esther was lying. The king exclaimed, "Will he also attempt to rape the queen while I am still in the building!" As these words left the king's mouth, they covered Haman's face.

9 Harbona, one of the king's eunuchs, said, "Indeed, there is the gallows that Haman made for Mordecai, who spoke out in the king's behalf. It stands near Haman's home and is seventy-five feet high." The king said, "Hang him on it!"

10 So they hanged Haman on the very gallows that he had prepared for Mordecai. The king's rage then abated.

### Esther Rewarded and Mordecai Promoted

8:1 On that same day King Ahasuerus gave the estate of Haman, that adversary of the Jews, to Queen Esther. Now Mordecai had come before the king, for Esther had revealed how he was related to her.

2 The king then removed his signet ring (the very one he had taken back from Haman) and gave it to Mordecai. And Esther designated Mordecai to be in charge of Haman's estate.

### Esther's Request to Save the Jews

3 Then Esther again spoke with the king, falling at his feet. She wept and begged him for mercy, that he might nullify the evil of Haman the Agagite which he had intended against the Jews.

4 When the king extended to Esther the gold scepter, she arose and stood before the king.

5 She said, "If the king is so inclined and if I have met with his approval and if the matter is agreeable to the king and if I am attractive to him, let an edict be written rescinding those recorded intentions of Haman the son of Hammedatha, the Agagite, which he wrote in order to destroy the Jews who are throughout all the king's provinces.

6 For how can I watch the calamity that will befall my people, and how can I watch the destruction of my relatives?"

### Ahasuerus Authorizes Esther and Mordecai to Issue a Decree in His Name

7 King Ahasuerus replied to Queen Esther and to Mordecai the Jew, "Look, I have already given Haman's estate to Esther, and he has been hanged on the gallows because he took hostile action against the Jews.

8 Now you write in the king's name whatever in your opinion is appropriate concerning the Jews and seal it with the king's signet ring. Any decree that is written in the king's name and sealed with the king's signet ring cannot be rescinded.

### Mordecai Decrees that the Jews May Defend Themselves

9 The king's scribes were quickly summoned—in the third month (that is, the month of Sivan), on the twenty-third day. They wrote out everything that Mordecai instructed to the Jews and to the satraps and the governors and the officials of the provinces all the way from India to Ethiopia—a hundred and twenty-seven provinces in all—to each province in its own script and to each people in their own language, and to the Jews according to their own script and their own language.

10 Mordecai wrote in the name of King Ahasuerus and sealed it with the king's signet ring. He then sent letters by couriers on horses, who rode royal horses that were very swift.

11 The king thereby allowed the Jews who were in every city to assemble and to stand up for themselves—to destroy, to kill, and to annihilate any army of whatever people or province that should become their adversaries, including their women and children, and to confiscate their property.

12 This was to take place on a certain day throughout all the provinces of King Ahasuerus—namely, on the thirteenth day of the twelfth month (that is, the month of Adar).



13 A copy of the edict was to be presented as law throughout each and every province and made known to all peoples, so that the Jews might be prepared on that day to avenge themselves from their enemies.

14 The couriers who were riding the royal horses went forth with the king's edict without delay. And the law was presented in Susa the citadel as well.

### **The Jews Rejoice**

15 Now Mordecai went out from the king's presence in purple and white royal attire, with a large golden crown and a purple linen mantle. The city of Susa shouted with joy.

16 For the Jews there was radiant happiness and joyous honor.

17 Throughout every province and throughout every city where the king's edict and his law arrived, the Jews experienced happiness and joy, banquets and holidays. Many of the resident peoples pretended to be Jews, because the fear of the Jews had overcome them.

## **The Jews Soundly Defeat Their Enemies (April 5–7, 473 BC)**

Esther 9:1–19

1 In the twelfth month (that is, the month of Adar), on its thirteenth day, the edict of the king and his law were to be executed. It was on this day that the enemies of the Jews had supposed that they would gain power over them. But contrary to expectations, the Jews gained power over their enemies.

2 The Jews assembled themselves in their cities throughout all the provinces of King Ahasuerus to strike out against those who were seeking their harm. No one was able to stand before them, for dread of them fell on all the peoples.

3 All the officials of the provinces, the satraps, the governors and those who performed the king's business were assisting the Jews, for the dread of Mordecai had fallen on them.

4 Mordecai was of high rank in the king's palace, and word about him was spreading throughout all the provinces. His influence continued to become greater and greater.

5 The Jews struck all their enemies with the sword, bringing death and destruction, and they did as they pleased with their enemies.

6 In Susa the citadel the Jews killed and destroyed five hundred men.

7 In addition, they also killed Parshandatha, Dalphon, Aspatha,

8 Poratha, Adalia, Aridatha,

9 Parmashta, Arisai, Aridai, and Vaizatha,

10 the ten sons of Haman son of Hammedatha, the enemy of the Jews. But they did not confiscate their property.

11 On that same day the number of those killed in Susa the citadel was brought to the king's attention.

12 Then the king said to Queen Esther, "In Susa the citadel the Jews have killed and destroyed five hundred men and the ten sons of Haman! What then have they done in the rest of the king's provinces? What is your request? It shall be given to you. What other petition do you have? It shall be done."

13 Esther replied, "If the king is so inclined, let the Jews who are in Susa be permitted to act tomorrow also according to today's law, and let them hang the ten sons of Haman on the gallows."

14 So the king issued orders for this to be done. A law was passed in Susa, and the ten sons of Haman were hanged.

15 The Jews who were in Susa then assembled on the fourteenth day of the month of Adar, and they killed three hundred men in Susa. But they did not confiscate their property.

16 The rest of the Jews who were throughout the provinces of the king assembled in order to stand up for themselves and to have rest from their enemies. They killed seventy-five thousand of their adversaries, but they did not confiscate their property.

17 All of this happened on the thirteenth day of the month of Adar. They then rested on the fourteenth day and made it a day for banqueting and happiness.

18 But the Jews who were in Susa assembled on the thirteenth and fourteenth days, and rested on the fifteenth, making it a day for banqueting and happiness.

19 This is why the Jews who are in the rural country—those who live in rural cities—set aside the fourteenth day of the month of Adar as a holiday for happiness, banqueting, holiday, and sending gifts to one another.

## **The Feast of Purim (April 6–7, 473 BC)**

Esther 9:20–32

20 Mordecai wrote these matters down and sent letters to all the Jews who were throughout all the provinces of King Ahasuerus, both near and far,

21 to have them observe the fourteenth and the fifteenth day of the month of Adar each year

22 as the time when the Jews gave themselves rest from their enemies—the month when their trouble was turned to happiness and their mourning to a holiday. These were to be days of banqueting, happiness, sending gifts to one another, and providing for the poor.



23 So the Jews committed themselves to continue what they had begun to do and to what Mordecai had written to them.  
24 For Haman the son of Hammedatha, the Agagite, the enemy of all the Jews, had devised plans against the Jews to destroy them. He had cast pur (that is, the lot) in order to afflict and destroy them.  
25 But when the matter came to the king's attention, the king gave written orders that Haman's evil intentions that he had devised against the Jews should fall on his own head. He and his sons were hanged on the gallows.  
26 For this reason these days are known as Purim, after the name of pur.  
27 Therefore, because of the account found in this letter and what they had faced in this regard and what had happened to them, the Jews established as binding on themselves, their descendants, and all who joined their company that they should observe these two days without fail, just as written and at the appropriate time on an annual basis.  
28 These days were to be remembered and to be celebrated in every generation and in every family, every province, and every city. The Jews were not to fail to observe these days of Purim; the remembrance of them was not to cease among their descendants.  
29 So Queen Esther, the daughter of Abihail, and Mordecai the Jew wrote with full authority to confirm this second letter about Purim.  
30 Letters were sent to all the Jews in the hundred and twenty-seven provinces of the empire of Ahasuerus—words of true peace—  
31 to establish these days of Purim in their proper times, just as Mordecai the Jew and Queen Esther had established, and just as they had established both for themselves and their descendants, matters pertaining to fasting and lamentation.  
32 Esther's command established these matters of Purim, and the matter was officially recorded.

### Mordecai Honored (c. 473–465 BC)

#### Esther 10

1 King Ahasuerus then imposed forced labor on the land and on the coastlands of the sea.  
2 Now all the actions carried out under his authority and his great achievements, along with an exact statement concerning the greatness of Mordecai, whom the king promoted, are they not written in the Book of the Chronicles of the Kings of Media and Persia?  
3 Mordecai the Jew was second only to King Ahasuerus. He was the highest-ranking Jew, and he was admired by his numerous relatives. He worked enthusiastically for the good of his people and was an advocate for the welfare of all his descendants.

*Scripture quoted by permission. All scripture quotations, unless otherwise indicated, are taken from the NET Bible® copyright ©1996–2006 by Biblical Studies Press, L.L.C. <http://bible.org> All rights reserved. This material is available in its entirety as a free download or online web use at <http://netbible.org/>.*

## Opposition to the Remnant During Artaxerxes' Reign (c. 465–458 BC)

Ezra 4:7

7 And during the reign of Artaxerxes, Bishlam, Mithredath, Tabeel, and the rest of their colleagues wrote to King Artaxerxes of Persia. This letter was first written in Aramaic but then translated.

## 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 had happened, during the reign of King Artaxerxes of Persia, Ezra came up from Babylon.

### Ezra's Priestly Lineage

1b Ezra was the son of Seraiah, who was the son of Azariah, who was the son of Hilkiah,

2 who was the son of Shallum, who was the son of Zadok, who was the son of Ahitub,

3 who was the son of Amariah, who was the son of Azariah, who was the son of Meraioth,

4 who was the son of Zerariah, who was the son of Uzzi, who was the son of Bukki,

5 who was the son of Abishua, who was the son of Phinehas, who was the son of Eleazar, who was the son of Aaron the chief priest.

6a This Ezra is the one who came up from Babylon. He was a scribe who was skilled in the law of Moses which the LORD God of Israel had given.

### Ezra's Mission

6b The king supplied him with everything he requested, for the hand of the LORD his God was on him.

7 In the seventh year of King Artaxerxes, Ezra brought up to Jerusalem some of the Israelites and some of the priests, the Levites, the attendants, the gatekeepers, and the temple servants.

9a On the first day of the first month he had determined to make the ascent from Babylon,

10 Now Ezra had dedicated himself to the study of the law of the LORD, to its observance, and to teaching its statutes and judgments in Israel.

### Artaxerxes' Letter of Authorization

11 What follows is a copy of the letter that King Artaxerxes gave to Ezra the priestly scribe. Ezra was a scribe in matters pertaining to the commandments of the LORD and his statutes over Israel:

12 "Artaxerxes, king of kings, to Ezra the priest, a scribe of the perfect law of the God of heaven:

13 I have now issued a decree that anyone in my kingdom from the people of Israel—even the priests and Levites—who wishes to do so may go up with you to Jerusalem.

14 You are authorized by the king and his seven advisers to inquire concerning Judah and Jerusalem, according to the law of your God which is in your possession,

15 and to bring silver and gold which the king and his advisers have freely contributed to the God of Israel, who resides in Jerusalem, 16 along with all the silver and gold that you may collect throughout all the province of Babylon and the contributions of the people and the priests for the temple of their God which is in Jerusalem.

17 With this money you should be sure to purchase bulls, rams, and lambs, along with the appropriate meal offerings and libations. You should bring them to the altar of the temple of your God which is in Jerusalem.

18 You may do whatever seems appropriate to you and your colleagues with the rest of the silver and the gold, in keeping with the will of your God.

19 Deliver to the God of Jerusalem the vessels that are given to you for the service of the temple of your God.

20 The rest of the needs for the temple of your God that you may have to supply, you may do so from the royal treasury.

21 "I, King Artaxerxes, hereby issue orders to all the treasurers of Trans-Euphrates, that you precisely execute all that Ezra the priestly scribe of the law of the God of heaven may request of you—

22 up to 100 talents of silver, 100 cors of wheat, 100 baths of wine, 100 baths of olive oil, and unlimited salt.

23 Everything that the God of heaven has required should be precisely done for the temple of the God of heaven. Why should there be wrath against the empire of the king and his sons?

24 Furthermore, be aware of the fact that you have no authority to impose tax, tribute, or toll on any of the priests, the Levites, the musicians, the doorkeepers, the temple servants, or the attendants at the temple of this God.

25 "Now you, Ezra, in keeping with the wisdom of your God which you possess, appoint judges and court officials who can arbitrate cases on behalf of all the people who are in Trans-Euphrates who know the laws of your God. Those who do not know this law should be taught.

26 Everyone who does not observe both the law of your God and the law of the king will be completely liable to the appropriate penalty, whether it is death or banishment or confiscation of property or detainment in prison."

**Ezra's Personal Note of Thanksgiving**

27 Blessed be the LORD God of our fathers, who so moved in the heart of the king to so honor the temple of the LORD which is in Jerusalem!

28 He has also conferred his favor on me before the king, his advisers, and all the influential leaders of the king. I gained strength as the hand of the LORD my God was on me, and I gathered leaders from Israel to go up with me.

**List of Family Heads Who Accompanied Ezra**

8:1 These are the leaders and those enrolled with them by genealogy who were coming up with me from Babylon during the reign of King Artaxerxes:

2 from the descendants of Phinehas, Gershom; from the descendants of Ithamar, Daniel; from the descendants of David, Hattush

3 the son of Shecaniah; from the descendants of Parosh, Zechariah, and with him were enrolled by genealogy 150 men;

4 from the descendants of Pahath-Moab, Eliehoenai son of Zerariah, and with him 200 men;

5 from the descendants of Zattu, Shecaniah son of Jahaziel, and with him 300 men;

6 from the descendants of Adin, Ebed son of Jonathan, and with him 50 men;

7 from the descendants of Elam, Jeshaiiah son of Athaliah, and with him 70 men;

8 from the descendants of Shephatiah, Zebadiah son of Michael, and with him 80 men;

9 from the descendants of Joab, Obadiah son of Jehiel, and with him 218 men;

10 from the descendants of Bani, Shelomith son of Josiphiah, and with him 160 men;

11 from the descendants of Bebai, Zechariah son of Bebai, and with him 28 men;

12 from the descendants of Azgad, Johanan son of Hakkatan, and with him 110 men;

13 from the descendants of Adonikam there were the latter ones. Their names were Eliphelet, Jeuel, and Shemaiah, and with them 60 men;

14 from the descendants of Bigvai, Uthai, and Zaccur, and with them 70 men.

**At the Ahava Canal (April 8–18, 457 BC)**

Ezra 8:15–30

**Enlistment of Temple Personnel**

15 I had them assemble at the canal that flows toward Ahava, and we camped there for three days. I observed that the people and the priests were present, but I found no Levites there.

16 So I sent for Eliezer, Ariel, Shemaiah, Elnathan, Jarib, Elnathan, Nathan, Zechariah, and Meshullam, who were leaders, and Joiarib and Elnathan, who were teachers.

17 I sent them to Iddo, who was the leader in the place called Casiphia. I told them what to say to Iddo and his relatives, who were the temple servants in Casiphia, so they would bring us attendants for the temple of our God.

18 Due to the fact that the good hand of our God was on us, they brought us a skilled man, from the descendants of Mahli the son of Levi son of Israel. This man was Sherebiah, who was accompanied by his sons and brothers, 18 men,

19 and Hashabiah, along with Jeshaiiah from the descendants of Merari, with his brothers and their sons, 20 men,

20 and some of the temple servants that David and his officials had established for the work of the Levites—220 of them. They were all designated by name.

**Prayer and Fasting**

21 I called for a fast there by the Ahava Canal, so that we might humble ourselves before our God and seek from him a safe journey for us, our children, and all our property.

22 I was embarrassed to request soldiers and horsemen from the king to protect us from the enemy along the way, because we had said to the king, "The good hand of our God is on everyone who is seeking him, but his great anger is against everyone who forsakes him."

23 So we fasted and prayed to our God about this, and he answered us.

**Treasure Bearers**

24 Then I set apart twelve of the leading priests, together with Sherebiah, Hashabiah, and ten of their brothers,

25 and I weighed out to them the silver, the gold, and the vessels intended for the temple of our God—items that the king, his advisers, his officials, and all Israel who were present had contributed.

26 I weighed out to them 650 talents of silver, silver vessels worth 100 talents, 100 talents of gold,

27 20 gold bowls worth 1,000 darics, and two exquisite vessels of gleaming bronze, as valuable as gold.

28 Then I said to them, "You are holy to the LORD, just as these vessels are holy. The silver and the gold are a voluntary offering to the LORD, the God of your fathers.

29 Be careful with them and protect them, until you weigh them out before the leading priests and the Levites and the family leaders of Israel in Jerusalem, in the storerooms of the temple of the LORD."

30 Then the priests and the Levites took charge of the silver, the gold, and the vessels that had been weighed out, to transport them to Jerusalem to the temple of our God.

### Journey to Jerusalem (April 19–August 4, 457 BC)

Ezra 8:31; 7:8, 9b

8:31 On the twelfth day of the first month we began traveling from the Ahava Canal to go to Jerusalem. The hand of our God was on us, and he delivered us from our enemy and from bandits along the way.

7:8 He entered Jerusalem in the fifth month of the seventh year of the king.

7:9b and on the first day of the fifth month he arrived at Jerusalem, for the good hand of his God was on him.

### At Jerusalem (August 4–6, 457 BC)

Ezra 8:32

32 So we came to Jerusalem, and we stayed there for three days.

### Delivery of the Temple Vessels (August 7, 457 BC)

Ezra 8:33–36

33 On the fourth day we weighed out the silver, the gold, and the vessels in the house of our God into the care of Meremoth son of Uriah, the priest, and Eleazar son of Phinehas, who were accompanied by Jozabad son of Jeshua and Noadiah son of Binnui, who were Levites.

34 Everything was verified by number and by weight, and the total weight was written down at that time.

35 The exiles who were returning from the captivity offered burnt offerings to the God of Israel—twelve bulls for all Israel, ninety-six rams, seventy-seven male lambs, along with twelve male goats as a sin offering. All this was a burnt offering to the LORD.

36 Then they presented the decrees of the king to the king's satraps and to the governors of Trans-Euphrates, who gave help to the people and to the temple of God.

*Scripture quoted by permission. All scripture quotations, unless otherwise indicated, are taken from the NET Bible® copyright ©1996–2006 by Biblical Studies Press, L.L.C. <http://bible.org> All rights reserved. This material is available in its entirety as a free download or online web use at <http://netbible.org/>.*

## 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 leaders approached me and said, “The people of Israel, the priests, and the Levites have not separated themselves from the local residents who practice detestable things similar to those of the Canaanites, the Hittites, the Perizzites, the Jebusites, the Ammonites, the Moabites, the Egyptians, and the Amorites.

2 Indeed, they have taken some of their daughters as wives for themselves and for their sons, so that the holy race has become intermingled with the local residents. Worse still, the leaders and the officials have been at the forefront of all of this!”

3 When I heard this report, I tore my tunic and my robe and ripped out some of the hair from my head and beard. Then I sat down, quite devastated.

4 Everyone who held the words of the God of Israel in awe gathered around me because of the unfaithful acts of the people of the exile. Devastated, I continued to sit there until the evening offering.

### Ezra’s Prayer

5 At the time of the evening offering I got up from my self-abasement, with my tunic and robe torn, and then dropped to my knees and spread my hands to the LORD my God.

6 I prayed, “O my God, I am ashamed and embarrassed to lift my face to you, my God! For our iniquities have climbed higher than our heads, and our guilt extends to the heavens.

7 From the days of our fathers until this very day our guilt has been great. Because of our iniquities we, along with our kings and priests, have been delivered over by the local kings to sword, captivity, plunder, and embarrassment—right up to the present time.

8 “But now briefly we have received mercy from the LORD our God, in that he has left us a remnant and has given us a secure position in his holy place. Thus our God has enlightened our eyes and has given us a little relief in our time of servitude.

9 Although we are slaves, our God has not abandoned us in our servitude. He has extended kindness to us in the sight of the kings of Persia, in that he has revived us to restore the temple of our God and to raise up its ruins and to give us a protective wall in Judah and Jerusalem.

10 “And now what are we able to say after this, our God? For we have forsaken your commandments

11 which you commanded us through your servants the prophets with these words: ‘The land that you are entering to possess is a land defiled by the impurities of the local residents! With their abominations they have filled it from one end to the other with their filthiness. [cf. [Lev 18:25](#)]

12 Therefore do not give your daughters in marriage to their sons, and do not take their daughters in marriage for your sons. Do not ever seek their peace or welfare, so that you may be strong and may eat the good of the land and may leave it as an inheritance for your children forever.’ [cf. [Deut 7:1–5](#)]

13 “Everything that has happened to us has come about because of our wicked actions and our great guilt. Even so, our God, you have exercised restraint toward our iniquities and have given us a remnant such as this.

14 Shall we once again break your commandments and intermarry with these abominable peoples? Would you not be so angered by us that you would wipe us out, with no survivor or remnant?

15 O LORD God of Israel, you are righteous, for we are left as a remnant this day. Indeed, we stand before you in our guilt. However, because of this guilt no one can really stand before you.”

### Covenant to Divorce the Foreign Women

10:1 While Ezra was praying and confessing, weeping and throwing himself to the ground before the temple of God, a very large crowd of Israelites—men, women, and children alike—gathered around him. The people wept loudly.

2 Then Shecaniah son of Jehiel, from the descendants of Elam, addressed Ezra: “We have been unfaithful to our God by marrying foreign women from the local peoples. Nonetheless, there is still hope for Israel in this regard.

3 Therefore let us enact a covenant with our God to send away all these women and their offspring, in keeping with your counsel, my lord, and that of those who respect the commandments of our God. And let it be done according to the law.

4 Get up, for this matter concerns you. We are with you, so be strong and act decisively!”

5 So Ezra got up and made the leading priests and Levites and all Israel take an oath to carry out this plan. And they all took a solemn oath.

6 Then Ezra got up from in front of the temple of God and went to the room of Jehohanan son of Eliashib. While he stayed there, he did not eat food or drink water, for he was in mourning over the infidelity of the exiles.

### A Proclamation is Circulated Calling the Men to Jerusalem

7 A proclamation was circulated throughout Judah and Jerusalem that all the exiles were to be assembled in Jerusalem.

8 Everyone who did not come within three days would thereby forfeit all his property, in keeping with the counsel of the officials and the elders. Furthermore, he himself would be excluded from the assembly of the exiles.

### A Course of Action is Decided (December 19, 457 BC)

Ezra 10:9–15

9 All the men of Judah and Benjamin were gathered in Jerusalem within the three days. (It was in the ninth month, on the twentieth day of that month.) All the people sat in the square at the temple of God, trembling because of this matter and because of the rains.

10 Then Ezra the priest stood up and said to them, “You have behaved in an unfaithful manner by taking foreign wives! This has contributed to the guilt of Israel.

11 Now give praise to the LORD God of your fathers, and do his will. Separate yourselves from the local residents and from these foreign wives.”

12 All the assembly replied in a loud voice: “We will do just as you have said!

13 However, the people are numerous and it is the rainy season. We are unable to stand here outside. Furthermore, this business cannot be resolved in a day or two, for we have sinned greatly in this matter.

14 Let our leaders take steps on behalf of all the assembly. Let all those in our towns who have married foreign women come at an appointed time, and with them the elders of each town and its judges, until the hot anger of our God is turned away from us in this matter.”

15 Only Jonathan son of Asahel and Jahzeiah son of Tikvah were against this, assisted by Meshullam and Shabbethai the Levite.

### Inquiry Into Unlawful Marriages (December 29, 457–March 27, 456 BC)

Ezra 10:16–44

16 So the exiles proceeded accordingly. Ezra the priest separated out by name men who were leaders in their family groups. They sat down to consider this matter on the first day of the tenth month,

17 and on the first day of the first month they finished considering all the men who had married foreign wives.

18 It was determined that from the descendants of the priests, the following had taken foreign wives: from the descendants of Jeshua son of Jozadak, and his brothers: Maaseiah, Eliezer, Jarib, and Gedaliah.

19 (They gave their word to send away their wives; their guilt offering was a ram from the flock for their guilt.)

20 From the descendants of Immer: Hanani and Zebadiah.

21 From the descendants of Harim: Maaseiah, Elijah, Shemaiah, Jehiel, and Uzziyah.

22 From the descendants of Pashhur: Elioenai, Maaseiah, Ishmael, Nethanel, Jozabad, and Elasah.

23 From the Levites: Jozabad, Shimei, Kelaiah (also known as Kelita), Pethahiah, Judah, and Eliezer.

24 From the singers: Eliashib. From the gatekeepers: Shallum, Telem, and Uri.

25 From the Israelites: from the descendants of Parosh: Ramiah, Izziah, Malkijah, Mijamin, Eleazar, Malkijah, and Benaiah.

26 From the descendants of Elam: Mattaniah, Zechariah, Jehiel, Abdi, Jeremoth, and Elijah.

27 From the descendants of Zattu: Elioenai, Eliashib, Mattaniah, Jeremoth, Zabad, and Aziza.

28 From the descendants of Bebai: Jehohanan, Hananiah, Zabbai, and Athlai.

29 From the descendants of Bani: Meshullam, Malluch, Adaiah, Jashub, Sheal, and Jeremoth.

30 From the descendants of Pahath-Moab: Adna, Kelal, Benaiah, Maaseiah, Mattaniah, Bezalel, Binnui, and Manasseh.

31 From the descendants of Harim: Eliezer, Ishijah, Malkijah, Shemaiah, Shimeon,

32 Benjamin, Malluch, and Shemariah.

33 From the descendants of Hashum: Mattenai, Mattattah, Zabad, Eliphelet, Jeremai, Manasseh, and Shimei.

34 From the descendants of Bani: Maadai, Amram, Uel,

35 Benaiah, Bedeiah, Keluhi,

36 Vaniah, Meremoth, Eliashib,

37 Mattaniah, Mattenai, and Jaasu.

38 From the descendants of Binnui: Shimei,

39 Shelemiah, Nathan, Adaiah,

40 Machnadebai, Shashai, Sharai,

41 Azarel, Shelemiah, Shemariah,

42 Shallum, Amariah, and Joseph.

43 From the descendants of Nebo: Jeiel, Mattithiah, Zabad, Zebina, Jaddai, Joel, and Benaiah.

44 All these had taken foreign wives, and some of them also had children by these women.

*Scripture quoted by permission. All scripture quotations, unless otherwise indicated, are taken from the NET Bible® copyright ©1996–2006 by Biblical Studies Press, L.L.C. <http://bible.org> All rights reserved. This material is available in its entirety as a free download or online web use at <http://netbible.org/>.*

## 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 concerning Jerusalem to King Artaxerxes as follows:

9 From Rehum the commander, Shimshai the scribe, and the rest of their colleagues—the judges, the rulers, the officials, the secretaries, the Erechites, the Babylonians, the people of Susa (that is, the Elamites),

10 and the rest of nations whom the great and noble Ashurbanipal deported and settled in the cities of Samaria and other places in Trans-Euphrates.

11 (This is a copy of the letter they sent to him:) “To King Artaxerxes, from your servants in Trans-Euphrates:

12 Now let the king be aware that the Jews who came up to us from you have gone to Jerusalem. They are rebuilding that rebellious and odious city. They are completing its walls and repairing its foundations.

13 Let the king also be aware that if this city is built and its walls are completed, no more tax, custom, or toll will be paid, and the royal treasury will suffer loss.

14 In light of the fact that we are loyal to the king, and since it does not seem appropriate to us that the king should sustain damage, we are sending the king this information

15 so that he may initiate a search of the records of his predecessors and discover in those records that this city is rebellious and injurious to both kings and provinces, producing internal revolts from long ago. It is for this very reason that this city was destroyed.

16 We therefore are informing the king that if this city is rebuilt and its walls are completed, you will not retain control of this portion of Trans-Euphrates.”

### Artaxerxes' Reply

17 The king sent the following response: “To Rehum the commander, Shimshai the scribe, and the rest of their colleagues who live in Samaria and other parts of Trans-Euphrates: Greetings!

18 The letter you sent to us has been translated and read in my presence.

19 So I gave orders, and it was determined that this city from long ago has been engaging in insurrection against kings. It has continually engaged in rebellion and revolt.

20 Powerful kings have been over Jerusalem who ruled throughout the entire Trans-Euphrates and who were the beneficiaries of tribute, custom, and toll.

21 Now give orders that these men cease their work and that this city not be rebuilt until such time as I so instruct.

22 Exercise appropriate caution so that there is no negligence in this matter. Why should danger increase to the point that kings sustain damage?”

### Rehum Brings Work on Jerusalem's Walls to a Halt

23 Then, as soon as the copy of the letter from King Artaxerxes was read in the presence of Rehum, Shimshai the scribe, and their colleagues, they proceeded promptly to the Jews in Jerusalem and stopped them with threat of armed force.

## Nehemiah Learns of the Remnant's Adversity (Kislev [December] 445 BC)

Nehemiah 1

1 These are the words of Nehemiah son of Hacaliah: It so happened that in the month of Kislev, in the twentieth year, I was in Susa the citadel.

2 Hanani, who was one of my relatives, along with some of the men from Judah, came to me, and I asked them about the Jews who had escaped and had survived the exile, and about Jerusalem.

3 They said to me, “The remnant that remains from the exile there in the province are experiencing considerable adversity and reproach. The wall of Jerusalem lies breached, and its gates have been burned down!”

4 When I heard these things I sat down abruptly, crying and mourning for several days. I continued fasting and praying before the God of heaven.

5 Then I said, “Please, O LORD God of heaven, great and awesome God, who keeps his loving covenant with those who love him and obey his commandments,

6 may your ear be attentive and your eyes be open to hear the prayer of your servant that I am praying to you today throughout both day and night on behalf of your servants the Israelites. I am confessing the sins of the Israelites that we have committed against you—both I myself and my family have sinned.

7 We have behaved corruptly against you, not obeying the commandments, the statutes, and the judgments that you commanded your servant Moses.

8 Please recall the word you commanded your servant Moses: ‘If you act unfaithfully, I will scatter you among the nations.

9 But if you repent and obey my commandments and do them, then even if your dispersed people are in the most remote location, I will gather them from there and bring them to the place I have chosen for my name to reside.’ [cf. [Deut 4:25–31](#); [30:1–10](#)]

10 They are your servants and your people, whom you have redeemed by your mighty strength and by your powerful



hand. [\[Deut 9:29\]](#)

11 Please, O Lord, listen attentively to the prayer of your servant and to the prayer of your servants who take pleasure in showing respect to your name. Grant your servant success today and show compassion to me in the presence of this man.” Now I was cupbearer for the king.

### Artaxerxes Authorizes Nehemiah to Rebuild Jerusalem’s Walls (Nisan [April] 444 BC)

Nehemiah 2:1–8

1 Then in the month of Nisan, in the twentieth year of King Artaxerxes, when wine was brought to me, I took the wine and gave it to the king. Previously I had not been depressed in the king’s presence.  
 2 So the king said to me, “Why do you appear to be depressed when you aren’t sick? What can this be other than sadness of heart?” This made me very fearful.  
 3 I replied to the king, “O king, live forever! Why would I not appear dejected when the city with the graves of my ancestors lies desolate and its gates destroyed by fire?”  
 4 The king responded, “What is it you are seeking?” Then I quickly prayed to the God of heaven  
 5 and said to the king, “If the king is so inclined and if your servant has found favor in your sight, dispatch me to Judah, to the city with the graves of my ancestors, so that I can rebuild it.”  
 6 Then the king, with his consort sitting beside him, replied, “How long would your trip take, and when would you return?” Since the king was amenable to dispatching me, I gave him a time.  
 7 I said to the king, “If the king is so inclined, let him give me letters for the governors of Trans-Euphrates that will enable me to travel safely until I reach Judah,  
 8 and a letter for Asaph the keeper of the king’s nature preserve, so that he will give me timber for beams for the gates of the fortress adjacent to the temple and for the city wall and for the house to which I go.” So the king granted me these requests, for the good hand of my God was on me.

### Nehemiah’s Nocturnal Inspection (July 444 BC)

Nehemiah 2:9–20

9 Then I went to the governors of Trans-Euphrates, and I presented to them the letters from the king. The king had sent with me officers of the army and horsemen.  
 10 When Sanballat the Horonite and Tobiah the Ammonite official heard all this, they were very displeased that someone had come to seek benefit for the Israelites.  
 11 So I came to Jerusalem. When I had been there for three days,  
 12 I got up during the night, along with a few men who were with me. But I did not tell anyone what my God was putting on my heart to do for Jerusalem. There were no animals with me, except for the one I was riding.  
 13 I proceeded through the Valley Gate by night, in the direction of the Well of the Dragons and the Dung Gate, inspecting the walls of Jerusalem that had been breached and its gates that had been destroyed by fire.  
 14 I passed on to the Gate of the Well and the King’s Pool, where there was not enough room for my animal to pass with me.  
 15 I continued up the valley during the night, inspecting the wall. Then I turned back and came to the Valley Gate, and so returned.  
 16 The officials did not know where I had gone or what I had been doing, for up to this point I had not told any of the Jews or the priests or the nobles or the officials or the rest of the workers.  
 17 Then I said to them, “You see the problem that we have: Jerusalem is desolate and its gates are burned. Come on! Let’s rebuild the wall of Jerusalem so that this reproach will not continue.”  
 18 Then I related to them how the good hand of my God was on me and what the king had said to me. Then they replied, “Let’s begin rebuilding right away!” So they readied themselves for this good project.  
 19 But when Sanballat the Horonite, Tobiah the Ammonite official, and Geshem the Arab heard all this, they derided us and expressed contempt toward us. They said, “What is this you are doing? Are you rebelling against the king?”  
 20 I responded to them by saying, “The God of heaven will prosper us. We his servants will start the rebuilding. But you have no just or ancient right in Jerusalem.”

### Rebuilding the Walls of Jerusalem (July 31–September 21, 444 BC)

Nehemiah 3

#### Repairing the Northern and Western Walls

1 Then Eliashib the high priest and his priestly colleagues arose and built the Sheep Gate. They dedicated it and erected its doors, working as far as the Tower of the Hundred and the Tower of Hananel.  
 2 The men of Jericho built adjacent to it, and Zaccur son of Imri built adjacent to them.

- 3 The sons of Hassenaah rebuilt the Fish Gate. They laid its beams and positioned its doors, its bolts, and its bars.
- 4 Meremoth son of Uriah, the son of Hakoz, worked on the section adjacent to them. Meshullam son of Berechiah the son of Meshezabel worked on the section next to them. And Zadok son of Baana worked on the section adjacent to them.
- 5 The men of Tekoa worked on the section adjacent to them, but their town leaders would not assist with the work of their master.
- 6 Joiada son of Paseah and Meshullam son of Besodeiah worked on the Jeshanah Gate. They laid its beams and positioned its doors, its bolts, and its bars.
- 7 Adjacent to them worked Melatiah the Gibeonite and Jadon the Meronothite, who were men of Gibeon and Mizpah. These towns were under the jurisdiction of the governor of Trans-Euphrates.
- 8 Uzziel son of Harhaiah, a member of the goldsmiths' guild, worked on the section adjacent to him. Hananiah, a member of the perfumers' guild, worked on the section adjacent to him. They plastered the city wall of Jerusalem as far as the Broad Wall.
- 9 Rephaiah son of Hur, head of a half-district of Jerusalem, worked on the section adjacent to them.
- 10 Jedaiah son of Harumaph worked on the section adjacent to them opposite his house, and Hattush son of Hashabneiah worked on the section adjacent to him.
- 11 Malkijah son of Harim and Hasshub son of Pahath-Moab worked on another section and the Tower of the Fire Pots.
- 12 Shallum son of Hallohesh, head of a half-district of Jerusalem, worked on the section adjacent to him, assisted by his daughters.
- 13 Hanun and the residents of Zanoah worked on the Valley Gate. They rebuilt it and positioned its doors, its bolts, and its bars, in addition to working on fifteen hundred feet of the wall as far as the Dung Gate.
- 14 Malkijah son of Recab, head of the district of Beth Hakkerem, worked on the Dung Gate. He rebuilt it and positioned its doors, its bolts, and its bars.
- 15 Shallun son of Col-Hozeh, head of the district of Mizpah, worked on the Fountain Gate. He rebuilt it, put on its roof, and positioned its doors, its bolts, and its bars. In addition, he rebuilt the wall of the Pool of Siloam, by the royal garden, as far as the steps that go down from the City of David.

#### **Construction of the Eastern Wall**

- 16 Nehemiah son of Azbuk, head of a half-district of Beth Zur, worked after him as far as the tombs of David and the artificial pool and the House of the Warriors.
- 17 After him the Levites worked—Rehum son of Bani and after him Hashabiah, head of half the district of Keilah, for his district.
- 18 After him their relatives worked—Binnui son of Henadad, head of a half-district of Keilah.
- 19 Adjacent to him Ezer son of Jeshua, head of Mizpah, worked on another section, opposite the ascent to the armory at the buttress.
- 20 After him Baruch son of Zabbai worked on another section, from the buttress to the door of the house of Eliashib the high priest.
- 21 After him Meremoth son of Uriah, the son of Hakkoz, worked on another section from the door of Eliashib's house to the end of it.
- 22 After him the priests worked, men of the nearby district.
- 23 After them Benjamin and Hasshub worked opposite their house. After them Azariah son of Maaseiah, the son of Ananiah, worked near his house.
- 24 After him Binnui son of Henadad worked on another section, from the house of Azariah to the buttress and the corner.
- 25 After him Palal son of Uzai worked opposite the buttress and the tower that protrudes from the upper palace of the court of the guard. After him Pedaiah son of Parosh
- 26 and the temple servants who were living on Ophel worked up to the area opposite the Water Gate toward the east and the protruding tower.
- 27 After them the men of Tekoa worked on another section, from opposite the great protruding tower to the wall of Ophel.
- 28 Above the Horse Gate the priests worked, each in front of his house.
- 29 After them Zadok son of Immer worked opposite his house, and after him Shemaiah son of Shecaniah, guard at the East Gate, worked.
- 30 After him Hananiah son of Shelemiah, and Hanun, the sixth son of Zalaph, worked on another section. After them Meshullam son of Berechiah worked opposite his quarters.
- 31 After him Malkijah, one of the goldsmiths, worked as far as the house of the temple servants and the traders, opposite the Inspection Gate, and up to the room above the corner.
- 32 And between the room above the corner and the Sheep Gate the goldsmiths and traders worked.

*Scripture quoted by permission. All scripture quotations, unless otherwise indicated, are taken from the NET Bible® copyright ©1996–2006 by Biblical Studies Press, L.L.C. <http://bible.org> All rights reserved. This material is available in its entirety as a free download or online web use at <http://netbible.org/>.*

**Sanballat Tries to Hinder Nehemiah (July 31–September 21, 444 BC)****Nehemiah 4****Opposition by Ridicule**

1 Now when Sanballat heard that we were rebuilding the wall he became angry and was quite upset. He derided the Jews,  
 2 and in the presence of his colleagues and the army of Samaria he said, “What are these feeble Jews doing? Will they be left to themselves? Will they again offer sacrifice? Will they finish this in a day? Can they bring these burnt stones to life again from piles of dust?”  
 3 Then Tobiah the Ammonite, who was close by, said, “If even a fox were to climb up on what they are building, it would break down their wall of stones!”  
 4 Hear, O our God, for we are despised! Return their reproach on their own head! Reduce them to plunder in a land of exile!  
 5 Do not cover their iniquity, and do not wipe out their sin from before them. For they have bitterly offended the builders!  
 6 So we rebuilt the wall, and the entire wall was joined together up to half its height. The people were enthusiastic in their work.

**Opposition by Plot**

7 When Sanballat, Tobiah, the Arabs, the Ammonites, and the people of Ashdod heard that the restoration of the walls of Jerusalem had moved ahead and that the breaches had begun to be closed, they were very angry.  
 8 All of them conspired together to move with armed forces against Jerusalem and to create a disturbance in it.  
 9 So we prayed to our God and stationed a guard to protect against them both day and night.

**Internal Opposition: Discouragement and Fear**

10 Then those in Judah said, “The strength of the laborers has failed! The debris is so great that we are unable to rebuild the wall.”  
 11 Our adversaries also boasted, “Before they are aware or anticipate anything, we will come in among them and kill them, and we will bring this work to a halt!”  
 12 So it happened that the Jews who were living near them came and warned us repeatedly about all the schemes they were plotting against us.  
 13 So I stationed people at the lower places behind the wall in the exposed places. I stationed the people by families, with their swords, spears, and bows.  
 14 When I had made an inspection, I stood up and said to the nobles, the officials, and the rest of the people, “Don’t be afraid of them. Remember the great and awesome Lord, and fight on behalf of your brothers, your sons, your daughters, your wives, and your families!”  
 15 It so happened that when our adversaries heard that we were aware of these matters, God frustrated their intentions. Then all of us returned to the wall, each to his own work.

**Diligence and Readiness in the Work**

16 From that day forward, half of my men were doing the work and half of them were taking up spears, shields, bows, and body armor. Now the officers were behind all the people of Judah  
 17 who were rebuilding the wall. Those who were carrying loads did so by keeping one hand on the work and the other on their weapon.  
 18 The builders to a man had their swords strapped to their sides while they were building. But the trumpeter remained with me.  
 19 I said to the nobles, the officials, and the rest of the people, “The work is demanding and extensive, and we are spread out on the wall, far removed from one another.  
 20 Wherever you hear the sound of the trumpet, gather there with us. Our God will fight for us!”  
 21 So we worked on, with half holding spears, from dawn till dusk.  
 22 At that time I instructed the people, “Let every man and his coworker spend the night in Jerusalem and let them be guards for us by night and workers by day.  
 23 We did not change clothes—not I, nor my relatives, nor my workers, nor the watchmen who were with me. Each had his weapon, even when getting a drink of water.

**Oppression Within the Remnant (July 31–September 21, 444 BC)****Nehemiah 5****Extortion by the Rich**

1 Then there was a great outcry from the people and their wives against their fellow Jews.  
 2 There were those who said, “With our sons and daughters, we are many. We must obtain grain in order to eat and stay alive.”  
 3 There were others who said, “We are putting up our fields, our vineyards, and our houses as collateral in order to obtain grain during the famine.”  
 4 Then there were those who said, “We have borrowed money to pay our taxes to the king on our fields and our vineyards.  
 5 And now, though we share the same flesh and blood as our fellow countrymen, and our children are just like their children, still we

have found it necessary to subject our sons and daughters to slavery. Some of our daughters have been subjected to slavery, while we are powerless to help, since our fields and vineyards now belong to other people.”

#### **Nehemiah Rebukes the Creditors**

6 I was very angry when I heard their outcry and these complaints.

7 I considered these things carefully and then registered a complaint with the wealthy and the officials. I said to them, “Each one of you is seizing the collateral from your own countrymen!” Because of them I called for a great public assembly.

8 I said to them, “To the extent possible we have bought back our fellow Jews who had been sold to the Gentiles. But now you yourselves want to sell your own countrymen, so that we can then buy them back!” They were utterly silent, and could find nothing to say.

9 Then I said, “The thing that you are doing is wrong! Should you not conduct yourselves in the fear of our God in order to avoid the reproach of the Gentiles who are our enemies?”

10 Even I and my relatives and my associates are lending them money and grain. But let us abandon this practice of seizing collateral!

11 This very day return to them their fields, their vineyards, their olive trees, and their houses, along with the interest that you are exacting from them on the money, the grain, the new wine, and the olive oil.”

#### **The Creditors Heed Nehemiah’s Rebuke**

12 They replied, “We will return these things, and we will no longer demand anything from them. We will do just as you say.” Then I called the priests and made the wealthy and the officials swear to do what had been promised.

13 I also shook out my garment, and I said, “In this way may God shake out from his house and his property every person who does not carry out this matter. In this way may he be shaken out and emptied!” All the assembly replied, “So be it!” and they praised the LORD. Then the people did as they had promised.

#### **Nehemiah’s Unselfish Leadership**

14 From the day that I was appointed governor in the land of Judah, that is, from the twentieth year until the thirty-second year of King Artaxerxes—twelve years in all—neither I nor my relatives ate the food allotted to the governor.

15 But the former governors who preceded me had burdened the people and had taken food and wine from them, in addition to forty shekels of silver. Their associates were also domineering over the people. But I did not behave in this way, due to my fear of God.

16 I gave myself to the work on this wall, without even purchasing a field. All my associates were gathered there for the work.

17 There were 150 Jews and officials who dined with me routinely, in addition to those who came to us from the nations all around us.

18 Every day one ox, six select sheep, and some birds were prepared for me, and every ten days all kinds of wine in abundance.

Despite all this I did not require the food allotted to the governor, for the work was demanding on this people.

19 Please remember me for good, O my God, for 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 When Sanballat, Tobiah, Geshem the Arab, and the rest of our enemies heard that I had rebuilt the wall and no breach remained in it (even though up to that time I had not positioned doors in the gates),

2 Sanballat and Geshem sent word to me saying, “Come on! Let’s set up a time to meet together at Kephirim in the plain of Ono.” Now they intended to do me harm.

3 So I sent messengers to them saying, “I am engaged in an important work, and I am unable to come down. Why should the work come to a halt when I leave it to come down to you?”

4 They contacted me four times in this way, and I responded the same way each time.

5 The fifth time that Sanballat sent his assistant to me in this way, he had an open letter in his hand.

6 Written in it were the following words: “Among the nations it is rumored (and Geshem has substantiated this) that you and the Jews have intentions of revolting, and for this reason you are building the wall. Furthermore, according to these rumors you are going to become their king.

7 You have also established prophets to announce in Jerusalem on your behalf, ‘We have a king in Judah!’ Now the king is going to hear about these rumors. So come on! Let’s talk about this.”

8 I sent word back to him, “We are not engaged in these activities you are describing. All of this is a figment of your imagination.”

9 All of them were wanting to scare us, supposing, “Their hands will grow slack from the work, and it won’t get done.” So now, strengthen my hands!

**Opposition by Intimidation**

10 Then I went to the house of Shemaiah son of Delaiah, the son of Mehetabel. He was confined to his home. He said, “Let’s set up a time to meet in the house of God, within the temple. Let’s close the doors of the temple, for they are coming to kill you. It will surely be at night that they will come to kill you.”

11 But I replied, “Should a man like me run away? Would someone like me flee to the temple in order to save his life? I will not go!”

12 I recognized the fact that God had not sent him, for he had spoken the prophecy against me as a hired agent of Tobiah and Sanballat.

13 He had been hired to scare me so that I would do this and thereby sin. They would thus bring reproach on me and I would be discredited.

14 Remember, O my God, Tobiah and Sanballat in light of these actions of theirs—also Noadiah the prophetess and the other prophets who were trying to scare 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 day of Elul, in just fifty-two days.

16 When all our enemies heard and all the nations who were around us saw this, they were greatly disheartened. They knew that this work had been accomplished with the help of our God.

**Opposition Still Continues**

17 In those days the aristocrats of Judah repeatedly sent letters to Tobiah, and responses from Tobiah were repeatedly coming to them.

18 For many in Judah had sworn allegiance to him, because he was the son-in-law of Shecaniah son of Arah. His son Jonathan had married the daughter of Meshullam son of Berechiah.

19 They were telling me about his good deeds and then taking back to him the things I said. Tobiah, on the other hand, sent letters in order to scare me.

*Scripture quoted by permission. All scripture quotations, unless otherwise indicated, are taken from the NET Bible® copyright ©1996–2006 by Biblical Studies Press, L.L.C. <http://bible.org> All rights reserved. This material is available in its entirety as a free download or online web use at <http://netbible.org/>.*

## Nehemiah Organizes the Community (September 22–25, 444 BC)

Nehemiah 7:1–5a

### Organization for Conservation

1 When the wall had been rebuilt and I had positioned the doors, and the gatekeepers, the singers, and the Levites had been appointed,  
 2 I then put in charge over Jerusalem my brother Hanani and Hananiah the chief of the citadel, for he was a faithful man and feared God more than many do.  
 3 I said to them, “The gates of Jerusalem must not be opened in the early morning, until those who are standing guard close the doors and lock them [*or* and while they are standing guard, let them shut and bolt the doors]. Position residents of Jerusalem as guards, some at their guard stations and some near their homes.”

### The Registration of the People

4 Now the city was spread out and large, and there were not a lot of people in it. At that time houses had not been rebuilt.  
 5a My God placed it on my heart to gather the leaders, the officials, and the ordinary people so they could be enrolled on the basis of genealogy.

## Ezra Reads the Law and Explains It to the People (September 26, 444 BC)

Nehemiah 7:73b–8:12

7:73b When the seventh month arrived and the Israelites were settled in their cities,  
 8:1 all the people gathered together in the plaza which was in front of the Water Gate. They asked Ezra the scribe to bring the book of the law of Moses which the LORD had commanded Israel.  
 2 So Ezra the priest brought the law before the assembly which included men and women and all those able to understand what they heard. (This happened on the first day of the seventh month.)  
 3 So he read it before the plaza in front of the Water Gate from dawn till noon before the men and women and those children who could understand. All the people were eager to hear the book of the law.  
 4 Ezra the scribe stood on a towering wooden platform constructed for this purpose. Standing near him on his right were Mattithiah, Shema, Anaiah, Uriah, Hilkiah, and Masseiah. On his left were Pedaiah, Mishael, Malkijah, Hashum, Hashbaddanah, Zechariah, and Meshullam.  
 5 Ezra opened the book in plain view of all the people, for he was elevated above all the people. When he opened the book, all the people stood up.  
 6 Ezra blessed the LORD, the great God, and all the people replied “Amen! Amen!” as they lifted their hands. Then they bowed down and worshiped the LORD with their faces to the ground.  
 7 Jeshua, Bani, Sherebiah, Jamin, Akkub, Shabbethai, Hodiah, Maaseiah, Kelita, Azariah, Jozabad, Hanan, and Pelaiah—all of whom were Levites—were teaching the people the law, as the people remained standing.  
 8 They read from the book of God’s law, explaining it and imparting insight. Thus the people gained understanding from what was read.  
 9 Then Nehemiah the governor, Ezra the priestly scribe, and the Levites who were imparting understanding to the people said to all of them, “This day is holy to the LORD your God. Do not mourn or weep.” For all the people had been weeping when they heard the words of the law.  
 10 He said to them, “Go and eat delicacies and drink sweet drinks and send portions to those for whom nothing is prepared. For this day is holy to our Lord. Do not grieve, for the joy of the LORD is your strength.”  
 11 Then the Levites quieted all the people saying, “Be quiet, for this day is holy. Do not grieve.”  
 12 So all the people departed to eat and drink and to share their food with others and to enjoy tremendous joy, for they had gained insight in the matters that had been made known to them.

## Discovery of the Forgotten Feast (September 27, 444 BC)

Nehemiah 8:13–15

13 On the second day of the month the family leaders met with Ezra the scribe, together with all the people, the priests, and the Levites, to consider the words of the law.  
 14 They discovered written in the law that the LORD had commanded through Moses that the Israelites should live in temporary shelters during the festival of the seventh month,  
 15 and that they should make a proclamation and disseminate this message in all their cities and in Jerusalem: “Go to the hill country and bring back olive branches and branches of wild olive trees, myrtle trees, date palms, and other leafy trees to construct temporary shelters, 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 these things back and constructed temporary shelters for themselves, each on his roof and in his courtyard and in the courtyards of the temple of God and in the plaza of the Water Gate and the plaza of the Ephraim Gate.  
 17 So all the assembly which had returned from the exile constructed temporary shelters and lived in them. The Israelites had not done so from the days of Joshua son of Nun until that day. Everyone experienced very great joy.  
 18 Ezra read in the book of the law of God day by day, from the first day to the last. They observed the festival for seven days, and on the eighth day they held an assembly as was required.

## The Israelites' Prayer of Confession (October 20, 444 BC)

Nehemiah 9:1–37

### Assembly for Confession and Worship

1 On the twenty-fourth day of this same month the Israelites assembled; they were fasting and wearing sackcloth, their heads covered with dust.  
 2 Those truly of Israelite descent separated from all the foreigners, standing and confessing their sins and the iniquities of their ancestors.  
 3 For one-fourth of the day they stood in their place and read from the book of the law of the LORD their God, and for another fourth they were confessing their sins and worshiping the LORD their God.  
 4 Then the Levites—Jeshua, Binnui, Kadmiel, Shebaniah, Bunni, Sherebiah, Bani, and Kenani—stood on the steps and called out loudly to the LORD their God.  
 5a The Levites—Jeshua, Kadmiel, Bani, Hashabneiah, Sherebiah, Hodiah, Shebaniah, and Pethahiah—said, “Stand up and bless the LORD your God!”

### Prayer of Confession

5b “May you be blessed, O LORD our God, from age to age. May your glorious name be blessed; may it be lifted up above all blessing and praise.  
 6 You alone are the LORD. You made the heavens, even the highest heavens, along with all their multitude of stars, the earth and all that is on it, the seas and all that is in them. You impart life to them all, and the multitudes of heaven worship you.  
 7 “You are the LORD God who chose Abram and brought him forth from Ur of the Chaldeans. You changed his name to Abraham.  
 8 When you perceived that his heart was faithful toward you, you established a covenant with him to give his descendants the land of the Canaanites, the Hittites, the Amorites, the Perizzites, the Jebusites, and the Girgashites. You have fulfilled your promise, for you are righteous.  
 9 “You saw the affliction of our ancestors in Egypt, and you heard their cry at the Red Sea.  
 10 You performed awesome signs against Pharaoh, against his servants, and against all the people of his land, for you knew that the Egyptians had acted presumptuously against them. You made for yourself a name that is celebrated to this day.  
 11 You split the sea before them, and they crossed through the sea on dry ground! But you threw their pursuers into the depths, like a stone into surging waters.  
 12 You guided them with a pillar of cloud by day and with a pillar of fire by night to illumine for them the path they were to travel.  
 13 “You came down on Mount Sinai and spoke with them from heaven. You provided them with just judgments, true laws, and good statutes and commandments.  
 14 You made known to them your holy Sabbath; you issued commandments, statutes, and law to them through Moses your servant.  
 15 You provided bread from heaven for them in their time of hunger, and you brought forth water from the rock for them in their time of thirst. You told them to enter in order to possess the land that you had sworn to give them.  
 16 “But they—our ancestors—behaved presumptuously; they rebelled and did not obey your commandments.  
 17 They refused to obey and did not recall your miracles that you had performed among them. Instead, they rebelled and appointed a leader to return to their bondage in Egypt. But you are a God of forgiveness, merciful and compassionate, slow to get angry and unfailing in your loyal love. You did not abandon them,  
 18 even when they made a cast image of a calf for themselves and said, ‘This is your God who brought you up from Egypt,’ or when they committed atrocious blasphemies.  
 19 “Due to your great compassion you did not abandon them in the desert. The pillar of cloud did not stop guiding them in the path by day, nor did the pillar of fire stop illuminating for them by night the path on which they should travel.  
 20 You imparted your good Spirit to instruct them. You did not withhold your manna from their mouths; you provided water for their thirst.  
 21 For forty years you sustained them. Even in the desert they never lacked anything. Their clothes did not wear out and their feet did not swell.  
 22 “You gave them kingdoms and peoples, and you allocated them to every corner of the land. They inherited the land of King Sihon of Heshbon and the land of King Og of Bashan.



23 You multiplied their descendants like the stars of the sky. You brought them to the land you had told their ancestors to enter in order to possess.

24 Their descendants entered and possessed the land. You subdued before them the Canaanites who were the inhabitants of the land. You delivered them into their hand, together with their kings and the peoples of the land, to deal with as they pleased.

25 They captured fortified cities and fertile land. They took possession of houses full of all sorts of good things—wells previously dug, vineyards, olive trees, and fruit trees in abundance. They ate until they were full and grew fat. They enjoyed to the full your great goodness.

26 “Nonetheless they grew disobedient and rebelled against you; they disregarded your law. They killed your prophets who had solemnly admonished them in order to cause them to return to you. They committed atrocious blasphemies.

27 Therefore you delivered them into the hand of their adversaries, who oppressed them. But in the time of their distress they called to you, and you heard from heaven. In your abundant compassion you provided them with deliverers to rescue them from their adversaries.

28 “Then, when they were at rest again, they went back to doing evil before you. Then you abandoned them to their enemies, and they gained dominion over them. When they again cried out to you, in your compassion you heard from heaven and rescued them time and again.

29 And you solemnly admonished them in order to return them to your law, but they behaved presumptuously and did not obey your commandments. They sinned against your ordinances—those by which an individual, if he obeys them, will live. They boldly turned from you; they rebelled and did not obey.

30 You prolonged your kindness with them for many years, and you solemnly admonished them by your Spirit through your prophets. Still they paid no attention, so you delivered them into the hands of the neighboring peoples.

31 However, due to your abundant mercy you did not do away with them altogether; you did not abandon them. For you are a merciful and compassionate God.

32 “So now, our God—the great, powerful, and awesome God, who keeps covenant fidelity—do not regard as inconsequential all the hardship that has befallen us—our kings, our leaders, our priests, our prophets, our ancestors, and all your people—from the days of the kings of Assyria until this very day!

33 You are righteous with regard to all that has happened to us, for you have acted faithfully. It is we who have been in the wrong!

34 Our kings, our leaders, our priests, and our ancestors have not kept your law. They have not paid attention to your commandments or your testimonies by which you have solemnly admonished them.

35 Even when they were in their kingdom and benefiting from your incredible goodness that you had lavished on them in the spacious and fertile land you had set before them, they did not serve you, nor did they turn from their evil practices.

36 “So today we are slaves! In the very land you gave to our ancestors to eat its fruit and to enjoy its good things—we are slaves!

37 Its abundant produce goes to the kings you have placed over us due to our sins. They rule over our bodies and our livestock as they see fit, and we are in great distress!

## A Signed National Covenant (October 20, 444 BC)

Nehemiah 9:38–10:39

### Introduction

9:38 “Because of all of this we are entering into a binding covenant in written form; our leaders, our Levites, and our priests have affixed their names on the sealed document.”

### The Chief Leaders and Priests Who Signed

10:1 On the sealed documents were the following names: Nehemiah the governor, son of Hacaliah, along with Zedekiah,

2 Seraiah, Azariah, Jeremiah,

3 Pashhur, Amariah, Malkijah,

4 Hattush, Shebaniah, Malluch,

5 Harim, Meremoth, Obadiah,

6 Daniel, Ginnethon, Baruch,

7 Meshullam, Abijah, Mijamin,

8 Maaziah, Bilgai, and Shemaiah. These were the priests.

### The Levites Who Signed

9 The Levites were as follows: Jeshua son of Azaniah, Binnui of the sons of Henadad, Kadmiel.

10 Their colleagues were as follows: Shebaniah, Hodiah, Kelita, Pelaiah, Hanan,

11 Mica, Rehob, Hashabiah,

12 Zaccur, Sherebiah, Shebaniah,

13 Hodiah, Bani, and Beninu.

**The Other Leaders Who Signed**

14 The leaders of the people were as follows: 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, and Baanah.

**The Solemn Promise**

28 “Now the rest of the people—the priests, the Levites, the gatekeepers, the singers, the temple attendants, and all those who have separated themselves from the neighboring peoples because of the law of God, along with their wives, their sons, and their daughters, all of whom are able to understand—  
29 hereby participate with their colleagues the town leaders and enter into a curse and an oath to adhere to the law of God which was given through Moses the servant of God, and to obey carefully all the commandments of the LORD our Lord, along with his ordinances and his statutes.

**Specific Examples of Separation**

30 “We will not give our daughters in marriage to the neighboring peoples, and we will not take their daughters in marriage for our sons.  
31 We will not buy on the Sabbath or on a holy day from the neighboring peoples who bring their wares and all kinds of grain to sell on the Sabbath day. We will let the fields lie fallow every seventh year, and we will cancel every loan.

**Temple Taxes**

32 We accept responsibility for fulfilling the commands to give one third of a shekel each year for the work of the temple of our God,  
33 for the loaves of presentation and for the regular grain offerings and regular burnt offerings, for the Sabbaths, for the new moons, for the appointed meetings, for the holy offerings, for the sin offerings to make atonement for Israel, and for all the work of the temple of our God.

**Offerings in Kind**

34 “We—the priests, the Levites, and the people—have cast lots concerning the wood offerings, to bring them to the temple of our God according to our families at the designated times year by year to burn on the altar of the LORD our God, as is written in the law.  
35 We also accept responsibility for bringing the first fruits of our land and the first fruits of every fruit tree year by year to the temple of the LORD.  
36 We also accept responsibility, as is written in the law, for bringing the firstborn of our sons and our cattle and the firstborn of our herds and of our flocks to the temple of our God, to the priests who are ministering in the temple of our God.  
37 We will also bring the first of our coarse meal, of our contributions, of the fruit of every tree, of new wine, and of olive oil to the priests at the storerooms of the temple of our God, along with a tenth of the produce of our land to the Levites, for the Levites are the ones who collect the tithes in all the cities where we work.  
38 A priest of Aaron’s line will be with the Levites when the Levites collect the tithes, and the Levites will bring up a tenth of the tithes to the temple of our God, to the storerooms of the treasury.  
39 The Israelites and the Levites will bring the contribution of the grain, the new wine, and the olive oil to the storerooms where the utensils of the sanctuary are kept, and where the priests who minister stay, along with the gatekeepers and the singers. We will not neglect the temple of our God.”

*Scripture quoted by permission. All scripture quotations, unless otherwise indicated, are taken from the NET Bible® copyright ©1996–2006 by Biblical Studies Press, L.L.C. <http://bible.org> All rights reserved. This material is available in its entirety as a free download or online web use at <http://netbible.org/>.*

## The Repopulation of Jerusalem (late 444 BC)

Nehemiah 11:1–24

1 Chronicles 9:1b–34

### Summary Statement

1 So the leaders of the people settled in Jerusalem, while the rest of the people cast lots to bring one out of every ten to settle in Jerusalem, the holy city, while the other nine remained in other cities.

2 The people gave their blessing on all the men who volunteered to settle in Jerusalem.

### Heading

3 These are the provincial leaders who settled in Jerusalem. (While other Israelites, the priests, the Levites, the temple attendants, and the sons of the servants of Solomon settled in the cities of Judah, each on his own property in their cities,

### Judah

4 some of the descendants of Judah and some of the descendants of Benjamin settled in Jerusalem.)

Of the descendants of Judah: Athaiah son of Uziah, the son of Zechariah, the son of Amariah, the son of Shephatiah, the son of Mahalalel, from the descendants of Perez;

5 and Maaseiah son of Baruch, the son of Col-Hozeh, the son of Hazaiah, the son of Adaiah, the son of Joiarib, the son of Zechariah, from the descendants of Shelah.

6 The sum total of the descendants of Perez who were settling in Jerusalem was 468 exceptional men.

### Benjamin

7 These are the descendants of Benjamin: Sallu 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 Jeshaiiah,

8 and his followers, Gabbai and Sallai—928 in all.

9 Joel son of Zicri was the officer in charge of them, and Judah son of Hassenuah was second-in-command over the city.

### Priests

10 From the priests: Jedaiah son of Joiarib, Jakin,

11 Seraiah son of Hilkiah, the son of Meshullam, the son of Zadok, the son of Meraioth, the son of Ahitub, supervisor in the temple of God,

12 and their colleagues who were carrying out work for the temple—822; and Adaiah son of Jeroham, the son of Pelaliah, the son of Amzi, the son of Zechariah, the son of Pashhur, the son of Malkijah,

13 and his colleagues who were heads of families—242; and Amashsai son of Azarel, the son of Ahzai, the son of Meshillemoth, the son of Immer,

14 and his colleagues who were exceptional men—128.

The officer over them was Zabdiel the son of Haggadolim.

### Levites

15 From the Levites: Shemaiah son of Hasshub, the son of Azrikam, the son of Hashabiah, the son of Bunni;

16 Shabbethai and Jozabad, leaders of the Levites, were in charge of the external work for the temple of God;

17 Mattaniah son of Mica, the son of Zabdi, the son of Asaph,

1b The people of Judah were carried away to Babylon because of their unfaithfulness.

2 The first to resettle on their property and in their cities were some Israelites, priests, Levites, and temple servants.

3 Some from the tribes of Judah, Benjamin, and Ephraim and Manasseh settled in Jerusalem.

4 The settlers included: Uthai son of Ammihud, son of Omri, son of Imri, son of Bani, who was a descendant of Perez son of Judah.

5 From the Shilonites: Asaiah the firstborn and his sons.

6 From the descendants of Zerach: Jeuel. Their relatives numbered 690.

7 From the descendants of Benjamin: Sallu son of Meshullam, son of Hodaviah, son of Hassenuah;

8 Ibneiah son of Jeroham; Elah son of Uzzi, son of Mikri; and Meshullam son of Shephatiah, son of Reuel, son of Ibnijah.

9 Their relatives, listed in their genealogical records, numbered 956. All these men were leaders of their families.

10 From the priests: Jedaiah; Jehoiarib; Jakin;

11 Azariah son of Hilkiah, son of Meshullam, son of Zadok, son of Meraioth, son of Ahitub the leader in God's temple;

12 Adaiah son of Jeroham, son of Pashhur, son of Malkijah; and Maasai son of Adiel, son of Jahzerah, son of Meshullam, son of Meshillemith, son of Immer.

13 Their relatives, who were leaders of their families, numbered 1,760. They were capable men who were assigned to carry out the various tasks of service in God's temple.

14 From the Levites: Shemaiah son of Hasshub, son of Azrikam, son of Hashabiah a descendant of Merari;

15 Bakbakkar; Heresh; Galal; Mattaniah son of Mika, son of Zikri, son of Asaph;

16 Obadiah son of Shemaiah, son of Galal, son of Jeduthun;

the praise leader who led in thanksgiving and prayer; Bakbukiah, second among his colleagues; and Abda son of Shammua, the son of Galal, the son of Jeduthun.  
18 The sum total of the Levites in the holy city was 284.

#### **Gatekeepers**

19 And the gatekeepers: Akkub, Talmon and their colleagues who were guarding the gates—172.

#### **Duties**

#### **Levitical Singers**

#### **Summary**

#### **The Rest**

20 And the rest of the Israelites, with the priests and the Levites,

and Berechiah son of Asa, son of Elkanah, who lived among the settlements of the Netophathites.

17 The gatekeepers were: Shallum, Akkub, Talmon, Ahiman, and their brothers. Shallum was the leader;

18 he serves to this day at the King's Gate on the east. These were the gatekeepers from the camp of the descendants of Levi.

19 Shallum son of Kore, son of Ebiasaph, son of Korah, and his relatives from his family (the Korahites) were assigned to guard the entrance to the sanctuary. Their ancestors had guarded the entrance to the LORD's dwelling place.

20 Phinehas son of Eleazar had been their leader in earlier times, and the LORD was with him.

21 Zechariah son of Meshelemiah was the guard at the entrance to the meeting tent.

22 All those selected to be gatekeepers at the entrances numbered 212. Their names were recorded in the genealogical records of their settlements. David and Samuel the prophet had appointed them to their positions.

23 They and their descendants were assigned to guard the gates of the LORD's sanctuary (that is, the tabernacle).

24 The gatekeepers were posted on all four sides—east, west, north, and south.

25 Their relatives, who lived in their settlements, came from time to time and served with them for seven-day periods.

26 The four head gatekeepers, who were Levites, were assigned to guard the storerooms and treasuries in God's sanctuary.

27 They would spend the night in their posts all around God's sanctuary, for they were assigned to guard it and would open it with the key every morning.

28 Some of them were in charge of the articles used by those who served; they counted them when they brought them in and when they brought them out.

29 Some of them were in charge of the equipment and articles of the sanctuary, as well as the flour, wine, olive oil, incense, and spices.

30 (But some of the priests mixed the spices.)

31 Mattithiah, a Levite, the firstborn son of Shallum the Korahite, was in charge of baking the bread for offerings.

32 Some of the Kohathites, their relatives, were in charge of preparing the bread that is displayed each Sabbath.

33 The musicians and Levite family leaders stayed in rooms at the sanctuary and were exempt from other duties, for day and night they had to carry out their assigned tasks.

34 These were the family leaders of the Levites, as listed in their genealogical records. They lived in Jerusalem.

were in all the cities of Judah, each on his own property.

#### Temple Servants

21 The temple attendants were living on Ophel, and Ziha and Gishpa were over them.

#### Levitical Overseers

22 The overseer of the Levites in Jerusalem was Uzzi son of Bani, the son of Hashabiah, the son of Mattaniah, the son of Mica.

He was one of Asaph's descendants who were the singers responsible for the service of the temple of God.

23 For they were under royal orders which determined their activity day by day.

#### Liaison with the King

24 Pethahiah son of Meshezabel, one of the descendants of Zerah son of Judah, was an adviser to the king in every matter pertaining to the people.

### The Repopulation of the Surrounding Villages (late 444 BC)

Nehemiah 11:25–36

25 As for the settlements with their fields, some of the people of Judah settled in Kiriath Arba and its neighboring villages, in Dibon and its villages, in Jekabzeel and its settlements,

26 in Jeshua, in Moladah, in Beth Pelet,

27 in Hazar Shual, in Beer Sheba and its villages,

28 in Ziklag, in Meconah and its villages,

29 in En Rimmon, in Zorah, in Jarmuth,

30 Zanoah, Adullam and their settlements, in Lachish and its fields, and in Azekah and its villages. So they were encamped from Beer Sheba to the Valley of Hinnom.

31 Some of the descendants of Benjamin settled in Geba, Micmash, Aija, Bethel and its villages,

32 in Anathoth, Nob, and Ananiah,

33 in Hazor, Ramah, and Gittaim,

34 in Hadid, Zeboim, and Neballat,

35 in Lod, Ono, and the Valley of the Craftsmen.

36 Some of the Judean divisions of the Levites settled in Benjamin.

### Priests and Levites During the Persian Empire (c. 537 – c. 330 BC)

Nehemiah 12:1–26

#### Priests and Levites Who Returned with Zerubbabel (c. 537)

1 These are the priests and Levites who returned with Zerubbabel son of Shealtiel and Jeshua: Seraiah, Jeremiah, Ezra,

2 Amariah, Malluch, Hattush,

3 Shecaniah, Rehum, Meremoth,

4 Iddo, Ginnethon, Abijah,

5 Mijamin, Moadiah, Bilgah,

6 Shemaiah, Joiarib, Jedaiah,

7 Sallu, Amok, Hilkiyah, and Jedaiah. These were the leaders of the priests and their colleagues in the days of Jeshua.

8 And the Levites: Jeshua, Binnui, Kadmiel, Sherebiah, Judah, and Mattaniah, who together with his colleagues was in charge of the songs of thanksgiving.

9 Bakbukiah and Unni, their colleagues, stood opposite them in the services.

#### The Line of High Priests (c. 537 – c. 330)

10 Jeshua was the father of Joiakim, Joiakim was the father of Eliashib, Eliashib was the father of Joiada,

11 Joiada was the father of Jonathan, and Jonathan was the father of Jaddua.

#### Heads of Priestly Families in Joiakim's Day (c. 500 – c. 470)

12 In the days of Joiakim, these were the priests who were leaders of the families: of Seraiah, Meraiah; of Jeremiah, Hananiah;

13 of Ezra, Meshullam; of Amariah, Jehohanan;  
 14 of Malluch, Jonathan; of Shecaniah, Joseph;  
 15 of Harim, Adna; of Meremoth, Helkai;  
 16 of Iddo, Zechariah; of Ginnethon, Meshullam;  
 17 of Abijah, Zicri; of Miniamin and of Moadiah, Piltai;  
 18 of Bilgah, Shammua; of Shemaiah, Jehonathan;  
 19 of Joiarib, Mattenai; of Jedaiah, Uzzi;  
 20 of Sallu, 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, in the days of Eliashib, Joiada, Johanan and Jaddua the heads of families were recorded, as were the priests during the reign of Darius the Persian.

23 The descendants of Levi were recorded in the Book of the Chronicles as heads of families up to the days of Johanan son of Eliashib.

#### **Heads of Levitical Families in Joiakim's and Nehemiah's Day (c. 500 – c. 425)**

24 And the leaders of the Levites were Hashabiah, Sherebiah, Jeshua son of Kadmiel, and their colleagues, who stood opposite them to offer praise and thanks, one contingent corresponding to the other, as specified by David the man of God.

25 Mattaniah, Bakbukiah, Obadiah, Meshullam, Talmon, and Akkub were gatekeepers who were guarding the storerooms at the gates.

26 These all served in the days of Joiakim son of Jeshua, the son of Jozadak, and in the days of Nehemiah the governor and of Ezra the priestly scribe.

### **Dedication of the Walls (late 444 BC)**

Nehemiah 12:27–47

#### **Gathering Participants for the Dedication**

27 At the dedication of the wall of Jerusalem, they sought out the Levites from all the places they lived to bring them to Jerusalem to celebrate the dedication joyfully with songs of thanksgiving and songs accompanied by cymbals, harps, and lyres.

28 The singers were also assembled from the district around Jerusalem and from the settlements of the Netophathites

29 and from Beth Gilgal and from the fields of Geba and Azmaveth, for the singers had built settlements for themselves around Jerusalem.

30 When the priests and Levites had purified themselves, they purified the people, the gates, and the wall.

#### **Two Processions on the Wall**

31 I brought the leaders of Judah up on top of the wall, and I appointed two large choirs to give thanks. One was to proceed on the top of the wall southward toward the Dung Gate.

32 Going after them were Hoshaiiah, half the leaders of Judah,

33 Azariah, Ezra, Meshullam,

34 Judah, Benjamin, Shemaiah, Jeremiah,

35 some of the priests with trumpets, Zechariah 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 colleagues—Shemaiah, Azarel, Milalai, Gilalai, Maai, Nethanel, Judah, and Hanani—with musical instruments of David the man of God. (Ezra the scribe led them.)

37 They went over the Fountain Gate and continued directly up the steps of the City of David on the ascent to the wall. They passed the house of David and continued on to the Water Gate toward the east.

38 The second choir was proceeding in the opposite direction. I followed them, along with half the people, on top of the wall, past the Tower of the Ovens to the Broad Wall,

39 over the Ephraim Gate, the Jeshanah Gate, the Fish Gate, the Tower of Hananel, and the Tower of the Hundred, to the Sheep Gate. They stopped at the Gate of the Guard.

#### **The Ceremonies at the Temple**

40 Then the two choirs that gave thanks took their stations in the temple of God. I did also, along with half the officials with me,

41 and the priests—Eliakim, Maaseiah, Miniamin, Micaiah, Elioenai, Zechariah, and Hananiah, with their trumpets—

42 and also Maaseiah, Shemaiah, Eleazar, Uzzi, Jehohanan, Malkijah, Elam, and Ezer. The choirs sang loudly under the direction of Jezrahiah.

43 And on that day they offered great sacrifices and rejoiced, for God had given them great joy. The women and children also

rejoiced. The rejoicing in Jerusalem could be heard from far away.

#### **Provisions for the Temple Storerooms**

44 On that day men were appointed over the storerooms for the contributions, first fruits, and tithes, to gather into them from the fields of the cities the portions prescribed by the law for the priests and the Levites, for the people of Judah took delight in the priests and Levites who were ministering.

45 They performed the service of their God and the service of purification, along with the singers and gatekeepers, according to the commandment of David and his son Solomon.

46 For long ago, in the days of David and Asaph, there had been directors for the singers and for the songs of praise and thanks to God.

47 So in the days of Zerubbabel and in the days of Nehemiah, all Israel was contributing the portions for the singers and gatekeepers, according to the daily need. They also set aside the portion for the Levites, and the Levites set aside the portion for the descendants of Aaron.

### **Nehemiah Returns to Babylon (c. 433–429 BC)**

Nehemiah 13:6a

6a During all this time I was not in Jerusalem, for in the thirty-second year of King Artaxerxes of Babylon, I had gone back to the king.

*Scripture quoted by permission. All scripture quotations, unless otherwise indicated, are taken from the NET Bible® copyright ©1996–2006 by Biblical Studies Press, L.L.C. <http://bible.org> All rights reserved. This material is available in its entirety as a free download or online web use at <http://netbible.org/>.*

#### **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 What follows is divine revelation. The word of the LORD came to Israel through Malachi:

#### Israel Questions God's Claim of Love

2 "I have shown love to you," says the LORD, but you say, "How have you shown love to us?" "Esau was Jacob's brother," the LORD explains, "yet I chose Jacob

3 and rejected Esau. I turned Esau's mountains into a deserted wasteland and gave his territory to the wild jackals." [[Rom 9:13](#)]

4 Edom says, "Though we are devastated, we will once again build the ruined places." So the LORD who rules over all responds, "They indeed may build, but I will overthrow. They will be known as the land of evil, the people with whom the LORD is permanently displeased.

5 Your eyes will see it, and then you will say, 'May the LORD be magnified even beyond the border of Israel!'"

#### Israel Questions God's Charge of Disrespect

6 "A son naturally honors his father and a slave respects his master. If I am your father, where is my honor? If I am your master, where is my respect? The LORD who rules over all asks you this, you priests who make light of my name! But you reply, 'How have we made light of your name?'

7 You are offering improper sacrifices on my altar, yet you ask, 'How have we offended you?' By treating the table of the LORD as if it is of no importance!

8 For when you offer blind animals as a sacrifice, is that not wrong? And when you offer the lame and sick, is that not wrong as well? Indeed, try offering them to your governor! Will he be pleased with you or show you favor?" asks the LORD who rules over all.

9 But now plead for God's favor that he might be gracious to us. "With this kind of offering in your hands, how can he be pleased with you?" asks the LORD who rules over all.

10 "I wish that one of you would close the temple doors, so that you no longer would light useless fires on my altar. I am not pleased with you," says the LORD who rules over all, "and I will no longer accept an offering from you.

11 For from the east to the west my name will be great among the nations. Incense and pure offerings will be offered in my name everywhere, for my name will be great among the nations," says the LORD who rules over all.

12 "But you are profaning it by saying that the table of the Lord is common and its offerings despicable.

13 You also say, 'How tiresome it is.' You turn up your nose at it," says the LORD who rules over all, "and instead bring what is stolen, lame, or sick. You bring these things for an offering! Should I accept this from you?" asks the LORD.

14 "There will be harsh condemnation for the hypocrite who has a valuable male animal in his flock but vows and sacrifices something inferior to the Lord. For I am a great king," says the LORD who rules over all, "and my name is awesome among the nations."

#### Warning to the Priests

2:1 "Now, you priests, this commandment is for you.

2 If you do not listen and take seriously the need to honor my name," says the LORD who rules over all, "I will send judgment on you and turn your blessings into curses—indeed, I have already done so because you are not taking it to heart.

3 I am about to discipline your children and will spread offal on your faces, the very offal produced at your festivals, and you will be carried away along with it.

4 Then you will know that I sent this commandment to you so that my covenant may continue to be with Levi," says the LORD who rules over all.

5 "My covenant with him was designed to bring life and peace. I gave its statutes to him to fill him with awe, and he indeed revered me and stood in awe before me.

6 He taught what was true; sinful words were not found on his lips. He walked with me in peace and integrity, and he turned many people away from sin.

7 For the lips of a priest should preserve knowledge of sacred things, and people should seek instruction from him because he is the messenger of the LORD who rules over all.

8 You, however, have turned from the way. You have caused many to violate the law; you have corrupted the covenant with Levi," says the LORD who rules over all.

9 "Therefore, I have caused you to be ignored and belittled before all people to the extent to which you are not following after me and are showing partiality in your instruction."

#### God Charges Israel With Unfaithfulness

10 Do we not all have one father? Did not one God create us? Why do we betray one another, in this way making light of the covenant of our ancestors?

11 Judah has become disloyal, and unspeakable sins have been committed in Israel and Jerusalem. For Judah has profaned the holy

things that the LORD loves and has turned to a foreign god!

12 May the LORD cut off from the community of Jacob every last person who does this, as well as the person who presents improper offerings to the LORD who rules over all!

13 You also do this: You cover the altar of the LORD with tears as you weep and groan, because he no longer pays any attention to the offering nor accepts it favorably from you.

14 Yet you ask, "Why?" The LORD is testifying against you on behalf of the wife you married when you were young, to whom you have become unfaithful even though she is your companion and wife by law.

15 No one who has even a small portion of the Spirit in him does this. What did our ancestor do when seeking a child from God? Be attentive, then, to your own spirit, for one should not be disloyal to the wife he took in his youth.

16 "I hate divorce," says the LORD God of Israel, "and the one who is guilty of violence," says the LORD who rules over all. "Pay attention to your conscience, and do not be unfaithful."

#### **Israel Questions God's Charge of Wearisome Words**

17 You have wearied the LORD with your words. But you say, "How have we wearied him?" Because you say, "Everyone who does evil is good in the Lord's opinion, and he delights in them," or "Where is the God of justice?"

3:1 "I am about to send my messenger, who will clear the way before me. Indeed, the Lord you are seeking will suddenly come to his temple, and the messenger of the covenant, whom you long for, is certainly coming," says the LORD who rules over all. [[Matt 11:10](#); [Mark 1:2](#); [Luke 7:27](#)]

2 Who can endure the day of his coming? Who can keep standing when he appears? For he will be like a refiner's fire, like a launderer's soap.

3 He will act like a refiner and purifier of silver and will cleanse the Levites and refine them like gold and silver. Then they will offer the LORD a proper offering.

4 The offerings of Judah and Jerusalem will be pleasing to the LORD as in former times and years past.

5 "I will come to you in judgment. I will be quick to testify against those who practice divination, those who commit adultery, those who break promises, and those who exploit workers, widows, and orphans, who refuse to help the immigrant and in this way show they do not fear me," says the LORD who rules over all.

6 "Since, I, the LORD, do not go back on my promises, you, sons of Jacob, have not perished.

#### **Israel Questions God's Charge of Disobedience**

7 From the days of your ancestors you have ignored my commandments and have not kept them! Return to me, and I will return to you," says the LORD who rules over all. "But you say, 'How should we return?'

8 Can a person rob God? You indeed are robbing me, but you say, 'How are we robbing you?' In tithes and contributions!

9 You are bound for judgment because you are robbing me—this whole nation is guilty.

10 "Bring the entire tithe into the storehouse so that there may be food in my temple. Test me in this matter," says the LORD who rules over all, "to see if I will not open for you the windows of heaven and pour out for you a blessing until there is no room for it all.

11 Then I will stop the plague from ruining your crops, and the vine will not lose its fruit before harvest," says the LORD who rules over all.

12 "All nations will call you happy, for you indeed will live in a delightful land," says the LORD who rules over all.

#### **Israel Questions God's Charge of Hard Words**

13 "You have criticized me sharply," says the LORD, "but you ask, 'How have we criticized you?'

14 You have said, 'It is useless to serve God. How have we been helped by keeping his requirements and going about like mourners before the LORD who rules over all?'

15 So now we consider the arrogant to be happy; indeed, those who practice evil are successful. In fact, those who challenge God escape!"

16 Then those who respected the LORD spoke to one another, and the LORD took notice. A scroll was prepared before him in which were recorded the names of those who respected the LORD and honored his name.

17 "They will belong to me," says the LORD who rules over all, "in the day when I prepare my own special property. I will spare them as a man spares his son who serves him.

18 Then once more you will see that I make a distinction between the righteous and the wicked, between the one who serves God and the one who does not.

#### **Remember the Coming "Day of the Lord"**

4:1 "For indeed the day is coming, burning like a furnace, and all the arrogant evildoers will be chaff. The coming day will burn them up," says the LORD who rules over all. "It will not leave even a root or branch.

2 But for you who respect my name, the sun of vindication will rise with healing wings, and you will skip about like calves released from the stall.

3 You will trample on the wicked, for they will be like ashes under the soles of your feet on the day which I am preparing," says the

LORD who rules over all.

4 “Remember the law of my servant Moses, to whom at Horeb I gave rules and regulations for all Israel to obey.

5 Look, I will send you Elijah the prophet before the great and terrible day of the LORD arrives. [[Matt 17:10](#); [Mark 9:11](#)]

6 He will encourage fathers and their children to return to me, so that I will not come and strike the earth with judgment.”

## Nehemiah Returns to Jerusalem (c. 429/428 BC)

Nehemiah 13:1–31

### Ammonites and Moabites Expelled from the Temple (occurred during Nehemiah’s absence)

1 On that day the book of Moses was read aloud in the hearing of the people. They found written in it that no Ammonite or Moabite may ever enter the assembly of God,

2 for they had not met the Israelites with food and water, but instead had hired Balaam to curse them. (Our God, however, turned the curse into blessing.)

3 When they heard the law, they removed from Israel all who were of mixed ancestry.

### Tobiah’s Presence in the Temple Chambers (occurred during Nehemiah’s absence)

4 But prior to this time, Eliashib the priest, a relative of Tobiah, had been appointed over the storerooms of the temple of our God.

5 He made for himself a large storeroom where previously they had been keeping the grain offering, the incense, and the vessels, along with the tithes of the grain, the new wine, and the olive oil as commanded for the Levites, the singers, the gate keepers, and the offering for the priests.

### Nehemiah Cleanses the Temple of Tobiah’s Influence

6 During all this time I was not in Jerusalem, for in the thirty-second year of King Artaxerxes of Babylon, I had gone back to the king. After some time I had requested leave of the king,

7 and I returned to Jerusalem. Then I discovered the evil that Eliashib had done for Tobiah by supplying him with a storeroom in the courts of the temple of God.

8 I was very upset, and I threw all of Tobiah’s household possessions out of the storeroom.

9 Then I gave instructions that the storerooms should be purified, and I brought back the equipment of the temple of God, along with the grain offering and the incense.

### Nehemiah Restores the Tithes to the Levites

10 I also discovered that the grain offerings for the Levites had not been provided, and that as a result the Levites and the singers who performed this work had all gone off to their fields.

11 So I registered a complaint with the leaders, asking “Why is the temple of God neglected?” Then I gathered them and reassigned them to their positions.

12 Then all of Judah brought the tithe of the grain, the new wine, and the olive oil to the storerooms.

13 I gave instructions that Shelemiah the priest, Zadok the scribe, and a certain Levite named Pedaiah be put in charge of the storerooms, and that Hanan son of Zaccur, the son of Mattaniah, be their assistant, for they were regarded as trustworthy. It was then their responsibility to oversee the distribution to their colleagues.

14 Please remember me for this, O my God, and do not wipe out the kindness that I have done for the temple of my God and for its services!

### Nehemiah Enforces Observance of the Sabbath

15 In those days I saw people in Judah treading winepresses on the Sabbath, bringing in heaps of grain and loading them onto donkeys, along with wine, grapes, figs, and all kinds of loads, and bringing them to Jerusalem on the Sabbath day. So I warned them on the day that they sold these provisions.

16 The people from Tyre who lived there were bringing fish and all kinds of merchandise and were selling it on the Sabbath to the people of Judah—and in Jerusalem, of all places!

17 So I registered a complaint with the nobles of Judah, saying to them, “What is this evil thing that you are doing, profaning the Sabbath day?”

18 Isn’t this the way your ancestors acted, causing our God to bring on them and on this city all this misfortune? And now you are causing even more wrath on Israel, profaning the Sabbath like this!”

19 When the evening shadows began to fall on the gates of Jerusalem before the Sabbath, I ordered the doors to be closed. I further directed that they were not to be opened until after the Sabbath. I positioned some of my young men at the gates so that no load could enter on the Sabbath day.

20 The traders and sellers of all kinds of merchandise spent the night outside Jerusalem once or twice.

21 But I warned them and said, “Why do you spend the night by the wall? If you repeat this, I will forcibly remove you!” From that time on they did not show up on the Sabbath.

22 Then I directed the Levites to purify themselves and come and guard the gates in order to keep the Sabbath day holy. For this please remember me, O my God, and have pity on me in keeping with your great love.

#### **Nehemiah Punishes Those Who Had Married Foreign Women**

23 Also in those days I saw the men of Judah who had married women from Ashdod, Ammon, and Moab.

24 Half of their children spoke the language of Ashdod (or the language of one of the other peoples mentioned) and were unable to speak the language of Judah.

25 So I entered a complaint with them. I called down a curse on them, and I struck some of the men and pulled out their hair. I had them swear by God saying, “You will not marry off your daughters to their sons, and you will not take any of their daughters as wives for your sons or for yourselves!

26 Was it not because of things like these that King Solomon of Israel sinned? Among the many nations there was no king like him. He was loved by his God, and God made him king over all Israel. But the foreign wives made even him sin!

27 Should we then in your case hear that you do all this great evil, thereby being unfaithful to our God by marrying foreign wives?”

28 Now one of the sons of Joiada son of Eliashib the high priest was a son-in-law of Sanballat the Horonite. So I banished him from my sight.

29 Please remember them, O my God, because they have defiled the priesthood, the covenant of the priesthood, and the Levites.

30 So I purified them of everything foreign, and I assigned specific duties to the priests and the Levites.

31 I also provided for the wood offering at the appointed times and also for the first fruits. Please remember me for good, O my God.

*Scripture quoted by permission. All scripture quotations, unless otherwise indicated, are taken from the NET Bible® copyright ©1996–2006 by Biblical Studies Press, L.L.C. <http://bible.org> All rights reserved. This material is available in its entirety as a free download or online web use at <http://netbible.org/>.*

#### **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.soniclight.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 Now many have undertaken to compile an account of the things that have been fulfilled among us,  
 2 like the accounts passed on to us by those who were eyewitnesses and servants of the word from the beginning.  
 3 So it seemed good to me as well, because I have followed all things carefully from the beginning, to write an orderly account for you, most excellent Theophilus,  
 4 so that you may know for certain the things you were taught.

**“In the beginning”—John’s Preface (c. 5/4 BC)**

John 1:1–18

1 In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was fully God.  
 2 The Word was with God in the beginning.  
 3 All things were created by him, and apart from him not one thing was created that has been created.  
 4 In him was life, and the life was the light of mankind.  
 5 And the light shines on in the darkness, but the darkness has not mastered it.  
 6 There came a man, sent from God, whose name was John.  
 7 He came for a witness, that he might bear witness of the light, that all might believe through him.  
 8 He was not the light, but came that he might bear witness of the light.  
 9 The true light, who gives light to everyone, was coming into the world.  
 10 He was in the world, and the world was created by him, but the world did not recognize him.  
 11 He came to what was his own, but his own people did not receive him.  
 12 But to all who have received him—those who believe in his name—he has given the right to become God’s children  
 13 —children not born by human parents or by human desire or a husband’s decision, but by God.  
 14 Now the Word became flesh and took up residence among us. We saw his glory—the glory of the one and only, full of grace and truth, who came from the Father.  
 15 John bore witness of 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 we have all received from his fullness one gracious gift after another.  
 17 For the law was given through Moses, but grace and truth came about through Jesus Christ.  
 18 No one has ever seen God. The only one, himself God, who is in closest fellowship with the Father, has made God known.

**John’s Birth Foretold to Zacharias (c. 5/4 BC)**

Luke 1:5–23

5 During the reign of Herod king of Judea, there lived a priest named Zechariah who belonged to the priestly division of Abijah, and he had a wife named Elizabeth, who was a descendant of Aaron. [cf. [1 Chr 24:1–19](#)]  
 6 They were both righteous in the sight of God, following all the commandments and ordinances of the Lord blamelessly.  
 7 But they did not have a child, because Elizabeth was barren, and they were both very old.  
 8 Now while Zechariah was serving as priest before God when his division was on duty,  
 9 he was chosen by lot, according to the custom of the priesthood, to enter the holy place of the Lord and burn incense.  
 10 Now the whole crowd of people were praying outside at the hour of the incense offering.  
 11 An angel of the Lord, standing on the right side of the altar of incense, appeared to him.  
 12 And Zechariah, visibly shaken when he saw the angel, was seized with fear.  
 13 But the angel said to him, “Do not be afraid, Zechariah, for your prayer has been heard, and your wife Elizabeth will bear you a son; you will name him John.  
 14 Joy and gladness will come to you, and many will rejoice at his birth,  
 15 for he will be great in the sight of the Lord. He must never drink wine or strong drink, and he will be filled with the Holy Spirit, even before his birth.  
 16 He will turn many of the people of Israel to the Lord their God.  
 17 And he will go as forerunner before the Lord in the spirit and power of Elijah, to turn the hearts of the fathers back to their children and the disobedient to the wisdom of the just, to make ready for the Lord a people prepared for him.” [[Mal 4:5–6](#)]  
 18 Zechariah said to the angel, “How can I be sure of this? For I am an old man, and my wife is old as well.”  
 19 The angel answered him, “I am Gabriel, who stands in the presence of God, and I was sent to speak to you and to bring you this good news.  
 20 And now, because you did not believe my words, which will be fulfilled in their time, you will be silent, unable to speak, until the day these things take place.”

- 21 Now the people were waiting for Zechariah, and they began to wonder why he was delayed in the holy place.  
 22 When he came out, he was not able to speak to them. They realized that he had seen a vision in the holy place, because he was making signs to them and remained unable to speak.  
 23 When his time of service was over, he went to his home.

### John's Conception (4 BC)

Luke 1:24–25

- 24 After some time his wife Elizabeth became pregnant, and for five months she kept herself in seclusion. She said,  
 25 "This is what the Lord has done for me at the time when he has been gracious to me, to take away my disgrace among people."

### Jesus' Birth Foretold to Mary—The Annunciation (early 3 BC)

Luke 1:26–38

- 26 In the sixth month of Elizabeth's pregnancy, the angel Gabriel was sent by God to a town of Galilee called Nazareth,  
 27 to a virgin engaged to a man whose name was Joseph, a descendant of David, and the virgin's name was Mary.  
 28 The angel came to her and said, "Greetings, favored one, the Lord is with you!"  
 29 But she was greatly troubled by his words and began to wonder about the meaning of this greeting.  
 30 So the angel said to her, "Do not be afraid, Mary, for you have found favor with God!  
 31 Listen: You will become pregnant and give birth to a son, and you will 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 He will reign over the house of Jacob forever, and his kingdom will never end." [cf. [1 Chr 17:7–14](#)]  
 34 Mary said to the angel, "How will this be, since I have not had sexual relations with a man?"  
 35 The angel replied, "The Holy Spirit will come upon you, and the power of the Most High will overshadow you. Therefore the child to be born will be holy; he will be called the Son of God.  
 36 "And look, your relative Elizabeth has also become pregnant with a son in her old age—although she was called barren, she is now in her sixth month!  
 37 For nothing will be impossible with God." [cf. [Gen 18:14](#)]  
 38 So Mary said, "Yes, I am a servant of the Lord; let this happen to me according to your word." Then the angel departed from her.

### Jesus' Conception (early 3 BC)

John 1:14a

- 14a Now the Word became flesh...

### Mary Visits Her Relative Elizabeth (early to mid 3 BC)

Luke 1:39–45

- 39 In those days Mary got up and went hurriedly into the hill country, to a town of Judah,  
 40 and entered Zechariah's house 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 She exclaimed with a loud voice, "Blessed are you among women, and blessed is the child in your womb!  
 43 And who am I that the mother of my Lord should come and visit me?  
 44 For the instant the sound of your greeting reached my ears, the baby in my womb leaped for joy.  
 45 And blessed is she who believed that what was spoken to her by the Lord would be fulfilled."

### 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 begun to rejoice in God my Savior,  
 48 because he has looked upon the humble state of his servant.  
     For from now on all generations will call me blessed,  
 49 because he who is mighty has done great things for me, and holy is his name;  
 50 from generation to generation he is merciful to those who fear him.



- 51 He has demonstrated power with his arm;  
he has scattered those whose pride wells up from the sheer arrogance of their hearts.
- 52 He has brought down the mighty from their thrones, and has lifted up those of lowly position;
- 53 he has filled the hungry with good things, and has sent the rich away empty.
- 54 He has helped his servant Israel, remembering his mercy,
- 55 as he promised to our ancestors, to Abraham and to his descendants forever.” [cf. [Ps 98:3](#)]

56 So Mary stayed with Elizabeth about three months and then returned to her home.

### The Birth of John (mid 3 BC)

Luke 1:57–66

- 57 Now the time came for Elizabeth to have her baby, and she gave birth to a son.
- 58 Her neighbors and relatives heard that the Lord had shown great mercy to her, and they rejoiced with her.
- 59 On the eighth day they came to circumcise the child, and they wanted to name him Zechariah after his father.
- 60 But his mother replied, “No! He must be named John.”
- 61 They said to her, “But none of your relatives bears this name.”
- 62 So they made signs to the baby’s father, inquiring what he wanted to name his son.
- 63 He asked for a writing tablet and wrote, “His name is John.” And they were all amazed.
- 64 Immediately Zechariah’s mouth was opened and his tongue released, and he spoke, blessing God.
- 65 All their neighbors were filled with fear, and throughout the entire hill country of Judea all these things were talked about.
- 66 All who heard these things kept them in their hearts, saying, “What then will this child be?” For the Lord’s hand was indeed with him.

### Zacharias’ Song of Praise—The *Benedictus* (mid 3 BC)

Luke 1:67–79

- 67 Then his father Zechariah was filled with the Holy Spirit and prophesied,
- 68 “Blessed be the Lord God of Israel,  
because he has come to help and has redeemed his people.
- 69 For he has raised up a horn of salvation for us in the house of his servant David,  
70 as he spoke through the mouth of his holy prophets from long ago,  
71 that we should be saved from our enemies,  
and from the hand of all who hate us.
- 72 He has done this to show mercy to our ancestors,  
and to remember his holy covenant—  
73 the oath that he swore to our ancestor Abraham.  
This oath grants  
74 that we, being rescued from the hand of our enemies,  
may serve him without fear,  
75 in holiness and righteousness before him for as long as we live.
- 76 And you, child, will be called the prophet of the Most High.  
For you will go before the Lord to prepare his ways,  
77 to give his people knowledge of salvation through the forgiveness of their sins.
- 78 Because of our God’s tender mercy  
the dawn will break upon us from on high  
79 to give light to those who sit in darkness and in the shadow of death,  
to guide our feet into the way of peace.”

*Scripture quoted by permission. All scripture quotations, unless otherwise indicated, are taken from the NET Bible® copyright ©1996–2006 by Biblical Studies Press, L.L.C. <http://bible.org> All rights reserved. This material is available in its entirety as a free download or online web use at <http://netbible.org/>.*



**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.

---

<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,” *l'Histoire* (2000), Online: <http://www.chronosynchro.net/>; Paul R. **Finch**, *Beyond Acts: New Perspectives in New Testament History*, Sunrise Pub., (2004); Andrew E. **Steinmann**, “When Did Herod the Great Reign?” *Novum Testamentum* 51 (2009): 1–29; *From Abraham to Paul* (Concordia Publishing House, 2011): 219–251.