

Read the Bible in A Year: Chronological

Readings for August 30-September 5, 2020

From: Ezekiel 32-33, 40-46; Jeremiah 52; Psalm 137; 1 Chronicles 4-9; and Daniel 4

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). Judah has faced years of struggle with Babylon, having two kings and two waves of captives already sent into exile in Babylon. Now Judah continues to face threats from Egypt and Assyria, and the Babylonian forces have laid siege to Jerusalem and carried captives to exile in Babylon. The prophets continue to speak words of judgement and hope to the people in captivity and under siege.



Our Readings this week begin with the prophet, Ezekiel...

Jerusalem's Fall Explained

In the twelfth year of our exile, in the tenth month on the fifth day, a man who had escaped from Jerusalem came to me and said, "The city has fallen!" Now the evening before the man arrived, the hand of the LORD was on me, and he opened my mouth before the man came to me in the morning. So, my mouth was opened, and I was no longer silent.

Then the word of the LORD came to me: "Son of man, the people living in those ruins in the land of Israel are saying, 'Abraham was only one man, yet he possessed the land. But we are many; surely the land has been given to us as our possession.' Therefore, say to them, 'This is what the Sovereign LORD says: Since you eat meat with the blood still in it and look to your idols and shed blood, should you then possess the land? You rely on your sword, you do detestable things, and each of you defiles his neighbor's wife. Should you then possess the land?'

“Say this to them: ‘This is what the Sovereign LORD says: As surely as I live, those who are left in the ruins will fall by the sword, those out in the country I will give to the wild animals to be devoured, and those in strongholds and caves will die of a plague. I will make the land a desolate waste, and her proud strength will come to an end, and the mountains of Israel will become desolate so that no one will cross them. Then they will know that I am the LORD, when I have made the land a desolate waste because of all the detestable things they have done.’ As for you, son of man, your people are talking together about you by the walls and at the doors of the houses, saying to each other, ‘Come and hear the message that has come from the LORD.’ My people come to you, as they usually do, and sit before you to hear your words, but they do not put them into practice. Their mouths speak of love, but their hearts are greedy for unjust gain. Indeed, to them you are nothing more than one who sings love songs with a beautiful voice and plays an instrument well, for they hear your words but do not put them into practice. When all this comes true—and it surely will—then they will know that a prophet has been among them.”

The LORD Will Be Israel’s Shepherd

The word of the LORD came to me: “Son of man, prophesy against the shepherds of Israel; prophesy and say to them: ‘This is what the Sovereign LORD says: Woe to you shepherds of Israel who only take care of yourselves! Should not shepherds take care of the flock? You eat the curds, clothe yourselves with the wool and slaughter the choice animals, but you do not take care of the flock. You have not strengthened the weak or healed the sick or bound up the injured. You have not brought back the strays or searched for the lost. You have ruled them harshly and brutally. So they were scattered because there was no shepherd, and when they were scattered they became food for all the wild animals. My sheep wandered over all the mountains and on every high hill. They were scattered over the whole earth, and no one searched or looked for them. Therefore, you shepherds, hear the word of the LORD: As surely as I live, declares the Sovereign LORD, because my flock lacks a shepherd and so has been plundered and has become food for all the wild animals, and because my shepherds did not search for my flock but cared for themselves rather than for my flock, therefore, you shepherds, hear the word of the LORD: This is what the Sovereign LORD says: I am against the shepherds and will hold them accountable for my flock. I will remove them from tending the flock so that the shepherds can no longer feed themselves. I will rescue my flock from their mouths, and it will no longer be food for them. For this is what the Sovereign LORD says: I myself will search for my sheep and look after them. As a shepherd looks after his scattered flock when he is with them, so will I look after my sheep. I will rescue them from all the places where they were scattered on a day of clouds and darkness. I will bring them out from the nations and gather them from the countries, and I will bring them into their own land. I will pasture them on the mountains of Israel, in the ravines and in all the settlements in the land. I will tend them in a good pasture, and the mountain heights of Israel will be their grazing land. There they will lie down in good grazing land, and there they will feed in a rich pasture on the mountains of Israel. I myself will tend my sheep and have them lie down, declares the Sovereign LORD. I will search for the lost and bring back the strays. I will bind up the injured and strengthen the weak, but the sleek and the strong I will destroy. I will shepherd the flock with justice. As for you, my flock, this is what the Sovereign LORD says: I will judge between one sheep and another, and between rams and goats. Is it not enough for you to feed on the good pasture? Must you also trample the rest of your pasture with your feet? Is it not enough for you to drink clear water? Must you also muddy the rest with your feet? Must my flock feed on what you have trampled and drink what you have muddied with your feet? Therefore, this is what the Sovereign LORD says to them: See, I myself will judge between the fat sheep and the lean sheep. Because you shove with flank and shoulder, butting all the weak sheep with your horns until you have driven them away, I will save my flock, and they will no longer be plundered. I will judge between one sheep and another. I will place over them one shepherd, my servant David, and he will tend them; he will tend them and be their shepherd. I the LORD will be their God, and my servant David will be prince among them. I the LORD have spoken. I will make a covenant of peace with them and rid the land of savage beasts so that they may live in the wilderness and sleep in the forests in safety. I will make them and the places surrounding my hill a blessing. I will send down showers in season; there will be showers of blessing. The trees will yield their fruit and the ground will yield its crops; the people will be secure in their land. They will know that I am the LORD, when I break the bars of their yoke and rescue them from the hands of those who enslaved them. They will no longer be plundered by the nations, nor will wild animals devour them. They will live in safety, and no one will make them afraid. I will provide for them a land renowned for its crops, and they will no longer be victims of famine in the land or bear the scorn of the

nations. Then they will know that I, the LORD their God, am with them and that they, the Israelites, are my people, declares the Sovereign LORD. You are my sheep, the sheep of my pasture, and I am your God, declares the Sovereign LORD.”

A Prophecy Against Edom

The word of the LORD came to me: “Son of man, set your face against Mount Seir; prophesy against it and say: ‘This is what the Sovereign LORD says: I am against you, Mount Seir, and I will stretch out my hand against you and make you a desolate waste. I will turn your towns into ruins and you will be desolate. Then you will know that I am the LORD. Because you harbored an ancient hostility and delivered the Israelites over to the sword at the time of their calamity, the time their punishment reached its climax, therefore as surely as I live, declares the Sovereign LORD, I will give you over to bloodshed and it will pursue you. Since you did not hate bloodshed, bloodshed will pursue you. I will make Mount Seir a desolate waste and cut off from it all who come and go. I will fill your mountains with the slain; those killed by the sword will fall on your hills and in your valleys and in all your ravines. I will make you desolate forever; your towns will not be inhabited. Then you will know that I am the LORD. Because you have said, ‘These two nations and countries will be ours and we will take possession of them,’ even though I the LORD was there, therefore as surely as I live, declares the Sovereign LORD, I will treat you in accordance with the anger and jealousy you showed in your hatred of them and I will make myself known among them when I judge you. Then you will know that I the LORD have heard all the contemptible things you have said against the mountains of Israel. You said, ‘They have been laid waste and have been given over to us to devour.’ You boasted against me and spoke against me without restraint, and I heard it. This is what the Sovereign LORD says: While the whole earth rejoices, I will make you desolate. Because you rejoiced when the inheritance of Israel became desolate, that is how I will treat you. You will be desolate, Mount Seir, you and all of Edom. Then they will know that I am the LORD.”

Hope for the Mountains of Israel

“Son of man, prophesy to the mountains of Israel and say, ‘Mountains of Israel, hear the word of the LORD. This is what the Sovereign LORD says: The enemy said of you, ‘Aha! The ancient heights have become our possession.’” Therefore prophesy and say, ‘This is what the Sovereign LORD says: Because they ravaged and crushed you from every side so that you became the possession of the rest of the nations and the object of people’s malicious talk and slander, therefore, mountains of Israel, hear the word of the Sovereign LORD: This is what the Sovereign LORD says to the mountains and hills, to the ravines and valleys, to the desolate ruins and the deserted towns that have been plundered and ridiculed by the rest of the nations around you— this is what the Sovereign LORD says: In my burning zeal I have spoken against the rest of the nations, and against all Edom, for with glee and with malice in their hearts they made my land their own possession so that they might plunder its pastureland.’ Therefore prophesy concerning the land of Israel and say to the mountains and hills, to the ravines and valleys: ‘This is what the Sovereign LORD says: I speak in my jealous wrath because you have suffered the scorn of the nations. Therefore this is what the Sovereign LORD says: I swear with uplifted hand that the nations around you will also suffer scorn. But you, mountains of Israel, will produce branches and fruit for my people Israel, for they will soon come home. I am concerned for you and will look on you with favor; you will be plowed and sown, and I will cause many people to live on you—yes, all of Israel. The towns will be inhabited and the ruins rebuilt. I will increase the number of people and animals living on you, and they will be fruitful and become numerous. I will settle people on you as in the past and will make you prosper more than before. Then you will know that I am the LORD. I will cause people, my people Israel, to live on you. They will possess you, and you will be their inheritance; you will never again deprive them of their children. This is what the Sovereign LORD says: Because some say to you, ‘You devour people and deprive your nation of its children,’ therefore you will no longer devour people or make your nation childless, declares the Sovereign LORD. No longer will I make you hear the taunts of the nations, and no longer will you suffer the scorn of the peoples or cause your nation to fall, declares the Sovereign LORD.”

Israel’s Restoration Assured

Again the word of the LORD came to me: “Son of man, when the people of Israel were living in their own land, they defiled it by their conduct and their actions. Their conduct was like a woman’s monthly uncleanness in

my sight. So I poured out my wrath on them because they had shed blood in the land and because they had defiled it with their idols. I dispersed them among the nations, and they were scattered through the countries; I judged them according to their conduct and their actions. And wherever they went among the nations they profaned my holy name, for it was said of them, "These are the LORD's people, and yet they had to leave his land." I had concern for my holy name, which the people of Israel profaned among the nations where they had gone. Therefore say to the Israelites, "This is what the Sovereign LORD says: It is not for your sake, people of Israel, that I am going to do these things, but for the sake of my holy name, which you have profaned among the nations where you have gone. I will show the holiness of my great name, which has been profaned among the nations, the name you have profaned among them. Then the nations will know that I am the LORD, declares the Sovereign LORD, when I am proved holy through you before their eyes. For I will take you out of the nations; I will gather you from all the countries and bring you back into your own land. I will sprinkle clean water on you, and you will be clean; I will cleanse you from all your impurities and from all your idols. I will give you a new heart and put a new spirit in you; I will remove from you your heart of stone and give you a heart of flesh. And I will put my Spirit in you and move you to follow my decrees and be careful to keep my laws. Then you will live in the land I gave your ancestors; you will be my people, and I will be your God. I will save you from all your uncleanness. I will call for the grain and make it plentiful and will not bring famine upon you. I will increase the fruit of the trees and the crops of the field, so that you will no longer suffer disgrace among the nations because of famine. Then you will remember your evil ways and wicked deeds, and you will loathe yourselves for your sins and detestable practices. I want you to know that I am not doing this for your sake, declares the Sovereign LORD. Be ashamed and disgraced for your conduct, people of Israel! This is what the Sovereign LORD says: On the day I cleanse you from all your sins, I will resettle your towns, and the ruins will be rebuilt. The desolate land will be cultivated instead of lying desolate in the sight of all who pass through it. They will say, "This land that was laid waste has become like the garden of Eden; the cities that were lying in ruins, desolate and destroyed, are now fortified and inhabited." Then the nations around you that remain will know that I the LORD have rebuilt what was destroyed and have replanted what was desolate. I the LORD have spoken, and I will do it. This is what the Sovereign LORD says: Once again I will yield to Israel's plea and do this for them: I will make their people as numerous as sheep, as numerous as the flocks for offerings at Jerusalem during her appointed festivals. So will the ruined cities be filled with flocks of people. Then they will know that I am the LORD."

The Valley of Dry Bones

The hand of the LORD was on me, and he brought me out by the Spirit of the LORD and set me in the middle of a valley; it was full of bones. He led me back and forth among them, and I saw a great many bones on the floor of the valley, bones that were very dry. He asked me, "Son of man, can these bones live?" I said, "Sovereign LORD, you alone know." Then he said to me, "Prophecy to these bones and say to them, 'Dry bones, hear the word of the LORD! This is what the Sovereign LORD says to these bones: I will make breath enter you, and you will come to life. I will attach tendons to you and make flesh come upon you and cover you with skin; I will put breath in you, and you will come to life. Then you will know that I am the LORD.'" So, I prophesied as I was commanded. And as I was prophesying, there was a noise, a rattling sound, and the bones came together, bone to bone. I looked, and tendons and flesh appeared on them and skin covered them, but there was no breath in them. Then he said to me, "Prophecy to the breath; prophecy, son of man, and say to it, 'This is what the Sovereign LORD says: Come, breath, from the four winds and breathe into these slain, that they may live.'" So I prophesied as he commanded me, and breath entered them; they came to life and stood up on their feet—a vast army. Then he said to me: "Son of man, these bones are the people of Israel. They say, 'Our bones are dried up and our hope is gone; we are cut off.' Therefore prophecy and say to them: 'This is what the Sovereign LORD says: My people, I am going to open your graves and bring you up from them; I will bring you back to the land of Israel. Then you, my people, will know that I am the LORD, when I open your graves and bring you up from them. I will put my Spirit in you and you will live, and I will settle you in your own land. Then you will know that I the LORD have spoken, and I have done it, declares the LORD.'"

One Nation Under One King

The word of the LORD came to me: "Son of man, take a stick of wood and write on it, 'Belonging to Judah and the Israelites associated with him.' Then take another stick of wood, and write on it, 'Belonging to Joseph (that

is, to Ephraim) and all the Israelites associated with him.’ Join them together into one stick so that they will become one in your hand. When your people ask you, ‘Won’t you tell us what you mean by this?’ say to them, ‘This is what the Sovereign LORD says: I am going to take the stick of Joseph—which is in Ephraim’s hand—and of the Israelite tribes associated with him, and join it to Judah’s stick. I will make them into a single stick of wood, and they will become one in my hand.’ Hold before their eyes the sticks you have written on and say to them, ‘This is what the Sovereign LORD says: I will take the Israelites out of the nations where they have gone. I will gather them from all around and bring them back into their own land. I will make them one nation in the land, on the mountains of Israel. There will be one king over all of them and they will never again be two nations or be divided into two kingdoms. They will no longer defile themselves with their idols and vile images or with any of their offenses, for I will save them from all their sinful backsliding, and I will cleanse them. They will be my people, and I will be their God. My servant David will be king over them, and they will all have one shepherd. They will follow my laws and be careful to keep my decrees. They will live in the land I gave to my servant Jacob, the land where your ancestors lived. They and their children and their children’s children will live there forever, and David my servant will be their prince forever. I will make a covenant of peace with them; it will be an everlasting covenant. I will establish them and increase their numbers, and I will put my sanctuary among them forever. My dwelling place will be with them; I will be their God, and they will be my people. Then the nations will know that I the LORD make Israel holy, when my sanctuary is among them forever.”

The LORD’s Great Victory Over the Nations

The word of the LORD came to me: “Son of man, set your face against Gog, of the land of Magog, the chief prince of Meshek and Tubal; prophesy against him and say: ‘This is what the Sovereign LORD says: I am against you, Gog, chief prince of Meshek and Tubal. I will turn you around, put hooks in your jaws and bring you out with your whole army—your horses, your horsemen fully armed, and a great horde with large and small shields, all of them brandishing their swords. Persia, Cush and Put will be with them, all with shields and helmets, also Gomer with all its troops, and Beth Togarmah from the far north with all its troops—the many nations with you. Get ready; be prepared, you and all the hordes gathered about you, and take command of them. After many days you will be called to arms. In future years you will invade a land that has recovered from war, whose people were gathered from many nations to the mountains of Israel, which had long been desolate. They had been brought out from the nations, and now all of them live in safety. You and all your troops and the many nations with you will go up, advancing like a storm; you will be like a cloud covering the land. This is what the Sovereign LORD says: On that day thoughts will come into your mind and you will devise an evil scheme. You will say, “I will invade a land of unwalled villages; I will attack a peaceful and unsuspecting people—all of them living without walls and without gates and bars. I will plunder and loot and turn my hand against the resettled ruins and the people gathered from the nations, rich in livestock and goods, living at the center of the land. Sheba and Dedan and the merchants of Tarshish and all her villages will say to you, “Have you come to plunder? Have you gathered your hordes to loot, to carry off silver and gold, to take away livestock and goods and to seize much plunder?””

“Therefore, son of man, prophesy and say to Gog: ‘This is what the Sovereign LORD says: In that day, when my people Israel are living in safety, will you not take notice of it? You will come from your place in the far north, you and many nations with you, all of them riding on horses, a great horde, a mighty army. You will advance against my people Israel like a cloud that covers the land. In days to come, Gog, I will bring you against my land, so that the nations may know me when I am proved holy through you before their eyes. This is what the Sovereign LORD says: You are the one I spoke of in former days by my servants the prophets of Israel. At that time they prophesied for years that I would bring you against them. This is what will happen in that day: When Gog attacks the land of Israel, my hot anger will be aroused, declares the Sovereign LORD. In my zeal and fiery wrath I declare that at that time there shall be a great earthquake in the land of Israel. The fish in the sea, the birds in the sky, the beasts of the field, every creature that moves along the ground, and all the people on the face of the earth will tremble at my presence. The mountains will be overturned, the cliffs will crumble and every wall will fall to the ground. I will summon a sword against Gog on all my mountains, declares the Sovereign LORD. Every man’s sword will be against his brother. I will execute judgment on him with plague and bloodshed; I will pour down torrents of rain, hailstones and burning sulfur on him and on his

troops and on the many nations with him. And so I will show my greatness and my holiness, and I will make myself known in the sight of many nations. Then they will know that I am the LORD.’

“Son of man, prophesy against Gog and say: ‘This is what the Sovereign LORD says: I am against you, Gog, chief prince of Meshek and Tubal. I will turn you around and drag you along. I will bring you from the far north and send you against the mountains of Israel. Then I will strike your bow from your left hand and make your arrows drop from your right hand. On the mountains of Israel you will fall, you and all your troops and the nations with you. I will give you as food to all kinds of carrion birds and to the wild animals. You will fall in the open field, for I have spoken, declares the Sovereign LORD. I will send fire on Magog and on those who live in safety in the coastlands, and they will know that I am the LORD. I will make known my holy name among my people Israel. I will no longer let my holy name be profaned, and the nations will know that I the LORD am the Holy One in Israel. It is coming! It will surely take place, declares the Sovereign LORD. This is the day I have spoken of. Then those who live in the towns of Israel will go out and use the weapons for fuel and burn them up—the small and large shields, the bows and arrows, the war clubs and spears. For seven years they will use them for fuel. They will not need to gather wood from the fields or cut it from the forests, because they will use the weapons for fuel. And they will plunder those who plundered them and loot those who looted them, declares the Sovereign LORD. On that day I will give Gog a burial place in Israel, in the valley of those who travel east of the Sea. It will block the way of travelers, because Gog and all his hordes will be buried there. So it will be called the Valley of Hamon Gog. For seven months the Israelites will be burying them in order to cleanse the land. All the people of the land will bury them, and the day I display my glory will be a memorable day for them, declares the Sovereign LORD. People will be continually employed in cleansing the land. They will spread out across the land and, along with others, they will bury any bodies that are lying on the ground. After the seven months they will carry out a more detailed search. As they go through the land, anyone who sees a human bone will leave a marker beside it until the gravediggers bury it in the Valley of Hamon Gog, near a town called Hamonah. And so they will cleanse the land.’

“Son of man, this is what the Sovereign LORD says: Call out to every kind of bird and all the wild animals: ‘Assemble and come together from all around to the sacrifice I am preparing for you, the great sacrifice on the mountains of Israel. There you will eat flesh and drink blood. You will eat the flesh of mighty men and drink the blood of the princes of the earth as if they were rams and lambs, goats and bulls—all of them fattened animals from Bashan. At the sacrifice I am preparing for you, you will eat fat till you are glutted and drink blood till you are drunk. At my table you will eat your fill of horses and riders, mighty men and soldiers of every kind,’ declares the Sovereign LORD. “I will display my glory among the nations, and all the nations will see the punishment I inflict and the hand I lay on them. From that day forward the people of Israel will know that I am the LORD their God. And the nations will know that the people of Israel went into exile for their sin, because they were unfaithful to me. So I hid my face from them and handed them over to their enemies, and they all fell by the sword. I dealt with them according to their uncleanness and their offenses, and I hid my face from them. Therefore this is what the Sovereign LORD says: I will now restore the fortunes of Jacob and will have compassion on all the people of Israel, and I will be zealous for my holy name. They will forget their shame and all the unfaithfulness they showed toward me when they lived in safety in their land with no one to make them afraid. When I have brought them back from the nations and have gathered them from the countries of their enemies, I will be proved holy through them in the sight of many nations. Then they will know that I am the LORD their God, for though I sent them into exile among the nations, I will gather them to their own land, not leaving any behind. I will no longer hide my face from them, for I will pour out my Spirit on the people of Israel, declares the Sovereign LORD.”

A Lament for Pharaoh and Egypt

In the twelfth year, in the twelfth *month*, on the first day of the month, the word of the LORD came to me, saying: Son of man, take up a lamentation for Pharaoh king of Egypt and say to him: You likened yourself to a young lion of the nations, but you are as the monster in the seas; and you burst forth in your rivers, and muddied the waters with your feet, and made foul their rivers.

Thus says the Lord GOD: I will therefore spread out My net over you with a company of many peoples, and they shall bring you up in My net. Then I will leave you upon the land; I will cast you out on the open field,

and I will cause all the fowl of the heavens to remain upon you. And I will fill the beasts of the whole earth with you. I will lay your flesh upon the mountains and fill the valleys with your refuse. I will also water the land with your blood, as far as the mountains; and the rivers shall be full of you. When I put you out, I will cover the heavens and make their stars dark; I will cover the sun with a cloud, and the moon shall not give its light. All the bright lights in the heavens I will make dark over you, and set darkness upon your land, says the Lord GOD. I will also vex the hearts of many peoples when I bring your destruction among the nations, into the countries which you have not known. Indeed, I will make many peoples amazed at you, and their kings shall be horribly afraid for you when I brandish My sword before them. And they shall tremble at every moment, every man for his own life, on the day of your fall. For thus says the Lord GOD:

The sword of the king of Babylon shall come upon you. By the swords of the mighty, I will cause your multitude to fall. All of them are tyrants of the nations; they shall destroy the pride of Egypt, and all its multitude shall be destroyed. I also will destroy all the beasts from beside many waters; nor shall the foot of man muddy them anymore, nor the hoofs of beasts muddy them. Then I will make their waters settle, and cause their rivers to run like oil, says the Lord GOD. When I make the land of Egypt desolate, and the country is destitute of that by which it was full, when I smite all those who dwell in it, then shall they know that I am the LORD. This is the lamentation, and they shall chant it. The daughters of the nations shall chant it. They shall chant it over Egypt and over all her multitude, says the Lord GOD.

A Dirge for Egypt

In the twelfth year, on the fifteenth day of the month, the word of the LORD came to me, saying: Son of man, wail for the multitude of Egypt and cast it down, her and the daughters of the powerful nations, to the nether parts of the earth, with those who go down into the pit. "Whom do you surpass in beauty? Descend and make your bed with the uncircumcised." They shall fall in the midst of those who are slain by the sword. She is delivered to the sword. They have drawn her and all her multitudes away. The strong among the mighty shall speak to him and those who help him out of the midst of Sheol: "They have gone down, they lie still, uncircumcised, slain by the sword."

Assyria is there and all her company. Her graves are around her. All of them are slain, fallen by the sword, whose graves are set in the sides of the pit and her company is all around her grave. All of them are slain, fallen by the sword, who cause terror in the land of the living.

There is Elam and all her multitude all around her grave, all of them slain, fallen by the sword, who descended uncircumcised into the nether parts of the earth, who caused their terror in the land of the living and bore their shame with those who went down to the pit. They have set a bed for her in the midst of the slain with all her multitude. Her graves are all around it. All of them uncircumcised, slain by the sword; though their terror was caused in the land of the living, yet they have borne their shame with those who go down to the pit. They were put in the midst of those who are slain.

There is Meshek, Tubal, and all her multitude. Their graves are all around them. All of them uncircumcised, slain by the sword, though they caused their terror in the land of the living. They shall not lie with the mighty who are fallen of the uncircumcised, who have gone down to Sheol with their weapons of war and whose swords were laid under their heads. But the punishment for their iniquity rested upon their bones, though the terror of these mighty ones was once in the land of the living. Indeed, you shall be broken in the midst of the uncircumcised and shall lie with those who are slain with the sword.

There is Edom also, its kings and all its officials, who for all their might are laid by those who were slain by the sword. They shall lie with the uncircumcised and with those who go down to the pit. There are also the officials of the north, all of them, and all the Sidonians, who in spite of the terror from their might have gone down in shame with the slain. So they lie down uncircumcised with those who are slain by the sword, and bear their shame with those who go down to the pit.

Pharaoh shall see them, and shall be comforted over all his multitude slain by the sword, even Pharaoh and all his army, says the Lord GOD. Though I have caused a terror of him in the land of the living, yet he shall be laid in the midst of the uncircumcised with those who are slain with the sword, even Pharaoh and all his multitude, says the Lord GOD.

Renewal of Ezekiel's Call as Watchman

The word of the LORD came to me: "Son of man, speak to your people and say to them: 'When I bring the sword against a land, and the people of the land choose one of their men and make him their watchman, and he sees the sword coming against the land and blows the trumpet to warn the people, then if anyone hears the trumpet but does not heed the warning and the sword comes and takes their life, their blood will be on their own head. Since they heard the sound of the trumpet but did not heed the warning, their blood will be on their own head. If they had heeded the warning, they would have saved themselves. But if the watchman sees the sword coming and does not blow the trumpet to warn the people and the sword comes and takes someone's life, that person's life will be taken because of their sin, but I will hold the watchman accountable for their blood.'

"Son of man, I have made you a watchman for the people of Israel; so hear the word I speak and give them warning from me. When I say to the wicked, 'You wicked person, you will surely die,' and you do not speak out to dissuade them from their ways, that wicked person will die for their sin, and I will hold you accountable for their blood. But if you do warn the wicked person to turn from their ways and they do not do so, they will die for their sin, though you yourself will be saved.

"Son of man, say to the Israelites, 'This is what you are saying: "Our offenses and sins weigh us down, and we are wasting away because of them. How then can we live?"' Say to them, 'As surely as I live, declares the Sovereign LORD, I take no pleasure in the death of the wicked, but rather that they turn from their ways and live. Turn! Turn from your evil ways! Why will you die, people of Israel?'

"Therefore, son of man, say to your people, 'If someone who is righteous disobeys, that person's former righteousness will count for nothing. And if someone who is wicked repents, that person's former wickedness will not bring condemnation. The righteous person who sins will not be allowed to live even though they were formerly righteous.' If I tell a righteous person that they will surely live, but then they trust in their righteousness and do evil, none of the righteous things that person has done will be remembered; they will die for the evil they have done. And if I say to a wicked person, 'You will surely die,' but they then turn away from their sin and do what is just and right— if they give back what they took in pledge for a loan, return what they have stolen, follow the decrees that give life, and do no evil—that person will surely live; they will not die. None of the sins that person has committed will be remembered against them. They have done what is just and right; they will surely live.

"Yet your people say, 'The way of the Lord is not just.' But it is their way that is not just. If a righteous person turns from their righteousness and does evil, they will die for it. And if a wicked person turns away from their wickedness and does what is just and right, they will live by doing so. Yet you Israelites say, 'The way of the Lord is not just.' But I will judge each of you according to your own ways."

We return to the narrative accounting of what happened during this time as the captives begin to be taken away to Babylon from Judah.

From Jeremiah 52: 28-30: These are the people whom Nebuchadnezzar carried away captive: in the seventh year three thousand and twenty-three Jews. In the eighteenth year of Nebuchadnezzar he carried away captive from Jerusalem eight hundred and thirty-two persons. In the twenty-third year of Nebuchadnezzar, Nebuzaradan the captain of the guard carried away captive of the Jews seven hundred and forty-five. All the persons were four thousand and six hundred.

Psalm 137 was written during this time as a lament sung by those who were captive in Babylon

By the rivers of Babylon, there we sat down and wept
when we remembered Zion.

We hung our harps upon the poplars.
For there our captors made us sing and our tormentors made us entertain,
saying, "Sing us one of the songs of Zion."
How shall we sing the song of the LORD in a foreign land?
If I forget you, O Jerusalem, let my right hand forget its skill.
If I do not remember you, let my tongue stick to the roof of my mouth,
if I do not have Jerusalem as my highest joy.
Remember, O LORD, the people of Edom in the day of Jerusalem,
who said, "Raze it, raze it, down to its foundations."
O daughter of Babylon, who is to be destroyed,
blessed is the one who rewards you as you have done to us.
Blessed is the one who takes and dashes your little ones against the rocks.

And from 1 Chronicles... a genealogy review and accounting of those who were in exile...

Sons of Simeon

The sons of Simeon were Nemuel, Jamin, Jarib, Zerah, Shaul, Shallum his son, Mibsam his son, and Mishma his son. The sons of Mishma were Hammuel his son, Zakkur his son, and Shimei his son. Shimei had sixteen sons and six daughters, but his brothers did not have many sons, nor did all their family multiply as much as the sons of Judah. Now they dwelt in Beersheba, Moladah, and Hazar Shual as well as in Bilhah, Ezem, Tolad, Bethuel, Hormah, Ziklag, Beth Markaboth, Hazar Susim, Beth Biri, and Shaaraim. These were their cities until the reign of David. Their villages were Etam, Ain, Rimmon, Token, and Ashan, five cities in all, and all the villages that were around these cities as far as Baal. Such are their inhabited cities, and those registered to them were Meshobab, Jamlech, and Joshah the son of Amaziah; Joel, and Jehu the son of Joshibiah, the son of Seraiah, the son of Asiel; Elioenai, Jaakobah, Jeshohaiah, Asaiah, Adiel, Jesimiel, Benaiah; Ziza the son of Shiphi, the son of Allon, the son of Jedaiah, the son of Shimri, the son of Shemaiah.

These mentioned by name were leaders in their families, and their fathers' houses increased greatly. They went to the entrance of Gedor, as far as the east side of the valley, to seek pasture for their flocks. There they found rich, good pasture, and the land was wide, quiet, and peaceful; for former inhabitants there belonged to Ham.

In the days of Hezekiah king of Judah, those written by name came and attacked their tents, along with the Meunites who were found there, and utterly destroyed them until this day. Then they dwelt there in their place because there was pasture for their flocks there. Now some of them, namely five hundred men from the sons of Simeon, went to Mount Seir with Pelatiah, Neariah, Rephaiah, and Uzziel, the sons of Ishi, as their captains. Then they struck down the rest of the Amalekites who had escaped. So they have dwelt there until this day.

Sons of Reuben

Now the sons of Reuben the firstborn of Israel (for he was the firstborn, but since he defiled his father's bed, his birthright was given to the sons of Joseph the son of Israel, so that the genealogy is not listed according to the birthright; though Judah prevailed over his brothers and a ruler came from him, yet the birthright belonged to Joseph), the sons of Reuben the firstborn of Israel were Hanok, Pallu, Hezron, and Karmi. The sons of Joel were Shemaiah his son, Gog his son, Shimei his son, Micah his son, Reaiah his son,

Baal his son, and Beerah his son, whom Tiglath-Pileser the king of Assyria led into exile. He was a leader of the Reubenites. His brothers according to their families by the registration of their generations were Jeiel, the first, and Zechariah; Bela the son of Azaz, the son of Shema, the son of Joel, who dwelt in Aroer, even as far as Nebo and Baal Meon. And he dwelt toward the east as far as the entrance to the wilderness from the Euphrates, for their cattle were abundant in the land of Gilead. Now in the days of Saul, they made war with the Hagarites, who fell by their hand, and they dwelt in their tents over all the eastern plains of Gilead.

Sons of Gad

The sons of Gad dwelt opposite them in the land of Bashan as far as Salekah. Joel was the first, Shapham the second, with Janai and Shaphat in Bashan. Their brothers of their father's house were Michael, Meshullam, Sheba, Jorai, Jakan, Zia, and Eber, seven in all. These are the sons of Abihail, the son of Huri, the son of Jaroah, the son of Gilead, the son of Michael, the son of Jeshishai, the son of Jahdo, the son of Buz; Ahi the son of Abdiel, the son of Guni, was the head of their father's house. They dwelt in Gilead in Bashan, and in its towns, and in all the outlands of Sharon to the edge of their borders. All of them were registered by genealogy in the days of Jotham king of Judah and in the days of Jeroboam king of Israel.

The sons of Reuben, and the Gadites, and the half-tribe of Manasseh numbered forty-four thousand seven hundred and sixty valiant men, men able to bear shield and sword, to shoot with a bow, and who were skillful in battle, who went to war. They made war with the Hagarites, namely Jetur, Naphish, and Nodab. They were helped against them, and the Hagarites and all who were with them were delivered into their hand, for they cried to God in the battle, and He heard their prayer because they trusted in Him. They captured their livestock: fifty thousand of their camels, two hundred and fifty thousand sheep, two thousand donkeys, and one hundred thousand men. ²² So many fell slain, because the war was of God. And they dwelt in their place until the exile.

The Half-Tribe of Manasseh

The children of the half-tribe of Manasseh also dwelt in the land. They increased from Bashan as far as Baal Hermon and Senir, even to Mount Hermon.

These were the heads of their fathers' houses: Ephraim, Ishi, Eliel, Azriel, Jeremiah, Hodaviah, and Jahdiel, mighty men of valor, men of reputation, and heads of their fathers' houses. They were unfaithful to the God of their fathers and played the harlot after the gods of the peoples of the land, whom God had wiped out before them. So the God of Israel stirred up the spirit of Pul the king of Assyria, even the spirit of Tiglath-Pileser king of Assyria, and he led the Reubenites, the Gadites, and the half-tribe of Manasseh into exile and brought them to Halah, Habor, Hara, and to the river of Gozan to this day.

The Descendants of Amram

The children of Amram were Aaron, Moses, and Miriam. The sons of Aaron were Nadab, Abihu, Eleazar, and Ithamar.

Aaron and his sons were making sacrifices on the altar of the burnt offering and on the altar of incense for all the work of the Most Holy Place and to make atonement for Israel, according to all that Moses the servant of God had commanded.

Eleazar became the father of Phinehas, Phinehas the father of Abishua, Abishua the father of Bukki, and Bukki the father of Uzzi. Uzzi became the father of Zerahiah, and Zerahiah the father of Meraioth. Meraioth became the father of Amariah, and Amariah father of Ahitub. Ahitub became the father of Zadok, and Zadok father of Ahimaaz. Ahimaaz became the father of Azariah, and Azariah father of Johanan. Johanan became the father of Azariah (he was the one who ministered as a priest in the temple that Solomon built in Jerusalem). Azariah became the father of Amariah, and Amariah the father of Ahitub. Ahitub became the father of Zadok, and Zadok the father of Shallum. Shallum became the father of Hilkiah, and Hilkiah the father of Azariah. Azariah became the father of Seraiah, and Seraiah of Jehozadak. Jehozadak went into exile when the LORD led Judah and Jerusalem into exile by the hand of Nebuchadnezzar.

Sons of Issachar

Now the sons of Issachar were Tola, Puah, Jashub, and Shimron, four in all. The sons of Tola were Uzzi, Rephaiah, Jeriel, Jahmai, Ibsam, and Samuel. They were heads of their father's house. The sons of Tola were mighty men of valor in their generations. Their number in the days of David was twenty-two thousand six hundred. The son of Uzzi was Izrahiah, and the sons of Izrahiah were Michael, Obadiah, Joel, and Ishiah, five chiefs in all. With them, by their generations, after the house of their fathers, were thirty-six thousand troops of war, battle-ready, for they had many wives and sons. Now their brothers from all the families of Issachar were mighty men of valor, in all eighty-seven thousand registered by genealogy.

Sons of Benjamin

Benjamin had Bela, Beker, and Jediael, three sons in all. The sons of Bela were five: Ezbon, Uzzi, Uzziel, Jerimoth, and Iri. They were heads of their fathers' houses, mighty men of valor, and registered by their genealogies, twenty-two thousand and thirty four in number. The sons of Beker were Zemirah, Joash, Eliezer, Elioenai, Omri, Jeremoth, Abijah, Anathoth, and Alemeth. All these are the sons of Beker. Now their registration according to their generations, heads of their fathers' houses, mighty men of valor, was twenty thousand two hundred. The son of Jediael was Bilhan, along with the sons of Bilhan: Jeush, Benjamin, Ehud, Kenaanah, Zethan, Tarshish, and Ahishahar. All these sons of Jediael were heads of their fathers' houses, mighty men of valor, numbering seventeen thousand two hundred soldiers, ready to go out to war for battle. And the Shuppites and Huppites were the sons of Ir; the Hushites the sons of Aher.

Sons of Naphtali

The sons of Naphtali were Jahziel, Guni, Jezer, and Shallum, descendants of Bilhah.

Sons of Manasseh

The sons of Manasseh were Asriel, whom his Aramean concubine bore. She also bore Makir the father of Gilead. Now Makir took a wife for Huppim and Shuppim, whose sister's name was Maakah. The name of the second was Zelophehad, and Zelophehad had daughters. Maakah the wife of Makir bore a son, and she called his name Peresh. His brother's name was Sheresh, and his sons were Ulam and Rakem. The son of Ulam was Bedan. These were the sons of Gilead, the son of Makir, the son of Manasseh. His sister Hammoleketh bore Ishhod, Abiezer, and Mahlah. The sons of Shemida were Ahian, Shechem, Likhi, and Aniam.

Sons of Ephraim

The sons of Ephraim were Shuthelah, Bered his son, Tahath his son, Eleadah his son, Tahath his son, Zabad his son, Shuthelah his son, and Ezer and Elead, whom the men of Gath born in that land killed because they came down to take their livestock. Ephraim their father mourned many days, and his brothers came to comfort him. Then he went in to his wife, and she conceived and bore a son, so he called his name Beriah, because evil had been in his house (his daughter was Sheerah, who built both Lower and Upper Beth Horon as well as Uzzen Sheerah). Rephah was also his son, as were Resheph, Telah his son, Tahan his son, Ladan his son, Ammihud his son, Elishama his son, Nun his son, and Joshua his son. Their possessions and settlements were Bethel and its towns, and to the east Naaran, and to the west Gezer with its towns, Shechem and its towns, and Ayyah and its towns; also along the borders of the Manassites, Beth Shan and its towns, Taanach and its towns, Megiddo and its towns, and Dor and its towns. In these lived the sons of Joseph the son of Israel.

Sons of Asher

Now the children of Asher were Imnah, Ishvah, Ishvi, Beriah, and their sister Serah. The sons of Beriah were Heber and Malkiel, who was the father of Birzaith. Heber became the father of Japhlet, Shomer, Hotham, and their sister Shua. The sons of Japhlet were Pasak, Bimhal, and Ashvath. These were the children of Japhlet. The sons of Shomer were Ahi, Rohgah, Hubbah, and Aram. The sons of his brother Helem were Zophah, Imna, Shelesh, and Amal. The sons of Zophah were Suah, Harnepher, Shual, Beri, Imrah, Bezer, Hod, Shamma, Shilshah, Ithran, and Beera. The sons of Jether were Jephunneh, Pispah, and Ara. The sons of Ulla were Arah, Hanniel, and Rizia. All these were the children of Asher, heads of their fathers' houses, choice men, mighty men of valor, and heads of the leaders. They were registered by their genealogy among the army fit for war. Their number was twenty-six thousand men.

The Generations of Benjamin

Now Benjamin became the father of Bela his firstborn, Ashbel the second, Aharah the third, Nohah the fourth, and Rapha the fifth. The sons of Bela were Addar, Gera, Abihud, Abishua, Naaman, Ahoah, Gera, Shephuphan, and Huram. These are the sons of Ehud, who were the heads of the fathers' houses to those dwelling in Geba, and who exiled them to Manahath. So he exiled Naaman, Ahijah, and Gera and then became the father of Uzza and Ahihud. Shaharaim had sons in the country of Moab after he had sent away his wives Hushim and Baara. He had sons with his wife Hodesh, namely Jobab, Zibia, Mesha, Malkam, Jeuz, Sakia, and Mirmah. These were his sons, heads of the fathers' houses. He also had sons by Hushim: Abitub and Elpaal. The sons of Elpaal were Eber, Misham, Shemed (he built Ono and Lod with its towns), ¹³Beriah, and Shema, who were heads of the fathers' houses to those dwelling in Aijalon and who drove out the inhabitants of Gath, as well as Ahio, Shashak, Jeremoth, Zebadiah, Arad, Eder, Michael, Ishpah, and Joha, the sons of Beriah. Zebadiah, Meshullam, Hizki, Heber, Ishmerai, Izliah, and Jobab were the sons of Elpaal. Jakim, Zikri, Zabdi, Elienai, Zillethai, Eliel, Adaiah, Beraiah, and Shimrath were the sons of Shimei. Ishpan, Eber, Eliel, Abdon, Zikri, Hanan, Hananiah, Elam, Anthothijah, Iphdeiah, and Penuel were the sons of Shashak. Shamsherai, Shehariah, Athaliah, Jareshiah, Elijah, and Zikri were the sons of Jeroham.

These were heads of the fathers' houses according to their generations, chief men who dwelt in Jerusalem. The father of Gibeon dwelt in Gibeon, and Maakah was his wife's name. His firstborn son was Abdon, along with Zur, Kish, Baal, Nadab, Gedor, Ahio, and Zeker. Mikloth also became the father of Shimeah. Now these also dwelt in Jerusalem with their own families near their brothers. Ner became the father of Kish; Kish the father of Saul; Saul the father of Jonathan, Malki-Shua, Abinadab,

and Esh-Baal. Jonathan's son was Merib-Baal, and Merib-Baal became the father of Micah. The sons of Micah were Pithon, Melek, Tarea, and Ahaz. Ahaz became the father of Jehoaddah, and Jehoaddah became the father of Alemeth, Azmaveth, and Zimri. Zimri became the father of Moza,³ and Moza became the father of Binea. Now Raphah was his son, Eleasah his son, and Azel his son. Azel had six sons, and their names were Azrikam, Bokeru, Ishmael, Sheariah, Obadiah, and Hanan. All these were the sons of Azel. The sons of his brother Eshek were Ulam his firstborn, Jeush the second, and Eliphelet the third. The sons of Ulam were mighty men of valor, even archers, and had many sons and grandsons, one hundred and fifty in all. These were all the sons of Benjamin.

So all Israel was registered by genealogies, and these were written in the book of the kings of Israel. And Judah was led into exile to Babylon for their unfaithfulness.

The book of Daniel continues with events in Babylon, beginning with an account in the words of the Babylonian King, Nebuchadnezzar, of a dream he had and shared with Daniel in hopes he could interpret it as he had interpreted a previous dream...

Nebuchadnezzar's Second Dream

Nebuchadnezzar the king, to all peoples, nations, and languages, who dwell in all the earth: Peace be multiplied to you. I thought it good to declare the signs and wonders that the Most High God has done for me. How great are His signs, and how mighty are His wonders. His kingdom is an everlasting kingdom, and His dominion is from generation to generation.

I, Nebuchadnezzar, was at rest in my house, and flourishing in my palace. I saw a dream which made me afraid, and the thoughts upon my bed and the visions of my head troubled me. Therefore I made a decree to bring in all the wise men of Babylon before me, that they might make known to me the interpretation of the dream. Then came in the magicians, the astrologers, the Chaldeans, and the soothsayers, and I told the dream before them; but they did not make known to me its interpretation. But at the last Daniel came in before me, whose name was Belteshazzar according to the name of my god and in whom is the Spirit of the Holy God, and before him I told the dream, saying, Belteshazzar, master of the magicians, because I know that the Spirit of the Holy God is in you and no secret troubles you, tell me the visions of my dream that I have seen, and its interpretation. Now these were the visions of my mind *while* on my bed: I saw a tree in the midst of the earth, and its height was great. The tree grew and became strong, and its height reached heaven, and it was visible to the end of all the earth. Its leaves were fair, and its fruit much, and in it was food for all. The animals of the field had shadow under it, and the fowl of the heavens lived in its boughs, and all flesh was fed of it.

I saw in the visions of my head upon my bed, and there was a holy watcher coming down from heaven. He cried aloud and said thus: 'Hew down the tree and cut off its branches, shake off its leaves and scatter its fruit. Let the animals get away from under it, and the fowl from its

branches. Nevertheless leave the stump of its roots in the earth, even with a band of iron and bronze, in the tender grass of the field. And let it be wet with the dew of heaven, and let its portion be with the animals in the grass of the earth. Let its heart be changed from that of a man, let him be given the heart of an animal. And let seven periods of time pass over it. This matter is by the decree of the watchers, and the demand by the word of the holy ones, in order that the living may know that the Most High rules over the kingdom of men and gives it to whomever He wills and sets up over it the basest of men.' This dream I, King Nebuchadnezzar, have seen. Now you, Belshazzar, tell its interpretation to me, because all the wise men of my kingdom are not able to make known to me the interpretation. But you are able, for the Spirit of the Holy God is in you."

Daniel Interprets the Dream

Then Daniel, whose name was Belshazzar, was astonished for a while, and his thoughts troubled him. The king spoke and said, "Belshazzar, do not let the dream, or its interpretation, trouble you."

Belshazzar answered and said, "My lord, *if only* the dream was for those who hate you, and its interpretation for your enemies! The tree that you saw, which grew and became strong, whose height reached to the heavens, and was visible to all the earth, and whose leaves were fair, and its fruit much, and in it was food for all, under which the animals of the field lived, and upon whose branches the fowl of the heavens had their habitation: It is you, O king, who have grown and become strong. Your greatness has grown and reaches to heaven, and your dominion to the ends of the earth. Whereas the king saw a watcher and a holy one coming down from heaven and saying, 'Cut the tree down and destroy it, yet leave the stump of its roots in the ground, even with a band of iron and bronze, in the tender grass of the field. And let it be wet with the dew of heaven, and let its portion be with the animals of the field until seven periods of time pass over it'— This is the interpretation, O king, and this is the decree of the Most High, which has come upon my lord the king: You shall be driven away from men, and your dwelling shall be with the wild animals. You shall be given grass to eat like oxen, and wet with the dew of heaven. And seven times shall pass over you, until you have learned that the Most High rules over the kingdom of men and gives it to whomever He chooses. Inasmuch as they commanded to leave the stump of the tree roots, your kingdom shall be assured to you after you acknowledge that Heaven rules. Therefore, O king, let my counsel be acceptable to you, and break off your sins by righteousness and your iniquities by showing mercy to the poor, in case there may be a lengthening of your prosperity."

The Dream Is Fulfilled

All this came upon King Nebuchadnezzar. At the end of twelve months he walked on *the roof* of the palace of the kingdom of Babylon. The king spoke, saying, "Is this not Babylon the Great that I

myself have built as a royal residence by my mighty power and for the honor of my majesty?" While the word was in the king's mouth, there fell a voice from heaven: "O King Nebuchadnezzar, to you it is spoken: The kingdom has departed from you! And you shall be driven away from men, and your dwelling shall be with the animals of the field. You shall be given grass to eat as oxen, and seven periods of time shall pass over you until you know that the Most High rules over the kingdom of men and gives it to whomever He wills."

Immediately the thing was fulfilled concerning Nebuchadnezzar. And he was driven from men and ate grass as oxen, and his body was wet with the dew of heaven until his hairs were grown like eagles' *feathers* and his nails like birds' *claws*.

Nebuchadnezzar Praises God

But at the end of the days, I, Nebuchadnezzar, lifted up my eyes to heaven, and my understanding returned to me, and I blessed the Most High, and I praised and honored Him who lives forever: For His dominion is an everlasting dominion, and whose kingdom endures from generation to generation. And all the inhabitants of the earth are reputed as nothing; and He does according to His will in the army of heaven and among the inhabitants of the earth. And no one can stay His hand or say to Him, "What have You done?" At the same time my reason returned to me. And for the glory of my kingdom, my honor and splendor returned to me. And my counselors and my lords sought me out. Then I was established in my kingdom, and excellent majesty was added to me. Now I, Nebuchadnezzar, praise and extol and honor the King of heaven, for all His works are true and His ways just, and those who walk in pride He is able to abase.

Also during this time, the prophet Ezekiel was having visions of a time of restoration for the people and land of Israel. This vision is one of the restoration of the Temple, worship, and the ministry of the priests when the people would be home once again...

Ezekiel 40-46

The Vision of the New Temple

In the twenty-fifth year of our captivity, in the beginning of the year, on the tenth day of the month, in the fourteenth year after the city was struck, on that very day the hand of the LORD was upon me and He brought me there. In the visions of God, He brought me into the land of Israel and set me upon a very high mountain, on which was as the frame of a city on the south. He brought me there, and there was a man whose appearance was like the appearance of bronze, with a line of flax and a measuring reed in his hand. And he stood in the gate. The man said to me, "Son of man, look with your eyes, and hear with your ears, and set your heart on all that I shall show you. For you have been brought here to show it to you. Declare all that you see to the house of Israel."

The East Gate

There was a wall all around the outside of the temple. In the man's hand was a measuring reed of six cubits long, each being a cubit and a handbreadth. So he measured the width of the building, one reed. And the height, one reed. Then he went to the gateway facing east; and he went up its stairs and measured the threshold of the gate, which was one reed wide. And the other threshold of the gate was one reed wide. Every little chamber was one reed long and one reed wide. And between the little chambers were five cubits. And the threshold of the gate by the vestibule of the inside gate was one reed. He measured also the vestibule of the gate within, one reed. Then he measured the vestibule of the gate, eight cubits. And its posts, two cubits. And the vestibule of the gate was the inner end. The little chambers of the gate eastward were three on this side and three on that side. The three were of one measurement. And the posts had one measure on this side and on that side. He measured the width of the entrance of the gate, ten cubits, and the length of the gate, thirteen cubits. The space also before the little chambers was one cubit on this side, and the space was one cubit on that side. And the little chambers were six cubits on this side, and six cubits on that side. He measured then the gate from the roof of one little chamber to the roof of another; the width was twenty-five cubits, door against door. He measured the posts, sixty cubits,^[1] even to the post of the court all around the gate. From the face of the gate of the entrance to the face of the vestibule of the inner gate was fifty cubits. There were narrow windows in the little chambers and in their posts inside the gate all around, and likewise in the vestibules. And windows were all around inside. And on each post were palm tree ornaments.

The Outer Court

Then he brought me into the outer court, and there were chambers and a pavement made all around the court. Thirty chambers were on the pavement. The pavement was by the side of the gates, corresponding to the length of the gates; this was the lower pavement. Then he measured the width from the front of the lower gate to the outer front of the inner court, a hundred cubits eastward and northward.

The North Gate

As for the gate of the outer court that faced north, he measured its length and its width. Its little chambers, three on this side and three on that side, its posts, and its arches had the same measurements as the first gate; its length was fifty cubits, and its width twenty-five cubits. Its windows, and those of its arches, and its palm trees had the same measurements as the gate facing east. Seven steps led up to it; and its arches were in front of it. The gate of the inner court was opposite the gate on the north, as on the east. And he measured from gate to gate, a hundred cubits.

The South Gate

After that he brought me toward the south, and there was a gate facing south. And he measured its posts and its arches according to these same measurements. There were windows in it and in its arches all around like those windows. The length was fifty cubits, and the width twenty-five cubits. There were seven steps to go up to it, and its arches were before them. And it had palm tree ornaments, one on this side, and another on that side on its posts. There was a gate in the inner court facing south. And he measured from gate to gate toward the south, a hundred cubits.

The Inner Court

He brought me to the inner court by the south gate. And he measured the south gate according to these same measurements. And its little chambers and its posts and its arches were according to these same measurements. And there were windows in it and in its arches all around. It was fifty cubits long and twenty-five cubits wide. The arches all around were twenty-five cubits long and five cubits wide. Its arches faced the outer court. And palm tree ornaments were on its posts. And its staircase had eight steps. He brought me into the inner court facing east. And he measured the gate according to these same measurements. Its little

chambers and its posts and its arches were according to these same measurements. And there were windows in it and in its arches all around. It was fifty cubits long and twenty-five cubits wide. Its arches faced the outer court. And palm tree ornaments were on its posts, on this side and on that side. And its staircase had eight steps. He brought me to the north gate and measured it according to these same measurements; its little chambers, its posts, and its arches, and it had windows all around: the length was fifty cubits, and the width twenty-five cubits. Its posts faced the outer court. And palm tree ornaments were on its posts, on this side and on that side. And its staircase had eight steps.

Chambers for Washing the Sacrifice

The chambers and its entrance were by the posts of the gates where they washed the burnt offering. In the vestibule of the gate were two tables on this side and two tables on that side, to slay on it the burnt offering and the sin offering and the trespass offering. On the outside of the *vestibule*, as one goes up to the entrance of the north gate, were two tables. And on the other side of the vestibule of the gate were two tables. Four tables were on this side and four tables on that side by the side of the gate, eight tables on which they slaughtered *their sacrifices*. The four tables were of hewn stone for the burnt offering, of a cubit and a half long, and a cubit and a half wide, and one cubit high. On which also they laid the instruments with which they slaughtered the burnt offering and the sacrifice. Within were hooks, a handbreadth wide, fastened all around. And on the tables was the flesh of the offering.

Chambers for the Singers and Priests

Outside the inner gate were the chambers for the singers in the inner court, one at the side of the north gate facing south, the other at the side of the east gate facing north. He said to me, "This chamber that faces south is for the priests who have charge of the temple. The chamber that faces north is for the priests who have charge of the altar. These are the sons of Zadok among the sons of Levi, who come near to the LORD to minister to Him." So he measured the court, a hundred cubits long, and a hundred cubits wide, foursquare. And the altar was before the temple.

The Vestibule of the Temple

Then he brought me to the vestibule of the temple and measured each post of the vestibule, five cubits on this side, and five cubits on that side. And the width of the gate was three cubits on this side and three cubits on that side. The length of the vestibule was twenty cubits and the width eleven cubits. And he brought me by the steps whereby they went up to it. And there were pillars by the posts, one on this side and another on that side.

The Inner Temple

Afterward he brought me to the temple and measured the posts, six cubits wide on the one side and six cubits wide on the other side, which was the width of the tabernacle. The width of the door was ten cubits. And the sides of the door were five cubits on the one side and five cubits on the other side. And he measured its length, forty cubits, and the width, twenty cubits. Then he went inward and measured the post of the door, two cubits, and the door, six cubits, and the width of the door, seven cubits. So he measured its length, twenty cubits. And before the temple, the width was twenty cubits. And he said to me, "This is the Most Holy Place."

Afterward he measured the wall of the temple, six cubits, and the width of every side chamber, four cubits, all around the temple on every side. The side chambers were in three stories, one above the other, thirty in each story. There were offsets all around to serve as supports for the side chambers, so that they should not be supported by the wall of the temple. The side chambers became wider with each successive story going up because the structures went up all around the temple. Therefore the width of the temple increased going upwards and thus one went up from the lowest to the highest level through the middle level.

I saw also the height all around the temple. The foundations of the side chambers were a full reed of six great cubits. The thickness of the wall of the side chambers was five cubits. And that which was left was the place of the side chambers that were within. Between the chambers was the wideness of twenty cubits all around the

temple on every side. The doors of the side chambers opened onto the open place, one door toward the north and another door toward the south. And the width of the open place was five cubits all around.

Now the building that was facing the separate yard on the west side was seventy cubits wide. And the wall of the building was five cubits thick all around, and its length ninety cubits. So he measured the temple, a hundred cubits long; and the separate yard and the building with its walls, a hundred cubits long; also the width of the eastern face of the temple and the separate yard was a hundred cubits.

Then he measured the length of the building facing the yard at the west, together with its galleries on either side, one hundred cubits with the nave of the temple and the porches of the court, the doorposts and the narrow windows. The galleries all around their three stories opposite the threshold were paneled with wood from the ground to the windows (the windows were covered), from the space above the door, even to the inner room, as well as outside, and on every wall all around, inside and outside, by measure. It was made with cherubim and palm trees, so that a palm tree was between cherub and cherub. And every cherub had two faces, so that the face of a man was toward the palm tree on the one side, and the face of a young lion toward the palm tree on the other side. It was made throughout the temple all round. From the ground to the top of the door and on the wall of the nave, cherubim and palm trees were carved.

The posts of the temple and the face of the sanctuary were squared. The appearance of the one was as the appearance of the other. The altar of wood was three cubits high, and its length two cubits. And its corners and its length and its walls were of wood. And he said to me, "This is the table that is before the LORD." The temple and the sanctuary had two doors. The doors had two leaves apiece, two turning leaves. Two leaves were for the one door, and two leaves for the other door. There were made on them, on the doors of the temple, cherubim and palm trees like those made on the walls. And there were thick planks on the front of the vestibule outside. There were beveled windows and palm trees on both sides, on the sides of the vestibule; thus were the side chambers of the temple and the thresholds.

The Chambers for the Priests

Then he brought me out into the outer court, toward the north; and he brought me into the chamber that was opposite the separate yard and which was opposite the building on the north. Before the length of a hundred cubits was the north door, and the width was fifty cubits. Opposite the twenty cubits that belonged to the inner court, and opposite the pavement that belonged to the outer court, was gallery against gallery in three stories. In front of the chambers was a passage on the inner side, ten cubits wide and one *hundred* cubits deep; and their doors faced north. Now the upper chambers were shorter. For the galleries were higher than these, than the lower and the middle ones of the building. For they were in three stories, but had no pillars as the pillars of the courts. Therefore the building was set back more than the lowest and the middle ones from the ground. And a wall that was outside was parallel to the chambers, toward the outer court, opposite the chambers; its length was fifty cubits. For the length of the chambers that were in the outer court was fifty cubits. And the length of those before the temple was a hundred cubits. From under these chambers was the entrance on the east side as one goes into them from the outer court.

The chambers were in the thickness of the wall of the court toward the east, opposite the separate yard and opposite the building, with a passage in front of them; they were like the appearance of the chambers which were toward the north, of the same length and width. And all their exits and arrangements were according to plan. Corresponding to the doors of the chambers that were facing south was a door at the head of the passage way, the passage way directly in front of the wall toward the east.

Then he said to me, "The north chambers and the south chambers, which are before the separate place, are the holy chambers where the priests who approach the LORD shall eat the most holy offerings. There they shall lay the most holy offerings—the grain offering, the sin offering, and the guilt offering—for the place is holy. When the priests enter it, then they shall not go out of the holy place into the outer court, but there they shall lay their garments in which they minister, for they are holy. And they shall put on other garments, and shall approach those things which are for the people."

Now when he had made an end of measuring the inner temple, he brought me out by the gate that faces east, and measured it all around. He measured the east side with the measuring reed, five hundred cubits with the

measuring reed all around. He measured the north side with the measuring reed round about, five hundred reeds. He measured the south side with the measuring reed, five hundred reeds. He turned about to the west side and measured five hundred reeds with the measuring reed. He measured it by the four sides. It had a wall all around, five hundred reeds long and five hundred wide, to make a separation between the sanctuary and the profane place.

God's Glory Returns to the Temple

Afterward he brought me to the gate, the gate facing east. And the glory of the God of Israel came from the way of the east. And His voice was like a noise of many waters. And the earth shone with His glory. It was according to the appearance of the vision which I saw, even according to the vision that I saw, when He came to destroy the city. And the visions were like the vision that I saw by the River Kebar. And I fell upon my face. The glory of the LORD came into the temple by the way of the gate facing east. So the Spirit took me up and brought me into the inner court. And the glory of the LORD filled the temple.

Then I heard one speaking to me out of the temple. And a man stood by me. He said to me: Son of man, this is the place of My throne and the place of the soles of My feet, where I will dwell in the midst of the sons of Israel forever. And My holy name shall the house of Israel defile no more, nor they nor their kings by their harlotry, nor by the corpses of their kings when they die. By setting their threshold by My threshold and their post by My posts and the wall between Me and them, they have even defiled My holy name by their abominations that they have committed. Therefore I have consumed them in My anger. Now let them put away their harlotry and the corpses of their kings far from Me, and I will dwell in their midst forever.

As for you, son of man, describe the temple to the house of Israel, that they may be ashamed of their iniquities. And let them measure the pattern. If they are ashamed of all that they have done, show them the design of the temple and its fashion and exits and its entrances and all its forms and all its ordinances and all its laws. And write it in their sight so that they may keep its whole form and all its ordinances and do them. This is the law of the temple: The whole territory on the top of the mountain all around shall be most holy. This is the law of the temple.

The Altar Restored

These are the measurements of the altar by cubits (the cubit is a cubit and a handbreadth): The base shall be a cubit, and the width a cubit, and its border by its edge all around shall be a span. And this shall be the height of the altar: From the bottom on the ground even to the lower ledge shall be two cubits, and the width one cubit. And from the lesser ledge even to the greater ledge shall be four cubits, and the width one cubit. So the altar shall be four cubits. And from the altar and upward shall be four horns. The altar hearth shall be twelve cubits long by twelve wide, square in its four corners. The ledge shall be fourteen cubits long and fourteen wide in the four squares. And the border about it shall be half a cubit. And its bottom shall be a cubit all around. And its stairs shall face east.

He said to me: Son of man, thus says the Lord GOD: These are the ordinances of the altar in the day when they shall make it to offer burnt offerings on it and to sprinkle blood on it. You shall give to the priests the Levites that are of the seed of Zadok who approach Me to minister to Me, says the Lord GOD, a young bull as a sin offering. You shall take of its blood and put it on its four horns, and on the four corners of the ledge and on the rim all around. Thus you shall cleanse and purge it. You shall take the bull also of the sin offering, and it shall be burned in the appointed place of the temple, outside the sanctuary.

On the second day you shall offer a male goat without blemish as a sin offering. And they shall cleanse the altar as they cleansed it with the bull. When you have made an end of cleansing it, you shall offer a young bull without blemish and a ram out of the flock without blemish. You shall offer them before the LORD, and the priests shall cast salt on them, and they shall offer them up as a burnt offering to the LORD. For seven days you shall prepare every day a goat as a sin offering. They shall also prepare a young bull and a ram out of the flock, without blemish. For seven days they shall purge the altar and purify it. So they shall consecrate it. When they have completed the days, it shall be that on the eighth day and forward, the priests shall present your burnt offerings and your peace offerings upon the altar. And I will accept you, says the Lord GOD.

The East Gate for the Prince

Then he brought me back to the gate of the outer sanctuary, which faces east. And it was shut. Then the LORD said to me: This gate shall be shut; it shall not be opened, and no man shall enter by it. Because the LORD, the God of Israel, has entered by it, therefore it shall be shut. As for the prince, he shall sit in it as prince to eat bread before the LORD. He shall enter by the way of the vestibule of the gate and shall go out by the same way. Then he brought me by the way of the north gate before the temple. And I looked, and the glory of the LORD filled the house of the LORD, and I fell upon my face.

The LORD said to me: Son of man, mark well, and see with your eyes and hear with your ears all that I say to you concerning all the ordinances of the house of the LORD and all its laws. And mark well those who may enter the house, with all exits of the sanctuary. You shall say to the rebellious, even to the house of Israel, Thus says the Lord GOD: O house of Israel, let all your abominations suffice; you brought foreigners into My sanctuary, uncircumcised in heart and uncircumcised in flesh, to be in My sanctuary to pollute it, even My house, when you offered My food, the fat and the blood. For they have broken My covenant because of all your abominations. You have not kept the charge of My holy things. But you have set foreigners to keep charge of My sanctuary. Thus says the Lord GOD: No foreigner, uncircumcised in heart nor uncircumcised in flesh, shall enter into My sanctuary, of any foreigner who is among the sons of Israel.

Laws for the Priests

But the Levites who have gone far from Me when Israel went astray, who went astray away from Me after their idols, they shall bear the punishment of their iniquity. Yet they shall be ministers in My sanctuary, having charge at the gates of the house and ministering to the house. They shall slay the burnt offering and the sacrifice for the people, and they shall stand before them to minister to them. Because they ministered to them before their idols and caused the house of Israel to fall into iniquity, therefore I have lifted up My hand against them, says the Lord GOD, that they shall bear the punishment of their iniquity. They shall not come near to Me to do the office of a priest to Me, nor to come near to any of My holy things in the Most Holy Place. But they shall bear their shame and their abominations which they have committed. But I will make them keepers of the charge of the temple for all its service and for all that shall be done in it.

But the Levitical priests, the sons of Zadok, who kept the charge of My sanctuary when the sons of Israel went astray from Me, they shall come near to Me to minister to Me, and they shall stand before Me to offer to Me the fat and the blood, says the Lord GOD. They shall enter My sanctuary, and they shall come near to My table to minister to Me, and they shall keep My charge.

It shall come to pass that when they enter at the gates of the inner court, they shall be clothed with linen garments. And no wool shall come upon them while they minister in the gates of the inner court, and within. They shall have linen turbans on their heads and shall have linen breeches on their loins. They shall not gird themselves with *anything that causes sweat*. When they go out into the outer court, even into the outer court to the people, they shall put off their garments in which they ministered and lay them in the holy chambers, and they shall put on other garments. And they shall not sanctify the people with their garments.

Nor shall they shave their heads, nor suffer their locks to grow long. They shall only trim the hair of their heads. Nor shall any priest drink wine when they enter the inner court. Nor shall they take for their wives a widow, nor her who has been put away. But they shall take maidens of the seed of the house of Israel, or a widow who had a priest before. They shall teach My people the difference between the holy and profane, and cause them to discern between the unclean and the clean.

In controversy they shall stand in judgment. And they shall judge it according to My judgments. And they shall keep My laws and My statutes in all My assemblies. And they shall hallow My Sabbaths.

They shall not go to a dead person to defile themselves. But for father, or for mother, or for son, or for daughter, for brother, or for sister that has had no husband, they may defile themselves. After he is cleansed,

they shall reckon to him seven days. In the day that he goes into the sanctuary, to the inner court, to minister in the sanctuary, he shall offer his sin offering, says the Lord GOD.

It shall be to them for an inheritance. I am their inheritance. And you shall give them no possession in Israel. I am their possession. They shall eat the grain offering and the sin offering and the guilt offering. And every dedicated thing in Israel shall be theirs. The first of all the first fruits of all things and every oblation of all of every sort of your oblations shall be the priest's. You shall also give to the priest the first of your dough to cause a blessing to rest in your house. The priests shall not eat any bird or beast that has died naturally or was torn to pieces.

The Holy District

Moreover, when you divide by lot the land for inheritance, you shall offer an allotment to the LORD, a holy portion of the land. The length shall be the length of twenty-five thousand cubits, and the width shall be twenty thousand. It shall be holy throughout its territory all around. Of this there shall be a square plot for the sanctuary, five hundred by five hundred cubits, with fifty cubits for an open space around it. Of this measure you shall measure the length of twenty-five thousand cubits and the width of ten thousand cubits. And in it shall be the sanctuary, the Most Holy Place. The holy portion of the land shall be for the priests, the ministers of the sanctuary, who shall come near to minister to the LORD. And it shall be a place for their houses and a holy place for the sanctuary. An area twenty-five thousand cubits in length and ten thousand in width shall be for the Levites, the ministers of the temple, and for their possession cities in which to dwell. You shall appoint the possession of the city five thousand cubits wide and twenty-five thousand cubits long adjacent to the allotment of the holy portion. It shall be for the whole house of Israel.

The Portion for the Prince

A portion shall be for the prince on the one side and on the other side of the holy allotment and property of the city, adjacent to the holy allotment and the property of the city, from the west side westward and from the east side eastward. And the length shall correspond to one of the *tribal* portions, from the west border to the east border. In the land shall be his possession in Israel. And My officials shall no more oppress My people. And *the rest of* the land they shall give to the house of Israel according to their tribes.

Laws Governing the Prince

Thus says the Lord GOD: Let it suffice you officials of Israel. Remove violence and destruction, and execute justice and righteousness. Take away your exactions from My people, says the Lord GOD. You shall have just balances and a just ephah and a just bath. The ephah and the bath shall be of one measure so that the bath may contain the tenth part of a homer, and the ephah the tenth part of a homer. Their measure shall be after the homer. The shekel shall be twenty gerahs. Twenty shekels, twenty-five shekels, and fifteen shekels shall be your mina.

This is the offering that you shall offer: the sixth part of an ephah of a homer of wheat, and you shall give the sixth part of an ephah of a homer of barley. Concerning the ordinance of oil that is the bath of oil, you shall offer the tenth part of a bath out of the kor, which is a homer or ten baths, for ten baths are a homer. And one lamb shall be out of the flock, out of two hundred, out of the watering places of Israel, as a grain offering and as a burnt offering and for peace offerings, to make reconciliation for them, says the Lord GOD. All the people of the land shall give this offering for the prince in Israel. It shall be the prince's part to give burnt offerings and grain offerings and drink offerings in the feasts and in the New Moons and in the Sabbaths, in all solemnities of the house of Israel. He shall prepare the sin offering and the grain offering and the burnt offering and the peace offerings, to make reconciliation for the house of Israel.

Observing the Feasts

Thus says the Lord GOD: In the first *month*, on the first day of the month, you shall take a young bull without blemish and cleanse the sanctuary. And the priest shall take some of the blood of the sin offering and put it on the doorposts of the temple and on the four corners of the ledge of the altar and on the gateposts of the inner

court. So you shall do the seventh day of the month for everyone who errs and for him who is naive. So you shall make atonement for the temple.

In the first *month*, on the fourteenth day of the month, you shall have the Passover, a feast of seven days. Unleavened bread shall be eaten. On that day the prince shall prepare for himself and for all the people of the land a bull as a sin offering. For seven days of the feast he shall prepare a burnt offering to the LORD, seven bulls and seven rams without blemish daily for the seven days, and a male of the goats daily as a sin offering. He shall prepare a grain offering of an ephah for a bull and an ephah for a ram and a hin of oil for an ephah.

In the seventh *month*, on the fifteenth day of the month, he shall do the like in the feast of the seven days, according to the sin offering, according to the burnt offering, and according to the grain offering, and according to the oil.

The Prince and the Feasts

Thus says the Lord GOD: The gate of the inner court that faces east shall be shut the six working days. But on the Sabbath it shall be opened, and in the day of the New Moon it shall be opened. The prince shall enter by the way of the vestibule of that gate from outside, and shall stand by the post of the gate, and the priests shall prepare his burnt offering and his peace offerings, and he shall worship at the threshold of the gate. Then he shall go out. But the gate shall not be shut until the evening. Likewise the people of the land shall worship at the door of this gate before the LORD in the Sabbaths and in the New Moons. The burnt offering that the prince shall offer to the LORD in the Sabbath day shall be six lambs without blemish and a ram without blemish. The grain offering shall be an ephah for a ram and the grain offering for the lambs as he shall be able to give and a hin of oil to an ephah. In the day of the New Moon *it shall be* a young bull without blemish and six lambs and a ram. They shall be without blemish. He shall prepare a grain offering, an ephah for a bull and an ephah for a ram, and for the lambs according as his hand shall attain to, and a hin of oil to an ephah. When the prince enters, he shall go in by the way of the vestibule of that gate, and he shall go out the same way.

But when the people of the land shall come before the LORD in the solemn feasts, he who enters by the way of the north gate to worship shall go out by way of the south gate. And he who enters by the way of the south gate shall go out by way of the north gate. He shall not return by way of the gate by which he entered, but shall go out the opposite gate. The prince shall be in their midst. When they enter, he shall enter; and when they go out, he shall go out. At the feasts and the appointed festivals the grain offering shall be an ephah for a bull, and an ephah for a ram, and with the lambs as much as he is able to give, together with a hin of oil for an ephah.

Now when the prince prepares a voluntary burnt offering or voluntary peace offering to the LORD, the gate facing east shall be opened for him; and he shall prepare his burnt offering and his peace offerings as he did on the Sabbath day. Then he shall go out. And after he goes out, the gate shall be shut. You shall daily prepare a burnt offering to the LORD of a lamb of the first year without blemish. You shall prepare it every morning. You shall prepare a grain offering for it every morning, the sixth part of an ephah, and the third part of a hin of oil to temper with the fine flour, a grain offering continually by a perpetual ordinance to the LORD. Thus they shall prepare the lamb and the grain offering and the oil every morning as a continual burnt offering.

Inheritance Laws for the Prince

Thus says the Lord GOD: If the prince gives a gift out of his inheritance to any of his sons, it will belong to his sons. It is their possession by inheritance. But if he gives a gift out of his inheritance to one of his servants, it will be his until the year of liberty. Then it will revert to the prince. His inheritance will be only his sons. It will belong to them. Moreover the prince shall not take of the people's inheritance by oppression to thrust them out of their possession. But he shall give his sons inheritance out of his own possession so that My people not be scattered, every man from his possession.

Preparations for the Offerings

Then he brought me through the entrance, which was at the side of the gate, into the holy chambers of the priests which face toward the north. And there was a place at the extreme westward end of them. Then he said to me, "This is the place where the priests shall boil the guilt offering and the sin offering, and where they shall bake the grain offering so that they not bear them out into the outer court, to sanctify the people."

Then he brought me out into the outer court and caused me to pass by the four corners of the court. And in every corner of the court *there was* a court. In the four corners of the court there were courts joined of forty cubits long and thirty wide. These four corners were of one measurement. There was a row of *masonry* all around in them, all around the four of them; and it was made with hearths at the bottom of the rows all around. Then he said to me, "These are the boiling places where the ministers of the temple shall boil the sacrifices of the people."