

# WEEK 44. 2 Kings, 2 Chronicles, Habakkuk, Jeremiah, Lamentations (Consequences of Rebellion)

## Sunday ([2 Kings 24-25](#))

24:1 During Jehoiakim's reign, King Nebuchadnezzar of Babylon attacked. Jehoiakim was his subject for three years, but then he rebelled against him. 24:2 The Lord sent against him Babylonian, Syrian, Moabite, and Ammonite raiding bands; he sent them to destroy Judah, as he had warned he would do through his servants the prophets. 24:3 Just as the Lord had announced, he rejected Judah because of all the sins which Manasseh had committed. 24:4 Because he killed innocent people and stained Jerusalem with their blood, the Lord was unwilling to forgive them.

24:5 The rest of the events of Jehoiakim's reign and all his accomplishments, are recorded in the scroll called the Annals of the Kings of Judah. 24:6 He passed away and his son Jehoiachin replaced him as king. 24:7 The king of Egypt did not march out from his land again, for the king of Babylon conquered all the territory that the king of Egypt had formerly controlled between the Brook of Egypt and the Euphrates River.

### Jehoiachin's Reign over Judah

24:8 Jehoiachin was eighteen years old when he became king, and he reigned three months in Jerusalem. His mother was Nehushta the daughter of Elnathan, from Jerusalem. 24:9 He did evil in the sight of the Lord as his ancestors had done.

24:10 At that time the generals of King Nebuchadnezzar of Babylon marched to Jerusalem and besieged the city. 24:11 King Nebuchadnezzar of Babylon came to the city while his generals were besieging it. 24:12 King Jehoiachin of Judah, along with his mother, his servants, his officials, and his eunuchs surrendered to the king of Babylon. The king of Babylon, in the eighth year of his reign, took Jehoiachin prisoner. 24:13 Nebuchadnezzar took from there all the riches in the treasuries of the Lord's temple and of the royal palace. He removed all the gold items which King Solomon of Israel had made for the Lord's temple, just as the Lord had warned. 24:14 He deported all the residents of Jerusalem, including all the officials and all the soldiers (10,000 people in all). This included all the craftsmen and those who worked with metal. No one was left except for the poorest among the people of the land. 24:15 He deported Jehoiachin from Jerusalem to Babylon, along with the king's mother and wives, his eunuchs, and the high-ranking officials of the land. 24:16 The king of Babylon deported to Babylon all the soldiers (there were 7,000), as well as 1,000 craftsmen and metal workers. This included all the best warriors. 24:17 The king of Babylon made Mattaniah, Jehoiachin's uncle, king in Jehoiachin's place. He renamed him Zedekiah.

## Zedekiah's Reign over Judah

24:18 Zedekiah was twenty-one years old when he became king, and he ruled for eleven years in Jerusalem. His mother was Hamutal, the daughter of Jeremiah, from Libnah. 24:19 He did evil in the sight of the Lord, as Jehoiakim had done.

24:20 What follows is a record of what happened to Jerusalem and Judah because of the Lord's anger; he finally threw them out of his presence. Zedekiah rebelled against the king of Babylon.

25:1 So King Nebuchadnezzar of Babylon came against Jerusalem with his whole army and set up camp outside it. They built siege ramps all around it. He arrived on the tenth day of the tenth month in the ninth year of Zedekiah's reign. 25:2 The city remained under siege until King Zedekiah's eleventh year. 25:3 By the ninth day of the fourth month the famine in the city was so severe the residents had no food. 25:4 The enemy broke through the city walls, and all the soldiers tried to escape. They left the city during the night. They went through the gate between the two walls that is near the king's garden. (The Babylonians were all around the city.) Then they headed for the Jordan Valley. 25:5 But the Babylonian army chased after the king. They caught up with him in the plains of Jericho, and his entire army deserted him. 25:6 They captured the king and brought him up to the king of Babylon at Riblah, where he passed sentence on him. 25:7 Zedekiah's sons were executed while Zedekiah was forced to watch. The king of Babylon then had Zedekiah's eyes put out, bound him in bronze chains, and carried him off to Babylon.

## Nebuchadnezzar Destroys Jerusalem

25:8 On the seventh day of the fifth month, in the nineteenth year of King Nebuchadnezzar of Babylon, Nebuzaradan, the captain of the royal guard who served the king of Babylon, arrived in Jerusalem. 25:9 He burned down the Lord's temple, the royal palace, and all the houses in Jerusalem, including every large house. 25:10 The whole Babylonian army that came with the captain of the royal guard tore down the walls that surrounded Jerusalem. 25:11 Nebuzaradan, the captain of the royal guard, deported the rest of the people who were left in the city, those who had deserted to the king of Babylon, and the rest of the craftsmen. 25:12 But he left behind some of the poor of the land and gave them fields and vineyards.

25:13 The Babylonians broke the two bronze pillars in the Lord's temple, as well as the movable stands and the big bronze basin called the "The Sea." They took the bronze to Babylon. 25:14 They also took the pots, shovels, trimming shears, pans, and all the bronze utensils used by the priests. 25:15 The captain of the royal guard took the golden and silver censers and basins. 25:16 The bronze of the items that King Solomon made for the Lord's temple – including the two pillars, the big bronze basin called "The Sea," the twelve bronze bulls under "The Sea," and the movable stands – was too heavy to be weighed. 25:17 Each of the pillars was about twenty-seven feet high. The bronze top of one pillar was about four and a half feet high and had bronze latticework and pomegranate shaped ornaments all around it. The second pillar with its latticework was like it.

25:18 The captain of the royal guard took Seraiah the chief priest and Zephaniah, the priest who was second in rank, and the three doorkeepers. 25:19 From the city he took a eunuch who was in charge of the soldiers, five of the king's advisers who were discovered in the city, an official army secretary who drafted citizens for military service, and sixty citizens from the people of the land who were discovered in the city. 25:20 Nebuzaradan, captain of the royal guard, took them and brought them to the king of Babylon at Riblah. 25:21 The king of Babylon ordered them to be executed at Riblah in the territory of Hamath. So Judah was deported from its land.

### **Gedaliah Appointed Governor**

25:22 Now King Nebuchadnezzar of Babylon appointed Gedaliah son of Ahikam, son of Shaphan, as governor over the people whom he allowed to remain in the land of Judah. 25:23 All of the officers of the Judahite army and their troops heard that the king of Babylon had appointed Gedaliah to govern. So they came to Gedaliah at Mizpah. The officers who came were Ishmael son of Nethaniah, Johanan son of Kareah, Seraiah son of Tanhumeth the Netophathite, and Jaazaniah son of the Maacathite. 25:24 Gedaliah took an oath so as to give them and their troops some assurance of safety. He said, "You don't need to be afraid to submit to the Babylonian officials. Settle down in the land and submit to the king of Babylon. Then things will go well for you." 25:25 But in the seventh month Ishmael son of Nethaniah, son of Elishama, who was a member of the royal family, came with ten of his men and murdered Gedaliah, as well as the Judeans and Babylonians who were with him at Mizpah. 25:26 Then all the people, from the youngest to the oldest, as well as the army officers, left for Egypt, because they were afraid of what the Babylonians might do.

### **Jehoiachin in Babylon**

25:27 In the thirty-seventh year of the exile of King Jehoiachin of Judah, on the twenty-seventh day of the twelfth month, King Evil-Merodach of Babylon, in the first year of his reign, pardoned King Jehoiachin of Judah and released him from prison. 25:28 He spoke kindly to him and gave him a more prestigious position than the other kings who were with him in Babylon. 25:29 Jehoiachin took off his prison clothes and ate daily in the king's presence for the rest of his life. 25:30 He was given daily provisions by the king for the rest of his life until the day he died.

### **PRAYER**

Lord, You place boundaries on Your patience, rebellion is not tolerated endlessly. May I remember to not presume upon Your patience with repeated sin. Your sovereign will is sometimes administered by non-believers who are unaware that they serve Your purpose. May I be watchful for Your action in this world, always remembering that your means to an end are always the most-perfect possible.

### **SCRIPTURE IN PERSPECTIVE**

Jehoahaz was king for three months and did evil – so Pharaoh Necho imprisoned him, levied a heavy tribute on the people, and installed Josiah's son Eliakim king in Josiah's place, and changed his name to Jehoiakim – he ruled for eleven years.

King Nebuchadnezzar of Babylon attacked and made Jehoiakim his subject for three years.

Jehoiakim rebelled, so the Lord sent Babylonian, Syrian, Moabite, and Ammonite raiding bands to destroy Judah for generations of rebellion - highlighted by Manassah's extreme evil.

Jehoiachin ruled for three months and did evil.

The Lord God allowed King Nebuchadnezzar of Babylon to besiege the city and take the king and his royal court and ten thousand people prisoner, installing Mattaniah, Jehoiachin's uncle, king in his place. He stripped the palace and temple of valuables and renamed Mattaniah to Zedekiah.

Zedekiah ruled for eleven years when, following his rebellion against them, the Babylonians breached the city walls and destroyed the siege-impooverished city. They killed Zedekiah's sons as he watched, gouged-out his eyes, then took him away in chains.

Nebuchadnezzar sent his forces to destroy everything of significance in Jerusalem, including the temple, the royal palace, all of the larger houses, and the protective city walls. The remaining members of the king's court were found and executed and everyone but the poor were deported.

Gedaliah was appointed governor of the remaining people and invited the remnant military in hiding to join him now that things were safe and to submit to the Babylonians. A few months later they returned and killed him, then the remaining people fled to Egypt for fear of the Babylonian's revenge.

King Evil-Merodach of Babylon, in the first year of his reign, pardoned King Jehoiachin of Judah and allowed him to join with him at the royal table for the remainder of his life.

## INTERACT WITH THE TEXT

### CONSIDER

Each of the kings who followed Hezekiah and Manassah had the choice as to which they would copy, all but Josiah followed Manassah's evil pattern – leading their people into disaster. Nebuchadnezzar wanted to remove any remaining national symbols from Judah.

### DISCUSS

Knowing the trouble that flowed from Hezekiah's late-in-life foolishness, followed by the curse that flowed from Manassah's evil, why would other kings follow the worst of the kings rather than Josiah and

Hezekiah – the best of them? Might it have been the Lord God Who had some mercy on Jehoiachin and prompted the king of Babylon to be kind to him?

### REFLECT

As Judah followed Israel into oblivion, because of their rebellion against the Lord God, nations all around them rose and fell – Egypt, then Assyria, and then Babylon. Gedaliah misjudged the remnant military when he thought they'd willingly accept the dominance of Babylon and serve them.

### SHARE

When have you experienced or observed someone in leadership choosing to follow the path of a failed leader, despite the obvious high-probability that they also would fail? When have you experienced or observed unexpected kindness from an enemy toward a weaker person?

### FAITH IN ACTION

### PRAY

Ask the Holy Spirit to reveal to you something that you are copying from a parent or other source of influence that is destructive and reveal to you someone over whom you have power and to whom you may offer a small measure of grace.

### ACT

Today I will ask at least one fellow believer to be my accountability and prayer partner as I turn away from that which the Holy Spirit has shown me is destructive in my life. I will be an agent of the Lord God's grace and do an unexpected kindness in His name to someone who least expects it.

Be Specific \_\_\_\_\_

## Monday ([2 Chronicles 36:1-21](#))

### Jehoahaz's Reign

36:1 The people of the land took Jehoahaz son of Josiah and made him king in his father's place in Jerusalem. 36:2 Jehoahaz was twenty-three years old when he became king, and he reigned three months in Jerusalem. 36:3 The king of Egypt prevented him from ruling in Jerusalem and imposed on the land a special tax of one hundred talents of silver and a talent of gold. 36:4 The king of Egypt made Jehoahaz's brother Eliakim king over Judah and Jerusalem, and changed his name to Jehoiakim. Necho seized his brother Jehoahaz and took him to Egypt.

### Jehoiakim's Reign

36:5 Jehoiakim was twenty-five years old when he became king, and he reigned for eleven years in Jerusalem. He did evil in the sight of the Lord his God. 36:6 King Nebuchadnezzar of Babylon attacked him, bound him with bronze chains, and carried him away to Babylon. 36:7 Nebuchadnezzar took some of the items in the Lord's temple to Babylon and put them in his palace there.

36:8 The rest of the events of Jehoiakim's reign, including the horrible sins he committed and his shortcomings, are recorded in the Scroll of the Kings of Israel and Judah. His son Jehoiachin replaced him as king.

### **Jehoiachin's Reign**

36:9 Jehoiachin was eighteen years old when he became king, and he reigned three months and ten days in Jerusalem. He did evil in the sight of the Lord. 36:10 At the beginning of the year King Nebuchadnezzar ordered him to be brought to Babylon, along with the valuable items in the Lord's temple. In his place he made his relative Zedekiah king over Judah and Jerusalem.

### **Zedekiah's Reign**

36:11 Zedekiah was twenty-one years old when he became king, and he ruled for eleven years in Jerusalem. 36:12 He did evil in the sight of the Lord his God. He did not humble himself before Jeremiah the prophet, the Lord's spokesman. 36:13 He also rebelled against King Nebuchadnezzar, who had made him vow allegiance in the name of God. He was stubborn and obstinate, and refused to return to the Lord God of Israel. 36:14 All the leaders of the priests and people became more unfaithful and committed the same horrible sins practiced by the nations. They defiled the Lord's temple which he had consecrated in Jerusalem.

### **The Babylonians Destroy Jerusalem**

36:15 The Lord God of their ancestors continually warned them through his messengers, for he felt compassion for his people and his dwelling place. 36:16 But they mocked God's messengers, despised his warnings, and ridiculed his prophets. Finally the Lord got very angry at his people and there was no one who could prevent his judgment. 36:17 He brought against them the king of the Babylonians, who slaughtered their young men in their temple. He did not spare young men or women, or even the old and aging. God handed everyone over to him. 36:18 He carried away to Babylon all the items in God's temple, whether large or small, as well as what was in the treasuries of the Lord's temple and in the treasuries of the king and his officials. 36:19 They burned down the Lord's temple and tore down the wall of Jerusalem. They burned all its fortified buildings and destroyed all its valuable items. 36:20 He deported to Babylon all who escaped the sword. They served him and his sons until the Persian kingdom rose to power. 36:21 This took place to fulfill the Lord's message delivered through Jeremiah. The land experienced its sabbatical years; it remained desolate for seventy years, as prophesied.

## PRAYER

Lord, You have been perfectly consistent in fulfilling your prophecies, blessings for obedience and troubles for rebellion. You have used both the faithful and the pagans as instruments of Your sovereign plan. May I never forget that everything belongs to You, that You permit humankind great liberty to make choices, but in the great scheme of things Your sovereign will shall be done – with or without my agreement or my willing participation – but may I be inclined to make myself Your instrument of blessing.

## SCRIPTURE IN PERSPECTIVE

Jehoahaz son of Josiah became king but only for a few months “... the king of Egypt prevented him from ruling in Jerusalem.”

The king of Egypt then made his brother Eliakim king instead and changed his name to Jehoiakim. King Necho took Jehoahaz away to Egypt

Jehoiakim was king for eleven years but was evil before the Lord so Nebuchadnezzar, king of Babylon, took him captive along with some of the items from the temple.

His son Jehoiachin was king for three months and four days, he was also evil, and Nebuchadnezzar took him and more items from the temple to Babylon.

Zedekiah was king for eleven years during which even the priests did evil, defiling the temple, Nebuchadnezzar destroyed Jerusalem and the temple – taking the remaining treasures and those who were not killed as servants in Babylon – fulfilling the prophesy given through the prophet Jeremiah.

## INTERACT WITH THE TEXT

### CONSIDER

The foolish experiment with human kings, which the people of Israel had demanded of the Lord God, began and ended badly – just as He had warned.

### DISCUSS

Why would Jehoiakim act in rebellion against the Lord God knowing the likely consequences?

### REFLECT

The Persian people are Elamites, descendants of Elam, the first born son of Shem, one of the sons of Noah.

## SHARE

When have you experienced or observed someone entrusted with spiritual leadership choosing to do evil?

## FAITH IN ACTION

### PRAY

Ask the Holy Spirit to reveal to you a place where you have struggled to hear from and/or to obey the Lord God – and that you may find encouragement and a role model in an unexpected place.

### ACT

Today I will humbly accept the chastising and teaching of the Holy Spirit and I will repent of my failure to listen and/or my failure to obey. I will gratefully receive the direct or indirect mentoring of a person or perhaps a 'publication' (electronic or print) which comes from an unexpected source as it faithfully leads me to truth (without presuming that anything else from that same source is necessarily correct).

Be Specific \_\_\_\_\_

## Tuesday ([Habakkuk 1–3](#))

### Habakkuk Complains to the Lord

1:1 The following is the message which God revealed to Habakkuk the prophet:

1:2 How long, Lord, must I cry for help? But you do not listen! I call out to you, “Violence!” But you do not intervene!

1:3 Why do you force me to witness injustice? Why do you put up with wrongdoing? Destruction and violence confront me; conflict is present and one must endure strife.

1:4 For this reason the law lacks power, and justice is never carried out. Indeed, the wicked intimidate the innocent. For this reason justice is perverted.

### The Lord Reveals Some Startling News

1:5 “Look at the nations and pay attention! You will be shocked and amazed! For I will do something in your lifetime that you will not believe even though you are forewarned.

1:6 Look, I am about to empower the Babylonians, that ruthless and greedy nation. They sweep across the surface of the earth, seizing dwelling places that do not belong to them.

1:7 They are frightening and terrifying; they decide for themselves what is right.

1:8 Their horses are faster than leopards and more alert than wolves in the desert. Their horses gallop, their horses come a great distance; like a vulture they swoop down quickly to devour their prey.

1:9 All of them intend to do violence; every face is determined. They take prisoners as easily as one scoops up sand.

1:10 They mock kings and laugh at rulers. They laugh at every fortified city; they build siege ramps and capture them.

1:11 They sweep by like the wind and pass on. But the one who considers himself a god will be held guilty.”

### **Habakkuk Voices Some Concerns**

1:12 Lord, you have been active from ancient times; my sovereign God, you are immortal. Lord, you have made them your instrument of judgment. Protector, you have appointed them as your instrument of punishment.

1:13 You are too just to tolerate evil; you are unable to condone wrongdoing. So why do you put up with such treacherous people? Why do you say nothing when the wicked devour those more righteous than they are?

1:14 You made people like fish in the sea, like animals in the sea that have no ruler.

1:15 The Babylonian tyrant pulls them all up with a fishhook; he hauls them in with his throw net. When he catches them in his dragnet, he is very happy.

1:16 Because of his success he offers sacrifices to his throw net and burns incense to his dragnet; for because of them he has plenty of food, and more than enough to eat.

1:17 Will he then continue to fill and empty his throw net? Will he always destroy nations and spare none?

2:1 I will stand at my watch post; I will remain stationed on the city wall. I will keep watching, so I can see what he says to me and can know how I should answer when he counters my argument.

### **The Lord Assures Habakkuk**

2:2 The Lord responded: “Write down this message! Record it legibly on tablets, so the one who announces it may read it easily.

2:3 For the message is a witness to what is decreed; it gives reliable testimony about how matters will turn out. Even if the message is not fulfilled right away, wait patiently; for it will certainly come to pass – it will not arrive late.

2:4 Look, the one whose desires are not upright will faint from exhaustion, but the person of integrity will live because of his faithfulness.

2:5 Indeed, wine will betray the proud, restless man! His appetite is as big as Sheol's; like death, he is never satisfied. He gathers all the nations; he seizes all peoples.

### **The Proud Babylonians are as Good as Dead**

2:6 “But all these nations will someday taunt him and ridicule him with proverbial sayings: ‘The one who accumulates what does not belong to him is as good as dead (How long will this go on?) – he who gets rich by extortion!’

2:7 Your creditors will suddenly attack; those who terrify you will spring into action, and they will rob you.

2:8 Because you robbed many countries, all who are left among the nations will rob you. You have shed human blood and committed violent acts against lands, cities, and those who live in them.

2:9 The one who builds his house by unjust gain is as good as dead. He does this so he can build his nest way up high and escape the clutches of disaster.

2:10 Your schemes will bring shame to your house. Because you destroyed many nations, you will self-destruct.

2:11 For the stones in the walls will cry out, and the wooden rafters will answer back.

2:12 The one who builds a city by bloodshed is as good as dead – he who starts a town by unjust deeds.

2:13 Be sure of this! The Lord who commands armies has decreed: The nations' efforts will go up in smoke; their exhausting work will be for nothing.

2:14 For recognition of the Lord's sovereign majesty will fill the earth just as the waters fill up the sea.

2:15 “You who force your neighbor to drink wine are as good as dead – you who make others intoxicated by forcing them to drink from the bowl of your furious anger, so you can look at their genitals.

2:16 But you will become drunk with shame, not majesty. Now it is your turn to drink and expose your uncircumcised foreskin! The cup of wine in the Lord's right hand is coming to you, and disgrace will replace your majestic glory!

2:17 For you will pay in full for your violent acts against Lebanon; terrifying judgment will come upon you because of the way you destroyed the wild animals living there. You have shed human blood and committed violent acts against lands, cities, and those who live in them.

2:18 What good is an idol? Why would a craftsman make it? What good is a metal image that gives misleading oracles? Why would its creator place his trust in it and make such mute, worthless things?

2:19 The one who says to wood, 'Wake up!' is as good as dead – he who says to speechless stone, 'Awake!' Can it give reliable guidance? It is overlaid with gold and silver; it has no life's breath inside it.

2:20 But the Lord is in his majestic palace. The whole earth is speechless in his presence!"

### **Habakkuk's Vision of the Divine Warrior**

3:1 This is a prayer of Habakkuk the prophet:

3:2 Lord, I have heard the report of what you did; I am awed, Lord, by what you accomplished. In our time repeat those deeds; in our time reveal them again. But when you cause turmoil, remember to show us mercy!

3:3 God comes from Teman, the sovereign one from Mount Paran. *Selah*. His splendor covers the skies, his glory fills the earth.

3:4 He is as bright as lightning; a two-pronged lightning bolt flashes from his hand. This is the outward display of his power.

3:5 Plague goes before him; pestilence marches right behind him.

3:6 He takes his battle position and shakes the earth; with a mere look he frightens the nations. The ancient mountains disintegrate; the primeval hills are flattened. He travels on the ancient roads.

3:7 I see the tents of Cushan overwhelmed by trouble; the tent curtains of the land of Midian are shaking.

3:8 Is the Lord mad at the rivers? Are you angry with the rivers? Are you enraged at the sea? Is this why you climb into your horse-drawn chariots, your victorious chariots?

3:9 Your bow is ready for action; you commission your arrows. *Selah*. You cause flash floods on the earth's surface.

3:10 When the mountains see you, they shake. The torrential downpour sweeps through. The great deep shouts out; it lifts its hands high.

3:11 The sun and moon stand still in their courses; the flash of your arrows drives them away, the bright light of your lightning-quick spear.

3:12 You furiously stomp on the earth, you angrily trample down the nations.

3:13 You march out to deliver your people, to deliver your special servant. You strike the leader of the wicked nation, laying him open from the lower body to the neck. *Selah*.

3:14 You pierce the heads of his warriors with a spear. They storm forward to scatter us; they shout with joy as if they were plundering the poor with no opposition.

3:15 But you trample on the sea with your horses, on the surging, raging waters.

### Habakkuk Declares His Confidence

3:16 I listened and my stomach churned; the sound made my lips quiver. My frame went limp, as if my bones were decaying, and I shook as I tried to walk. I long for the day of distress to come upon the people who attack us.

3:17 When the fig tree does not bud, and there are no grapes on the vines; when the olive trees do not produce, and the fields yield no crops; when the sheep disappear from the pen, and there are no cattle in the stalls,

3:18 I will rejoice because of the Lord; I will be happy because of the God who delivers me!

3:19 The sovereign Lord is my source of strength. He gives me the agility of a deer; he enables me to negotiate the rugged terrain. (This prayer is for the song leader. It is to be accompanied by stringed instruments.)

### PRAYER

Lord, You punish the wicked, chastise the sinner, but "... the person of integrity will live because of his faithfulness." May I grow to become more and more a person of integrity so that I may be one of Your instruments of redemption in this world.

### SCRIPTURE IN PERSPECTIVE

Habakkuk is estimated to have been written variously around 600 to 650 BC. He prophesied the destruction of the Chaldeans just prior to the fall of Jerusalem.

He pleaded with the Lord God to explain why the law was not causing sin to end. He would allow the Babylonians to His instrument of punishment but then they, because they would imagine themselves to be gods, would also be punished.

Habakkuk was given a word of hope “Look, the one whose desires are not upright will faint from exhaustion, but the person of integrity will live because of his faithfulness.”

Habakkuk reviewed recent events in history and the Lord God's promises, followed by an instruction to a song leader to accompany the prayer with stringed instruments, with these his final recorded words “I will rejoice because of the Lord; I will be happy because of the God who delivers me! The sovereign Lord is my source of strength. He gives me the agility of a deer; he enables me to negotiate the rugged terrain.”

### INTERACT WITH THE TEXT

#### CONSIDER

Habakkuk was frustrated and offended by the unrepentant sin of his people and of the nations around him.

#### DISCUSS

Why would Habakkuk have failed to understand that the purpose of the law was to convict and not to make-perfect?

#### REFLECT

Habakkuk trusted the Lord God to protect and to guide him.

#### SHARE

When have you been frustrated with sin and cried-out to the Lord God?

### FAITH IN ACTION

#### PRAY

Ask the Holy Spirit to reveal to you a place in your life where the Lord God is applying the law to show you where and how you need Him.

#### ACT

Today I will humbly submit to the teaching of the Lord, repent of my sin, request and receive His forgiveness, then step out in greater faith to serve Him.

Be Specific \_\_\_\_\_

## Wednesday ([Jeremiah 41-46](#))

41:1 But in the seventh month Ishmael, the son of Nethaniah and grandson of Elishama who was a member of the royal family and had been one of Zedekiah's chief officers, came with ten of his men to Gedaliah son of Ahikam at Mizpah. While they were eating a meal together with him there at Mizpah, 41:2 Ishmael son of Nethaniah and the ten men who were with him stood up, pulled out their swords, and killed Gedaliah, the son of Ahikam and grandson of Shaphan. Thus Ishmael killed the man that the king of Babylon had appointed to govern the country. 41:3 Ishmael also killed all the Judeans who were with Gedaliah at Mizpah and the Babylonian soldiers who happened to be there.

41:4 On the day after Gedaliah had been murdered, before anyone even knew about it, 41:5 eighty men arrived from Shechem, Shiloh, and Samaria. They had shaved off their beards, torn their clothes, and cut themselves to show they were mourning. They were carrying grain offerings and incense to present at the temple of the Lord in Jerusalem. 41:6 Ishmael son of Nethaniah went out from Mizpah to meet them. He was pretending to cry as he walked along. When he met them, he said to them, "Come with me to meet Gedaliah son of Ahikam." 41:7 But as soon as they were inside the city, Ishmael son of Nethaniah and the men who were with him slaughtered them and threw their bodies in a cistern. 41:8 But there were ten men among them who said to Ishmael, "Do not kill us. For we will give you the stores of wheat, barley, olive oil, and honey we have hidden in a field. So he spared their lives and did not kill them along with the rest. 41:9 Now the cistern where Ishmael threw all the dead bodies of those he had killed was a large one that King Asa had constructed as part of his defenses against King Baasha of Israel. Ishmael son of Nethaniah filled it with dead bodies. 41:10 Then Ishmael took captive all the people who were still left alive in Mizpah. This included the royal princesses and all the rest of the people in Mizpah that Nebuzaradan, the captain of the royal guard, had put under the authority of Gedaliah son of Ahikam. Ishmael son of Nethaniah took all these people captive and set out to cross over to the Ammonites.

### Johanan Rescues the People Ishmael Had Carried Off

41:11 Johanan son of Kareah and all the army officers who were with him heard about all the atrocities that Ishmael son of Nethaniah had committed. 41:12 So they took all their troops and went to fight against Ishmael son of Nethaniah. They caught up with him near the large pool at Gibeon. 41:13 When all the people that Ishmael had taken captive saw Johanan son of Kareah and all the army officers with him, they were glad. 41:14 All those people that Ishmael had taken captive from Mizpah turned and went over to Johanan son of Kareah. 41:15 But Ishmael son of Nethaniah managed to escape from Johanan along with eight of his men, and he went on over to Ammon.

41:16 Johanan son of Kareah and all the army officers who were with him led off all the people who had been left alive at Mizpah. They had rescued them from Ishmael son of Nethaniah after he killed Gedaliah son of Ahikam. They led off the men, women, children, soldiers, and court officials whom they had brought away from Gibeon. 41:17 They set out to go to Egypt to get away from the Babylonians, but stopped at Geruth Kimham near Bethlehem. 41:18 They were afraid of what the Babylonians might do

because Ishmael son of Nethaniah had killed Gedaliah son of Ahikam, whom the king of Babylon had appointed to govern the country.

### The Survivors Ask the Lord for Advice but Refuse to Follow It

42:1 Then all the army officers, including Johanan son of Kareah and Jezaniah son of Hoshaiah and all the people of every class, went to the prophet [Jeremiah. 42:2](#) They said to him, "Please grant our request and pray to the Lord your God for all those of us who are still left alive here. For, as you yourself can see, there are only a few of us left out of the many there were before. 42:3 Pray that the Lord your God will tell us where we should go and what we should do." 42:4 The prophet Jeremiah answered them, "Agreed! I will indeed pray to the Lord your God as you have asked. I will tell you everything the Lord replies in response to you. I will not keep anything back from you." 42:5 They answered Jeremiah, "May the Lord be a true and faithful witness against us if we do not do just as the Lord sends you to tell us to do. 42:6 We will obey what the Lord our God to whom we are sending you tells us to do. It does not matter whether we like what he tells us or not. We will obey what he tells us to do so that things will go well for us." 42:7 Ten days later the Lord spoke to [Jeremiah. 42:8](#) So Jeremiah summoned Johanan son of Kareah and all the army officers who were with him and all the people of every class. 42:9 Then Jeremiah said to them, "You sent me to the Lord God of Israel to make your request known to him. Here is what he says to you: 42:10 'If you will just stay in this land, I will build you up. I will not tear you down. I will firmly plant you. I will not uproot you. For I am filled with sorrow because of the disaster that I have brought on you. 42:11 Do not be afraid of the king of Babylon whom you now fear. Do not be afraid of him because I will be with you to save you and to rescue you from his power. I, the Lord, affirm it! 42:12 I will have compassion on you so that he in turn will have mercy on you and allow you to return to your land.' 42:13 "You must not disobey the Lord your God by saying, 'We will not stay in this land.' 42:14 You must not say, 'No, we will not stay. Instead we will go and live in the land of Egypt where we will not face war, or hear the enemy's trumpet calls, or starve for lack of food.' 42:15 If you people who remain in Judah do that, then listen to what the Lord says. The Lord God of Israel who rules over all says, 'If you are so determined to go to Egypt that you go and settle there, 42:16 the wars you fear will catch up with you there in the land of Egypt. The starvation you are worried about will follow you there to Egypt. You will die there. 42:17 All the people who are determined to go and settle in Egypt will die from war, starvation, or disease. No one will survive or escape the disaster I will bring on them.' 42:18 For the Lord God of Israel who rules over all says, 'If you go to Egypt, I will pour out my wrath on you just as I poured out my anger and wrath on the citizens of Jerusalem. You will become an object of horror and ridicule, an example of those who have been cursed and that people use in pronouncing a curse. You will never see this place again.'

42:19 "The Lord has told you people who remain in Judah, 'Do not go to Egypt.' Be very sure of this: I warn you here and now. 42:20 You are making a fatal mistake. For you sent me to the Lord your God and asked me, 'Pray to the Lord our God for us. Tell us what the Lord our God says and we will do it.' 42:21 This day I have told you what he said. But you do not want to obey the Lord by doing what he sent me to

tell you. 42:22 So now be very sure of this: You will die from war, starvation, or disease in the place where you want to go and live.”

43:1 Jeremiah finished telling all the people all these things the Lord their God had sent him to tell them. 43:2 Then Azariah son of Hoshai, Johanan son of Kareah, and other arrogant men said to Jeremiah, “You are telling a lie! The Lord our God did not send you to tell us, ‘You must not go to Egypt and settle there.’ 43:3 But Baruch son of Neriah is stirring you up against us. He wants to hand us over to the Babylonians so that they will kill us or carry us off into exile in Babylon.” 43:4 So Johanan son of Kareah, all the army officers, and all the rest of the people did not obey the Lord’s command to stay in the land. 43:5 Instead Johanan son of Kareah and all the army officers led off all the Judean remnant who had come back to live in the land of Judah from all the nations where they had been scattered. 43:6 They also led off all the men, women, children, and royal princesses that Nebuzaradan, the captain of the royal guard, had left with Gedaliah, the son of Ahikam and grandson of Shaphan. This included the prophet Jeremiah and Baruch son of Neriah. 43:7 They went on to Egypt because they refused to obey the Lord, and came to Tahpanhes.

### **Jeremiah Predicts that Nebuchadnezzar Will Plunder Egypt and Its Gods**

43:8 At Tahpanhes the Lord spoke to [Jeremiah. 43:9](#) “Take some large stones and bury them in the mortar of the clay pavement at the entrance of Pharaoh’s residence here in Tahpanhes. Do it while the people of Judah present there are watching. 43:10 Then tell them, ‘The Lord God of Israel who rules over all says, “I will bring my servant King Nebuchadnezzar of Babylon. I will set his throne over these stones which I have buried. He will pitch his royal tent over them. 43:11 He will come and attack Egypt. Those who are destined to die of disease will die of disease. Those who are destined to be carried off into exile will be carried off into exile. Those who are destined to die in war will die in war. 43:12 He will set fire to the temples of the gods of Egypt. He will burn their gods or carry them off as captives. He will pick Egypt clean like a shepherd picks the lice from his clothing. He will leave there unharmed. 43:13 He will demolish the sacred pillars in the temple of the sun in Egypt and will burn down the temples of the gods of Egypt.””

### **The Lord Will Punish the Judean Exiles in Egypt for Their Idolatry**

44:1 The Lord spoke to Jeremiah concerning all the Judeans who were living in the land of Egypt, those in Migdol, Tahpanhes, Memphis, and in the region of southern Egypt. 44:2 “The Lord God of Israel who rules over all says, ‘You have seen all the disaster I brought on Jerusalem and all the towns of Judah. Indeed, they now lie in ruins and are deserted. 44:3 This happened because of the wickedness the people living there did. They made me angry by worshiping and offering sacrifice to other gods whom neither they nor you nor your ancestors previously knew. 44:4 I sent my servants the prophets to you people over and over again warning you not to do this disgusting thing I hate. 44:5 But the people of Jerusalem and Judah would not listen or pay any attention. They would not stop the wickedness they were doing nor quit sacrificing to other gods. 44:6 So my anger and my wrath were poured out and burned like a fire through

the towns of Judah and the streets of Jerusalem. That is why they have become the desolate ruins that they are today.'

44:7 "So now the Lord, the God who rules over all, the God of Israel, asks, 'Why will you do such great harm to yourselves? Why should every man, woman, child, and baby of yours be destroyed from the midst of Judah? Why should you leave yourselves without a remnant? 44:8 That is what will result from your making me angry by what you are doing. You are making me angry by sacrificing to other gods here in the land of Egypt where you live. You will be destroyed for doing that! You will become an example used in curses and an object of ridicule among all the nations of the earth. 44:9 Have you forgotten all the wicked things that have been done in the towns of Judah and in the streets of Jerusalem by your ancestors, by the kings of Judah and their wives, by you and your wives? 44:10 To this day your people have shown no contrition! They have not revered me nor followed the laws and statutes I commanded you and your ancestors.'

44:11 "Because of this, the Lord God of Israel who rules over all says, 'I am determined to bring disaster on you, even to the point of destroying all the Judeans here. 44:12 I will see to it that all the Judean remnant that was determined to go and live in the land of Egypt will be destroyed. Here in the land of Egypt they will fall in battle or perish from starvation. People of every class will die in war or from starvation. They will become an object of horror and ridicule, an example of those who have been cursed and that people use in pronouncing a curse. 44:13 I will punish those who live in the land of Egypt with war, starvation, and disease just as I punished Jerusalem. 44:14 None of the Judean remnant who have come to live in the land of Egypt will escape or survive to return to the land of Judah. Though they long to return and live there, none of them shall return except a few fugitives.'"

44:15 Then all the men who were aware that their wives were sacrificing to other gods, as well as all their wives, answered Jeremiah. There was a great crowd of them representing all the people who lived in northern and southern Egypt. They answered, 44:16 "We will not listen to what you claim the Lord has spoken to us! 44:17 Instead we will do everything we vowed we would do. We will sacrifice and pour out drink offerings to the goddess called the Queen of Heaven just as we and our ancestors, our kings, and our leaders previously did in the towns of Judah and in the streets of Jerusalem. For then we had plenty of food, were well-off, and had no troubles. 44:18 But ever since we stopped sacrificing and pouring out drink offerings to the Queen of Heaven, we have been in great need. Our people have died in wars or of starvation." 44:19 The women added, "We did indeed sacrifice and pour out drink offerings to the Queen of Heaven. But it was with the full knowledge and approval of our husbands that we made cakes in her image and poured out drink offerings to her."

44:20 Then Jeremiah replied to all the people, both men and women, who responded to him in this way. 44:21 "The Lord did indeed remember and call to mind what you did! He remembered the sacrifices you and your ancestors, your kings, your leaders, and all the rest of the people of the land offered to other gods in the towns of Judah and in the streets of Jerusalem. 44:22 Finally the Lord could no longer endure

your wicked deeds and the disgusting things you did. That is why your land has become the desolate, uninhabited ruin that it is today. That is why it has become a proverbial example used in curses. 44:23 You have sacrificed to other gods! You have sinned against the Lord! You have not obeyed the Lord! You have not followed his laws, his statutes, and his decrees! That is why this disaster that is evident to this day has happened to you.”

44:24 Then Jeremiah spoke to all the people, particularly to all the women. “Listen to what the Lord has to say all you people of Judah who are in Egypt. 44:25 The Lord God of Israel who rules over all says, ‘You women have confirmed by your actions what you vowed with your lips! You said, “We will certainly carry out our vows to sacrifice and pour out drink offerings to the Queen of Heaven.” Well, then fulfill your vows! Carry them out!’ 44:26 But listen to what the Lord has to say, all you people of Judah who are living in the land of Egypt. The Lord says, ‘I hereby swear by my own great name that none of the people of Judah who are living anywhere in Egypt will ever again invoke my name in their oaths! Never again will any of them use it in an oath saying, “As surely as the Lord God lives....” 44:27 I will indeed see to it that disaster, not prosperity, happens to them. All the people of Judah who are in the land of Egypt will die in war or from starvation until not one of them is left. 44:28 Some who survive in battle will return to the land of Judah from the land of Egypt. But they will be very few indeed! Then the Judean remnant who have come to live in the land of Egypt will know whose word proves true, mine or theirs.’ 44:29 Moreover the Lord says, ‘I will make something happen to prove that I will punish you in this place. I will do it so that you will know that my threats to bring disaster on you will prove true. 44:30 I, the Lord, promise that I will hand Pharaoh Hophra king of Egypt over to his enemies who are seeking to kill him. I will do that just as surely as I handed King Zedekiah of Judah over to King Nebuchadnezzar of Babylon, his enemy who was seeking to kill him.’”

### **Baruch is Rebuked but also Comforted**

45:1 The prophet Jeremiah spoke to Baruch son of Neriah while he was writing down in a scroll the words that Jeremiah spoke to him. This happened in the fourth year that Jehoiakim son of Josiah was ruling over Judah. 45:2 “The Lord God of Israel has a message for you, Baruch. 45:3 ‘You have said, “I feel so hopeless! For the Lord has added sorrow to my suffering. I am worn out from groaning. I can’t find any rest.’””

45:4 The Lord told Jeremiah, “Tell Baruch, “The Lord says, “I am about to tear down what I have built and to uproot what I have planted. I will do this throughout the whole earth. 45:5 Are you looking for great things for yourself? Do not look for such things. For I, the Lord, affirm that I am about to bring disaster on all humanity. But I will allow you to escape with your life wherever you go.’””

### **Prophecies Against Foreign Nations**

46:1 The Lord spoke to Jeremiah about the nations.

## The Prophecy about Egypt's Defeat at Carchemish

46:2 He spoke about Egypt and the army of Pharaoh Necho king of Egypt which was encamped along the Euphrates River at Carchemish. Now this was the army that King Nebuchadnezzar of Babylon defeated in the fourth year that Jehoiakim son of Josiah was ruling over Judah.

46:3 "Fall into ranks with your shields ready! Prepare to march into battle!

46:4 Harness the horses to the chariots! Mount your horses! Put on your helmets and take your positions! Sharpen your spears! Put on your armor!

46:5 What do I see?" says the Lord. "The soldiers are terrified. They are retreating. They have been defeated. They are overcome with terror; they desert quickly without looking back.

46:6 But even the swiftest cannot get away. Even the strongest cannot escape. There in the north by the Euphrates River they stumble and fall in defeat.

46:7 "Who is this that rises like the Nile, like its streams turbulent at flood stage?

46:8 Egypt rises like the Nile, like its streams turbulent at flood stage. Egypt says, 'I will arise and cover the earth. I will destroy cities and the people who inhabit them.'

46:9 Go ahead and charge into battle, you horsemen! Drive furiously, you charioteers! Let the soldiers march out into battle, those from Ethiopia and Libya who carry shields, and those from Lydia who are armed with the bow.

46:10 But that day belongs to the Lord God who rules over all. It is the day when he will pay back his enemies. His sword will devour them until its appetite is satisfied! It will drink their blood until it is full! For the Lord God who rules over all will offer them up as a sacrifice in the land of the north by the Euphrates River.

46:11 Go up to Gilead and get medicinal ointment, you dear poor people of Egypt. But it will prove useless no matter how much medicine you use; there will be no healing for you.

46:12 The nations will hear of your devastating defeat. your cries of distress will echo throughout the earth. In the panic of their flight one soldier will trip over another and both of them will fall down defeated."

## The Lord Predicts that Nebuchadnezzar Will Attack and Plunder Egypt

46:13 The Lord spoke to the prophet Jeremiah about Nebuchadnezzar coming to attack the land of Egypt.

46:14 “Make an announcement throughout Egypt. Proclaim it in Migdol, Memphis, and Tahpanhes. “Take your positions and prepare to do battle. For the enemy army is destroying all the nations around you.’

46:15 Why will your soldiers be defeated? They will not stand because I, the Lord, will thrust them down.

46:16 I will make many stumble. They will fall over one another in their hurry to flee. They will say, ‘Get up! Let’s go back to our own people. Let’s go back to our homelands because the enemy is coming to destroy us.’

46:17 There at home they will say, ‘Pharaoh king of Egypt is just a big noise! He has let the most opportune moment pass by.’

46:18 I the King, whose name is the Lord who rules over all, swear this: I swear as surely as I live that a conqueror is coming. He will be as imposing as Mount Tabor is among the mountains, as Mount Carmel is against the backdrop of the sea.

46:19 Pack your bags for exile, you inhabitants of poor dear Egypt. For Memphis will be laid waste. It will lie in ruins and be uninhabited.

46:20 Egypt is like a beautiful young cow. But northern armies will attack her like swarms of stinging flies.

46:21 Even her mercenaries will prove to be like pampered, well-fed calves. For they too will turn and run away. They will not stand their ground when the time for them to be destroyed comes, the time for them to be punished.

46:22 Egypt will run away, hissing like a snake, as the enemy comes marching up in force. They will come against her with axes as if they were woodsmen chopping down trees.

46:23 The population of Egypt is like a vast, impenetrable forest. But I, the Lord, affirm that the enemy will cut them down. For those who chop them down will be more numerous than locusts. They will be too numerous to count.

46:24 Poor dear Egypt will be put to shame. She will be handed over to the people from the north.”

46:25 The Lord God of Israel who rules over all says, “I will punish Amon, the god of Thebes. I will punish Egypt, its gods, and its kings. I will punish Pharaoh and all who trust in him. 46:26 I will hand them over to Nebuchadnezzar and his troops, who want to kill them. But later on, people will live in Egypt again as they did in former times. I, the Lord, affirm it!”

**A Promise of Hope for Israel**

46:27 “You descendants of Jacob, my servants, do not be afraid; do not be terrified, people of Israel. For I will rescue you and your descendants from the faraway lands where you are captives. The descendants of Jacob will return to their land and enjoy peace. They will be secure and no one will terrify them.

46:28 I, the Lord, tell you not to be afraid, you descendants of Jacob, my servant, for I am with you. Though I completely destroy all the nations where I scatter you, I will not completely destroy you. I will indeed discipline you but only in due measure. I will not allow you to go entirely unpunished.”

## PRAYER

Lord, the persistent arrogance and rebellion of the people angered You, yet you retained a remnant so that You could keep Your covenant with Abraham, Issac, and Jacob. May I rest in the certainty that Your every sovereign promise will always be kept.

## SCRIPTURE IN PERSPECTIVE

Just as Jeremiah had warned, the failure of the king to surrender to the Babylonians resulted in terrible consequences; not only was Jerusalem destroyed and the people taken away to Babylon “There at Riblah the king of Babylon had Zedekiah’s sons put to death while Zedekiah was forced to watch. The king of Babylon also had all the nobles of Judah put to death. 39:7 Then he had Zedekiah’s eyes put out and had him bound in chains to be led off to Babylon.”

Jeremiah was protected by the orders of the Babylonian king and allowed to remain among the people. Ebed-Melech the Ethiopian was also protected for acting from faith in rescuing Jeremiah.

Gedaliah was appointed by the Babylonians to oversee the remnant people and a community rose at Mizpah. Some soldiers who had been hiding, as well as civilians who also managed to hide from the Babylonian army, joined them. “Thus they harvested a large amount of wine and dates and figs.”

Ishmael (son of Nethaniah) and his small army murdered Gedaliah and many others and then took the rest of these people captive then marched them away to the Ammonites. Johanan son of Kareah and his small army heard what had happened and rescued the people, but Ishmael escaped with a few men to the Ammonites.

Johanan wanted to go to Egypt but feared the Babylonians would catch them so they asked Jeremiah to consult the Lord God. He prophesied that they should stay and not flee to Egypt but arrogant members of leadership called him a liar and insisted that they flee to Egypt, despite the warning from the Lord that they would be worse off there.

Jeremiah was taken to Egypt with the people and there prophesied doom for Egypt, and the rebels from Judah, at the hands of the Babylonians who would destroy Egypt.

Baruch, Jeremiah's scribe, was having a pity-party for himself and the Lord said to him "I am about to tear down what I have built and to uproot what I have planted. I will do this throughout the whole earth. 45:5 Are you looking for great things for yourself? Do not look for such things. For I, the Lord, affirm that I am about to bring disaster on all humanity. But I will allow you to escape with your life wherever you go."

Jeremiah's prophesy concluded with immediate disaster for Egypt and eventually for Babylon and that a remnant would be preserved even as those nations were destroyed around them.

## INTERACT WITH THE TEXT

### CONSIDER

The Lord God kept providing opportunities for the people to choose faithful-obedience to Him and they persisted in rebellion.

### DISCUSS

Isn't it amazing that the Lord God caused the king of Babylon to preserve Jeremiah and the Ethiopian in the midst of the battle and the deportations?

### REFLECT

Even in the sad times following the destruction of Jerusalem and the deportation of the people Ishmael attacked and tried to force the remnant into slavery under the Ammonites.

### SHARE

When have you had your own pity-party because things were going badly all around you?

## FAITH IN ACTION

### PRAY

Ask the Holy Spirit to reveal to you a place where you are too obsessed with your own stuff to notice what the Lord is doing all around you.

### ACT

Today I will confess and repent, seek and receive the Lord's forgiveness, and intentionally begin looking at the world through His eyes.

Be Specific \_\_\_\_\_

**Thursday ([Jeremiah 47-51](#))**

## Judgment on the Philistine Cities

47:1 The Lord spoke to the prophet Jeremiah about the Philistines before Pharaoh attacked Gaza.

47:2 “Look! Enemies are gathering in the north like water rising in a river. They will be like an overflowing stream. They will overwhelm the whole country and everything in it like a flood. They will overwhelm the cities and their inhabitants. People will cry out in alarm. Everyone living in the country will cry out in pain.

47:3 Fathers will hear the hoofbeats of the enemies’ horses, the clatter of their chariots and the rumbling of their wheels. They will not turn back to save their children because they will be paralyzed with fear.

47:4 For the time has come to destroy all the Philistines. The time has come to destroy all the help that remains for Tyre and Sidon. For I, the Lord, will destroy the Philistines, that remnant that came from the island of Crete.

47:5 The people of Gaza will shave their heads in mourning. The people of Ashkelon will be struck dumb. How long will you gash yourselves to show your sorrow, you who remain of Philistia’s power?

47:6 How long will you cry out, ‘Oh, sword of the Lord, how long will it be before you stop killing? Go back into your sheath! Stay there and rest!’

47:7 But how can it rest when I, the Lord, have given it orders? I have ordered it to attack the people of Ashkelon and the seacoast.

## Judgment Against Moab

48:1 The Lord God of Israel who rules over all spoke about Moab. “Sure to be judged is Nebo! Indeed, it will be destroyed! Kiriathaim will suffer disgrace. It will be captured! Its fortress will suffer disgrace. It will be torn down!

48:2 People will not praise Moab any more. The enemy will capture Heshbon and plot how to destroy Moab, saying, ‘Come, let’s put an end to that nation!’ City of Madmen, you will also be destroyed. A destructive army will march against you.

48:3 Cries of anguish will arise in Horonaim, ‘Oh, the ruin and great destruction!’

48:4 “Moab will be crushed. Her children will cry out in distress.

48:5 Indeed they will climb the slopes of Luhith, weeping continually as they go. For on the road down to Horonaim they will hear the cries of distress over the destruction.

48:6 They will hear, 'Run! Save yourselves! Even if you must be like a lonely shrub in the desert!'

48:7 "Moab, you trust in the things you do and in your riches. So you too will be conquered. Your god Chemosh will go into exile along with his priests and his officials.

48:8 The destroyer will come against every town. Not one town will escape. The towns in the valley will be destroyed. The cities on the high plain will be laid waste. I, the Lord, have spoken!

48:9 Set up a gravestone for Moab, for it will certainly be laid in ruins! Its cities will be laid waste and become uninhabited."

48:10 A curse on anyone who is lax in doing the Lord's work! A curse on anyone who keeps from carrying out his destruction!

48:11 "From its earliest days Moab has lived undisturbed. It has never been taken into exile. Its people are like wine allowed to settle undisturbed on its dregs, never poured out from one jar to another. They are like wine which tastes like it always did, whose aroma has remained unchanged.

48:12 But the time is coming when I will send men against Moab who will empty it out. They will empty the towns of their people, then will lay those towns in ruins. I, the Lord, affirm it!

48:13 The people of Moab will be disappointed by their god Chemosh. They will be as disappointed as the people of Israel were when they put their trust in the calf god at Bethel.

48:14 How can you men of Moab say, 'We are heroes, men who are mighty in battle?'

48:15 Moab will be destroyed. Its towns will be invaded. Its finest young men will be slaughtered. I, the King, the Lord who rules over all, affirm it!

48:16 Moab's destruction is at hand. Disaster will come on it quickly.

48:17 Mourn for that nation, all you nations living around it, all of you nations that know of its fame. Mourn and say, 'Alas, its powerful influence has been broken! Its glory and power have been done away!'

48:18 Come down from your place of honor; sit on the dry ground, you who live in Dibon. For the one who will destroy Moab will attack you; he will destroy your fortifications.

48:19 You who live in Aroer, stand by the road and watch. Question the man who is fleeing and the woman who is escaping. Ask them, 'What has happened?'

48:20 They will answer, 'Moab is disgraced, for it has fallen! Wail and cry out in mourning! Announce along the Arnon River that Moab has been destroyed.'

48:21 "Judgment will come on the cities on the high plain: on Holon, Jahzah, and Mephaath, 48:22 on Dibon, Nebo, and Beth Diblathaim, 48:23 on Kiriathaim, Beth Gamul, and Beth Meon, 48:24 on Kerioth and Bozrah. It will come on all the towns of Moab, both far and near. 48:25 Moab's might will be crushed. Its power will be broken. I, the Lord, affirm it!

48:26 "Moab has vaunted itself against me. So make him drunk with the wine of my wrath until he splashes around in his own vomit, until others treat him as a laughingstock.

48:27 For did not you people of Moab laugh at the people of Israel? Did you think that they were nothing but thieves, that you shook your head in contempt every time you talked about them?

48:28 Leave your towns, you inhabitants of Moab. Go and live in the cliffs. Be like a dove that makes its nest high on the sides of a ravine.

48:29 I have heard how proud the people of Moab are, I know how haughty they are. I have heard how arrogant, proud, and haughty they are, what a high opinion they have of themselves.

48:30 I, the Lord, affirm that I know how arrogant they are. But their pride is ill-founded. Their boastings will prove to be false.

48:31 So I will weep with sorrow for Moab. I will cry out in sadness for all of Moab. I will moan for the people of Kir Heres.

48:32 I will weep for the grapevines of Sibmah just like the town of Jazer weeps over them. Their branches once spread as far as the Dead Sea. They reached as far as the town of Jazer. The destroyer will ravage her fig, date, and grape crops.

48:33 Joy and gladness will disappear from the fruitful land of Moab. I will stop the flow of wine from the winepresses. No one will stomp on the grapes there and shout for joy. The shouts there will be shouts of soldiers, not the shouts of those making wine.

48:34 Cries of anguish raised from Heshbon and Elealeh will be sounded as far as Jahaz. They will be sounded from Zoar as far as Horonaim and Eglath Shelishiyah. For even the waters of Nimrim will be dried up.

48:35 I will put an end in Moab to those who make offerings at her places of worship. I will put an end to those who sacrifice to other gods. I, the Lord, affirm it!

48:36 So my heart moans for Moab like a flute playing a funeral song. Yes, like a flute playing a funeral song, my heart moans for the people of Kir Heres. For the wealth they have gained will perish.

48:37 For all of them will shave their heads in mourning. They will all cut off their beards to show their sorrow. They will all make gashes in their hands. They will all put on sackcloth.

48:38 On all the housetops in Moab and in all its public squares there will be nothing but mourning. For I will break Moab like an unwanted jar. I, the Lord, affirm it!

48:39 Oh, how shattered Moab will be! Oh, how her people will wail! Oh, how she will turn away in shame! Moab will become an object of ridicule, a terrifying sight to all the nations that surround her.”

48:40 For the Lord says, “Look! Like an eagle with outspread wings a nation will swoop down on Moab.

48:41 Her towns will be captured. Her fortresses will be taken. At that time the soldiers of Moab will be frightened like a woman in labor.

48:42 Moab will be destroyed and no longer be a nation, because she has vaunted herself against the Lord.

48:43 Terror, pits, and traps are in store for the people who live in Moab. I, the Lord, affirm it!

48:44 Anyone who flees at the sound of terror will fall into a pit. Anyone who climbs out of the pit will be caught in a trap. For the time is coming when I will punish the people of Moab. I, the Lord, affirm it!

48:45 In the shadows of the walls of Heshbon those trying to escape will stand helpless. For a fire will burst forth from Heshbon. Flames will shoot out from the former territory of Sihon. They will burn the foreheads of the people of Moab, the skulls of those war-loving people.

48:46 Moab, you are doomed! You people who worship Chemosh will be destroyed. Your sons will be taken away captive. Your daughters will be carried away into exile.

48:47 Yet in days to come I will reverse Moab’s ill fortune.” says the Lord. The judgment against Moab ends here.

### **Judgment Against Ammon**

49:1 The Lord spoke about the Ammonites. “Do you think there are not any people of the nation of Israel remaining? Do you think there are not any of them remaining to reinherit their land? Is that why you people who worship the god Milcom have taken possession of the territory of Gad and live in his cities?

49:2 Because you did that, I, the Lord, affirm that a time is coming when I will make Rabbah, the capital city of Ammon, hear the sound of the battle cry. It will become a mound covered with ruins. Its villages will be burned to the ground. Then Israel will take back its land from those who took their land from them. I, the Lord, affirm it!

49:3 Wail, you people in Heshbon, because Ai in Ammon is destroyed. Cry out in anguish, you people in the villages surrounding Rabbah. Put on sackcloth and cry out in mourning. Run about covered with gashes. For your god Milcom will go into exile along with his priests and officials.

49:4 Why do you brag about your great power? Your power is ebbing away, you rebellious people of Ammon, who trust in your riches and say, 'Who would dare to attack us?'

49:5 I will bring terror on you from every side," says the Lord God who rules over all. "You will be scattered in every direction. No one will gather the fugitives back together.

49:6 Yet in days to come I will reverse Ammon's ill fortune." says the Lord.

### **Judgment Against Edom**

49:7 The Lord who rules over all spoke about Edom. "Is wisdom no longer to be found in Teman? Can Edom's counselors not give her any good advice? Has all of their wisdom turned bad? 49:8 Turn and flee! Take up refuge in remote places, you people who live in Dedan. For I will bring disaster on the descendants of Esau. I have decided it is time for me to punish them.

49:9 If grape pickers came to pick your grapes, would they not leave a few grapes behind? If robbers came at night, would they not pillage only what they needed?

49:10 But I will strip everything away from Esau's descendants. I will uncover their hiding places so they cannot hide. Their children, relatives, and neighbors will all be destroyed. Not one of them will be left!

49:11 Leave your orphans behind and I will keep them alive. Your widows too can depend on me."

49:12 For the Lord says, "If even those who did not deserve to drink from the cup of my wrath must drink from it, do you think you will go unpunished? You will not go unpunished, but must certainly drink from the cup of my wrath. 49:13 For I solemnly swear," says the Lord, "that Bozrah will become a pile of ruins. It will become an object of horror and ridicule, an example to be used in curses. All the towns around it will lie in ruins forever."

49:14 I said, "I have heard a message from the Lord. A messenger has been sent among the nations to say, 'Gather your armies and march out against her! Prepare to do battle with her!'"

49:15 The Lord says to Edom, "I will certainly make you small among nations. I will make you despised by all humankind.

49:16 The terror you inspire in others and the arrogance of your heart have deceived you. You may make your home in the clefts of the rocks; you may occupy the highest places in the hills. But even if you made your home where the eagles nest, I would bring you down from there," says the Lord.

49:17 “Edom will become an object of horror. All who pass by it will be filled with horror; they will hiss out their scorn because of all the disasters that have happened to it.

49:18 Edom will be destroyed like Sodom and Gomorrah and the towns that were around them. No one will live there. No human being will settle in it,” says the Lord.

49:19 “A lion coming up from the thick undergrowth along the Jordan scatters the sheep in the pastureland around it. So too I will chase the Edomites off their land. Then I will appoint over it whomever I choose. For there is no one like me, and there is no one who can call me to account. There is no ruler who can stand up against me.

49:20 So listen to what I, the Lord, have planned against Edom, what I intend to do to the people who live in Teman. Their little ones will be dragged off. I will completely destroy their land because of what they have done.

49:21 The people of the earth will quake when they hear of their downfall. Their cries of anguish will be heard all the way to the Gulf of Aqaba.

49:22 Look! Like an eagle with outspread wings, a nation will soar up and swoop down on Bozrah. At that time the soldiers of Edom will be as fearful as a woman in labor.”

### **Judgment Against Damascus**

49:23 The Lord spoke about Damascus. “The people of Hamath and Arpad will be dismayed because they have heard bad news. Their courage will melt away because of worry. Their hearts will not be able to rest.

49:24 The people of Damascus will lose heart and turn to flee. Panic will grip them. Pain and anguish will seize them like a woman in labor.

49:25 How deserted will that once-famous city be, that city that was once filled with joy!

49:26 For her young men will fall in her city squares. All her soldiers will be destroyed at that time,” says the Lord who rules over all.

49:27 “I will set fire to the walls of Damascus; it will burn up the palaces of Ben Hadad.”

### **Judgment Against Kedar and Hazor**

49:28 The Lord spoke about Kedar and the kingdoms of Hazor that King Nebuchadnezzar of Babylon conquered. “Army of Babylon, go and attack Kedar. Lay waste those who live in the eastern desert.

49:29 Their tents and their flocks will be taken away. Their tent curtains, equipment, and camels will be carried off. People will shout to them, "Terror is all around you!"

49:30 The Lord says, "Flee quickly, you who live in Hazor. Take up refuge in remote places. For King Nebuchadnezzar of Babylon has laid out plans to attack you. He has formed his strategy on how to defeat you."

49:31 The Lord says, "Army of Babylon, go and attack a nation that lives in peace and security. They have no gates or walls to protect them. They live all alone.

49:32 Their camels will be taken as plunder. Their vast herds will be taken as spoil. I will scatter to the four winds those desert peoples who cut their hair short at the temples. I will bring disaster against them from every direction," says the Lord.

49:33 "Hazor will become a permanent wasteland, a place where only jackals live. No one will live there. No human being will settle in it."

### **Judgment Against Elam**

49:34 Early in the reign of King Zedekiah of Judah, the Lord spoke to the prophet Jeremiah about Elam.

49:35 The Lord who rules over all said, "I will kill all the archers of Elam, who are the chief source of her military might.

49:36 I will cause enemies to blow through Elam from every direction like the winds blowing in from the four quarters of heaven. I will scatter the people of Elam to the four winds. There will not be any nation where the refugees of Elam will not go.

49:37 I will make the people of Elam terrified of their enemies, who are seeking to kill them. I will vent my fierce anger and bring disaster upon them," says the Lord. "I will send armies chasing after them until I have completely destroyed them.

49:38 I will establish my sovereignty over Elam. I will destroy their king and their leaders," says the Lord.

49:39 "Yet in days to come I will reverse Elam's ill fortune." says the Lord.

### **Judgment Against Babylon**

50:1 The Lord spoke concerning Babylon and the land of Babylonia through the prophet Jeremiah.

50:2 “Announce the news among the nations! Proclaim it! Signal for people to pay attention! Declare the news! Do not hide it! Say: ‘Babylon will be captured. Bel will be put to shame. Marduk will be dismayed. Babylon’s idols will be put to shame. Her disgusting images will be dismayed.

50:3 For a nation from the north will attack Babylon. It will lay her land waste. People and animals will flee out of it. No one will inhabit it.’

50:4 “When that time comes,” says the Lord, “the people of Israel and Judah will return to the land together. They will come back with tears of repentance as they seek the Lord their God.

50:5 They will ask the way to Zion; they will turn their faces toward it. They will come and bind themselves to the Lord in a lasting covenant that will never be forgotten.

50:6 “My people have been lost sheep. Their shepherds have allowed them to go astray. They have wandered around in the mountains. They have roamed from one mountain and hill to another. They have forgotten their resting place.

50:7 All who encountered them devoured them. Their enemies who did this said, ‘We are not liable for punishment! For those people have sinned against the Lord, their true pasture. They have sinned against the Lord in whom their ancestors trusted.’

50:8 “People of Judah, get out of Babylon quickly! Leave the land of Babylonia! Be the first to depart! Be like the male goats that lead the herd.

50:9 For I will rouse into action and bring against Babylon a host of mighty nations from the land of the north. They will set up their battle lines against her. They will come from the north and capture her. Their arrows will be like a skilled soldier who does not return from the battle empty-handed.

50:10 Babylonia will be plundered. Those who plunder it will take all they want,” says the Lord.

50:11 “People of Babylonia, you plundered my people. That made you happy and glad. You frolic about like calves in a pasture. Your joyous sounds are like the neighs of a stallion.

50:12 But Babylonia will be put to great shame. The land where you were born will be disgraced. Indeed, Babylonia will become the least important of all nations. It will become a dry and barren desert.

50:13 After I vent my wrath on it Babylon will be uninhabited. It will be totally desolate. All who pass by will be filled with horror and will hiss out their scorn because of all the disasters that have happened to it.

50:14 “Take up your battle positions all around Babylon, all you soldiers who are armed with bows. Shoot all your arrows at her! Do not hold any back! For she has sinned against the Lord.

50:15 Shout the battle cry from all around the city. She will throw up her hands in surrender. Her towers will fall. Her walls will be torn down. Because I, the Lord, am wreaking revenge, take out your vengeance on her! Do to her as she has done!

50:16 Kill all the farmers who sow the seed in the land of Babylon. Kill all those who wield the sickle at harvest time. Let all the foreigners return to their own people. Let them hurry back to their own lands to escape destruction by that enemy army.

50:17 “The people of Israel are like scattered sheep which lions have chased away. First the king of Assyria devoured them. Now last of all King Nebuchadnezzar of Babylon has gnawed their bones.

50:18 So I, the Lord God of Israel who rules over all, say: ‘I will punish the king of Babylon and his land just as I punished the king of Assyria.

50:19 But I will restore the flock of Israel to their own pasture. They will graze on Mount Carmel and the land of Bashan. They will eat until they are full on the hills of Ephraim and the land of Gilead.

50:20 When that time comes, no guilt will be found in Israel. No sin will be found in Judah. For I will forgive those of them I have allowed to survive. I, the Lord, affirm it!”

50:21 The Lord says, “Attack the land of Merathaim and the people who live in Pekod! Pursue, kill, and completely destroy them! Do just as I have commanded you!

50:22 The noise of battle can be heard in the land of Babylonia. There is the sound of great destruction.

50:23 Babylon hammered the whole world to pieces. But see how that ‘hammer’ has been broken and shattered! See what an object of horror Babylon has become among the nations!

50:24 I set a trap for you, Babylon; you were caught before you knew it. You fought against me. So you were found and captured.

50:25 I have opened up the place where my weapons are stored. I have brought out the weapons for carrying out my wrath. For I, the Lord God who rules over all, have work to carry out in the land of Babylonia.

50:26 Come from far away and attack Babylonia! Open up the places where she stores her grain! Pile her up in ruins! Destroy her completely! Do not leave anyone alive!

50:27 Kill all her soldiers! Let them be slaughtered! They are doomed, for their day of reckoning has come, the time for them to be punished.”

50:28 Listen! Fugitives and refugees are coming from the land of Babylon. They are coming to Zion to declare there how the Lord our God is getting revenge, getting revenge for what they have done to his temple.

50:29 “Call for archers to come against Babylon! Summon against her all who draw the bow! Set up camp all around the city! Do not allow anyone to escape! Pay her back for what she has done. Do to her what she has done to others. For she has proudly defied me, the Holy One of Israel.

50:30 So her young men will fall in her city squares. All her soldiers will be destroyed at that time,” says the Lord.

50:31 “Listen! I am opposed to you, you proud city,” says the Lord God who rules over all. “Indeed, your day of reckoning has come, the time when I will punish you.

50:32 You will stumble and fall, you proud city; no one will help you get up. I will set fire to your towns; it will burn up everything that surrounds you.”

50:33 The Lord who rules over all says, “The people of Israel are oppressed. So too are the people of Judah. All those who took them captive are holding them prisoners. They refuse to set them free.

50:34 But the one who will rescue them is strong. He is known as the Lord who rules over all. He will strongly champion their cause. As a result he will bring peace and rest to the earth, but trouble and turmoil to the people who inhabit Babylonia.

50:35 “Destructive forces will come against the Babylonians,” says the Lord. “They will come against the people who inhabit Babylonia, against her leaders and her men of wisdom.

50:36 Destructive forces will come against her false prophets; they will be shown to be fools! Destructive forces will come against her soldiers; they will be filled with terror!

50:37 Destructive forces will come against her horses and her chariots. Destructive forces will come against all the foreign troops within her; they will be as frightened as women! Destructive forces will come against her treasures; they will be taken away as plunder!

50:38 A drought will come upon her land; her rivers and canals will be dried up. All of this will happen because her land is filled with idols. Her people act like madmen because of those idols they fear.

50:39 Therefore desert creatures and jackals will live there. Ostriches will dwell in it too. But no people will ever live there again. No one will dwell there for all time to come.

50:40 I will destroy Babylonia just like I did Sodom and Gomorrah and the neighboring towns. No one will live there. No human being will settle in it,” says the Lord.

50:41 “Look! An army is about to come from the north. A mighty nation and many kings are stirring into action in faraway parts of the earth.

50:42 Its soldiers are armed with bows and spears. They are cruel and show no mercy. They sound like the roaring sea as they ride forth on their horses. Lined up in formation like men going into battle, they are coming against you, fair Babylon!

50:43 The king of Babylon will become paralyzed with fear when he hears news of their coming. Anguish will grip him, agony like that of a woman giving birth to a baby.

50:44 “A lion coming up from the thick undergrowth along the Jordan scatters the sheep in the pastureland around it. So too I will chase the Babylonians off of their land. Then I will appoint over it whomever I choose. For there is no one like me. There is no one who can call me to account. There is no ruler that can stand up against me.

50:45 So listen to what I, the Lord, have planned against Babylon, what I intend to do to the people who inhabit the land of Babylonia. Their little ones will be dragged off. I will completely destroy their land because of what they have done.

50:46 The people of the earth will quake when they hear Babylon has been captured. Her cries of anguish will be heard by the other nations.”

51:1 The Lord says, “I will cause a destructive wind to blow against Babylon and the people who inhabit Babylonia.

51:2 I will send people to winnow Babylonia like a wind blowing away chaff. They will winnow her and strip her land bare. This will happen when they come against her from every direction, when it is time to destroy her.

51:3 Do not give her archers time to string their bows or to put on their coats of armor. Do not spare any of her young men. Completely destroy her whole army.

51:4 Let them fall slain in the land of Babylonia, mortally wounded in the streets of her cities.

51:5 “For Israel and Judah will not be forsaken by their God, the Lord who rules over all. For the land of Babylonia is full of guilt against the Holy One of Israel.

51:6 Get out of Babylonia quickly, you foreign people. Flee to save your lives. Do not let yourselves be killed because of her sins. For it is time for the Lord to wreak his revenge. He will pay Babylonia back for what she has done.

51:7 Babylonia had been a gold cup in the Lord's hand. She had made the whole world drunk. The nations had drunk from the wine of her wrath. So they have all gone mad.

51:8 But suddenly Babylonia will fall and be destroyed. Cry out in mourning over it! Get medicine for her wounds! Perhaps she can be healed!

51:9 Foreigners living there will say, 'We tried to heal her, but she could not be healed. Let's leave Babylonia and each go back to his own country. For judgment on her will be vast in its proportions. It will be like it is piled up to heaven, stacked up into the clouds.'

51:10 The exiles from Judah will say, 'The Lord has brought about a great deliverance for us! Come on, let's go and proclaim in Zion what the Lord our God has done!'

51:11 "Sharpen your arrows! Fill your quivers! The Lord will arouse a spirit of hostility in the kings of Media. For he intends to destroy Babylonia. For that is how the Lord will get his revenge – how he will get his revenge for the Babylonians' destruction of his temple.

51:12 Give the signal to attack Babylon's wall! Bring more guards! Post them all around the city! Put men in ambush! For the Lord will do what he has planned. He will do what he said he would do to the people of Babylon.

51:13 "You who live along the rivers of Babylon, the time of your end has come. You who are rich in plundered treasure, it is time for your lives to be cut off.

51:14 The Lord who rules over all has solemnly sworn, 'I will fill your land with enemy soldiers. They will swarm over it like locusts. They will raise up shouts of victory over it.'

51:15 He is the one who by his power made the earth. He is the one who by his wisdom fixed the world in place, by his understanding he spread out the heavens.

51:16 When his voice thunders, the waters in the heavens roar. He makes the clouds rise from the far-off horizons. He makes the lightning flash out in the midst of the rain. He unleashes the wind from the places where he stores it.

51:17 All idolaters will prove to be stupid and ignorant. Every goldsmith will be disgraced by the idol he made.

For the image he forges is merely a sham. There is no breath in any of those idols.

51:18 They are worthless, objects to be ridiculed. When the time comes to punish them, they will be destroyed.

51:19 The Lord, who is the portion of the descendants of Jacob, is not like them. For he is the one who created everything, including the people of Israel whom he claims as his own. He is known as the Lord who rules over all.

51:20 “Babylon, you are my war club, my weapon for battle. I used you to smash nations. I used you to destroy kingdoms.

51:21 I used you to smash horses and their riders. I used you to smash chariots and their drivers.

51:22 I used you to smash men and women. I used you to smash old men and young men. I used you to smash young men and young women.

51:23 I used you to smash shepherds and their flocks. I used you to smash farmers and their teams of oxen. I used you to smash governors and leaders.”

51:24 “But I will repay Babylon and all who live in Babylonia for all the wicked things they did in Zion right before the eyes of you Judeans,” says the Lord.

51:25 The Lord says, “Beware! I am opposed to you, Babylon! You are like a destructive mountain that destroys all the earth. I will unleash my power against you; I will roll you off the cliffs and make you like a burned-out mountain.

51:26 No one will use any of your stones as a cornerstone. No one will use any of them in the foundation of his house. For you will lie desolate forever,” says the Lord.

51:27 “Raise up battle flags throughout the lands. Sound the trumpets calling the nations to do battle. Prepare the nations to do battle against Babylonia. Call for these kingdoms to attack her: Ararat, Minni, and Ashkenaz. Appoint a commander to lead the attack. Send horses against her like a swarm of locusts.

51:28 Prepare the nations to do battle against her. Prepare the kings of the Medes. Prepare their governors and all their leaders. Prepare all the countries they rule to do battle against her.

51:29 The earth will tremble and writhe in agony. For the Lord will carry out his plan. He plans to make the land of Babylonia a wasteland where no one lives.

51:30 The soldiers of Babylonia will stop fighting. They will remain in their fortified cities. They will lose their strength to do battle. They will be as frightened as women. The houses in her cities will be set on fire. The gates of her cities will be broken down.

51:31 One runner after another will come to the king of Babylon. One messenger after another will come bringing news. They will bring news to the king of Babylon that his whole city has been captured.

51:32 They will report that the fords have been captured, the reed marshes have been burned, the soldiers are terrified.

51:33 For the Lord God of Israel who rules over all says, 'Fair Babylon will be like a threshing floor which has been trampled flat for harvest. The time for her to be cut down and harvested will come very soon.'

51:34 "King Nebuchadnezzar of Babylon devoured me and drove my people out. Like a monster from the deep he swallowed me. He filled his belly with my riches. He made me an empty dish. He completely cleaned me out."

51:35 The person who lives in Zion says, "May Babylon pay for the violence done to me and to my relatives."

Jerusalem says, "May those living in Babylonia pay for the bloodshed of my people."

51:36 Therefore the Lord says, "I will stand up for your cause. I will pay the Babylonians back for what they have done to you. I will dry up their sea. I will make their springs run dry.

51:37 Babylon will become a heap of ruins. Jackals will make their home there. It will become an object of horror and of hissing scorn, a place where no one lives.

51:38 The Babylonians are all like lions roaring for prey. They are like lion cubs growling for something to eat.

51:39 When their appetites are all stirred up, I will set out a banquet for them. I will make them drunk so that they will pass out, they will fall asleep forever, they will never wake up," says the Lord.

51:40 "I will lead them off to be slaughtered like lambs, rams, and male goats."

51:41 "See how Babylon has been captured! See how the pride of the whole earth has been taken! See what an object of horror Babylon has become among the nations!

51:42 The sea has swept over Babylon. She has been covered by a multitude of its waves.

51:43 The towns of Babylonia have become heaps of ruins. She has become a dry and barren desert. No one lives in those towns any more. No one even passes through them.

51:44 I will punish the god Bel in Babylon. I will make him spit out what he has swallowed. The nations will not come streaming to him any longer. Indeed, the walls of Babylon will fall."

51:45 "Get out of Babylon, my people! Flee to save your lives from the fierce anger of the Lord!

51:46 Do not lose your courage or become afraid because of the reports that are heard in the land. For a report will come in one year. Another report will follow it in the next. There will be violence in the land with ruler fighting against ruler.”

51:47 “So the time will certainly come when I will punish the idols of Babylon. Her whole land will be put to shame. All her mortally wounded will collapse in her midst.

51:48 Then heaven and earth and all that is in them will sing for joy over Babylon. For destroyers from the north will attack it,” says the Lord.

51:49 “Babylon must fall because of the Israelites she has killed, just as the earth’s mortally wounded fell because of Babylon.

51:50 You who have escaped the sword, go, do not delay. Remember the Lord in a faraway land. Think about Jerusalem.

51:51 ‘We are ashamed because we have been insulted. Our faces show our disgrace. For foreigners have invaded the holy rooms in the Lord’s temple.’

51:52 Yes, but the time will certainly come,” says the Lord, “when I will punish her idols. Throughout her land the mortally wounded will groan.

51:53 Even if Babylon climbs high into the sky and fortifies her elevated stronghold, I will send destroyers against her,” says the Lord.

51:54 Cries of anguish will come from Babylon, the sound of great destruction from the land of the Babylonians.

51:55 For the Lord is ready to destroy Babylon, and put an end to her loud noise. Their waves will roar like turbulent waters. They will make a deafening noise.

51:56 For a destroyer is attacking Babylon. Her warriors will be captured; their bows will be broken. For the Lord is a God who punishes; he pays back in full.

51:57 “I will make her officials and wise men drunk, along with her governors, leaders, and warriors. They will fall asleep forever and never wake up,” says the King whose name is the Lord who rules over all.

51:58 This is what the Lord who rules over all says, “Babylon’s thick wall will be completely demolished. Her high gates will be set on fire. The peoples strive for what does not satisfy. The nations grow weary trying to get what will be destroyed.”

51:59 This is the order Jeremiah the prophet gave to Seraiah son of Neriah, son of Mahseiah, when he went to King Zedekiah of Judah in Babylon during the fourth year of his reign. (Seraiah was a quartermaster.) 51:60 Jeremiah recorded on one scroll all the judgments that would come upon Babylon – all these prophecies written about Babylon. 51:61 Then Jeremiah said to Seraiah, “When you arrive in Babylon, make sure you read aloud all these prophecies. 51:62 Then say, ‘O Lord, you have announced that you will destroy this place so that no people or animals live in it any longer. Certainly it will lie desolate forever!’ 51:63 When you finish reading this scroll aloud, tie a stone to it and throw it into the middle of the Euphrates River. 51:64 Then say, ‘In the same way Babylon will sink and never rise again because of the judgments I am ready to bring upon her; they will grow faint.’”

The prophecies of Jeremiah end here.

## PRAYER

Lord, You allowed evil nations to serve as Your tools of discipline, but they were not allowed to prosper endlessly. May I trust that Your perfect justice will come to those who mistreat Christians and Jews today.

## SCRIPTURE IN PERSPECTIVE

Jeremiah pronounced the Lord God's prophesy against the foreign nations; Philistia “For the time has come to destroy all the Philistines.” and Moab was to be punished terribly as well, but Moab had hope “Yet in days to come I will reverse Moab’s ill fortune.” says the Lord. The judgment against Moab ends here.”

He prophesied for Ammon “You will be scattered in every direction. No one will gather the fugitives back together. Yet in days to come I will reverse Ammon’s ill fortune.” says the Lord.” and for Edom “I will completely destroy their land because of what they have done.”

Jeremiah prophesied for Damascus ““I will set fire to the walls of Damascus; it will burn up the palaces of Ben Hadad.”

He spoke judgment against Kedar “Lay waste those who live in the eastern desert.” and Hazor “Hazor will become a permanent wasteland, a place where only jackals live. No one will live there. No human being will settle in it.”

Jeremiah's prophesy against Elam was “I will establish my sovereignty over Elam. I will destroy their king and their leaders, Yet in days to come I will reverse Elam’s ill fortune.” says the Lord.

He declared a lengthy prophesy against Babylon, also the nation had been useful as the Lord's “war club” it remained loyal to a false god and indulged in brutality as well as living in comfort from stolen goods “Babylon’s idols will be put to shame. Her disgusting images will be dismayed. For a nation from the north will attack Babylon. It will lay her land waste. People and animals will flee out of it. No one will

inhabit it.' "When that time comes," says the Lord, "the people of Israel and Judah will return to the land together. They will come back with tears of repentance as they seek the Lord their God."

## INTERACT WITH THE TEXT

### CONSIDER

Those who worshiped false gods and who hated God's people eventually suffered for both.

### DISCUSS

Why might the Lord God have promised to "reverse the fortunes" of the Philistines and the Elamites after punishing them?

### REFLECT

Babylon went from the greatest power on earth to nothing.

### SHARE

When have you experienced or observed someone or some organization which appeared to be overwhelmingly powerful suddenly fall from power?

## FAITH IN ACTION

### PRAY

Ask the Holy Spirit to remind you of a time in your life where a time of trouble, which seemed endless, came to an end due to an external intervention.

### ACT

I will give thanks to the Lord for sending help to rescue me from trouble.

Be Specific \_\_\_\_\_

## Friday (**Jeremiah 52**)

### The Fall of Jerusalem

52:1 Zedekiah was twenty-one years old when he became king, and he ruled in Jerusalem for eleven years. His mother's name was Hamutal daughter of Jeremiah, from Libnah. 52:2 He did what displeased the Lord just as Jehoiakim had done.

52:3 What follows is a record of what happened to Jerusalem and Judah because of the Lord's anger when he drove them out of his sight. Zedekiah rebelled against the king of Babylon. 52:4 King Nebuchadnezzar

of Babylon came against Jerusalem with his whole army and set up camp outside it. They built siege ramps all around it. He arrived on the tenth day of the tenth month in the ninth year that Zedekiah ruled over Judah. 52:5 The city remained under siege until Zedekiah's eleventh year. 52:6 By the ninth day of the fourth month the famine in the city was so severe the residents had no food. 52:7 They broke through the city walls, and all the soldiers tried to escape. They left the city during the night. They went through the gate between the two walls that is near the king's garden. (The Babylonians had the city surrounded.) Then they headed for the Jordan Valley. 52:8 But the Babylonian army chased after the king. They caught up with Zedekiah in the plains of Jericho, and his entire army deserted him. 52:9 They captured him and brought him up to the king of Babylon at Riblah in the territory of Hamath and he passed sentence on him there. 52:10 The king of Babylon had Zedekiah's sons put to death while Zedekiah was forced to watch. He also had all the nobles of Judah put to death there at Riblah. 52:11 He had Zedekiah's eyes put out and had him bound in chains. Then the king of Babylon had him led off to Babylon and he was imprisoned there until the day he died.

52:12 On the tenth day of the fifth month, in the nineteenth year of King Nebuchadnezzar of Babylon, Nebuzaradan, the captain of the royal guard who served the king of Babylon, arrived in Jerusalem. 52:13 He burned down the Lord's temple, the royal palace, and all the houses in Jerusalem, including every large house. 52:14 The whole Babylonian army that came with the captain of the royal guard tore down the walls that surrounded Jerusalem. 52:15 Nebuzaradan, the captain of the royal guard, took into exile some of the poor, the rest of the people who remained in the city, those who had deserted to him, and the rest of the craftsmen. 52:16 But he left behind some of the poor and gave them fields and vineyards.

52:17 The Babylonians broke the two bronze pillars in the temple of the Lord, as well as the movable stands and the large bronze basin called the "The Sea." They took all the bronze to Babylon. 52:18 They also took the pots, shovels, trimming shears, basins, pans, and all the bronze utensils used by the priests. 52:19 The captain of the royal guard took the gold and silver bowls, censers, basins, pots, lampstands, pans, and vessels. 52:20 The bronze of the items that King Solomon made for the Lord's temple (including the two pillars, the large bronze basin called "The Sea," the twelve bronze bulls under "The Sea," and the movable stands) was too heavy to be weighed. 52:21 Each of the pillars was about 27 feet high, about 18 feet in circumference, three inches thick, and hollow. 52:22 The bronze top of one pillar was about seven and one-half feet high and had bronze latticework and pomegranate-shaped ornaments all around it. The second pillar with its pomegranate-shaped ornaments was like it. 52:23 There were ninety-six pomegranate-shaped ornaments on the sides; in all there were one hundred pomegranate-shaped ornaments over the latticework that went around it.

52:24 The captain of the royal guard took Seraiah the chief priest, Zephaniah the priest who was second in rank, and the three doorkeepers. 52:25 From the city he took an official who was in charge of the soldiers, seven of the king's advisers who were discovered in the city, an official army secretary who drafted citizens for military service, and sixty citizens who were discovered in the middle of the city.

52:26 Nebuzaradan, the captain of the royal guard, took them and brought them to the king of Babylon at Riblah. 52:27 The king of Babylon ordered them to be executed at Riblah in the territory of Hamath.

So Judah was taken into exile away from its land. 52:28 Here is the official record of the number of people Nebuchadnezzar carried into exile: In the seventh year, 3,023 Jews; 52:29 in Nebuchadnezzar's eighteenth year, 832 people from Jerusalem; 52:30 in Nebuchadnezzar's twenty-third year, Nebuzaradan, the captain of the royal guard, carried into exile 745 Judeans. In all 4,600 people went into exile.

### Jehoiachin in Exile

52:31 In the thirty-seventh year of the exile of King Jehoiachin of Judah, on the twenty-fifth day of the twelfth month, Evil-Merodach, in the first year of his reign, pardoned King Jehoiachin of Judah and released him from prison. 52:32 He spoke kindly to him and gave him a more prestigious position than the other kings who were with him in Babylon. 52:33 Jehoiachin took off his prison clothes and ate daily in the king's presence for the rest of his life. 52:34 He was given daily provisions by the king of Babylon for the rest of his life until the day he died.

### PRAYER

Lord, You warned Your people many more times than any mere humans would have warned them, yet they continued to rebel and finally You allowed Jerusalem to fall.

### SCRIPTURE IN PERSPECTIVE

The previously-studied text of [2 Corinthians 36:9=10](#) taught that "Jehoiachin was eighteen years old when he became king, and he reigned three months and ten days in Jerusalem. He did evil in the sight of the Lord. At the beginning of the year King Nebuchadnezzar ordered him to be brought to Babylon, along with the valuable items in the Lord's temple. In his place he made his relative Zedekiah king over Judah and Jerusalem."

Under Zedekiah the rebellion of the people of Judah, first against the Lord God and then against Babylon, led to the utter destruction of Jerusalem, the execution of most of the leaders, and the eventual deportation of 4,600.

Jeremiah reported that former king Jehoiachin was later pardoned by Nebuchadnezzar's successor, and for the rest of his life was given daily provisions at the king's table, while the blinded Zedekiah remained in prison.

### INTERACT WITH THE TEXT

### CONSIDER

Jehoiachin served only three months as king when he was removed to Babylon. While he offended the Lord God during that time there is no record of rebellion against Babylon, thus no cause given for his deportation and replacement.

### **DISCUSS**

Why would Zedekiah have chosen rebellion against Babylon given the impossible odds and his poor relationship with the Lord God?

### **REFLECT**

The Lord God took treasures from the pagans around them and used them in His Temple and elsewhere but then allowed them to be removed by the Babylonians since rebellious Judah had mocked their holy purpose.

### **SHARE**

When have you observed the blessings of freedom, health, and/or resources removed from a group, nation, or a person as a result of their rebellion?

### **FAITH IN ACTION**

### **PRAY**

Ask the Holy Spirit to reveal to you a choice or choices that you are making which place you in opposition to the will of the Lord and which may lead to unhappy consequences.

### **ACT**

Today I will confess and repent, seek and receive the forgiveness of the Lord, then act to remove the offensive things from my life.

Be Specific \_\_\_\_\_

## **Saturday (Lamentations)**

The Prophet Speaks:

1:1 א (*Alef*)

Alas! The city once full of people now sits all alone! The prominent lady among the nations has become a widow! The princess who once ruled the provinces has become a forced laborer!

1:2 ב (*Bet*)

She weeps bitterly at night; tears stream down her cheeks. She has no one to comfort her among all her lovers. All her friends have betrayed her; they have become her enemies.

1:3 ג (*Gimel*)

Judah has departed into exile under affliction and harsh oppression. She lives among the nations; she has found no resting place. All who pursued her overtook her in narrow straits.

1:4 ד (*Dalet*)

The roads to Zion mourn because no one travels to the festivals. All her city gates are deserted; her priests groan. Her virgins grieve; she is in bitter anguish!

1:5 ה (*He*)

Her foes subjugated her; her enemies are at ease. For the Lord afflicted her because of her many acts of rebellion. Her children went away captive before the enemy.

1:6 ו (*Vav*)

All of Daughter Zion's splendor has departed. Her leaders became like deer; they found no pasture, so they were too exhausted to escape from the hunter.

1:7 ז (*Zayin*)

Jerusalem remembers, when she became a poor homeless person, all her treasures that she owned in days of old. When her people fell into an enemy's grip, none of her allies came to her rescue. Her enemies gloated over her; they sneered at her downfall.

1:8 ח (*Khet*)

Jerusalem committed terrible sin; therefore she became an object of scorn. All who admired her have despised her because they have seen her nakedness. She groans aloud and turns away in shame.

1:9 ט (*Tet*)

Her menstrual flow has soiled her clothing; she did not consider the consequences of her sin. Her demise was astonishing, and there was no one to comfort her. She cried, "Look, O Lord, on my affliction because my enemy boasts!"

1:10 י (*Yod*)

An enemy grabbed all her valuables. Indeed she watched in horror as Gentiles invaded her holy temple – those whom you had commanded: "They must not enter your assembly place."

1:11 כ (*Kaf*)

All her people groaned as they searched for a morsel of bread. They exchanged their valuables for just enough food to stay alive.

### Jerusalem Speaks:

“Look, O Lord! Consider that I have become worthless!”

1:12 ל (Lamed)

Is it nothing to you, all you who pass by on the road? Look and see! Is there any pain like mine? The Lord has afflicted me, he has inflicted it on me when he burned with anger.

1:13 מ (Mem)

He sent down fire into my bones, and it overcame them. He spread out a trapper's net for my feet; he made me turn back. He has made me desolate; I am faint all day long.

1:14 נ (Nun)

My sins are bound around my neck like a yoke; they are fastened together by his hand. He has placed his yoke on my neck; he has sapped my strength. The Lord has handed me over to those whom I cannot resist.

1:15 ס (Samek)

He rounded up all my mighty ones; The Lord did this in my midst. He summoned an assembly against me to shatter my young men. The Lord has stomped like grapes the virgin daughter, Judah.

1:16 ע (Ayin)

I weep because of these things; my eyes flow with tears. For there is no one in sight who can comfort me or encourage me. My children are desolated because an enemy has prevailed.

### The Prophet Speaks:

1:17 פ (Pe)

Zion spread out her hands, but there is no one to comfort her. The Lord has issued a decree against Jacob; his neighbors have become his enemies. Jerusalem has become like filthy garbage in their midst.

### Jerusalem Speaks:

1:18 צ (Tsade)

The Lord is right to judge me! Yes, I rebelled against his commands. Please listen, all you nations, and look at my suffering! My young women and men have gone into exile.

1:19 ק (Qof)

I called for my lovers, but they had deceived me. My priests and my elders perished in the city. Truly they had searched for food to keep themselves alive.

1:20 ר (Resh)

Look, O Lord! I am distressed; my stomach is in knots! My heart is pounding inside me. Yes, I was terribly rebellious! Out in the street the sword bereaves a mother of her children; Inside the house death is present.

1:21 ש (Sin/Shin)

They have heard that I groan, yet there is no one to comfort me. All my enemies have heard of my trouble; they are glad that you have brought it about. Bring about the day of judgment that you promised so that they may end up like me!

1:22 ת (Tav)

Let all their wickedness come before you; afflict them just as you have afflicted me because of all my acts of rebellion. For my groans are many, and my heart is sick with sorrow.

### The Prophet Speaks:

2:1 א (Alef)

Alas! The Lord has covered Daughter Zion with his anger. He has thrown down the splendor of Israel from heaven to earth; he did not protect his temple when he displayed his anger.

2:2 ב (Bet)

The Lord destroyed mercilessly all the homes of Jacob's descendants. In his anger he tore down the fortified cities of Daughter Judah. He knocked to the ground and humiliated the kingdom and its rulers.

2:3 ג (Gimel)

In fierce anger he destroyed the whole army of Israel. He withdrew his right hand as the enemy attacked. He was like a raging fire in the land of Jacob; it consumed everything around it.

2:4 ד (Dalet)

He prepared his bow like an enemy; his right hand was ready to shoot. Like a foe he killed everyone, even our strong young men; he has poured out his anger like fire on the tent of Daughter Zion.

2:5 ה (He)

The Lord, like an enemy, destroyed Israel. He destroyed all her palaces; he ruined her fortified cities. He made everyone in Daughter Judah mourn and lament.

2:6 ו (Vav)

He destroyed his temple as if it were a vineyard; he destroyed his appointed meeting place. The Lord has made those in Zion forget both the festivals and the Sabbaths. In his fierce anger he has spurned both king and priest.

2:7 ז (Zayin)

The Lord rejected his altar and abhorred his temple. He handed over to the enemy her palace walls; the enemy shouted in the Lord's temple as if it were a feast day.

2:8 ן (*Khet*)

The Lord was determined to tear down Daughter Zion's wall. He prepared to knock it down; he did not withdraw his hand from destroying. He made the ramparts and fortified walls lament; together they mourned their ruin.

2:9 ם (*Tet*)

Her city gates have fallen to the ground; he smashed to bits the bars that lock her gates. Her king and princes were taken into exile; there is no more guidance available. As for her prophets, they no longer receive a vision from the Lord.

2:10 ך (*Yod*)

The elders of Daughter Zion sit on the ground in silence. They have thrown dirt on their heads; They have dressed in sackcloth. Jerusalem's young women stare down at the ground.

2:11 ם (*Kaf*)

My eyes are worn out from weeping; my stomach is in knots. My heart is poured out on the ground due to the destruction of my helpless people; children and infants faint in the town squares.

2:12 ך (*Lamed*)

Children say to their mothers, "Where are food and drink?" They faint like a wounded warrior in the city squares. They die slowly in their mothers' arms.

2:13 ם (*Mem*)

With what can I equate you? To what can I compare you, O Daughter Jerusalem? To what can I liken you so that I might comfort you, O Virgin Daughter Zion? Your wound is as deep as the sea. Who can heal you?

2:14 ן (*Nun*)

Your prophets saw visions for you that were worthless lies. They failed to expose your sin so as to restore your fortunes. They saw oracles for you that were worthless lies.

2:15 ם (*Samek*)

All who passed by on the road clapped their hands to mock you. They sneered and shook their heads at Daughter Jerusalem. "Ha! Is this the city they called 'The perfection of beauty, the source of joy of the whole earth!'"

2:16 ם (*Pe*)

All your enemies gloated over you. They sneered and gnashed their teeth; they said, "We have destroyed her! Ha! We have waited a long time for this day. We have lived to see it!"

2:17 ז (Ayin)

The Lord has done what he planned; he has fulfilled his promise that he threatened long ago: He has overthrown you without mercy and has enabled the enemy to gloat over you; he has exalted your adversaries' power.

2:18 צ (Tsade)

Cry out from your heart to the Lord, O wall of Daughter Zion! Make your tears flow like a river all day and all night long! Do not rest; do not let your tears stop!

2:19 ק (Qof)

Get up! Cry out in the night when the night watches start! Pour out your heart like water before the face of the Lord! Lift up your hands to him for your children's lives; they are fainting at every street corner.

### Jerusalem Speaks:

2:20 ר (Resh)

Look, O Lord! Consider! Whom have you ever afflicted like this? Should women eat their offspring, their healthy infants? Should priest and prophet be killed in the Lord's sanctuary?

2:21 ש (Sin/Shin)

The young boys and old men lie dead on the ground in the streets. My young women and my young men have fallen by the sword. You killed them when you were angry; you slaughtered them without mercy.

2:22 ת (Tav)

As if it were a feast day, you call enemies to terrify me on every side. On the day of the Lord's anger no one escaped or survived. My enemy has finished off those healthy infants whom I bore and raised.

### The Prophet Speaks:

3:1 א (Alef)

I am the man who has experienced affliction from the rod of his wrath.

3:2 He drove me into captivity and made me walk in darkness and not light.

3:3 He repeatedly attacks me, he turns his hand against me all day long.

3:4 ב (Bet)

He has made my mortal skin waste away; he has broken my bones.

3:5 He has besieged and surrounded me with bitter hardship.

3:6 He has made me reside in deepest darkness like those who died long ago.

3:7 ג (*Gimel*)

He has walled me in so that I cannot get out; he has weighted me down with heavy prison chains.

3:8 Also, when I cry out desperately for help, he has shut out my prayer.

3:9 He has blocked every road I take with a wall of hewn stones; he has made every path impassable.

3:10 ד (*Dalet*)

To me he is like a bear lying in ambush, like a hidden lion stalking its prey.

3:11 He has obstructed my paths and torn me to pieces; he has made me desolate.

3:12 He drew his bow and made me the target for his arrow.

3:13 ה (*He*)

He shot his arrows into my heart.

3:14 I have become the laughingstock of all people, their mocking song all day long.

3:15 He has given me my fill of bitter herbs and made me drunk with bitterness.

3:16 ו (*Vav*)

He ground my teeth in gravel; he trampled me in the dust.

3:17 I am deprived of peace; I have forgotten what happiness is.

3:18 So I said, "My endurance has expired; I have lost all hope of deliverance from the Lord."

3:19 ז (*Zayin*)

Remember my impoverished and homeless condition, which is a bitter poison.

3:20 I continually think about this, and I am depressed.

3:21 But this I call to mind; therefore I have hope:

3:22 ח (*Khet*)

The Lord's loyal kindness never ceases; his compassions never end.

3:23 They are fresh every morning; your faithfulness is abundant!

3:24 "My portion is the Lord," I have said to myself, so I will put my hope in him.

3:25 ט (*Tet*)

The Lord is good to those who trust in him, to the one who seeks him.

3:26 It is good to wait patiently for deliverance from the Lord.

3:27 It is good for a man to bear the yoke while he is young.

3:28 י (Yod)

Let a person sit alone in silence, when the Lord is disciplining him.

3:29 Let him bury his face in the dust; perhaps there is hope.

3:30 Let him offer his cheek to the one who hits him; let him have his fill of insults.

3:31 כ (Kaf)

For the Lord will not reject us forever.

3:32 Though he causes us grief, he then has compassion on us according to the abundance of his loyal kindness.

3:33 For he is not predisposed to afflict or to grieve people.

3:34 ל (Lamed)

To crush underfoot all the earth's prisoners,

3:35 to deprive a person of his rights in the presence of the Most High,

3:36 to defraud a person in a lawsuit – the Lord does not approve of such things!

3:37 מ (Mem)

Whose command was ever fulfilled unless the Lord decreed it?

3:38 Is it not from the mouth of the Most High that everything comes – both calamity and blessing?

3:39 Why should any living person complain when punished for his sins?

3:40 נ (Nun)

Let us carefully examine our ways, and let us return to the Lord.

3:41 Let us lift up our hearts and our hands to God in heaven:

3:42 “We have blatantly rebelled; you have not forgiven.”

3:43 ע (Samek)

You shrouded yourself with anger and then pursued us; you killed without mercy.

3:44 You shrouded yourself with a cloud so that no prayer can get through.

3:45 You make us like filthy scum in the estimation of the nations.

3:46 פ (*Pe*)

All our enemies have gloated over us;

3:47 Panic and pitfall have come upon us, devastation and destruction.

3:48 Streams of tears flow from my eyes because my people are destroyed.

3:49 י (*Ayin*)

Tears flow from my eyes and will not stop; there will be no break

3:50 until the Lord looks down from heaven and sees what has happened.

3:51 What my eyes see grieves me – all the suffering of the daughters in my city.

3:52 צ (*Tsade*)

For no good reason my enemies hunted me down like a bird.

3:53 They shut me up in a pit and threw stones at me.

3:54 The waters closed over my head; I thought I was about to die.

3:55 ק (*Qof*)

I have called on your name, O Lord, from the deepest pit.

3:56 You heard my plea: “Do not close your ears to my cry for relief!”

3:57 You came near on the day I called to you; you said, “Do not fear!”

3:58 ר (*Resh*)

O Lord, you championed my cause, you redeemed my life.

3:59 You have seen the wrong done to me, O Lord; pronounce judgment on my behalf!

3:60 You have seen all their vengeance, all their plots against me.

3:61 ש (*Sin/Shin*)

You have heard their taunts, O Lord, all their plots against me.

3:62 My assailants revile and conspire against me all day long.

3:63 Watch them from morning to evening; I am the object of their mocking songs.

3:64 ת (*Tav*)

Pay them back what they deserve, O Lord, according to what they have done.

3:65 Give them a distraught heart; may your curse be on them!

3:66 Pursue them in anger and eradicate them from under the Lord's heaven.

### The Prophet Speaks:

4:1 א (*Alef*)

Alas! Gold has lost its luster; pure gold loses value. Jewels are scattered on every street corner.

4:2 ב (*Bet*)

The precious sons of Zion were worth their weight in gold – Alas! – but now they are treated like broken clay pots, made by a potter.

4:3 ג (*Gimel*)

Even the jackals nurse their young at their breast, but my people are cruel, like ostriches in the desert.

4:4 ד (*Dalet*)

The infant's tongue sticks to the roof of its mouth due to thirst; little children beg for bread, but no one gives them even a morsel.

4:5 ה (*He*)

Those who once feasted on delicacies are now starving to death in the streets. Those who grew up wearing expensive clothes are now dying amid garbage.

4:6 ו (*Vav*)

The punishment of my people exceeded that of Sodom, which was overthrown in a moment with no one to help her.

4:7 ז (*Zayin*)

Her consecrated ones were brighter than snow, whiter than milk; their bodies more ruddy than corals, their hair like lapis lazuli.

4:8 ח (*Khet*)

Now their appearance is darker than soot; they are not recognized in the streets. Their skin has shriveled on their bones; it is dried up, like tree bark.

4:9 ט (Tet)

Those who died by the sword are better off than those who die of hunger, those who waste away, struck down from lack of food.

4:10 י (Yod)

The hands of tenderhearted women cooked their own children, who became their food, when my people were destroyed.

4:11 כ (Kaf)

The Lord fully vented his wrath; he poured out his fierce anger. He started a fire in Zion; it consumed her foundations.

4:12 ל (Lamed)

Neither the kings of the earth nor the people of the lands ever thought that enemy or foe would enter the gates of Jerusalem.

4:13 מ (Mem)

But it happened due to the sins of her prophets and the iniquities of her priests, who poured out in her midst the blood of the righteous.

4:14 נ (Nun)

They wander blindly through the streets, defiled by the blood they shed, while no one dares to touch their garments.

4:15 ס (Samek)

People cry to them, "Turn away! You are unclean! Turn away! Turn away! Don't touch us!" So they have fled and wander about; but the nations say, "They may not stay here any longer."

4:16 פ (Pe)

The Lord himself has scattered them; he no longer watches over them. They did not honor the priests; they did not show favor to the elders.

### **The People of Jerusalem Lament:**

4:17 צ (Ayin)

Our eyes continually failed us as we looked in vain for help. From our watchtowers we watched for a nation that could not rescue us.

4:18 ק (Tsade)

Our enemies hunted us down at every step so that we could not walk about in our streets. Our end drew near, our days were numbered, for our end had come!

4:19 ק (Qof)

Those who pursued us were swifter than eagles in the sky. They chased us over the mountains; they ambushed us in the wilderness.

4:20 ר (Resh)

Our very life breath – the Lord’s anointed king – was caught in their traps, of whom we thought, “Under his protection we will survive among the nations.”

### **The Prophet Speaks:**

4:21 ש (Sin/Shin)

Rejoice and be glad for now, O people of Edom, who reside in the land of Uz. But the cup of judgment will pass to you also; you will get drunk and take off your clothes.

4:22 ת (Tav)

O people of Zion, your punishment will come to an end; he will not prolong your exile. But, O people of Edom, he will punish your sin and reveal your offenses!

### **The People of Jerusalem Pray:**

5:1 O Lord, reflect on what has happened to us; consider and look at our disgrace.

5:2 Our inheritance is turned over to strangers; foreigners now occupy our homes.

5:3 We have become fatherless orphans; our mothers have become widows.

5:4 We must pay money for our own water; we must buy our own wood at a steep price.

5:5 We are pursued – they are breathing down our necks; we are weary and have no rest.

5:6 We have submitted to Egypt and Assyria in order to buy food to eat.

5:7 Our forefathers sinned and are dead, but we suffer their punishment.

5:8 Slaves rule over us; there is no one to rescue us from their power.

5:9 At the risk of our lives we get our food because robbers lurk in the countryside.

5:10 Our skin is hot as an oven due to a fever from hunger.

5:11 They raped women in Zion, virgins in the towns of Judah.

5:12 Princes were hung by their hands; elders were mistreated.

5:13 The young men perform menial labor; boys stagger from their labor.

5:14 The elders are gone from the city gate; the young men have stopped playing their music.

5:15 Our hearts no longer have any joy; our dancing is turned to mourning.

5:16 The crown has fallen from our head; woe to us, for we have sinned!

5:17 Because of this, our hearts are sick; because of these things, we can hardly see through our tears.

5:18 For wild animals are prowling over Mount Zion, which lies desolate.

5:19 But you, O Lord, reign forever; your throne endures from generation to generation.

5:20 Why do you keep on forgetting us? Why do you forsake us so long?

5:21 Bring us back to yourself, O Lord, so that we may return to you; renew our life as in days before,

5:22 unless you have utterly rejected us and are angry with us beyond measure.

## PRAYER

Lord, after the fact Your people lament but while You called them to faithfulness they could only disrespect and rebel. May I choose faithful-obedience so that I am not left with endless laments later.

## SCRIPTURE IN PERSPECTIVE

Jeremiah used a rhetorical conversation between himself “The Prophet Speaks” as he described the circumstances and the response of the people “Jerusalem Speaks” as in “Look, O Lord! Consider that I have become worthless!”

The NET translator's notes explain that he used a pattern which utilized an acrostic of the Hebrew alphabet across chapters 1, 2, and 4 then in chapter 3 he used all 66 letters by themselves. In chapter 5 he did not use the acrostic.

Jeremiah, in chapter 5, switched to “The People of Jerusalem Pray:” where they appeal to the Lord God for rescue “Bring us back to yourself, O Lord, so that we may return to you; renew our life as in days before, unless you have utterly rejected us and are angry with us beyond measure.”

## INTERACT WITH THE TEXT

## CONSIDER

Jeremiah was heartsick over what has happened.

## DISCUSS

The Lord God told the people they would be in exile for 70 years, so why would they be whining and asking why He was taking so long to rescue them?

## REFLECT

Jeremiah suffered alongside of his people, even though he had delivered the Lord God's repeated warnings and had pleaded with them to repent.

## SHARE

When have you received punishment which you knew that you deserved and you knew was coming, and still cried-out for a short-cut out of it?

## FAITH IN ACTION

## PRAY

Ask the Holy Spirit to remind you of a place in your life where you have not been fully-faithful and obedient and from which bad consequences may come to you if you don't repent.

## ACT

Today I will confess and repent, request and receive forgiveness from the Lord God, and then get right with Him in the area(s) which He has brought to my awareness.

Be Specific \_\_\_\_\_

All Bible text is from the NET unless otherwise indicated - <http://bible.org>

Note 1: These Studies often rely upon the guidance of the NET Translators from their associated notes. Careful attention has been given to cite that source where it has been quoted directly or closely paraphrased. Feedback is encouraged where credit has not been sufficiently assigned.

Note 2: When NET text is quoted in commentary and discussion all pronouns referring to God are capitalized, though they are lower-case in the original NET text.

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