

# Jerusalem: A Lost City

APR 30-MAY 6 2024

EZE 3-7, 12, 21, 24, 29-31; 2 KI 25; JER 39-44, 52, LA 1-5; 2 CH 36; PS 89

Week 30

Prophecy comes true and Jerusalem falls when the city is invaded by the Babylonian Army. Despite the disaster, there is hope for a ruined city and for the devastated nation. Because of God's character and His might, there are new mercies with every sunrise, justice in all of his judgments and full grace and love available to all those who seek his forgiveness. Only God can restore what has been shattered. This lesson can be ours as well: When we face tremendous loss, when life overwhelms us, there is One we can trust to restore. Jeremiah's God is our God: a God of grace and strength and glory, as well as a God of judgment.

### Weekly Reading Plan (p. 808-836)

Day 1: EZE 21:18-32; 24:1-27  
Day 2: EZE 3:22-7:27; 29:1-16; 30:20-31:18  
Day 3: 2 KI 25:4-7; JER 52:7-11; JER 39:1-7;  
2 KI 25:8-21; JER 52:12-27; 39:8-10  
Day 4: LA 1:1-5:22  
Day 5: 2 KI 25:22-26  
Day 6: JER 39:11-44:30  
Day 7: 2 CH 36:17-21; EZE 12:1-28; PS 89

### Outline

Israel and Ammon Rebel [Day 1]  
Ezekiel's Sign Acts [Day 2]  
Pharaoh Hophra's Assault [Day 2]  
Prophetic Account: The Fall of Jerusalem [Day 3]  
Lamentations: Weeping for a Lost City [Day 4]  
Gedaliah the Governor [Day 5 and 6]  
Priestly Account: The Fall of Jerusalem [Day 7]  
The End of the Siege [Day 7]

### Key Characters

Zedekiah	Ezekiel
Nebuchadnezzar	Hophra
Gedaliah	Jeremiah
Nebuzaradan	Ishmael
Ebed-Melek	Johanah
Jezebel	

### Key Locations

Babylon	Jerusalem
Egypt	Judah
Mizpah	Ramah
Tahpanhes	Persia

### Key Terms

Sovereign Lord  
Judgment  
Remnant  
Lord Almighty  
Fulfilled  
Lament

### Key Verses

"Son of man, you are living among a rebellious people. They have eyes to see but do not see and ears to hear but do not hear, for they are a rebellious people." [EZE 12:2]

"This is what the Sovereign Lord says: None of my words will be delayed any longer; whatever I say will be fulfilled, declares the Sovereign Lord." [EZE 12:28]

How she sits alone, the city once crowded with people! She who was great among the nations has become like a widow. The princess among the provinces has been put to forced labor [LAM 1:1]

Because of the LORD's faithful love we do not perish, for his mercies never end. They are new every morning; great is your faithfulness! [LAM 3:22-23]

I will sing of the Lord's great love forever; with my mouth I will make your faithfulness known through all generations. [PS 89:1]

Blessed are those who have learned to acclaim you, who walk in the light of your presence. [PS 89:15]

## Chapter Summaries (from @biblesummary)

Eze21: "Son of man, prophesy against Israel. A sword is sharpened! Mark the way for the king of Babylon. A ruin, ruin, ruin I will make it."

Eze24: "Put meat into the pot. Woe to the bloody city!" My wife died. The LORD said: "I will profane my sanctuary. Ezekiel will be a sign."

Eze3: He said to me: "Israel will not listen." I came to the exiles. The LORD said: "I have made you a watchman. I will open your mouth."

Eze4: "Son of man, take clay and draw Jerusalem. Then lie on your side. You shall bear the punishment of Israel. Cook your bread over dung."

Eze5: "Son of man, shave your head. Jerusalem has rebelled. A third shall die of famine, a third by the sword and a third I will scatter."

Eze6: "Son of man, prophesy against the mountains of Jerusalem. The slain shall lie among their idols. They will know that I am the LORD."

Eze7: "The end has come! I will punish you for all your abominations. Silver and gold cannot deliver. The people of the land will tremble."

Eze29: "I am against you, Pharaoh, the great dragon. Egypt will never again rule the nations. Nebuchadnezzar will carry off its wealth."

Eze30: "A sword will come upon Egypt. Those who support her will fall. Nebuchadnezzar will destroy the land. I will break Pharaoh's arms."

Eze31: "Assyria was a cedar. It towered above the trees. Its heart was proud. Foreigners have cut it down. This is Pharaoh and his hordes."

2Ki25: Nebuchadnezzar besieged Jerusalem. Nebuzaradan burned the temple and took the people into exile. Evil-merodach released Jehoiachin.

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La1: How lonely sits the city! Judah has gone into exile. O LORD, I am despised. Is any sorrow like mine? There is no one to comfort me.

La2: The LORD has not pitied Jacob. He has abandoned his sanctuary. My eyes fail with tears. Young and old lie slaughtered in the streets.

La3: He has driven me into darkness. But the steadfast love of the LORD never ceases. Let us return to the LORD! You will repay my enemies.

La4: The holy stones lie scattered. The children beg for food. The LORD has poured out his fierce anger. O Zion, your punishment will end.

La5: Look, O LORD, and see our disgrace! We have become orphans. Slaves rule over us. But you, O LORD, reign forever. Restore us as of old!

Jer39: The Babylonians besieged Jerusalem and captured Zedekiah. They took the people into exile. Nebuchadnezzar said: Do not harm Jeremiah.

Jer40: Nebuzaradan said to Jeremiah: Go back to Gedaliah, who has been appointed over Judah. The captains warned Gedaliah about Ishmael.

Jer41: Ishmael killed Gedaliah and eighty men. Johanan went to fight Ishmael but he escaped. Johanan led the survivors on the way to Egypt.

Jer42: The people asked Jeremiah to pray. The LORD says: If you stay in the land, I will grant you mercy. If you go to Egypt, you will die.

Jer43: Johanan and all the people did not obey the LORD. They went to Egypt. The LORD said: Nebuchadnezzar will ravage the land of Egypt.

Jer44: The LORD says: Why do you provoke me with other gods? The people said: We will not listen. The LORD says: I am going to punish you.

## Chapter Summaries (from @biblesummary)

2Chr36: Jehoahaz, Jehoiakim, Jehoiachin and Zedekiah ruled. Then Nebuchadnezzar burned the temple and took Judah captive for seventy years.

Ezk12: "Son of man, they are a rebellious house. Bring out your baggage like an exile. I will disperse them. My word will not be delayed."

Ps89: I will sing of the mercies of the LORD. You said, "I will establish the throne of David forever." O Lord, where is your love of old?

## Teachings About God

- God’s concern for his name is a central theme in the book of Ezekiel. More than 60 times God declares his intention for people to “know that I am the LORD.”
- God’s holiness resulted in his destroying Jerusalem for her many sins.
- In Lamentations, God’s justice in punishing his people is in the foreground, but the background note is one of his mercy.
- God is shown to be righteous and just in Psalm 89. He is a God of covenant faithfulness.

## Teachings About Humanity

- Ezekiel illustrates one whom God used in a time of crisis and whose intimate family life became a symbol of God’s dealing with his people (EZ 24:15-18).
- Ezekiel contains prophecies against Israel (EZ 1-24) and 0. prophecies against the nations (EZ 25-32).
- Jeremiah’s suffering and Jerusalem’s fall are described in Jeremiah (JER 36-45).
- Because humans are moral agents responsible to God, their sins will be punished.
- Because God made humans in his image, they are capable of emotion.
- The temple destruction is described in 2 Chronicles.

## Teachings About Salvation

- Ezekiel begins with a message of judgment and ends with hope.
- Despite the grief he expressed, the author of Lamentations did not waiver in his faith in God. He had steadfast trust in the presence of national catastrophe and personal disaster.

## Reflections of Christ/Holy Spirit

- The expression Son of Man used throughout Ezekiel is the expression Jesus uses most often to refer to himself.
- Lamentations 1:12 has often been used of Christ as he suffered on the cross.
- Jesus is the final Davidic heir (PS 89).

## Literary Genres/Techniques

- Ezekiel includes prophecies, visions and symbolic actions. It is written mainly in Hebrew prose but has some poetry (EZ 7, 21, 24, and 26-32). Ezekiel also used parables.
- Jeremiah includes foretelling prophecies in Hebrew prose.
- The majority of Jeremiah is poetry, with some narrative prose and biographical narrative.
- Jeremiah used repetition and cryptograms.
- Lamentations is a lament written in Hebrew poetry with acrostic features. The entire book is Hebrew poetry.
- Psalm 89 is a royal psalm to honor Israel’s earthly kings.

## Author/Date of Writing/Audience

- Ezekiel prophesied during the first part of the Babylonian captivity (c593-571BC) to the exiles.
- 2 Kings describes the 800 year history of Israel from the entry into Canaan until the exile.
- Jeremiah prophesied to Judah for 40 years c 626-c586. The book was likely compiled c585 BC. Jeremiah was written for the people of Judah during Jeremiah’s lifetime.
- Lamentations was perhaps written by Jeremiah soon after 586 BC to the Jewish witnesses of Jerusalem’s fall.
- 2 Chronicles was written by Ezra c450 BC to the Jews after they returned from exile.
- Ethan the Ezrahite, a wise man of King Solomon’s time, wrote Psalm 89.

## What did I learn about God?

- Does it surprise you that God's patience has an end? Why or why not? If God's patience were limitless, what would his justice look like?
- Does God judge nations and bring disaster on them today? Why or why not?
- Judah fell because "she did not consider her future." If God, in His righteousness, brought Judah low, what warning is there for us? Are we, as a nation or as an individual, guilty of the same error? How so? How can we consider the future more effectively?
- Based on Judah's experience, how seriously does God take the issue of sin? What does Jesus' death on the cross add to this picture? How should we treat sin in our own lives?

## What did I learn about human nature?

- Does the violent history of Israel's First Commonwealth confuse you? Disturb you? Instruct you?
- Why does Babylon deport the ruling class and leave the poor people to tend the land?
- In Lamentations, the poet indicts the false prophets who did not expose the sins of Judah. Who are the false prophets we tend to "give ear" to today? Politicians? News commentators? Entertainers? Our peer groups? Psychologists? Health/wealth evangelists? Others?
- LA 3:41 says "Let us lift up our hearts and our hands to God in heaven and say: we have sinned and rebelled and you have not forgiven." In what ways do we lift up our hands, but not our hearts, when we are in trouble? What does true repentance look like? What do truly repentant people do?

## What did I learn about my life/relationship with God?

- Can you live one day at a time? Does the past drag you down or the future worry you? If expectations and obligations set your agenda, what do you have to give up to truly experience the present moment?
- In your decision making this past week, at what point did you seek God's counsel? The input of others? Did you truly want advice, or simply a blessing on your plans? Have you ever obeyed God's word to you at a time when all your gut instincts said no? What happened as a result of your obedience?
- What scripture is especially helpful to you in difficult times? What hymns are especially meaningful to you? Why? Do you know them by heart?
- When you experience setbacks what is your first reaction? Become overwhelmed by feelings? Focus on the problem? Affirm God's control? What is the psalmists approach in PS 89?