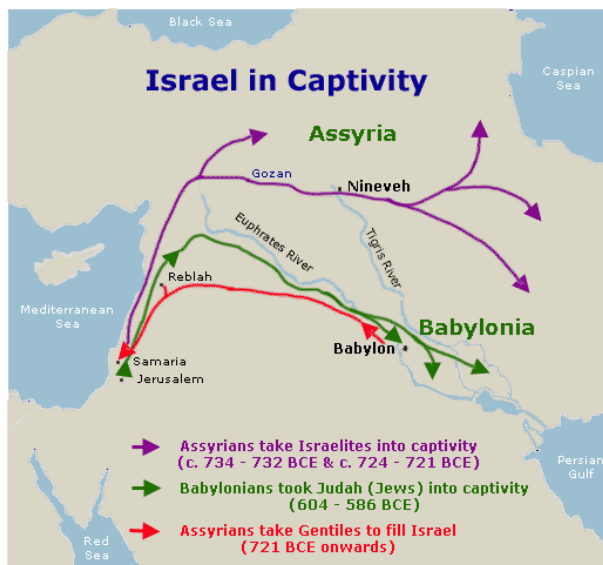


## Read the Bible in A Year: Chronological

### Readings for August 2-8, 2020

We continue the events in Israel and Judah during this time in their history. If you recall, the people of Israel had been exiled to Assyria (see the purple lines on the map below), and the King of Assyria had repopulated the cities of Israel (Samaria) with gentiles from other lands (see red line below). Josiah, had become king in Judah and instituted many reforms, including the return to worship, obedience, covenant and Passover. Judah continues to be threatened by Assyria and Babylon.



We begin with the words of three prophets who spoke and wrote during this time. We begin with Nahum, a prophet from Judah who spoke words of doom against Assyria, particularly the capital city of Nineveh.

### Nahum

An oracle for Nineveh, a writing of the vision of Nahum, the Elkoshite.

#### God's Anger with Nineveh

The LORD is a jealous and avenging God; the LORD avenges and is furious. The LORD takes vengeance on His enemies, and He reserves it for His adversaries; the LORD is slow to anger and great in power, and the LORD will in no way acquit the guilty. In gale winds and a storm is His way, and clouds are the dust of His feet. He rebukes and dries up the sea, and He makes waterless all the rivers. Bashan and Carmel wither up, and the sprout of Lebanon wastes away. The mountains quake before Him, and the hills melt; the land rises up before Him, the earth and everything that dwells on it. Who can stand before His anger? Who will rise up before His burning wrath? His heat is poured out like fire, and the rocks are broken up before Him.

The LORD is good, a stronghold in the day of distress; and He knows those who take refuge in Him. As a flood running forth, He will bring to an end the distress, and He will pursue His adversaries into darkness. Why do you all scheme against the LORD? He will bring it to an end. It will not rise up a second time. Because they are like interwoven thorns and as drunkards imbibing, they are consumed like completely dry stubble. Out of you, *O Nineveh*, comes one, a worthless counselor, who devises evil against the LORD.

So the LORD says: "Even though they are full and many, they will be cut down, and it will pass away. Even though I have afflicted you, I will no longer afflict you, *O Judah*; now I will break apart his yoke from over you, and I will tear apart your bonds." The LORD has given a command concerning you: "No longer will your name go forth. I will cut off the carved image and metal image from the house of your gods. I will prepare your grave, for you are despised." Look, on the mountains come the feet of him who brings good news, who proclaims peace! Make your feasts, *O Judah*, and complete your vows. For the wicked one will never again pass through your midst; he is completely cut down.

### The Fall of Nineveh

He who scatters has come to you. Guard the fortifications! Watch the road! Prepare yourself and strengthen yourself! For the LORD is restoring the prominence of Jacob, even the prominence of Israel, for others have certainly laid waste their vines. The shields of his mighty men are soaked red, even the mighty men are clad in red. In the day he prepares the chariots, they are like a fire of iron. The cypress spears are ready. The chariots run wildly through the streets, they rush to and fro in the open areas; their appearance is like torches, they dash to and fro like lightning. He remembers his officers as they stumble about on the road; they hurry on to the wall as the siege tower is set up. The holding gates are opened wide, and the palace washes away. It is decreed: She is uncovered and led away captive; her handmaidens shall lead her as with the voice of doves, beating their chests. Nineveh is like a pool whose waters run away. "Halt! Halt!" they cry, but no one turns back. "Plunder the silver! Plunder the gold! There is no limit to the treasure, or to the wealth of every precious thing." She is desolate, empty, and waste! Hearts melt away, and knees shake; pain is in all the loins, and all their faces grow pale. Where is the den of the lions, and the feeding place of the young lions, where the lion and lioness prowl, and the lion's cub goes, with no one to disturb *them*? The lion tore enough food for his cubs and strangled prey for his lionesses; he has filled his caves with prey, and his dens with flesh. I am against you, says the LORD of Hosts, and I will burn your chariots in smoke, and the sword will devour your lions. I will cut off your prey from the earth, and the voice of your messengers will be heard no more.

### Woe to Nineveh

Woe to the bloody city! It is full of lies and plunder. The prey never departs. The noise of the whip and the noise of the rattling of the wheels, galloping horses, and rushing chariots! Horsemen charging with flashing sword and glittering spear. Multitude of slain, great number of corpses, dead bodies without end— they stumble on the corpses— because of the countless harlotries of the seductive harlot, the mistress of sorceries, who sells nations through her harlotries and families through her sorceries. I am against you, says the LORD of Hosts; I will lift your skirts over your face, and I will show the nations your nakedness, and the kingdoms your shame. I will throw filth on you, and make you vile, and make you a spectacle. All who look at you will flee from you, and say, "Nineveh is devastated! Who will lament for her?" Where shall I seek comforters for you? Are you better than Thebes that sat by the Nile, with water around her, whose rampart was the sea, and whose wall was the water? Ethiopia and Egypt were her strength, and it was without limit; Put and Libya were her helpers. Yet she went into exile, she went into captivity; her young children were dashed to pieces at the head of every street; they cast lots for her honorable men, and all her great men were bound in chains. You also will be drunk; you will go into hiding; you will seek refuge from the enemy. All your fortresses are like fig trees with first-ripe figs: If they are shaken, they fall into the mouth of the eater. Your troops are women in your midst! The gates of your land are wide open to your enemies; fire has devoured your bars. Draw water for the

siege! Strengthen your forts! Go into the clay and tread the mortar! Take hold of the brick mold! There the fire will devour you, the sword will cut you off; it will eat you up like the locust. Multiply yourselves—like the locust! Multiply—like the grasshopper! You have multiplied your merchants more than the stars of heaven. The locust plunders and flies away. Your leaders are like grasshoppers, your commanders like swarms of locusts, which camp in the hedges on a cold day; when the sun rises they fly away, and the place where they are is not known. Your shepherds slumber, O king of Assyria; Your nobles lie *in the dust*. Your people are scattered on the mountains, and no one gathers them. There is no healing of your injury, your wound is grievous. All who hear news about you clap their hands over you, for upon whom has not your wickedness continually passed?

**The biographical information about the prophet, Habakkuk, is very slim. From his writings, scholars have identified him as most likely being a temple prophet in Jerusalem during this time when Babylon was rising in power and threatening Judah. The first section of this book is a dialog between the prophet and God. The last part, a prayer and a hymn, are probably liturgical pieces used in temple worship.**

## Habakkuk

The oracle that Habakkuk the prophet saw.

### Habakkuk's Complaint

O LORD, how long shall I cry, and You will not hear? Or cry to You, "Violence!" and You will not save? Why do You make me see wickedness, and cause me to see trouble? Plundering and violence are before me; strife and contention arise. Therefore, the law is powerless, and justice never goes forth. For the wicked surround the righteous; therefore injustice proceeds.

### The LORD's Answer

Look among the nations, and watch—wonder and be amazed! For I am doing a work in your days that you would not believe, though it were told you. For I am raising up the Chaldeans, that bitter and hasty nation which marches through the breadth of the earth, to possess dwelling places that are not theirs. They are terrible and dreadful; their justice and their dignity proceed from themselves. Their horses are swifter than leopards, more fierce than evening wolves. Their horsemen charge on; their horsemen come from afar; they fly like the eagle that hastens to eat. They all come for violence; their forces advance like the east wind. They gather captives like sand. They scoff at kings, and they scorn rulers. They deride every stronghold, for they build up siege ramps to capture it. Then their mind changes, and they transgress and commit offense; their own power is their god.

### Habakkuk's Second Complaint

Are You not from everlasting, O LORD my God, my Holy One? We will not die. O LORD, You have appointed them for judgment; and You, O Rock, have established them for correction. Your eyes are too pure to look on evil, and You cannot look on wickedness. Why do You look on those who deal treacherously, and hold Your tongue when the wicked devours the man who is more righteous than he? You make men like fish of the sea, like crawling things that have no ruler.

They bring all of them up with a hook, they catch them in their net; they gather them in their dragnet. Therefore, they rejoice and are glad. Therefore, they sacrifice to their net and burn incense to their dragnet; for by them their portion is extravagant, and their food plentiful. Shall they continue to empty their net, and continually kill the nations while not sparing anyone? I will stand at my watch and station myself on the watchtower; and I will keep watch to see what He will say to me, and what I will answer when I am reproved.

### **The LORD'S Answer: The Just Shall Live by Faith**

And the LORD answered me: Write the vision, and make it plain on tablets, that he who reads it may run. For the vision is yet for an appointed time; but it speaks of the end, and does not lie. If it delays, wait for it; it will surely come, it will not delay. Look, his soul is lifted up; it is not upright in him; but the just shall live by his faith. Indeed, wine betrays the proud man, who does not stay at home. He enlarges his appetite as Sheol, and like death he is never satisfied. He gathers to himself all nations and collects for himself all peoples.

### **The LORD'S Answer Continues: Woe to the Wicked**

Shall not all these take up a taunt against him, with satire and riddles, and say, "Woe to him who increases what is not his—how long? And to him who loads himself with heavy debts!" Shall not your debtors rise up suddenly, and those awake who oppress you? Then you will be their plunder. Because you have plundered many nations, all the remnant of the people will plunder you, because of the bloodshed of men and violence of the land, of the cities and all who live in them. Woe to him who gets evil gain for his house, to set his nest on high, to be delivered from the power of calamity! You have given shameful counsel to your house by cutting off many peoples and forfeiting your life. For the stone will cry out from the wall, and the beam of the woodwork will answer it. Woe to him who builds a town with bloodshed and establishes a city on iniquity!" Is it not from the LORD of Hosts that the people labor to feed fire, and the nations weary themselves for nothing? For the earth will be filled with the knowledge of the glory of the LORD, as the waters cover the seas. Woe to him who makes his neighbor drink, pouring out your poison until they are drunk, that you may look on their nakedness!" You will be filled with shame instead of glory. You yourself—drink and show your uncircumcision! The cup of the LORD's right hand will be turned against you, and utter shame will come on your glory! The violence done to Lebanon will cover you, as will the plunder of beasts that terrified them, because of the bloodshed of men and violence of the land, of the cities and all who live in them. What profit is a carved image when its maker has carved it, a cast image, and a teacher of lies, that its maker trusts in what he has shaped when he makes mute idols? Woe to him who says to the wood, "Awake!" To the silent stone, "Arise!" Can it teach? It is overlaid with gold and silver, and there is no breath at all in it. But the LORD is in His holy temple. Let all the earth keep silence before Him.

### **The Prayer of Habakkuk**

A prayer of Habakkuk the prophet, on Shigionoth.

O LORD, I have heard the report of You, and was afraid;  
O LORD, revive Your work in the midst of the years!  
In the midst of these years make them known; in wrath remember mercy.  
God came from Teman, and the Holy One from Mount Paran.

His glory covered the heavens, and the earth was full of His praise.  
His brightness was like the light; rays flashed from His hand, and there His power was hidden.  
Pestilence went out before Him, and plague followed His feet.  
He stood and measured the earth; He looked and shook the nations.  
The eternal mountains were scattered, the perpetual hills bowed.  
His ways are everlasting.

I saw the tents of Cushan in affliction; the curtains of the land of Midian trembled.  
Were you displeased with the rivers, O LORD?  
Was Your anger against the rivers, and was Your wrath against the sea  
when You rode on Your horses, on Your chariots of salvation?  
You made bare Your bow; oaths were the arrows at Your command.

You divided the earth with the rivers.  
The mountains saw You and trembled; the overflowing water passed by.  
The deep lifted its voice and lifted its hands on high.  
The sun and moon stood still in their places;  
at the light of Your arrows they went, at the flash of Your glittering spear.  
You marched throughout the earth in indignation; You threshed the nations in anger.  
You went forth to deliver Your people, to deliver Your anointed one.  
You wounded the head of the house of the wicked, laying him bare from head to foot.

You pierced with his own arrows the leaders of his villages.  
They came like a whirlwind to scatter me; their rejoicing was like devouring the poor in secret.  
You trampled the sea with Your horses, through the wakes of great waters.  
I heard, and my body trembled; my lips quivered at the sound;  
rottenness entered my bones; my legs tremble beneath me.  
Yet I will wait quietly for the day when calamity comes on the people invading us.

### **A Hymn of Faith**

Though the fig tree does not blossom,  
nor fruit be on the vines;  
though the yield of the olive fails,  
and the fields produce no food;  
though the flocks are cut off from the fold,  
and there be no herd in the stalls—  
yet I will rejoice in the LORD;  
I will exult in the God of my salvation.  
The LORD God is my strength;  
He will make my feet like hinds' feet,  
and He will make me walk on my high places.

The prophet, Zephaniah, worked during the reign of Josiah. His words warn of the judgement to come from the Lord, and he aims his criticism at the worship of idols and other gods. This means he was probably mostly speaking and working during the early part of Josiah's reign before he instituted his reforms.

## Zephaniah

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

### The Great Day of the LORD

I will utterly consume all things on the face of the earth, says the LORD;  
I will consume man and beast;  
I will consume the birds of the heavens and the fish of the sea,  
and the stumbling blocks with the wicked.  
I will cut off man from the face of the land, says the LORD.  
I will stretch out my hand against Judah, and against all the inhabitants of Jerusalem.  
I will cut off from this place the remnant of Baal,  
and the name of the idolatrous priests along with the priests,  
and those who bow down on the roofs to the host of heaven;  
those who worship and swear oaths by the LORD and yet swear by Milcom;  
those who have turned back from following the LORD,  
who have not sought the LORD nor inquired of Him.  
Be silent before the Lord GOD!  
For the day of the LORD is at hand; the LORD has prepared the sacrifice;  
He has consecrated His guests.  
On the day of the LORD's sacrifice, I will punish the officials and the king's sons,  
and all who clothe themselves with foreign attire.  
On that day I will punish all who step over the threshold,  
who fill their masters' houses with violence and deceit.  
On that day, says the LORD, a cry will be heard from the Fish Gate,  
a wail from the Second Quarter, and a loud crash from the hills.  
Wail, you inhabitants of the Mortar!  
For all the merchants are cut down; all those who weigh out silver are cut off.  
At that time I will search Jerusalem with lamps,  
and I will punish the men who are settled on their lees,  
who say in their heart, "The LORD will not do good, nor will He do evil."  
Their goods will be plundered, and their houses laid waste.  
Though they build houses, they will not inhabit them;  
though they plant vineyards, they will not drink from their wine.  
  
The great day of the LORD is near, near and hastening quickly.  
The sound of the day of the LORD is bitter; the mighty man shall cry out there.  
That day is a day of wrath, a day of trouble and distress, a day of ruin and desolation,  
a day of darkness and gloom, a day of clouds and blackness,  
a day of trumpet and alarms against the fortified cities and against the high towers.  
I will bring distress on men, so that they will walk like blind men.  
Because they have sinned against the LORD,

their blood will be poured out like dust, and their flesh like dung.  
Neither their silver nor their gold will be able to deliver them on the day of the LORD's wrath.  
But the whole earth will be consumed by the fire of His jealousy,  
for He will make a sudden end of all those who dwell on the earth.

### **Judgment on the Nations**

Gather together, yes, gather together, O shameless nation,  
before the decree takes effect, before the day passes like chaff,  
before the fierce anger of the LORD comes upon you,  
before the day of the LORD's anger comes upon you.  
Seek the LORD, all you humble of the land, who carry out His judgment.  
Seek righteousness, seek humility.  
Perhaps you will be hidden on the day of the LORD's anger.  
For Gaza will be forsaken, and Ashkelon a desolation;  
Ashdod will be driven out at noon, and Ekron will be uprooted.  
Woe to the inhabitants of the seacoast, the nation of Kerethites!  
The word of the LORD is against you, O Canaan, land of the Philistines:  
I will destroy you, so that there will be no inhabitant.  
The seacoast will be pastures, with meadows for shepherds and folds for flocks.  
The coast will be for the remnant of the house of Judah, on which they will feed.  
In the houses of Ashkelon they will lie down at evening.  
For the LORD their God will visit them and restore their fortunes.  
I have heard these taunts of Moab, and the revilings of the Ammonites,  
by which they have reproached My people, and made boasts against their territory.  
Therefore, as I live, says the LORD of Hosts, the God of Israel,  
surely Moab will be like Sodom, and the Ammonites like Gomorrah—  
a land of weeds and salt pits, and a perpetual desolation.  
The remnant of My people will plunder them, and the survivors of My nation will possess them.  
This will they have for their pride,  
because they taunted and boasted against the people of the LORD of Hosts.  
The LORD will be dreadful to them, for He will weaken all the gods of the earth;  
men will worship Him, every one from his place, all the lands of the nations.  
You also, O Ethiopians, will be slain by My sword.  
And He will stretch out His hand against the north and destroy Assyria;  
and He will make Nineveh a desolation, and dry like the desert.  
Herds will lie down in her midst, beasts of every kind;  
the cormorant and the bittern will lodge on her pillars.  
Their voice will sing in the windows; desolation will be on the threshold;  
for He will lay bare the cedar work.  
This is the rejoicing city that dwelt securely, that said in her heart,  
"I am, and there is no one besides me."  
How has she become a desolation, a place for beasts to lie down!  
Everyone who passes by her will hiss and shake his fist.

### **Woe to Jerusalem**

Woe to her who is rebellious and defiled, the oppressing city.  
She obeys no voice, she receives no correction;  
she does not trust in the LORD, she does not draw near to her God.  
Her princes within her are roaring lions; her judges are evening wolves  
who leave nothing until the morning.

Her prophets are reckless, treacherous men;  
her priests have profaned the sanctuary and done violence to the law.  
The LORD is righteous in her midst; He does no unrighteousness.  
Every morning He brings His justice to light;  
He does not fail, but the unjust knows no shame.  
I have cut off nations, their strongholds are devastated;  
I have made their streets desolate, with no one passing by.  
Their cities are destroyed; *there is* no man, no inhabitant.  
I said, "Surely you will fear Me; and you will receive correction."  
So her dwelling will not be cut off, according to all that I have appointed against her.  
But they were more eager to corrupt all their deeds.

### The Conversion of the Nations

Therefore wait for Me, declares the LORD, until the day when I rise up to seize the plunder;  
for My decision is to gather nations, to assemble kingdoms,  
to pour on them My indignation, all My fierce anger;  
for all the earth will be devoured with the fire of My jealousy.  
For then I will restore to the peoples a pure speech  
that all of them may call on the name of the LORD, to serve Him with one accord.  
From beyond the rivers of Ethiopia  
My worshippers, the daughter of My dispersed ones, will bring My offering.  
On that day you will not be ashamed  
for all your deeds by which you have transgressed against Me;  
for then I will remove from your midst those who rejoice in your pride,  
and you will no longer be haughty in My holy mountain.  
But I will leave in your midst a meek and humble people,  
and they will trust in the name of the LORD.  
The remnant of Israel will do no unrighteousness, nor speak lies;  
nor will a deceitful tongue be found in their mouth;  
for they will feed and lie down, and no one will make them afraid.

### Israel's Song of Joy

Sing, O daughter of Zion! Shout, O Israel!  
Be glad and rejoice with all your heart, O daughter of Jerusalem!  
The LORD has taken away your judgments, He has cast out your enemies.  
The King of Israel, the LORD, is in your midst; you will see evil no more.  
On that day it will be said to Jerusalem: Fear not, O Zion; let not your hands be slack.  
The LORD your God is in your midst, a Mighty One, who will save.  
He will rejoice over you with gladness, He will renew you with His love,  
He will rejoice over you with singing.  
I will gather those who grieve for the appointed festival,  
which is a reproach and burden on you.  
At that time I will deal with all who oppress you;  
I will save the lame and gather the outcast;  
I will give them praise and fame in every land where they have been put to shame.  
At that time I will bring you in, at the time when I gather you;  
for I will make you renowned and praised among all peoples of the earth,  
when I restore your fortunes before your eyes, says the LORD.



**We continue with the narrative account of the history of Judah during this time as recorded in 2 Kings and 2 Chronicles. As we have in previous readings, the accounts from 2 Kings will be in regular font and the accounts from 2 Chronicles will be in italics. Readings from Jeremiah and Daniel will be interspersed within the narrative as they fit into the chronology.**

*After all this when Josiah had prepared the temple, Necho king of Egypt went up to war in Carchemish on the Euphrates, and Josiah went out to meet him. And Necho sent messengers to him saying, "What is there between you and me, king of Judah? I am not against you this day, but against the house with which I am at war. And God has commanded that I hurry. Refrain from being against God who is with me so that He does not destroy you." But Josiah did not turn away from him for he went to battle against him disguised. He did not listen to the words of Necho that came from the mouth of God, but he came to battle in the plain of Megiddo. So the archers shot King Josiah, and the king said to his servants, "Take me away for I am severely wounded." Then his servants took him from the chariot, and they set him in a second chariot, and they brought him to Jerusalem. He died and was buried in the tombs of his fathers. And all Judah and Jerusalem mourned for Josiah. And Jeremiah composed a dirge for Josiah, and all the male and female singers speak of Josiah in their laments to this day. They set them as a statute over Israel. They are written in the Laments. And the remainder of the acts of Josiah, his deeds and covenant faithfulness, according to what is written in the Law of the LORD, and his acts from beginning to end are written in the book of the kings of Israel and Judah.*

In his days Pharaoh Necho, king of Egypt, went up against the king of Assyria to the River Euphrates. King Josiah went to meet him, but he killed him at Megiddo when he had seen him. His servants carried him dead in a chariot from Megiddo, brought him to Jerusalem, and buried him in his own tomb. The people of the land took Jehoahaz the son of Josiah, anointed him, and made him king in place of his father.

## **Jeremiah Chapter 47-48**

### **Judgment on the Philistines**

The word of the LORD which came to Jeremiah the prophet against the Philistines, before Pharaoh conquered Gaza.

Thus, says the LORD: See, waters rise up out of the north and will be an overflowing flood, and will overflow the land, and all that is in it, the city and those who dwell in it. Then the men shall cry out and all the inhabitants of the land will howl at the noise of the stamping of the hoofs of his strong horses, at the rushing of his chariots, and at the rumbling of his wheels. The fathers will not look back to their children because of the feebleness of their hands, because of the day that comes to destroy all the Philistines and to cut off from Tyre and Sidon every helper that remains. For the LORD will destroy the Philistines, the remnant of the country of Caphtor. Baldness has come upon Gaza; Ashkelon has been cut off. O remnant of their valley, how long shall you gash yourself?

O sword of the LORD, how long shall you not be quiet? Withdraw into your sheath, rest, and be still. How can it be quiet, seeing the LORD has given it a charge against Ashkelon and against the sea shore? There He has appointed it.

## Judgment on Moab

Concerning Moab:

Thus, says the LORD of Hosts, the God of Israel: Woe to Nebo, for it is devastated. Kiriathaim is humiliated and captured; Misgab is humiliated and dismayed. There is no more praise for Moab, in Heshbon they have devised evil against her: "Come and let us cut it off from being a nation!" Also you will be cut down, O Madmen. The sword will pursue you. A sound of crying will be from Horonaim: "Devastation and great destruction!" "Moab is destroyed"; her little ones have caused a cry of distress to be heard; for by the Ascent of Luhith they will go up with continual weeping; for at the descent of Horonaim they have heard a cry of destruction. Flee, save your lives, and be like the juniper in the wilderness. For because you have trusted in your works and in your treasures, you will also be captured; and Chemosh shall go forth into captivity together with his priests and his officials. The destroyer will come upon every city, and no city will escape. The valley also will perish, and the plain will be destroyed, as the LORD has spoken. Give wings to Moab, that she may flee and get away; for the cities will become desolate, without any to dwell in them.

Cursed be he who does the work of the LORD negligently, and cursed be he who keeps back his sword from blood. Moab has been at ease from his youth, and he has also been undisturbed, like wine on its dregs, and he has not been emptied from vessel to vessel, nor has he gone into captivity. Therefore his taste remained in him, and his scent has not changed. Therefore, surely the days are coming, says the LORD, when I will send to him those who tip vessels, and they will tip him over, and will empty his vessels and break his bottles. Moab shall be ashamed of Chemosh, as the house of Israel was ashamed of Bethel, their confidence.

How do you say, "We are mighty and strong men for the war"? Moab has been devastated and gone up out of her cities, and her chosen young men have also gone down to the slaughter, says the King whose name is the LORD of Hosts. The calamity of Moab will come soon, and his affliction hastens fast. All you who are about him, mourn for him. And all you who know his name, say, "How the strong staff has been broken, the beautiful rod!"

O daughter who inhabits Dibon, come down from your glory and sit on the parched ground, for the destroyer of Moab will come upon you, and he will destroy your strongholds. O inhabitant of Aroer, stand by the road and keep watch. Ask him who flees and her who escapes, and say, "What has happened?" Moab has been humiliated, for it has been broken down. Howl and cry out. Tell it in Arnon, that Moab has been devastated. And judgment has come upon the plain country: upon Holon and Jahzah and Mephaath, and Dibon and Nebo and Beth Diblathaim, and Kiriathaim and Beth Gamul and Beth Meon, and Kerioth and Bozrah, and all the cities of the land of Moab, far and near. The horn of Moab has been cut off and his arm has been broken, says the LORD.

Make him drunk, for he magnified himself against the LORD. Moab also will wallow in his vomit, and he also will be held in derision. For was not Israel a derision to you? Or was he caught among thieves? For each time you speak of him, you shake your head in scorn. O you who dwell in Moab, leave the cities and dwell in the rock, and be like the dove that makes her nest in the sides of the hole's mouth.

We have heard of the pride of Moab (he is very proud), of his loftiness, and his arrogance, and his pride, and the haughtiness of his heart. I know his wrath, says the LORD, but it is futile. His lies have accomplished nothing. Therefore I will howl for Moab, and I will cry out for all Moab. My heart shall mourn for the men of Kir Hareseth. O vine of Sibmah, I will weep for you more than the weeping of Jazer. Your plants have stretched over the sea, they reach even to the sea of Jazer. The destroyer has fallen upon your summer fruits and upon your vintage. Joy and gladness are taken away from the plentiful field, even from the land of Moab, and I have caused wine to fail from the winepresses; no one will tread with shouting. Their shouting will not be shouts of joy.

From the outcry of Heshbon even to Elealeh, and even to Jahaz, they have uttered their voice, from Zoar even to Horonaim and to Eglath Shelishiyah; for also the waters of Nimrim shall become desolate. Moreover I will cause to cease in Moab, says the LORD, him who offers *sacrifice* in the high place and him who burns incense to his gods.

Therefore My heart will wail for Moab like pipes, and My heart will wail like pipes for the men of Kir Hareseth, because the riches that they have gotten have perished. For every head will be bald and every beard clipped; upon all the hands will be gashes, and upon the loins sackcloth. There will be lamentation everywhere upon all the housetops of Moab and in the streets, for I have broken Moab like a vessel in which is no pleasure, says the LORD. How it is broken down! How they have wailed! How Moab has turned his back with shame! So Moab will be a derision and a terror to all around him.

For thus says the LORD: Look, one will fly as an eagle and spread his wings against Moab. Kerioth has been captured, and the strongholds have been seized, and the mighty men's hearts in Moab in that day will be as the heart of a woman in her pangs. Moab will be destroyed from being a people because he has magnified himself against the LORD. Fear and the pit and the snare will be upon you, O inhabitant of Moab, says the LORD. He who flees from the terror shall fall into the pit, and he who gets up out of the pit will be taken in the snare; for I will bring upon it, even upon Moab, the year of their punishment, says the LORD.

The fugitives stand without strength under the shadow of Heshbon; for a fire will come out of Heshbon and a flame from the midst of Sihon, and will devour the forehead of Moab and the crown of the head of the tumultuous ones. Woe to you, O Moab! The people of Chemosh have perished; for your sons have been taken away captive and your daughters into captivity. Yet I will restore the fortunes of Moab in the latter days, says the LORD.

Thus far is the judgment of Moab.

*After the death of Josiah, the people of the land took Jehoahaz the son of Josiah and made him king in the place of his father in Jerusalem. And Jehoahaz was twenty-three years old when he began to reign, and he reigned three months in Jerusalem. Then the king of Egypt deposed him in Jerusalem and imposed on the land a tribute of a hundred talents of silver and a talent of gold. The king of Egypt made his brother Eliakim king over Judah and Jerusalem and changed his name to Jehoiakim. But Necho took his brother Jehoahaz and carried him to Egypt.*

Jehoahaz was twenty-three years old when he became king, and he reigned three months in Jerusalem. His mother's name was Hamutal daughter of Jeremiah of Libnah. He did evil in the sight of the LORD, according to all that his fathers had done. Pharaoh Necho imprisoned him at Riblah in the land of Hamath, so that he might not reign in Jerusalem, and imposed tribute on the land of a hundred talents of silver and a talent of gold. Pharaoh Necho made Eliakim son of Josiah king in place of Josiah his father and changed his name to Jehoiakim. He took Jehoahaz away and went to Egypt, and he died there. Jehoiakim gave the silver and gold to Pharaoh, but he taxed the land to give the money according to Pharaoh's demand. According to an assessed amount, he exacted the silver and gold from the people of the land to give to Pharaoh Necho.

*Jehoiakim was twenty-five years old when he began to reign, and he was king in Jerusalem for eleven years. He did what was evil in the eyes of the LORD his God.*

## Jeremiah 22 and 26

Thus says the LORD: Go down to the house of the king of Judah, and speak this word there, and say: Hear the word of the LORD, O king of Judah who sits on the throne of David, you and your servants and your people who enter by these gates. Thus says the LORD: Execute justice and righteousness, and deliver the robbed out of the hand of the oppressor. And do no wrong or violence to the stranger, the fatherless, or the widow, neither shed innocent blood in this place. For if you indeed do these things, then kings sitting on the throne of David will enter by the gates of this house, riding in chariots and on horses, he and his servants and his people. But if you will not obey these words, I swear by Myself, says the LORD, that this house will become a desolation.

For thus says the LORD to the king's house of Judah: You are Gilead to me and the peak of Lebanon; yet surely, I will make you a wilderness and cities which are not inhabited. I will prepare destroyers against you, everyone with his weapons; and they shall cut down your choice cedars and cast them into the fire. Many nations will pass by this city, and every man will say to his neighbor, "Why has the LORD done thus to this great city?" Then they will answer, "Because they have forsaken the covenant of the LORD their God, and worshipped other gods, and served them." Do not weep for the dead nor bemoan him, but weep constantly for him who goes away; for he will return no more nor see his native country.

For thus says the LORD concerning Shallum (Jehoahaz) the son of Josiah king of Judah, who became king instead of Josiah his father, who went from this place: He will not return any more, but will die in the place where they have led him captive and will see this land no more. Woe to him who builds his house with unrighteousness and his chambers with injustice, who uses his neighbor's services without wages, and gives him nothing for his work, who says, "I will build myself a roomy house and large chambers," and cuts out its windows, paneling it with cedar and painting it with vermilion.

Do you reign because you compete in cedar? Did not your father eat and drink and do justice and righteousness, and then it was well with him? He judged the cause of the poor and needy; then it was well with him. Is not this what it means to know Me? says the LORD. But your eyes and your heart are intent only on your covetousness and on shedding innocent blood and on oppression and violence.

Therefore thus says the LORD concerning Jehoiakim the son of Josiah, king of Judah: They will not lament for him, saying, "Ah, my brother!" or, "Ah, sister!" They will not lament for him, saying, "Ah, lord!" or, "Ah, his glory!" He will be buried with the burial of a donkey, drawn and cast out beyond the gates of Jerusalem. Go up to Lebanon and cry out, and lift up your voice in Bashan, and cry out from Abarim, for all your lovers are destroyed. I spoke to you in your prosperity, but you said, "I will not listen!" This has been your manner from your youth, that you have not obeyed My voice. The wind will sweep away all your shepherds, and your lovers shall go into captivity; surely then you will be ashamed and humiliated for all your wickedness. O inhabitant of Lebanon, who makes your nest in the cedars, how you will groan when pangs come upon you, the pain as of a woman in labor!

In the beginning of the reign of Jehoiakim the son of Josiah, king of Judah by the decree of the Pharaoh Neccho, this word came from the LORD, saying: Thus says the LORD: Stand in the court of the house of the LORD, and speak to all the cities of Judah who come to worship in the house of the LORD all the words that I command you to speak to them. Do not diminish a word. Perhaps they will listen and turn every man from his evil way, that I may repent of the calamity which I purpose to do to them because of the evil of their deeds. You will say to them: Thus says the LORD: If you will not listen to Me, to walk in My law which I have set before you, to listen to the words of My servants the prophets, whom I sent to you, both rising up early and sending them, but you have not listened, then I will make this house like Shiloh and will make this city a curse to all the nations of the earth.

So the priests and the prophets and all the people heard Jeremiah speaking these words in the house of the LORD. And when Jeremiah had made an end of speaking all that the LORD had commanded him to speak to all the people, the priests and the prophets and all the people took hold of him, saying, "You shall surely die. Why have you prophesied in the name of the LORD, saying, 'This house shall be like Shiloh, and this city shall be desolate without an inhabitant?'" And all the people were gathered against Jeremiah in the house of the LORD.

When the officials of Judah heard these things, then they came up from the king's house to the house of the LORD and sat down in the entry of the New Gate of the house of the LORD. Then the priests and the prophets spoke to the officials and to all the people, saying, "This man deserves to die! For he has prophesied against this city, as you have heard with your ears."

Then Jeremiah spoke to all the officials and to all the people, saying, "The LORD sent me to prophesy against this house and against this city all the words that you have heard. Therefore, now amend your ways and your deeds, and obey the voice of the LORD your God; and the LORD will repent of the disaster that He has pronounced against you. As for me, here I am in your hand. Do with me as seems good and right to you. But know for certain that if you put me to death, you will surely bring innocent blood upon yourselves and upon this city and upon the inhabitants. For truly the LORD has sent me to you to speak all these words in your ears."

Then the officials and all the people said to the priests and to the prophets, "This man is not worthy of death. For he has spoken to us in the name of the LORD our God." Then certain of the elders of the land rose up and spoke to all the assembly of the people, saying: "Micah of Moresheth prophesied in the days of Hezekiah king of Judah, and spoke to all the people of Judah, saying, 'Thus says the LORD of Hosts: Zion shall be plowed like a field, and Jerusalem shall become heaps, and the mountain of the house as the high places of a forest.' Did Hezekiah king of Judah and all Judah put him to death? Did he not fear the LORD and entreat the LORD, and the LORD relented of the disaster which He had pronounced against them? Thus we might procure great evil against ourselves."

There was also a man that prophesied in the name of the LORD, Uriah the son of Shemaiah of Kiriath Jearim, who prophesied against this city and against this land according to all the words of Jeremiah. And when Jehoiakim the king, with all his mighty men and all the officials, heard his words, the king sought to put him to death. But when Uriah heard it, he was afraid and fled and went into Egypt. And Jehoiakim the king sent men into Egypt: namely, Elnathan the son of Akbor and certain men with him into Egypt. They brought Uriah out of Egypt and led him to Jehoiakim the king, who slew him with the sword and cast his dead body into the graves of the common people. Nevertheless, the hand of Ahikam the son of Shaphan was with Jeremiah, with the result that he was not given into the hands of the people to put him to death.

### **All that the prophets had warned of begins...**

In his days Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon came up, and Jehoiakim became his servant for three years. Then he turned and rebelled against him. The LORD sent against him bands of Chaldeans, bands of Arameans, bands of Moabites, and bands of Ammonites. He sent them against Judah to destroy it, according to the word of the LORD that He spoke by His servants the prophets. Surely at the decree of the LORD this came upon Judah, to remove them from before Him, for the sins of Manasseh, according to all that he had done, and also for the innocent blood that he had shed, for he filled Jerusalem with innocent blood, and the LORD was not willing to pardon.

**The first captives are taken from Judah to Babylon. The prophet Daniel records several accounts of their experience there...**

## Daniel 1-3

### Daniel Taken to Babylon

In the third year of the reign of Jehoiakim king of Judah, Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon came to Jerusalem and besieged it. The Lord gave Jehoiakim king of Judah into his hand, with part of the vessels of the house of God, and he carried them into the land of Shinar to the house of his god. And he brought the vessels into the treasure house of his god.

The king spoke to Ashpenaz the master of his officials that he should bring some of the sons of Israel and some of the king's descendants and some of the nobles, youths in whom was no blemish, who were handsome and skillful in every *branch of wisdom* and gifted with understanding and discerning knowledge, and such as had ability in them to serve in the king's palace, and whom they might teach the learning and the language of the Chaldeans. The king appointed them a daily provision of the king's food and of the wine which he drank. They were to be educated for three years, that at the end of it they might serve before the king.

Now among them were of the sons of Judah: Daniel, Hananiah, Mishael, and Azariah, to whom the commander of the officials gave names. And he gave to Daniel the name of Belteshazzar; to Hananiah, Shadrach; to Mishael, Meshach; and to Azariah, Abednego.

But Daniel purposed in his heart that he would not defile himself with the portion of the king's food, nor with the wine which he drank. Therefore, he requested of the master of the officials that he might not defile himself. Now God had brought Daniel into favor and compassion with the master of the officials. The master of the officials said to Daniel, "I fear my lord the king who has appointed your food and your drink. For why should he see your faces worse-looking than the youths who are your age? Then you would endanger my head before the king."

Then Daniel said to the steward, whom the master of the officials had set over Daniel, Hananiah, Mishael, and Azariah, "Please test your servants for ten days, and let them give us vegetables to eat and water to drink. Then let our countenances be looked upon before you, and the countenance of the youths who eat of the portion of the king's food. And as you see, deal with your servants." So he consented to them in this matter and tested them for ten days.

At the end of ten days their countenances appeared fairer and fatter than all the youths who ate the portion of the king's food. Thus the guard continued to take away the portion of their food and the wine that they were to drink, and gave them vegetables. As for these four youths, God gave them knowledge and skill in every *branch of learning and wisdom*. And Daniel had understanding in all *kinds of visions and dreams*.

Now at the end of the days that the king had set for them to be brought in, the master of the officials brought them in before Nebuchadnezzar. The king spoke with them, and, among them all, none was found like Daniel, Hananiah, Mishael, and Azariah. Therefore they served before the king. In all matters of wisdom and understanding which the king inquired of them, he found them ten times better than all the magicians and astrologers that were in all his realm. Daniel continued even to the first year of King Cyrus.

### Nebuchadnezzar's Dream

And in the second year of the reign of Nebuchadnezzar, Nebuchadnezzar had dreams, and his spirit was troubled and his sleep left him. Then the king gave the command to call the magicians and the astrologers and the sorcerers and the Chaldeans to tell the king his dreams. So they came and stood before the king. The king said to them, "I have had a dream, and my spirit is anxious to understand the dream." Then the Chaldeans spoke to the king in Aramaic, "O king, live forever. Tell your servants the dream, and we will tell the interpretation." The king answered and said to the Chaldeans, "The command from me is firm: If you will not make known to me the dream with its interpretation, you shall be cut in pieces and your houses shall be made a dunghill. But if you tell the dream and its interpretation, you shall receive from me gifts and rewards and great honor. Therefore tell me the dream and its interpretation." They answered again and said, "Let the king tell his servants the dream, and we will tell the interpretation." The king answered and said, "I know of certainty that you are bargaining for time, because you see that the command from me is firm: If you will not make known to me the dream, there is but one decree for you. For you have agreed to speak lying and corrupt words before me until the circumstance is changed. Therefore tell me the dream so that I know that you can tell me its interpretation." The Chaldeans answered before the king and said, "There is not a man on the earth who can tell the king's matter, inasmuch as no great king or ruler has ever asked such things of any magician or astrologer or Chaldean. Also, it is a rare thing that the king requires, and there is no one else who can tell it before the king, except the gods whose dwelling is not with flesh."

For this cause the king was angry and very furious, and commanded to destroy all the wise men of Babylon. Therefore the decree went out that the wise men should be slain. And they sought for Daniel and his companions to be slain. Then Daniel answered with discretion and wisdom to Arioch the captain of the king's guard, who had gone out to kill the wise men of Babylon. He answered and said to Arioch the king's captain, "Why is the decree from the king so urgent?" Then Arioch made the thing known to Daniel. Then Daniel went in and desired of the king that he would give him time in order that he could tell the king the interpretation. Then Daniel went to his house and made the thing known to Hananiah, Mishael, and Azariah, his companions, so that they might ask for compassion from the God of heaven concerning this secret, so that Daniel and his companions might not perish with the rest of the wise men of Babylon.

## God Reveals Nebuchadnezzar's Dream

Then the secret was revealed to Daniel in a night vision. Then Daniel blessed the God of heaven. Daniel answered and said:

“Blessed be the name of God forever and ever, for wisdom and might are His.  
It is He who changes the times and the seasons; He removes kings and sets up kings;  
He gives wisdom to the wise and knowledge to those who know understanding.  
He reveals the deep and secret things;  
He knows what is in the darkness, and the light dwells with Him.  
I thank and praise You, O God of my fathers; for You have given me wisdom and might,  
and have made known to me now what we asked of You,  
for You have made known to us the king's matter.”

## Daniel Interprets the Dream

Therefore Daniel went in to Arioch, whom the king had ordained to destroy the wise men of Babylon. He went and said to him: “Do not destroy the wise men of Babylon. Bring me in before the king, and I will tell the king the interpretation.” Then in haste Arioch brought Daniel before the king and said thus to him, “I have found a man of the captives of Judah who can make known to the king the interpretation.” The king answered and said to Daniel, whose name was Belteshazzar, “Are you able to make known to me the dream which I have seen, and its interpretation?” Daniel answered in the presence of the king and said, “The secret which the king has demanded, the wise men, the astrologers, the magicians, and the soothsayers cannot tell the king. But there is a God in heaven who reveals secrets and makes known to King Nebuchadnezzar what shall be in the latter days. Your dream and the visions of your head upon your bed are these: As for you, O king, your thoughts came into your mind upon your bed about what would come to pass hereafter, and He who reveals secrets makes known to you what shall come to pass. But as for me, this secret is not revealed to me for any wisdom that I have more than any living man, but for the purpose of making known the interpretation to the king, and that you might understand the thoughts of your heart. You, O king, were watching, and there was a great image. This great image, whose brightness was excellent, stood before you. And its form was awesome. This image's head was of fine gold, its breast and its arms of silver, its belly and its thighs of bronze, its legs of iron, its feet partly of iron and partly of clay. You watched until a stone was cut out without hands which struck the image upon its feet, which were of iron and clay, and broke them to pieces. Then the iron, the clay, the bronze, the silver, and the gold were broken to pieces together, and became like the chaff of the summer threshing floors. And the wind carried them away so that not a trace of them was found. But the stone that struck the image became a great mountain and filled the whole earth.



“This was the dream. Now we will tell its interpretation before the king. You, O king, are the king of kings. For the God of heaven has given you a kingdom, power, and strength, and glory. Wherever the sons of men dwell, or the animals of the field, or the fowl of the heavens, He has given them into your hand and has made you ruler over them all. You are the head of gold. After you, another kingdom inferior to you shall arise, and a third kingdom of bronze, which shall rule over all the earth. And the fourth kingdom shall be strong as iron, for iron breaks in pieces and shatters everything; and like iron that crushes, it shall crush and shatter all these. As you saw the feet and toes, partly of potters’ clay and partly of iron, the kingdom shall be divided. But there shall be in it some of the strength of the iron, inasmuch as you saw the iron mixed with miry clay. As the toes of the feet were partly of iron and partly of clay, so the kingdom shall be partly strong and partly broken. Whereas you saw iron mixed with miry clay, they shall mingle themselves with the seed of men, but they shall not cleave to one another, even as iron does not mix with clay. In the days of these kings the God of heaven shall set up a kingdom which shall never be destroyed. And the kingdom shall not be left to another people, but it shall break in pieces and consume all these kingdoms, and it shall stand forever. Inasmuch as you saw that the stone was cut out of the mountain without hands and that it broke in pieces the iron, the bronze, the clay, the silver, and the gold, the great God has made known to the king what shall come to pass hereafter. And the dream is certain, and its interpretation sure.”

### The Promotion of Daniel

Then King Nebuchadnezzar fell upon his face and did homage to Daniel and commanded that they should present an offering and sweet incense to him. The king answered Daniel and said, “Truly your God is a God of gods, and a Lord of kings, and a revealer of secrets, since you could reveal this secret.” Then the king advanced Daniel and gave him many great gifts and made him ruler over the whole province of Babylon and chief of the governors over all the wise men of Babylon. Then Daniel requested of the king, and he set Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego over the affairs of the province of Babylon. But Daniel sat at the court of the king.

### The Image of Gold

Nebuchadnezzar the king made an image of gold, whose height was sixty cubits and its width six cubits. He set it up in the plain of Dura in the province of Babylon. Then Nebuchadnezzar the king sent to gather together the officials, the governors, and the captains, the judges, the treasurers, the counselors, the sheriffs, and all the rulers of the provinces to come to the dedication of the image which Nebuchadnezzar the king had set up. Then the officials, the governors, and captains, the judges, the treasurers, the counselors, the sheriffs, and all the rulers of the provinces were gathered together to the dedication of the image that Nebuchadnezzar the king had set up, and they stood before the image that Nebuchadnezzar had set up.

Then a herald cried aloud: "To you it is commanded, O peoples, nations, and languages, that at the time you hear the sound of the cornet, flute, harp, sackbut, psaltery, dulcimer, and all kinds of music, you should fall down and worship the golden image that Nebuchadnezzar the king has set up. And whoever does not fall down and worship shall the same hour be cast into the midst of a burning fiery furnace." Therefore at that time, when all the people heard the sound of the cornet, flute, harp, sackbut, psaltery, and all kinds of music, all the peoples, the nations, and the languages fell down and worshipped the golden image that Nebuchadnezzar the king had set up.

### The Fiery Furnace

Therefore at that time certain Chaldeans came near and accused the Jews. They spoke and said to King Nebuchadnezzar, "O king, live forever. You, O king, have made a decree, that every man who hears the sound of the cornet, flute, harp, sackbut, psaltery, and dulcimer, and all kinds of music should fall down and worship the golden image. And whoever does not fall down and worship should be cast into the midst of a burning fiery furnace. There are certain Jews whom you have set over the affairs of the province of Babylon: Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego. These men, O king, have not regarded you. They do not serve your gods or worship the golden image which you have set up."

Then Nebuchadnezzar in his rage and fury commanded Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego be brought. Then they brought these men before the king. Nebuchadnezzar spoke and said to them, "Is it true, Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego, that you do not serve my gods or worship the golden image which I have set up? Now if you are ready at the time you hear the sound of the cornet, flute, harp, sackbut, psaltery, and dulcimer, and all kinds of music to fall down and worship the image which I have made, very well. But if you do not worship, you shall be cast the same hour into the midst of a burning fiery furnace. And who is that god who can deliver you out of my hands?"

Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego answered and said to the king, "O Nebuchadnezzar, we do not need to give you an answer in this matter. If it be so, our God whom we serve is able to deliver us from the burning fiery furnace, and He will deliver us out of your hand, O king. But *even if He does not*, be it known to you, O king, that we will not serve your gods, nor worship the golden image which you have set up."

### Protection in the Fiery Furnace

Then Nebuchadnezzar was full of fury, and the form of his visage was changed against Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego. Therefore he spoke, and commanded that they should heat the furnace seven times more than it was usually heated. He commanded the most mighty men in his army to bind Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego and cast them into the burning fiery furnace. Then these men were bound in their trousers, their coats, and their hats, and their other garments, and were cast into

the midst of the burning fiery furnace. Therefore, because the king's commandment was urgent and the furnace exceeding hot, the flame of the fire killed those men who took up Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego. These three men, Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego fell down bound into the midst of the burning fiery furnace. Then Nebuchadnezzar the king was astonished, and rose up in haste, and spoke, and said to his counselors, "Did we not cast three men bound into the midst of the fire?" They answered and said to the king, "True, O king." He answered and said, "But I see four men loose and walking in the midst of the fire, and they are unharmed. And the form of the fourth is like the Son of God!"

### Nebuchadnezzar Praises God

Then Nebuchadnezzar came near to the mouth of the burning fiery furnace, and spoke, and said, "Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego, you servants of the Most High God, come out and come here!" Then Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego came out of the midst of the fire. The officials, governors, and captains, and the king's counselors, being gathered together, saw these men upon whose bodies the fire had no power, nor was a hair of their head singed, neither were their coats changed, nor had the smell of fire even come upon them. Then Nebuchadnezzar spoke and said, "Blessed be the God of Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego, who has sent His angel and delivered His servants who trusted in Him. They have defied the king's word, and yielded their bodies, that they might not serve nor worship any god, except their own God. Therefore I make a decree that every people, nation, and language which speaks anything amiss against the God of Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego shall be cut in pieces, and their houses shall be made a dunghill, because there is no other God who can deliver in this way." Then the king promoted Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego in the province of Babylon.

**During this time as the first captives were taken from Judah to Babylon, Jeremiah continued to warn the people remaining in Judah...**

### Jeremiah 25, 36, 45, 46, 19, 20, 7-11

The word that came to Jeremiah concerning all the people of Judah in the fourth year of Jehoiakim the son of Josiah, king of Judah, that was the first year of Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon, which Jeremiah the prophet spoke to all the people of Judah and to all the inhabitants of Jerusalem, saying: From the thirteenth year of Josiah the son of Amon, king of Judah, even to this day, these twenty-three years the word of the LORD has come to me, and I have spoken to you, rising early and speaking, but you have not listened. The LORD has sent to you all His servants the prophets, rising early and sending them, but you have not listened nor inclined your ear to hear. They said, "Turn now again everyone from his evil way and from the evil of your deeds, and dwell in the land that the LORD has given to you and to your fathers forever and ever. And do not go after other gods to serve them and to worship them, and provoke Me not to anger with the works of your hands; and I will do you no harm." Yet you have not

listened to Me, says the LORD, that you might provoke Me to anger with the works of your hands to your own harm.

Therefore thus says the LORD of Hosts: Because you have not obeyed My words, I will send and take all the families of the north, says the LORD, and Nebuchadnezzar the king of Babylon, My servant, and will bring them against this land and its inhabitants, and against all these surrounding nations; I will utterly destroy them, and make them an astonishment, a hissing, and perpetual desolations. Moreover I will take from them the voice of laughter and the voice of gladness, the voice of the bridegroom and the voice of the bride, the sound of the millstones and the light of the candle. This whole land shall be a desolation and an astonishment, and these nations will serve the king of Babylon seventy years.

It shall come to pass when seventy years are finished that I will punish the king of Babylon and that nation, says the LORD, for their iniquity, and the land of the Chaldeans, and will make it perpetual desolations. I will bring upon that land all My words which I have pronounced against it, even all that is written in this book, which Jeremiah has prophesied against all the nations. For many nations and great kings will make slaves of them, even them. And I will recompense them according to their deeds and according to the works of their hands.

### **The Cup of Wrath**

For thus says the LORD God of Israel to me: Take the wine cup of this fury at My hand and cause all the nations to whom I send you to drink it. They will drink, and totter, and be mad, because of the sword that I will send among them.

Then I took the cup from the hand of the LORD and made all the nations, to whom the LORD had sent me, drink: Jerusalem and the cities of Judah and the kings and the officials, to make them a desolation, an astonishment, a hissing, and a curse, as it is this day; Pharaoh king of Egypt, and his servants, and his officials, and all his people; and all the foreign people, and all the kings of the land of Uz, and all the kings of the land of the Philistines (even Ashkelon, and Gaza, and Ekron, and the remnant of Ashdod); Edom, and Moab, and the children of Ammon; and all the kings of Tyre, and all the kings of Sidon, and the kings of the coastlands which are beyond the sea; Dedan, and Tema, and Buz, and all who cut the corners of their hair; and all the kings of Arabia, and all the kings of the foreign people who dwell in the desert; and all the kings of Zimri, and all the kings of Elam, and all the kings of the Medes; and all the kings of the north, far and near, one with another; and all the kingdoms of the earth which are upon the face of the earth, and the king of Sheshak shall drink after them.

Therefore you shall say to them, Thus says the LORD of Hosts, the God of Israel: Drink and be drunk and spew and fall and rise no more because of the sword which I will send among you. It will be, if they refuse to take the cup from your hand to drink, then you will say to them: Thus says the LORD of Hosts: You shall certainly drink! For I am starting to bring calamity on the city which is called by My name, and should you be utterly unpunished? You shall not be unpunished. For I will call for a sword upon all the inhabitants of the earth, says the LORD of Hosts. Therefore prophesy against them all these words, and say to them: The LORD will roar from on high, and utter His voice from His holy habitation; He will mightily roar against His fold. He will give a shout, as those who tread the grapes, against all the inhabitants of the earth. A noise shall come even to the remote parts of the earth, for the LORD has a controversy with the nations; He shall enter into judgment with all flesh. He shall give those who are wicked to the sword, says the LORD.

Thus says the LORD of Hosts: See, disaster shall go forth from nation to nation, and a great whirlwind shall be raised up from the remote parts of the earth. The slain of the LORD on that day will be from one end of the earth even to the other end of the earth. They will not be lamented or gathered or buried. They will be as dung on the ground. Howl, you shepherds, and cry; and wallow in the ashes, you leaders of the flock. For the days of your slaughter and of your dispersions are accomplished; and you will fall like a choice vessel. The shepherds will have no way to flee, nor the leaders of the flock to escape. A voice of the cry of the shepherds and a howling of the leaders of the flock shall be heard, for

the LORD has devastated their pasture. The peaceable habitations are cut down because of the fierce anger of the LORD. He has left His lair as the lion; for their land is desolate because of the fierceness of the oppressor and because of His fierce anger.

### **Jeremiah's Scroll is Burned**

In the fourth year of Jehoiakim the son of Josiah, king of Judah, this word came to Jeremiah from the LORD, saying: Take a scroll of a book, and write in it all the words that I have spoken to you against Israel and against Judah and against all the nations, from the day I spoke to you, from the days of Josiah, even to this day. It may be that the house of Judah will hear all the disaster which I intend to do to them, so that every man may turn from his evil way; then I will forgive their iniquity and their sin.

Then Jeremiah called Baruch the son of Neriah. And Baruch wrote on a scroll at the dictation of Jeremiah all the words of the LORD which He had spoken to him. Jeremiah commanded Baruch, saying, "I am shut in. I cannot go into the house of the LORD. Therefore go and read from the scroll that you have written at my dictation the words of the LORD in the hearing of the people in the house of the LORD on a fast day. And also you shall read them in the ears of all Judah who come out of their cities. Perhaps their supplication will come before the LORD, and everyone will turn from his evil way, for great is the anger and the fury that the LORD has pronounced against this people."

Baruch the son of Neriah did according to all that Jeremiah the prophet commanded him, reading in the book the words of the LORD in the house of the LORD. In the fifth year of Jehoiakim the son of Josiah, king of Judah, in the ninth month, they proclaimed a fast before the LORD to all the people in Jerusalem and to all the people who came from the cities of Judah to Jerusalem. Then Baruch read from the book the words of Jeremiah in the house of the LORD, in the chamber of Gemariah the son of Shaphan the scribe, in the higher court, at the entry of the New Gate of the house of the LORD, in the ears of all the people.

When Micaiah the son of Gemariah, the son of Shaphan, had heard out of the book all the words of the LORD, then he went down to the king's house, into the scribe's chamber. And all the officials sat there, even Elishama the scribe, and Delaiah the son of Shemaiah, and Elnathan the son of Akbor, and Gemariah the son of Shaphan, and Zedekiah the son of Hananiah, and all the other officials. Then Micaiah declared to them all the words that he had heard when Baruch read the book in the ears of the people. Then all the officials sent Jehudi the son of Nethaniah, the son of Shelemiah, the son of Cush, to Baruch, saying, "Take in your hand the scroll from which you have read in the ears of the people and come." So Baruch the son of Neriah took the scroll in his hand and came to them. They said to him, "Sit down now, and read it in our ears."

So Baruch read it in their ears. When they heard all the words, they turned to one another in fear and said to Baruch, "We will surely tell the king of all these words." They also asked Baruch, saying, "Tell us now, how did you write all these words? Was it at his mouth?" Then Baruch answered them, "He pronounced all these words to me with his mouth, and I wrote them with ink in the book."

Then the officials said to Baruch, "Go hide, you and Jeremiah, and let no man know where you are."

Then they went to the king in the court, but they laid up the scroll in the chamber of Elishama the scribe, and told all the words in the ears of the king. So the king sent Jehudi to fetch the scroll, and he took it out of Elishama the scribe's chamber. And Jehudi read it in the ears of the king and in the ears of all the officials who stood beside the king. Now the king sat in the winter house in the ninth month, and there was a fire burning on the hearth before him. As Jehudi read three or four columns, the king cut it with a scribe's knife and cast it into the fire that was on the hearth, until all the scroll was consumed in the fire that was on the hearth. Yet they were not afraid, nor did they tear their garments, neither the king nor any of his servants who heard all these words. Although Elnathan and Delaiah and Gemariah entreated the king not to burn the scroll, yet he would not listen to them. But the king commanded

Jerahmeel the son of Hammelech, and Seraiah the son of Azriel, and Shelemiah the son of Abdeel to seize Baruch the scribe and Jeremiah the prophet. But the LORD hid them.

### **Jeremiah and Baruch Rewrite the Scroll**

Then the word of the LORD came to Jeremiah after the king had burned the book and the words which Baruch had written at the mouth of Jeremiah, saying: Take again another scroll and write in it all the former words that were in the first book, which Jehoiakim the king of Judah has burned. You shall say to Jehoiakim king of Judah: Thus says the LORD: You have burned this book, saying, Why have you written in it that the king of Babylon will certainly come and destroy this land, and will cause man and beast to cease from here? Therefore thus says the LORD concerning Jehoiakim king of Judah: He shall have no one to sit on the throne of David. And his dead body shall be cast out to the heat of the day and the frost of the night. I will also punish him and his seed and his servants for their iniquity. And I will bring upon them and upon the inhabitants of Jerusalem and upon the men of Judah all the disaster that I have pronounced against them; but they did not listen. Then Jeremiah took another scroll and gave it to Baruch the scribe, the son of Neriah who wrote in it from the mouth of Jeremiah all the words of the book which Jehoiakim king of Judah had burned in the fire. And there were added to them many like words.

### **A Message to Baruch**

The word that Jeremiah the prophet spoke to Baruch the son of Neriah when he had written these words in a book at the mouth of Jeremiah, in the fourth year of Jehoiakim the son of Josiah, king of Judah, saying: Thus says the LORD, the God of Israel, to you, O Baruch: You said, "Alas, woe is me! For the LORD has added grief to my sorrow. I fainted in my sighing, and I find no rest." Thus you shall say to him, "Thus says the LORD: That which I have built I will break down, and that which I have planted I will pluck up, even this whole land. But are you seeking great things for yourself? Do not seek them. For I will bring disaster upon all flesh, says the LORD, but I will give your life to you as booty in all the places where you go."

### **Judgment on Egypt**

The word of the LORD which came to Jeremiah the prophet against the nations:

Concerning Egypt, about the army of Pharaoh Necho king of Egypt, which was by the River Euphrates in Carchemish, which Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon defeated in the fourth year of Jehoiakim the son of Josiah, king of Judah: Order the buckler and shield, and draw near to battle! Harness the horses; mount the steeds! Take your positions with your helmets, polish the spears, put on the armor! Why have I seen them dismayed and drawing back? Their mighty ones are beaten down and have taken refuge in flight, and not looking back. Terror is on every side! says the LORD. Let not the swift flee away, nor the mighty man escape; they will stumble and fall towards the north by the River Euphrates.

Who is this that comes up as the Nile, whose waters surge about as the rivers? Egypt rises up like the Nile, and his waters surge about like the rivers. And he has said, I will go up and will cover the land. I will surely destroy the city and its inhabitants. Come up, O horses, and rage, O chariots! And let the mighty men come forth: the Ethiopians and the Libyans who handle the shield, and the Lydians who handle and bend the bow. For this is the day of the Lord GOD of Hosts, a day of vengeance, so that He may avenge Himself of His adversaries. And the sword will devour; and it will be satiated and made drunk with their blood; for the Lord GOD of Hosts has a slaughter in the north country by the River Euphrates. Go up into Gilead and take balm, O virgin daughter of Egypt; in vain you shall use many medicines, for you will not be cured. The nations have heard of your shame, and your cry has filled the land; for the mighty man has stumbled over the mighty, and they both have fallen together.

## **Defeat of Egypt Foretold**

The word that the LORD spoke to Jeremiah the prophet, about Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon coming to strike the land of Egypt. Declare in Egypt and publish in Migdol, and publish in Memphis and in Tahpanhes; say, "Stand fast and prepare yourself, for the sword will devour those about you." Why have your valiant men become prostrate? They do not stand because the LORD has thrust them down. He made many to fall. Indeed, each one has fallen upon another. Then they said, "Arise and let us go back to our own people and to the land of our nativity, away from the oppressing sword." They cried there, "Pharaoh king of Egypt is a tumult. He has let the time appointed pass by!"

As I live, says the King whose name is the LORD of Hosts, surely as Tabor is among the mountains, and as Carmel by the sea, so he shall come. O daughter dwelling in Egypt, prepare your baggage for captivity, for Memphis will become desolate, it will even be burned down without an inhabitant. Egypt is like a very fair heifer, but destruction comes, it comes out of the north. Also her mercenaries are in her midst like fat bulls, for they also have turned back and have fled away together. They did not stand their ground because the day of their calamity has come upon them, even the time of their punishment. Its sound goes along like a serpent, for they march on as an army, and come against her with axes, as choppers of wood. They have cut down her forest, says the LORD. Surely it will not be found any more, even though they are now more numerous than the grasshoppers, and are innumerable. The daughter of Egypt has been humiliated; she has been delivered into the hand of the people of the north.

The LORD of Hosts, the God of Israel, says: See, I will punish Amon of Thebes, and Pharaoh, and Egypt, with their gods and their kings, even Pharaoh and all those who trust in him. And I shall deliver them into the hand of those who seek their lives and into the hand of Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon and into the hand of his servants. But afterwards it will be inhabited, as in the days of old, says the LORD.

## **God Will Save Israel**

But do not fear, O My servant Jacob, and do not be dismayed, O Israel. For I will save you from afar off, and your seed from the land of their captivity; and Jacob shall return and be in rest and at ease, and no one shall make him afraid. Do not fear, O Jacob My servant, says the LORD, for I am with you; for I will make a full end of all the nations where I have driven you. However, I will not make a full end of you, but correct you in measure, and I will not leave you wholly unpunished.

## **The Broken Jar**

Thus, says the LORD: Go and buy a potter's earthen bottle, and take some of the elders of the people and some of the elders of the priests. Then go out to the Valley of Ben Hinnom, which is by the entry of the Potsherd Gate, and proclaim there the words that I will tell you, and say: Hear the word of the LORD, O kings of Judah and inhabitants of Jerusalem. Thus, says the LORD of Hosts, the God of Israel: I will bring such disaster upon this place, at which whoever hears of it, his ears shall tingle. Because they have forsaken Me and have profaned this place by making offerings in it to other gods whom neither they, their fathers, nor the kings of Judah have known, and have filled this place with the blood of the innocent, and have built the high places of Baal to burn their sons with fire for burnt offerings to Baal, which I did not command or decree, nor did it come into My mind— therefore, surely the days are coming, says the LORD, when this place shall no more be called Topheth or the Valley of Ben Hinnom, but the Valley of Slaughter.

I will make void the counsel of Judah and Jerusalem in this place, and I will cause them to fall by the sword before their enemies, and by the hands of those who seek their lives. And their corpses I will give to be food for the fowl of the heaven and for the beasts of the earth. I will make this city desolate and a hissing. Everyone who passes by will be astonished and hiss because of all the wounds. I will cause them

to eat the flesh of their sons and the flesh of their daughters, and everyone will eat the flesh of his friend in the siege and distress, with which their enemies and those who seek their lives will distress them.

Then you will break the bottle in the sight of the men that go with you, and say to them: Thus says the LORD of Hosts: Even so I will break this people and this city, as one breaks a potter's vessel that cannot be made whole again; and they will bury them in Topheth until there is no other place to bury. Thus, I will do to this place and to the inhabitants, says the LORD, and even make this city as Topheth. And the houses of Jerusalem and the houses of the kings of Judah will be defiled as the place of Topheth, because of all the houses upon whose roofs they have burned incense to all the host of heaven and have poured out drink offerings to other gods.

Then Jeremiah came from Topheth, where the LORD had sent him to prophesy. And he stood in the court of the house of the LORD and said to all the people: Thus says the LORD of Hosts, the God of Israel: I am about to bring upon this city and upon all her towns all the disaster that I have pronounced against it, because they have stiffened their necks so that they might not heed My words.

### **Pashhur Strikes Jeremiah**

Now Pashhur the son of Immer the priest, who was also chief officer in the house of the LORD, heard that Jeremiah prophesied these things. Then Pashhur struck Jeremiah the prophet and put him in the stocks that were in the upper Gate of Benjamin, which was by the house of the LORD. On the next day Pashhur brought Jeremiah out of the stocks. Then Jeremiah said to him, The LORD has not called your name Pashhur, but "Magor-missabib." For thus says the LORD: I will make you a terror to yourself and to all your friends. And they will fall by the sword of their enemies while your eyes will see it. Thus, I will give all Judah into the hand of the king of Babylon, and he will carry them captive into Babylon and will slay them with the sword. Moreover, I will deliver all the wealth of this city, and all its produce, and all the precious things; and all the treasures of the kings of Judah I will give into the hand of their enemies who will destroy them, and take them, and carry them to Babylon. You, Pashhur, and all who dwell in your house will go into captivity; and you will come to Babylon, and there you will die and will be buried there, you and all your friends to whom you have prophesied lies.

### **Jeremiah's Prayer of Dejection**

O LORD, You have deceived me and I was deceived; You are stronger than I and have prevailed.

I am held in derision daily; everyone mocks me.

For each time I speak, I cry out; I cry out, "Violence and devastation," because to me the word of the LORD has resulted in reproach and derision daily.

But if I say, "I will not make mention of Him nor speak any more in His name," then His word was in my heart as a burning fire shut up in my bones;

and I was weary of forbearing it, and I could not endure it.

For I heard the defaming of many, "Terror on every side! Denounce him. Yes, denounce him!"

All my familiar friends who watch for my fall, say, "Perhaps he will be enticed

so that we can prevail against him, and we will take our revenge on him."

But the LORD is with me as a dread mighty One.

Therefore my persecutors will stumble, and will not prevail.

They will be greatly ashamed, for they will not prosper.

Their everlasting shame will never be forgotten.

But, O LORD of Hosts, who tests the righteous and sees the mind and the heart, let me see Your vengeance on them, for to You I have presented my cause.

Sing to the LORD, praise the LORD.

For He has delivered the soul of the poor from the hand of evildoers.



Cursed be the day in which I was born. Let not the day be blessed in which my mother bore me.  
Cursed be the man who brought tidings to my father, saying, "A baby boy has been born to you!"  
and made him very glad.

Let that man be as the cities which the LORD overthrew and did not relent,  
and let him hear the cry in the morning and the shout of alarm at noon,  
because he did not kill me from the womb, so that my mother might have been my grave,  
and her womb be always pregnant.

Why did I come forth from the womb to see trouble and sorrow, so that my days are spent in shame?

### **False Trust in the Temple**

The word that came to Jeremiah from the LORD, saying: Stand in the gate of the house of the LORD and proclaim there this word:

Hear the word of the LORD, all you of Judah, who enter at these gates to worship the LORD. Thus says the LORD of Hosts, the God of Israel: Amend your ways and your deeds, and I will cause you to dwell in this place. Do not trust in lying words, saying, "The temple of the LORD, the temple of the LORD, the temple of the LORD." For if you thoroughly amend your ways and your deeds, if you thoroughly execute justice between a man and his neighbor, if you do not oppress the stranger, the fatherless, and the widow, and do not shed innocent blood in this place, or walk after other gods to your harm, then I will cause you to dwell in this place, in the land that I gave to your fathers, forever and ever. Indeed, you trust in lying words that cannot profit.

Shall you steal, murder, and commit adultery, and swear falsely, and burn incense to Baal, and walk after other gods whom you do not know, and come and stand before Me in this house, which is called by My name, and say, "We are delivered," so that you may do all these abominations? Has this house, which is called by My name, become a den of robbers in your eyes? Certainly, even I have seen it, says the LORD.

But go now to My place which was in Shiloh, where I set My name at the first, and see what I did to it for the wickedness of My people Israel. And now, because you have done all these works, says the LORD, and I spoke to you, rising up early and speaking, but you did not hear, and I called you, but you did not answer, therefore I will do to this house, which is called by My name, in which you trust, and to the place which I gave to you and to your fathers, as I have done to Shiloh. I will cast you out of My sight as I have cast out all your brothers, even the whole seed of Ephraim.

As for you, do not pray for this people, nor lift up a cry nor prayer for them, nor make intercession to Me, for I will not hear you. Do you not see what they do in the cities of Judah and in the streets of Jerusalem? The children gather wood, and the fathers kindle the fire, and the women knead their dough, to make cakes to the queen of heaven, and to pour out drink offerings to other gods, that they may provoke Me to anger. Do they provoke Me to anger? says the LORD. Do they not provoke themselves to the shame of their own faces?

Therefore thus says the Lord GOD: My anger and My fury will be poured out upon this place, upon man and upon beast, and upon the trees of the field, and upon the fruit of the ground; and it shall burn, and shall not be quenched.

Thus says the LORD of Hosts, the God of Israel: Add your burnt offerings to your sacrifices and eat flesh. For I spoke not to your fathers, nor commanded them in the day that I brought them out of the land of Egypt, concerning burnt offerings or sacrifices. But this thing I commanded them, saying, "Obey My voice, and I will be your God, and you shall be My people. And walk in all the ways that I have commanded you, that it may be well with you." But they did not listen, nor incline their ear, but walked in the counsels and in the imagination of their evil heart, and went backward and not forward. Since the day that your fathers came out of the land of Egypt to this day, I have even sent to you all My servants

the prophets, daily rising up early and sending them. Yet they did not listen to Me, nor incline their ear, but hardened their neck. They did worse than their fathers.

Therefore you will speak all these words to them. But they will not listen to you. You will also call to them, but they will not answer you. You shall say to them: This is a nation that does not obey the voice of the LORD their God, nor receive correction. Truth has perished, and has been cut off from their mouth.

Cut off your hair, O Jerusalem, and cast it away, and take up a lamentation on high places; for the LORD has rejected and forsaken the generation of His wrath. For the sons of Judah have done evil in My sight, says the LORD. They have set their abominations in the house which is called by My name, to pollute it. They have built the high places of Topheth, which is in the Valley of Ben Hinnom, to burn their sons and their daughters in the fire, which I did not command them, nor did it come into My heart. Therefore, truly the days are coming, says the LORD, that it will no more be called Topheth, nor the Valley of Ben Hinnom, but the Valley of Slaughter; for they will bury in Topheth because there is no other place. The corpses of this people shall be food for the fowl of the heaven and for the beasts of the earth; and no one will frighten them away. Then I will cause to cease from the cities of Judah and from the streets of Jerusalem the voice of laughter and the voice of gladness, the voice of the bridegroom and the voice of the bride; for the land shall become desolate.

At that time, says the LORD, they will bring out the bones of the kings of Judah, and the bones of his officials, and the bones of the priests, and the bones of the prophets, and the bones of the inhabitants of Jerusalem out of their graves. And they will spread them before the sun and the moon and all the host of heaven, whom they have loved and whom they have served, and after whom they have walked and whom they have sought, and whom they have worshipped. They will not be gathered, nor be buried. They will be as dung upon the face of the earth. Death will be chosen rather than life by all the rest of those who remain of this evil family, which remains in all the places wherever I have driven them, says the LORD of Hosts.

### **Sin and Judgment**

Moreover you shall say to them, Thus says the LORD:

Do men fall and not arise? Do they turn away and not repent? Why then is this people of Jerusalem turned away by a perpetual backsliding? They hold fast to deceit; they refuse to return. I listened and heard, but they did not speak what is right. No man repented of his wickedness, saying, "What have I done?" Everyone turned to his course, as the horse rushes into the battle. Indeed, the stork in the sky knows her appointed times. And the turtledove and the crane and the swallow observe the time of their coming. But My people do not know the judgment of the LORD.

How do you say, "We are wise, and the law of the LORD is with us"? Certainly, the lying pen of the scribes has made it into a lie. The wise men are ashamed; they are dismayed and caught. Indeed, they have rejected the word of the LORD, and what kind of wisdom do they have? Therefore, I will give their wives to others, and their fields to those who shall inherit them. For everyone from the least even to the greatest is given to covetousness; from the prophet even to the priest everyone deals falsely. For they have healed the brokenness of the daughter of My people superficially, saying, "Peace, peace," when there is no peace. Were they ashamed when they had committed abomination? They were not at all ashamed, nor could they blush. Therefore they will fall among those who fall; in the time of their punishment they will be cast down, says the LORD.

I will surely consume them, says the LORD. There will be no grapes on the vine nor figs on the fig tree, and the leaf shall fade; and the things that I have given them will pass away from them. Why do we sit still? Assemble yourselves, and let us enter the fortified cities and let us perish there. For the LORD our God has doomed us and given us water of gall to drink, because we have sinned against the LORD. We looked for peace, but no good came; and for a time of health, but there was trouble! The snorting of his

horses was heard from Dan; the whole land trembled at the sound of the neighing of his strong ones. For they have come and have devoured the land and all that is in it, the city, and those who dwell in it. See, I will send serpents against you, adders, which will not be charmed, and they will bite you, declares the LORD.

### **Jeremiah Mourns for His People**

My sorrow is beyond healing; my heart is faint within me. Listen! The cry of the daughter of my people from a far country: "Is not the LORD in Zion? Is not her king in her?"

"Why have they provoked Me to anger with their graven images, with foreign vanities?"

"The harvest is past, the summer is ended, and we are not saved."

For the brokenness of the daughter of my people am I broken; I mourn; dismay has taken hold of me. Is there no balm in Gilead? Is there no physician there? Why then has not the health of the daughter of my people recovered?

### **Failures of Judah**

Oh, that my head were waters and my eyes a fountain of tears, that I might weep day and night for the slain of the daughter of my people! Oh, that I had in the wilderness a lodging place of wayfaring men, that I might leave my people and go from them! For they all are adulterers, an assembly of treacherous men. They bend their tongues like their bow; lies and not truth prevail upon the land; for they proceed from evil to evil, and they do not know Me, says the LORD. Let everyone be on guard against his neighbor, and do not trust in any brother; for every brother supplants, and every neighbor walks about with slanders. Everyone deceives his neighbor and does not speak the truth. They have taught their tongue to speak lies; they weary themselves in committing iniquity. Your habitation is in the midst of deceit; through deceit they refuse to know Me, says the LORD.

Therefore, thus says the LORD of Hosts: Now, I will refine them and assay them; for what else shall I do for the daughter of My people? Their tongue is a deadly arrow; it speaks deceit. One speaks peaceably to his neighbor with his mouth, but in his heart he lies in wait. Shall I not punish them for these things? says the LORD. Shall not My soul be avenged on such a nation as this?

For the mountains I will take up a weeping and wailing, and for the habitations of the wilderness a lamentation, because they are burned up so that no one can pass through them; nor can men hear the lowing of the cattle. Both the fowl of the heavens and the beast have fled; they are gone.

I will make Jerusalem a heap of ruins and a den of jackals; and I will make the cities of Judah desolate, without an inhabitant.

Who is the wise man who may understand this? And who is he to whom the mouth of the LORD has spoken, that he may declare it? Why is the land ruined and burned up like a wilderness, so that no one passes through?

And the LORD said: Because they have forsaken My law which I set before them, and have not obeyed My voice, nor walked in it, but have walked after the imagination of their own heart and after the Baals, which their fathers taught them. Therefore, thus says the LORD of Hosts, the God of Israel: I will feed them, even this people, with wormwood and give them water of gall to drink. I will scatter them also among the nations, whom neither they nor their fathers have known. And I will send a sword after them until I have consumed them.

Thus says the LORD of Hosts:

Consider and call for the mourning women, that they may come; and send for wailing women, that they may come. And let them make haste and take up a wailing for us, that our eyes may run down with tears and our eyelids gush out with waters. For a voice of wailing is heard out of Zion, "How devastated we are! We are greatly humiliated because we have forsaken the land, because our dwellings have cast us out."

Yet hear the word of the LORD, O you women, and let your ear receive the word of His mouth; and teach your daughters wailing, and everyone her neighbor a lamentation. "For death has come up into our windows; and has entered our palaces, to cut off the children from the streets, and the young men from the squares."

Speak, Thus, says the LORD: "The carcasses of men shall fall as dung upon the open field, and as the sheaf after the harvester, and no one shall gather them."

Thus, says the LORD: Let not the wise man glory in his wisdom, and let not the mighty man glory in his might, let not the rich man glory in his riches; but let him who glories glory in this, that he understands and knows Me, that I am the LORD who exercises lovingkindness, justice, and righteousness in the earth. For in these things I delight, says the LORD.

The days are surely coming, says the LORD, that I will punish all who are circumcised and yet uncircumcised— Egypt, Judah, Edom, the children of Ammon, Moab, and all who dwell in the wilderness who clip the hair on their temples; for all these nations are uncircumcised, and all the house of Israel are uncircumcised of heart.

### **The True God and Idols**

Hear the word which the LORD speaks to you, O house of Israel. Thus says the LORD:

Do not learn the way of the nations; do not be terrified at the signs of heaven, although the nations are terrified at them. For the customs of the people are vain; for with the axe one cuts a tree out of the forest, the work of the hands of the workman. They deck it with silver and with gold; they fasten it with nails and with hammers so that it may not move. They are as a scarecrow in a cucumber field, but do not speak; they must be carried, because they cannot walk. Do not be afraid of them, for they cannot do evil, nor can they do good.

There is no one like You, O LORD. You are great, and Your name is great in might. Who would not fear You, O King of the nations? Indeed, it is Your due. For among all the wise men of the nations, and in all their kingdoms, there is no one like You.

But they are altogether unthinking and foolish; the tree is a doctrine of vanities. Silver spread into plates is brought from Tarshish, and gold from Uphaz, the work of the workman and of the hands of the founder; blue and purple are their clothing; they all are the work of skilled men. But the LORD is the true God; He is the living God and an everlasting King. At His wrath the earth trembles, and the nations cannot endure His indignation.

Thus you shall say to them: The gods that have not made the heavens and the earth, even they shall perish from the earth and from under these heavens.

He has made the earth by His power. He has established the world by His wisdom and has stretched out the heavens by His discretion. When He utters His voice, there is a multitude of waters in the heavens, and He causes the vapors to ascend from the remote parts of the earth; He makes lightning with rain, and brings out the wind from His storehouses.

Every man is stupid, without knowledge; every goldsmith is put to shame by an idol; for his molded image is false, and there is no breath in them. They are vain and a work of mockery; in the time of their

punishment they shall perish. The portion of Jacob is not like them, for He is the Maker of all things, and Israel is the rod of His inheritance. The LORD of Hosts is His name.

### **The Exile Prophesied**

Gather up your wares out of the land, O inhabitant of the fortress. For thus says the LORD: I will sling out the inhabitants of the land at this time, and will distress them that they may be found.

Woe is me because of my brokenness! My wound is grievous. But I said, "Truly this is an illness, and I must bear it." My tabernacle is devastated, and all my cords are broken. My sons have gone from me and are no more. There is no one to spread my tent anymore, and to set up my curtains. For the shepherds have become unthinking and have not sought the LORD. Therefore they have not prospered, and all their flocks are scattered. Listen! The sound of the report has come, and a great commotion out of the north country, to make the cities of Judah desolate and a den of jackals.

### **The Prayer of Jeremiah**

O LORD, I know that the way of man is not in himself; it is not in man who walks to direct his steps. O LORD, correct me, but with justice, not in Your anger, lest You bring me to nothing. Pour out Your fury upon the nations that do not know You and upon the families that do not call on Your name; for they have eaten up Jacob and devoured him, and consumed him, and have made his habitation desolate.

### **The Broken Covenant**

The word that came to Jeremiah from the LORD, saying: Hear the words of this covenant, and speak to the men of Judah and to the inhabitants of Jerusalem. And say you to them, Thus says the LORD God of Israel: Cursed is the man who does not obey the words of this covenant, which I commanded your fathers in the day that I brought them out of the land of Egypt, from the iron furnace, saying, Obey My voice, and do according to all which I command you. So you shall be My people, and I will be your God, that I may perform the oath which I have sworn to your fathers, to give them a land flowing with milk and honey, as it is this day.

Then I answered and said, "So be it, O LORD."

Then the LORD said to me: Proclaim all these words in the cities of Judah and in the streets of Jerusalem: saying, Hear the words of this covenant, and do them. For I earnestly warned your fathers in the day that I brought them up out of the land of Egypt, even to this day, rising early and warning, saying, Obey My voice. Yet they did not obey or incline their ear, but everyone walked in the imagination of their evil heart. Therefore I will bring upon them all the words of this covenant, which I commanded them to do, but which they did not do.

The LORD said to me: A conspiracy has been found among the men of Judah and among the inhabitants of Jerusalem. They have turned back to the iniquities of their forefathers who refused to hear My words. And they have gone after other gods to serve them. The house of Israel and the house of Judah have broken My covenant which I made with their fathers. Therefore thus says the LORD, Surely, I will bring calamity upon them which they will not be able to escape. And though they cry to Me, I will not listen to them. Then the cities of Judah and inhabitants of Jerusalem will go and cry to the gods to whom they offer incense. But they will not save them at all in the time of their trouble. For according to the number of your cities are your gods, O Judah. And according to the number of the streets of Jerusalem you have set up altars to that shameful thing, even altars to burn incense to Baal.

Therefore do not pray for this people, nor lift up a cry or prayer for them. For I will not hear them in the time that they cry to Me because of their trouble.

What right has My beloved in My house, seeing that she has done many lewd deeds? Can the sacrificial meat take away from you your disaster, so that you can rejoice while doing evil?

The LORD called your name, "A green olive tree, fair in fruit and form." With the noise of a great tumult. He has kindled fire upon it, and its branches are broken.

For the LORD of Hosts, who planted you, has pronounced disaster against you, because of the evil of the house of Israel and of the house of Judah, which they have done against themselves to provoke Me to anger in offering incense to Baal.

### **Jeremiah's Life Threatened**

The LORD has made it known to me and I knew it; then You showed me their deeds. But I was like a gentle lamb that is brought to the slaughter, and I did not know that they had devised plots against me, saying,

"Let us destroy the tree with the fruit,  
and let us cut him off from the land of the living  
so that his name may be remembered no more."  
But, O LORD of Hosts, who judges righteously,  
who tries the feelings and the heart,  
let me see Your vengeance on them,  
for to You I have revealed my cause.

Therefore thus says the LORD of the men of Anathoth who seek your life, saying, "Do not prophesy in the name of the LORD so that you not die by our hand." Therefore thus says the LORD of Hosts: I will punish them. The young men shall die by the sword. Their sons and their daughters shall die by famine. And there shall be no remnant of them, for I will bring calamity upon the men of Anathoth, even the year of their punishment.