

“And the Word became flesh, and dwelt among us . . .”

John 1:14

All are welcome at the manger.

SUNDAY NIGHT BIBLE FELLOWSHIP

“Don’t Take Your Sin Lightly”

Lamentations 1:4-9

December 20, 2020

Lev 26:14-20

14 'But if you do not obey Me and do not carry out all these commandments,

15 if, instead, you reject My statutes, and if your soul abhors My ordinances so as not to carry out all My commandments, and so break My covenant,

16 I, in turn, will do this to you: I will appoint over you a sudden terror, consumption and fever that will waste away the eyes and cause the soul to pine away; also, you will sow your seed uselessly, for your enemies will eat it up.

17 'I will set My face against you so that you will be struck down before your enemies; and those who hate you will rule over you, and you will flee when no one is pursuing you.

18 'If also after these things you do not obey Me, then I will punish you seven times more for your sins.

19 'I will also break down your pride of power; I will also make your sky like iron and your earth like bronze.

20 'Your strength will be spent uselessly, for your land will not yield its produce and the trees of the land will not yield their fruit.

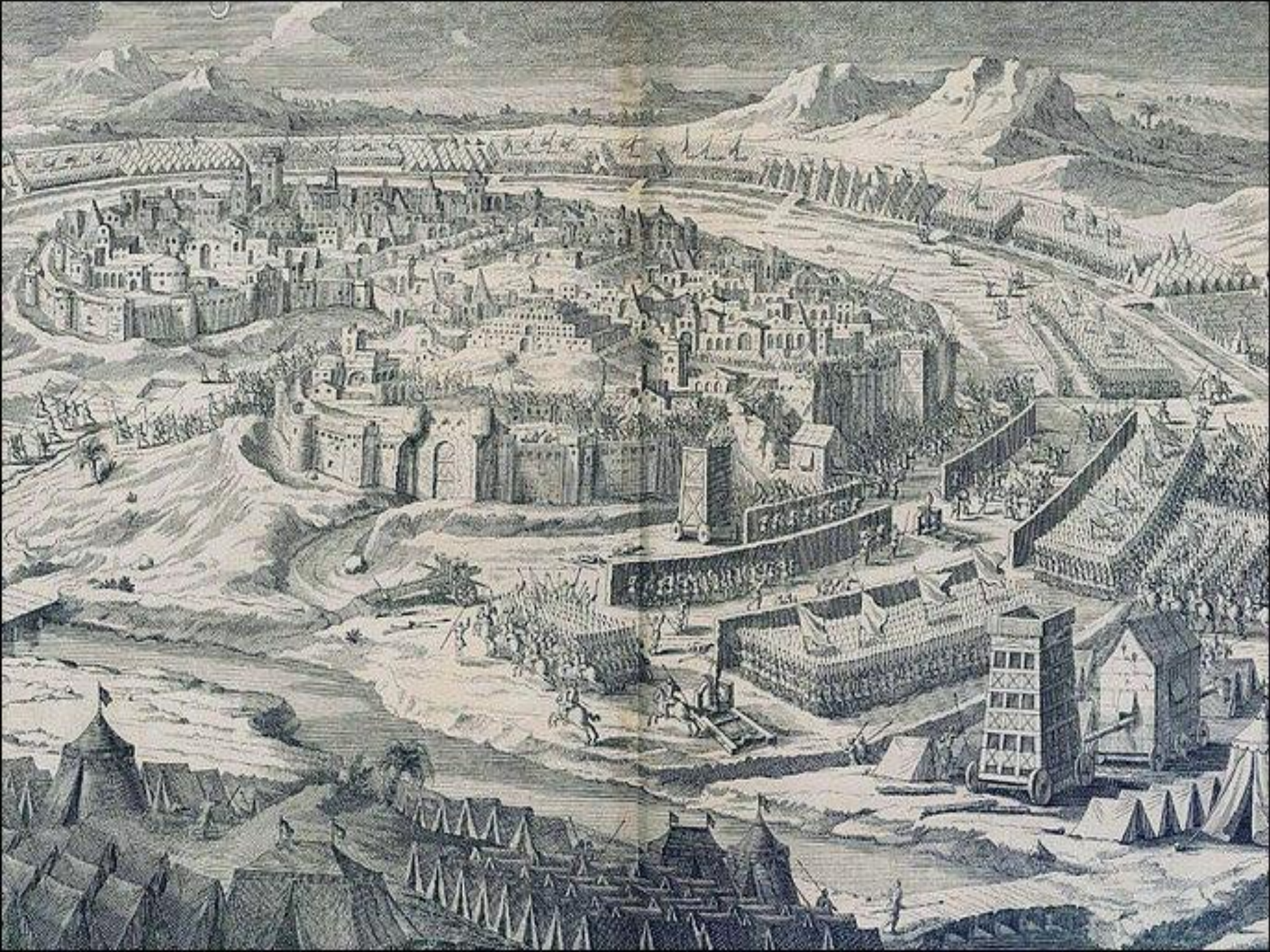
Heb 10:31

31 It is a terrifying thing to fall into the hands of the living God.

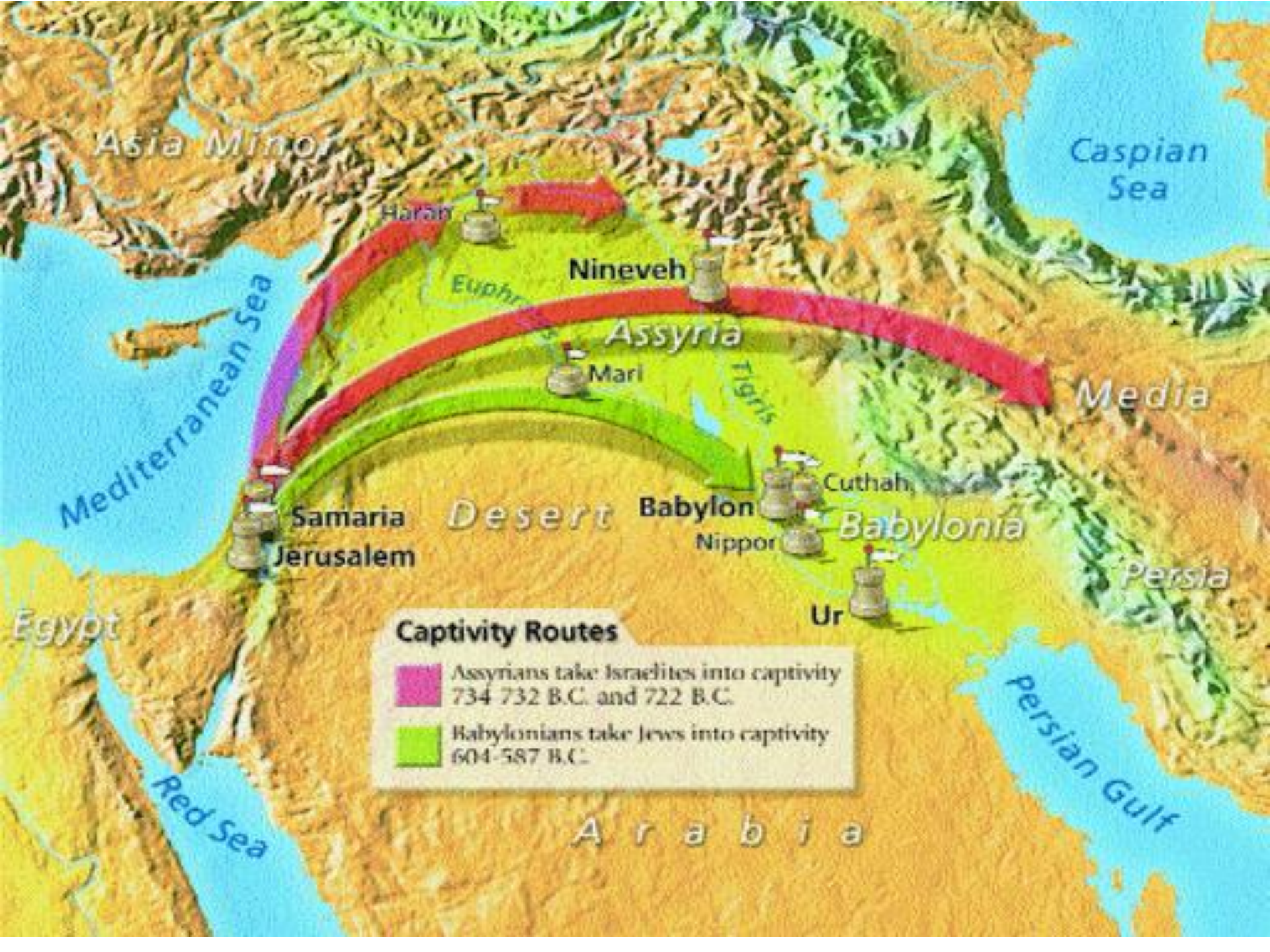
- The word "Babylon" is found 164 times in the book of Jeremiah.
- Again and again Jeremiah warned the Jews that God's judgment was coming because of their sins, and that God would send the Babylonians to destroy their city and take them away as captives.
- The Jews did not like to think about Babylon but Jeremiah kept reminding them of the judgment that was coming.

Jer 20:4-5



- 4 I will give over all Judah to the hand of the king of Babylon, and he will carry them away as exiles to Babylon and will slay them with the sword.
- 5 'I will also give over all the wealth of this city, all its produce and all its costly things; even all the treasures of the kings of Judah I will give over to the hand of their enemies, and they will plunder them, take them away and bring them to Babylon.







Captivity Routes

-  Assyrians take Israelites into captivity 734-732 B.C. and 722 B.C.
-  Babylonians take Jews into captivity 604-587 B.C.





Lamentations 1:1-3

- 1 How lonely sits the city
That was full of people!
She has become like a widow
Who was once great among the nations!
She who was a princess among the provinces
Has become a forced laborer!
- 2 She weeps bitterly in the night
And her tears are on her cheeks;
She has none to comfort her
Among all her lovers.
All her friends have dealt treacherously with her;
They have become her enemies.
- 3 Judah has gone into exile under affliction
And under harsh servitude;
She dwells among the nations,
But she has found no rest;
All her pursuers have overtaken her
In the midst of distress.

Lam 1:4-9

4 The roads of Zion are in mourning
Because no one comes to the appointed feasts.
All her gates are desolate;
Her priests are groaning,
Her virgins are afflicted,
And she herself is bitter.

5 Her adversaries have become her masters,
Her enemies prosper;
For the Lord has caused her grief
Because of the multitude of her transgressions;
Her little ones have gone away
As captives before the adversary.

6 All her majesty
Has departed from the daughter of Zion;
Her princes have become like deer
That have found no pasture;
And they have fled without strength
Before the pursuer.

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“mourning” - אָבֵל - aw-bale – the mourning rites of the dead.

“feasts” – referring to the 3 major annual feasts.

7 Major Feasts of Israel

Lev. 23

Spring Feasts

Summer

Fall Feasts

Passover

**Unleavened
Bread**

First
Fruits

Pentecost

Trumpets

Day of
Atonement

Tabernacles

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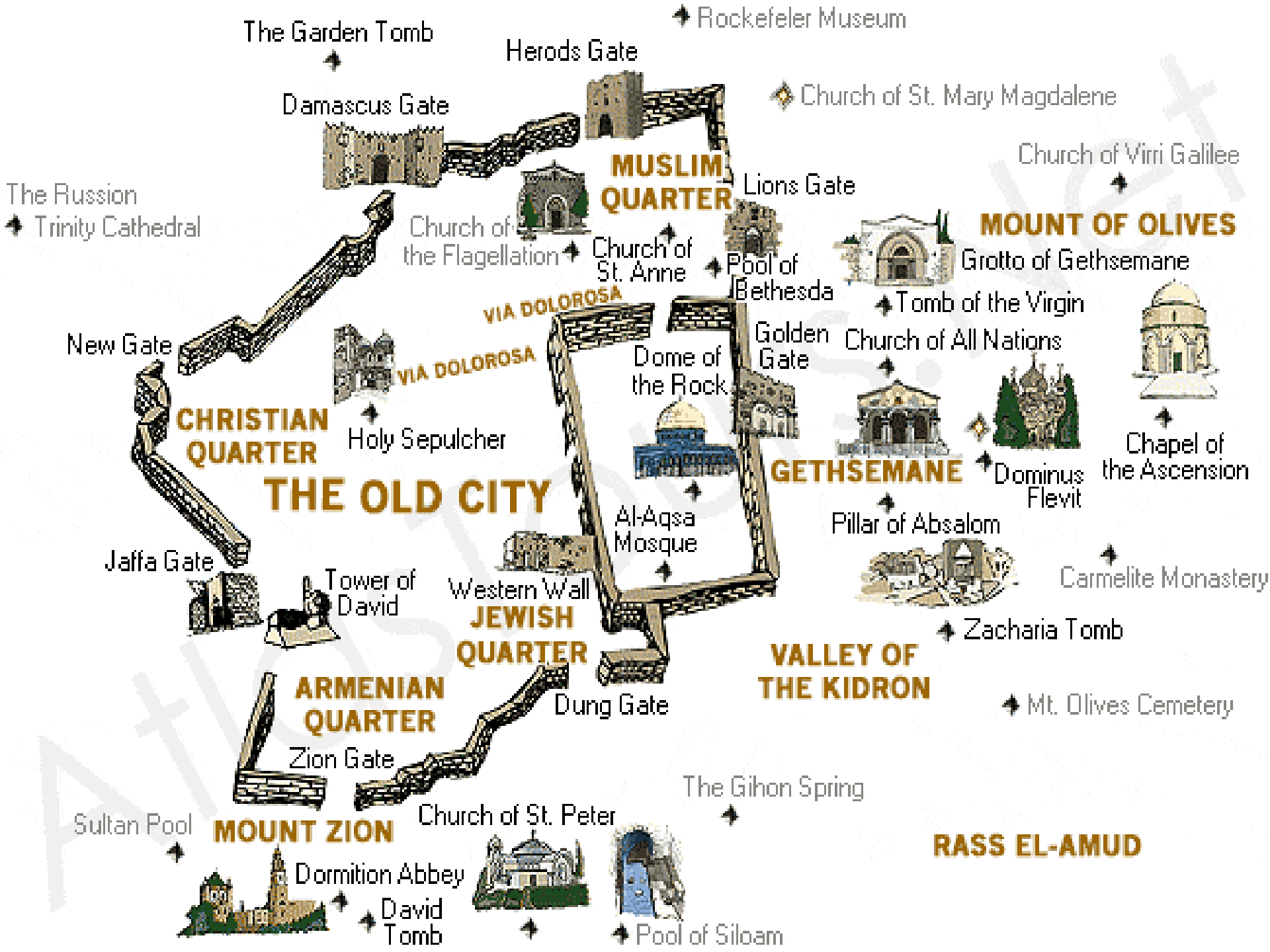
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“feasts” – referring to the 3 major annual feasts.

“gates” – served 2 purposes: 1. Security. 2. Providing access to the city.



Corner Gate

Ephraim Gate

Foundation Gate

Benjamin Gate

New Gate





St. Steven's Gate, Jerusalem

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“groaning” – they expressed their grief in groanings.

“virgins”- those who sang and danced and brought music at the feasts.

“bitter” - מָר - mar – bitter, angry.

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- The believers in Jerusalem are now slaves of their enemies.
- Babylon “fattens” its bank accounts from Jerusalem.
- Here is the first time the Lord is mentioned.
- These 2 lines really explain why this has happened:
 1. Grief is the result
 2. The Lord is the cause.
 3. Sin is the reason for the cause.
- Now think of the children in the hands of pagan Babylon. What if they were your children?

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“majesty” - her temple, her throne, and her priesthood.

- Like stags running away from hunters, leaving no one to defend the herd, so Judah's leaders had abandoned the nation as did King Zedekiah when he fled for his life during the siege of Jerusalem.
- They had been nearly starved to death for 2 years and so Zedekiah and the leaders fled, but not far.

7 In the days of her affliction and homelessness
Jerusalem remembers all her precious things
That were from the days of old,
When her people fell into the hand of the adversary
And no one helped her.
The adversaries saw her,
They mocked at her ruin.

8 Jerusalem sinned greatly,
Therefore she has become an unclean thing.
All who honored her despise her
Because they have seen her nakedness;
Even she herself groans and turns away.

9 Her uncleanness was in her skirts;
She did not consider her future.
Therefore she has fallen astonishingly;
She has no comforter.
"See, O Lord, my affliction,
For the enemy has magnified himself!"

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- If the physical trauma was not enough, the believers in Jerusalem must also deal with the mental anguish as they remembered what once was hers.
- Her present state of ruin and ridicule is contrasted sharply with her former glory.
- After falling into enemy hands, she was laughed at.

Ps 137:1-3

1 By the rivers of Babylon,
There we sat down and wept,
When we remembered Zion.

2 Upon the willows in the midst of it
We hung our harps.

3 For there our captors demanded of us songs,
And our tormentors mirth, saying,
"Sing us one of the songs of Zion."

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“greatly” - the sin of Jerusalem was no small thing.

- This was a campaign.
- God stripped this harlot of all He had provided for her and with nothing left, those who benefited off of her harlotry turned on her because she had nothing more to give them.

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“uncleanness” – a term usually used with sexual uncleanness. Here it is used as a metaphor. She is obscene in her appearance.

- Here is the deception of sin – no consequences - “live for today, everything is just fine, nothing to worry about.”
- And then suddenly she falls unexpectedly.
- She cries for help, but no one helps.

“The nature of sin is such that, whether or not others discover your sin, your sin will “discover you.” You cannot run from the consequences. Sin carries within itself the power to pay the sinner back, and sin’s payback is hell. Don’t even think about toying with sin. It cannot be tamed, outrun, or shaken off. No matter how safe you think you are, if you are a sinner, your sin will find you out.”

- Michael Houdmann

How does this apply to me?

1. Nothing will turn blessing into cursing faster than the sin of pride.

“That's life, that's what all the people say
You're riding high in April, shot down in May.”

- Frank Sinatra

“That's Life”

How does this apply to me?

1. Nothing will turn blessing into cursing faster than the sin of pride.
2. You are not the source of what you have.

2 Cor 3:5

5 Not that we are adequate in ourselves to consider anything as coming from ourselves, but our adequacy is from God,

1 Cor 4:7

7 For who regards you as superior? What do you have that you did not receive? And if you did receive it, why do you boast as if you had not received it?

How does this apply to me?

1. Nothing will turn blessing into cursing faster than the sin of pride.
2. You are not the source of what you have.
3. Don't be fooled by the delayed move of the hand of God.
4. The security of today's pleasures, can quickly become the horror of tomorrow's reality.
5. God wants us to pay attention and to learn what Lamentations is telling us – **“don't take your sin lightly.”**

“Pride is the carbon monoxide of sin.
It silently and slowly kills you
without even knowing.”

- Tim Keller