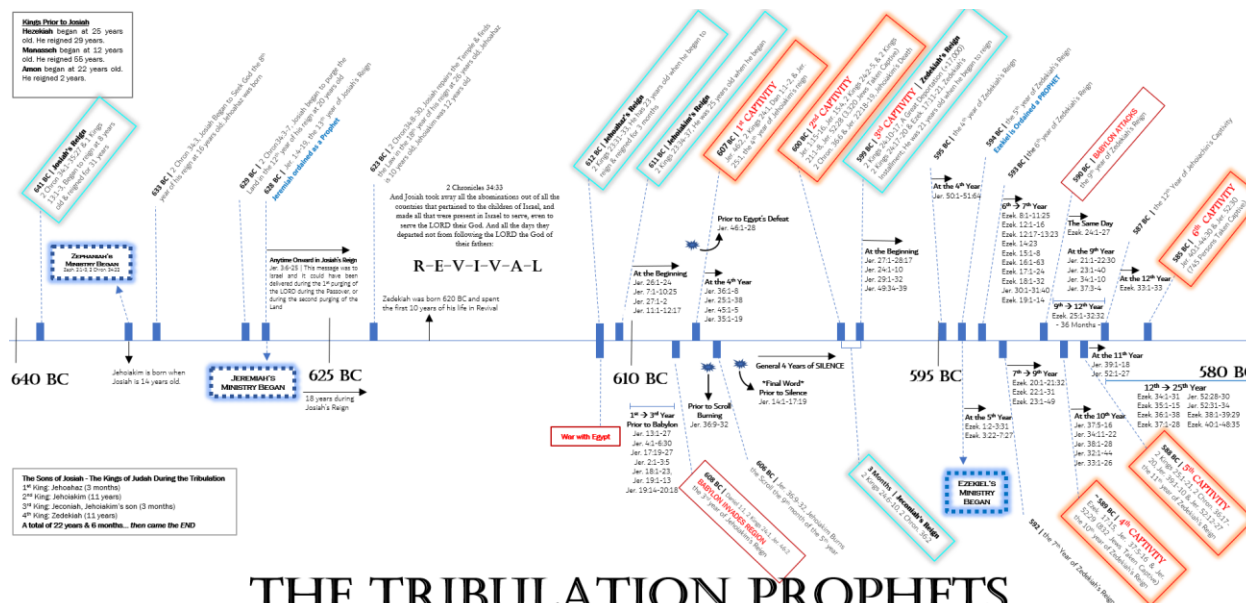


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## A Chronological Ordering of Events



## THE TRIBULATION PROPHETS

Blessed are they which are persecuted for righteousness' sake for there is the Kingdom of Heaven.  
 Blessed are ye, when men shall revile you, and persecute you, and shall say all manner of evil against you falsely, for My sake.  
 Rejoice and be exceedingly glad for great is your reward in Heaven:  
**FOR SO THEY PERSECUTED THEM THE PROPHETS WHICH WERE BEFORE YOU** - Matt. 5:10-12

Directly following a 13-year period of glorious revival in the Kingdom of Judah, a Great Falling Away (as one might call it) began with the reign of Jehoahaz (who reigned for only 3 months). Then, it continued during the reign of Jehoiaquim (who reigned 11 years). Afterwards, the Kingship was momentarily assumed by Jeconiah (who reigned for 3 months and surrendered to Babylon). Then, Zedekiah (who reigned 11 years) ascended the throne at the appointment of Babylon and drove the Kingdom of Judah into the predestinated catastrophe of wrath and destruction! Therefore, seeing that the reigns of Jehoahaz and Jeconiah were nearly irrelevant in respect to the driving influences of wrath and reprobation, the reigns of Jehoiaquim and Zedekiah are in primary view in the Book of Jeremiah. A Great Falling Away necessitates a GREAT STANDING SECURITY before the fall; otherwise, the people would have had nothing to fall away from. Hence, before Jehoahaz, Jehoiaquim, Jeconiah, and Zedekiah, JOSIAH REIGNED! All generations are susceptible to experience the Great Falling Away which must come at the end of the World; and, in biblical parallelism, the Josiah Generation of the Last Days will be one of revival and restoration and then... general reprobation! What happened of old will happen anew. With all this in mind, let us turn our eyes upon Josiah's reign.

### Josiah's Reign

At approx. 641 BC at 8 years old Josiah's reign began. He reigned a total of 31 years in Jerusalem (2 Chron. 34:1).

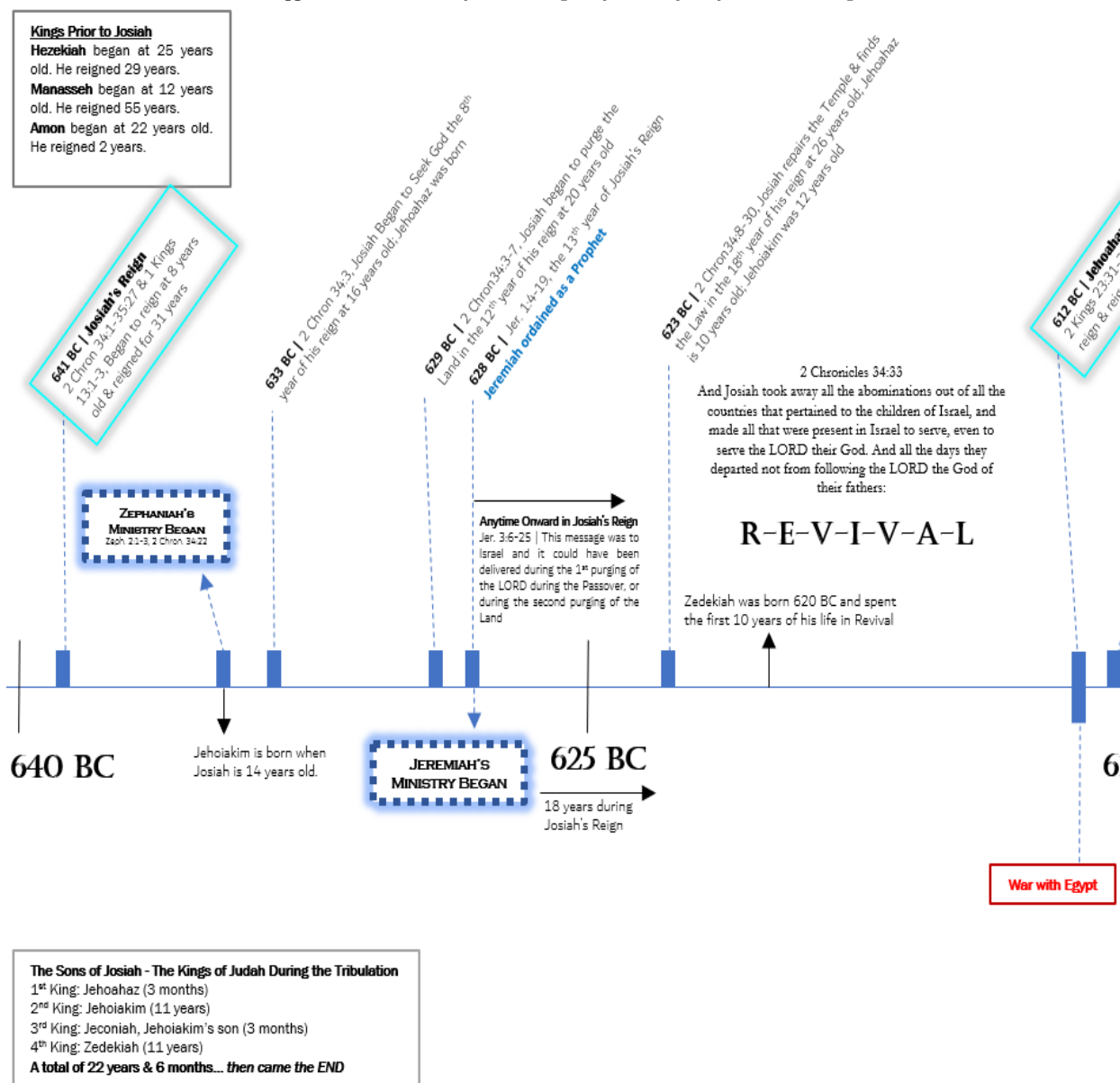
**Jeremiah 1:1-3, 25:3, 36:2** – **The historical placement of Jeremiah's early ministry** is herein identified. This information is vital to determine the audience of Jeremiah's earlier prophecies, those of the greater part of his ministry, and all unmarked and undated messages received and delivered.

**Jeremiah 1:4-19** – **At the 13<sup>th</sup> year of Josiah's reign**, Jeremiah was ordained by God a Prophet and his first prophecy of his active ministry was revealed. This was the *first* of only *two* prophecies received by Jeremiah during the reign of Josiah, a time when his ministry had very little activity. Notably, even though this prophecy was received during the reign of Josiah, its message pertained to the people of Judah during the reign of Jehoiaquim and Zedekiah, which made up the bulk of Jeremiah's active ministry.

**Jeremiah 3:6-25** – **Anytime from the 13<sup>th</sup> year of Josiah's reign and onward**, this is the *second* and *final* prophecy given during Josiah's reign. Surprisingly, this message is for the people of Israel instead of the people of Judah. The reason for this is clarified by the exploits of Josiah and the peculiar circumstance of Israel during that time.

### The Forerunning Context of the Great Falling Away & the Tribulation

*Approx. 641-611 BC, Josiah's Reign to Jehoahaz and Jehoiakim's Reign*



As you can see in the portion of the Timeline provided above, the 13-year Revival Period under King Josiah – (approx. 623-611 BC) from the 18<sup>th</sup> year of Josiah's reign to his death which resulted in the ascension of Jehoahaz (3 months) and Jehoiakim (11 years) – was a period where “ALL” were made to “serve the LORD” (2 Chron. 34:33)! From 10 years old to 23 years old, Jehoahaz served the LORD! From 12 years old to 25 years old, Jehoiakim served the LORD! These two men, the sons of Josiah, spent the formative years of their understanding in the rain shower of REVIVAL! From a place of utter and longstanding saturation in the Spirit of God on every side, these men ascended the Throne! And, shockingly, during the next 22 years all hell broke loose! These men, the apostates of the Great Tribulation, were men who knew the LORD and walked with God, having spent over a decade in obedience to God, and yet in their day all the spiritual and physical curses

were brought into manifestation! No one is above it. No, not in their generation or ours! This is a sobering reality to reckon at such an hour as now! Oh, how ignorantly optimistic I have been! May the LORD have mercy.

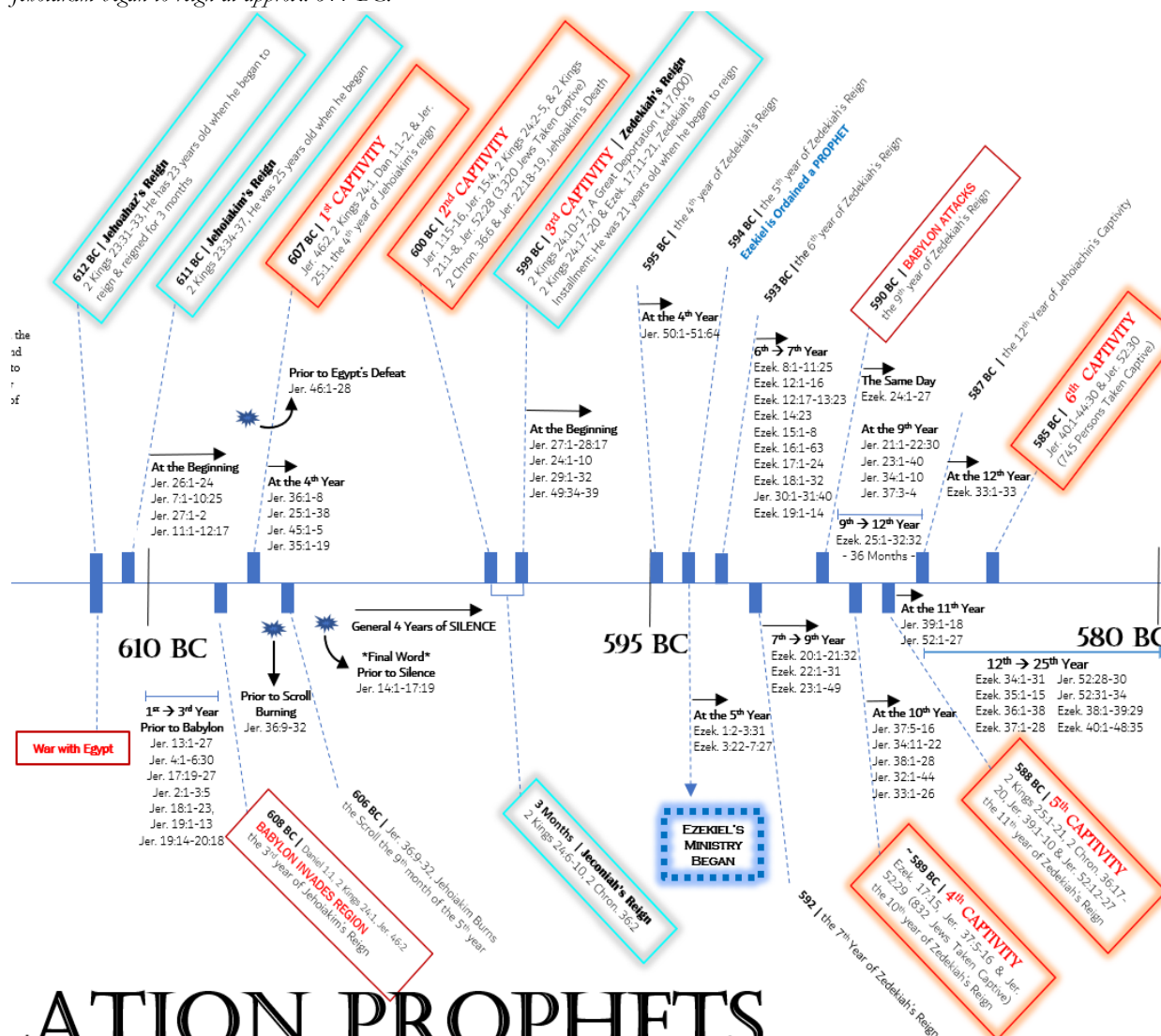
After spending 13 years watching Jeremiah as a right-hand man to King Josiah, these men rebelled against the LORD and disregarded the renown and aged Prophet! Jeremiah, the beloved friend of Josiah, would have gone to and fro from Josiah's children (Jeboabaz, Jehoiaikim, and Zedekiah) while interacting with him and his family, his children at their differing ages from 1 to 25 years old. This is a profound heritage to denounce and disregard! This is an immense fall from a high and glorious place! Zedekiah, for a later reference point, was born 3 years into the Revival Period. He spent the first 10 years of his life knowing nothing but a King, a Kingdom, and a people of Judah loving and serving the LORD in Spirit and in truth! He too, like the others, served the LORD.

Josiah died and Jeboabaz is made King for 3 months (2 Kings 23:30, 2 Chron. 36:1).

After just 3 months, Jeboabaz is taken captive to Egypt and Judah is put under tribute. Then Eliakim, the son of Josiah (who was named Jehoiaikim by Pharaoh), is put in rule by Pharaoh. He reigned for a total of 11 years (2 Kings 23:34, 2 Chron. 36:4).

## Jehoiaikim's Reign

Jehoiaikim began to reign at approx. 611 BC.



# ATION PROPHETS

*Only 3 Months into the Idolatry and Apostasy of the Kingdom of Judah, the aged and honored Prophet Jeremiah boldly confronted the backsliding by a near-martyrdom proclamation in The Temple Courts (Jer. 26:1-24, 7:1-10:25) followed by a bold defiance in the King's Court (Jer. 27:1-2). Afterwards, Jeremiah turned to the people of Judah as a whole by traversing the streets of all the Cities of Judah to prophesy (Jer. 11:1-12:17, 13:1-27). Finally, and while time was running out because the Babylonian Armies were on their way, Jeremiah ran the Streets of Jerusalem searching for one righteous man while preaching like a madman (Jer. 4:1-6:30)! Finding none, Jeremiah spent the rest of his time in Jerusalem prophesying (Jer. 17:19-27, 2:1-3:5, 18:1-23, 19:1-13, 19:14-20:18) until the besiegement of Jerusalem, and, until the following 1<sup>st</sup> Captivity. During these final months of prophesying, Jeremiah directly addressed the vain hope of Egypt and valiantly opposed the most prominent origins of disobedience with increasing boldness and urgency amidst rising persecution on every side.*

**Jeremiah 26:1-24 – At the beginning of the reign of Jehoiakim**, Jeremiah was commanded to go and stand in the Temple Courts and deliver the message of God, diminishing not a word. In all likelihood, this was the beginning of Jeremiah's active ministry in the days of Jehoiakim. He had only prophesied two messages during the reign of Josiah, so his prophetic activity was quite new at this time. Nevertheless, this was a bold move! This would have thrust him into the public eye immediately! And after a near-death experience, Jeremiah was no doubt approved of God for further prophecies in the thrall of a backsliding generation.

**Jeremiah 7:1-10:25** – This is the record of Jeremiah's full message delivered in the Temple Courts at the onset of Jeremiah's ministry **at the beginning of Jehoiakim's reign**, summarized in Jeremiah 26:2-8.

From the beginning of Jehoiakim's reign and at the onset of Jeremiah's ministry in this generation, the word was given, "This House shall be like Shiloh, and this City shall be **desolate without an inhabitant**" (Jer. 26:9). This word almost resulted in Jeremiah's martyrdom! In the same message (Jer. 26:8), which was recorded in full at Jeremiah 7:1-10:25, the LORD further expounded the judgment of God in reference to what happened to Shiloh (Jer. 7:14-15). This judgment was so significant to the Kingdom and people of Judah that, the Lord said, "the Land shall be **desolate**" (Jer. 7:34). The word desolate means that the people would be slaughtered until **none were left** and the Land was **without inhabitant**, that so great a massacre of the people would take place that there would be **no man** to bury the carcasses sprawled across the countryside (Jer. 7:33). "The Land *perisheth* and is *burned up* like a wilderness, that **none passeth through**", the Prophet declared (Jer. 9:12). Babylon, the Army from "the North Country", was coming to "make the Cities of Judah **desolate** and *a den of dragons*" (Jer. 10:22). These judgments belonged to those who were in the Land of Judah, my reader. As the judgments of God became manifest in their increasing increments, one must recognize how meticulously the LORD was keeping track of every single person – the objects of God's special judgment!

Shockingly, there was another categorically different people who would be the subject of prophecy and judgment all throughout the ministry of Jeremiah from the 1<sup>st</sup> Captivity to the 6<sup>th</sup> Captivity. Namely, God was jealously concerned with the Jews who would be *scattered* in all the nations whither the LORD would *disperse* them. You see, many would try to escape the judgment of God in hopes to settle in peace within foreign nations. But to them, the LORD said, "**death shall be chosen** rather than life by *all the residue* of them that remain of this evil family" (Jer. 8:3). Again, speaking of those who would be scattered among the heathen, 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).

Despite the declaration of these inescapable judgments, pathetic appeals of mercy and forgiveness were offered. God's intentions for sending Jeremiah were clear from the very beginning! At the commissioning statement of Jeremiah's initial stand in Jehoiakim's generation, it was written, "Thus saith the LORD; Stand in the court of the LORD'S House, and speak unto all the Cities of Judah, which come to worship in the LORD'S House, all the words that I command thee to speak unto them;



diminish not a word: **If so be they will** *hearken*, and *turn* every man from his evil way, **that I may repent** Me of the **evil**, which I purpose to do unto them because of the evil of their doings” (Jer. 26:2-3). The LORD wanted to repent, to justly thwart the purpose of death and destruction! He wanted to have mercy, my reader ...but, sadly, the people wouldn’t repent. Fearfully, the LORD expressed how earnestly He was standing among the people to **listen** and **look** for their repentance. With mourning and astonishment, the LORD said, “Why then is this people of Jerusalem slidden back by a perpetual backsliding? they hold fast deceit, they refuse to return. I **hearkened** and **heard**, but **they spake not aright: no man repented** him of his wickedness, **saying, What have I done?** every one turned to his course, as the horse rusheth into the battle” (Jer. 8:5-6).

What could cause such deafness and dumbness to God? Fearfully, He was standing among the people both looking and listening for their repentance... and found none! Then God turned His gaze upon *the Prophet* and *the Priest* which “dealeth falsely”, and said, “For they have healed the hurt of the daughter of My people slightly, saying, Peace, peace; when there is no peace.” These deceivers! Then, the LORD asked, “Were they ashamed when they had committed abomination? nay, they were not at all ashamed, neither could they blush: therefore shall they fall among them that fall: in the time of their visitation they shall be cast down, saith the LORD” (Jer. 8:10-12). Oh, the people were bewitched! And much of the blame was put upon the false Prophets. As for the people, they didn’t understand the judgments of God because they didn’t understand their sin (Jer. 8:7-9), and thereby they were made susceptible to false prophets. Amidst a strong delusion so widespread and a rebellion so numerous, the LORD asked: “Who is the wise man, that may understand this” (Jer. 9:12)? He was exasperated by the people’s stubborn impenitence! Testifying of this, He clarified the special ministry of Jeremiah as that of a Tribulation Prophet, saying, “Since the day that your fathers came forth out of the land of Egypt unto this day I have even sent unto you all my servants the prophets, daily rising up early and sending them: Yet they hearkened not unto me, nor inclined their ear, but hardened their neck: they did worse than their fathers. Therefore thou shalt speak all these words unto them; but **they will not hearken to thee**: thou shalt also call unto them; but **they will not answer thee**” (Jer. 7:25-27).

**Jeremiah 27:1-2 – At the beginning of the reign of Jehoiakim**, Jeremiah marched boldly into the King’s Court with a message of the LORD! The King (who was like a nephew to Jeremiah) was commanded to come under the **yoke** of Babylon and **live in no uncertain terms**, or else. This message was delivered within the scope of Jehoiakim’s and Zedekiah’s reign, recorded in **Jeremiah 27:1-28:17**, but the events of Zedekiah’s reign wherein Jeremiah faced-off with the false prophets of that time were in special focus. From the very beginning of Jehoiakim’s reign, the word of the LORD came with definitive clarity concerning the judgments of God. It is vital that this message is comprehended from as early as it was descriptively defined by God to the people who were in the midst of a Great Falling Away; namely, the specific means of death ordained for all the rebels of the Church, or, in other words, the means by which God would restore Church Purity and become Immediately Sovereign once again! The Armies of Babylon were the LORD’s weapons of choice to do the primary act of judgment. They were His hewing axe and destroying weapon (Isa. 10), my reader! Unto the Kingdom of Judah and to all nations, the LORD said: “*that nation will I punish*, saith the LORD, with **the sword**, and with **the famine**, and with **the pestilence**, until I have **consumed** them by [Babylon’s] hand” (Jer. 27:8). The LORD said, “until **I HAVE CONSUMED THEM** by [Babylon’s] hand” (Jer. 27:8)! This message was cited to be delivered in Zedekiah’s time, but the context of the Chapter implies that the same message was delivered to Jehoiakim.

**Jeremiah 11:1-12:17 – At the beginning of the reign of Jehoiakim**, *I conclude*, because that which was preached at the Temple, firstly, and to the King, secondarily, must then be preached in the streets and byways of all the Cities of Judah. In the first recorded instance in the Book of Jeremiah, the Lord commanded, “Proclaim all these words **in the Cities of Judah**, and **in the streets of Jerusalem**” (Jer. 11:6). That which was proclaimed at the Temple must be proclaimed everywhere, no doubt! Even so, the primary message given at the Temple (recorded in Jeremiah 7:1-10:25) is very similar to that which was delivered to the Cities of Judah, and necessarily so. Reasonably, only after Jeremiah faithfully delivered the word of God to the prominent leaders associated with the Temple (the Prophets, Priests, Princes, Elders, and Levites),

and the King, would he then be given another prophetic word for another sector of the people of Judah; and he, being commanded to go, embarked upon a distinctly separate mission to the hazarding of his safety and the spending of his energy. The latter message, spoken to all the people of the Cities of Judah, was certainly affected by the reception or rejection of the former messages, spoken to the prominent leaders of the common people.

What is the word? To the impenitent Nation whose Temple and King's Court traffickers had heard and rejected the direct word of the LORD, the God of Israel said: "Therefore thus saith the LORD, Behold, I will bring **evil** upon them, which **they shall not be able to escape**; and *though they shall cry unto Me, I will not hearken unto them*. Then shall the cities of Judah and inhabitants of Jerusalem go, and cry unto the gods unto whom they offer incense: *but they shall not save them at all in the time of their trouble*" (Jer. 11:11-12). The LORD of the Church rebels, declared, "**they shall not be able to escape!**" This depicts God's meticulous involvement in the enforcement of these judgments: The LORD was **watching** with every Babylonian Soldier who stood at attention to prevent all escapees (Ps. 127:1, Ezek. 21:3-4, 5:10, 12-17, 6:2-4, 6-7, 10), the LORD was **meticulously guiding** the blade of every Babylonian sword wielded on the battlefield (Ps. 17:13-14), the LORD was **meticulously aiming** every Babylonian arrow to plunge into the flesh of those whom divine anger was targeting (1 Kings 22:20, 34; Ezek. 3:18, 18:4, 20), the LORD was **meticulously directing** the deadly claws of pestilence which walked the countryside to ravaged the people (Ex. 12:12-13, 23, Deut. 28:35, Ex. 15:26), the LORD was **standing in judgment** over the biological resilience of every man who assayed to endure the famine but couldn't (Jer. 42:16-17, 22, Ezek. 5:12, 6:12), and, finally, the LORD was **specifically ordering** the disorderly imagination of every violent beast to devour the flesh of whomever was divinely appointed to die (Lev. 26:22, Ezek. 14:15, 21, 33:27, Jer. 15:3, 1 Kings 13:24-25, 2 Kings 17:25)! When God said that **none shall escape**, He meant it.

For example, when the Men of Anathoth conspired to kill the Prophet Jeremiah and the LORD retaliated, He said, "Therefore thus saith the LORD of hosts, 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). The LORD was *in their midst* and *standing among them* for **JUDGMENT** – He was **looking** and **seeing**, **listening** and **hearing**, **speaking** and **retaliating**! When men vainly threatened God's Prophet, the LORD effectually threatened the conspirators and boldly brought the conflict into the public eye by the Prophet's prophesying so that, in turn, all men might learn whose purpose would stand at the latter end. The persecutors vainly said, "He shall not see our last end" (Jer. 12:4). Indeed. Who? The contest was already settled! God Almighty said, "for **the sword of the LORD** shall devour **from one end of the Land even to the other end of the Land**: *no flesh shall have peace*" (Jer. 12:12). Nevertheless, the LORD would not make a full end (leaving a remnant: Jer. 4:27, 5:10, 18). A remnant would be saved in the latter days after God's wrath was satisfied and every judgment was executed to meticulously annihilate all rebels from the Church (Jer. 12:15-16).

**Jeremiah 13:1-27 – Anywhere in the midst of the 1<sup>st</sup> or 2<sup>nd</sup> year of the reign of Jehoiakim** and probably while Jeremiah is going to and fro throughout the Cities of Judah, *I conclude*, because Jeremiah had to travel to the Euphrates River twice for the delivery of this prophetic word.

Oh, how affectionately the appeals went forth! How diligently did wisdom sound the alarm to the simple ones, crying out: "Hear ye, and give ear; be not proud: for the LORD hath spoken. 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. 13:15-17). Yes, and how terrifyingly merciless the judgments of God would pursue and overcome those

who spurn the pitiful voice of God! “Then shalt thou say unto them, Thus saith the LORD, **Behold**, I will fill *all the inhabitants of this Land*, even *the Kings* that sit upon David's throne, and *the Priests*, and *the Prophets*, and *all the inhabitants of Jerusalem*, with drunkenness. And **I will dash them one against another, even the fathers and the sons together**, saith the LORD: **I will not pity, nor spare, nor have mercy, but destroy them**” (Jer. 13:13-14).

**Jeremiah 4:1-6:30 – In the midst of the 2<sup>nd</sup> year and toward the beginning of the 3<sup>rd</sup> year of Jehoiakim's reign**, *I conclude*, because Babylon had already *gone forth out of his place* to invade the region (Jer. 6:22-23). This invasion, we know, transpired in the 3<sup>rd</sup> year of Jehoiakim (Dan. 1:1), but the actual defeat of the primary opponent, Egypt, did not take place until the 4<sup>th</sup> year of Jehoiakim (Jer. 46:2). Jehoiakim didn't surrender to Babylon until the end of the 4<sup>th</sup> year of his reign. The Prophet was commanded, “**RUN** ye to and fro **through the streets of Jerusalem**, and **SEE** now, and **KNOW**, and **SEEK** in the broad places thereof, if ye can **FIND** a man, if there be any...” (Jer. 5:1). What was happening? Jerusalem was SEARCHED!

A promise of restoration was offered upon the people's repentance (Jer. 4:1-4) and a vision of the coming destruction was seen and proclaimed by Jeremiah – a destroying force so comprehensive, Jeremiah said: “I beheld, and, lo, there was **no man...not a man...**”! Not a man would be left in Jerusalem! ...and not a man was repenting at the preaching of Jeremiah! How fearful! How exactly did justice hit the mark! The LORD brought before the faces of the impenitent people a weeping and broken Prophet – his face contorted and cheeks tear-stained! – at what? Jeremiah saw a vision of the people in distress, weeping, and anguish! He heard the words that they would soon utter, crying, “Woe is me now! For my soul is wearied because of murderers” (Jer. 4:31)! This behavior was starkly contrasted with the tearless and stone-cold condition of the people even while Jeremiah was heralding these prophecies like a madman on the streets of Jerusalem! Not one man who feared God could be found (Jer. 5:1), and Jeremiah searched! This is a **Tribulation Prophet**. They were responding to the word of God by Jeremiah, saying, “It is not He; neither shall evil come upon us; neither shall we see **sword** nor **famine**” (Jer. 5:12).

At this time the first increment of chastisement was on its way. Literally, I mean, Babylon was on her way (Jer. 6:1, 22-26). Jeremiah felt the urgency! The command of the LORD was already given to the Armies of Babylon, “Hew ye down trees, and cast a mount against Jerusalem: this is the City to be visited...”, and appeals were made to Jerusalem in the light of it, which were: “Be thou instructed, O Jerusalem, lest My soul depart from thee; lest I make thee desolate, a Land not inhabited” (Jer. 6:6-9). Was Jerusalem instructed? Did she repent? Both *the Prophet* and *the Priest* were dealing falsely! The LORD **looked** and **listened**, and **said**: “They have healed also the hurt of the daughter of My people slightly, saying, Peace, peace; when there is no peace. Were they ashamed when they had committed abomination? nay, they were not at all ashamed, neither could they blush: therefore they shall fall among them that fall: at the time that I visit them they shall be cast down, saith the LORD” (Jer. 6:14-15). Despite all correction theretofore (Jer. 5:3, 21), the people were blindly staggering into the hands of an Angry God! [leaving a remnant: 4:27, 5:10, 18]

**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 waited 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 2:1-3:5 – Subsequent to the former two prophecies, and also in the midst of the 2<sup>nd</sup> year and toward the beginning of the 3<sup>rd</sup> year of Jehoiakim's reign** (Dan. 1:1; I mean, just before the invasion of the region and the minor besiegement of Jerusalem), *I conclude*, because at this time strong appeals were made to the people that they would not trust in Egypt. 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, like that of 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 18:1-23, 19:1-13, 19:14-20:18 – Subsequent to the former prophecy, and also in the midst of the 3<sup>rd</sup> year of Jehoiakim's reign but before the arrival of Babylon to the region, I conclude** (Jeremiah made a trip to Tophet which was right outside of the City), Jeremiah made the last advances of his personal appearances in public ministry for the rest of Jehoiakim's reign. Note: If Gedaliah the son of Pashur (Jer. 38:1) was the son of Pasher, the son of Immer (Jer. 20:1; the Governor of the House of the LORD during the reign of Jehoiakim), and it appears that he was, then these events took place during Jehoiakim's reign. Why? Apparently, Pashur the son of Immer was carried away captive in the **3<sup>rd</sup> Captivity**, otherwise he would have been the man acting instead of Gedaliah in the situation which took place in Jeremiah 38:1 during Zedekiah's reign.

On the eve of the **1<sup>st</sup> Captivity**, which was the beginning of God's judgments... what is the word? Graciously, the LORD made one last appeal for mercy (Jer. 18:7-11)! Sadly, though, it was rejected (Jer. 18:12). Then, upon the pronouncement of certain judgment (Jer. 18:15-17) the impenitent people conspired to kill Jeremiah, saying, "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). The people succeeded inasmuch that they put Jeremiah in the stocks and humiliated him (Jer. 20:1-18), but, meanwhile, the threatenings of God were delivered with breathtaking description (Jer. 19:9) and retaliatory specificity (Jer. 20:3-6). How fearful! Finally, and necessarily so, Jeremiah was forced from thenceforth to go into hiding until the death of Jehoiakim. In the notated sequence of events written above, Jeremiah was moved to prophesy to the people as a whole (Jer. 18:1-23), the ancients of the people and of the Priesthood (Jer. 19:1-13), then to the presiding Priesthood of the time who did their duties in the Temple (Jer. 19:14-20:18), and as a consequence of these three consecutive events, let it be understood, persecution rose to its highest threat! This meant death or imprisonment for Jeremiah from this point onward in the reign of Jehoiakim. Evidently, as you will see in the following events, Jeremiah was directed by the LORD into hiding so as to prophesy by writing (through the ministry of Baruch) until the fall of the Kingdom at the 11<sup>th</sup> year of Jehoiakim (Jer. 36:1-8).

## Babylon Invades the Region and Besieges Jerusalem!

Take note, my reader, Jerusalem was besieged by Babylon at **the 3<sup>rd</sup> year of Jehoiakim** (Dan. 1:1, approx.). This siege, which was more of a detainment of Judah until Egypt was defeated, lasted for the space of about 1 year until Jehoiakim surrendered to Babylon (2 Kings 24:1). In all likelihood, Jehoiakim chose to surrender at the defeat of the Egyptian Army encamped at the river Euphrates in the 4<sup>th</sup> year of Jehoiakim's reign (Jer. 46:2).

**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 of 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!

*The Egyptian Army was the primary opponent of Babylon. At the 4<sup>th</sup> year of Jehoiakim and the 1<sup>st</sup> of Nebuchadnezzar, Babylon defeated the Egyptian Army and thus liberated Judah from the Egyptian tribute (Jer. 46:2). Albeit, let us take note of the peculiar situation of Jehoiakim during this time. Jehoiakim was made to reckon with the soon-to-be Ruler of the region when Jerusalem was besieged in the 3<sup>rd</sup> year of his reign (Dan. 1:1), at least around 1 year before his surrender to Babylon. Jehoiakim could have been refusing to surrender until he saw the conclusion of the battle between the Egyptians and the Babylonians which was taking place right then (Jer. 46:2). What magnitude of force was put into the siege of Jerusalem is historically unclear. Given the many battles Babylon was fighting in the region at the time, the force and progress of the siege could have been minor and preliminary to any major attack (time must be spent building war instruments and wooden forts for the siege – e.g. 2 Kings 25:1, Isa. 29:3; or perhaps they were simply surrounding Jerusalem so that they did not send aid to the Egyptian Army which was encamped at the river Euphrates – Jer. 46:2; or, in the case that they were not worried about Judah sending aid to Egypt, perhaps they were simply surrounding them so as to detain them until the battle with the Egyptians was finished and the victor declared, in hopes that Judah would behold the overthrow of their master and willingly submit to Babylon). It is clear that Jehoiakim peacefully surrendered and thus kept his installment as King of Judah as a tributary to Babylon (2 Kings 24:1), therefore the only reasonable conclusion to make is that the siege was minor and for the space of about a year until sometime in the 4<sup>th</sup> year of Jehoiakim's reign, Jehoiakim surrendered. At this time the people of Judah became tributaries to Babylon for the next three years until Jehoiakim rebelled (2 Kings 24:1). Note: there are contrary opinions about what exactly happened historically, but this position appears indisputably sound.*

## 1<sup>st</sup> Captivity

*At approx. 607 BC Babylon Conquers Egypt (Jer. 46:2) & Judah is put under tribute (2 Kings 24:1, Dan. 1:1-2, Jer. 25:1). This takes place at the 1<sup>st</sup> year of Nebuchadnezzar's reign. The House of the LORD is partly robbed (Dan. 1:2) and the prophet Daniel and companions are deported (Dan. 1:1-4). After this, Judah spends 3 years in faithful servitude to Babylon... and then rebels (2 Kings 24:1). The account of why Babylon did not come around the 7<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup> year of Jehoiakim's reign, the year he rebelled (2 Kings 24:1), is not revealed. Babylon could have been occupied in other wars and this delayed its coming, but it is most likely that Babylon did come by the 9<sup>th</sup> or 10<sup>th</sup> year of Jehoiakim because the siege appears to have been long enough to help bring about a devastating famine (Jer. 14:1-22). Babylon finally conquered, with no detailed record of how these things transpired. This much we do know: by this time (the 2<sup>nd</sup> Captivity) it was the 11<sup>th</sup> year of Jehoiakim's reign and the 7<sup>th</sup> year of Nebuchadnezzar's reign (2 Kings 23:36). Surprisingly, only three major passages of scripture seem to be dedicated to this approx. 6-year period (Jeremiah Ch. 36, Ch. 25, & 14:1-17:18; with one small prophecy given personally to Baruch – Jer. 45:1-5). These are passages detailing climactic events, truly! ...but, notably, the overall silence could be because of Jehoiakim's horrific act of burning the scroll and attempted at capturing and killing Jeremiah and Baruch, which forced them into hiding for the remainder of Jehoiakim's rule. This is what happened...*

**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 siege 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 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 Jeremiah's prophecies 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 during **the 2<sup>nd</sup> Advent War**, 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; 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 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 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.

**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.

**Jeremiah 14:1-17:18 – Sometime after the 5<sup>th</sup> year and ninth month of Jehoiakim's reign, after Jehoiakim burned the Word of God, and before the conquering of Jerusalem in the 11<sup>th</sup> year of Jehoiakim's reign**, a fierce word of general reprobation is delivered (Jer. 15:1). After observing the time references of this prophecy (see [Commentary](#)), and because of the richness of the following events, it is helpful to note in summary several points of relevance and complexity. For a focused and necessary explanation of the following, see the [Commentary](#).

- **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 statedly 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.

*A general 4-year period of silence transpired after Jehoiaakim burned the Word of God, excepting Jeremiah 14:1-17:18 (likely delivered around the time that Jehoiaakim rebelled against Babylon in the 7<sup>th</sup> year of Jehoiaakim's reign). The command to find, arrest, imprison, and or kill Jeremiah and Baruch was already given, and the two went into hiding by the hand of God until judgment came.*

## 2<sup>nd</sup> Captivity

*At approx. 600 BC Jehoiaakim King of Judah was taken captive and died just outside of Jerusalem for refusing to pay tribute, and his son Jeconiah was made King in his stead (2 Kings 24:2-9, Jer. 52:28). This was the 11<sup>th</sup> year of Jehoiaakim's reign and the 7<sup>th</sup> year of Nebuchadnezzar's reign (2 Kings 23:36). Note: Jehoiaakim was bound in chains and meant to be carried to Babylon, but he died just outside of the gates of Jerusalem (see 2 Chron. 36:6 & Jer. 22:18-19). [3320 Jews were taken captive - Jer. 52:28]*

## Jeconiah's Reign

*We do not know who installed Jeconiah as King of Judah. It appears that Babylon left without appointing government officials. It could be presumed that no one person appointed Jeconiah. Rather, the people of Judah that remained in the Land chose him to fill the void seeing that he was Jehoiaakim's son. Babylon carried away captive all that were ordained thereto, only 3,320 people. The ill-treatment of Jehoiaakim, resulting in his death, conveys the brutality and force used by Babylon. Remember, King Jehoiaakim died outside the gates of Jerusalem having been bound with chains in train with the Captivity; this speaks toward what manner of persons were in this Captivity. They had every intention to cripple the nation by selectively choosing this relatively small captivity and returning as quickly as possible. They knew that the government affairs of Judah were left in disarray. Why didn't they set things in order in the 2<sup>nd</sup> Captivity? I believe there were too many difficult decisions to make and thus it required the presence of the King of Babylon. It is likely that he wanted to be there. Upon crippling the Kingdom via the 2<sup>nd</sup> Captivity, the Armies of Babylon were committed to return with the King of Babylon himself to set in order the government of the City. I believe the King of Babylon wanted to look upon things himself to prevent any further uprising. With just enough time to travel to and from Babylon to secure the 2<sup>nd</sup> Captivity and conduct the King of Babylon to Jerusalem (only 3 months), they returned. Thus, Jeconiah's reign was a mere 3 months. We do not know what happened within the 3 months of this man's rule, the man Jeconiah, but we do know his conduct: he, being merely 18 years old, committed great wickedness and rebellion against the Lord (2 Kings 24:9). Note: it appears that in the 1<sup>st</sup> Captivity Nebuchadnezzar was present (2 Kings 24:1), in the second he wasn't (2 Kings 24:2-5), and in the third he was (2 Kings 24:10-11).*

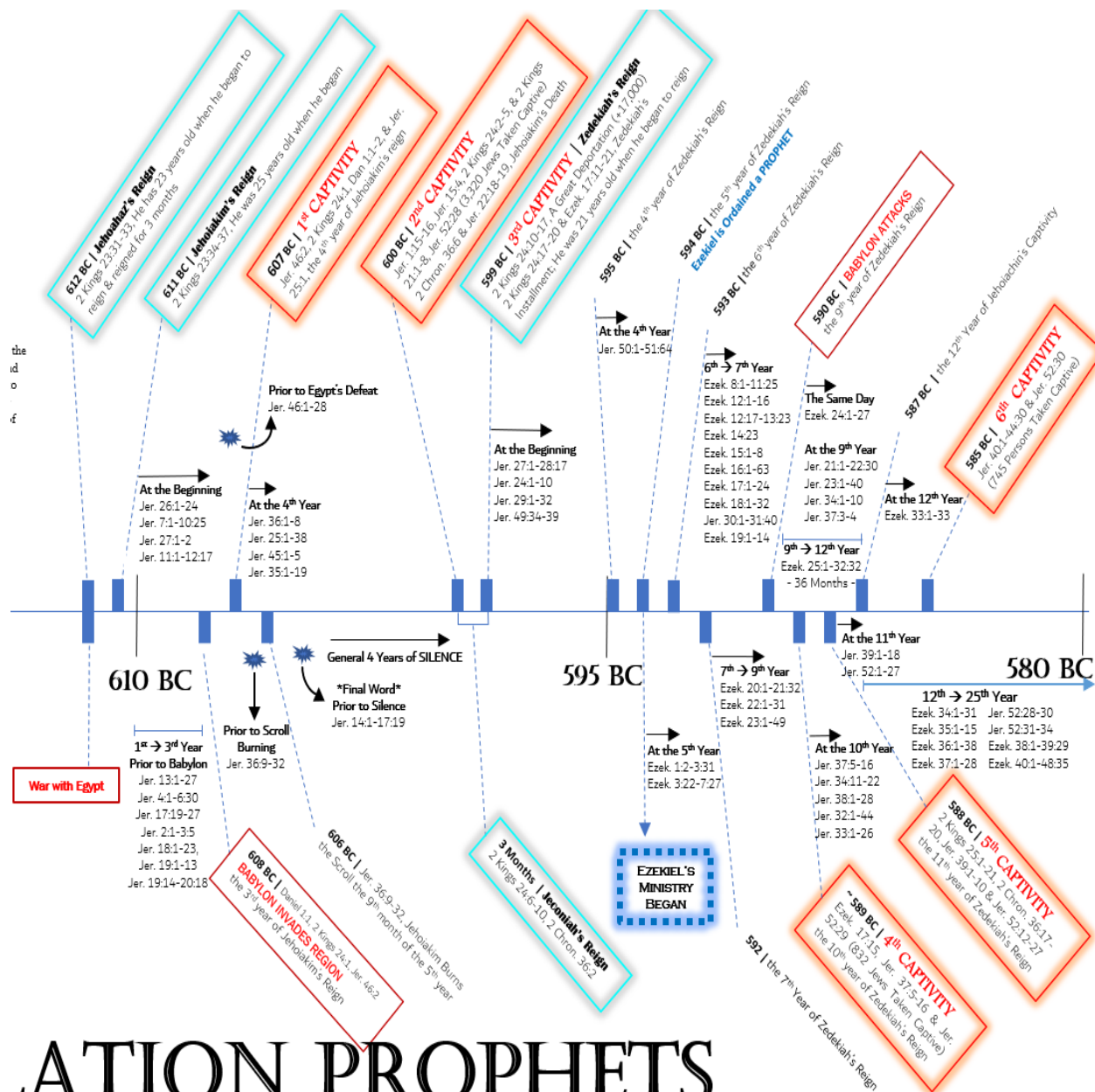
## 3<sup>rd</sup> Captivity

*At approx. 599 BC Jerusalem was besieged and overtaken after only 3 months of Jeconiah's reign. Because the Kingdom of Judah was just conquered only three months ago, they were in no shape to withstand the Armies of Babylon. Thoughtfully, the young man Jeconiah surrendered to Babylon and lived. He and a multitude of others were carried away in a great deportation (2 Kings 24:10-17; Nebuchadnezzar took Jeconiah in the 8<sup>th</sup> year of Nebuchadnezzar's reign - 2 Kings 24:11-12). Finally, and at last, after setting in order what was left of the officials of the government, the King of Babylon made Mattaniah the son of Josiah (whose name was changed to Zedekiah) King in Jeconiah's stead (2 Kings 24:17-20). All the Princes, mighty men of valor, craftsmen, smiths, and all that were apt for war were taken Captive, according to the scriptures [+17,000 were taken captive – 2 Kings 24:14-16]. Note: the sons of the Princes, the relatives, and other such like persons would fill the rooms of their captive family members in an attempt to revive the government just like Jeconiah filled the room of his father Jehoiaakim.*

## Zedekiah's Reign

*At approx. 599 BC Zedekiah's reign began. Zedekiah was a tributary to Babylon for at least 7 years (approx.). He was sworn in by oath to the King of Babylon (2 Kings 24:17-19, Ezek. 17:11-21), and at some point around the 7<sup>th</sup> year of his reign he rebelled against the King of Babylon (2 Kings 24:20, Ezek. 17:11-21). This rebellion, probably by not paying the tribute, resulted in Babylon's eventual attack which came in the 9<sup>th</sup> year of Zedekiah's reign (2 Kings 24:20). The tribute to Babylon was withheld in hopes to hire Egyptian horses and or soldiers*

*as an aid against a retaliatory attack by Babylon (Ezek. 17:15, Jer. 37:5-16). Babylon eventually attacked at the 9<sup>th</sup> year of Zedekiah's reign, as formerly mentioned, but Egypt was not officially hired until the 10<sup>th</sup> year of Zedekiah's reign. By officially hired, I mean, Egypt did not assemble to aid the Kingdom of Judah until this time. But, Egypt proved to be a broken reed. Here's what happened...*



# ATION PROPHETS

*At the beginning of Zedekiah's reign, Jeremiah prophesied 3 times. After this, no prophecy is received or delivered for approximately 4 years. At the 4<sup>th</sup> year of Zedekiah's reign, Jeremiah prophesied 1 time. At the 5<sup>th</sup> year of Zedekiah's reign, Ezekiel is ordained and he prophesies approximately 7 times. In the midst of the 6<sup>th</sup> and 7<sup>th</sup> year of Zedekiah's reign, Ezekiel prophesies approximately 9 times & Jeremiah prophesies approximately 1 time. From the 7<sup>th</sup> to the 9<sup>th</sup> year Zedekiah's reign, Ezekiel prophesies approximately 3 times. In the midst of the 9<sup>th</sup> year of Zedekiah's reign, Ezekiel prophesies approximately 3 times & Jeremiah prophesies approximately 3 times. At the 10<sup>th</sup> year of Zedekiah's reign, Jeremiah prophesies approximately 5 times. At the 11<sup>th</sup> year of Zedekiah's reign, Jeremiah prophesies approximately 2 times. From the 9<sup>th</sup> to the 12<sup>th</sup> year of what would have been Zedekiah's reign, Ezekiel prophesies approximately 9 times. From the 12<sup>th</sup> to the 25<sup>th</sup> year since Jeconiah's captivity, Ezekiel prophesies approximately 7 times.*



**Jeremiah 27:1-28:17 – 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! [Note: to understand the depth and significance of Jeremiah 27:1-28:17, please see the [Commentary](#).] 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 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. Considering the course of rebellion from Babylon that Jehoiakim took, how did Zedekiah do it? He watched on as Jehoiakim lead the formerly righteous nation into 5 years of backsliding and, meanwhile, he 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?

With a yoke upon Jeremiah’s neck, and yokes for the other Kings, Jeremiah declared: “And it shall come to pass, that *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, saith the LORD, with **the sword**, and with **the famine**, and with **the pestilence**, until I have **consumed** them by his hand. Therefore hearken not ye to your *prophets*, nor to your *diviners*, nor to your *dreamers*, nor to your *enchanters*, nor to your *sorcerers*, which speak unto you, saying, Ye shall not serve the king of Babylon: For they prophesy a lie unto you, to remove you far from your land; and that I should **drive you out**, and ye should **perish**. But *the nations* that bring their neck under the **yoke** of the King of Babylon, and serve him, those will I let *remain still in their own land*, saith the LORD; and they shall till it, and *dwell therein*” (Jer. 27:8-11). Of course, the demon-inspired Prophets of foreign nations and the supposed Prophets of the Kingdom of Judah were heralding the same promise as from God, saying, “Ye shall not serve the King of Babylon”, and so Jeremiah’s reengagement of public ministry was in the throes of serious conflict.

God reckoned with the heathen inasmuch as they touched the apple of His eye, the Church, but He had special judgments reserved for the Church. The false prophets of Judah cried, “Behold, the vessels of the LORD’s House shall now shortly be brought again from Babylon” (27:14, 16), and the LORD responded with a challenge and sound reason (Jer. 27:18-22). When this was to no avail, and the conflict escalated, the LORD capitalized on the opportunity. With all boldness and in direct opposition to Jeremiah’s prophesying, Hananiah falsely prophesied that within 2 years *the people and vessels* would be returned and *all nations* would be removed from the yoke of Babylon (Jer. 28:2-4, 11). Then, shockingly, in less than 1-year God killed the man! A bold and defiant lie warranted a bold confrontation of truth. The slaying of this Prophet should have been a sure signal to all spectators! Lo, and behold, they were under the meticulous observation of an inescapable KING! They were bound as by chains of sovereignty! The LORD retaliated and is retaliating, and thereby all Church Members were being led into a calculated death: **the sword, the famine, and the pestilence** (*a remnant excluded*)! In the midst of the Great Falling Away, this is the Operation of Grace performed by the Glory of God.

**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! See the [Commentary](#).

[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. See the [Commentary](#).

[Jeremiah 49:34-39](#) – **At the beginning of Zedekiah's reign** (Jer. 49:34), Jeremiah prophesies against Elam. This prophecy to Elam is one of eight prophecies delivered to various Heathen Nations, besides those delivered to Babylon.

[Jeremiah 50:1-51:64](#) – **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! See the [Commentary](#).

*Approx. 1 Year passed...*

[Ezekiel 1:2-3:21](#) – **At the 5<sup>th</sup> year of Zedekiah's reign** (Ezek. 1:2), Ezekiel was ordained a Prophet and the essence of his ministry was revealed. My reader, this was a timely ordination! For, fearfully, the **Good Figs** still weren't good! Can you believe it? These individuals, the **Good Figs**, had been digressing even further into sin the past 5 years of Zedekiah's reign. Contextually, this is a very important observation and essential to understanding the Tribulation Period and the Tribulation Prophets. See the [Commentary](#) for an in-depth and vital address of Ezekiel's shocking ordination as a Prophet only 6 years from Judgment Day (the **5<sup>th</sup> Captivity** at the 11<sup>th</sup> year of Zedekiah's reign).

[Ezekiel 3:22-7:27](#) – **At the 5<sup>th</sup> year of Zedekiah's reign** (individual prophecies/events/instructions within the same year: Ezek. 1:2-3:14, 3:16-22, 3:23-27, 4:1-17, 5:1-17, 6:1-14, 7:1-27; time change: Ezek. 8:1), soon after Ezekiel's ordination as a Prophet, the first series of prophetic messages were received and delivered with all speed as a rescue attempt for the **Good Figs**. God was intent upon the conversion or restoration of the **Good Figs**, and nothing would stand in His way. Contextually, though, the situation was far from friendly to the God of Jeremiah and Ezekiel; the Evil Figs were deceiving the Good Figs even though they were so radically removed from one another! In this order, let us understand: **Firstly**, the shockingly violent condition of the Good Figs hinders Ezekiel's liberality of preaching. In the same time period Jeremiah was going to and fro among the Evil Figs as a reprover, but Ezekiel couldn't behave thus among the Good Figs. **Secondarily**, the vain hope and deceptive trust of the people was directly targeted by God – their trust in the City of Jerusalem & the Kingdom of Judah via Covenantal Ideals. Hence, the LORD prophetically unfolding the progressive judgments before they were manifest to confront the doomsday people to give God the glory. With this end goal, the horrors of unthinkable depravity amidst suffering was foretold so that when it happens they would remember the LORD (Ezek. 5:9). **Thirdly**, the primary provocation that infuriated God was identified. Unspeakable wrath was thereby justified! And, dare we commit this provocation in its New Testament form, my reader? Think of it... because judgment was compromised by Church Officers, God would do the judgment and NONE WOULD ESCAPE. **Fourthly**, and unexpectedly, an amendment was added to the repertoire of damnation constituted for the Evil Figs. See the [Commentary](#) for an in-depth and vital assessment of this series of messages.

In summation, God knows how to make an **Evil Fig** become **good**! And, thereby, God knows how to make a presently **evil Good Fig** become **good**! They, the **Evil Figs**, didn't believe in a total annihilation of the Land and Cities of Judah (because of Covenantal Idealism; Ezek. 5:10-15), they certainly denied that they would eat their friends and families flesh for food (because of self-righteous Phariseism; Ezek. 5:9-10), they were depicted to be steadfast in impenitence even after judgment came upon the Cities of Judah (those who escaped to the Mountains, hills, rivers, and valleys thought they would inhabit the Land and reckon Covenantal Ideals; Ezek. 6:1-7), in such and such ways and more they would try to strengthen themselves in their iniquities as the judgments incrementally persisted... but they will fail to do so in the latter end (Ezek. 7:13-18, 25-27) – therefore, at last, the devastated survivors of a radically decreased multitude will finally lose faith in idolatry and shun False Judaism, they will become repentant insomuch that when they are scattered into all nations, they

are prophetically depicted as ones giving glory to God by vindicating divine justice (Ezek. 6:8-10)! Furthermore, because the **Evil Figs** were deceiving the **Good Figs**, Ezekiel was moved to prophesy of the progressive and eventually dismantled status of Covenantal Idealism and Unconditional Eternal Security, the erroneous faith of the Evil Figs. This would, in turn, redirect the eyes of the **Good Figs** away from the **Evil Figs** unto God. This was their only hope.

*All the prophecies of Ezekiel from Ezekiel 1:2 to Ezekiel 7:27 can be deciphered into approximately 7 prophecies. They all took place subsequently starting from the day when Ezekiel 1:2 took place, one by one, unto any time prior to the 5<sup>th</sup> day of the 6<sup>th</sup> month of the 6<sup>th</sup> year of Zedekiah's reign. Approximately 1 Year, 6 months, and 5 days passed. Note: the 7 prophecies of Ezekiel are undated in the midst of the year in which they were received and delivered; they are deciphered as individual prophecies according to the details which give reference to the close of a message and the opening of another, and or various references to places, events, and actions.*

**Ezekiel 8:1-11:25 – At the 6<sup>th</sup> year of Zedekiah's reign** (the 5<sup>th</sup> day of the 6<sup>th</sup> month - Ezek. 8:1), Ezekiel is again arrested by the Spirit of Prophecy, and let it suffice the reader to know that there is no other Prophet in all of Biblical Church History that so clearly and intentionally illustrates the earth-changing event: *the Glory of God departing from the Church!* The stoutest men on earth would be breath-taken with astonishment if only they could understand the meaning of it all! But, as Daniel lamented of the all-too-often estate of things, one must confess: “to us belongeth confusion of face” (Dan. 9:7-8), and, “yet made we not our prayer before the LORD our God, that we might turn from our iniquities, and understand Thy truth” (Dan. 9:13)! May it never be of us, dear saints! We, above others, stand in need of understanding and truth because we may be that fateful generation upon whom the end of the World is come (1 Cor. 10:11)! Therefore, may God open up our minds to understand the scriptures (“Then opened He their understanding, that they might understand the scriptures” – Luke 24:45)! See the [Commentary](#).

*All prophecies of Ezekiel from Ezekiel 8:1 to Ezekiel 19:14 took place subsequently starting from the 5<sup>th</sup> day of the 6<sup>th</sup> month of the 6<sup>th</sup> year and onward, one by one, unto any time prior to the 10<sup>th</sup> day of the 5<sup>th</sup> month of the 7<sup>th</sup> year (see Ezek. 8:1 & Ezek. 20:1). In approximately 1 year, Ezekiel received and delivered 9 prophecies while Jeremiah received and delivered only 1 prophecy. Note: the 9 prophecies of Ezekiel are undated in the midst of the year in which they were received and delivered; they are deciphered as individual prophecies according to the details which give reference to the close of a message and the opening of another, and or various references to places, events, and actions.*

**Ezekiel 12:1-16 – Chronologically subsequent to the former prophecy and in the same timeframe** (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: 8:1 & 20:1), Ezekiel was compelled into another prophetic demonstration and this time, once again, concerning the Prince and people of Judah, the **Evil Figs** (Ezek. 12:12-16). As thoroughly addressed heretofore, however, the **Evil Figs** were a prophetic target in an effort to win the heart of the **Good Figs** (Ezek. 12:2-3)! And, shockingly, God is *hopeful* for the **Good Figs** to come to repentance based upon what He was presently directing Ezekiel to do by the Spirit of Prophecy! This should give us some pause. This is an unprecedented and rare statement of *hopefulness* in the heart of God on behalf of the **Good Figs** who were, at present, still yet, far from **good** (“*it may be they will consider, though they be a rebellious House*” – Ezek. 12:3)! This *hopefulness* on behalf of the wicked and impenitent **Good Figs** was both sincere fully informed. This hopefulness indicates a profoundly strong thrust to save the Good Figs through Ezekiel's prophecy! This was Divine Thinking in Divine Sincerity, a thoughtfulness that is far from the pretentious or erroneous like the uninformed hopefulness of human kind. See the [Commentary](#).

**Ezekiel 12:17-13:23 – Chronologically subsequent to the former prophecy and in the same timeframe** (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: 8:1 & 20:1), Ezekiel was commanded to do another demonstration. After targeting the vain admiration of the people toward the Prince of Judah (Ezek. 12:1-16), and, behold, the Prince was led away captive to Babylon as a blind man (Ezekiel demonstrated), the LORD provided a prophetic demonstration to reveal the soon-to-be experience of “the inhabitants of Jerusalem and of the Land of Israel” (Ezek. 12:19): the **Evil Figs**. The renowned Unconditional Eternal Security loyalists, who abode in the Kingdom of Judah, refused to admit that there was breach in National Security. Think of it! The targets of God's eternal fury were believers in an un-breach-able security! The no-security people did only and always meditate on God's mercy! Furthermore, in the same event or in a sequence of events with short periods in between them, three prophecies were given: “And the word of the LORD came unto me...” (Ezek. 12:21, 26, 13:1). See the [Commentary](#).

**Ezekiel 14:1-23 – Chronologically subsequent to the former prophecy and in the same timeframe** (*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*), the Elders of Israel gathered to inquire of Ezekiel for the second time (Ezek. 14:1). The Lord's message to the insincere inquirers is a dreadful one: **the deception of God.**

**Ezekiel 15:1-8 – Chronologically subsequent to the former prophecy and in the same timeframe** (*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*), an illustrative word from the Lord came to Ezekiel, conveying: **the worthwhile burning of the unworthy people.**

**Ezekiel 16:1-63 – Chronologically subsequent to the former prophecy and in the same timeframe** (*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*), another illustrative word from the Lord came to Ezekiel. This time, divine argumentation was employed to unveil the abominableness of condemned Jerusalem in this order: firstly, in reference to Jerusalem's father and mother before salvation; secondarily, in reference to her redeemed estate after her adoption, rearing, and beautification unto God as a Bride; thirdly, in reference to her adultery and harlotry; fourthly, in reference to God's jealousy and Jerusalem's destruction. In summation, Jerusalem's latter end is worse than all of her family members; most astonishingly, though, she suffers a greater condemnation than Sodom and Samaria!

**Ezekiel 17:1-24 – Chronologically subsequent to the former prophecy and in the same timeframe** (*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*), Ezekiel is given a time-sensitive message to the events unfolding in Jerusalem; mind you, these are events Ezekiel knows nothing about except by the inspiration of God because he is in the Land of Chaldea! It is revealed to Ezekiel that Zedekiah rebelled as a tributary to Babylon despite the covenant and oath he swore to the King of Babylon (Ezek. 17:13). He did this with hopes to be in league with Egypt who would supply him with horses and a great army, given the fact that the tributary money meant for Babylon was used to hire Egypt. In response to Zedekiah's plan, the LORD asked: "Shall he prosper? Shall he escape that doeth such things? Or shall he break the covenant, and be delivered?" (Ezek. 17:15)? Notably, this is the same question delivered to the second of three vines addressed in the prophecy, the LORD saying, "Shall is prosper" (Ezek. 17:9-10)?

A parable was put forth of two great eagles whose plantings became two vines (Ezek. 17:3-6, 7-8), and then a third planting which became a goodly tree (Ezek. 17:22-24). The first two plantings are illustrated and then an interpretation was given (Ezek. 17:11-21), with the third planting following. According to the interpretation, the first planting of "the highest branch of cedar" (which became a vine) was by the King of Babylon, the great eagle, who took the King and the Princes of Judah to Babylon in 1<sup>st</sup>, 2<sup>nd</sup>, and 3<sup>rd</sup> Captivity (Ezek. 17:12-14). Notably, this vine (in contrast to the second vine) will prosper (as God has already testified in Jer. 29:4-7)! It was God's will that the Jews of the Kingdom of Judah were taken to Babylon (the Good Figs) as a chastisement with a promise of a future restoration (Ezek. 17:22-24).

However, the Jews located in the Kingdom of Judah (the Evil Figs) rebelled against Babylon *at the time of this prophecy* (approximately the 7<sup>th</sup> year of Zedekiah's reign) in hopes to become a prosperous people and Kingdom through the nourishment of Egypt (Ezek. 17:7-8, 15, 17). Being in covenant with Egypt (the planting of the second vine), Judah hoped to be supplied with horses and much people for a mighty army (Ezek. 17:15, 17). Remember, though, to break with Babylon and join with Egypt, Zedekiah had to break the covenant he made with the King of Babylon (Ezek. 18:15-19). God took this personally, and rightfully so! This rebellion was not an offence against a mere man, the King of Babylon. It was rebellion against God who raised up the King of Babylon as a chastisement to His people (Jer. 25:9, 27:6, 43:10). The morality of Unconditional Eternal Security believers knows no bounds! In response to this, the LORD said, "I will bring him to Babylon and will plead with him there for his trespass that he hath trespassed against Me" (Ezek. 17:20). As for the rest, all the fugitives of this "rebellious house" of Judah remaining in Jerusalem will be slain by

“the sword” or “scattered toward all winds”, and the LORD said, “ye shall know that I the LORD have spoken it” (Ezek. 17:21).

Notably, the vine which represented the Good Figs would live and prosper (at least temporarily)! And, the vine which represented the Evil Figs would be uprooted and destroyed! They were, in other words, a Good Vine and an Evil Vine. Fearfully, though, through Unconditional Eternal Security the Jews in Jerusalem were claiming the promises of pastime in hopes that they could be reckoned for the present. In every other occasion, except the Great Tribulation, the promises of pastime were authoritatively God’s revealed will for the residue of Jews in Jerusalem... but not now! This was unseen time despite the “discerning eye” of false prophets who only and always preach the promises of God. Jesus said to the generation of the Great Tribulation in His day, “Ye hypocrites, ye can discern the face of the sky and of the earth; but how is it that ye do not discern this time” (Lk. 12:56)?

Having declared that the Jews (the Good Vine) with Babylon would prosper and the Jews with Egypt would be uprooted (the Evil Vine), the LORD illustrated the latter end: namely, the Jews returning to “the Mountain of the height of Israel” to become a “goodly cedar”, not merely a vine, “and under it shall dwell all fowl of every wing; in the shadow of the branches thereof shall they dwell” (Ezek. 17:24). Much of Ezekiel’s ministry has been a rescue attempt of the impenitent and wicked Good Figs, here called the Good Vine, and the LORD says that they will return to the Land of Israel in restoration and glory, but how? Will the LORD take the Jews of the Captivity (taken from the 1<sup>st</sup>, 2<sup>nd</sup>, and 3<sup>rd</sup> Captivities) as a whole and bring them to Zion (the Good Vine or Good Figs in their entirety)? No. the LORD promised to take only the elect of Babylon in the same way he took the elect from Judah and Jerusalem in the former 3 Captivities, saying, “I will also take of the highest branch of the high cedar, and will set it; I will crop off from the top of his young twigs a tender one, and will plant it...” (Ezek. 17:22). Looking carefully, this is the same language used to describe the relocation and planting of the Jews in Babylon via the Captivities (Ezek. 17:3-6). Therefore, not all the Jews in Babylon would accompany the restoration that God promised to perform... only the hand-selected bunch would be. This people, above all others, will inherit the blessing God had intended for the Good Figs. This is a selected residue of the whole population of Jews who would be in Babylon, from Babylon-to-Israel just as they were hand-selected of old from Judah-to-Babylon. Triumphantly, the LORD said, “And all the trees of the field shall know that I the LORD have brought down the high tree, have exalted the low tree, have dried up the green tree, and have made the dry tree to flourish: I the LORD have spoken and have done it” (Ezek. 17:24). Shocking.

*Note: In response to this rebellion, Babylon would come and attack in a little under two years’ time and, after a long siege lasting approx. 3 years, Jerusalem would be successfully overthrown.*

**Ezekiel 18:1-32 – Chronologically subsequent to the former prophecy and in the same timeframe** (*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*), a forcible and combative word is given to Ezekiel that answers the popular heresies that reign over the minds of the impenitent Jews. A snapshot into the situation can be observed and comprehensively studied in this order: [The Evil Figs Didn’t Believe They Were Evil](#), [A Parable Debating the Spiritual Status & Eternal Fate of Those Who Did, Do, and Would Die](#), [Father-to-Child Visitation & Recompense](#), [Seeming Contradictions](#), [Vindicating the Scriptural Emphasis of Guilt](#), [In a Situation of Annihilation Every Person is Individually Judged by God](#), [Attempted & Hardly Thwarted Events of Total Annihilation](#), [The Doctrine of Collective Judgment Refuted](#), [Vindicating the Scriptural Emphasis of One Man’s Sins](#), [The Truly Converted Status of the Israelite People in the Wilderness & the Ideals Theretofore](#), [The Status of the Church before Backsliders](#), [Were all the People of the Exodus Generation Saved?](#), [The Judgment of the Church in Situations of Backsliding](#), [The People’s Proneness to Rebellion Throughout Redemptive History](#).



**Jeremiah 30:1-31:40 – At the 6<sup>th</sup> year of the reign of Zedekiah, I conclude, because Jeremiah’s prophecy is chronologically complementary to Ezekiel’s prophecy (Ezek. 18:1-32), or vice versa** (*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*). Herein, Jeremiah forges the doctrine of “**Jacob’s Trouble**” as it relates to the eventual repentance of a remnant of God’s backslidden people. This experience is also known as the *Wilderness Experience*. Echoing Hosea, Jeremiah was careful to make mention of this experience because it is the beginning of what God was going to increasingly weave upon the tapestry as Ezekiel’s prophesying continues in this time period (culminating in Ezekiel 20:1-21:32).

**Ezekiel 19:1-14 – Chronologically subsequent to the former prophecy and in the same timeframe** (*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*), a straightforward and plain-in-meaning parable was given as a lamentation for the princes of Jerusalem.

*Approximately 1 Year transpired in the duration of the previous 10 prophecies...*

**Ezekiel 20:1-21:32 – At the 7<sup>th</sup> year of the reign of Zedekiah** (*sometime between the 10<sup>th</sup> day of the 5<sup>th</sup> month of the 7<sup>th</sup> year to the 10<sup>th</sup> day of the 10<sup>th</sup> month of the 9<sup>th</sup> year; time references: see 20:1 & 24:1*), Ezekiel was inspired by God to do **judgment** with unprecedented clarity (Ezek. 20:4). In doing so, one of the most essential messages to the Tribulation Period of this time was delivered, spoken, and written. Herein, the LORD endeavors to settle all controversies concerning the Majesty of the LORD in utilizing Babylon for the Tribulation Periods of the past, present, or future. This portion of prophecy is a guiding burden that is capable to lead the reader into a discovery of all the primary doctrines that have been forged in the Tribulation Period of old, things vitally relevant in how they correlate with **the Trumpets of Revelation 7-9** in the Tribulation Period of the future.

**Ezekiel 22:1-31 – Chronologically subsequent to the former prophecy and in the same timeframe** (*sometime between the 10<sup>th</sup> day of the 5<sup>th</sup> month of the 7<sup>th</sup> year to the 10<sup>th</sup> day of the 10<sup>th</sup> month of the 9<sup>th</sup> year; time references: see 20:1 & 24:1*).

**Ezekiel 23:1-49 – Chronologically subsequent to the former prophecy and in the same timeframe** (*sometime between the 10<sup>th</sup> day of the 5<sup>th</sup> month of the 7<sup>th</sup> year to the 10<sup>th</sup> day of the 10<sup>th</sup> month of the 9<sup>th</sup> year; time references: see 20:1 & 24:1*).

## Babylon Attacks!

*Approx. 590 BC Babylon attacked Judah and Jerusalem in the 10<sup>th</sup> day of the 10<sup>th</sup> month of the 9<sup>th</sup> year of Zedekiah’s reign (2 Kings 25:1, Ezek. 24:1). The battle transpires for 3 years in total, with a momentary hiccup. This is what happened...*

**Ezekiel 24:1-27 – At the 9<sup>th</sup> year of the reign of Zedekiah** (*sometime between the 10<sup>th</sup> day of the 10<sup>th</sup> month of the 9<sup>th</sup> year & the 5<sup>th</sup> day of the 10<sup>th</sup> month of the 12<sup>th</sup> year; time references: see 24:1 & 33:21*), the day that Babylon came and pitched against Jerusalem with all his hosts (2 Kings 25:1, Jer. 52:4-6). Herein, Ezekiel prophesies of the foreboding woes of the future: the fall of Jerusalem & the Destruction of the Temple in what will be the **5<sup>th</sup> Captivity**! This is a strategically timed prophecy in that hereafter Ezekiel is dumb for 18 months until all is accomplished (Ezek. 24:24-27, 33:21-22). In the meantime, until all is accomplished, Ezekiel will prophesy against Heathen Nations in **Ezekiel 25:1-32:32**. At the 9<sup>th</sup> day of the 4<sup>th</sup> month of the 11<sup>th</sup> year, Jerusalem will be broken up because the famine prevails (2 Kings 25:2-3, Jer. 39:2). At the 7<sup>th</sup> day of the 5<sup>th</sup> month of the 11<sup>th</sup> year, the House of the LORD and the City of Jerusalem are spoiled and burnt by fire in the wrath of God through Babylon!

**Jeremiah 21:1-22:30 (at least) & maybe 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 and thus he was moved to inquire 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). Before, Zedekiah was denying that Babylon would come because he was believing in the lies of false prophets, but at last he was made to inquire of Jeremiah (who was not yet imprisoned) if there was 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 was charged to do justice and judgment, and hopeful words of the Throne being established were 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 unlawful enslavement of 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!

[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!

#### 4<sup>th</sup> Captivity

*Approx. 590 BC Babylon attacked Judah and besieged Jerusalem in the 10<sup>th</sup> day of the 10<sup>th</sup> month of the 9<sup>th</sup> year of Zedekiah's reign. At the 10<sup>th</sup> year of Zedekiah's reign and the 18<sup>th</sup> year of Nebuchadnezzar's reign, when Babylon departed from Jerusalem and Judah to go to battle against Egypt (who had been hired by Judah), the prisoners accumulated from Judah were deported to Babylon so that they would not be a liability in war against the Egyptian Army (Jer. 52:29, 37:11, 34:21). [832 persons were deported]*

[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).

**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*.

**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.

**Ezekiel 25:1-32:32 – During a 36-month period** (*between the 10<sup>th</sup> day of the 10<sup>th</sup> month of the 9<sup>th</sup> year of Zedekiah’s reign [Ezek. 24:1, 2 Kings 25:1] and the 5<sup>th</sup> day of the 10<sup>th</sup> month of the 12<sup>th</sup> year [of what would have been Zedekiah’s reign] counting from the 3<sup>rd</sup> Captivity in which Jechoiahin was taken Captive & Zedekiah was installed King*), Ezekiel prophesied against Heathen Nations until the word of the LORD concerning Jerusalem was completely fulfilled (i.e. Jerusalem was destroyed and a messenger came back to give the report to Ezekiel; Ezek. 24:25-27, 33:21-22).

## 5<sup>th</sup> Captivity

*At approx. 589 BC the famine waxed sore upon the people and thereby Babylon prevailed to break up the City 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 (2 Kings 25:2-3, Jer. 39:2). The Babylonians spoiled and set fire to the House of the LORD and the City at the 7<sup>th</sup> day of the 5<sup>th</sup> month of the 11<sup>th</sup> year (Jer. 39:1-10, 52:12-27, 2 Kings 25:1-21, 2 Chron. 36:17-20). This took place at the 19<sup>th</sup> year of Nebuchadnezzar’s reign (Jer. 52:1-12).*

**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 Nebuchadnezzar 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)!

**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.

**Ezekiel 33:1-33 – At what would have been the 12<sup>th</sup> year of Zedekiah’s reign, which we know to be the 12<sup>th</sup> year since Jeconiah’s captivity & Zedekiah’s installment** (*the 5<sup>th</sup> day of the 10<sup>th</sup> month of the 12<sup>th</sup> year; time reference: 33:21*),

**Ezekiel 34:1-31 – Chronologically subsequent to the former prophecy and in the same timeframe** (*sometime between the 5<sup>th</sup> day of the 10<sup>th</sup> month of the 12<sup>th</sup> year & the 10<sup>th</sup> day of the 1<sup>st</sup> month of the 25<sup>th</sup> year; time reference: 33:21 & 40:1*).

**Ezekiel 35:1-15 – Chronologically subsequent to the former prophecy and in the same timeframe** (*sometime between the 5<sup>th</sup> day of the 10<sup>th</sup> month of the 12<sup>th</sup> year & the 10<sup>th</sup> day of the 1<sup>st</sup> month of the 25<sup>th</sup> year; time reference: 33:21 & 40:1*).

**Ezekiel 36:1-38 – Chronologically subsequent to the former prophecy and in the same timeframe** (*sometime between the 5<sup>th</sup> day of the 10<sup>th</sup> month of the 12<sup>th</sup> year & the 10<sup>th</sup> day of the 1<sup>st</sup> month of the 25<sup>th</sup> year; time reference: 33:21 & 40:1*).

**Ezekiel 37:1-28 – Chronologically subsequent to the former prophecy and in the same timeframe** (*sometime between the 5<sup>th</sup> day of the 10<sup>th</sup> month of the 12<sup>th</sup> year & the 10<sup>th</sup> day of the 1<sup>st</sup> month of the 25<sup>th</sup> year; time reference: 33:21 & 40:1*).

## 6<sup>th</sup> Captivity

*At approx. 585 BC, presumably after the murder of the Governor named Gedaliah the son of Ahikam the son of Shaphan, after all the Jews which were left in the Land fled to Egypt (Jer. 43:1-7) and the Land was made without inhabitant (Jer. 44:2), then, I conclude, some 745 persons re-inhabited the Land against the word of the LORD – this people, I conclude, Babylon carried away captive when they eventually came to Jerusalem because of the absence of Gedaliah (Jer. 52:30). This was in the 23<sup>rd</sup> year of Nebuchadnezzar’s reign.*

**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.

**Ezekiel 38:1-39:29 – Chronologically subsequent to the former prophecies of Ezekiel and in the same timeframe** (*sometime between the 5<sup>th</sup> day of the 10<sup>th</sup> month of the 12<sup>th</sup> year & the 10<sup>th</sup> day of the 1<sup>st</sup> month of the 25<sup>th</sup> year, which is 14 years after the City of Jerusalem was smitten; time reference: 33:21 & 40:1*), Ezekiel prophesies concerning Gog & Magog in one of the most baffling prophecies ever to grace the eyes of unworthy interpreters of Biblical Prophecy.

**Ezekiel 40:1-48:35 – At the 10<sup>th</sup> day of the 1<sup>st</sup> month of what would have been the 25<sup>th</sup> year of Zedekiah’s reign, which is 25 years since the 3<sup>rd</sup> Captivity in which Jeconiah was taken captive and 14 years after the City of Jerusalem was smitten** (approx. 575 BC; Ezek. 40:1), Ezekiel prophesies yet another baffling prophecy bringing consternation and trouble to the minds of would-be-interpreters throughout all ages. This prophecy, much like the former (Ezek. 38-39), and no doubt related to the former, is profoundly clear if it is approached from a Biblical & Historical perspective. Nevertheless, this approach is hard to come by for impatient handlers of the text. Therefore, Ezekiel’s Temple remains infamous in how men purpose to overlook it, wagging their heads in displeasure, and it is famous in how men will at last discover its meaning in the purpose that God intended according to His good pleasure. In other words, Ezekiel 40-48 is a true masterpiece of the Father who takes pleasure in hiding and revealing the truth (Matt. 11:25-26)!