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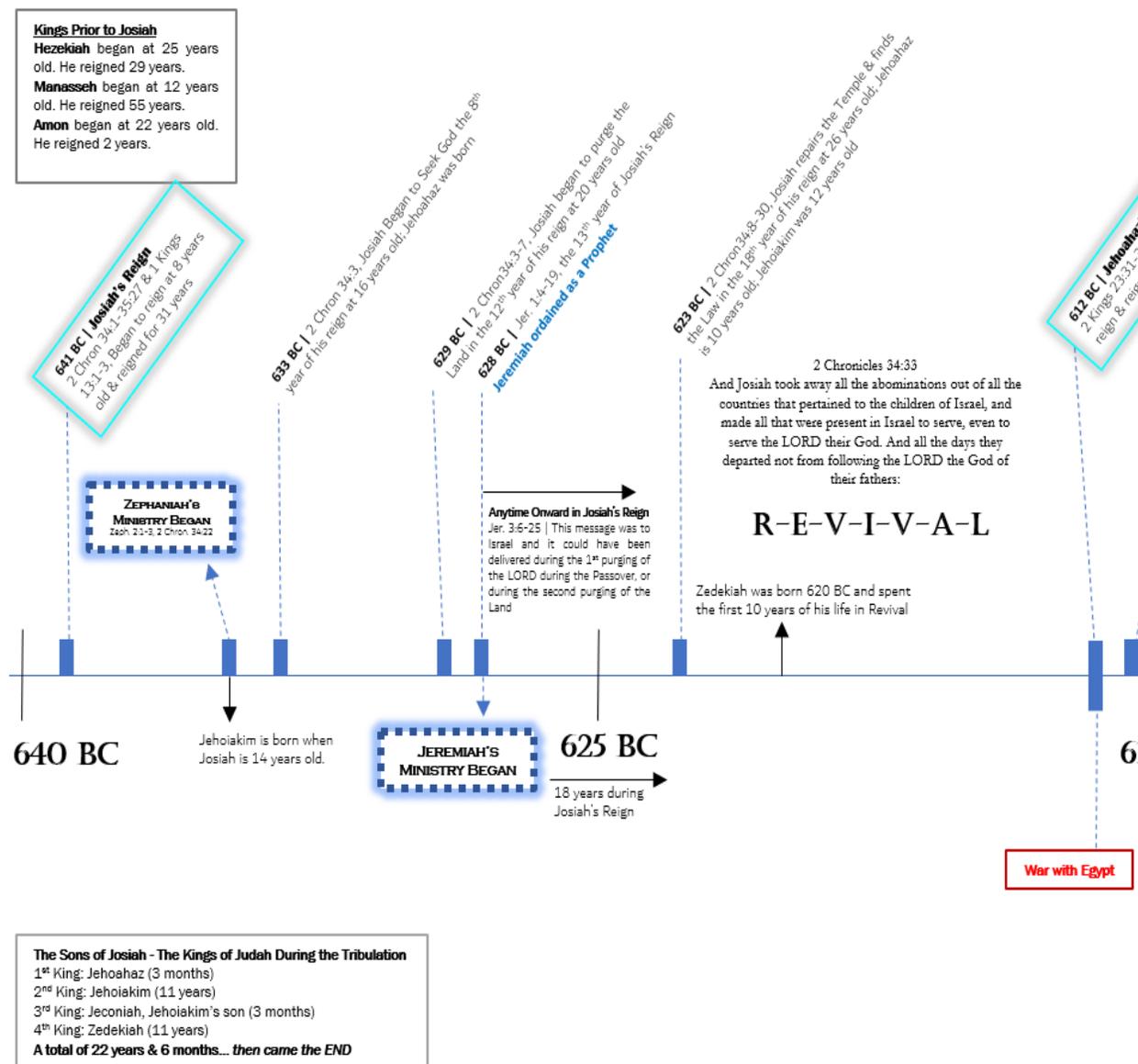
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## A Commentary on the Book of Jeremiah

JEREMIAH 1:1-3, 25:3, 36:2

**The historical placement of Jeremiah's early ministry:** Jeremiah became a Prophet and began to prophesy in the 13<sup>th</sup> year of the reign of Josiah, which was 5 years after Josiah "began to seek after the God of David his father" (2 Chron. 34:3). This first 4 years of seeking the LORD and 1 year of purging the Land, which transpired before Jeremiah became a Prophet, is relevant to the Tribulation Period. My reader, Josiah was not alone.



The timeline above calendars the major points of Josiah's life. The beginning of his reign (641 BC), when he began to seek God (633 BC), when he began to purge the Lands of Israel and Judah (629 BC), when he began to restore the Temple which led to the discovery of the Law (623 BC), and the 13 Year REVIVAL period that followed. After studiously

considering the life of Josiah, one is made to wonder... what made Josiah begin to seek God at 16 years of age during the 8<sup>th</sup> year of his reign? I am persuaded that Josiah began to seek the LORD upon Zephaniah prophesying the word of the LORD to the people. In the timeline above, the beginning of Zephaniah's ministry is placed just before Josiah began to seek the LORD in approx. 633 BC. Can you imagine how Josiah and company felt when they heard the word of the LORD, declaring:

“The great Day of the LORD is near, it is near, and hasteth greatly, even the voice of the Day of the LORD: the mighty man shall cry there bitterly. That day is a day of wrath, a day of trouble and distress, a day of wasteness and desolation, a day of darkness and gloominess, a day of clouds and thick darkness, A day of the trumpet and alarm against the fenced cities, and against the high towers. And I will bring distress upon men, that they shall walk like blind men, because they have sinned against the LORD: and their blood shall be poured out as dust, and their flesh as the dung. Neither their silver nor their gold shall be able to deliver them in the day of the LORD'S wrath; but the whole land shall be devoured by the fire of his jealousy: for he shall make even a speedy riddance of all them that dwell in the land.” – Zeph. 1:14-18

Very specifically, the LORD threatened the King and the Princes, saying, “I will punish the Princes and the King's children” (Zeph. 1:8). My reader, think of it! The very first thing the LORD said through the Prophet Zephaniah was, “I will utterly consume all things from off the Land” (Zeph. 1:2)! The first sentence declared the total destruction of the Kingdom of Judah, a near annihilation of the people of Judah, and a total dispersion of the remnant of survivors. Now, remember, Josiah was only 16 years old when he began to seek the LORD. No doubt, Josiah would have heard the life stories of his Grandfather and great Grandfather, Manasseh and Hezekiah, and how the Kingdom of Israel was overthrown by the Assyrians because of their wickedness and sin. This is a godly heritage! But, being so young, I cannot believe that these things alone moved the man to seek God at the young age of 16 years. Furthermore, by the age of 26, a College of seeking the LORD was already built and in full operation (2 Chron. 34:22). Also, it is not likely that Jeremiah, who became a Prophet only 5 years after Josiah first began seeking the LORD, was Josiah's only companion – they were both very young! A very significant movement was underway inasmuch that a College was built and an unprecedented campaign of purging of idolatry commenced in both Israel and Judah; therefore, it is to be expected that some profound event motivated all this! I believe this significant and profoundly inspiring event is Zephaniah's prophesying, therefore I place the beginning of his ministry right before Josiah began to seek the LORD in the 8<sup>th</sup> year of his reign. Consider Zephaniah's words, my reader.

“Gather yourselves together, yea, gather together, O nation not desired; Before the decree bring forth, before the day pass as the chaff, before the fierce anger of the LORD come upon you, before the day of the LORD'S anger come upon you. Seek ye the LORD, all ye meek of the earth, which have wrought his judgment; seek righteousness, seek meekness: it may be ye shall be hid in the day of the LORD'S anger.” – Zeph. 2:1-3

Zephaniah cried, “*gather yourselves together*”, and, “*seek ye the LORD*”, and in turn the people gathered together to intentionally seek the LORD. This was a 4-year long intentional effort which led into the campaign of idolatry purging. That means, King Josiah, the Prophet Zephaniah, Huldah the Prophetess, Jeremiah the Priest in training (who was both young and likely seeking the Lord alongside Jeremiah before he was called to be a Prophet), Hilkiah the High Priest (who could have been Jeremiah's father), Shaphan the Scribe, and all others who pertained to *the intentional pursuit of the Lord* in that time (“*all ye meek of the earth*”), were in a concerted effort to establish a revival. Again, let me affirm this again: we can see clear evidences of this *intentional gathering together in pursuit of the Lord* in that a College was established, the same place where Huldah the Prophetess was found to be when Josiah needed a word from the Lord (2 Chron. 34:22). You see, Josiah knew where to find a Prophet or Prophetess and receive a word from the LORD, the College! Huldah, no doubt, was with many others who pertained to the College, and she was the Prophetess who delivered the word of the Lord to Josiah because Zephaniah was abroad somewhere outside of the City of Jerusalem. It is reasonable to conclude that Zephaniah was abroad because if he would have been in Jerusalem, he would have delivered the word of the Lord to Josiah instead of Huldah. This is because, firstly, he was a man (Gen. 3:16, Judges 4:9, 1 Cor. 11:3-10) and, secondarily, he was a more prominent Prophet than Huldah (Zeph. 1:1-3:20).

Note: Jeremiah was a Priest and the son of a Priest, before he was a Prophet, which means that he would have been in the formative years of his learning as well, according as it was written, the “Priest’s lips should keep knowledge”, but both he and Josiah lacked the Law to read and learn from in those years (Mal. 2:7). Because of this, the leadership of this time must have sought understanding through the Oral Tradition which remained among the ancients. With this heart, Jeremiah, Josiah, and many others would have spoken often one to another concerning the fear of the LORD and the fragments of understanding which were preserved through Oral Tradition (Mal. 3:16). In the life of Josiah, remember, four years passed in seeking and learning before any purging of the Land transpired.

Giving further significance to the beginning of Jeremiah’s ministry, in that it began in the 13<sup>th</sup> year of Josiah’s reign, this was only 1 year after Josiah *began to purge* the Land of idolatry. Josiah went on to purge the Lands of Judah, Jerusalem, and Israel, as much as he knew how, and this he did steadfastly for 5 additional years from the beginning of Jeremiah’s ministry until his return to Jerusalem to *repair the Temple* in the 18<sup>th</sup> year of his reign. In total, as it pertained to Josiah, there were 4 years of *seeking after the Lord* and 6 years of *purging the Lands* of idolatry, and Jeremiah was likely seeking the LORD with Josiah from the very beginning. The spiritual condition of this generation shifted from condemnation to justification at the 18<sup>th</sup> year of Josiah’s reign. Do you remember how slim the chance was for mercy? Zephaniah said, “*it may be ye shall be hid in the Day of the LORD’s anger*” (Zeph. 2:3)! What happened?

At last in the 18<sup>th</sup> year, *the Book of the Law was found* hidden in the Temple. Until this point in time, when, finally, the Law was found and then read before the King (resulting in his tender-hearted penitence and clothe-rending tearfulness), the wrath of God was still impending upon Josiah’s generation despite all that they had done (2 Chron. 34:27-28). This event proved to be the moment at which God’s mind to destroy the generation was changed, and not before! After this, and for the rest of Josiah’s reign, the King “made a Covenant before the LORD” and “caused *all* that were present in Jerusalem and Benjamin *to stand to it*”, “and *all the inhabitants of Jerusalem* did according to the Covenant of God” (2 Chron. 34:31-32). Notably, it was said of Josiah again, “Josiah took away *all* the abominations out of all the countries that pertained to the children of Israel, and made *all that were present* in Israel to serve, *even to serve the LORD their God*. And all his days *they departed not from following the LORD*, the God of their fathers” (2 Chron. 34:33). What a profound testimony! The ministry of this man, Josiah, must not be underestimated! For, “like unto him was there no King before him, that turned to the LORD with all his heart, and with all his soul, and with all his might, according to all the Law of Moses; neither after him arose there any like him” (2 Kings 23:25).

In retrospect, the manifold wisdom of God is manifest in the life of Josiah in one of the most peculiar pronouncements of prophecy contained in all of scripture. My reader, not many men are called by name hundreds of years before their birth, but Josiah was! At the nativity of idolatry in the Land of Israel, Josiah’s name was uttered by the mouth of a holy Prophet, declaring, “a child shall be born unto the House of David, Josiah by name” (1 Kings 13:2), which meant the profanation and desolation of the altars of idolatry in the Name of the God of Israel! What a Glory!

## JEREMIAH 1:4-19

**Jeremiah was miraculously visited and ordained by God Almighty (Jer. 1:4-10), the primary message of the Prophet was revealed (Jer. 1:11-16), the primary people to whom he would speak, and the conflicts and trials which would thereby transpire (Jer. 1:17-19):** This, we know, took place during the 13<sup>th</sup> year of the reign of Josiah, as Jeremiah 1:2 gave reference. Furthermore, seeing that this event and these prophecies were uttered at the beginning of Jeremiah’s ordination, and necessarily so, the Prophet was made to reckon with the inevitable future that awaited him in the Lord’s service. Albeit, is this at all in reference to the days of Josiah?

This question must be answered correctly lest we think that Jeremiah 1:19 (“*they shall fight against thee*”) and Jeremiah 2:1-3:5 were spoken to and descriptive of the leadership of Josiah’s generation. Furthermore, this much we know, the Lord did indeed raise up “all the families of the Kingdoms of the North”, as God did here say at the onset of Jeremiah’s ministry (Jer. 1:15-16), but this took place in the **2<sup>nd</sup> Captivity** of Judah that transpired at the 11<sup>th</sup> year of the reign of Jehioakim.

This was approx. 29 years later! One Captivity took place before this and four Captivities after it, but none of them were in the reign of Josiah because *he was a righteous King!* Remember?

Surely, it cannot be said that Josiah fought against Jeremiah (“*they shall fight against thee*”), right? Quite the contrary! Hence, Josiah and those in leadership with him were not the primary objects of Jeremiah’s prophesying. Jeremiah and Josiah were no doubt seeking God together and facilitating the reformations of the revival. Jeremiah spent the next 18 years of his ministry with Josiah, 5 years of purging the Lands and 13 years of unprecedented REVIVAL!

With all things considered and in such circumstances, let us consider the ministry of Jeremiah in its beginnings. Being ordained by God, the Lord was careful to unveil the essence of the message entrusted to Jeremiah’s stewardship: namely, Babylon’s eventual coming to destroy Judah and Jerusalem (Jer. 1:11-16). This was likely given to Jeremiah in the same blowing of the Spirit as that which befell him at his ordination as a Prophet by God. Furthermore, the Lord was careful to depict the people to whom this message was primarily sent: a stout-faced people who would rebelliously fight against Jeremiah (Jer. 1:8, 17-19). Certainly, these people do not meet the character of Josiah the King of Judah, nor does it describe the Princes, Priests, and the people of the Land during the reign of Josiah (“*they departed not from following the LORD*” – 2 Chron. 34:33). Thus, when God said to Jeremiah, “arise” and “speak”, he was not referring to the people of Josiah’s reign in particular (Jer. 1:17).

## JEREMIAH 2:1-3:5

**The people to whom Jeremiah was primarily sent, clearly identified:** The Lord says, like in Jeremiah 1:17, “GO” and “CRY”, but to whom (Jer. 2:1)? Cohesively, and in concert with the aforementioned contextual scope, Jeremiah’s prophesying in Jeremiah 2:1-3:5 is directed to the *King, Princes, Priests, and people* during the reign of Jehoiakim. Proving this, the people of this time were “trusting in Egypt” (Jer. 2:18-19, 36-37), loving strangers (Jer. 2:25), given to idolatry (Jer. 2:27), and seared in their consciences (Jer. 2:35) in that they were full of excuses which appeared reasonable to them that they couldn’t serve the LORD (Jer. 2:31-32). This certainly describes the early part of the reign of Jehoiakim! And, completely contrary to this description, Josiah went to war against Egypt (being filled with contempt, not love!), zealously purged all idolatry from the Lands of Israel and Judah (rather than serving idols!), and was of a tender heart and sensitive conscience in the service of God without excuse (disobedience was so unreasonable to him!).

Evidently, therefore, Jeremiah 2:1-3:5 was directed to the people of Jehoiakim’s reign during the first 4 years. Why the first 4 years, you wonder? Firstly, Jehoiakim was chosen and installed as King by Pharaoh-nechoh and, since then, the two peoples were in a friendly relationship concerning the tributary agreement (2 Kings 23:33-34); in this dynamic they were “trusting Egypt” rather than warring against her (Jer. 2:18-19, 36-37), but, much more, they would trust in Egypt as the power to defeat the Armies of Babylon when they arrive. Contrary to Josiah, his father, Jehoiakim was satisfied with and drawn after Egypt’s idolatrous ways, trusting in them too (Jer. 2:27). Secondly, the bulk of Jeremiah’s early prophesying was during the early part of Jehoiakim’s reign, specifically the first 4 years of his reign while they were under Egyptian sovereignty, because *a significant scroll* was used in the writing of Jeremiah’s prophecy that had taken place leading up to the 4<sup>th</sup> year of Jehoiakim’s reign, at which, we are told, a scroll of the prophesying of Jeremiah was read before the King and then burned (Jer. 36:1-32).

Note: the period of time when Zedekiah trusted in Egypt and pursued their aid was over a decade later than this time, and by the latter time Jehoiakim was already set-forth as an example of God’s wrath against such actions according to the surety of the word of the LORD, which Jehoiakim burnt in a fire, thus it seems inconceivable that the prophesying of Jeremiah so early in the placement of this book would refer to Zedekiah’s comparatively transient pursuit of Egypt.

Strong appeals were made to the people that they would not to trust in Egypt, and here’s the foremost reason why: Remember, Jehoahaz was taken away by the King of Egypt and Jehoiakim was installed in his place, and since then the Kingdom of Judah was a tributary to Egypt (2 Kings 23:31-37). Egypt was the presiding in power over the region and Babylon was *on its way* (Jer. 6:22-23), thus the eyes of Judah were soon to fasten upon the unfolding conflict: Babylon

against Egypt. What was the message? DON'T TRUST IN EGYPT! Elaborate appeals were being cried **in the ears of Jerusalem** (Jer. 2:1-2) with repetition, urgency, and boldness because Babylon's arrival was imminent. The Prophet was likely running to and fro to deliver the message, like former prophecies. Think of it, my reader! When the unbelieving people saw the Armies of the North, just as Jeremiah had foretold, they would have hoped that the rest of what Jeremiah had been prophesying would not come to pass with it! Babylon's arrival was but the tip of the iceberg, truly. Before long Babylon would be in the region, surrounding Jerusalem, and fighting against Egypt (Dan. 1:1, Jer. 46:2), and then Jeremiah's prophecies would need to be reckoned with all sobriety and fear, the impenitent people thinking, "What if...!".

With a significant amount of time to brace themselves, the appeal was being made: DON'T TRUST IN EGYPT! With perfect articulation of what is ahead, the appeal was being made: DON'T TRUST IN EGYPT! With much affection, and as an estranged Husband, the people's regenerated estate at the first was painfully remembered by the LORD (Jer. 2:2-3) and their recent backsliding and degeneration is rehearsed (Jer. 2:21). Shockingly, the Pastors and Priests of the people knew of no such backsliding! Meanwhile, as the Lord had utterly departed from the people... the Pastors and Priests did not even think to ask, "Where is the Lord?" (Jer. 2:6-8). They were given to idolatry and whoredom with Egypt (Jer. 2:20, 25-32). Idolatry was convenient and undemanding, you see. They were covetous and overcome with the cares of this life, they had no time for God (Jer. 2:31-32). Meanwhile, the Prophet Jeremiah watched Jerusalem burn in prophetic visions foretelling the near future (Jer. 2:15)! The main thrust of it all is: DON'T TRUST IN EGYPT!

"And now what hast thou to do in the way of **Egypt**, to drink the waters of **Sihor**? or what hast thou to do in the way of **Assyria**, to drink the waters of the **river**? Thine own wickedness shall correct thee, and thy backslidings shall reprove thee: know therefore and see that it is an evil thing and bitter, that thou hast forsaken the LORD thy God, and that my fear is not in thee, saith the Lord GOD of hosts." – Jer. 2:18-19

"Why gaddest thou about so much to change thy way? thou also shalt be ashamed of **Egypt**, as thou wast ashamed of **Assyria**. Yea, thou shalt go forth from him, and thine hands upon thine head: for the LORD hath rejected thy confidences, and thou shalt not prosper in them." – Jer. 2:36-37

The Lord pointed to the recent past where, indeed, the people's confidence in Assyria was rejected by God and they were ashamed. Bringing this to memory, the LORD attested: "thou also shalt be ashamed of Egypt, as thou wast ashamed of Assyria." What happened with Assyria? Ahaz, King of Judah, sought their aid while being attacked by the Edomites and the Philistines, and instead of Assyria helping him he attacked and impoverished him (2 Chron. 28:16-25). Furthermore, during Hezekiah's reign, Ahaz's son, Assyria destroyed and scattered the nation of Israel and almost did the same to the King of Judah. Only one Defensed City of Judah remained intact before God came to Hezekiah's aid by slaying the mighty men of Assyria's army as they encamp around Jerusalem. In short, Israel and Judah were ashamed of their trust in Assyria! Even so, the LORD declared, they would be ashamed of their trust in Egypt. The Lord had already declared at the beginning of Jehoiakim's reign, speaking of Egypt and all other foreign Nations: "the Nation and Kingdom which will not serve the same Nebuchadnezzar the King of Babylon, and that will not put their neck under the yoke of the King of Babylon, that nation will I punish...until I have consumed them by his hand" (Jer. 27:8).

The events leading up to this point in time were essential to understand. After Jerusalem had been searched and found without any hope of mercy (Jer. 5:1-5) and, notably, a promise of restoration was presented as a beacon of hope (Jer. 17:19-27), and, meanwhile, in the midst of delivering these two prophecies, because Jeremiah accomplished the search and didn't find one man (Jer. 4:1-6:30 & 2:1-3:5), this prophecy would have served as the last message of this manner delivered to the common people of the City of Jerusalem.

The end of it all was clearly detailed in the prophetic declaration, "they made his Land **waste**: his Cities are **burned without inhabitant**" (Jer. 2:15), but the time was not yet. Remember, the LORD was bringing judgment with increasing increments in hopes that the people would be corrected. At the execution of each stage of chastisement, the LORD would look and listen for the people's repentance, hoping, "It may be", ...and what happened? Prophecy revealed that at the blast of Divine Judgment the people would find their gods silent to them and unable to help... then, the LORD said that they would cry to Him, saying, "Arise and save us!", but the LORD would respond, saying, "Wherefore will ye plead with Me? Ye all have transgressed against Me" (Jer. 2:27-29). Because of insincerity and steadfast impenitence, the people were

impregnated with more woes. As time went on and trouble endured, the people would say to God: “Wilt thou not from this time cry unto Me, My Father, Thou art the guide of my youth? Will He reserve His anger for ever? Will He keep it to the end” (Jer. 3:4-5)? And, alas! What was spoken once would be reality theretofore, the LORD lamenting: “In vain have I smitten your children; they received no correction...” (Jer. 2:30). The impenitent hearts would be softened, but it was too late.

## JEREMIAH 3:6-25

**The second and final prophecy given during Josiah’s reign:** A shocking appeal to *the House of Israel* during the reign of Josiah! My reader, when was the last time this happened? Yes, Jeremiah prophesied to *the House of Israel* from the Land of Judah during the reign of Josiah! Think of it, my reader. Since Jeremiah was ordained as a Prophet at the 13<sup>th</sup> year of Josiah’s reign, this was the second and final prophecy given the whole duration of Josiah’s reign. This means that for an 18-year period there were only two prophecies given to Jeremiah.

The *first* was an introductory prophecy which revealed the cause of justice which had been increasing in momentum for generations, finding relevance in the reign of Jehoiakim and irrelevance in the reign of Josiah (because Josiah found grace in the eyes of the Lord). Therefore, notably, this prophecy (the *second* prophecy) was primarily given to *the children of Israel*, not Judah. For good reason! Because of the King of Judah, named Josiah, the people of Judah found grace in the eyes of the Lord; and, because of the King of Judah, named Josiah, the people of Israel were finding opportunity to discover grace in the eyes of the Lord. At such a time the people of Israel NEEDED to hear the merciful voice of God!

By this time, the children of Israel had been *nearly annihilated* and then *dispersed* by the Assyrians, whom the Lord graciously turned away from the neck of Judah during the reign of Hezekiah, and being thus judged by God Almighty, Israel was moved to “weeping and supplications” before the Lord, with many vows (Jer. 3:21-25). Not only this, but, the Israelite people’s prayers for mercy were all the more significant because Josiah, the King of Judah, was traversing across the Land of Israel to eradicate idolatry for the first time in hundreds of years! So, of course, because Jeremiah was a companion of Josiah during this time, which means that he certainly knew what Josiah was doing and why he was doing it – lo, and behold, at timely word from the LORD came unto Jeremiah for the people among whom Josiah traversed! Furthermore, the people of Israel were compelled into the audience of Josiah (and more importantly, the LORD) when they kept the Passover Feast at Josiah’s compulsion. Remember, Josiah compelled Israel to return to the edicts of the Law so as to worship God *at the Temple in Jerusalem* according to the scriptures (Deut. 16:1-8), an event which hadn’t happened for hundreds of years! Therefore, it was amidst these very peculiar and relevant circumstances, the Lord said, “Return, thou backsliding *Israel*, saith the LORD; and I will not cause mine anger to fall upon you: for I am merciful, saith the LORD, and I will not keep anger for ever” (Jer. 3:12). The Lord spoke the word of hope in a needed hour, saying, “Return, ye backsliding children, and I will heal your backslidings” (Jer. 3:22). What a Glory!

Cohesively, Jeremiah 3:6-11 effectually introduces the warrant of mercy made available to *the House of Israel* in light of the sins of Judah that were committed by the sons of Hezekiah who reigned long before Josiah did, especially the sins of Manasseh. Very specifically, doomsday was irrevocably made imminent on account of Manasseh’s unspeakable wickedness (2 Kings 21:2-18, 24:3-4, Jer. 15:1-9)! In the wake of a revival that Israel wasn’t privileged to experience (transpiring in the days of Hezekiah), Manasseh made Judah to sin against greater light and thereby they “justified” God’s appeal of mercy to Israel (Jer. 3:11). Thus, verses 6-11 are a justifying introduction to the pathetic appeals of mercy and redemption given to Israel when, of recent, Judah had acted so treacherously from a superior point of privilege, though not during Josiah’s reign.

## JEREMIAH 4:1-6:30

**The Babylonian Army has left Babylon and is on its way, conquering and to conquer:** Sadly, Israel didn't steadfastly repent. Even though a significant work of repentance took place during the revival under Josiah the King, it did not persevere (Judges 2:7-11). Here, at a later time (apparently during the reign of Jehoiakim), Israel was in need of returning to the Lord (Jer. 4:1-2). Judging by the content of the prophecies, Jeremiah 4:1-6:30 is a distinct message from what was delivered during the reign of Josiah in Jeremiah 3:6-25, and, therein, Judah's degeneration in the days of Jehoiakim is odiously apparent.

From verse 3 onward, Judah is the primary object of prophecy, God declaring: "I will bring evil from the North" (Jer. 4:6), "the destroyer of the Gentiles is *on his way*" (Jer. 4:7), "he *is gone forth* from his place" (Jer. 4:7), "the fierce anger of the LORD *is not turned back*" (Jer. 4:8), and, in respect to the manifestation of these things, "the heart of *the King* shall perish, and the heart of *the Princes*; and *the Priests* shall be astonished, and *the Prophets* shall wonder" (Jer. 4:9). Such things cannot be said of the status of Judah's imminent invasion by Babylon in the days of Josiah; specifically speaking, I mean, during the remaining 18 years of his reign that transpired after Jeremiah was ordained as a Prophet before God. Why? Because, remember, Josiah was whole-heartedly repenting of all known sin and following the Lord, and the Lord determined that his eyes would not see the evil that is brought upon Judah and Jerusalem (2 Chron. 34:24-28).

This being the case, Josiah was not one of the *Kings, Princes, Priests, or Prophets* that was perishing in astonishment and wonder at the sword of Babylon reaching unto their very own souls, as Jeremiah prophesied (Jer. 4:8-9). Josiah did not see the defilement of the Temple (Jer. 4:20) or widespread slaughter and murder (Jer. 4:31), as Jeremiah foretold. Contrary to the people deserving such a fate, Josiah was *executing judgment* and *seeking the truth*, and by the Lord's grace he found pardon with God (Jer. 5:1). Josiah was, therefore, a part of the company of "great men" in his time that knew "the way of the LORD" and "the judgment of their God", and, yet, he *didn't* break the yoke *nor* burst the bonds (Jer. 5:5), as Jeremiah described as the contrary in Jehoiakim's day.

In the reign of Jehoiakim, all these indictments were fearfully accurate and precise! How? Concerning the fulfillment of these prophecies in the reign of Jehoiakim, two primary events are referenced in Jeremiah 4:1-6:30. These two events are the **1<sup>st</sup> & 2<sup>nd</sup> Captivities of Babylon** which took place at different points in Jehoiakim's reign (the 4<sup>th</sup> and 11<sup>th</sup> year). Therefore, as the plot of this historical situation thickens, it is important that we take note of the diverse relationship Judah had with Babylon at differing points of time, resulting in these two distinct Captivities.

At the 3<sup>rd</sup> year of the reign of Jehoiakim (Dan. 1:1) and before the **1<sup>st</sup> Captivity** actually took place, Babylon arrived in the region (and Babylon had already *gone out of his place* at the time that this prophecy was given; Jer. 4:7), conquered Egypt (Jer. 46:2), and took over the tributary territories which were under the sovereignty of Egypt (2 Kings 23:34-35), which included Judah. This resulted in the **1<sup>st</sup> Captivity** (which exiled *Daniel* and *companions*; Dan. 1:1) and the first of several robberies of the Temple; but, Judah, for three more years, conducted themselves faithful in the tributary agreement set up by Babylon so that nothing worse came upon them as of yet (2 Kings 24:1). Albeit, after three years (at the 8<sup>th</sup> year of his reign), Jehoiakim rebelled against the former agreement with Babylon; and, thickening the plot of the historical situation in relationship to the ministry of Jeremiah, Babylon did not come to Judah to reclaim sovereignty immediately because she was likely detained in other wars for the next three years. This provision of time proved to strengthen the bands of iniquity. All the way until the 11<sup>th</sup> year of Jehoiakim's reign, *the King, the Princes, the Priests, and the Prophets* were taken in the fantastic lies of false prophets (Jer. 5:30-31) – words which healed the hurt of the people of Judah slightly, saying, "Peace, peace; when there is no peace" (Jer. 6:13-15)! God warned them that war and destruction were still imminent during the space of these three years of rebellion, but they obstinately declared, "**We will not hearken**" (Jer. 6:16-17).

### Sermon Notes:

- Babylon was on its way, it was urgent! – Jer. 6:22-23
- The time and duration of this searching (in the midst of the 2<sup>nd</sup> year and toward the beginning of the 3<sup>rd</sup> year; the besiegement began in the 3<sup>rd</sup> year [Dan. 1:1] and Egypt was not defeated until the 4<sup>th</sup> year [Jer. 46:2]).

- Jeremiah is commanded to RUN the STREETS of Jerusalem like a MADMAN! Hereby Jerusalem is searched. – Jer. 5:1-5
- A promise of restoration upon the people’s repentance is offered. – Jer. 5:12 (their response)
- With Babylon on its way, divine commands were given to Babylon and divine appeals were made to Jerusalem. – Jer. 6:1, 4, 5, 6, 22-26
- Explicit appeals included hope that reprobation could be avoided. – Jer. 6:6-8
- The LORD *looked* and *listened* for the people to repent, and what did He *see* and *hear*? – Jer. 6:13-15
- A Remnant will be left. – Jer. 4:27, 5:10, 18
- Despite all the correction theretofore the people were blindly staggering into the hands of an Angry God! – Jer. 5:3, 21

## JEREMIAH 7:1-10:25

**The first sermon delivered in the Temple Courts, first of all, revealing the progress of iniquity and the diminishing patience of God, resulting in reprobation:** Going in the order of how the Chapters were organized in the Book of Jeremiah, this is the first sermon (specifically cited) that Jeremiah preached while standing “in the Gate of the LORD’s House” (Jer. 7:2) and the first message delivered in the backslidden Kingdom of Judah. Necessarily, this happened during Jehoiakim’s reign, as it perfectly characterizes the situation of Jeremiah’s early ministry to the idolatry-bound people of that generation. Remember, the people in office at the Temple Courts were Jeremiah’s brethren, uncles, cousins, and family members, all of them being fellow Priests & Levites.

The people’s relationship to *the Temple* and *the Law* is brought into view in Jeremiah 7:4 and 8:8, in that they said, “The Temple of the LORD, the Temple of the LORD, the Temple of the LORD, are these”, and, “We are wise, and the Law of the LORD is with us”. But, was it true? Were these sincere confessions? If such confessions were originally made during Josiah’s reign, they would have been true! But, seeing that they were mindlessly quoted in the mouths of men whose hearts were far from God in Jehoiakim’s reign, they were false! Concerning the people of Jeremiah’s prominent ministry, Jeremiah exclaimed: “Thou art near in their mouth, and far from their reins” (Jer. 12:2)! Ah, but it was not always so! *The Temple* which Josiah restored and *the Law* which he found in the process, during the 18<sup>th</sup> year of his reign, were *rightly hallowed* and *ordinately related* to during his time. As a matter of Biblical fact, the restoration of *the Temple* and the repossession of *the Law* did usher the nation into a genuine revival for the remaining 13 years of Josiah’s reign! As evidence of this, let us remember what was written of the man Josiah, that “he caused all that were present in Jerusalem and Benjamin to stand to it. And the inhabitants of Jerusalem did according to the Covenant of God, the God of their fathers” (2 Chron. 34:32). But, fearfully! Just a few years removed from this time of restoration and obedience... perversity revived!

These should-be holy confessions of the people in Jehoiakim’s day, formerly quoted (Jer. 7:4, 8:8), became lying words! God said, “Behold, ye trust in *lying words*, that cannot profit” (Jer. 7:8)! The people had an erroneous relationship to the *benefits granted to* and *the graces utilized by* Josiah via *the Temple* and *the Law*. Consequentially, the destruction of the Temple was threatened by God, and, yet... it was avoidable! If the people repented (see the progression from Jer. 7:1-12 to Jer. 9:18-22), the LORD would not destroy the Temple. The Lord, being full of compassion, made verbal pleas that the people would come to repentance, offering to the people life and peace therein. One can almost hear the longing heart of God, in the words, “that it may be well unto you” (Jer. 7:23)! ...but, at last, the Lord said: “And now, because ye have done all these works, saith the LORD, and I spake unto you, rising early and speaking, and ye heard not; and I called you, but ye answered not; Therefore...”, God said, “I will cast you out of My sight” (Jer. 7:13-15). Furthermore, the Lord said to Jeremiah, “Therefore pray not thou for this people, neither lift up cry nor prayer for them, neither make intercession to Me: for I will not hear thee” (Jer. 7:16). The people were engrossed in idolatry the whole time (Jer. 7:17-20), even while they maintained their religious devotions to the LORD via sacrifices and the like (Jer. 7:21-23); all of which, the LORD utterly rejected as vain and contemptible in His sight!

Implicit of the length of time spent and the volume of words prophesied in Jeremiah's ministry, the process of eventual reprobation is clearly detailed, and the reprobation vindicated, because the Lord pled the cause abundantly before annihilation ensued (Jer. 7:13, 25-28). Jeremiah's ministry is included in this indictment of the people's deafness to the word of God, in the saying, "they will not hearken to thee: thou shalt also call unto them; but they will not answer thee" (Jer. 7:27). The people were clearly poised to do as they had already done to the prophets theretofore. Therefore, this people as a generation deserved the title: "the generation of [God's] wrath" (Jer. 7:29). This people as a single family deserved the title: "evil family" (Jer. 8:3).

What is the conclusion of the whole matter? God was leaving. The LORD would no longer dwell in Zion! Her King would no longer be in her! Hence, there would be no more balm in Gilead, and no Physician to apply it, and thus the health of God's people would become unrecoverable and fatal (Jer. 8:19-9:3). The state of the people became profoundly wicked (Jer. 9:1-9)! There was only one remedy left: *The Baptism of Fire*. Speaking of this, the Lord said, "Behold, I will *melt* them, and *try* them; for how shall I do for the daughter of My people" (Jer. 9:7)? By this, the habitations of the wilderness would be burned up, the Cities of Judah and Jerusalem would be reduced to heaps, and more. The people would be scattered among the heathen and therein suffer so many afflictions that, the Lord said, "death shall be chosen rather than life by all the residue of them that remain of this evil family, which remain in all the places whither I have driven them" (Jer. 8:3). How so? The Lord said, "I will scatter them also among the heathen, whom neither they nor their fathers have known: and I will send a sword after them, till I have consumed them" (Jer. 9:16).

You see, my reader, through the increasing increments of the chastisements inflicted by the LORD, God was intent upon removing the wicked from the Land of Judah, the Church, but... seeing that the people of Judah refused to purify the Church by judgment – which would result in the removal of the wicked from among the people – at last, so great a Baptism of Fire was kindled so that "there [was] none shut up, or left" (Jer. 6:28-30, Deut. 32:36). In other words, if "the wicked are not **plucked away**" from the Church by the means of correctional chastisements which, by design, leave the place and people of the Church intact so as to enable the people to repent and do the judgment necessary to remove the wicked from their midst, then the Lord would demolish the place and destroy the people to accomplish the judgment Himself (Jer. 6:28-29, 7:14-15, 8:3, 9:1-3, 7, 16, 10:19-20). You see, my reader? The Lord was listening! They repented not of their wickedness, the Lord said. The Lord was right *in their presence* and *among the people*, LOOKING UPON THEM! He said, "I *hearkened* and *heard*, but they spake not aright: no man repented his of his wickedness, saying, What have I done? Every one turned to his course, as the horse rusheth into the battle" (Jer. 8:6).

The message preached sounded the alarm of coming desolation (Jer. 26:9, 7:33-34, 9:12, 10:22) insomuch that even the scattered peoples would find no peace in foreign Lands because the LORD would send a sword after them until they were consumed (Jer. 8:3, 9:16)! Pathetic appeals of mercy, forgiveness, and hope were indeed given (Jer. 26:2-3), but as the LORD God of Israel was *standing*, *looking*, and *listening* if anyone would repent, NONE DID: no, not the people (Jer. 8:5-6), the prophet or priest (Jer. 8:10-12), nor those who were foremost to blame (Jer. 8:7-9), all because none understood nor were there any who were wise (Jer. 9:12)! It was a bleak situation because of the progress of depravity from generation to generation (Jer. 7:25-27).

## JEREMIAH 11:1-12:17

**After Jeremiah's preaching in the Temple Courts and Kings Court were fully accomplished, the sermon he was commissioned to preach on the streets of all the Cities of Judah was revealed. In response to the preaching, persecution was incited and undertaken especially by the Men of Anathoth, the City of the Priests, which was Jeremiah's hometown. At last, God's retaliatory actions taken in defense of the Prophet Jeremiah are terrifyingly revealed and vindicated:** Still during the reign of Jehoiakim, but at a different instance in time than the former message which was given in the Temple courts, the Lord said to the Prophet Jeremiah, "Proclaim all these words in the Cities of Judah, and in the streets of Jerusalem" (Jer. 11:6). Jeremiah's ministry was not isolated to the Temple courts, nor was it isolated to the City of Jerusalem. Here we see the message PROCLAIMED! Jeremiah going to and fro throughout the

Cities of Judah, proclaiming! And, of course, the message preached on the streets was thematically united with the message preached in the Temple courts. It is only right that Jeremiah began the prophetic proclamation there, as God said to the angel in the vision of Ezekiel, “begin at My Sanctuary” (Ezek. 9:6). This is because if righteousness prevails *in the House of God*, it will prevail *everywhere else in Judah*; and if sin prevails *there* so it will *everywhere*. Tragically, the latter was the case. Sin prevailed *there* and *everywhere*, so the Prophet was sent *there* and then *everywhere*! What was first proclaimed *there* must be then proclaimed *everywhere*, namely: the judgments of God against the sin of the people, the Church! Clear correlations can be made between the two messages of different locations by comparing Jeremiah 7:16, 21-28 with Jeremiah 11:3-8, 14.

The message Jeremiah preached throughout the Cities of Judah and Jerusalem is revealed in Jeremiah 11:1-17, and in the same series of events which transpired because of this, persecution arose (Jer. 11:18-23). The Men of Anathoth, the City where Jeremiah was from, conspired to kill Jeremiah (Jer. 11:18-23). Should we be surprised? The Lord said to Jeremiah, very specifically, “even thy brethren, and the House of thy father, even they have dealt treacherously with thee; yea, they have called a multitude after thee: believe them not, though they speak fair words unto thee” (Jer. 12:6). Shockingly, this was the City of the Priests! Even they dealt with a preacher of righteousness thus! They said to Jeremiah, “**Prophesy not in the Name of the LORD, that thou die not by our hand**” (Jer. 11:21). This conspiracy could have been stirred up by Jeremiah’s visit there, because of his bold and unrelenting open-air preaching on the streets of Anathoth, or perhaps while he was preaching abroad throughout all the Cities of Judah and Jerusalem, then his family, friends, and companions of Anathoth were contacted and bestirred by the men of other Cities to stop Jeremiah, like Jesus’ family tried to stop Jesus (John 7:1-9, Mark 3:21, 31-35, Matt. 12:46-50, Matt. 10:34-37). “So persecuted they the Prophets”, the Lord Jesus said (Matt. 5:12). So persecuted they Jeremiah!

So, what happened? Do you remember how the Lord promised to Jeremiah, “they shall fight against thee; but they shall not prevail against thee; for I am with thee, saith the LORD, to deliver thee” (Jer. 1:19)? The conspiracy was strong, a multitude was called after Jeremiah by his very own *family* and *friends* (Jer. 12:6). They vowed to kill him, saying: “**Let us destroy the tree with the fruit thereof, and let us cut him off from the Land of the living, that his name be no more remembered**” (Jer. 11:19). Shockingly, the LORD responded to them in real time through His servant Jeremiah (“*thus saith the LORD of the Men of Anathoth, that seek thy life...*” – Jer. 11:21), saying, “Behold, I will punish THEM: the young men shall die by **the sword**; their sons and their daughters shall die by **famine**: And **there shall be no remnant of them**: for I will bring **evil** upon *the Men of Anathoth*, even **the year of their visitation**” (Jer. 11:22-23). Fearful!

In the same sequence of events, Jeremiah took time to speak with the LORD concerning His judgments (Jer. 12:1-4). Jeremiah mourned over the coming judgments, thinking, “How long...” (Jer. 12:4), but he did not properly identify with the personal affliction the Lord underwent theretofore by His own *Family* and *House* which had forsaken Him. Therefore when Jeremiah’s own *family* and *friends* forsook him, he called upon the LORD for the execution of judgment, protection, and vengeance (Jer. 11:20, 12:1-3), and the Lord answered him (Jer. 11:22-23)! Do you wonder why? It was personal to Jeremiah, so Jeremiah cried! And in this way Jeremiah feelingly experienced the pain of treachery which vindicated the acts of God’s vengeance formerly cited. The Lord compelled the Prophet into agreement with Himself by heaping upon him like personal experiences. In a similar way to Jeremiah’s cries for justice and vengeance, the LORD said to His own, “I have forsaken Mine House, I have left Mine heritage...”, and justifiably so (Jer. 12:7-11).

In summary, the location and duration of Jeremiah’s message is specified (Jer. 11:6), the message was very similar to the one delivered in the Temple Courts (Jer. 7:1-10:25), necessarily so. At the hazarding of Jeremiah’s life and the spending of his energy to prophesy, to wit, the men of Anathoth conspired to murder him (Jer. 11:18-23), it becomes clear that the hard and impenitent hearts of the people would be softened too late (Jer. 11:11-12). Fearfully, despite the fact that the LORD was looking, seeing, listening, hearing, speaking, and retaliating – executing judgment (Jer. 12:12) and proclaiming the safekeeping of an eventual remnant (Jer. 12:15-16) – the people sinned away their days of grace! What was the just punishment awaiting those who were spurning the affectionate and merciful appeals of God (Jer. 13:15-17)? The most terrifying and merciless judgments imaginable (Jer. 13:13-14).

## JEREMIAH 13:1-27

**A prophetic message achieved by traveling far north of Judah to the Euphrates River. Urgent pleas were given forewarning of an irreversible threshold of damnation just ahead:** Thematically united with the former messages, and progressive, another series of events takes place for the emphasis of a single message. The Prophet was instructed to hide a linen girdle at the Euphrates river, which was far north of Judah, so it would have been quite a trip to go there, hide it, and return to get it after many days (Jer. 13:1-7). Clearly this was not during Babylon's presence in the Land of Israel or Judah, otherwise such traveling would have been impossible. The Lord was intent upon showing Judah's sin in respect to how close they were made to cleave unto the Living God (*"as the girdle cleaveth to the loins of a man, so have I caused to cleave unto Me the whole House of Israel and the whole House of Judah"* – Jer. 13:11), and, even still "they would not hear"! Pitiless destruction approached (Jer. 13:14)! The desperate voice of Jeremiah could be heard from street to street and gate to gate all throughout the Cities of Judah, saying, "Give glory to the LORD your God, BEFORE He *cause* **darkness**, and BEFORE your feet **stumble** upon **the dark mountains**, and, while ye look for light, He *turn it into* **the shadow of death**, and *make it* **gross darkness**. But if ye will not hear it, my soul shall weep in secret places for your pride; and mine eye shall weep sore, and run down with tears, because the LORD'S flock is carried away captive." (Jer. 13:16-17). Jeremiah waxes even more bold as he appeals to the common people of the Land, saying, "Say unto the King and to the Queen, Humble yourselves, sit down" (Jer. 13:18)! And, on the backside of this charge, the Lord proclaimed the unprecedented warning: a whole-population Captivity with not a single man left in the Cities of Judah! He said, "Judah shall be carried away captive ALL OF IT, it shall be WHOLLY carried away captive" (Jer. 13:19). At the **6<sup>th</sup> Captivity** of Judah to Babylon it would be accomplished. Nevertheless, the people were dumbfounded, and inquired, "Wherefore come these evil things upon me" (Jer. 13:22).

## JEREMIAH 14:1-17:18

The contextual and situational intensity of the prophecies and events which take place before, within, and after Jeremiah 14:1-17:18 are exceedingly profound. In a staggering series of events before and within this situation, we see: an incomplete revival, a completely successful apostasy, an unprepared Prophet, a deviation from Covenantal Ideals, and a Redemptive Purpose that is largely unexplained. Having just personally confronted King Jehoiakim (Jer. 36:29-31), the LORD does herein confront the false Prophets who had roused themselves in partnership with and in confirmation of the King's apostate actions (Jer. 14:12-18). These two, the King and the false Prophets, were the primary mediums through which damnation was secured.

### The Timeframe & Context of Jeremiah 14:1-17:18

In order to convey the greatness and terribleness of this prophetic message, the timeframe of its delivery must be narrowed as the context allows.

**Firstly...** Conveying an irrefutable time reference, it must be noted: a mere famine (via the withholding of rain) is not the primary thrust of this prophecy; rather, **the famine** and **the sword** are referenced together in this prophecy (Jer. 14:12-18). Apparently, the LORD was withholding a significant volume of rain from falling upon the Land for some time leading up to this point so that there was a dearth in the making (Jer. 3:3, 12:4), but the mere withholding of rain (which can be devastating just by itself) was not the only cause of the famine according to the prophecy. Clear and direct references were made to "**the sword**" and "**the famine**" which would come, and they have and do consistently exist with one another during a siege because the adversary blocks off passage to food and water. Also, according to the vision that Jeremiah had in Jeremiah 14:18, the famine would be interrelated with the widespread slaughtering of the people by war. Because of the aforementioned observations, we know that this prophecy does not identify Babylon's presence in the **1<sup>st</sup> Captivity**. Why? Judah did not war against Babylon at the **1<sup>st</sup> Captivity** because Jehoiakim surrendered. Therefore, the **famine** and the **sword** identify circumstances of a future siege and warfare

that would take place in the 2<sup>nd</sup> Captivity of Babylon, and we know the 2<sup>nd</sup> Captivity of Babylon is in direct reference because of the correlation between Jer. 15:4 and 2 Kings 24:2-5 (see also 2 Kings 21:1-18). Hence, it can be certainly concluded that this prophecy was delivered during the reign of Jehoiakim and leading into the 2<sup>nd</sup> Captivity.

**Secondarily...** Of note, and with shocking relevance to the fasting that took place in the 4<sup>th</sup> and 5<sup>th</sup> year of Jehoiakim's reign, the LORD said, "When they fast, I will not hear their cry; and when they offer burnt-offering and an oblation, I will not accept them" (Jer. 14:12; Note: Jeremiah 14:12, 36:6, & 36:9 are the only three places the word fast or fasting is used in all the Book of Jeremiah). This is a breathtaking response to the backslidden Nation that was almost turned to God! As was formerly covered in detail, the grassroots revival reached to the neck of the nation and... was squelched. Now evidently at this time, warranting the wrath of God depicted in Jeremiah 14:1-17:18, the people's heart of repentance did not recover from the intimidating blow of Jehoiakim.

After observing the time references of this prophecy, and because of the richness of the following events, it is helpful to note in summary several points of relevance and complexity:

- **The Silence of God:** This was the last and final prophetic word, a word of general reprobation, given to the recently lead- astray Kingdom under Jehoiakim: the man who personally offended the KING of Israel by cutting and burning the word of prophecy, Judah's only hope. God's wrath was both warranted and retaliatory.
- **Jehoiakim Rebelled Against Babylon:** This was a word that needed to be spoken in this time, not only because Jehoiakim behaved himself violently against the written word of God in the 5<sup>th</sup> year of his reign, but, in further defiance and at the 7<sup>th</sup> year of Jehoiakim's reign, he rebelled against Babylon in pursuit of "liberty" – a liberty heralded as a promise by false prophets that resulted in Jehoiakim's utter destruction.
- **A Strong Delusion via Choice Instruments:** A nearly successful revival of the Church was quickly redirected into a completely successful apostasy, and according to Jeremiah, who watched the events unfold, the false prophets were infamously and staggeringly responsible for it all!
- **Jeremiah Backslid:** Feeling shocked and exasperated, unrighteously so, lonely Jeremiah succumbed to worldly sorrow and evil unbelief. As a consequence to this, the wrath of God was stately upon him! As an aid to help Jeremiah repent and escape the wrath of God, the LORD was gracious to pointedly innumerate his compromises; and, as a result of these events and Jeremiah's restoration, deep-rooted misunderstandings were directly confronted and hopefully purged once and for all.

### The Silence of God

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King David, a man after God's own heart, was an embattled saint who knew the potentials of wrath and cried out for persevering mercy, though he was undeserving. Directly relevant to the fate of Jehoiakim, who suffered the silence of God, and the false peace ministries of false prophets, David was made to cry out to God the following prayer...

"Unto thee will I cry, O LORD my rock; BE NOT SILENT to me: **lest, if thou be silent to me, I become like them that go down into the pit.** Hear the voice of my supplications, when I cry unto thee, when I lift up my hands toward thy holy oracle. **Draw me not away with the wicked,** and with the workers of iniquity, which SPEAK PEACE to their neighbours, but mischief is in their hearts." – Psalm 28:1-3

In reference to the silence of God, this fearful prophecy (Jer. 14:1-17:18) was essentially the last word spoken to the Kingdom of Judah during the reign of Jehoiakim; it was a word of general reprobation. Apart from this prophecy, an unprecedented 6 years of silence took place as a result of Jehoiakim cutting and burning the word of God, not to mention the royal decree to hunt down and arrest Jeremiah and Baruch, God's ministers. Oh, the fearful condition! The horrifying estate! To be shut-up in *the silence of God* like King Saul (1 Sam. 14:37, 28:6)! One thing is for sure: when God is *silent* to the

inquiries of man, He, like a Lion silently stalks its prey in the covert of tall grass, moves into position to execute a fatal strike. On the eve of Saul's death, it was written, "the LORD answered him not, neither by dreams, nor by Urim, nor by prophets" (1 Sam. 28:6). Some men prefer a more silent and solitary life, but silence is deadly when a Lion is hiding in the covert! Hence, what shall become of Jehoiakim's "peaceable habitations" (Jer. 25:37)? Fearfully, Jeremiah prophesied: "He [GOD] hath forsaken His covert, as a LION: for their Land is desolate because of the fierceness of the oppressor, and because of His fierce anger" (Jer. 25:38)!

Take note, my reader: Jeremiah was no "peace-preacher". He didn't believe in it! Yes... but Jeremiah was flawed in that he was unprepared to fight against the persistence, power, and pervasiveness of false "peace". My reader, this made Jeremiah vulnerable to temptation and unbelief in the LONG battle against apostasy. Indeed, Jeremiah preached the truth and hazarded his life to do so faithfully! Yet, God suffered him to do so with vulnerabilities which would be purged and sanctified in the process. Jeremiah's vulnerabilities are set-forth as an example, an instruction, so that the saints of future Tribulation Periods might find assuage from like vulnerabilities.

Notably, neither "the famine" nor "the famine + the sword" scenarios prophesied here had come to pass. The famine was seen by Jeremiah already (Jer. 12:4, 3:3), and is further explained to eventuate into a dearth so bad there would be no water or grass, causing sickness and death to man and beast (Jer. 14:1-6). Evidently this has not happened yet, and thus, to Jeremiah's surprise, the false prophets boldly contradicted his prophecy, saying to the people, "Ye shall not see **the sword**, neither shall ye have **famine**; but I will give you assured **peace** in this place" (Jer. 14:13). Jeremiah was shocked by this ("Then said I..."), exclaiming: "Ah, Lord GOD! Behold, the prophets say..." (Jer. 14:13). Conveying deep-rooted misunderstandings, Jeremiah prayed a heart-wrenching prayer depicting the visual expression on the Face of Almighty God who refused to save (Jer. 14:7-9). He humbly questioned God, saying,

"O the hope of Israel, the saviour thereof in time of trouble, why shouldest thou be as a stranger in the land, and as a wayfaring man that turneth aside to tarry for a night? Why shouldest thou be as a man astonished, as a mighty man that cannot save? yet thou, O LORD, art in the midst of us, and we are called by thy name; leave us not." – Jer. 14:8-9

Because of the famine, the word would be fulfilled, "the cry of Jerusalem is gone up" (Jer. 14:2), but the Lord responded by saying, "When they fast, I will not hear their cry; and when they offer burnt-offering and an oblation, I will not accept them: but I will consume them by **the sword**, and by **the famine**, and by **the pestilence**" (Jer. 14:12). With reprobating wrath rearing the arms of Almighty God, here we see the specificity of sovereignty with more clarity than ever before! After all this, how could the people be deceived? How did Jehoiakim hold-fast to false peace? How, after only 5 years of rebellion, did *faithful* and *devout* Jehoiakim (from 12 to 15 years old) act in such unprecedented wickedness? Evil spirits were possessing false prophets to fill the Land with false prophecies of Unconditional Eternal Security!

"Then said the LORD unto me, Pray not for this people for their good. When they fast, I will not hear their cry; and when they offer burnt offering and an oblation, I will not accept them: but **I will consume them by the sword, and by the famine, and by the pestilence**. Then said I, Ah, Lord GOD! behold, *the Prophets* say unto them, Ye shall not see **the sword**, neither shall ye have **famine**; but I will give you assured **peace** in this place. Then the LORD said unto me, The prophets prophesy lies in my name: I sent them not, neither have I commanded them, neither spake unto them: they prophesy unto you a false vision and divination, and a thing of nought, and the deceit of their heart. Therefore thus saith the LORD concerning the prophets that prophesy in my name, and I sent them not, yet they say, **Sword** and **famine** shall not be in this land; By **sword** and **famine** shall those prophets be **consumed**. And the people to whom they prophesy shall be **cast out** in the streets of Jerusalem because of **the famine** and **the sword**; and **they shall have none to bury** them, them, their wives, nor their sons, nor their daughters: for I will pour their wickedness upon them. If I go forth into the field, then **behold the slain with the sword!** and if I enter into the City, then **behold them that are sick with famine!** yea, both *the Prophet* and *the Priest* **go about into a land that they know not.**" – Jer. 14:11-18

These judgments were meticulously specific and retaliatory in real-time situations among which God Almighty *stood, observed* and *heard* what was spoken by men, and He *responded!* In this case, His *response* was to the false prophets. This is the operation

of grace and the manifestation of **the Glory of God** in the midst of **the Great Falling Away**: a **Tribulation Prophet** triumphing in a **Tribulation Period** (2 Cor. 2:14)! Clearly attesting to this Divine Purpose, and in direct reference to God's dealings with false prophets, the Lord said: "Am I a God at hand, saith the LORD, and not a God afar off" (Jer. 23:23)? Indeed, He was nigh and at hand! He proved it.

### *Intercessory Attempts Denied*

Relentlessly, Jeremiah attempts further intercession for the people even after God told him, "Pray not for this people for their **good**" (Jer. 14:11). The compassionate and tender-hearted prophet couldn't help himself (see Jer. 14:19-22)! And yet, it wasn't *all* Spirit-filled affection. Jeremiah was beset by unrighteous optimism and misguided by inordinate hopefulness. You see? Jeremiah hoped to be like the primary objects of his meditation that he read about from Biblical Church History, men like the Prophet Moses and the Prophet Samuel. They too, like himself, lived amidst a conflict with a backsliding generation, right? Indeed. Albeit, Jeremiah's generation was different. Indicating this, God Almighty said: "I am *weary* with **repenting**" (Jer. 15:6). What does it mean? Well, when Moses and Samuel interceded for the backsliding Church of God – standing between an Angry God and the objects of His fury – God was *willing* to **repent** of His purpose to destroy. Fearfully though, this wasn't the case for the backslidden Church in Jeremiah's day! My reader, in the following overview of Moses and Samuel's Ministries of intercession, carefully consider what is loudly communicated by the divine statement, "I am *weary* with **repenting**" (Jer. 15:6). [For a more exhaustive overview, see: "[The Near Annihilation of God's People](#)", "[I Am Weary With Repenting](#)", & "[Mercy On Whom I Will Have Mercy](#)".]

**Moses' Intercession:** Exodus 32:10-14, Ex. 33:11-34:9 (Moses being known by name and finding grace in God's sight is central), Deut. 9:6-29 (Ex. 17:8-16); Psalm 106:23 (Num. 11:1-3, 33-35, 12:13); Numbers 14:11-21; Num. 16:21-22; Num. 16:45-50.

**Samuel's Intercession** (Psalm 99:6, Jer. 15:1): Israel lamented 20 years (1 Sam. 7:2), Samuel preached (1 Sam. 7:3-5), the people repented of idolatry (1 Sam. 7:4), the people gathered to fast, pray, and repent (1 Sam. 7:6), Samuel prayed for them and judged them (1 Sam. 7:5-6), Samuel was entreated that he would cry out to the LORD for Israel (1 Sam. 7:8), Samuel offered a sacrifice and cried out to the LORD (1 Sam. 7:9-10), the LORD thundered upon the Philistines (1 Sam. 7:10), and from thenceforth the hand of the LORD was against the Philistines all the days of Samuel (1 Sam. 7:13). When Samuel was old and by necessity retired from active judgment, his sons displeased the people because of their waywardness and they asked of Samuel a King, so Samuel prayed (1 Sam. 8:6). After solemnly protesting to the people what manner of King *they* would have, he rehearsed the people's answer before the LORD in prayer (1 Sam. 8:21). Then, after the Ammonites were slaughtered through the leadership of Saul and the Kingdom was renewed unto Saul (1 Sam. 11:1-15), Samuel made further proclamation of the Kingdom. Samuel rehearsed the righteous acts of the LORD in that, He delivered them when their fathers of the Exodus Generation "cried unto the LORD" (1 Sam. 12:8), and on multiple occasions thereafter, also, He delivered them when the generations of Judges "cried unto the LORD" (1 Sam. 12:10-11), and up to this point in time, in reference to the Philistines who oppressed the people, the LORD said, "I have looked upon My people, because their cry is come unto Me" (1 Sam. 9:16), but they did not see their sin in asking for themselves a King when they were afraid of the Ammonites (1 Sam. 12:12). In this situation, they did not call upon the LORD. They distrusted God as KING and wanted a man. To help persuade them of their wickedness in asking for themselves a King, the LORD performed a sign and wonder (1 Sam. 12:16-25). In the process of this great sign, prayer was central. Samuel said, "I will call unto the LORD" (1 Sam. 12:17). It was written, "So Samuel called unto the LORD" (1 Sam. 12:18). The people saw the thunder and rain and were in great fear, saying to Samuel, "Pray for thy servants unto the LORD thy God, that we die not: for we have added unto all our sins this evil, to ask us a King" (1 Sam. 12:19). Samuel responded, "God forbid that I should sin against the LORD in ceasing to pray for you: but I will teach you the good and the right way" (1 Sam. 12:23). Also, in reference to Samuel's prayer life amidst Saul's backsliding, it was written, "it grieved Samuel; and he cried unto the LORD all night" (1 Sam. 15:11), and, "Samuel mourned for Saul" (1 Sam. 16:35). The LORD had to reprove him, by saying, "How long wilt thou mourn for Saul, seeing I have rejected him from reigning over Israel?" (1 Sam. 16:1).

Fearfully, the Tribulation Period was when these intercessory exploits were deemed impossible! These most notable intercessors, Moses and Samuel, were named and hypothetically denied! What happened? By Jeremiah's generation, God became *weary*. He was no longer willing to **repent** as He did for Moses and Samuel. It was no longer possible to prevent the wrath-aimed intention of annihilation authored in the holy heart of God! The wrath of God would not be redirected from its intended and prophetically declared course! The Lord was sure to get across the point by such a statement ("*Though Moses and Samuel stood before Me, yet my mind could not be toward this people...*" - Jer. 15:1), and, be sure of this! Jeremiah wasn't the only one offended about it.

Think of it, my reader. It wasn't unusual for Prophets to contradict the angry command of God while employed in an intercessory engagement, like the aforementioned citations of scripture do demonstrate in the lives of Moses and Samuel. Also, comparatively speaking, it is not altogether unusual for God to command Jeremiah to stop praying for the people (Jer. 7:16, 11:14, 14:11-12, 15:1). Jeremiah remembered how the LORD commanded Moses, "let Me alone, that My wrath may wax hot against them, and that I may consume them" (Ex. 32:10), and how that, after intercession, God repented (Ex. 32:14). Jeremiah meditated on many other similar experiences in the lives of Moses, Samuel, and the other Prophets, and therefore he was *unprepared* for his *peculiar ministry* as a Tribulation Prophet. He was *unprepared* to be God's voice in a Tribulation Period. You see, my reader? God had chosen a different route for the ministry of Jeremiah. God had authored a different scheme of salvation and damnation, and of goodness and severity. Moses and Samuel were not examples to follow, not for Jeremiah! SOMETHING ALTOGETHER DIFFERENT WAS GOING TO TAKE PLACE.

### *The Majesty of the Lord in Tribulatory Judgments of Life & Death*

It is true that the wrath of God waxed hot in former generations, but the people still had a Tabernacle or Temple to attend, an earthly Throne for GOD to sit upon (except momentarily when the Ark of God was taken in the days of Samuel), and a Priesthood to perform the necessary atonement ceremonies which were wrath-absorbing on behalf of the people. Furthermore, the infrastructure of the Church via Kings, Elders, Princes, Priests, Prophets, and the like (depending on the generation) remained in a redeemable condition. In general, the material infrastructure of redemption and the necessary personages thereof remained in existence; though backslidden, they were redeemable! Therefore, at the hearing of Jeremiah's prophecies the Kingdom of Judah was inclined towards resistance. The magnitude of destruction that was prophesied to take place had never happened before! So, with the help of false Prophets, the people would grasp after these presently unavailable schemes of redemption exemplified in Biblical Church History. The misguided people were taught to reckon upon the Covenantal Ideals of Biblical Church History as indissoluble, and, in turn, prejudice against the Prophet Jeremiah would abound. While singing and quoting a host of promises from the Psalms, sung everyday, and while meditating on a storehouse of pastime norms which would ordinarily be viable possibilities... Jeremiah was isolated, disregarded, and considered unbiblical. In fact, Jeremiah himself was offended at his own ministry!

As Moses exemplified, Jeremiah couldn't call the Levites to take sword in hand to slay all *the backsliders* of the Church (Ex. 32:25-29) – ALL WERE BACKSLIDDEN! As Samuel exemplified, Jeremiah couldn't gather the backslidden Church to teach them the truth, offer sacrifices on their behalf, and thereby find favor from God to put the Philistine Armies to flight (1 Sam. 7:1-10). Ah! Much more, the contrary, because the people of Jeremiah's day were *unteachable* and their iniquities *unatonable*, BABYLON WAS UNDEFEATABLE! The situation had escalated **far beyond the normal and historical means of recovery** that mere Church Officers could accomplish. The scope of judgment necessary was far too broad and intensive. The guilty persons were far too numerous and unstoppable (un-judge-able). The means of ordinary human instrumentality was thereby rendered weak and unqualified. Nevertheless, an ingenious design of redemption was prophetically unfolding and it was so unprecedented and unfamiliar, Jeremiah was offended. He shouldn't have been, but he was.

Jeremiah was forgetting the extraordinary and preferring the ordinary of Biblical Church History. Jeremiah didn't venture into the extraordinary of Church History (via meditation and consideration) because he was inconsiderate of the dire estate of the Church and consequentially the earth. After all the days of running the streets and preaching, looking and searching, and finding no one who was keeping judgment and being valiant for the truth (Jer. 5:1-5), Jeremiah should have reckoned

with reality and remembered – when the wicked become too numerous and purposefully unified, GOD intervenes (“*And the LORD said, Behold, the people is one, and they have all one language; and this they begin to do: and now nothing will be restrained from them, which they have imagined to do.*” – Gen. 11:6). Even if every Church Officer fails to judge the cause of justice, God judges (Isa. 63:4, 9-10, Heb. 10:30-31)! Instead of getting offended like a foolish man, being inconsiderate, Jeremiah should have been humiliated to behold the *greatness* and *depth* of God’s *works* and *thoughts* amidst the present situation, a scenario well accounted of in the prophetic annals of Inspired Scripture (namely, “*when the wicked spring as the grass, and when all the workers of iniquity flourish*” - Ps. 92:7).

“O LORD, how *great* are Thy *works*! and Thy *thoughts* are very *deep*. A brutish man knoweth not; neither doth a fool understand this. *When the wicked spring as the grass, and when all the workers of iniquity do flourish; it is that they shall be destroyed for ever*: But thou, LORD, art Most High for evermore. For, lo, thine enemies, O LORD, for, lo, thine enemies shall perish; all the workers of iniquity shall be scattered.” – Psalm 92:5-9

To Jeremiah, this ingenious method of redemption via God’s intervention was perceivably *without goodness*. Further, God said to him, “Pray not for this people for their **good**” (Jer. 14:11). In truth, however, the backslidden people were so **bad** that to do them **good**, was **bad**; they would never repent if God showered His **goodness** and **favor** upon them! On the contrary, when and if God gave them **evil**, the **evil** that Jeremiah was disagreeing with and attempting to intercede against, a remnant of the **bad** people would be made **good** (see Isa. 26:8-10). In other words, without Tribulatory Judgment the people’s hearts were fully “set in them to do evil” (Eccl. 8:11). These people were of the same constitution as Isaiah reckoned, saying, “Let **favor** be shewed to the wicked, *yet will he not learn righteousness*: in the Land of uprightness *will he deal unjustly*, and *will not behold the majesty of the LORD*” (Isa. 26:10). Given the circumstances, no Church Officer was going to conduct this tribulation process of judgment. It was simply impossible for them to oversee such an endeavor – to examine and overpass the penitent and, on the other hand, to execute the death sentence on the impenitent. GOD WAS THE ONLY ONE ABLE TO DO THE JOB! Tribulatory Judgment requires the employment of omniscience, omnipresence, and omnipotence. Therefore, GOD, as the sole conductor of the Great Tribulation, employs omniscience to thoroughly examine millions of Church Backsliders both inwardly and outwardly, in thought, word, and deed; He employs omnipresence to examine everyone at the same time and at all times throughout the steady increments of the Great Tribulation; and, He employs omnipotence to exercise sovereign sway over every material and immaterial force necessary to execute the judgment written.

“But let him that glorieth glory in this, that he understandeth and knoweth Me, that I am the LORD which **exercise** *lovingkindness, judgment, and righteousness*, in the earth: for in these things I delight, saith the LORD.” – Jer. 9:24

The LORD must, as it were, open His armory to bring out the weapons of His indignation (Jer. 50:25)! Hence, in no uncertain terms, the LORD claimed responsibility for every death that would transpire. The LORD claimed sovereignty over every **death** suffered by the Babylonian sword, every **death** suffered by the ongoing famine, and, furthermore, every **life** spared by the Captivity & Dispersion! And, with further clarity: the LORD claimed sovereignty over every violent manslaying dog who was brought to the brink of starvation, every swarming fowl that feasted upon the carcasses of the dead and dying, and every beast of the field that overpowered the weak and vulnerable! My reader, these were acts of judgment and purging executed by the hand of God Almighty for the repossessing of the Kingdom and the re-asserting of Dominion in the Church. “None can stay [God’s] hand, or say unto Him, What doest Thou?” (Dan. 4:35), PERIOD. Meticulously, the LORD purged all rebels and spared the elect in circumstances that appeared as ungovernable chaos!

“Then said the LORD unto me, Though Moses and Samuel stood before me, yet my mind could not be toward this people: **cast them out of my sight**, and let them go forth. And it shall come to pass, if they say unto thee, Whither shall we go forth? then thou shalt tell them, Thus saith the LORD; **Such as are for death, to death; and such as are for the sword, to the sword; and such as are for the famine, to the famine; and such as are for the captivity, to the captivity**. And I will appoint over them **four kinds**, saith the LORD: **the sword to slay, and the dogs to tear, and the fowls of the heaven, and the beasts of the earth, to devour and destroy**. And I will cause them

**to be removed into all kingdoms of the earth**, because of Manasseh the son of Hezekiah king of Judah, for that which he did in Jerusalem” - Jer. 15:1-4

With unequalled intelligence and benevolence, caring deeply for every soul that was personally under His direct oversight, deciding upon the death sentence as the last of all options, the LORD orchestrated the most calculated *progress* of every judgment *in pursuit* of repentance from each one. EVERY SINGLE PERSON WAS THOROUGHLY, PROGRESSIVELY, AND CONTINUOUSLY EXAMINED. God Almighty was the Personal Conductor of the tribulation suffered. Like the hand of a Symphony Director signals every instrument to play a synchronized melody to the amassed enormity of breathtaking music that sounds in volumes of indiscernible unanimity! Even so, like the hand of a Symphony Director, I say, each person was engulfed by a divinely authored situation of incremental judgment until, at last, if God determined they would not repent no matter what, the calculated appointment turned fatal. God knew the “such and such” of them all! “Such as are for death”, He knew every name! “Such as are for sword”, He guided every blade! “Such as are for the famine”, He directed the ecological details the same! “The LORD reigneth; let the people tremble: He sitteth between the cherubims; let the earth be moved” (Ps. 99:1)!

Note: from this point onward, these judgments were set in their courses to be perfectly fulfilled - in the reign of Jehoiakim in the 2<sup>nd</sup> **Captivity**, yes, but also and with increasing increments of fulfillment during the 3<sup>rd</sup>, 5<sup>th</sup>, and 6<sup>th</sup> **Captivities**.

### Jehoiakim Rebelled Against Babylon

**This was a word that needed to be spoken in this time, not only because Jehoiakim behaved himself violently against the written word of God in the 5<sup>th</sup> year of his reign, but, in further defiance and at the 7<sup>th</sup> year of Jehoiakim’s reign, he rebelled against Babylon in pursuit of “liberty” – a liberty heralded as a promise by false prophets that resulted in Jehoiakim’s utter destruction.**

Ageless apostasy parades the same banners, as the Apostle Peter repudiated: “While they promise *liberty*, they themselves are the servants of corruption” (2 Pet. 2:19). Jehoiakim believed for the liberty promised to him and he grasped after it. Namely, at the 7<sup>th</sup> year of Jehoiakim’s reign, 3 years after Jehoiakim surrendered to Babylon and became a tributary thereunto, he rebelled and broke the servitude agreement (2 Kings 24:1). Why? Contrary to Jeremiah’s word, the false prophets deceived the people to think that if Jehoiakim rebelled then Babylon wouldn’t return for war. My reader, do you remember what Jehoiakim said in the 5<sup>th</sup> year of his reign in response to the book of Jeremiah’s prophecies? While burning the word of God, Jehoiakim said,

“Why hast thou written therein, saying, The King of Babylon shall certainly come and destroy this Land, and shall cause to cease from thence man and beast?” - Jer. 36:29

This hardened man, two years later, plucked up courage to risk it all *through faith* in the God of Israel, so he thought. Think of it, my reader! How did Jehoiakim, who had been a servant to Egypt for 4 years and Babylon for 3, embolden himself to defy the divinely appointed chastisement? It is all he had ever known! He never experienced national sovereignty ever since ascending the throne of Judah and, before this, he watched his brother go to Egypt as a captive. After having a traumatic first impression of becoming King, watching Jehoahaz fall, Jehoiakim ventured into the unfamiliar terrain that King Josiah never dared to tread! Where? SIN. And, remember, because Jehoiakim walked with God for 13 years during his father’s reign, from 12 to 25, he was a novice when it came to sinning.

Closely leading up to the decisive moment of rebellion from Babylon, or just after it, the false prophets were promising that there would be no sword or famine (“*the Prophets* say unto them, Ye shall not see **the sword**, neither shall ye have **famine**; but I will give you assured **peace** in this place.” – Jer. 14:13). Jehoiakim was certainly in deep consideration on what he should do, hence the prophecy. He made his prayers to God with all fervency and sincerity, so he thought. The probability of Babylon’s return was high and, clearly, the matter was a focal point of consideration in the Kingdom; but, as is always the case in a Nation that has pleasure in unrighteousness, the false prophets prophesied and the people believed a lie. No one is above it! No, not even the sons of Josiah! Not even Jehoiakim (who was nurtured and matured in an environment of unprecedented Revival for 13 years, who knew almost nothing but serving and following the LORD for

most of his life (2 Chron. 34:33)! Not even this man, the son of Josiah, had the wherewithal to resist deception when iniquity has taken its course in a backslider's soul! Therefore, let *us* be forewarned!

Pause... and, look ahead. We, upon whom the end of the world is come (1 Cor. 10:11-12), have been forewarned by God concerning the deceivableness of unrighteousness and the power of a strong delusion, just yonder! Workers of iniquity will find *him* irresistible, *he* "whose coming is after the working of Satan", because his coming is "with *all power* and *signs* and *lying wonders*, and with *all deceivableness* of unrighteousness in them that perish; because they received not the love of the truth, that they might be saved. And for this cause God shall send them *strong delusion*, that they should *believe a lie*: That they all might be damned who believed not the truth, but had pleasure in unrighteousness" (2 Thess. 2:10-12). Pause, and consider it! While people are thinking that "all things continue as they were from the beginning of creation", this future situation will become the unnoticed reality of the present (2 Pet. 3:4). This one thing is certain: if we have *pleasure in unrighteousness*, we will be deceived to think that Satan's *power, signs, and wonders* are God's!

### A Strong Delusion via Choice Instruments

**A nearly successful revival of the Church was quickly redirected into a completely successful apostasy, and according to Jeremiah, who watched the events unfold, the false prophets were infamously and staggeringly responsible for it all!**

"Thy prophets have seen *vain* and *foolish* things for thee: and **they have not discovered thine iniquity**, to turn away thy captivity; but have seen for thee *false burdens* and *causes of banishment*." – Lam. 2:14

My reader, do you think you are not vulnerable to flattery? What about flattery in the form of "the promises of God" that have been, as you have heard it said, "bought and paid for by the blood of Christ!"? What about the flattery that deceived Jehoiakim, in other words (in OT terms)? This flattery was nothing more than the preaching of misapplied promises according to the doctrine of Unconditional Eternal Security, and to who? To a man that walked with God for 13 years! A righteous man, recently backslidden. Also, in Jehoiakim's case, flattery was a reckoning of Covenantal Ideals which would be the norm in former generations - like the Covenantal Ideals that were accessible to and reckoned upon by Moses and Samuel, or like the Covenantal Ideals revived in their seasons through the righteous judgment of Kings and Priests. Of *them*, the Covenantal Ideals, the LORD said, "Though Moses and Samuel stood before Me, My mind could not be toward this people..." (Jer. 15:1). How fearful! My reader, the undiscerning eyes of false prophets knew not the time in which they lived (Matt. 16:3)! Hence, in denial of the only true Prophet among them, the False Prophets preached and reckoned upon their intercessory powers to achieve what the Prophets of old exemplified. They thought of the Kings of Judah of pastime who were enabled by God to triumph against alien invaders, BUT NOT SO WITH BABYLON! Flattery is dangerous, my reader! Undiscerning eyes and misplaced promises are all that is required for the blind to lead the blind unknowingly into hellfire! Are you ready? "And such as do wickedly against the Covenant shall *he* corrupt by flatteries..." (Dan. 11:32).

Consider it! The near restoration of the backslidden Nation was thwarted, by who? Jehoiakim, yes, but not so much him in respect to Jeremiah's observation of the events. Jeremiah was shocked inasmuch that he was (unrighteously) staggering in faith, and why? He was shocked at how successful the false prophets were to flatter and deceive the newly humbled people so as to quench the fires of revival that almost overtook the Nation and turned it back to God! Jeremiah said, "Ah, Lord GOD!", speaking of the turn-around-victory of lies over truth, the overwhelming ministries of false prophets who were ready to confirm the actions of Jehoiakim and denounce the revival that was at work. How fearful! The unafraid King silenced the God-fearing Princes! In turn, Judah was unknowingly ushered into the silence of God! Jeremiah was so staggered by these events, he backslid.

### Jeremiah Backslid

**Feeling shocked and exasperated, unrighteously so, lonely Jeremiah succumbed to worldly sorrow and evil unbelief. As a consequence to this, the wrath of God was stately upon him! As an aid to help Jeremiah repent**

and escape the wrath of God, the LORD was gracious to pointedly innumerate his compromises; and, as a result of these events and Jeremiah's restoration, deep-rooted misunderstandings were directly confronted and hopefully purged once and for all.

My reader, remember, despite that fact that God told Jeremiah, "Pray not for this people for their **good**" (Jer. 14:11), Jeremiah prayed for their **good** (Jer. 14:19-22; "*Remember that I stood before Thee to speak good for them, and to turn away Thy wrath from them*" – Jer. 18:20)! Jeremiah was unprepared to hear the word, "Though Moses and Samuel stood before Me, yet *My mind could not be toward this people: cast the out of My sight, and let them go forth*" (Jer. 15:1), and, "I am *weary with repenting*" (Jer. 15:6). Hence, Jeremiah's steadfast plea was for their salvation (Jer. 14:8-9), which meant: a deliverance from the foreboding **sword** and **famine** that God promised (Jer. 14:12-13, 18) and the granting of **peace** and **healing** that God refused (Jer. 14:19). Despite Jeremiah's persistence in prayer to *pray for the good* (Jer. 14:19-22), God was steadfastly intent upon the performance of **evil** (Jer. 15:2; "*Behold, I frame evil against you*" – Jer. 18:11). The misunderstood Prophet, hoping to live-out the intercessory ministries of Moses and Samuel, was sorely disappointed, offended, and confounded.

Jeremiah disagreed with God! Meaning, Jeremiah *pitied* Jerusalem and *bemoaned* the people... and God didn't. As a response to Jeremiah's misdirected behavior, God spoke directly to the City of Jerusalem and the people therein. Intending to confront the wayward Prophet and correct him, God was unashamedly righteous and forthright to illustrate the utter vanity of Jeremiah's intercession, saying, "For WHO shall have *pity* upon thee, O Jerusalem? Or WHO shall *bemoan* thee? Or WHO shall go aside to ask how thou doest" (Jer. 15:5)? Jeremiah was forbidden to do so. These rhetorical questions were contextually relevant to the imminent backsliding of Jeremiah that was taking place. Hence, after the full declaration of the foregoing judgments were uttered (Jer. 15:1-9), Jeremiah responded in worldly sorrow and rashness, saying:

"Woe is me, my mother, that thou hast borne me a man of strife and a man of contention to the whole earth! I have neither lent on usury, nor men have lent to me on usury; yet every one of them doth curse me." - Jer. 15:10

The Lord was strongly displeased and angry at this, for Jeremiah had departed from the Lord's cause. The Lord responded to Jeremiah's miserable lamentation with judgment against the backslidden Prophet, and for the first time Jeremiah was included in the prophecy of damnation and woe that God sounded in his ears. Being a Prophet, Jeremiah was used to the sudden and unexpected sound of the Word of the LORD dropping upon him from Heaven, but he never thought he would be included in the number of abjects! Fearfully, Jeremiah was made to inherit the portion of the wicked because he mourned the lot of the righteous. Specifically speaking, the LORD was prepared to lead Jeremiah forth with the workers of iniquity that were bound by decree as Captives to Babylon ("*As for such as turn aside unto their crooked ways, the LORD shall lead them forth with the workers of iniquity...*" – Ps. 125:5). The LORD said, "I will make *thee* [Jeremiah] to pass with thine enemies into a Land which thou knowest not: for a fire is kindled in Mine anger, which shall burn upon *you*" (Jer. 15:11-14). God's wrath was kindled and ready to burn upon Jeremiah! Do you wonder why? Sadly, modern scholarship couldn't tell you the answer.

Certainly, Jeremiah's persistence to intercede is biblical, historical, and admirable, but only to a certain point. Jeremiah had been affectionately bound to the people of Judah, his kinsmen according to the flesh, even though the Lord denounced them as spiritually uncircumcised (Jer. 9:25-26); this is not unusual behavior for a Prophet. As Jeremiah persisted in prayer and intercessory attempts, and to no avail, this was a trial for him; this too is not unusual behavior for a Prophet. However, Jeremiah's heart was found faulty in that he mourned for the people both righteously *and* unrighteously – that is, through Spirit-filled intercession to God *and* through inordinate pity upon or fellowship with the people's crooked offences. Through worldly sorrow and loneliness, Jeremiah, who was in hiding on account of the manhunt for his arrest (Jer. 36:26), was desirous to gather with the assemblies of hypocrites to *mourn* with them. This is a stark contrast to Jeremiah's longstanding integrity before he backslid (in seeking to commend himself to God, Jeremiah said, "*I sat not in the assembly of the mockers, nor rejoiced; I sat alone because of Thy hand: for Thou hast filled me with indignation*" – Jer. 15:15-18).

Fearfully, though, the Lord spoke into the real-time situation of Jeremiah's corrupt desire, commanding him, "Enter not into *the House of Mourning*, neither go to *lament* nor *bemoan* them" (Jer. 16:5). Evidently, because of Jeremiah's loneliness, depression, and ungodly dissatisfaction, he longed to *commiserate* with those who *mourned* for the dead (i.e. funerals). In the

course of things, naturally speaking, one sin leads to another like unto the first. Lonely Jeremiah, out of fellowship with God, also desired to mingle with the multitude in pursuit of a wife to comfort himself against sorrow. If he did not actually mingle with them in this pursuit, he wanted to. The Lord responded, by saying, “Thou shalt not take thee a wife, neither shalt thou have sons or daughters in this place” (Jer. 16:2), and this meant, in other words, “Thou shalt not also go into *the House of Feasting*, to sit with them to eat and to drink” (Jer. 16:8-9). Jeremiah was alone and hiding in *righteousness*, longing for the contrary!

Can you see the contextual evidence for these interpretations, my reader? The aforementioned prophetic rebukes were uttered as a response to Jeremiah’s backsliding, no question about it. From Chapter 14 through Chapter 16, the sequence of events is clear: Jeremiah’s persistent and affectionate desire to pray for the people in righteousness (Jer. 14:8-9, 14:19-15:1), God’s sure declaration of unchangeableness (Jer. 15:1, 5-9), Jeremiah’s unrighteous response of worldly sorrow amidst the hardship of an un-save-able people who persecuted the Prophet while cleaving to inaccessible Covenantal Ideals (Jer. 15:10), God’s judgment upon the backslidden and murmuring Prophet (Jer. 15:11-14), Jeremiah’s commendation of his own integrity before the LORD which he maintained for so long a time, but of late compromised at least in heart (“*I sat not in the assembly of the mockers, nor rejoiced; I sat alone because of Thy hand: for Thou hast filled me with indignation*” – Jer. 15:15-18), the Lord’s response to Jeremiah’s attempted self-justification commanding him to repent and restore the former conduct of holiness and separation (“*take forth the precious from the vile*”, “*let them return unto thee; but return not thou unto them*” – Jer. 15:19-21), and upon the Prophet’s restoration (“*thou shalt stand before Me*”, “*thou shalt be as My mouth*” – Jer. 15:19), behold, he was further instructed concerning his compromises of holiness in relationship to the castaway generation among whom he dwelt (as the former paragraph proves, Jeremiah was unrighteously drawn to the hypocritical happiness of marriage ceremonies and the worldly sorrow of funeral ceremonies and processions of mourning – Jer. 16:1-9). [For more information on Jeremiah’s backsliding and restoration with a specific focus on how we must avoid a damnable misapplication of sovereign election, see “[Jeremiah](#)”.]

The people were engrossed in deception, as it was before exclaimed by Jeremiah (Jer. 4:9-10) and demonstrated theretofore (Jer. 2:20, 23, 25, 27, 31, 35, 3:4-5, 5:2, 12, 19, 24, 6:16-17, 7:4, 10, 8:6, 8, 11, 15, 12:4, 13:22, 14:13, 15); even so, once again, the people foolishly inquired: “Wherefore hath the LORD pronounced all this great evil against us? Or what is our iniquity? Or what is our sin that we have committed against the LORD our God” (Jer. 16:10)? Oblivion! So many biblical, sound, and irrefutable reasons had been uttered by God and unheard by the people! The Lord was careful to innumerate the reasons the people’s faith was *false* and their confidence *unfounded* (Jer. 16:11-17:4), and in the light of the present situation, He characterized the contrast between *false* faith and *true* faith in terms of a *cursed* man (Jer. 17:5-6) and a *blessed* man (Jer. 17:7-8); and in application to the people of Judah, who couldn’t discern the true essence of their own hearts, the Lord declared: “*the heart is deceitful above all things, and desperately wicked: who can know it*” (Jer. 17:9)? But, what the people didn’t know... God did! God knew their hearts and did theretofore judge them (Jer. 17:9-10)! “I the LORD search the heart, I try the reins, even to give every man according to his ways, and according to the fruit of his doings” (Jer. 17:10), and that’s the bottom line! Jeremiah responded to the prophetic interaction with a tender heart (Jer. 17:16-18) as the people chided with him concerning the words spoken, saying, “Where is the word of the LORD? Let it come now” (Jer. 17:15). “Be not a terror unto me: thou art my hope in the evil day”, Jeremiah prayed (Jer. 17:17).

Following the narrative, can you see what was happening to Jeremiah? The Prophet was coming into agreement with God! Jeremiah was finally learning the *righteousness* and *benevolence* of Gods’ perspective, when He said, “Pray not for this people for their **good**” (Jer. 14:11). In other words, Jeremiah was seeing the **goodness** of the command, “Pray not for this people for their **good**” (Jer. 14:11). How? As Jeremiah was becoming more and more acquainted with **the wickedness** of the people, the **seeming wickedness** of the Lord’s judgment disappeared. In other words, as Jeremiah was becoming more and more acquainted with **the evil** of the people, the judgments of the Lord appeared increasingly **good**. You see? Because Jeremiah was unacquainted with the wickedness of the people, he underestimated it. He was unrighteously optimistic towards the impenitent multitudes, and abruptly offended; Jeremiah didn’t see what God saw. However, it was becoming more and more clear to Jeremiah that if **good** was done to this **evil** people, then they would never become **good**! But, if **evil** was done to this **evil** people, lo, and behold, an elect remnant would become **good**! Jeremiah was certainly in the beginning stages of realizing this; this is true, and little does he know that God will pivot in a new direction from this point onward (for the whole duration of Jeremiah’s latter ministry!). Up to this point in time, *the redemptive purpose* of the Great

Tribulation had been largely unexplained. Coming this far into Jeremiah's ministry (approx. 25 years), only minute prophetic references were made concerning God sparing a remnant. Finally, Jeremiah was realizing how otherwise unsave-able his generation actually was except they be made pass through the Great Tribulation, and thus prayed for **evil**, saying:

“Let them be **confounded** that persecute me, but let not me be **confounded**: let them be **dismayed**, but let not me be **dismayed**: bring upon them **THE DAY OF EVIL**, and **destroy** them with **double destruction**” – Jer. 17:18 (see also Proverbs 16:4-5).

All the horrific detail that formerly offended Jeremiah now dawned upon him in the sovereign and glorious design that it was authored by God to be, a redemptive purpose! My reader, can you see how Jeremiah 15:2-3 is a redemptive purpose? Jeremiah was beginning to. My reader, if you are uncomfortable with Jeremiah's prayer I assure you that you are not comprehending what Jeremiah was beginning to realize. He was realizing the **goodness** of God in the Great Tribulation (Jer. 15:2-3), how that it is neither unnecessary nor uncalled for but, rather, it's the people's only hope!

Graciously, this purpose of redemption via a remnant will be prophetically expounded and enlarged upon with great detail from this point onward in Jeremiah's Ministry, so brace yourself. Our steep ascent up this dangerous slope will perch us aloft for an unforgettable sight: **THE MAJESTY OF THE LORD** in the fires of the Great Tribulation! You know, the very thing that the wicked do refuse to see or acknowledge (Isa. 26:10)! Yes, my reader, a remnant shall understand it (Dan. 12:10)! A remnant shall behold it! Amidst untold desolation and unspeakable suffering to come (Isa. 24:1-12), “When thus it shall be in the midst of the Land among the people...” (Isa. 24:13), a remnant shall understand God's purpose of redemption in embracing tribulation and, consequentially, they will *sing* for **THE MAJESTY OF THE LORD** amidst the *fires* of the Great Tribulation!

“They [a remnant] shall lift up their voice, they shall sing for **the Majesty of the LORD**, they shall cry aloud from the sea. Wherefore glorify ye the LORD in the fires, *even* the name of the LORD God of Israel in the isles of the sea. From the uttermost part of the earth have we heard songs, *even* glory to the righteous.” – Isa. 24:13-16

Do you want to be with this mysterious multitude, dear reader? “These are they which came out of Great Tribulation”, the Apostle John said (Rev. 7:14)! It is therefore expedient that you and I understand **THE MAJESTY OF THE LORD** in the Great Tribulation, my reader, and that we understand it well.

## JEREMIAH 17:19-27

**In the midst of the 2<sup>nd</sup> and toward the beginning of the 3<sup>rd</sup> year of Jehoiakim's reign**, *I conclude*, because Jeremiah was going from Gate to Gate in Jerusalem to deliver this prophecy (“in all the Gates of Jerusalem”) and there is no reference to the Gates being closed during the besiegement. Indeed, there would be no possible way to break the Sabbath in the way Jeremiah spoke (“*nor bring it in by the Gates of Jerusalem*” – Jer. 17:21) because the Gates are closed during a siege. Much more the rather, therefore, it was unto large populations of circuiting people, as usual, that Jeremiah prophesied concerning the unheeded yet fundamental law, keeping the Sabbath. Because of the fundamental nature of this law, this message would be delivered early on in Jeremiah's ministry; God would not have waiting until the reign of Zedekiah to preach upon so fundamental a topic. In further confirmation of this time reference, this message is very relevant to the former message that Jeremiah delivered. This message was directed toward the circuiting and abiding inhabitants of the City of Jerusalem (Jer. 17:19) and their hope for a perseverant Kingdom with just Kings and Princes as their rulers. The promise of restoring righteous Kings and Princes to the Throne of David (Jer. 17:24-26) was spoken in the light of not having found one man that did justice and judgment in all of Jerusalem (Jer. 5:1-5); hence, this was a profound promise! If they didn't repent God would burn Jerusalem down (Jer. 17:27)!

## JEREMIAH 18:1-23, 19:1-13, 19:14-20:18

## JEREMIAH 18:1-23

**A message of hope and restoration was denied, persecution thereby rose and plots of murder increased, and the Nation's fate was evidently sealed to destruction:** Jeremiah was commanded to “go down to the Potter’s House”, and there he would hear the word of the Lord that he is to deliver to the people of Judah (Jer. 18:2). In thematic continuation with the former message, and in the same time period, the entirety of the nation was symbolized in the vessels of clay that the Potter marred and made again, “as seemed good to the Potter to make it” (Jer. 18:4). This represents the utter dependency of the Kingdom of Judah, the whole lot of them are but a piece of clay in the Potter’s hands (Jer. 18:6). By interpretation, this means, the Lord can “pluck up”, “pull down”, and “destroy” any Kingdom and Nation He wants (Jer. 18:7-8). By interpretation, also, the Lord can “build” and “plant” any Kingdom or Nation He wants (Jer. 18:9-10). Depending on how that nation hears the threatenings of judgment, communicated theretofore, the Lord will or will not bring upon them the woes of condemnation. Depending on how that nation hears the promises of salvation, communicated theretofore, the Lord will or will not bring upon them the glories of restoration and establishment. Albeit, the word at present that Jeremiah delivers is this: “Behold, I frame evil against you, and devise and device against you: return ye now ever one from his evil way...” (Jer. 18:11).

Sadly, the people said in response: “There is no hope: but we will walk after our own devices, and we will every one do the imagination of his evil heart” (Jer. 18:12). The Lord responds lamentably concerning the desolations and calamities to come (Jer. 18:13-17) while the people imagine a vain thing that indeed, “there is no hope” (Jer. 18:12). There was hope! But, tragically and fearfully, their imaginations went from one vain thing to another, being compelled by the violence of depravity: “Then said they, Come, and let us devise devices against Jeremiah; for the law shall not perish from the priest, nor counsel from the wise, nor the word from the prophet. Come, and let us smite him with the tongue, and let us not give heed to any of his words” (Jer. 18:18). What a strong delusion! The people took counsel to slay Jeremiah, to dig a pit and lay snares for his feet (Jer. 18:22-23), even though Jeremiah affectionately sought their good when the word of condemnation was first delivered (Jer. 18:20). Who deceived the people to turn from a true hope and real security dependent upon our relationship with the Living God? Who turned the people to put their trust in a false hope of unconditional eternal security which was by word only, by precept, without vitality and reality in the Living God? It was “the law” from “the priest”, “the counsel” from “the wise”, and “the word” from “the prophet” of popular backslidden Judaism (Jer. 18:20)!

## JEREMIAH 19:1-13, 19:14-20:18

Having just been to the Potter’s House, beholding the scene, now Jeremiah is commanded to “get a Potter’s earthen bottle”, bring the ancients of the people and priests, and go forth to “the Valley of Hinnom” to proclaim the word of the Lord (Jer. 19:1-2). Remember, my reader, persecution was on the rise and Jeremiah’s life was on the line. Notably, though, when persecution was on the rise and plots of murder were in the works, the ancients of the people were of a softer countenance toward Jeremiah. They went with Jeremiah in compliance to hear the word! This was not the first time such a softness existed in the hearts of the eldest of Jews (“*And they which heard it, being convicted by their own conscience, went out one by one, beginning at the eldest, even unto the last...*” – John 8:9). Where, of all places, did they go? The Valley of Hinnom was in a place also called “Tophet”, the same place that the idolaters of Israel did wickedly sacrifice their children unto devils, observing doctrines of devils, and, consequentially, this was where Josiah did famously dig up the bones of the Apostate Priesthood and burn them upon the forbidden altars to profane them (2 Chron. 28:3, 33:6, Jer. 7:31-32, 2 Kings 23:10)! Because of these things, and especially Josiah’s valiant act of profanation, that place which was already unclean became exceedingly unclean in the eyes of the people. Thus when God foretold the fate of the people and Nation to be like as that of Tophet (Jer. 19:11-13), it was contemptible news indeed! So awful was the suffering which was to come that the unspeakable was spoken of, a horror unimaginable! What was it? God said, “I will cause them to eat the flesh of their sons and the flesh of their daughters, and they shall eat every one the flesh of his friend in the siege and straitness, wherewith

their enemies, and they that seek their lives, shall straiten them” (Jer. 19:9). To be thus reduced into animal-like depravity and immorality so as to eat your own children was, fittingly, comparable to the utter desecration which took place at Tophet, the Valley of Hinnom, with the unburied bodies of men sprawled upon the countryside.

Returning from Tophet, Jeremiah “stood in the court of the LORD’s House” and prophesied (Jer. 19:14-20:18). By this time, the prophecy of utter destruction and desecration pronounced in the Valley of Hinnom (before the ancient priests, mind you) did likely reach the ears of the younger generation of Priests who were still employed in the service of the Temple, Pashur being one of them. In due order therefore (“*they began at the ancient men*” – Ezek. 9:6), Jeremiah came to prophesy the same message as was uttered at the Valley (Jer. 19:14-15), only now in the Temple courts, of course, where the Chief Governor in the House of the LORD stood to be confronted (Jer. 20:1). How did the company of young priests respond? “The Pashur smote Jeremiah the Prophet, and put him in the stocks that were in the High Gate of Benjamin, which was by the House of the LORD” (Jer. 20:2). Jeremiah stayed there all night long until on the morrow he was brought forth and released. Pashur and the Priesthood meant to do Jeremiah some harm and disfavor, both to his body and to his reputation... but this evil did not prevail to dissuade God’s Prophet, though he was made to waver for a little while.

Fearfully, by the time that Pashur came to release Jeremiah in the morning, the word of the LORD was on his lips for the man, Pashur. “And it came to pass on the morrow, that Pashur brought forth Jeremiah out of the stocks. Then said Jeremiah unto him, ‘The LORD hath not called thy name Pashur, but Magor-missabib’” (Jer. 20:3). The LORD proceeded to directly threaten and ensure the terror and death that would come upon Pashur and all his companions not many days hence! And, furthermore, the captivity of the people of Judah in the hand of the King of Babylon (Jer. 20:4). Speaking to Pashur, God said, “I will make thee a terror to thyself and to all thy friends” (Jer. 20:4), and, “thou shalt come to Babylon, and there thou shalt die, and shalt be buried there, thou, and all thy friends, to whom thou hast prophesied lies” (Jer. 20:6). We see here that Pashur was not only a prominent authority, being the Chief Governor, but he was also a false prophet who won the hearts of his companions to the side of deception and lies.

After this striking exchange, and Jeremiah went his way a free man for the time, the inspired text gives us a parenthetical look into the wavering of Jeremiah during his tormenting, wearisome, and painful hours in the stocks (Jer. 20:7-18). Note, my reader, this was not a prison or a jail, Jeremiah’s confinement was by an instrument of public humiliation and punishment and he was positioned “in the High Gate of Benjamin which was by the House of the LORD” (Jer. 20:2). In other words, Jeremiah was put on display in a highly trafficked area where all those who traversed the Temple did pass by. In this situation, Jeremiah evidently lamented, saying: “I am in derision daily, every one mocketh me”, “the word of the LORD was made a reproach unto me, and a derision, daily”, “I heard of the defaming of many, fear on every side”, “all my familiars watched for my halting” (Jer. 20:7, 8, 10). Remember, Jeremiah was from Anathoth, a City of Priests, and he himself was a priest, so when he said, “all my familiars watched for my halting”, he is certainly describing his family members and friends, fellow priests, who hoped for Jeremiah’s recantation of his false prophesying, so they thought. While railing upon him and defaming him, and watching on, the familial priests said: “Peradventure he will be enticed, and we shall prevail against him, and we shall take our revenge on him” (Jer. 20:10). At this time, no doubt, Jeremiah was overtaken in worldly sorrow. He felt deceived and betrayed by the LORD, wrongfully so (Jer. 20:7). He, like other prophets, sinfully mourned his life and wished to die (Jer. 20:14-18; Moses: Num. 11:15; Jonah: Jonah 4:3; Elijah: 1 Kings 19:4; Job: Job 3:1-26). With such a heart, also, he spoke wrongly of the LORD when he said, “Thou hast deceived me, and I was deceived” (Jer. 20:7). Why did Jeremiah feel deceived? The Lord promised to Jeremiah, “they shall fight against thee; but they shall not prevail against thee; for I am with thee, saith the LORD, to deliver thee” (Jer. 1:19). Jeremiah supposed that this meant that he would never suffer the stocks or public humiliation and the like, but he did and he would. God was testing the prophet, as Jeremiah later confessed, “O LORD of hosts, that triest the righteous, and seest the reins and the heart” (Jer. 20:12). During the long hours of confinement (so they seemed to Jeremiah), Jeremiah wavered and even vowed to walk the course of disobedience, saying, “I will not make mention of Him, nor speak any more in His Name” (Jer. 20:9). Certainly this did not happen, as soon as Pashur arrived at Jeremiah’s stocks on the morrow the word of the LORD was proceeding forth from the Prophet’s lips. What happened? Jeremiah explained, “BUT His word was in mine heart as a burning fire shut up in my bones, and I was weary of forbearing, and I could not stay” (Jer. 20:9). As it were, the Spirit of God forced Jeremiah into the way of righteousness. The Spirit of God forced the goodly confessions, “BUT the LORD is with me as a mighty terrible One: therefore my persecutors shall stumble, and they shall not prevail...” (Jer. 20:11), even

though the Prophet had not reached a full understanding of his own way in the sight of the LORD. In similar situations of confusion in the future, Jeremiah would one day hear the word, “Call unto Me, and I will answer thee, and shew thee great and mighty things, which thou knowest not” (Jer. 33:3), for, indeed, there was something that Jeremiah was not understanding!

## JEREMIAH 21:1-22:30 & 23:1-40

**At the 9<sup>th</sup> year of Zedekiah’s reign**, Babylon attacked Judah and Jerusalem. Zedekiah is clearly put in fear, inquiring of God by Jeremiah, saying, “Enquire, I pray thee, of the LORD for us; for Nebuchadrezzar king of Babylon maketh war against us; if so be that the LORD will deal with us according to all his wondrous works, that he may go up from us” (Jer. 21:2). Zedekiah was denying that Babylon would even come, believing the false prophets, but at last he is made to inquire of Jeremiah (**who was not yet imprisoned**) if there is any hope that the Lord would work for them against Babylon (Jer. 21:2). Zedekiah was given the appeal to go out to the Chaldeans and live, rather than abiding in the city (Jer. 21:9). Zedekiah is charged to do justice and judgment, and hopeful words of the Throne being established are given (Jer. 22:2-5). Strong words of his imminent destruction were uttered if Zedekiah chose not to surrender to Babylon. These words, no doubt, moved Zedekiah and the princes to make the Covenant and keep the Covenant they made before God concerning the enslaved Israelites (recorded in Jeremiah 34:1-10); this is an event I am persuaded happened next, chronologically. I am persuaded of this because of the message of peace given to Zedekiah concerning a peaceful death in Jerusalem, which was not given to him yet anywhere else; yea, the contrary had been given!

To be Continued...

## JEREMIAH 24:1-10

**At the beginning of Zedekiah’s reign** (Jer. 24:1, 8, 2 Kings 24:11-17) and *certainly subsequent* to the events and prophecies recorded in Jeremiah 27:1-28:17, Jeremiah delivered a scathing response to the backwards people among whom he dwelt. Furthermore, this message was of incalculable significance in that it, for the first time, foundationally disclosed *the redemptive purpose* of the Tribulation Period and, very specifically, the *means* and *method* of saving an elect remnant from total annihilation. Wonderfully, this message marks a theological pivot, a venturing into a strong and continuous message of redemption theretofore largely unexplained and thenceforth exceedingly expounded! But, before we explore the meaningful content of this message we need to consider the timeliness of its delivery.

### Jeremiah Emerges into Public Ministry Unharmful and Unstopped

#### *Swift and Fatal Judgment upon the Persecutors*

How do I know that Jeremiah 24:1-10 was *certainly subsequent* to Jeremiah 27:1-28:17? Consider Jeremiah’s circumstances, my reader. Having finally resumed public ministry, and that, in the throes of conflict with Kings, Priests, and especially Prophets, Jeremiah remained *bold* and *unharmful* as he ministered! How? Unlike the treatment he suffered under Jehoiakim’s reign, I mean, Jeremiah was allowed to remain public, *untouched*! Notably, also, Jeremiah was not reprimanded by King Zedekiah even though he boldly confronted the King and his private collaborators. Why was God’s Prophet *unharmful*, *untouched*, and *unreprimanded*? I believe the answer to this question lies in *the timing* of this prophecy.

Apparently, the **3<sup>rd</sup> Captivity** didn’t humble the King, his collaborators, the Priests, or the Prophets as it should have (evidenced by Jeremiah 27:1-28:17). That being the case, what hindered the rise of persecution? What stilled the violence of the authorities who suffered Jeremiah’s bold confrontations despite the fact that they *weren’t* humbled by the **3<sup>rd</sup> Captivity**? Simply answered: God’s prop, Hananiah! Do you remember the man, Hananiah? This man, a false Prophet, was set as a TARGET of divine judgment and GOD DIDN’T MISS. Hence, *I am persuaded* this prophecy (Jer. 24:1-10)

was delivered at least 2 months after the former prophecy because Jeremiah 28:1-17 took place *in the 5<sup>th</sup> month* (Jer. 28:1; August), and two months later, in October (*the 7<sup>th</sup> month*), Hananiah the false Prophet was slain by the LORD according to the word of God through Jeremiah (Jer. 28:16-17). The fulfillment of the death threat, “I will cast thee from off the face of the earth” (Jer. 28:16), made the lustful and ambitious false Prophets rather slow to oppose Jeremiah like Hananiah did. To watch so prominent a false Prophet die gave some pause to the persecutors! And in it (the divinely provided space to speak), Jeremiah enlarged upon the Masterplan of Salvation for the Tribulation Period! This was a glorious happening and a timely one at that, my reader. This was a gracious providence of God. He pushed back the forces of Hell to give the Prophet time to preach the unfurling of divine genius: REDEMPTION, as men had never heard or understood it before!

## A New Message of Redemption & Damnation: the Good Figs & the Evil Figs

### *Near Annihilation vs. Total Annihilation*

The message was twofold: The redemptive purpose declared was both *unprecedented* and *paramount*, and, notwithstanding, the message was *scathing* and *denunciating* to the false Prophets who presently opposed Jeremiah. Speaking of all those who were taken in the **1<sup>st</sup>**, **2<sup>nd</sup>**, & **3<sup>rd</sup>** **Captivities** to Babylon, the LORD said they were the **Good Figs**. Speaking of all those who remained in the Land of Judah, Egypt, or anywhere else, the LORD said they were the **Naughty Figs**. Speaking of the **Good Figs**, the LORD said,

#### Jeremiah 24:5-7 (The Good Figs)

[5] Thus saith the LORD, the God of Israel; Like these <b>Good Figs</b> , <b>so will I acknowledge</b> <i>them that are carried away captive of Judah, whom I have sent out of this place into the land of the Chaldeans for their good.</i>	→ <b>The Babylonian Captivities</b>
[6] For I will set mine eyes upon them <b>for good</b> , and I will bring them again to this land: and I will build them, and not pull them down; and I will plant them, and not pluck them up.	→ <b>Will be Regathered</b>
[7] <b>And I will give them an heart to know Me, that I am the LORD: and they shall be My people, and I will be their God: for they shall return unto me with their whole heart.</b>	→ <b>Will be Genuinely Converted &amp; or Restored</b>

You see, my reader? These people were the only ones who had been liberated from the awful appointment: **the sword**, **the pestilence**, and **the famine**. God had another design in mind for them! Furthermore, speaking of the **Evil Figs**, the LORD said,

#### Jeremiah 24:8-10 (The Evil Figs)

[8] And as the <b>Evil Figs</b> , which cannot be eaten, they are so evil; surely thus saith the LORD, <b>So will I give Zedekiah the King of Judah</b> , and his <i>Princes</i> , and <i>the residue of Jerusalem, that remain in this Land</i> , and <i>them that dwell in the Land of Egypt</i> :	→ <b>The Remaining Inhabitants of Judah / Jerusalem and the Inhabitants of Egypt</b>
[9] And <b>I will deliver</b> <i>them</i> to be removed into all the Kingdoms of the earth <b>for their hurt</b> , to be a <b>reproach</b> and a <b>proverb</b> , a <b>taunt</b> and a <b>curse</b> , in all places whither <b>I shall drive them</b> .	→ <b>Dispersion into all Kingdoms, not Babylon</b>
[10] And <b>I will send</b> <b>the sword</b> , <b>the famine</b> , and <b>the pestilence</b> , among them, <b>till they be consumed</b> from off the land that I gave unto them and to their fathers.	→ <b>Total Annihilation</b>

Herein, graciously, the LORD’s prophetic sermons unveiled the method of redemption at hand! These two different spiritual categories, the **Good Figs** and the **Naughty Figs**, represented the populations of people *with* and *without* hope,

the *redeemable* and the *reprobate*, the *good* and the *naughty*! These weren't inconsequential titles, no! Furthermore, the *segregation* of these **two peoples** reveals God's meticulous involvement in the judgments of the Tribulation. Meticulous involvement, I say, because those who had been taken in the Captivities were *selected* by God to be in the **basket of hopefuls**, and those who had not been taken were *selected* by God to be in the **basket of deplorables**.

The people who became the objective of intercessory powers via the ministry of false Prophets were, in fact, the people whom God had categorically defined, the **Good Figs**. Their trajectory was indeed **hopeful** and **good**, that is, as long as they stayed in the location of their Captivity in the Land of Babylon. The inhabitants of Judah and Jerusalem, however, the backwards people, paraded the false prophecies of Prophets who aimed to bring them "home" via a successful intercession. If indeed they all came "home", they would all go to Hell together! To go from Babylon to Jerusalem was to go from good to bad! Unwittingly, though, the false Prophets aimed for the return of the Captivities, to wit: all men would suffer the agony of total annihilation! They proclaimed a salvation and a security which was, in truth, a damnation and absolute robbery! These were the devil's ministers. Do you see how backwards the people were? Ah, and through a misplaced "faith" in Covenantal Ideals this diabolical scheme was popularized! This is a cunning deception.

When considering the eternal ramifications of being a Jew in Babylon as opposed to a Jew in Jerusalem (when the geography itself is an indicator of eternal destiny), we can be sure that this didn't happen by happenchance. The populations of the two locations were not the random *natural selection* of earthly circumstances, no! God was and is the deciding factor, from a sovereign perspective, hence the aforementioned categories were populated *person by person* according to God's selection. That being the case, one is made to wonder: how were these choices made? Specifically speaking, how did God choose to carry one to Babylon and leave the other behind?

An abrupt answer to the question, would be: "The Captives were called **Good Figs**; meaning, they were **good**. God saw **goodness** in them and therefore they were hand-selected by God to be a Captive in Babylon." Shockingly, though, and on the contrary, the **Good Figs** weren't **good**! My reader, the evidence for this interpretation will be thoroughly conveyed in the following events and prophecies ([Jeremiah 29:1-32](#), [Jeremiah 50:1-51:64](#), [Ezekiel 1:2-3:21](#)). Until sufficient proof is offered, let us steadily gather the details of God's redemptive plan as they are unveiled via Scripture. Surely, exceedingly wonderful observations could also be made by drawing from the recent events of prophecies ([Jeremiah 14:1-17:18](#) & [Jeremiah 27:1-28:17](#)), but any answer or explanation attempted without the aid of the events and prophecies which follow, is futile. Therefore, having taken some pause to consider what these things may mean (namely, that the **Good Figs** weren't **good**), let us follow the divine argument as it unfolded in real time.

## JEREMIAH 25:1-38

**At the 4<sup>th</sup> year of Jehoiakim's reign** (Jer. 25:1) and as an interlude between Jeremiah 36:1-8 and Jeremiah 36:9-32, *I conclude*, because this was a timely word to the suddenly awakened people! There is indisputable evidence that this word was given as an interlude between these two points in time because, the book of prophecy that had been written by Baruch (as recorded in Jeremiah 36:1-8) is referenced in Jeremiah 25:13. Furthermore, because Baruch was presently reading from the book of Jeremiahs prophesies to God-fearing seekers in the House of the LORD (notably, they came from all over Judah; Jer. 36:1-8), Jeremiah was purposeful to bear witness of his ministry in its entirety (Jer. 25:3-4). Reasonably, "*even unto this day*", was of particular emphasis (Jer. 25:3).

Jeremiah's honesty and truthfulness had been verified in the arrival of Babylon and the **1<sup>st</sup> Captivity**. Judah and Jerusalem were ascending out of the conflict between Egypt and Babylon, and having just watched Egypt fall, their confidence in false prophets had been significantly shaken. Remember, Jerusalem was besieged by Babylon for the space of approximately 1 year. Seeing the two powers engage one another, with the Kingdom of Judah in the balance, the people of Judah were compelled to think long and hard about what **the end of these things** might be. Did Jeremiah come to mind? Absolutely. Who could forget Jeremiah's tear-stained face, the cracking of his voice which cried out in alarm, and his literal running to and fro throughout Jerusalem! Also, by the time of this prophecy, Jehoiakim surrendered to Babylon,

the **1<sup>st</sup> Captivity** took place, and the war was over. Therefore, with the conflict at rest and Judah under tribute to Babylon, the people had ample opportunity to consider their ways or, on the contrary, speak peace to themselves. Jeremiah, though, knowing they had not rightly remembered the word of the LORD given to him from the very beginning of his ministry (Jer. 1:15-16), took opportunity to remind them of the course of things which had happened theretofore (Jer. 25:3, 25:9-10; Note: the book that was begun in Jer. 36:2 was referenced here in Jer. 25:13), at God's command.

With many families mourning at the loss of their sons, daughters, and family members, everyone wondered... HOW LONG? Frantically, they questioned: "When will I see my family members again?" "Will they be restored to Jerusalem?" "Will the Captivity return?" The false prophets, no doubt, were poised at enmity against the truth (Jer. 27:12-28:17), but at the present time God delivered the first word on record to the freshly humbled people. When the people were hurting and in pain, the LORD graciously reminded them of the conditional promise, "and I will do you no hurt" (Jer. 25:6). Further, He said, "Yet ye have not hearkened unto Me" (Jer. 25:7). God said that the wickedness of their works has been "to [their] own hurt" (Jer. 25:7). The Lord reasoned with the conscience of the people in hopes to win their agreement in that, because the longstanding messages of hope and promise were stubbornly rejected theretofore (Jer. 25:3-7), there was no more hope until "seventy years are accomplished". In other words, the **1<sup>st</sup> Captivity** would not return and there were 6 more Captivities yet to come! God must be loyal to the disloyal people by keeping the Covenant, whether in blessing or in curse, and long ago it was foretold, "Thy sons and thy daughters shall be given unto another people, and thine eyes shall look, and fail with longing for them all the day long; and there shall be no might in thine hand" (Deut. 28:32). This was just the beginning. Soon... all the other curses would be fulfilled as well, to wit: God said, "thou shalt be mad from the sight of thine eyes which thou shalt see" (Deut. 28:34). How fearful! Seventy years of chastisement must be accomplished!

"And this whole land shall be a desolation, and an astonishment; and these nations shall serve the king of Babylon seventy years. And it shall come to pass, when seventy years are accomplished, that I will punish the king of Babylon, and that nation, saith the LORD, for their iniquity, and the land of the Chaldeans, and will make it perpetual desolations." – Jer. 25:11-12

In the wisdom of God, the LORD incrementally wrought these judgments in 6 Captivities. With only the **1<sup>st</sup> Captivity** accomplished, the LORD is bold to reference the **2<sup>nd</sup>** and the **3<sup>rd</sup> Captivities** in Jeremiah 25:9, saying,

"Behold, I will send and take all the families of the north [the **2<sup>nd</sup> Captivity**], saith the LORD, and Nebuchadrezzar the king of Babylon, my servant [the **3<sup>rd</sup> Captivity**], and will bring them against this land, and against the inhabitants thereof, and against all these nations round about, and will utterly destroy them, and make them an astonishment, and an hissing, and perpetual desolations." – Jer. 25:9

First, the LORD will send "all the Families of the North" (meaning, the Armies of Babylon and Affiliates) for the **2<sup>nd</sup> Captivity**, but Nebuchadrezzar will be absent. Then, three months later, the LORD will send both the Babylonian Armies and Nebuchadrezzar for the **3<sup>rd</sup> Captivity**. Thereby, Jeremiah 25:9 will be incrementally wrought in two more stages of fulfillment.

"For, lo, I begin to do evil on the City which is called by My Name, and should ye be utterly unpunished?" – Jer. 25:29

Furthermore, lest the hurting and childless people lose all hope in God as they consider the coming judgment upon the Kingdom of Judah, the LORD reveals the turn-around-judgment which He will execute upon Babylon (Jer. 25:14-38). The people of God are not the only ones who will be driven to madness! God was and is furious with the heathen nations of the world (Jer. 25:15)! They too shall "be mad" – they shall be driven to insanity "because of the sword that I will send among them", the LORD declared (Jer. 25:16)! It was written,

"The LORD shall roar from on high, and utter His voice from His Holy Habitation; He shall mightily roar upon His Habitation; He shall give a shout as they that tread the grapes, against all the inhabitants of the earth" - Jer. 25:30

How shocking! How fearful! The Lord will not suffer the people to be wide-eyed onlookers at the glory of Babylon and its false gods. No! Rather, God will take all the glory for Himself (Jer. 25:15-33). What does this mean? This means that God will deliver every wicked heathen man to the sword of the LORD, just as He did to the wicked of the Kingdom of Judah, the only difference being: there will be no righteous remnant among “the inhabitants of the earth” (Jer. 25:29). All of them will be wicked! **“He will give them that are wicked to the sword”** (Jer. 25:31; 1 Pet. 4:17-18), and, therefore, “the slain of the LORD shall be at that day from one end of the earth even unto the other end of the earth” (Jer. 25:33)! Though partial fulfillments of these prophecies do exist, and God was talking directly to literal and historical Babylon, we know that there is a Spiritual Babylon which will exist in the future when this prophetic woe is fulfilled in its entirety, and this means: “And out of his mouth goeth a sharp sword, that with it he should smite the nations: and he shall rule them with a rod of iron: and he treadeth the winepress of the fierceness and wrath of Almighty God” (Rev. 19:15; Spiritual Babylon: 1 Pet. 5:13, Rev. 14:8, 16:19, 17:5, 18:2, 4-5, 10, 21; Winepress: Rev. 14:14-20; The Eradication of all Wicked Men from the Earth (an incomplete list): Psalm 1:4, 37:38, 59:13, 68:1-2, 75:8, 104:35, 119:119, Prov. 2:22, 10:30, 11:31, Isa. 11:4, Jer. 25:31). Therefore the heathen of the Gentile World, the inhabitants of Spiritual Babylon, need to pledge allegiance to the Jewish Messiah and become citizens of His Kingdom, or else.

Note: utter destruction and captivity were prophesied to transpire at the hand of Babylon, but since Jehoiakim initially surrendered resulting in the **1<sup>st</sup> Captivity** this did not immediately take place; thus, an occasion of stumbling was presented before the people as they see a *small beginning* of the word spoken... will they deny its eventual consummation? They will. They did... but not without a grassroots revival making its way to the neck of the Nation.

## JEREMIAH 26:1-24

**The is first recorded instance of Jeremiah preaching in the Temple Courts and this marks the beginning of his prophesying to the backslidden Kingdom of Judah. The entire sermon Jeremiah preached is recorded in Jeremiah 7:1-10:25, and is here contextualized in the historical situation surrounded this message:** Jeremiah delivered this sermon “in the beginning of the reign of Jehoiakim the son of Josiah King of Judah”, for, straightway the Lord commanded him: “Stand in the Court of the LORD’s House, and speak...” (Jer. 26:1-2). With only 3 months into the idolatry of the people, Jeremiah came! After 13 years of incessant Revival under Josiah, these men were made to look upon the Spirit-filled face of Josiah’s companion, Jeremiah, who was like an uncle to the King and Princes, and he was a near kinsman to the Priesthood (being a Priest himself).

Being so early in the reign of Jehoiakim and before the persistent impenitence that transpired, the LORD was very outstretched in the cause of mercy and repentance (Jer. 26:3); but as we have already seen in the full sermon delivered, this mercy would be rejected. How do we know that Jeremiah 26:2-8 main point summary of the greater message recorded in Jeremiah 7:1-10:25? Well, my reader, the most notable message delivered in the Temple Courts, recorded in Jeremiah 7:1-10:25, is here spoken of in summary at the very same location. The main points of the sermon are manifest: **Firstly**, an appeal for mercy and hope upon repentance (Jer. 26:2-3). **Secondarily**, the longsuffering of God in persisting to send Prophets had expired (Jer. 26:5, Jer. 7:13, 25-27). **Thirdly**, and because of the former two points, God was going to strip the Temple of its Glory like He did at Shiloh generations ago (Jer. 26:6, Jer. 7:12-15). Notably, there is no other prophecy of Jeremiah which presents the threefold argument in like manner, except Jeremiah 7:1-10:25. In fact, the threat of reducing the Temple to the status of Shiloh was verbalized nowhere else in all of Jeremiah, except for Jeremiah 7:1-10:15). Furthermore, we can see that Jeremiah 26:2-6 is not the full message which God commanded Jeremiah to speak. The message was only summarized in these three points. Notice the words, “Now it came to pass, when Jeremiah had made an end of speaking all that the LORD had commanded him to speak unto all the people, that the Priests and the Prophets and all the people took him, saying, Thou shalt surely die” (Jer. 26:8). In other words, there were many more words spoken than what was recorded in Jeremiah 26:2-6, and they are recorded in Jeremiah 7:1-10:25.

As a result of the whole message preached, Jeremiah was trouble. It was written, “the priests and the prophets and all the people took him, saying, Thou shalt surely die” (Jer. 26:8). What was making them so angry? Exclusive to the message

delivered in Jeremiah 7:1-10:25, they said: “Why hast thou prophesied in the name of the LORD, saying, This House shall be like Shiloh, and this City shall be desolate without an inhabitant? And all the people were gathered against Jeremiah in the House of the LORD” (Jer. 26:9). When the Princes heard what was transpiring they came on to the scene (Jer. 26:11). The Priests and Prophets then appealed to the Princes concerning the judgment of Jeremiah, saying, “This man is worthy to die...” (Jer. 26:11).

Jeremiah answered by rehearsing the message preached, but he was speaking to “the Princes” and “to all the people” because there wasn’t any reasonable hope that the Priests and the Prophets would listen to him (Jer. 26:12-15). Then “the Princes” and “all the people” disagreed with “the Priests” and “the Prophets”, saying, “This man is not worthy to die...” (Jer. 26:16). Then, in agreement with the Princes and the people, certain “Elders of the Land” spoke and reminded the people how the Prophet Micah prophesied to King Hezekiah the same message that Jeremiah did, and Micah was not put to death (Jer. 26:17-19, Micah 3:12). They reminded the people of the Prophet Urijah also, who had the same message as Jeremiah, and he died at the hand of Jehoiakim (Jer. 26:20-23). Clearly, Jehoiakim was not like Hezekiah. Wickedly, the precedence was set that would lead to Jeremiah’s death! But one of the Elders of the Land, named Ahikam the son of Shaphan, stood with Jeremiah. It was written, “Nevertheless, the hand of Ahikam the son of Shaphan was with Jeremiah, that they should not give him into the hand of the people to put him to death” (Jer. 26:24). Ahikam was a very old man, and elder indeed, for he was alive and in authority decades ago during Jeremiah’s early ministry as a Prophet, a time when he was accepted and esteemed, the time of Josiah’s reign when they restored the Temple and found the Law (2 Chron. 34:20, 2 Kings 22:12-14, Jer. 39:14, 40:5-7, 2 Kings 25:22), thus it is to be expected that Jeremiah was held in high regard in Ahikam’s eyes. Think of it, this was Shaphan’s son, the Scribe who read the Law to Josiah, a good friend of Hilkiyah the High Priest who found the Law (who was likely Jeremiah’s father)! All the other Elders of the Land would bow down to the blood-thirsty will of the people, but this man wouldn’t! For good cause.

The message preached sounded the alarm of coming desolation (Jer. 26:9, 7:33-34, 9:12, 10:22) insomuch that even the scattered peoples would find no peace in foreign Lands because the LORD would send a sword after them until they were consumed (Jer. 8:3, 9:16)! Pathetic appeals of mercy, forgiveness, and hope were indeed given (Jer. 26:2-3), but as the LORD God of Israel was standing, looking, and listening if anyone would repent, none did (Jer. 8:5-6 – the people; Jer. 8:10-12 – the prophet and priest; Jer. 8:7-9 – those foremost to blame; Jer. 9:12 – none understood and none were wise)! It was a bleak situation because of the progress of depravity from generation to generation (Jer. 7:25-27).

## JEREMIAH 27:1-28:17

**Not only is this the first recorded message addressing “The Yoke of Babylon” in specific, it is a single message which was delivered over the span of many years to two different Kings of Judah and several other Nations:** Jeremiah was commanded to make for himself bonds and yokes, and God told him, “put them upon thy neck” (Jer. 27:2). The making of the yokes took place, as it was recorded, “*at the beginning* of the reign of Jehoiakim” (Jer. 27:1), and no doubt they were used at this time to prophesy to Jehoiakim; but, according to the authorial intent of the Book of Jeremiah (revealed by the organization of the Chapters), the Kings of Edom, Moab, the Ammonites, Tyrus, Zidon, and Zedekiah were to be brought into perspective concerning the same message, namely: “**The Yoke of Babylon**”. All of these Kings were brought into view despite the fact that they existed in 11 years into the future during the beginning of the reign of Zedekiah King of Judah (time reference: Jer. 28:1). The time period is not as important as the testimony of the message delivered by Jeremiah and rejected by the people. So, the message and demonstration prophesied at the beginning of Jehoiakim’s reign (Jer. 27:1-2) was likewise prophesied at the beginning of Zedekiah’s reign (the message: Jer. 27:12-17; the demonstration: Jer. 28:10). Also, keep this in memory, this is the same message delivered to all the Kings which were collaborating with Zedekiah concerning the orchestration of a rebellion against Babylon (the collaboration of rebellion: Jer. 27:3-4; the message: Jer. 27:5-11).

At the beginning of Zedekiah’s reign (see Jer. 28:1) and after approximately 7 years of hiding, Jeremiah’s public ministry was re-engaged! With the Kingdom of Judah humbled by the 2<sup>nd</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> **Captivities**, there was reason to hope that the

newly installed King of Judah (*appointed by Babylon*; 2 Kings 24:17) would hear the word of the LORD to embrace tribulation and submit to Babylon, and live. Sadly, though, even from the beginning of Zedekiah's reign he was collaborating with other Nations for a potential rebellion from Babylon (Jer. 27:3, 12, 28:1). Can you believe it? Of course, God told Jeremiah about it. Fittingly, Jeremiah made the collaborating Kings their own personal yokes to get across the point (Jer. 27:1-11)! Furthermore, it must have been humbling for Zedekiah to watch his brother, Jehoiakim, bound with chains and left for dead in the open field just outside of Jerusalem (2 Chron. 36:6, Jer. 22:18-19). Truly. And, considering the course of rebellion from Babylon that Jehoiakim took, how did Zedekiah do it? He watched as Jehoiakim lead the formerly righteous nation into 5 years of backsliding and, meanwhile, became the unwilling tributary of Babylon. He watched when the Kingdom of Judah was almost turned to God, yet, Jehoiakim struck it down. He watched Jehoiakim put his faith in the promise of "liberty" from Babylon in the 7<sup>th</sup> year of his reign, and to what end? According to prophecy, Jerusalem was made to endure a long siege by an undefeatable Army, the Babylonians, hence: the sword, famine, and pestilence were as a cup of drunkenness to all the people of Judah! Yea, after all this... Zedekiah is collaborating rebellion AT THE BEGINNING OF HIS REIGN (Jer. 28:1)! What was the word?

"I spake also to *Zedekiah* king of Judah according to all these words, saying, Bring your necks under the **yoke** of the king of Babylon, and serve him and his people, and **live**. Why will ye **die**, thou and thy people, by **the sword**, by **the famine**, and by **the pestilence**, as the LORD hath spoken against *the nation* that will not serve the King of Babylon."  
– Jer. 27:12-13

Babylon may not have known about the conspiracy, but the LORD did! After all, He was the real KING of Judah! Should it surprise us that He had a message to deliver to these Kings? Soberly consider it, my reader: this message took the form of Jeremiah the Prophet prophesying with a yoke upon his neck (Jer. 27:2, 28:10)! This represented the need for Judah and all Nations to "put *their neck* under the yoke of the King of Babylon" *like Jeremiah* had done (Jer. 27:8). You see, Jeremiah was the demonstration! "I have given all these Lands into the hand of Nebuchadnezzar the King of Babylon", the LORD said (Jer. 27:6)! With a collaboration of rebellion against Babylon in the works, it was to be expected that the "*prophets*", "*diviners*", "*dreamers*", "*enchanters*", and "*sorcerers*" of these Nations were prophesying lies to the Kings, saying, "Ye shall not serve the King of Babylon" (Jer. 27:9-10, 14), but should we expect that Jerusalem would be of the same spiritual constitution as these Alien Nations? The message of Jeremiah delivered exclusively to Zedekiah will shine light on this most shocking problem. Remember, Jeremiah's messages were delivered in this order: to Jehoiakim at the beginning of his reign (Jer. 27:1-2), to Zedekiah at the beginning of his reign as he was in collaboration with the foreign Kings to make a rebellion against Babylon (Jer. 27:3-11, 28:1; Note: the yoke was worn by Jeremiah and other yokes were sent by the hands of messengers to the Kings of these various nations.), and an exclusive message was given to Zedekiah and the Kingdom of Judah apart from the foreign Kings (Jer. 27:12-22, 28:1-17).

After Jeremiah's exclusive message to Zedekiah and the Kingdom of Judah was delivered, which was, "Bring your necks under the yoke of the King of Babylon...and live" (Jer. 27:12), the false prophets of Judah were recorded to have said to Zedekiah as a response the same thing that the *prophets*, *diviners*, *dreamers*, *enchanters*, and *sorcerers* of the foreign Nations said to their Kings, which was: "Ye shall not serve the King of Babylon" (Jer. 27:14-15). SHOCKING! As we can see, the instigators of this collaborated rebellion were far more numerous than the one man, Zedekiah! Hell's Territory reached far beyond the narrow borders of Jerusalem, remember that! This was a battle of Hell against Heaven! The primary struggle was and always will be immaterial (Eph. 6:12). Meaning, this was not about any race, language, or people. The Gates of Hell had prevailed against the Church, that's the problem! Hence, all these races and languages were one people under the Prince of the Power of the Air (Eph. 2:2-3). One in Satan, that is! "*Ye are of your father the devil, and the lusts of your father ye will do*" (John 8:44). Therefore, God, the real KING of Judah, was in the process of abandoning His immediate sovereignty over Jerusalem to join the Armies of Babylon. The Prophet Ezekiel, soon to be raised up, will be employed by God to prophetically demonstrate this in detail. As for the present time, however, all the signs are in place: All the prophets, both foreign and domestic, in all religions, Judaism and non-Judaism, were unanimously speaking the same message, "Ye shall not serve the King of Babylon!" How wicked! My reader, there's more...

## Intercession and Covenantal Ideals

The following point is very important to understand because of its relevance to the deception at work in such a time as this, a Great Falling Away. The prophets of Judah didn't just speak the aforementioned false prophecies to Zedekiah, and that alone; they also said, "Behold **the vessels of the LORD's House** shall now *shortly* be *brought again* from Babylon" (Jer. 27:16). In other words, they claimed that the exercise of intercession was successful and the Covenantal Ideals would be performed. This claim coming to the forefront of the controversy is not a mistake. Do you remember all that Jeremiah went through in the latest recorded prophecies and events that took place *leading up to* Jeremiah 27:1-28:17? Do you recall how profoundly significant it was that Jeremiah stumbled at the unusual situation at hand in [Jeremiah 14:1-17:18](#)?

Jeremiah was God's prop for the presentation, if you will. God chose Jeremiah for this peculiar time to demonstrate to all mankind the weakness and brutishness of men in that they are *hardly reconcilable* to the only divine scheme of judgment capable of redeeming a remnant during a Tribulation Period. Through the platform of God and Jeremiah's relationship one with another, and as a lesson for us all, the LORD conducted Jeremiah into agreement with the hard-to-be-understood situation. Jeremiah's recent renewals of mind, experienced in [Jeremiah 14:1-17:18](#), had never been so necessary and relevant as they were then, in the 1<sup>st</sup> year of Zedekiah's reign. Jeremiah's newly found *agreement* with God would then be tested in the public eye by standing in *disagreement* with the false Prophets and his former sentiments. THE WHOLE NATION stood at enmity against God being poised thereto by possessing the recently relinquished convictions that Jeremiah was forced to abandon.

If you can recall (at approx. the 7<sup>th</sup> year of Jehoiakim's reign), the false Prophets were prophesying of "peace", which meant: no "sword" or "famine" (Jer. 14:13). Similarly, though with different motives, Jeremiah was praying for the salvation of the people, which meant: no sword or famine ("*We looked for **peace**, and there was no **good**; and for the time of healing, and behold **trouble!***" - Jer. 14:19). In other words, Jeremiah was in far too much *agreement* with the false Prophets and, being such, he was in far too much *disagreement* with God. The unprecedented and formerly offensive judgment that Jeremiah was unprepared to hear regarded the impossibility of intercession (Jer. 15:1, 6). Neither Jeremiah nor the false Prophets believed it! Again, I say, Jeremiah was in far too much *agreement* with false Prophets while maintaining *disagreement* with God! For, as we see here, in the historical account of the events in Jeremiah 27:1-28:17, the internal thought-process of the false Prophets was an affirmation of intercessory norms.

Through Samuel's successful intercession the stolen Ark was returned after 7 months (1 Sam. 6:1), and now the false Prophets were boldly asserting the availability of intercessory success in the situation of judgment that had befallen the backslidden Church ("Behold **the vessels of the LORD's House** shall now *shortly* be *brought again* from Babylon" - Jer. 27:16). This time, because the Ark wasn't taken, it wasn't the focal point of their intercession. Rather, they interceded for "the vessels of the LORD's House" that were taken in the 1<sup>st</sup>, 2<sup>nd</sup>, and 3<sup>rd</sup> **Captivities** (Jer. 27:16). The most "offensive" point of the Tribulation Period was then asserted, and by who? By the false Prophets! They claimed intercessory success, the very thing that all righteous men and true Prophets would desire to reckon upon! Ah, and now we see the wisdom of God to hide His Prophet for the purpose of private discourse. Through the events that took place privately between Jeremiah and God, recorded in Jeremiah 14:1-17:18, the hidden Prophet was poised to withstand the onslaught of deception when resuming public ministry in the 1<sup>st</sup> year of Zedekiah's reign.

Being empowered by his newly attained agreement with God, Jeremiah knew the alluring claim of the false Prophets was in fact powerless. Boldly, Jeremiah confronted and challenged the false Prophets to make intercession! Not much different than Elijah's taunting challenge to the Prophets of Baal, only with the recently robbed and promised-bound objects that were vital for the physical operation of redemption in Old Testament Judaism (Isa. 52:11), hence the controversy. Elijah tested and taunted the false Prophets intercessory powers by proving that, for him, *the fire falls!* For Jeremiah, though, the challenge was different. With respect to intercession for the vital materials that were employed in the operation of redemption, Jeremiah declared: for me, *the fire won't fall!* The stolen vessels of the Temple would not be returned because all intercessory objectives of this kind were impossible.

Notably, Jeremiah's challenge of intercession was not for what had already been taken in prior Captivities, as the false Prophets enthusiastically presumed. Rather, Jeremiah told them to make intercession for all that remains yet to be taken in the foreboding Captivities! Jeremiah solemnly testified, saying,

“But if they be Prophets, and if the word of the LORD be with them, **let them now make intercession** to the LORD of hosts, *that the vessels which are left* in the House of the LORD, and in the house of the king of Judah, and at Jerusalem, *go not to Babylon*. For thus saith the LORD of hosts concerning the pillars, and concerning the sea, and concerning the bases, and concerning the residue of the vessels that remain in this City, Which Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon took not, when he carried away captive Jeconiah the son of Jehoiakim king of Judah from Jerusalem to Babylon, and all the nobles of Judah and Jerusalem; Yea, thus saith the LORD of hosts, the God of Israel, concerning the vessels that remain in the house of the LORD, and in the house of the king of Judah and of Jerusalem; *They shall be carried to Babylon*, and there shall they be until the day that I visit them, saith the LORD; then will I bring them up, and restore them to this place.” – Jer. 27:18-22

Jeremiah's disagreement with the false prophets was specific. The false prophets said the vessels of the Temple would “shortly” return (Jer. 27:16), and by that they meant the vessels which were taken alongside Jeconiah the son of Jehoiakim in **1<sup>st</sup>, 2<sup>nd</sup>, & 3<sup>rd</sup> Captivities**. Seeing that Zedekiah was set up after the **3<sup>rd</sup> Captivity**, Jeremiah prophesied of a **4<sup>th</sup>, 5<sup>th</sup>, & 6<sup>th</sup> Captivities**, but especially the **5<sup>th</sup>**. Jeremiah contradicted and affirmed that, not only would the vessels of the **1<sup>st</sup>, 2<sup>nd</sup>, & 3<sup>rd</sup> Captivities** stay in Babylon, but all *the goodly vessels* which were left in the House of the LORD and among Judah and Jerusalem would be taken away as well in the **4<sup>th</sup>, 5<sup>th</sup>, & 6<sup>th</sup> Captivities** which were to come (Jer. 27:19-22). The message was simple: “Bring your necks under the yoke of the King of Babylon...and live” (Jer. 27:12), for there were further Captivities to come which would extinguish any act of rebellion against Babylon. Chapter 28 gives further details of how the false Prophets responded to Jeremiah's bold contradiction recorded in Jeremiah 27:18-22.

### Jeremiah 28:1-17

As Jeremiah continued to make his rounds in public ministry for the duration of this year, one can only imagine what he is doing given the courageous record of his early ministry in the reign of Jehoiakim. Albeit, *in the same year* (at the beginning of Zedekiah's reign), but at a later time than Jeremiah 27:1-22, we see Jeremiah with a yoke upon his neck in prophetic protest against the Kingdom of Zedekiah (Jer. 28:1, 10), and the following events unfolded: Jeremiah, wearing the yoke (Jer. 28:10), entered into the House of the LORD to prophesy in the presence of the Priests and all the people (Jer. 28:1; Note: in comparison to the events that took place in Jeremiah 27:1-22, this was a later occasion *in the same year* wherein Jeremiah prophesied a similar message) ...and what happened?

#### Jeremiah 28:2-11

[2] Thus speaketh the LORD of hosts, the God of Israel, saying, I have broken the yoke of the king of Babylon.

[3] Within two full years will I bring again into this place all the vessels of the LORD'S house, that Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon took away from this place, and carried them to Babylon:

[4] And I will bring again to this place Jeconiah the son of Jehoiakim king of Judah, with all the captives of Judah, that went into Babylon, saith the LORD: for I will break the yoke of the king of Babylon.



**Hananiah's  
False Prophecy #1**  
(2 years, the vessels & Jeconiah)

[5] Then the prophet Jeremiah said unto the prophet Hananiah in the presence of the priests, and in the presence of all the people that stood in the house of the LORD,

[6] Even the prophet Jeremiah said, Amen: the LORD do so: the LORD perform thy words which thou hast prophesied, to bring again the vessels of the LORD'S house,

and all that is carried away captive, from Babylon into this place.

[7] Nevertheless hear thou now this word that I speak in thine ears, and in the ears of all the people;

[8] The prophets that have been before me and before thee of old prophesied both against many countries, and against great kingdoms, of war, and of evil, and of pestilence.

[9] The prophet which prophesieth of peace, when the word of the prophet shall come to pass, then shall the prophet be known, that the LORD hath truly sent him.

→ **Jeremiah's Protest**

[10] Then Hananiah the prophet took the yoke from off the prophet Jeremiah's neck, and brake it.

[11] And Hananiah spake in the presence of all the people, saying, Thus saith the LORD; Even so will I break the yoke of Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon from the neck of all nations within the space of two full years. And the prophet Jeremiah went his way.

→ **Hananiah's  
False Prophecy #2**  
(2 years, Babylon Sovereignty  
over all Nations Vanquished)

This time, we don't hear much of the content of what Jeremiah said. Rather, we hear what Hananiah the son of Azur the Prophet said and did in response to Jeremiah's bold declarations and challenges (see Jer. 27:12-22), saying, "Thus speaketh the LORD of hosts, the God of Israel, saying, I have broken the yoke of the King of Babylon" (Jer. 28:2). At first, the meaning of this was interpreted in reference to the vessels of the House of the LORD and Jeconiah. Fearfully, though, the false Prophet is seen to increase in madness as the interaction proceeded! As you can see, he declared that **within two years** the vessels of the LORD's House and Jeconiah would be returned (Jer. 28:3-4), and as if this wasn't enough! Enthusiastic and in the grip of diabolical influences, Hananiah extended himself further, saying, "**within two years** the yoke of Babylon would be removed from **ALL NATIONS**", not just Judah (Jer. 28:11)!

Not only does Hananiah say the aforementioned, but as a lying demonstration of how the LORD would break the yoke of Babylon, it was recorded, "Then Hananiah the prophet took the yoke from off the prophet Jeremiah's neck, and break it. And Hananiah spake in the presence of all the people, saying, Thus saith the LORD; Even so will I break the yoke of Nebuchadnezzar King of Babylon from the neck of all nations **within the space of two full years**" (Jer. 28:10-11). Jeremiah became the false Prophet's prop, and all we read is... "the Prophet Jeremiah went his way" (Jer. 28:11). Being exasperated by the boldness of the devil in the deranged prophecies, the humble Prophet of the LORD received no prophetic word to speak; rightfully, then, he went his way. Albeit, as Jeremiah went to his place the word of the LORD came to him, saying, "Go and tell Hananiah" (Jer. 28:12-17)! Tell him what?

Because of Hananiah's bold and outright lie that strengthened the bonds of deception among the people, God told the man the honest truth. Oh, these backwards false Prophets! Hananiah, who erroneously broke the wooden yoke and declared freedom, effectually manufactured iron yokes for an inescapable slavery (Jer. 28:13-14)! And, shockingly, because Hananiah waxed bold in falsehood insomuch that he claimed all these things would happen **within 2 years**, the LORD responded: "Behold, I will cast thee from off the face of the earth: **THIS YEAR** thou shalt die, because thou hast *taught rebellion* against the LORD" (Jer. 28:15-17)! The man who prophesied a False Gospel to transpire in **2 years**, was killed by God Almighty in that **same year**! The man, Hananiah, who misapplied salvific promises that originated from Covenantal Ideals, he received a personal promise from God, the Covenant Author, on the contrary! Jeremiah said, "Hear now, Hananiah; The LORD hath not sent thee; but thou makest this people to trust in a lie" (Jer. 28:15). Lo, and behold, the man who thought used Jeremiah as a prop became God's prop! God was *looking, listening, seeing, responding, and prophetically retaliating!* "So Hananiah the Prophet died the same year in the seventh month" (Jer. 28:17), just 2 months later (Jer. 28:1)!

## JEREMIAH 29:1-32

**At the beginning of Zedekiah's reign** (Jer. 29:1-2) and directly subsequent to the prophecy recorded in Jeremiah 24:1-10, Jeremiah was inspired to send an urgent Letter to the Captives in Babylon. We know that Jeremiah 24:1-10 was given and delivered prior Jeremiah 29:1-32 because the **Good** and **Evil Figs** were introduced in the former and further explained in the latter.

### An Urgent Letter to the Captivities

#### *The Good Figs Weren't Good*

It could be *conjectured* that the **Good Figs** were indeed **good**, but according to Jeremiah 29:1-32 it wasn't so. The truth be told, the **Good Figs** weren't **good**! Indeed, "**peace**", **goodness** ("*not of evil*" – Jer. 29:11), and "**an expected end**" was offered to the Jewish Captives of Babylon, BUT THEY REJECTED IT. They unwaveringly desired the **peace** and **goodness** of the Covenantal Ideals existing only in Jerusalem. God was providentially making available an extraordinary and unusual **peace** and **goodness** UNTIL the 70-year Tribulation Period expired and the Covenantal Ideals were restored (Jer. 29:5-7, 10-11), but they had no heart to suffer any further tribulation and they had no patience to wait for true and lasting peace ("*If thou hadst known, even thou, at least in this thy day, the things which belong unto thy peace! But now they are hid from thine eyes.*" – Lk. 19:41-42). They rashly insisted upon the presently unavailable, and boasted: "The LORD hath raised us up Prophets in Babylon" (Jer. 29:15). SHOCKING!

*"The LORD hath raised us up Prophets in Babylon" – Jer. 29:15*

False prophets had spawned in the Land of the Chaldeans, of all places! These men, the Jewish false prophets who were of the Captivities, were prophesying that the captivity was going to be *short* and that they would *soon* return to Judah and Jerusalem (Jer. 29:8-9). The deception of false security was so prevalent that – even in Babylon! – the people thought it wise and reasonable that salvation would be quickly and easily restored. Oh, that evil doctrine! That evil disease! The **decision** to *believe for salvation* whilst **undecided** concerning *repentance*! Ah, these "**vain and foolish things**" (Lam. 2:14)! With damnable iniquities yet **undiscovered**, the people boasted in the free grace of God to **turn away their Captivity** (Lam. 2:14). On this wise, this **Evil People** (the **Good Figs**) loathed the offering of divine **goodness**. They were so evil, they refused **good**! Inconsiderate of the length of their iniquities, the backslidden Church refused to believe their punishment was long. Yet, God said, "For the punishment of the iniquity of the daughter of My people IS GREATER than the punishment of the sin of Sodom, that was overthrown *as in a moment*, and no hands *stayed on her*" (Lam. 4:6). Hence, God has **evil** planned for the **good-less** people so that in the latter end they'd become **good**, but first the LORD needed strip from them the happy chant, "The LORD hath raised up Prophets in Babylon" (Jer. 29:15). God had some **bad news** for the people's happy agenda and, secondarily, men needed to die.

"Because ye [the Captives of Babylon] have said, The LORD hath raised us up prophets in Babylon; Know that thus saith the LORD of the King that sitteth upon the throne of David [the Kingdom of Judah], and of all the people that dwelleth in this City [Jerusalem], and of your brethren that are not gone forth with you into captivity; Thus saith the LORD of hosts; Behold, *I will send* upon them the **sword**, the **famine**, and the **pestilence**, and will make them like **Vile Figs**, that cannot be eaten, they are so **evil**. And *I will persecute* them with the **sword**, with the **famine**, and with the **pestilence**, and will deliver them to be **removed** to all the Kingdoms of the earth, to be a **curse**, and an **astonishment**, and an **hissing**, and a **reproach**, among all *the nations* whither I have driven them: Because they have not hearkened to My words, saith the LORD, which I sent unto them by my servants the prophets, rising up early and sending them; but ye would not hear, saith the LORD." – Jer. 29:15-19

After this, God saw fit to slay some notorious false Prophets that arose in the Land of Babylon lest the **Good Figs** don't ever become **good**! Think of it, my reader! In the Land of the Chaldeans – the only place of refuge from the *person by person* annihilation via **the sword**, **the pestilence**, and **the famine** – THE KILLING CONTINUED! For good reason, though.

*Swift and Fatal Judgment upon the Persecutors*

Naming names, the jealous Finger of God pointed to the Jewish false Prophets that dwelt in the Land of Babylon and, THEY DIED! Shockingly, Jeremiah precisely prophesied of their death while abiding in the distant Land of Jerusalem. A letter was written in the Land of Judah and sent to the Land of Babylon, and Jeremiah named names: AHAB, ZEDEKIAH, & SHEMAIAH (Ahab & Zedekiah, Jer. 29:21; Shemaiah, Jer. 29:32)! How fearful would it be to find your name in a letter carried all the way from Jerusalem to Babylon?

All of this was a divine testimony to those who were longing to return to the Kingdom of Judah. They looked from Babylon to Jerusalem with longing, with readiness to return, not knowing that the inhabitants of Jerusalem were hopelessly lost and mercilessly doomed in time and in eternity, excepting that they too were graciously carried to Babylon as a Prisoner of Hope (Zech. 9:12). The false Prophets effectually turned their eyes upon death, proclaiming: "LIFE!" That is, they turned their eyes upon Jerusalem, proclaiming: "LIFE!" Of course, the devil was in hot-pursuit after the **Good Figs**... and so was GOD!

In the conflict, it appears that a return Letter was immediately sent by Shemaiah to the authorities of Jerusalem. Immediately, I say, because it is highly unlikely that this letter was sent after the LORD roasted Ahab and Zedekiah in the fire. This event was so impactful to the falsehood-fervent Jews in Babylon that, in turn, they feared and gave glory to God, saying (and proverbially remembering): "The LORD make thee like Zedekiah and like Ahab, whom the King of Babylon roasted in the fire" (Jer. 29:22). Before this, Shemaiah had the boldness to write to the authorities of Jerusalem, saying:

"The LORD hath made thee Priest in the stead of Jehoiada the Priest, that ye should be Officers in the House of the LORD, for every man that is mad, and maketh himself a Prophet, that thou shouldest put him in prison, and in the stocks. Now therefore why hast thou not reprov'd Jeremiah of Anathoth, which maketh himself a Prophet to you? For therefore he sent unto us in Babylon, saying, This Captivity is LONG: build ye houses, and dwell in them; and plant gardens, and eat the fruit of them." – Jer. 29:26-28

I am sure this letter was not well received by the Priesthood in Jerusalem. Why? They, having recently beheld the death of Hananiah in Jerusalem (the last Prophet to boldly defy Jeremiah), were not so easily bewitched by Shemaiah's enticements. Notably, even Shemaiah recognized how freely and untouched Jeremiah preached and ministered during this time (Jer. 29:27). In a restraining sense, the terror of God was upon them (Gen. 35:5). At once, Jeremiah responded to Shemaiah, saying,

"Send to all them of the Captivity, saying, Thus saith the LORD concerning Shemaiah the Nehelamite; Because that Shemaiah hath prophesied unto you, and I sent him not, and *he caused you to trust in a lie*: Therefore thus saith the LORD; Behold, I will punish Shemaiah the Nehelamite, and his seed: he shall not have a man to dwell among this people; neither shall he behold the **good** that I will do for my people, saith the LORD; because he hath taught rebellion against the LORD." – Jer. 29:31-32

So, here's the situation... the **Good Figs** (Jer. 24:5-7, 29:4-7) were being bombarded by false Prophets in the Land of Babylon, God was speaking unto them **goodly** words (Jer. 29:4-7), and the Prophets, Diviners, and Dreamers were contradicting and blaspheming with flattering speeches (Jer. 29:8-9, 15). The people were indeed being bewitched, so they said, "The LORD hath raised us up prophets in Babylon" (Jer. 29:15), and because the heart of the **Good Figs** was made to trust in the false Prophets – the LORD briskly responded in word (Jer. 29:15-18) and in deed (Jer. 29:20-32). Fierce retaliation was necessary if God was going to recover the **Good Figs** from the past and present condition of *unchangeable evil*.

The false prophets were causing the **Good Figs** (Jer. 29:4-7) to wish for the fate of the **Evil Figs** (Jer. 29:16-18), hence the quick and urgent retaliation. They were causing the **Evil Figs** to believe that the judgment of God did effectually come upon the **Good Figs** while they, being in Judah, were in the promising boundaries of eternal security. What a wicked and fearful contradiction! By position, the Hopefuls hoped to be with the Hopeless while the Hopeless derided the Hopefuls

as Hopeless! So, how did the LORD respond? He roasted Ahab and Zedekiah in the fire, literally! Furthermore, He cursed Shemaiah and his seed! The LORD jealously defended the **Good Figs** from the encroaching deception of false Prophets on location in Babylon. Concerning these judgments, revealed to Jeremiah from the distant Land of Judah, God said: “Even I know, and am witness, saith the LORD” (Jer. 29:23). God Almighty was RIGHT THERE on site in Babylon, make no mistake about it! He was intent upon bringing the **Good Figs** to repentance through the 70-year Captivity, *and not without it!* After the purifying effect of the 70-year Tribulation, God said (in the future tense):

“Then shall ye call upon Me, and ye shall go and pray unto Me, and I will hearken unto you. And ye shall seek Me, and find Me, when ye shall search for Me with all your heart. And I will be found of you, saith the LORD: and I will turn away your captivity, and I will gather you from all the nations, and from all the places whither I have driven you, saith the LORD; and I will bring you again into the place whence I caused you to be carried away captive.” – Jer. 29:12-14

They needed the 70-year Captivity, my reader. The **Good Figs** weren't **good** yet! “THEN...”, was the time reference of the restoration. This was not the people's behavior at present. At a much later time (after 70 years of Tribulation), God said: “THEN shall ye call upon Me”, “ye shall go and pray unto Me”, “ye shall seek Me” and “search for Me with all your heart”, and God said He would be with them (Jer. 29:12-14)! This is the destined **goodness** providentially provided by God *through* the Tribulation, and not without it! The trajectory was set. The Divine Furnace was built. The Divine Fires were lit. To embrace God's **goodness** one must embrace Tribulation. Lo, and behold, the people were Captive in God's Refining Furnace located in the Land of Babylon (Isa. 48:9-12, 14, 20), and they couldn't get out! If they knew what was good for them, they wouldn't want out! Omnibenevolence spoke prophetically, saying, “Behold, I have refined thee, but with silver; I have chosen thee in the Furnace of Affliction” (Isa. 48:10). They were privileged to be the recipients of this means of redemption, and they didn't deserve it! The reality of the Tribulation Period was simply that Tribulation was unavoidable. **Evil** was coming upon *everyone everywhere*, but God determined to use this **evil** for **good** unto all those who were willing to receive it with *thanksgiving* and *praise*, but only in Babylon (Isa. 24:13-16, 48:10, Ezek. 20:38 [Ezek. 3:17-21, 18:1-32, 33:1-20], Zech. 3:2, Mal. 3:2-3).

### Sovereign Mercy: the Deciding Factor of Differing Eternal Destinies

For the sake of grasping the full intent of God in the categorical differentiation, the **Good Figs** and the **Evil Figs**, one must understand that the **Good Figs** weren't **good** yet. This fact becomes increasingly clear as the first 5 years of Zedekiah's reign progresses, but it is abundantly clear in the ordination of Ezekiel as a Prophet accounted of in **Ezekiel 1:2-3:21**. Note: *Ezekiel would not be ordained a Prophet until around 5 years after the beginning of Zedekiah's reign*. Year by year, the **Good Figs** were not made **good** nor were they getting better upon hearing Jeremiah's prophecies concerning them, *at least not yet* (**Jeremiah 27:1-28:17, Jeremiah 24:1-10, Jeremiah 29:1-32, Jeremiah 50:1-51:64, Ezekiel 1:2-3:21**). For this reason, because the **Good Figs** weren't **good** and because they desired immediate liberation from the Captivity so as to return to the Kingdom of Judah, Ezekiel was ordained (**Ezekiel 1:2-3:21**).

When considering the eternal ramifications of being a Jew in Babylon as opposed to a Jew in Jerusalem (when the geography itself was an indicator of eternal destiny), we can be sure that this didn't happen by happenchance. The populations of the two locations were not the random *natural selection* of earthly circumstances, no! God was and is the deciding factor, from a sovereign perspective, hence the aforementioned categories were populated *person by person* according to God's selection. That being the case, one is made to wonder: **how were these choices made?** Specifically speaking, **how did God choose to carry one to Babylon and leave the other behind?**

My reader, suffer this question to be answered before the abundant proof of the utter **good-less-ness** of the **Good Figs** is indisputably provided in Ezekiel 1:2-3:21. Wonder for a moment at the sovereignty at work in the choices made to segregate the populations thus. Knowing that there wasn't any **goodness** presently in the **Good Figs** that made them a *choice selection* in the sight of God, consider the situation in the raw events that took place. Consider the situation from the perspective of the individuals themselves from both locations. Amidst the battle and upon the victories of Babylon in the 1<sup>st</sup>, 2<sup>nd</sup>, and 3<sup>rd</sup> **Captivities**, those who were caught even while resisting being taken Captive, and those who were uncaught

while resisting being taken Captive, even they both were actively engaged in the same activity of rebellion, albeit, the former had opportunity for mercy and the latter had none. The former was forced into the category and the latter was left alone. The former was arrested by grace and restrained from sin (Ezek. 20:43-44, 36:32, Ps. 103:10), the latter was abandoned while enslaved to sin and left behind (Ps. 106:14-15, Ps. 78:29, Rom. 1:24, 26-27, Ps. 81:12, Hos. 4:17).

## JEREMIAH 30:1-31:40

**At the 6<sup>th</sup> year of the reign of Zedekiah, I believe, because Jeremiah's prophecy was synchronically delivered as a complement to Ezekiel's prophecy in Ezekiel 18:1-32** (sometime between the 6<sup>th</sup> month of the 6<sup>th</sup> year and the 5<sup>th</sup> month of the 7<sup>th</sup> year of Zedekiah's reign; time references: see 8:1 & 20:1). Jeremiah 30:1-31:40 is not Jeremiah's first writing, as some do wrongly suppose. This is assumed because of Jeremiah 30:2, which says, "Thus speaketh the LORD God of Israel, saying, Write thee all the words that I have spoken unto thee in a book." According to Jeremiah 36:2-4, 36:32, 51:60-64, this statement does not mean to convey that this is the beginning of Jeremiah's prophetic writings but a continuance of them. Although much more could be said to prove the time placement of Jeremiah's prophecy according to internal and external evidences that God has provided via the scripture, let it suffice the reader to know what foundationally brings these two prophecies together: both prophecies address the ungodly and heretical proverb that was notoriously popular among the backslidden and apostate Jews. The people said and believed that "*the fathers have eaten a sour grape, and the children's teeth are set on edge*" (Jer. 31:29, Ezek. 18:2). God was jealously intent upon eradicating from memory this heaven-hated and hell-spawned proverb from the Jews, that's for sure! Therefore, Jeremiah and Ezekiel (under inspiration) declared the stated purpose of God, saying,

"As I live, saith the Lord GOD, **ye shall not have occasion any more** to use this proverb in Israel." – Ezek. 18:3

"In those days **they shall say no more**, The fathers have eaten a sour grape, and the children's teeth are set on edge. But every one shall die for his own iniquity: every man that eateth the sour grape, his teeth shall be set on edge." – Jer. 31:29-30

Of course, [Ezekiel 18:1-32](#) and Jeremiah 30:1-31:40 were not unnecessarily repetitive. Rather, they were synchronically designed by God to refute the heretical proverb with substantial and complementary argumentation. If one prophecy was delivered before the other, I would assume that [Ezekiel 18:1-32](#) was the first. Ezekiel was explicitly and entirely focused on the underworking theological matters that are relevant to refuting the manmade proverb. Jeremiah, however, provides a closer look at illustrating the *thoughts* and *words* of the elect from among the **Evil Figs** when they would eventually come to repentance. Remember, the **Evil Figs** (the Jews living in the Land of Judah) were murmuring, saying, "Why? Doth not the son bear the iniquity of the father?" (Ezek. 18:19), because meanwhile people were dying on every side and the people didn't believe that any of these individuals were wicked. This is why the LORD detailed the character of a righteous and just man in the Land of Judah (Ezek. 18:5-9). With the fruits of real righteousness freshly set before the people (Ezek. 18:5-9) and their ungodly proverb effectually refuted (Ezek. 18:10-32) one might expect the people to come to repentance right then and there. However, upon a closer look, we see that God was moved to offer life and forgiveness *in the day* that doomed sinners were on the brink of death and destruction BECAUSE it was necessary that these hardened Jews were brought to the very brink of annihilation (Ezek. 3:17-21, 18:1-32, 33:1-20). If they were not thus exercised by the *Tribulation*, they wouldn't repent.

### Jacob's Trouble

The **Evil Figs**, to whom Ezekiel prophesied [Ezekiel 18:1-32](#), among whom Jeremiah stood to prophesy Jeremiah 30:1-31:40, would be convinced of sin at last *through* and *not without* what Jeremiah prophetically called, "**Jacob's Trouble**" (Jer. 30:7)! Above other prophecies, Jeremiah 30:1-31:40 illustrates the breaking-point of the Jews and how that in the end... they would repent. Extraordinarily, though, the Jews which Jeremiah portrays in the estate of eventual repentance are not the elect from among the **Evil Figs**, merely, but *all* Jews (of Israel or Judah) from every place (in Assyria, Babylon, Judah,

or elsewhere). Explicitly named, God directed the prophecy to both *Israel* and *Judah* because both of their captivities would be restored (the Assyrian and the Babylonian Captivities) and the longtime divided people would be united as one (Jer. 30:3-4, 8-10, 18-22, 31:1, 10-14, 21-25). Central to this restoration is the working of genuine repentance through what Jeremiah called it: “**Jacob’s Trouble**”. This trouble, or *Tribulation*, is profoundly communicated in the following illustrations.

“For thus saith the LORD; We have *heard a voice* of **trembling**, of **fear**, and **not of peace**. Ask ye now, and see whether a man doth **travail** with child? wherefore do I see *every man with his hands on his loins*, as a woman in travail, and *all faces are turned into paleness*? Alas! for that *Day is Great*, so that none is like it: it is even the time of **Jacob’s trouble**; BUT HE SHALL BE SAVED OUT OF IT.” – Jer. 30:5-7

“Behold, I will bring them from the north country, and gather them from the coasts of the earth, and with them the blind and the lame, the woman with child and her that travaileth with child together: a great company shall return thither. They shall come *with weeping*, and *with supplications will I lead them*: I will cause them to walk by the rivers of waters *in a straight way*, wherein *they shall not stumble*: for I am a Father to Israel, and Ephraim is my firstborn.” – Jer. 31:8-9

“Thus saith the LORD; A *voice was heard* in Ramah, **lamentation**, and **bitter weeping**; Rahel **weeping** for her children refused to be comforted for her children, because they were not. Thus saith the LORD; Refrain thy voice from **weeping**, and thine eyes from **tears**: for thy work shall be rewarded, saith the LORD; and they shall come again from the land of the enemy. And there is **hope** in thine end, saith the LORD, that thy children shall come again to their own border. I have surely heard Ephraim **bemoaning** himself thus; Thou hast **chastised** me, and I was **chastised**, as a bullock unaccustomed to the yoke: turn thou me, and I shall be turned; for thou art the LORD my God. Surely after that I was **turned**, I **repented**; and after that I was **instructed**, I **smote upon my thigh**: I was **ashamed**, yea, even **confounded**, because **I did bear the reproach of my youth**. Is Ephraim my dear son? is he a pleasant child? for *since I spake against him*, I do *earnestly remember him* still: therefore *My bowels are troubled for him*; I will surely have mercy upon him, saith the LORD. Set thee up waymarks, make thee high heaps: set thine heart toward the highway, even the way which thou wentest: turn again, **O virgin of Israel**, turn again to these thy cities. ” – Jer. 31:15-21

As you can see, God was prophetically speaking to both Israel and Judah as one united family again (Jer. 30:4, 31:1). Therefore, in the above prophesies depicting Israel and Judah’s eventual repentance, the terms which did exclusively belong to Israel (the northern tribes) did then prophetically include both Israel and Judah (words like “*Jacob*”, “*Israel*”, “*Ephraim*”, and “*My Firstborn*”). Also, it is important to note that Hosea and Amos were Tribulation Prophets to Israel (the northern tribes) like as Jeremiah and Ezekiel were Tribulation Prophets to Judah. So, what Jeremiah called “**Jacob’s Trouble**” (Jer. 30:5-7) wasn’t new; the Prophet Hosea had already spoken of the punishment that God would inflict upon Israel and Judah using this paradigm. Hosea prophesied,

“The LORD hath also a **controversy** with *Judah*, and will **punish Jacob** according to his ways; according to his doings will he **recompense** him. He took his brother by the heel in the womb, and by his strength he had power with God: Yea, he had power over the angel, and prevailed: **he wept, and made supplication unto him**: he found him in Bethel, and there he spake with us; Even the LORD God of hosts; the LORD is his memorial. Therefore turn thou to thy God: keep mercy and judgment, and wait on thy God continually.” – Hos. 12:2-6

This event, where Jacob was made to **weep** in earnest **supplication** (Hos. 12:4), was rightly called a **punishment** and a **recompense** according to the **controversy** that God had against him; and God had a like controversy with Israel and Judah in the days of Hosea, Amos, Jeremiah, and Ezekiel. Most people don’t recognize that what happened to Jacob in Genesis 32:1-33:20 was a punishment from God; it most certainly was! With all things rightly considered this point is indisputable (for more information, see “**Jacob**”). Even so, confirming this, Isaiah the Prophet spoke of what Jeremiah called, “**Jacob’s Trouble**” (Jer. 30:5-7), saying: “*by this therefore shall the iniquity of Jacob be purged; and this is all the fruit to take away his sin*” (Isa. 27:9). Can you believe it?

In Jeremiah 30:10-20, the LORD emphatically declared that both Israel and Judah's **bruises** and **wounds** were **incurable** and without **healing medicine**, meaning that intercession unto the preservation of the two Kingdoms was impossible, but then the LORD pronounced the future restoration of **health** and the **healing of wounds** that only God could accomplish. This is *the Glory of God* in the Tribulation! Meaning, this is *the redemptive purpose* in Tribulatory Judgments – the people would be saved *through it*, and *not without it!* Looking closely, though, the LORD was careful to specify *the identity* of the individuals who will be restored to God's Kingdom in the Holy Land (Jer. 30:18-24). In other words, so great a *restoration* was made possible by an *exclusion* of those who were unwelcome in the Church: **"the wicked"** (Jer. 30:23). Even so, Tribulatory Judgments did effectually target *all wicked persons* from among the Jews so that only the righteous would remain. Jeremiah testified,

"Behold, the whirlwind of the LORD goeth forth with fury, a continuing whirlwind: it shall fall with pain upon the head of **the wicked**. The fierce anger of the LORD *shall not return*, until he have done it, and until he have performed the intents of his heart: in the latter days ye shall consider it. *At the same time*, saith the LORD, will I be the God of all the families of Israel, and they shall be My people. Thus saith the LORD, **The people which were left of the sword found grace in the Wilderness**; even Israel, when I went to cause him to rest." – Jer. 30:23-31:2

This clarification is perfectly complementary to Ezekiel's message regarding the operation of the Tribulation, when he said: "The soul that **sinneth**, it shall **die**. *The son shall not bear the iniquity of the father, neither shall the father bear the iniquity of the son*: the righteousness of the righteous shall be upon him, and **the wickedness of the wicked** shall be upon him" (Ezek. 18:20, Jer. 31:29-30). Of course, God was not meaning to save alive **the wicked** and restore them to the Promised Land! Jeremiah identified the people who would find **grace** in the eyes of the LORD: they were, *"the people which were left of the sword"* (Jer. 31:2). The sword of the Almighty and or the destroying weapons of holy angels would not leave alive any **wicked person**, that's for sure (Ezek. 9:1-11)! Furthermore, the purifying operation of *the sword* is one and the same as the purifying operation of the *Wilderness*. It was written of these individuals that they "found grace in the *Wilderness*" (Jer. 31:2). How?

Hereby, and without coincidence, Jeremiah described the Tribulation experience of **"Jacob's Trouble"** in terms of *the sword* and the *Wilderness*. Without coincidence, I say, because the Tribulation Prophets of Israel were the first to utilize these terms in reference to the Tribulation via the Assyrian Captivity. Israel's captivity and dispersion via the Assyrians was a precursor to what would happen to Judah via the Babylonians. Therefore, the words, terms, and prophetic renderings of impending woe and eventual blessing (dispersion and eventual restoration) upon Israel - introduced by Hosea, Amos, and others – were elaborated upon in greater detail in reference to the dispersion and eventual restoration of Judah. Jeremiah and Ezekiel were inspired to give a detailed and extensive commentary on what happened to Judah using the same prophetic terms used to describe Israel's Tribulation. Understandably so, greater detail was used to describe the Tribulation of Judah because she was the longstanding remnant of the people of Israel as a whole (*"Yet the LORD would not destroy Judah for David his servant's sake, as he promised him to give him always a light, and to his children."* – 2 Kings 8:19). In other words, God was intent to bring things into focus with Judah. God was intent on establishing and memorialize *the Doctrine of the Great Tribulation* in no uncertain terms via the Captivity of Judah by Babylon.

Jeremiah the Prophet testified of the resounding parallelism insomuch that both Israel and Judah are addressed by the same title! The means by which God brought the "Kingdom of the House of Israel" to an end (with the intent to restore Church Purity; see Hos. 1:4) and the means by which God would restore it (Jer. 30:3-7) are methodically parallel even though the instruments that God used (the Assyrians and the Babylonians) and the Lands of the people's dispersion were different (Assyria and Babylon). Of course, if God was going to bring Israel and Judah back together under "One Head" and in a purified estate (Hos. 1:10-11), the same purifying contraption was utilized successfully upon each Kingdom. For example, the choice rendering of prophetic terms used in that, God would **strip** and **allure** Israel into the *Wilderness* to **slay** her with **thirst** and **kill her children** (Hos. 2:3-4, 8-13, 14-15), is used in like manner to describe what God would do to Judah only more detail is provided. The *Wilderness* experience of God's judgment upon Israel, referenced in Hosea 2:3-4 and Hosea 2:14-15, is elaborated upon in God's judgment upon Judah. Therefore, first, let us understand the broad strokes of Hosea the Prophet in how he introduced the *Wilderness* doctrine; then we will be enabled to behold the

significance of Ezekiel's elaboration of the subject.

### The Doctrine of the Wilderness According to Hosea

My reader, what do you think about when you read the verse, "Therefore, behold, **I will allure her** [Israel], and bring her into the *Wilderness*, and **speak comfortably unto her**" (Hos. 2:14)? This *Wilderness* experience sounds delightful, doesn't it? It certainly doesn't sound like a Tribulation Period of unspeakable suffering, right? Indeed. It is for this reason that most people never reconcile Hosea 2:14 with Hosea 2:3-4 and Hosea 2:15.

Hosea 2:3-4

"Lest I strip her [Israel] **naked**, and **set her as in the day that she was born**, and make her as a *Wilderness*, and set her like a *Dry Land*, and slay her with thirst. And **I will not have mercy** upon her *children*; for they be the *children* of whoredoms."

Hosea 2:14-15

"Therefore, behold, **I will allure her** [Israel], and bring her into the *Wilderness*, and **speak comfortably unto her**. And I will give her her vineyards from thence, and *the Valley of Achor* for a **door of hope**: and **she shall sing there, as in the days of her youth, and as in the day when she came up out of the land of Egypt.**"

Contextually, Hosea 2:14 and Hosea 2:3 are talking about the same *Wilderness* experience. This means that the **merciless stripping and slaying** of Israel in the *Wilderness* whereby the **children of whoredoms** do **perish** (*setting her as in the day she was born*), according to Hosea 2:3-4, is the exact same experience wherein the Lord **allures** Israel into the *Wilderness* and speaks **comfortably** to her insomuch that she **sings** in the *Wilderness* (*as in the days of her youth, and as in the day when she came out of the Land of Egypt*), according to Hosea 2:14-15. Hosea testified that, indeed, Israel would be given **vineyards** and she would see the fulfillment of all she **hoped** for and **sung** about in the *Wilderness*! So, how does a seemingly **hopeless pronouncement** of a *Wilderness Tribulation* (Hos. 2:3-4) become the very means of **hope, comfort, and singing**? The same way the seemingly **hopeless pronouncement**, "Thou shalt surely die" (Ezek. 33:14), leads once-born and backslidden evildoers to repent and as a result they inherit the promise, "He shall surely live" (Ezek. 33:15-16). Only an undeserving escapee of a divine and Inescapable Manhunt knows the rejoicing that sovereign mercy allows when the promise is fulfilled, "He shall surely live!" Even so, Ezekiel's prophesying has been and will continue to be a detailed commentary on how *the Manslaying Wilderness*, the *Tribulation* (Hos. 2:3-4), was the backslidden Churches' only "*door of hope*" as Hosea testified (Hos. 2:14-15). Ezekiel's prophesying on the subject has been informatively unrivaled up to the time of the reception of Jeremiah 30:1-31:40 by the Prophet Jeremiah. Therefore, *to those who have ears to hear*, it is an indisputably clear how "*the Valley of Achor*" (the slaughtering of the troublers of the Church) is Israel and Judah's only hope of salvation (Hos. 2:3-4, 14-15, Amos 9:8-10 & Ezek. 3:17-21, 18:1-32, 33:1-20)! Nevertheless, according to the providence of God, Ezekiel will wax all the more exact and complementary to expound the mysteries that unveil *the Glory of God* in the Tribulation Period in the coming days (from the 6<sup>th</sup> year of the reign of Zedekiah onward).

*the Wilderness* – Hosea 2:3, 14 →

The *Wilderness* experience is explicitly cited in reference to God's dealing with Judah in Ezekiel 19:12-14 via **parabolic language** (East Wind: Ezek. 17:10, Land Desolate: Ezek. 15:8) and in Ezekiel 20:35-38 via an **interpretation** of the parable.

*the Sword* – Amos 9:8-10 →

The *Devouring Sword* experience is explicitly cited in reference to God's dealing with Judah all throughout the prophesying of both Jeremiah and Ezekiel, but as a qualification in reference to those who will survive *the Sword* Ezekiel 12:14-16 and Ezekiel 17:21 are explicit, and this is the same message echoed by Jeremiah in Jeremiah 31:2 (a timely clarification of Ezekiel 21:1-7).

The *Devouring Fire* experience is explicitly cited in reference to God's dealing with Judah in Ezekiel 15:1-8, 19:14, 20:46-49, & 22:17-22 via

*the Fire* – Amos 2:5, 5:6 → **parabolic language**, and Ezekiel 21:1-7 (speaking of *the sword*) is an **interpretation** to the parabolic language in general but above all its interpretation clarifies the parable spoken in Ezekiel 20:46-49.

What is the *Wilderness* experience? It is the same as the *Devouring Sword* and *Fire* of God. All three are terms used to describe the overarching *Tribulation* experience via the Assyrian and Babylonian Captivities. Now, it is important to note that there are other uses for the word *Wilderness* which relate to and branch off from the primary *Wilderness* experience (*the Tribulation*) wherein God would save both Israel and Judah. These variant uses of the word describe the suffering and woe that extend from the overarching operation of salvation via the *Wilderness*. For example, through the Babylonian Captivity the Kingdom of Judah and the City of Jerusalem would become an actual *Wilderness*, literally speaking (Jer. 4:23-26, 22:6, 51:43); and, also, the False Prophets turned the Kingdom of Judah, the Church (God's "*Vineyard*" and "*Pleasant Portion*"), into a *Wilderness*, spiritually speaking (Jer. 12:10, Amos 8:11-13), but neither of these two uses of the term depict the overarching operation that God called the *Wilderness* in so many other places.

In the 7<sup>th</sup> year of the reign of Zedekiah (approximately one year from this point in time) Ezekiel will deliver a very pointed and clarifying message pertaining to the *Wilderness* doctrine in Ezekiel 20:1-49 (see "*Wilderness*" in Ezek. 20:35-36). From the latter half of the 6<sup>th</sup> year of Zedekiah's reign and onward the message is increasingly consistent and intentionally clarifying! Even so, Ezekiel 18:1-32, Jeremiah 30:1-31:40, Hosea 2:3-15, and Ezekiel 20:1-21:7 are profoundly complementary and vitally connected one to another, and of course Ezekiel speaks of the destroying, purifying, and salvific *Wilderness* of the Tribulation Period as one which is like "*the Wilderness of the Land of Egypt*" (Ezek. 20:36). This point, and the Exodus Generation in general, has and will continue to be ideologically foundational to comprehending the Tribulation Period because they were the generation that God took into the *Wilderness* at the first – and therein, in the *Wilderness*, they became **the Church Defined** for every generation thereafter. No doubt, this is why the **Exodus Generation** was repeatedly referenced by the Tribulation Prophets of Israel who prophesied of the Assyrian Captivity (Hos. 2:3-15, 9:10, 11:1-4, 13:1, 4-6; Amos 2:9-12, 3:1-2, 5:21-27). No doubt, this is why the **Exodus Generation** will be the primary subject whereby Ezekiel will definitively establish the doctrine of the *Wilderness* in the Tribulation Period of Judah via the Babylonian Captivity in Ezekiel 20:1-21:7, just as Hosea did for Israel (Hos. 2:3-15). Very specifically, though, this means that the **stripping** of Judah and the reducing of her status to the time when she was born (which was, namely, her *Wilderness* experience when *she came out of the Land of Egypt* according to Hosea 2:3-15) was an inspired reference-point for further elaboration. Ezekiel, a student of Hosea's prophecies, was inspired to elaborate the details of the operation and thus we see several chapters dedicated to what was briefly mentioned by Hosea (the destructive / salvific *Wilderness* experience is cited in reference to God's dealing with Judah in Ezek. 16:7, 37-39, 20:35-38). Therefore, furthermore, just as Israel was an adulteress and a harlot in the sight of God (as seen in Hosea 1:2-3, 3:1-3 [Hos. 4:15-19 appeals to Judah]), Judah was likewise depicted in Ezekiel Ch. 16 & 23.

The **Exodus Generation** references are interpreted in Ezekiel 20:1-21:32 because the **Exodus Generation** is used as an example of a time when the wrath of God executed the divine sentences of the Law via the operation of *the Glory of God* manifesting among the people. In other words, this was a time when *the Glory of God* was in operation for the fulfillment of Church Purity, and the Tribulation Period is likewise. The details of this cannot be explored now (as we will in Ezekiel 20:1-49), but let it be known to the reader that herein lies the meaning and point of Jeremiah 30:20-31:2 and very specifically Jeremiah 31:2 ("*The people which were left of the sword found grace in the Wilderness...*"). Remember the details just as Jeremiah told the story, my reader. The **bruises** and **wounds** were **incurable**, meaning that intercession was unable to stop the near annihilation of the people resulting in **the end** of both Kingdoms and the **desolation** of both Lands. This was the unchangeable. In other words, they must be drawn into the *Wilderness*! However, God promised that – *through it!* – He would **heal** the people's unhealable **wounds** and **restore** their **health** by saving, forgiving, and regathering them into the Land as one Nation under David their King. Therefore, as an interpretation to this, we see that the divine utility of the Tribulation was so that all the wicked persons from among God's people would be slain and thereby they wouldn't defile the Church any longer. The fulness of the prophecies that Jeremiah uttered would not come to pass until this intent, the purging of all wicked persons from the Church, was totally accomplished (Jer. 30:20-31:2). Therefore, at last, let us understand the full intent of Jeremiah's clarification, that those individuals who found **grace** (through the repentance of

their wickedness) are the very same ones who did scarcely escape **the sword** and thus they were effectually exercised by the *Wilderness* unto repentance (Jer. 31:2).

### The Regathering & Restoration – the 1<sup>st</sup> Restoration Generation

It is apparent, according to Jeremiah 30:1-31:40, that there must be a glorious and one-of-a-kind **regathering** and **restoration** of the Jews. Having understood [Jacob's Trouble](#) and [the Doctrine of the Wilderness According to Hosea](#), it behooves us to study what remains as a major theme in Jeremiah's prophecy. Promises of a **regathering** and **restoration** can be observed from the beginning, for example in Jeremiah 30:3, 8-10, 17-22, and necessarily so these promises are positioned as a result of *Jacob's Trouble* via *the Wilderness Period*. Moreover, the **regathering** and **restoration** of the Jews continues as a predominant subject from Jeremiah 31:3 onward, right after the status of the population of the regathered Jews is unmistakably clarified ("*the people which are left of the sword*" – Jer. 31:2) in correlation with Ezekiel's prophecies in Ezekiel 20:1-32. Therefore, the actual time and generation of this regathering and restoration must be identified.

"And this whole land shall be a desolation, and an astonishment; and these nations shall serve the king of Babylon **seventy years**. And it shall come to pass, when **seventy years** are accomplished, that I will punish the king of Babylon, and that nation, saith the LORD, for their iniquity, and the land of the Chaldeans, and will make it perpetual desolations. And I will bring upon that land all my words which I have pronounced against it, even all that is written in this book, which Jeremiah hath prophesied against all the nations. For many nations and great kings shall serve themselves of them also: and I will recompense them according to their deeds, and according to the works of their own hands." – Jer. 25:11-14

"For thus saith the LORD, That after **seventy years** be accomplished at Babylon I will visit you, and perform my good word toward you, in causing you to return to this place. For I know the thoughts that I think toward you, saith the LORD, thoughts of peace, and not of evil, to give you an expected end. Then shall ye call upon me, and ye shall go and pray unto me, and I will hearken unto you. And ye shall seek me, and find me, when ye shall search for me with all your heart. And I will be found of you, saith the LORD: and I will turn away your captivity, and I will gather you from all the nations, and from all the places whither I have driven you, saith the LORD; and I will bring you again into the place whence I caused you to be carried away captive." – Jer. 29:10-14

"In the first year of his reign I Daniel understood by books the number of the years, whereof the word of the LORD came to Jeremiah the prophet, that he would accomplish **seventy years** in the desolations of Jerusalem." – Dan. 9:2

Indeed, according to the word of the LORD, there was a **regathering** and **restoration** in progress after 70 years (Zech. 7:5). This **regathering** and **restoration** was authentically powered by the promises of God. God was genuinely motivated to accomplish it in this historical generation according to the Word of the LORD in the aforementioned passages and elsewhere. God's intentions for **regathering** and **restoring** the people were made abundantly clear through the former prophets (long before the regathering), and with these intentions bearing record we are enabled to know what God endeavored to do with the *Regathered Generation* of His people even though this period was short-lived.

In the beginning stages of the **regathering** and during *the process* of the people's **restoration** unto Glory, the definitive examples of God's Glory were held in memory as Spirit-filled men of God did reach forth to grasp **the Glory of the Restoration** that awaited them. For example, Nehemiah was remembering *the Glory of God* in the [Church Defined](#) (Neh. 9:20, 30) and longing for it. This is reminiscent of how Isaiah and many others did, likewise, lament the absence of God via [the Glory of the Exodus Generation](#) (Isa. 63:11-14, Ps. 77, Hos. 2:15). What Isaiah and others did lament and what Nehemiah longed for, God granted. Can you believe it? Otherwise, if this wasn't the case, why did God say the following? Why did God speak through Haggai and Zechariah testifying of the **restoration** of the Glory of God *as in the days of old*, saying,

"I am with you" – Hag. 2:4 (Isa. 12:6)

“According to the word that I Covenanted with you when ye came out of Egypt, so My Spirit remaineth among you: fear ye not.” – Hag. 2:5 (Isa. 11:16)

“I am returned to Jerusalem” – Zech. 1:16

“I...will be the Glory in the midst of Her [Jerusalem]” – Zech. 2:5

“Io, I come, and I will dwell in the midst of thee, saith the LORD” – Zech. 2:10

“Thus saith the LORD; I am returned unto Zion, and will dwell in the midst of Jerusalem...” – Zech. 8:3

“I will cause the remnant of this people to possess all things” – Zech. 8:12

“For thus saith the LORD of hosts; As I thought to **punish** you, when *your fathers* provoked me to wrath, saith the LORD of hosts, and I repented not: So again have I thought *in these days* to do **well** unto Jerusalem and to the house of Judah: fear ye not.” – Zech. 8:14-15 (Jeremiah 31:28)

Moreover, and specifically speaking, what do these affirmations and promises mean? In what practical manifestation did *the Glory of God* operate a **restoration** and for how long? Graciously, the LORD was very direct with His intentions. The LORD directly stated what He would perform through the instrumentality of **Zerubbabel** the Governor and **Joshua** the High Priest, saying,

“Speak now to **Zerubbabel** the son of Shealtiel, governor of Judah, and to Joshua the son of Josedech, the high priest, and to the residue of the people, saying, Who is left among you that saw this house in her first glory? and how do ye see it now? is it not in your eyes in comparison of it as nothing? Yet now be strong, O **Zerubbabel**, saith the LORD; and be strong, O Joshua, son of Josedech, the high priest; and be strong, all ye people of the land, saith the LORD, and work: *for I am with you, saith the LORD of hosts: According to the word that I covenanted with you when ye came out of Egypt, so my spirit remaineth among you: fear ye not.* For thus saith the LORD of hosts; Yet once, it is a little while, and I will shake the heavens, and the earth, and the sea, and the dry land; And I will shake all nations, and the desire of all nations shall come: and I will fill this house with glory, saith the LORD of hosts. The silver is mine, and the gold is mine, saith the LORD of hosts. The glory of this latter house shall be greater than of the former, saith the LORD of hosts: and in this place will I give peace, saith the LORD of hosts.” – Hag. 2:2-9 (Isaiah 60:1-22, 14:1-3, 49:22-26; Rev. 3:9; 15:4, Ps. 72:9, Micah 7:17, Isa. 49:23, 60:14)

“Then he answered and spake unto me, saying, This is the word of the LORD unto **Zerubbabel**, saying, Not by might, nor by power, but by my spirit, saith the LORD of hosts. Who art thou, O great mountain? before **Zerubbabel** thou shalt become a plain: and he shall bring forth the headstone thereof with shoutings, crying, Grace, grace unto it. Moreover the word of the LORD came unto me, saying, The hands of **Zerubbabel** have laid the foundation of this house; his hands shall also finish it; and thou shalt know that the LORD of hosts hath sent me unto you. For who hath despised the day of small things? for they shall rejoice, and shall see the plummet in the hand of Zerubbabel with those seven; they are the eyes of the LORD, which run to and fro through the whole earth.” – Zech. 4:6-10

“And again the word of the LORD came unto Haggai in the four and twentieth day of the month, saying, Speak to **Zerubbabel**, governor of Judah, saying, I will shake the heavens and the earth; And I will overthrow the throne of kingdoms, and I will destroy the strength of the kingdoms of the heathen; and I will overthrow the chariots, and those that ride in them; and the horses and their riders shall come down, every one by the sword of his brother. In that day, saith the LORD of hosts, will I take thee, O **Zerubbabel**, my servant, the son of Shealtiel, saith the LORD, and will make thee as a signet: for I have chosen thee, saith the LORD of hosts.” – Hag. 2:20-23

“Hear now, O **Joshua** the high priest, thou, and thy fellows that sit before thee: for they are men wondered at: for, behold, I will bring forth my servant **the BRANCH**. For behold the stone that I have laid before Joshua; upon one

stone shall be seven eyes: behold, I will engrave the graving thereof, saith the LORD of hosts, and I will remove the iniquity of that land in one day. In that day, saith the LORD of hosts, shall ye call every man his neighbour under the vine and under the fig tree.” – Zech. 3:8-10

“And the word of the LORD came unto me, saying, Take of them of the captivity, even of Heldai, of Tobijah, and of Jedaiah, which are come from Babylon, and come thou the same day, and go into the house of **Josiah** the son of Zephaniah; Then take silver and gold, and make crowns, and set them upon the head of Joshua the son of Josedech, the high priest; And speak unto him, saying, Thus speaketh the LORD of hosts, saying, Behold the man whose name is **The BRANCH**; and he shall grow up out of his place, and he shall build the temple of the LORD: Even he shall build the temple of the LORD; and he shall bear the glory, and shall sit and rule upon his throne; and he shall be a priest upon his throne: and the counsel of peace shall be between them both. And the crowns shall be to Helem, and to Tobijah, and to Jedaiah, and to Hen the son of Zephaniah, for a memorial in the temple of the LORD. And they that are far off shall come and build in the temple of the LORD, and ye shall know that the LORD of hosts hath sent me unto you. And this shall come to pass, if ye will diligently obey the voice of the LORD your God.” – Zech. 6:9-15

All these promises were genuinely delivered to these men, **Zerubbabel** and **Joshua**. In this very specific way and for this very definitive purpose *the Glory of God* had returned to Israel. However, as always, these were **conditional promises** given to the Restoration Generation. Vital **conditions** were joined to the aforementioned **promises** and **prophecies** in Jeremiah 12:15-17, Zechariah 3:6-7, and Zechariah 6:15.

“And it shall come to pass, after that I have plucked them out I will return, and have compassion on them, and will bring them again, every man to his heritage, and every man to his land. And it shall come to pass, **IF** they will diligently learn the ways of my people, to swear by my name, The LORD liveth; as they taught my people to swear by Baal; then shall they be built in the midst of my people. But **IF** they will not obey, I will utterly pluck up and destroy that nation, saith the LORD.” – Jer. 12:15-17

“And the angel of the LORD protested unto Joshua, saying, Thus saith the LORD of hosts; **IF** thou wilt walk in my ways, and **IF** thou wilt keep my charge, **THEN** thou shalt also judge my house, and shalt also keep my courts, and I will give thee places to walk among these that stand by.” – Zech. 3:6-7

“And they that are far off shall come and build in the temple of the LORD, and ye shall know that the LORD of hosts hath sent me unto you. And this shall come to pass, **IF** ye will diligently obey the voice of the LORD your God.” – Zech. 6:15

Tragically, the people continued in disobedience and thus the Covenant promises and prophecies delivered to the Restoration Generation were breached. According to the prophecies, these people were supposed to be a people of no more *fear* or *weeping* (Jer. 23:4, 46:27-28, Ezek. 36:15, Isa. 30:19), no more *uncleanness* or *defilement* (Isa. 52:1, Zech. 14:21, Ezek. 36:29, 33, Ezek. 11:18, 37:23, 43:7), no more *straying from God* or *idolatry* (Ezek. 14:11, Zech. 13:2, Ezek. 20:37-42, 36:25, Hos. 14:8), and therefore there would be no more *divine anger* or *war* (Ezek. 16:42, Isa. 54:9-10, Ezek. 39:29, Hos. 13:14, 14:4, Jer. 23:4-6, Hos. 2:18, Isa. 60:18, Mic. 4:3-4, Ps. 46:9) and the people would *never again leave the Holy Land* (Amos 9:11-15, Jer. 31:40)! Did it happen? No. Haggai 2:14, Zechariah 7:1-14, Nehemiah 13:1-31 (100 years later), and Malachi 1:1-4:6 do account of the decisive breaches of the Covenant according to the sins of the people and the corresponding repentances of God unto a recasting of the prophecies to be fulfilled in *the Latter Days* of a distant generation.

### The Regathering & Restoration Recasted to the Last Days

God knew that this generation, like the former, would backslide and fall short of the Covenant promises and prophecies, perhaps the most prominent of them being those which foretold the coming of “**the Branch**”. Nevertheless, God’s foreknowledge of their fall does not make the promises given to **Zerubbabel** and **Joshua** inauthentic or unreal (Hag. 2:2-9, Zech. 4:6-10, Hag. 2:20-23, Zech. 3:8-10, Zech. 6:9-15; **God in the Ways of Man**) as if there was no intention in the

mind of God to accomplish these things in and through the Restoration Generation of that time. For, remember, Joshua is called “**the Branch**” (Zech. 6:12) and Zerubbabel is called “**a Signet**” (Hag. 2:23), and moreover Zerubbabel is said to be the builder of God’s House and the promised finisher (Zech. 4:9), while Joshua is also promised to be a builder (Zech. 6:12-15) – and all of this, speaking of a *greater and more glorious House* than what Solomon built! If these promises were not authentically meant and genuinely intended for this time period, we would read of unconditional prophecies rather than promises bound with conditions! Instead, we read of **conditions** to these **promises** being strategically verbalized in Jer. 12:15-17, Zech. 3:6-7, & Zech. 6:15! Hence, the **breached promises** given especially to *the Restoration Generation* live-on to be *eventually fulfilled* in **the Messiah**, just like the breached promises that were authentically delivered to the **Exodus Generation of the Abrahamic Covenant** and the **Generational Seed of David in the Davidic Covenant**. To quote a wise Preacher concerning this cyclical happening, “*There is no new thing under the sun*” (Eccl. 1:9).

### The Branch

*“And He saw that there was no man, and wondered that there was no intercessor: therefore His arm brought salvation unto Him; and His righteousness, it sustained Him.” – Isa. 59:16, 50:2, 64:7*

It must needs be that these men – Zerubbabel, Joshua, and all others! – were found **unfaithful** and **unworthy**, though genuinely sought-after and sincerely covenanted with, for the arising of One who is Faithful, Worthy, and True! For, after all, there’s only one Man from the tribe of Judah that is **worthy** to embody *all the promises and prophecies of old* (Rev. 5:2-5). The duality of God’s intentions here and elsewhere convey the **two simultaneous and genuine wills in God** at all times; a glorious and necessary doctrine for all saints to understand! For, from the beginning (Prov. 8:30-31), ultimately (Rev. 19:13), and forevermore (Rev. 21:6), Biblical History & Futurity exists to prove that *all things were created by Jesus Christ and for Jesus Christ*, and “*by Him all things consist*” (Col. 1:16-17)! This being the case, and notwithstanding, put yourself as one among the Restoration Generation, one who is a close friend of Joshua the High Priest, the one called “**the Branch**” in that generation (Zech. 6:12; a title ultimately assumed by the Messiah and nevertheless **genuinely intended** for Joshua), and consider the inestimable significance of what was prophesied to this **unfit** and **unworthy** man!

Isaiah, who was one of the first to speak of the destruction of Jerusalem and the dissolving of the Davidic Throne (Isa. 13:1-14:32), is very pointed in prophesying of the restoration and revival of the Davidic Throne. The most memorable prophecies of this revival, accomplished by the redemptive purpose of God’s judgment of Judah through Babylon, are those in reference to **the**

**Branch**. From the beginning of Isaiah’s prophecies, the prophet was purposefully forthright in declaring the restoration of that which was in jeopardy, namely the status of Judah’s eventual restoration in that, God said, “*I will restore thy judges as at the first, and thy counsellors as at the beginning: afterward thou shalt be called, **The City of Righteousness, The Faithful City**. Zion shall be redeemed with judgment, and her converts with righteousness*” (Isa. 1:26-27). Pause and contemplate the actual fulfillment of this prophetic word, my reader! Given the tumultuous course of Judah and Jerusalem theretofore, this is a staggering pronouncement!

With respect to the nigh-unwavering constancy of backsliding from generation to generation (Isa. 1:21-22, Jer. 2:2-3, 21,

Jesus Christ is the mystery of every prophecy, promise, salvation, and Covenant. The purpose of God for Christ to descend into incarnation, ascend back up in Heaven, and then come again – this purpose was **eternal** – hereby in Jesus Christ, all things draw their significance. Nevertheless, besides this **eternal purpose** there were **temporary purposes** in God by way of **condescension**. God was intent on other salvations, promises, and Covenants (willful of them in the counsel “**God in the Ways of Man**”), but because of the sins of the persons to whom these salvific promises were given, they never came to pass. It was therefore – “*through their fall*” (Rom. 11:11) – that God changed His mind from the performance of the promises given to them, thus in another plan arising in a later time, but bounding thereto from eternity past, lo, “salvation is come” to us in Christ (Rom. 11:11)! They all fell from the good will of God in their lives (**God in the Ways of Man**), but it was for a mysterious, predestinated, and eternal purpose of Jesus Christ to become manifest in the sovereign will of God (**God in the Ways of God**). Men fell from the will of God in the ways of man because of the determination of the will of God in the ways of God.

Isa. 5:1-7), I mean, this would be a profound difference, a staggering contrast, a glorious restoration! In terms of Isaiah's prophecy, this meant: no more *murderers, dross, mixing, rebellion, and impurities* (Isa. 1:21-28), meaning a complete eradication of *all transgressors and sinners* from Zion (Isa. 1:28-31, Ps. 101:1-8)! What a difference? I mean, because the LORD desired to destroy Jerusalem and dissolve the Davidic Throne because of the sins of Rehoboam (1 Kings 14:21-24), and for the oath's sake repented (2 Sam. 7:12-16, 2 Chron. 12:13); and seeing that the same sequence of events transpired because of the sins of Abijah (1 Kings 15:3-5) and Jehoram (2 Kings 8:19), repenting for the oath's sake; and seeing that the divinely provocative and short-of-perfection sinfulness continued from Jehoram to Ahaz, who was Hezekiah's father, insomuch that in the days of Hezekiah the LORD did once again pursue the utter destruction of Jerusalem, which was thwarted for the oath's sake (Micah 3:12, Jer. 26:17-20, 2 Chron. 32:20, Isa. 37:35); and, at last, upon observing the same thing happen with Josiah (2 Chron. 34:27-28), what profoundly glorious restoration is Isaiah speaking of in Isaiah 1:26-27? What unearthly man could break this cycle of the sons of Adam (Rom. 5:12-21, 1 Cor. 15:21-22)? Well, Isaiah says that it's all because of **the Branch** (Isa. 11:1-12:6)!

In the Tribulation Period the LORD upbraided the seated Kings of Judah, the possessors of the Throne of David, because of their unethical hopefulness for partiality to wit God would forgive their impenitent sins and forbear to destroy Jerusalem yet again, but **time had run out!** The sons of Josiah, the Kings of Judah, were fearfully ignorant that the Davidic Throne shouldn't have survived theretofore on account of the sins of their predecessors, their fathers, **whose deeds they followed!** They hoped that as always, the oaths of the Davidic Covenant would be preferred, the Davidic Throne would continue to be eternal, and the City of Jerusalem indestructible, but all in vain (Jer. 17:24-27; see "**Bewilderment & Blindness by a Covenant Breached**")! Isaiah's foretold restoration, however, is radically different than pastime situations. Why?

Isaiah says it's all because of "**the Branch**" (Isa. 4:2-6): a Man said to be born of a virgin (Isa. 7:14) and, notwithstanding, "a root of Jesse" (Isa. 11:1, 10; "*of the seed of David according to the flesh*" – Rom. 1:3), having a shoulder's breadth that can carry the weight and responsibility that comes with "the Throne of David" (Isa. 9:6-7), whose lineage will effectively rebuild "the Tabernacle of David" (Isa. 16:5), having unsurpassed authority as one who possesses "the Key of the House of David" (Isa. 22:22), one upon whom rests "the sure mercies of David" (Isa. 55:3), so that in this Branch the saying of Amos would be fulfilled, "in that Day will I raise up the Tabernacle of David" (Amos 9:11). According to Isaiah's prophecies, this Man is identified by God to be, "**My Servant**" (Isa. 52:13-15, 53:1-13; Php. 2:5-8, 1 Cor. 15:45-47). According to Ezekiel, the Man is called "**My Servant David**" and also the "**One Shepherd**" and "**Prince**" of God's people (Ezek. 34:23-24). Again, in Ezekiel 37:24-25, the LORD says that "**David My Servant shall be King** over them; and they shall have **One Shepherd...**", and, "**My Servant David shall be their Prince** for ever". Speaking of the same Man, an Elder of Heaven's Court said, "*behold, the Lion of the tribe of Judah, the Root of David, hath prevailed to open the Book, and to loose the seven seals thereof*" (Rev. 5:5), but this declaration was long after the Restoration Generation of Zerubbabel and Joshua fell short of the promise.

All of this was originally calendared to happen (**God in the Ways of Man**) in the **regathering** and **restoration** directly after the 70-year Babylonian Captivity (Jer. 29:10-14, 25:11-12, 27:22). Then, with a *remnant* returning (Isa. 10:20-22), they would *seek David* their **King** like Hosea the prophet prophesied (Hos. 3:5); strikingly, the **regathering** and **restoration** happens at the same time as **the Branch** (Jer. 23:3-8, Isa. 11:1-12:6) to wit: the Lord will regather them just like he did in bringing them out of Egypt (Jer. 23:3-8, Isa. 11:16, Hag. 2:5) and dwell in the midst of them for the rebuilding of the Temple unto unprecedented manifestations of divine glory (Isa. 12:6, Zech. 1:16, 2:5, 10, 6:12, 8:3)! Knowing this, and hearing God speak of *Joshua the High Priest* as **the Branch** (Zech. 3:8-10, 6:9-15), the God-fearing Jews of the Restoration Generation would have been in great wonder and expectation of what was about to take place, and for obvious reasons! Beholding the selfsame events pertaining to the Branch, Jeremiah prophesied, "I will raise unto **David a Righteous Branch**, and a **King** shall **reign** and prosper, and shall execute **judgment** and **justice in the earth**" (Jer. 23:5), and, "...they shall serve the LORD their God, and **David their King**, whom I will raise up unto them" (Jer. 30:9, 33:14-26)! In retrospect, of course, we know that God ultimately intended (**God in the ways of God**) all these prophecies to be fulfilled in Jesus of Nazareth, the Messiah, though they were conditionally delivered to Joshua the High Priest of old. Moreover, seeing that acts of redemption and glory would come from **the Branch**, the likes of which are unprecedented and unachievable except by the Millennial Reign of Christ and the regeneration of the world (see Isaiah Chapters 4, 11, 12, &

60), the prophet Zechariah is compelled to look yonder into the distant future in a recasting of the prophecies to *the Latter Days* (see Zechariah Chapters 7-14).

### The Multi-Sensed Fulfillment of Jeremiah 31:31-34

Having observed the *multi-sensed* application of **the Branch** (the conditionally historical and exclusively future applications), we are prepared to look upon Jeremiah 31:31-34. The meaning of Jeremiah's prophecy is *multi-sensed*, but the distinctive times of the contrasting applications are not the same as **the Branch**. Meaning, the Branch is the Covenant Maker, but Jeremiah's prophecy (Jeremiah 31:31-34) details the special content of the Covenant agreement itself. Contextually, and undoubtedly, the time of this prophecy is to be fulfilled at the regathering of the Jews in the **Restoration Generation**, as demonstrated by Jeremiah 31:6-14, 16-17, 21-28, but the Covenant being spoken for is only divinely possible through the ultimate and complete embodiment of **the Branch**, the Covenant Maker, who we know to be Jesus of Nazareth. A clear reference point to the times of Jesus in Jeremiah 31:15 (Matt. 2:18), an event that took place long after the Restoration Generation, signals when this Covenant would ultimately become reality in and through Christ.

This being the case, however, this passage is notoriously misunderstood because it is widely regarded as *single-sensed* instead of *multi-sensed*. Sadly, the time period of the **1<sup>st</sup> Restoration Generation** is almost altogether ignored and passed over by nonsensical interpreters. So, what is the prominent single-sensed interpretation? A *shallow* study of Hebrews 8:6-13 and Hebrews 10:16-17 promotes the popular misconception that Jeremiah 31:31-34 is entirely fulfilled in the saints of the Gentile Church Age (a generation that exists in the fallout of a failed **2<sup>nd</sup> Restoration Generation**). No doubt, this Covenant has begun in the Christians of the Gentile Church Age, seeing that Jeremiah 31:31-34 is quoted in application to Christians by the writer of Hebrews in those passages, but this beginning is an inferior fulfillment of the Covenant. All things considered, the Jeremiah 31:31-34 Covenant was originally intended for the Jews of the **1<sup>st</sup> & 2<sup>nd</sup> Restoration Generations**, and seeing that these generations have come and gone (coming short of the promises; Heb. 4:1), there must be another Restoration Generation of the Jews in the distant future wherein God will fulfill this Covenant in full (a **3<sup>rd</sup> Restoration Generation**). The prophecies have been recasted to the future, remember! Hence, all possible fulfillments of Jeremiah 31:31-34 in the Gentile Church Age are far short of what is ultimately foretold and soon-to-be accomplished in the literal physical regathered Jews of the Promised Land (Rom. 11:7-36). This point is easily demonstrated below in a careful study of the text verse by verse.

### Inferior & Superior Fulfillments

When examining Jeremiah 31:31-34 carefully, being mindful of "the times" and "the people" to whom the Lord was giving promise to, we can see the double-sensed applications made of *inferior* and *superior* fulfillments. Jeremiah 31:31-34 is a template for how the prophets prophesied salvation in the coming days – with 1st and 2nd Advent promises that are double-sensed and sometimes triple-sensed. The promises that pertain to the 1<sup>st</sup> Advent of Christ are fulfilled in the Gentile Church Age, while the promises that pertain to the 2<sup>nd</sup> Advent of Christ pertain to *the restitution of all things* in the salvation and glorification of the Jews. This can be proven in a verse-by-verse study of the inspired text.

Speaking to the Gentiles, I say, you do err my beloved brethren when you do not consider the whole context of Jeremiah 31 and 32. "We", the saints of the Gentile Church Age, are NOT the *exclusive recipients* of the promises in Jeremiah chapter 31 & chapter 32. The Gentile Church is not the "original audience" (in one sense) to whom the prophet declares these promises. Therefore, in reality, the Gentile Church is *mysteriously included* in the promises of Jeremiah 31 and 32. And because the promises were not spoken *exclusively* or *entirely* for us, every statement within Jeremiah 31:31-34 is not *performed* or *fulfilled* in us, in the Gentile Church Age. These promises were spoken to a **people** and **time period** beyond the one which does now exist (the Last Generation salvation of the Jews), and in the mystery of God's unsearchable righteousness He has made Gentiles into Jews (thereby accomplishing our salvation), a thing which is a logical impossibility. In other words, the promises of Jeremiah 31 and 32 were spoken for and are committed to the Jews (the literal and physical Jews), and by the power of these promises "they" shall be finally saved (as the Abrahamic and Davidic Covenants prophesied, by the inheritances of the Promised Land through David's eternal throne). [For more info, see "Final Salvation & Final Judgment".]

In an effort to examine Jeremiah 31:31-34 to discover *what is now*, in the Gentile Church Age, and *what is to come* in the salvation of the Jews at the 2<sup>nd</sup> Advent of Christ and in the Millennial Reign, let's go through the most impactful promises and prophecies in the totality of Chapter 31 & 32 so as to harmoniously contextualize Jeremiah 31:31-34.

“...I will break his yoke from off thy neck, and will burst thy bonds, and strangers shall **NO MORE** serve themselves of him” – Jer. 30:8

“**NONE SHALL** make him afraid” – Jer. 30:10

“At the same time, saith the LORD, will I be the God of **ALL THE FAMILIES** of Israel, and they shall be My people.” – Jer. 31:1

“...their soul shall be as a watered garden; and they shall not sorrow **ANY MORE AT ALL.**” – Jer. 31:12 [Rev. 21:3-5]

Jeremiah 30:1-10, 17-24 is fulfilled with superiority and entirety in the 2<sup>nd</sup> **Advent** because literal physical Israel is depicted regathering unto the Promised Land, inhabiting it forevermore because of “David their King” whom God has raised up as a Savior (Jer. 30:9) – and because of King David, thereby God is able to say, “NO MORE” and “NONE SHALL” (Jer. 30:8, 10)!

Jeremiah 31:1-14 is fulfilled with superiority and entirety in the 2<sup>nd</sup> **Advent** because according to Jer. 31:1, this is the time in which “ALL THE FAMILIES” of Israel will be saved, which means that the families of Israel which were formerly divided will then be unified into one nation under one king (an act known in prophecy to be performed at the 2<sup>nd</sup> **Advent** of Christ, seen in Ezek. 34:23-24, 37:15-28, & Hos. 1:11). The salvation of literal physical Israel is in view here, and therefore as further confirmation, God said, “I will build” (31:4), “and gather” (31:8), unto the location called “the height of Zion” (31:12). Apparently, this is the time when by regathering and regeneration, God said, “they shall not sorrow ANY MORE AT ALL” (Jer. 31:12), an experience which is impossible until the 2<sup>nd</sup> **Advent** (see Rev. 21:3-5).

“teach **NO MORE**”, “**THEY ALL**” & “remember their sin **NO MORE**” – Jer. 31:34

“If those ordinances depart from before Me, saith the LORD, then the seed of Israel also shall cease from being a nation before Me **FOR EVER.**” – Jer. 31:36

“...it shall not be plucked up, nor thrown down **ANY MORE FOR EVER**” – Jer. 31:40

Jeremiah 31:15-40 is fulfilled with inferiority and without entirety in the 1<sup>st</sup> **Advent** [according to Jer. 31:31-34, which is quoted and applied as a New Testament experience in Hebrews 8:8-12, 10:16-17, & 1 John 2:27], but with superiority and entirety in the 2<sup>nd</sup> **Advent**. Remembering all that was accounted in Jer. 31:1-14, it is clear that the prophecy gazes upon what will be accomplished by the 2<sup>nd</sup> **Advent** of Christ. Nevertheless, it is important to note that this prophecy forewarns of great suffering that will transpire before this glorious and climactic end at the 2<sup>nd</sup> **Advent** (a suffering that will partly be experienced in the 1<sup>st</sup> Advent according to Jer. 31:15 & Matt. 2:17). God confirms to physical literal Israel that “they shall come again” into the land of Israel at the time of the “END” (Jer. 31:16-17), even though they will suffer much pain and chastisement until then (Jer. 31:18-20). God said, “I shall bring again their captivity” (Jer. 31:23), “to build and to plant” (Jer. 31:28) - this time is the 2<sup>nd</sup> **Advent** of Christ, by necessity, here called “a new thing” (Jer. 31:22) and “a new Covenant” (Jer. 31:31) in which “THEY SHALL ALL KNOW ME” (Jer. 31:34), scripture states, because “ALL THE FAMILIES of Israel” are saved (Jer. 31:1), therefore it is possible that they do ALL know God, every one of them (Rom. 11:26)! Strikingly, only by the 2<sup>nd</sup> **Advent** is it possible that there is Land-wide, Nation-wide, and City-wide holiness and security without ceasing “FOR EVER” (Jer. 31:36-40), therefore by the 2<sup>nd</sup> **Advent** “the city shall be built to the LORD” (Jer. 31:38).

Jeremiah 32:1-15 is fulfilled with superiority and entirety in the 2<sup>nd</sup> **Advent** of Christ according to Jer. 32:15, which states, “Houses and fields and vineyards shall be possessed again in this land”.

Jeremiah 32:16-25 is an account depicting Jeremiah's confusion of how this regathering and restoration of Israel could happen... giving platform for the glory of God in the **2<sup>nd</sup> Advent**.

“And I will make an **EVERLASTING COVENANT** with them, that **I WILL NOT TURN AWAY** from them, to do them good; but I will put My fear in their hearts, that they **SHALL NOT DEPART** from Me” – Jer. 32:40

“For thus saith the LORD; Like as I have brought all this great evil upon this people, so will I bring upon them **ALL THE GOOD THAT I HAVE PROMISED THEM.**” – Jer. 32:42

Jeremiah 32:26-44 is fulfilled with inferiority and without entirety in the **1<sup>st</sup> Advent** [even though any potential application has not been specified or cited by inspired writers], but, of course, the prophecy is fulfilled with superiority and entirety in the **2<sup>nd</sup> Advent**. “I will gather them”, God said (Jer. 32:37), by fulfilling “**ALL THE GOOD THAT I HAVE PROMISED THEM**” (Jer. 31:42), which is, namely, the “restitution of all things” (Acts 2:21) accomplished by the **2<sup>nd</sup> Advent** of Christ - thus with the resurrection accomplished God will never “TURN AWAY” from Israel nor will they “DEPART” from Him (Jer. 32:40), because **repentances in God are abolished** (Hos. 13:14, Jer. 32:41)! In this way, specifically, God “will cause their captivity to return” (Jer. 32:44)!

### Devastating Misconceptions of Jeremiah 31:31-34

A commentary on this portion of Holy Scripture would not be complete unless the devastating misconceptions of Jeremiah 31:31-34 are addressed head-on. Great violence is done to the souls of men on account of a *shallow* study of Hebrews 8:6-13 and Hebrews 10:16-17, hereby promoting *the Unconditional Eternal Security* of the saints in the New Covenant. This doctrine can be erroneously applied to the saints of the Gentile Church Age by misunderstanding when and how the promises of Jeremiah 31:31-34 will be fulfilled. Perhaps you've already noticed this vulnerability in the previous section? In addition to this, however, there are easily misunderstood statements made by the author of Hebrews, statements that seem to advocate *the Unconditional Eternal Security* of the saints in the Gentile Church Age. For example, it was written,

“But now hath He obtained a more excellent ministry, by how much also He is the Mediator of a better Covenant, which was established upon better promises. For if that first Covenant had been faultless, then should no place have been sought for the second.” – Hebrews 8:6-7

The above verses, compared with Jeremiah 31:32, brings before the reader an important subject: the potential non-breachability of the promises of salvation made in the New Covenant in distinction from those made in the Old Covenant. In respect to a topic such as this, hasty conclusions must be shunned. Therefore, I earnestly implore the reader to consider this subject at length in a comprehensive address, a document title: “**It says, Forever!**”.

## JEREMIAH 32:1-44

**During the 10<sup>th</sup> year of Zedekiah's reign** (Jer. 32:1), while Jeremiah is shut up in the Court of the Prison, the word of the LORD comes to him *the first time* (Jer. 32:2, 33:1). It is probable that this prophecy was given to Jeremiah and delivered to the people while he was in *the court of the prison* prior to being cast into *the dungeon of Malchiah*.

To be Continued...

## JEREMIAH 33:1-26

**During the 10<sup>th</sup> year of Zedekiah's reign and subsequent to Jeremiah's former prophecy** (Jer. 32:1-44; “*the second time*” – Jer. 33:1). It is probable that this prophecy was given to Jeremiah and delivered to the people after Jeremiah was pulled out of *the dungeon of Malchiah* and returned to *the court of the prison*, as recorded in Jeremiah 38:1-28.

To be Continued...

## JEREMIAH 34:1-10 & 37:3-4

[Note the Time Gap: Jeremiah 37:5-16, 34:11-22] – **At the 9<sup>th</sup> year of Zedekiah's reign** (2 Kings 25:1, Jer. 39:1), Judah was attacked and Jerusalem was being besieged (2 Kings 25:1, Jer. 34:1, 7). Shockingly, Zedekiah and the princes were in fear for the space of time from the 9<sup>th</sup> year to the 10<sup>th</sup> year of Zedekiah, when they eventually hired Egypt officially (which they were storing up and preparing to do before Babylon arrived by keeping back the tribute money, no doubt)! Shockingly, they repented of enslaving their brethren and God spoke a good word concerning Zedekiah as a result (see Jer. 34:1-10 & 37:3)! As you can see, Zedekiah was asking Jeremiah to pray for him, saying, “Pray now unto the LORD our God for us” (Jer. 37:3). Furthermore, remember, he inquired of the Lord by Jeremiah, saying, “Enquire, I pray thee, of the LORD for us; for Nebuchadrezzar king of Babylon maketh war against us; if so be that the LORD will deal with us according to all his wondrous works, that he may go up from us” (Jer. 21:2). The word of promise delivered to Zedekiah is clearly more merciful and provisional (Jer. 34:1-10) than the word delivered before he and the princes began repenting (Jeremiah 21:1-22:30). Before, it was stated that Zedekiah would die by the sword (Jer. 21:6-10) – which means, furthermore, he would perish in the shameful way like as Jehoiakim was killed (Jer. 21:18-19) – giving reference to this difference, how that Zedekiah will not die by the sword or go to Babylon (emphasis, “Yet!” in Jer. 34:4), but rather die like his fathers in Jerusalem (Jer. 34:5-6), the exact wording of the manner of death suffered by Jehoiakim in Jeremiah 21:18-19 is undone and heralded on the contrary as a blessing from God upon Zedekiah in Jeremiah 34:5. This is strong evidence that Jeremiah heard the word formerly delivered, recorded in Jeremiah 21:1-22:30, by acting in the aforementioned ways of repentance, thus the Lord was amending His word – first reiterating it in Jeremiah 34:2-3, and then amending it in Jeremiah 34:4-5!

To be Continued...

## JEREMIAH 35:1-19

**At the 4<sup>th</sup> year of Jehoiakim's reign** (Jer. 35:2), *I conclude*, seeing that the message is fitting and cohesive with what is being said and done at this time. The Word of the LORD to the Rechabites is a profound indicator of the times, especially in the light of what is about to take place in the 5<sup>th</sup> year of the reign of Jehoiakim.

To be Continued...

## JEREMIAH 36:1-8, 9-32

### JEREMIAH 36:1-8

**At the 4<sup>th</sup> year of Jehoiakim's reign** (Jer. 36:1) and after the **1<sup>st</sup> Captivity** took place (Jer. 46:2), *I conclude*, for the following reasons: (1<sup>st</sup>) A new ministerial effort is undertaken because of the rise of persecution, and now that Jeremiah is in hiding, Baruch assumes his ministerial role (Jer. 36:4). The valiant strides of Jeremiah's preaching and pleading (urgently undertaken just prior to the besiegement of Babylon and the 1<sup>st</sup> Captivity) ended with Jeremiah being put in the stocks

(Jer. 19:14-20:18). Remember, this was the climactic end of Jeremiah seeking to rescue Jerusalem from imminent destruction (Note: he did not know what would happen in the 1<sup>st</sup> Captivity, nor did he know how many Captivities would transpire thereafter). Jeremiah marched around Jerusalem in public defiance of apostasy amidst strong conspiracy for his murder, a plot which no doubt continued after he was released from the stocks (Jer. 20:3), therefore to prevent an untimely martyrdom he went into hiding at God's command ("*I am shut up; I cannot go into the House of the LORD*" – Jer. 36:5). (2<sup>nd</sup>) Necessarily so, Baruch was called, appointed, and sent forth to minister; and, take note, the historical narrative of Jeremiah 36:1-8 and Jeremiah 36:9-32 are meant to be taken together. There is a clear time-gap in between Jeremiah 36:8 and Jeremiah 36:9, and this is implicit of Baruch's ongoing success in ministry. Remember, this was just months after Babylon invaded the region, surrounded Jerusalem, and by this time defeated Egypt (Note: the people were allowed travel to and fro from Jerusalem, denoting peace, therefore the besiegement must have been over; "*Judah that come out of their Cities*" – Jer. 36:6).

After the 1<sup>st</sup> Captivity took place, one might expect the people to be humbled and fearing. They were! Think of it, my reader. The nation that nobody knew, thought about, or considered, ARRIVED! Having amassed an undefeatable army, the Nation that lonely Jeremiah told them about slew the Army of Egypt (*i.e. the confidence of Judah*), marched into Jerusalem, spoke an indiscernible language, and took captive all the mighty men of the nation (to the shame of the false prophets who denied that this would happen!). Because of these things, we see a very different behavior displayed by the common people of Judah and Jerusalem in Jeremiah 36:1-8.

What were they doing? They were fasting, praying, and seeking God. Amidst a surge of Jews circuiting Jerusalem for fasting, Jeremiah's prophesying theretofore was written in a scroll and read in the House of the LORD by Baruch (and thereby spread throughout Jerusalem, no doubt). After the proud and impenitent people were humbled greatly, the word of the LORD to Jeremiah conveyed a renewed hope. Now, God wanted to rehearse before the people ALL THAT WAS PROPHESED theretofore in hopes that the people would realize that God's word, against all odds, came to pass and will come to pass. God said,

**"It may be** that the House of Judah will hear all the evil which I purpose to do unto them; that they may return every man from his evil way; **that I may forgive their iniquity and their sin.**" – Jer. 36:3

Purposefully, this is the first mention of Jeremiah's prophesying being written down in a book. It was for Baruch's ministry! The blood-thirsty King and Jeremiah's familiars, the Priesthood, couldn't endure the likes of Jeremiah in public places, so God rerouted the rescue mission to attempt a grassroots revival from an unsuspecting source. "Go thou, and read in the roll", Jeremiah commanded Baruch (Jer. 36:6). Jeremiah was hopeful! Why? **"It may be** they will *present their supplication* before the LORD, and *will return* every one from his evil way: for great is the anger and the fury that the LORD hath pronounced against this people" (Jer. 35:7). Shocking.

These appeals for mercy were delivered and sincerely hoped for by the LORD – that is, when and if the people comprehend that the 1<sup>st</sup> Captivity was just the beginning (Jer. 36:3, 7). An incrementally delivered WOE is the Divinely Authored plan so that God would have opportunity to plead with the ready-to-die people over and over again, saying, "why will ye die, O House of Israel" (Ezek. 18:31)! According to the historical account detailed in this Chapter, no small stirring was underway for the next year and 9 months. At least, it was a grassroots revival in its beginnings. At most, the grassroots revival rose to the very neck of the nation to turn the Kingdom back to God!

Nearly 1 year and 9 months of prophesying could have taken place by way of Baruch reading the scroll in the House of the LORD (Jer. 36:1, 9) including any additional prophecies given, like that of Jeremiah 25:1-38, because they could have been added to the Book which was written and used in the reading of Baruch from thenceforth. After 1 year and 9 months transpired, the grassroots revival appeared to culminate in the proclamation of an all-inclusive special fast. Prominent leaders and Princes were fearing and Jeremiah's prophecies made their way to the Kings Court, the neck of the Nation! But, at last, as we will soon see when we cover Jeremiah 36:9-32, Jehoiakim squelched the fires of revival, intimidated the Princes, and burnt the scroll of Jeremiah's prophesying. Also, after the King gave commandment to arrest Baruch and Jeremiah (Jer. 36:26), Baruch joined Jeremiah in hiding. Before this, no small work of revival was underway! Here's what happened...

## JEREMIAH 36:9-32

**At the 5<sup>th</sup> year and ninth month of Jehoiakim's reign** (see the time transition in verse 9), the grassroots revival was rising up to the neck of the nation to turn it back to God! After many months of Baruch's ministry (approx. 1 year and 9 months), disseminating the word of God through Jeremiah to all the faithful of the Kingdom of Judah via the circuiting Jews, a *major fast* was proclaimed. Why? The Nation was turning to God! Take note: only high-authority leaders could call a fast like this one because it was "*proclaimed*" and "*all the people in Jerusalem*" and "*all the people*" visiting were *required* to participate (Jer. 36:9). This was a *special fast* for intentional reasons and, judging by how *all* the Princes were fearing God at the hearing of the words of Jeremiah the intentions of the fast are clear (Jer. 36:16)! This behavior is a radical change from their former behavior before the 1<sup>st</sup> Captivity, and this is strong evidence of the grassroots revival having an affect unto this special occasion, a citywide fast! The grassroots revival traveled abroad through circuiting Jews in the same way demonstrated in the Jews who humbled themselves to attend the Temple convocations in Hezekiah's day (2 Chron. 30:10-11, 31:1)? What happened after they gathered together at the Temple in those days? It was written,

"Now when all this was finished, all Israel *that were present* **went out** to the cities of Judah, and **brake the images in pieces**, and **cut down the groves**, and **threw down the high places and the altars** out of all Judah and Benjamin, in Ephraim also and Manasseh, **until they had utterly destroyed them all**. Then all the children of Israel **returned**, every man to his possession, into their own cities." – 2 Chron. 31:1

The potential for revival by this means should not be underestimated. It was the wisdom of God that the LORD appointed Baruch to read and preach the word of God for the past year and nine months, and what happened? The people were notably humbled (and fasting!), Baruch was openly reading ("*in the ears of all the people*" – Jer. 36:10), chief authorities proclaimed a special fast and it was thus required that *all* the people participated, and *all* the Princes were fearing (especially Delaiah, Elnathan, & Gemariah, and Germiah's son named Michaiah)! Shockingly, though, with all this momentum the revival made its way to the King's Court and HE STRUCK IT DOWN! According to the Historical Record, Michaiah heard the word, he shared it with *all* the Princes, the Princes called Baruch to hear the word themselves and were moved with fear. Showing contemplation and intentionality, the Princes commanded Baruch and Jeremiah to hide themselves (Jer. 36:19) because they were going to make a move to try to turn the Nation back to God by bringing Jeremiah's prophecies before the King, and if the King responded ill then Jeremiah and Baruch would be preserved from harm. Demonstrating the collaborated effort, it was recorded, "And Jehudi read it in the ears of the King, and *in the ears of all the Princes which stood beside the King*" (Jer. 36:21). See, *all* of them were unitedly standing by! They had already heard the word themselves, mind you (Jer. 36:16). In a Nation almost turned back to God, Jehoiakim was the last man standing!

Why were all the Princes afraid when they heard afresh the prophecies of Jeremiah? Because Jeremiah's word came true AGAINST ALL THE WORDS of the Prophets and Priests of so called "THE REMNANT" that was in leadership. They felt lied to and shaken from their former confidences because they watched Babylon invade the region, defeated Egypt, overtake Egyptian sovereignty over Judah, and take Captive a multitude of Jews just as Jeremiah had prophesied! Ah, these treacherous false prophets! The Princes remembered clearly how deception flourished through the winsome words of false prophets, amassed in droves, every one of them attempting to drown-out the lonely, weeping, running, and crying Prophet whom God had sent. Jeremiah was the only man on earth who was prophesying of the Babylonian Captivities and the utter destruction of the Kingdom of Judah! Fearfully, though, despite all of this! Jehoiakim burned the scroll of Jeremiah's prophecy, saying, "Why hast thou written therein, saying, The king of Babylon shall certainly come and **destroy this Land**, and shall **cause to cease from thence man and beast**?" Jehoiakim! The same man who, at 12 years old, beheld Zephaniah, Jeremiah, and Josiah usher the City of Jerusalem into the Presence of God (2 Chron. 34:33)! Yes, with only 5 years of rebellion against God under his belt, the young King was deranged and deluded to revolt against the aged Prophet, Jeremiah, the companion of his father Josiah! Remember that Jehoiakim walked in obedience to the LORD from years 12 to 25 (2 Chron. 34:33), and now this!

Because of Jehoiakim's murderous anger, Jeremiah went into further and even more intentional hiding at the charge of the Princes who feared for his life (Jer. 36:19). Jehoiakim fully turned upon Jeremiah like he did to Urijah the Prophet (Jer. 26:20-23). Alas! Jehoiakim's actions were bold and highhanded provocations against the correcting hand of God who brought the Armies of Babylon to the very gates of Jerusalem! ...but, you see, Jehoiakim wrongly believed that the Armies of Babylon wouldn't return for war anymore. Though the 30-year-old King did thus, Jehoiakim was not bold enough to break the tributary agreement with Babylon. Not yet. Jehoiakim continued in the tributary agreement for 3 years of faithful servitude (2 Kings 24:1; from the 4<sup>th</sup> year to the 7<sup>th</sup> year of Jehoiakim's reign), and... at last, after another year and three months of thinking, "Peace, peace" (Jer. 8:11), and, hearing, "**Sword** and **famine** shall not be in the Land" (Jer. 14:15), and, "We are delivered to do all these abominations" (Jer. 7:10), the false prophets prevailed upon Jehoiakim to erroneously seek the Covenantal Ideal of "liberty" from Babylon, so he thought ...when, in reality, they "looked for peace, but no good came; and for a time of health, and behold **trouble**" (Jer. 8:15). **BABYLON CAME!**

Once again, according to the operation of Glory demonstrated theretofore, the glory of God in the Tribulation Period, the LORD was personally offended and personally interactive with the backslidden King. The man, Jehoiakim, who dared to BURN THE WORD OF GOD, was confronted by God for what he did. Shockingly, the LORD was looking, listening, seeing, hearing, responding, and prophetically declaring His retaliation! The LORD quoted Jehoiakim and then told him how HE WAS GOING TO KILL HIM, what He would do with his dead body, and how He would punish His servants and his seed! Read it, my reader... and fear. Give glory to God!

"And thou shalt say to Jehoiakim king of Judah, Thus saith the LORD; Thou hast burned this roll, saying, Why hast thou written therein, saying, The king of Babylon shall certainly come and destroy this land, and shall cause to cease from thence man and beast? Therefore thus saith the LORD of Jehoiakim king of Judah; He shall have none to sit upon the throne of David: and his dead body shall be cast out in the day to the heat, and in the night to the frost. And I will punish him and his seed and his servants for their iniquity; and I will bring upon them, and upon the inhabitants of Jerusalem, and upon the men of Judah, all the evil that I have pronounced against them; but they hearkened not."  
– Jer. 36:29-31

An incomplete revival was followed by a completely successful apostasy, can you believe it? Jehoiakim's actions were paramount, indeed, but he was not alone in the madness. The last and final word delivered to the Kingdom of Judah during Jehoiakim's reign, contained in Jeremiah 14:1-17:18, will shed more light on how this sudden and successful apostasy was achieved. In it, God will *quote* and *confront* the other individuals who partnered with and confirmed Jehoiakim's high-handed rebellion against God – YOU BETTER BELIEVE GOD HAS SOME CHOICE WORDS FOR THEM! Wagg your head and it, my reader... and fear.

#### **Sermon Notes:**

- A major fast called by leaders / authorities and required by all – Jer. 36:9
- Notable leaders / Princes feared God above all other Princes (Delaiah, Elnathan, Germariah, & his son Michaiah) – Jer. 36:11-12, 25
- All the Princes were unitedly fearing God! – Jer. 36:16
- A bold attempt to turn the Nation back to God was made by ALL THE PRINCES (and meanwhile they protected Jeremiah and Baruch) – Jer. 36:19
- The King and his servants weren't afraid – Jer. 36:24
- Jehoiakim commanded the arrest of Jeremiah and Baruch – Jer. 36:26
- God looked, listened, quoted, responded, and promised to retaliate the direct provocation of Jehoiakim! – Jer. 36:27-32

## JEREMIAH 37:5-16 & 34:11-22

**During the 10<sup>th</sup> year of Zedekiah's reign** (Jer. 37:5-11, 34:21, 52:29), lo and behold the besiegement of Jerusalem was temporarily broken free by Pharaoh sending an army to Zedekiah's relief... but Babylon did not wholly depart from the besiegement effort. After engaging the matter of Egypt's army, they returned just as God had said through Jeremiah, "*they shall not depart*" (Jer. 37:9), and, "*I will command, saith the LORD, and cause them to return*" (Jer. 34:22). These acts of withholding tribute (before Babylon came) and hiring Egypt (after Babylon came) were the manifestation of Zedekiah's rebellion against God (2 Kings 24:20). In the process of doing this, Zedekiah had to break two oaths: first in chronology, Zedekiah made an oath to the King of Babylon at his installment (Ezek. 17:11-21) and, secondarily, Zedekiah and the princes made a covenant with the LORD during their repentance of enslaving their brethren, the Israelites (Jer. 37:5-16). The Lord is infuriated by the breaking of these covenants because they were done in obedience to the Lord. A strong delusion did consequentially come upon Zedekiah and the princes so that they believed the word of the Lord through Jeremiah had proven false. Once they saw Babylon depart from Jerusalem, Zedekiah and the princes reverted to apostasy suspecting that Jeremiah was wrong when he said, "*thou shalt not escape out of his hand, but shalt surely be taken...*" (Jer. 34:3), and such like words. A revival of apostasy and a strong delusion transpired here insomuch that the princes did harden their hearts in thinking that Jeremiah was a fraud in that the word failed! Oh, my reader, this is a great reversion! These princes, who were now counting Jeremiah a fraud, were greatly fearing in the days of Jehoiakim (Jer. 36:16, 19) and were humbled to see Jehoiakim die according to Jeremiah's word. In fact, the princes were fearing alongside Zedekiah their King (which was a first for the King of Judah since the days of Josiah)! Shockingly, they who feared were now slanderous against and angry with Jeremiah! Shockingly, they smote him and *put him in prison* and left him there to die (Jer. 37:12-16)! Note: the promise given to Zedekiah (Jer. 34:2-7) was breached (Jer. 34:17-22, 32:3-5). Note: Zedekiah himself was still fearing the Lord in some measure, though moved by the princes exceedingly, for he later inquired of Jeremiah and drew him out of the place wherein he was starving to death (*the prison in the house of Jonathan the Scribe*), and, afterward, even though the word delivered was not good ("*thou shalt be delivered into the hand of the King of Babylon*"-Jer. 37:17), Zedekiah moved Jeremiah into "*the court of the prison*" where he was fed daily (see Jer. 37:17-21). Secret Conversation: 37:17-21.

## JEREMIAH 38:1-28

**During the 10<sup>th</sup> year of Zedekiah's reign**, I conclude, because Ezekiel prophesies in correlation with the events of Jeremiah 37:5-16 & 34:11-22. According to Jeremiah 38:1-6, Jeremiah continues to prophesy to all the people from *the court of the prison* the same word, which was, to surrender to Babylon and live (Jer. 38:2-3). It is probable that Jeremiah 32:1-44 is a record of what Jeremiah prophesied from *the court of the prison* in this time. When the princes heard it, or such like words, they requested of the King his death (Jer. 38:4). Zedekiah granted to them their request (Jer. 38:5), and they took Jeremiah and cast him into "*the dungeon of Malchiah*" that was in the court of the prison, and Jeremiah sunk in the mire. There was no water in this place and there was no more food in the city. According to Jeremiah 38:7-28, the Ethiopian Eunuch rescues Jeremiah at the King's consent, not wanting Jeremiah to die. Jeremiah is then brought back to *the court of the prison* (Jer. 38:13). After this, Zedekiah secretly inquired of the Lord by Jeremiah yet again! Zedekiah is secretly seeking repentance (Jer. 38:19).

To be Continued...

## JEREMIAH 39:1-18

**At the 9<sup>th</sup> day of the 4<sup>th</sup> month of the 11<sup>th</sup> year of Zedekiah's reign**, the famine prevailed upon Jerusalem and thus the City was broken up (Jer. 39:2, 2 Kings 25:3). After the City was broken up and the House of the LORD and the City were burned, it was written that Nebuzar-adan the Captain of the Guard "left of the poor of the people, which had nothing, in the Land of Judah, and gave them vineyards and fields at the same time" (Jer. 39:10). Fearfully, though, this people

came under the judgment of God according to the prophecies which were before spoken concerning them (reducing Jerusalem into an uninhabited desolation: Jer. 44:2)! And, yet, after the 1<sup>st</sup> increment of this judgment came to pass an interval of mercy was provided (1<sup>st</sup> increment: Jer. 40:7-41:18, interval of mercy: Jer. 42:1-12, rejection of mercy: Jer. 42:13-43:7). A way of escape was made available! Sadly, though, the people rejected the mercy of God and claimed that Jeremiah spoke falsely (Jer. 43:2-3). Obstinate, all the Jews left the Land of Judah to dwell in Egypt . . . place where the people were not permitted to escape (Jer. 43:7-13; especially verses 11-12)! Fearfully, the LORD proceeded to proclaim judgment upon cities of refuge which were erroneously chosen in the Land of Egypt (Jer. 44:1). A great and affectionate appeal was made (Jer. 44:4)!

To be Continued...

## JEREMIAH 40:1-42:22

Judah following the 5<sup>th</sup> Captivity.

To be Continued...

## JEREMIAH 43:1-44:30

Jeremiah's Ministry in Egypt

To be Continued...

## JEREMIAH 45:1-5

**At the 4<sup>th</sup> year of Jehoiakim's reign** and in the midst of Baruch's ministry (recorded in Jer. 36:1-8), right after the **1<sup>st</sup> Captivity** when Babylon took control over the region instead of Egypt, Baruch was overcome with fear, distress, and covetousness. In response, the Lord gave him a sharp and sure word. My reader, this is fearful! Even Baruch was in disbelief that **the sword of the LORD** would pass through the Land at any time soon, thus... HE WAS STILL SEEKING GREAT THINGS FOR HIMSELF!

It is truly fearful what God said to Baruch! It was a great mercy, and a great providence, that Baruch was allowed by God to keep his life at the loss and robbery of all else! "Thus saith the LORD, the God of Israel, unto thee, O Baruch; Thou didst say, **Woe is me now! for the LORD hath added grief to my sorrow; I fainted in my sighing, and I find no rest.** Thus shalt thou say unto him, The LORD saith thus; Behold, that which I have built **will I break down**, and that which I have planted **I will pluck up, even this whole land.** And seekest thou *great things* for thyself? *seek them not:* for, **behold, I will bring evil upon all flesh**, saith the LORD: but *thy life* will I give unto thee for a prey in all places whither thou goest" (Jer. 45:2-5). The remnant of the Tribulation Period would learn the great mercy of this underserved gift! Baruch had *no rest* or *peace* because he was resisting tribulation instead of embracing it. Baruch was susceptible to and overtaken by the staunch mockery of the people, who said, "Where is the promise of his coming? for since the fathers fell asleep, all things continue as they were from the beginning of the creation" (2 Pet. 3:4). If we don't actively resist such mockery and scorning we will be passively overcome by it! Even with Bible in hand, like Baruch, we will fall a-prey to the allurements of deception!

## JEREMIAH 46:1-49:39 | PROPHECIES AGAINST HEATHEN NATIONS

Jeremiah 46-49, like Ezekiel 25-32, shifts the burden from *the Jews* to *the Gentiles*. According to the Old Testament, this is a turning from *the Church* to *the Heathen*. The *Heathen Nations* were judged in respect to their ill relationship to the Church; therefore, inasmuch as the heathen nations evilly affected the people of God and hastened their declension into sin, or inasmuch as the heathen rejoiced to see God's judgment of the Church *through Babylon* and therein blasphemed, God took vengeance. Using Babylon for these prophetically stated purposes is an awesome display of [the Majesty of the LORD](#).

When speaking to the Kings of the earth and prophesying to the kingdoms of the lower world, it is only meet that the LORD refers to Himself in the address, using the title: “**the KING**, whose name is **THE LORD OF HOSTS**” (Jer. 46:18, 48:15, 51:57; Rev. 17:14). When God says what He wants to say to whom He speaks, He wants the Kings of the earth to know that it's **THE KING OF KINGS** who's speaking! When describing the fate of human armies and the outcome of earthly wars, speaking to earthly warriors, He wants the soldiers of war to know that it's **THE LORD OF HOSTS** who's speaking! When the God of Israel has a message for the heathen, the messenger running the errand is “an **ambassador**” that is “*sent unto the heathen*” (Jer. 49:14) on behalf of a transcending and heavenly Kingdom! Therefore, when the Lord counsels and purposes against the nations, transcendent and majestic over all, so do the Kings and Armies whom He chooses to use as invaders (Jer. 49:14, 20, 30). In summation, the conquests and warfare of **Babylon** against other nations were and will be “**THE WORK OF THE LORD**” (Jer. 48:10, Hab. 1:5, 11; Ezek. 29:20).

Howbeit, after all is said and done, it is important to remember that God's focus was upon *the Church* to execute in them the judgment written ([nonarbitrary judgments](#)). This *was, is, and will be* the ultimate divine purpose in [Babylon's Rise](#). Bearing witness to this, Jeremiah and Ezekiel were inspired to dedicate only 18 out of a 100 Chapters of prophecy to the judgment of *Heathen Nations* (Ezek. 25:1-32:32, 35:1-15, 38:1-39:29; Jer. 46:1-51:64, 25:15-38, 27:1-11). This means that 82 out of 100 Chapters of prophecy were dedicated to God's judgment of the Church *through* historical **Babylon**. This being the case, however, the study of these prophecies to pastime *Heathen Nations* aren't irrelevant to the Church in the *past, present, or future*. I repeat, an in-depth study is necessary! This is true in all ages, but so much the more in the New Covenant seeing that *the Gentiles* have been brought into Covenant Relationship with God!

While the study of these Chapters is important in all perspectives, and for all Covenants, let us consider the most vital meaning above all others: namely, how these things are relevant to the Last Days Doctrine as revealed in the Book of Revelation. Remember, from a historical perspective (in Old Testament terms), Jeremiah 46-49 and Ezekiel 25-32 do foretell [the rise of Babylon by war and conquest](#) at the charges of Lord Sabaoth, the God of Israel, otherwise Babylon wouldn't have been able to rise and conquer in this manner. Right? Thus, upon comprehending the divine purpose of God in the rise of historical Babylon by war and conquest, we are prepared to reckon with the rise of Spiritual Babylon in the future according to the Book of Revelation.

Specifically speaking, the same *analogous terms* used in Jeremiah 46-49 and Ezekiel 25-32 are employed in [the Trumpets of Revelation 7-9](#) for the declaring of the very same event! Namely, [the Rise of Babylon by War & Conquest](#)! All of *the analogous terms* of the 6 TRUMPETS had their fulfillment in Tribulation Period #1 via the rise of historical **Babylon** to worldwide dominance through war and conquest. Hence, the Spirit of Prophecy drew upon and comprehensively compounded all the old-time prophetic and analogous terms in the judgment of the 6 TRUMPETS of Revelation Ch. 8-10; thus, we observe the complete and entire fulfillment of the old-time prophecies via the rise of **Spiritual Babylon** to worldwide dominance through war and conquest.

What analogous terms, you wonder? Well, according to *Jeremiah* and *Ezekiel* (not excluding *Isaiah*), what happened when **hail, fire, and blood burnt up trees and grass**? In summation of the historical event(s) that took place when **hail, fire, and blood burnt up trees and grass** in Tribulation Period #1, **BABYLON ATTACKED, CONQUERED, AND DOMINATED!** Even so, what happened when **the Day of the LORD** and **the year of visitation** came upon the nations of earth? Or, what happened when God determined a **cloudy and dark day** for a people and sent **blood and pestilence** into her **streets** or upon the **mountains** or filling the **rivers**? **BABYLON ATTACKED, CONQUERED, AND DOMINATED!**

Moreover, what happened when the Lord, and not man, had a **sacrifice** to make? What happened when the Lord, not man, **unsheathed** His **sword** to make it **drunk in blood**? What happened when the Lord **brandished** His **sword** and gave it to man to wield? What happened when the Lord made mighty men and warriors into **women in travail**, or what happened when whole nations were made into **drunkards** who were **wallowing** in their own **vomit**? Or, what happened when a **dragon** was plucked from the **waters** and cast into the **wilderness**? What happened when the Lord made waters of **rivers** or **seas** to **overflow** and **flood** lands, cities, and nations? What happened when the Lord made **waters desolate** and **dried, kindled fires**, made the **sea sorrowful, cut down trees**, caused **plagues to abound**, and brought the **four winds** from the **four quarters** of the heavens and the **east wind** to blow? Namely, **BABYLON ATTACKED, CONQUERED, AND DOMINATED!**

These **terms**, observable in the following Chapters and the like, serve as a guide (**a divine tutorial**) to interpret what is being foretold in THE ALARMS OF HEAVEN via THE 6 TRUMPETS. For an exhaustive address of the terms that directly correlate with THE TRUMPETS of the Book of Revelation, see [Revelation 7-9](#).

#### Jeremiah 46:1-28

**At the 4<sup>th</sup> year of the reign of Jehoiakim before the 1<sup>st</sup> Captivity** (Jer. 46:2), Jeremiah foretold the crushing defeat that was soon-to-be suffered by the Egyptian Army, only further confirming and reinforcing the pathetic appeals made to the Jews so far (DON'T TRUST EGYPT!). Moreover, this serves as a stunning example of how the omnipotent arm of God has indeed raised up Babylon for the accomplishment divine purposes – here called, “**the Day of the Lord GOD of Hosts, a Day of Vengeance**” (Jer. 46:10) – whereby the Lord would exact the outstanding causes of justice that He has with the nations of the earth, and much more with the Jews of the Kingdom of Judah!

#### Jeremiah 47:1-7

Against the Philistines...

#### Jeremiah 48:1-47

Against Moab...

#### Jeremiah 49:1-6

Against the Ammonites...

#### Jeremiah 49:7-22

Against Edom...

#### Jeremiah 49:23-27

Against Damascus...

#### Jeremiah 49:28-33

Against Kedar & Hazor...

#### Jeremiah 49:34-39

**At the beginning of Zedekiah's reign** (Jer. 49:34), Jeremiah prophesies against Elam...

To be Continued...

## JEREMIAH 50:1-51:64 | PROPHECIES AGAINST BABYLON

**At the 4<sup>th</sup> year of Zedekiah's reign** (Jer. 51:59-64), this prophecy was delivered by Letter to the Jews in Babylonian Captivity (the **Good Figs**). Babylon's complete and total annihilation was prophesied at length with shocking detail and intensity!

Truly staggering judgments against Babylon were uttered, inculcated, and illustrated... The overall reason why is obvious, but (thinking in context) why was this word given in the 4<sup>th</sup> year of the Zedekiah's reign? As a jealous Husband, God was seeking to capture the heart of His people who were Captive in Babylon. The motives for this word are very similar to the motivations discussed in context to [Jeremiah 25:1-38](#). At this time, only 4 years into Zedekiah's reign, the people in Captivity were not repenting. The Good Figs still weren't good! Hence, when God spoke of their repentance, faith, and restoration, the prophetic illustration was in the future tense. Prophesying of the successful end of the Tribulation Period, it was written,

“In those days, and in that time, saith the LORD, the children of Israel shall come, they and the children of Judah together, **going** and **weeping**: they shall go, and **seek the LORD their God**. They shall ask the way to Zion with their faces thitherward, saying, Come, and let us join ourselves to the LORD in a perpetual covenant that shall not be forgotten. My people hath been lost sheep: their shepherds have caused them to go astray, they have turned them away on the mountains: they have gone from mountain to hill, they have forgotten their resting place.” – Jer. 50:4-6

In the past and present, the Good Figs have been as lost sheep and devoured prey; ah, but the judgments served their purpose! With soft hearts and law-attentive ears, the people will one day weep at the hearing of the words of the Law (“*For all the people wept, when they heard the words of the Law.*” – Neh. 8:9), but that time is not now.

To be Continued...

## JEREMIAH 52:1-27

**At the 11<sup>th</sup> year of Zedekiah's reign**, *I conclude* (or perhaps written in retrospect at a later time), Jeremiah gives an account of the fall of Jerusalem and the burning of the Temple in what we know to be the 5<sup>th</sup> Captivity.

To be Continued...

## JEREMIAH 52:28-30

**Sometime after all 6 Captivities** (Jer. 52:28-30), Jeremiah gives an account of various captivities, both minor and major, disclosing details that not recorded anywhere else. Hereby, in addition to the rest of the Book of Jeremiah & Ezekiel, we are enabled to comprehend all 6 Captivities suffered by the Kingdom of Judah.

## JEREMIAH 52:31-34

**Sometime in or after the 37<sup>th</sup> year of the 70-year long Captivity** (Jer. 52:31), Jeremiah bears witness of the eventual liberation of Jehoiachin from dungeon-to-throne in Babylon.

To be Continued...