

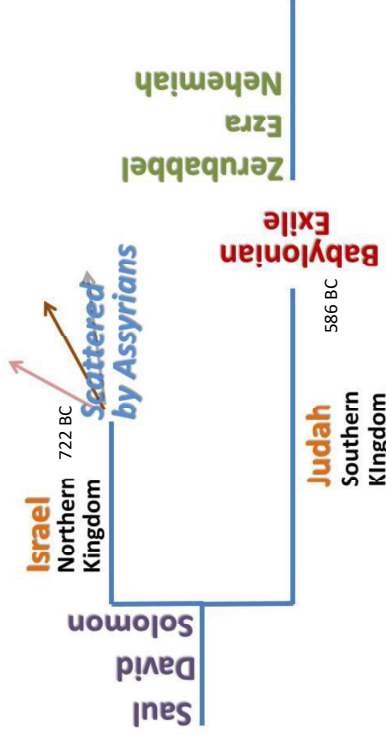


“Who Was In Charge Here?”

Lamentations 4:12-22

March 14, 2021

Timeline of the Kingdoms of Israel and Judah



- 12 The kings of the earth did not believe,
Nor did any of the inhabitants of the world,
That the adversary and the enemy
Could enter the gates of Jerusalem.
- 13 Because of the sins of her prophets
And the iniquities of her priests,
Who have shed in her midst
The blood of the righteous;
14 They wandered, blind, in the streets;
They were defiled with blood
So that no one could touch their garments.
15 "Depart! Unclean!" they cried of themselves.
"Depart, depart, do not touch!
"So they fled and wandered;
Men among the nations said,
"They shall not continue to dwell with us."

12 *The kings of the earth did not believe,
Nor did any of the inhabitants of the world,
That the adversary and the enemy
Could enter the gates of Jerusalem.*

- This shocked the world.
- Jerusalem looked invincible.
 - strongly fortified with mountains and hills, with walls and bulwarks.
 - vast number of people in it.
 - it was the city of the great God, who had so often preserved and saved it.
- There is no earthly kingdom that is safe from external or internal destruction.
- God is our security.

"Jerusalem's fall in 586 B.C. exposed their false assurance and illustrates a theological truth of Scripture: Sinful and rebellious people, even if outwardly associated with the covenant community and the promises of God, should not presume on His protection."

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Lam 2:14

14 Your prophets have seen for you
False and foolish visions;

And they have not exposed your iniquity

So as to restore you from captivity.

But they have seen for you false and misleading oracles.

Jer 6:13-15

13 "For from the least of them even to the greatest of them,

Everyone is greedy for gain,

And from the prophet even to the priest

Everyone deals falsely.

14 "They have healed the brokenness of My people superficially,

Saying, 'Peace, peace,'

But there is no peace.

15 "Were they ashamed because of the abomination they have done?

They were not even ashamed at all;

They did not even know how to blush.

Therefore they shall fall among those who fall;

At the time that I punish them,

They shall be cast down," says the Lord.

Jer 23:15-19

15 "Therefore thus says the Lord of hosts concerning the prophets,
'Behold, I am going to feed them wormwood And make them drink
poisonous water, For from the prophets of Jerusalem Pollution has
gone forth into all the land.'

16 Thus says the Lord of hosts, "Do not listen to the words of the
prophets who are prophesying to you. They are leading you into
futility; They speak a vision of their own imagination, Not from the
mouth of the Lord.

2 Chron 36:14

14 Furthermore, all the officials of the priests and the people were very
unfaithful following all the abominations of the nations; and they defiled
the house of the Lord which He had sanctified in Jerusalem.

Isa 28:7-8

7 And these also reel with wine and stagger from strong drink:

The priest and the prophet reel with strong drink,

They are confused by wine, they stagger from strong drink;

They reel while having visions,

They totter when rendering judgment.

8 For all the tables are full of filthy vomit, without a single clean place.

13 Because of the sins of her prophets

And the iniquities of her priests,

Who have shed in her midst

The blood of the righteous;

• Jerusalem's leadership, which were the prophets and
priests, failed the people of Israel.

• These two groups were supposed to preserve the spiritual
well-being of Israel.

• Prophets proclaimed God's word and interpreted His law.

• Priests offered sacrifices for sin. Priests read and taught God's

Word. The high priest alone was allowed to enter the Holy of

Holies on the annual Day of Atonement.

Mal 2:7

7 "For the lips of a priest should preserve knowledge, and men
should seek instruction from his mouth; for he is the messenger of
the Lord of hosts.

Jer 8:10

10 Everyone is greedy for gain;

From the prophet even to the priest

Everyone practices deceit.

Jer 18:18

18 Then they said, "Come and let us devise plans against Jeremiah. Surely the law is not going to
be lost to the priest; nor counsel to the sage; nor the divine word to the prophet! Come on
and let us strike at him with our tongue, and let us give no heed to any of his words."

Too much confidence.

Jer 23:11

11 "For both prophet and priest are polluted;

Even in My house I have found their wickedness," declares the Lord.

Jer 23:13-14

13 "Moreover, among the prophets of Samaria I saw an offensive thing:

They prophesied by Baal and led My people Israel astray.

14 "Also among the prophets of Jerusalem I have seen a horrible thing:

The committing of adultery and walking in falsehood;

And they strengthen the hands of evildoers,

So that no one has turned back from his wickedness.

All of them have become to Me like Sodom,

And her inhabitants like Gomorrah.

Jer 44:15-19

- Depth of their idolatry

15 Then all the men who were aware that their wives were
burning sacrifices to other gods, along with all the women who
were standing by, as a large assembly, including all the people
who were living in Pathros in the land of Egypt, responded to
Jeremiah, saying,

16 "As for the message that you have spoken to us in the name of
the Lord, we are not going to listen to you!

17 "But rather we will certainly carry out every word that has

proceeded from our mouths, by burning sacrifices to the queen
of heaven and pouring out drink offerings to her, just as we
ourselves, our forefathers, our kings and our princes did in the
cities of Judah and in the streets of Jerusalem; for then we had
plenty of food and were well off and saw no misfortune.

18 "But since we stopped burning sacrifices to the queen of
heaven and pouring out drink offerings to her, we have lacked
everything and have met our end by the sword and by famine."

19 "And," said the women, "when we were burning sacrifices to
the queen of heaven and were pouring out drink offerings to her,
was it without our husbands that we made for her sacrificial
cakes in her image and poured out drink offerings to her?"

Ezra 7:10 - Ezra – a faithful priest.

10 For Ezra had set his heart to study the law of the Lord and to practice it, and to teach His statutes and ordinances in Israel.

Neh 8:1-8

- 1 And all the people gathered as one man at the square which was in front of the Water Gate, and they asked Ezra the scribe to **bring the book** of the law of Moses which the Lord had given to Israel.
- 2 Then **Ezra the priest** brought the law before the assembly of men, women and all who could listen with understanding, on the first day of the seventh month.
- 3 He read from it before the square which was in front of the Water Gate from **early morning until midday**, in the presence of men and women, those who could understand; and **all the people were attentive** to the book of the law.
- 4 Ezra the scribe stood at a wooden podium which they had made for the purpose. . .
- 5 Ezra opened the book in the sight of all the people for he was standing above all the people; and when he opened it, **all the people stood up**.
- 6 Then Ezra blessed the Lord the great God. And all the people answered, "Amen, Amen!," while lifting up their hands; then they bowed low and worshipped the Lord with their faces to the ground.
- 7 . . . **the Levites explained the law** to the people while the people remained in their place.
- 8 They read from the book, from the law of God, **translating** (פָּרָשׁוּ **parash** - clearly declaring) **to give the sense** (שֵׁנִי **sheni** - meaning, understanding) **so that they understood the reading**.

Eph. 4:11-16

- 11 And He gave some as apostles, and some as prophets, and some as evangelists, and some as pastor-teachers,
- 12 for the equipping of the saints for the work of service, to the building up of the body of Christ;
- 13 **until we all attain to the unity of the faith**, and of the knowledge of the Son of God, to a mature man, to the measure of the stature which belongs to the fullness of Christ.

Qualifications for an Elder/Pastor-Teacher

(1 Tim 3:1-7, Titus 1:5-9)

Character

Above reproach
Man – husband of one wife
Temperate/Self controlled
Prudent
Respectable
Hospitality
Not addicted to wine
Gentle
Peaceable
Free from the love of money/Not fond of sordid gain
Manages household well
Children under control - not accused of dissipation and rebellion
Not a new convert
Good reputation outside the church
Not self-willed
Not quick tempered
Not pugnacious
Sensible
Just
Devout

Abilities

Able to Teach

- 12 The kings of the earth did not believe, Nor did any of the inhabitants of the world, That the adversary and the enemy Could enter the gates of Jerusalem.
- 13 Because of the sins of her prophets And the iniquities of her priests, Who have shed in her midst The blood of the righteous;
- 14 **They wandered, blind, in the streets; They were defiled with blood So that no one could touch their garments.**
- 15 **"Depart! Unclean!" they cried of themselves.** "Depart, depart, do not touch! "So they fled and wandered; Men among the nations said, **"They shall not continue to dwell with us."**

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So that no one could touch their garments.

15 "Depart! Unclean!" they cried of themselves.

"Depart, depart, do not touch!

"So they fled and wandered;

Men among the nations said,

"They shall not continue to dwell with us."

- The prophets and priests did not know where to walk. They acted as though they were blind as they tried to stagger around the dead bodies.
- Dead bodies with blood were all over the streets.
- Touching the blood of the dead with their garments defiled them.
- What a reversal: Instead of warning people of someone who had leprosy, they instead were saying, "Depart! Unclean!" they now had to say that about themselves. How humiliating.
- Other nations said, "We don't want them". Total rejection.

16 The presence of the Lord has scattered them,

He will not continue to regard them;

They did not honor the priests,

They did not favor the elders.

17 Yet our eyes failed,

Looking for help was useless;

In our watching we have watched

For a nation that could not save.

**16 The presence of the Lord has scattered them,
He will not continue to regard them;
They did not honor the priests,
They did not favor the elders.**

- God is the one who scattered the prophets, priests, and elders.
- God has no regard for them.
- Babylon had no regard for them.
- They held no rank in Babylon.
- They worked as slaves to survive.

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He will not continue to regard them;
They did not honor the priests,
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Looking for help was useless;
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For a nation that could not save.**

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Looking for help was useless;

In our watching we have watched

For a nation that could not save.

- The prophets and priests could not save Israel so now Israel turns to another nation.
- They looked for help, but it was useless.
- The reality was that no nation is going to save Israel.
- What are we trusting will save us?

18 They hunted our steps

So that we could not walk in our streets

Our end drew near,

Our days were finished

For our end had come.

19 Our pursuers were swifter

Than the eagles of the sky;

They chased us on the mountains,

They waited in ambush for us in the wilderness.

20 The breath of our nostrils, the Lord's anointed,

Was captured in their pits,

Of whom we had said, "Under his shadow

We shall live among the nations."

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Was captured in their pits,

Of whom we had said, "Under his shadow

We shall live among the nations."

- The residents of Jerusalem could not even walk the streets of their city because the danger was so great during the siege.
- After the walls were breached, they knew that their end was near.
- Zedekiah, the king, was of no help either. He was captured in a pit.
- There is no safety in prophets, priests, nations, or kings.

• It is always easier to trust in a political alliance than to trust in the Lord.

• It is always easier to trust in a king or president than to trust in the Lord.

• But they are false hopes.

Jer 17:5

5 Thus says the Lord,

"Cursed is the man who trusts in mankind

And makes flesh his strength,

**21 Rejoice and be glad, O daughter of Edom,
Who dwells in the land of Uz;
But the cup will come around to you as well,
You will become drunk and make yourself naked.**

22 The punishment of your iniquity has been completed, O daughter of Zion;

He will exile you no longer.

But He will punish your iniquity, O daughter of Edom;

He will expose your sins!

**21 Rejoice and be glad, O daughter of Edom,
Who dwells in the land of Uz;
But the cup will come around to you as well,
You will become drunk and make yourself naked.**

- Edom was the land of the descendants from Esau.



**21 Rejoice and be glad, O daughter of Edom,
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You will become drunk and make yourself naked.**

- Edom was the land of the descendants from Esau.
- Edom gloated over the capture of Israel
- There is little doubt that the Edomites, who knew the routes and crossings of the land and city, helped the Babylonians.
- But Edom, you will get yours. Your time is coming and the tables will be flipped.
- The cup of God's wrath will pass from Israel to Edom.
- They will stagger to and fro and fall as though drunk from the effects of the wrath of God.
- They will be stripped of their riches and wealth.
- It will start in less than 100 years and will end in 125 B.C.

21 Rejoice and be glad, O daughter of Edom,
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He will expose your sins!

- Israel's punishment will end and Edom's will begin (5th century). Book of Obadiah.
- Edom will be laid bare. Her sins exposed.
- Edom does not receive mercy and forgiveness. Israel does.
- Every person, regardless of anyone else, will give an account for there sin.

On the Day of Judgment will you receive mercy and forgiveness or wrath and condemnation?