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Israel and Judah: 43. Judah's Last Kings, 2

by David Sielaff, October 2022

Then read the accompanying "[October 2022 Newsletter](#)"

Israel and Judah: 43

Judah's
Last Kings 2

This episode focuses on the prophecies and historical narratives from the perspective of the prophet Jeremiah during the reign of Jehoiakim, one of the last Kings of Judah. Jeremiah's historical narratives give valuable background different from the histories in the biblical books of Second Kings and Second Chronicles. Also, some of the prophecies from YHWH through Jeremiah are difficult to fit into the historical settings of biblical chronology. Remember, Jeremiah greatly loved the people of Judah and Jerusalem. He dreaded God's righteous judgments that would soon come.^a

CONTEXT: Jeremiah and the Last Kings of Judah

This article looks at events in Judah and particularly Jerusalem during the reign of Jehoiakim, an evil King of Judah, with two other kings following him (Jehoiachin, and Zedekiah). Again, throughout this article I use the consistent English translation of the Concordant Old Testament. Note the three general periods of the Book of Jeremiah during his prophetic ministry over several decades:

"The words of Jeremiah son of Hilkiah, of the priests who were in Anathoth in the land of Benjamin, to whom

- [1] **the word of Yahweh came in the days of Josiah son of Amon, king of Judah, in the thirteenth year of his reign;**
- [2] **it came through the days of Jehoiakim son of Josiah, king of Judah,**
- [3] **until the finishing of the eleventh year of Zedekiah son of Josiah, king of Judah,**

that is, until the deportation of Jerusalem in the fifth month [of Zedekiah's 11th year]."

Jeremiah 1:1-3

^a See Dr. Martin's writings about Jeremiah's work: "[Introduction to Jeremiah](#)," "[Jeremiah, Part 2](#)," "[Jeremiah, Part 3](#)," and "[Jeremiah, Part 4](#)." Jeremiah also had a mission to all the peoples, nations, and kingdoms of the world. His message was to warn them of a new Babylonian system to come: A version of that system still exists today.

This three-verse introduction to the Book of Jeremiah gives a partial historical overview of the prophet's ministry to Judah. (Jeremiah also had a prophetic ministry to all the nations of the world.) Only three important kings are mentioned: Josiah, Jehoiakim, and Zedekiah.

Two minor kings (not named in Jeremiah 1:1–3) ruled for short times. Jehoahaz, reigned between [1] and [2] above. He was the fourth son of Josiah of Judah and was selected by the people to be king. He ruled 3 months after Josiah died. He was removed by Pharaoh Neco (spelled Necho in Jeremiah), King of Egypt, who put Jehoiakim on the throne.

Jehoiachin is between [2] and [3] above. He reigned **“three months and ten days”** (2 Chronicles 36:9). He was removed as king by Nebuchadnezzar.

All Kings of Judah were directly descended from “good” King David. And all the “evil” last four kings of Judah were related to the last “good” king, Josiah. Jeremiah’s substantial historical narratives give details of royal court proceedings of Judah at Jerusalem. Jeremiah tried to advise and warn each king to protect them and their kingdom from God’s coming judgments. None listened to him.

Note that in Jeremiah 1:2, Jeremiah’s prophetic ministry proceeded **“through the days of Jehoiakim,”** through the end of his reign and Jeremiah’s ministry to Judah was completed in the 11th and last year of King Zedekiah. In verse 3, **“the deportation of Jerusalem”** is mentioned. It was not the first deportation of people from Judah to Babylon; but was a later deportation of the people specifically those **“of Jerusalem.”**

King (in order of reign)	Length of Reign
<i>Jehoahaz</i>	<i>3 months</i>
Jehoiakim	11 years
<i>Jehoiachin</i>	<i>3 months</i>
Zedekiah	11 years

Before Jehoiakim Began His Reign

Whether during the three-month reign of Jehoahaz, or soon after Pharaoh Neco put Jehoiakim on the throne, the prophet Jeremiah met with Jehoiakim to give him a message from YHWH. That word from God encompasses all of Jeremiah chapter 22. God told Jehoiakim (through Jeremiah) how he could be a good king. This was done just as God told Solomon (King of United Israel) and Jeroboam (King of the 10 northern tribes of Israel) how they should act as kings.

That chapter 22 meeting of Jehoiakim and Jeremiah is in pages 4–7 of the prior episode: [“Israel and Judah: 42. Judah’s Last Kings, 1.”](#) I mention this again because as we proceed through the events of Jehoiakim’s reign, it is important to understand that he has no excuse for his overt sinful and evil actions. He is openly and publicly disobedient and rebellious toward his God because he wants to be.

That private message from God, delivered by Jeremiah was YHWH’s personal appeal to the young king. After Jehoiakim rejected it, Jeremiah was then commanded to present a public message from YHWH to both the king and to the people. Jeremiah appeared and spoke YHWH’s words in the Temple. Being a priest, Jeremiah had access and gained entry to the Temple court.

REVIEW: From the Beginning of Jehoiakim’s Reign

Jeremiah spoke to King Jehoiakim and to all the people from the court of Solomon’s Temple in the early weeks or months of Jehoiakim’s 11-year reign. Take note of the precise instructions God gave Jeremiah. Remember that Jeremiah was well-known to the king, the leaders, the priests, and to the people of Judah:

“In the beginning of the kingship of Jehoiakim son of Josiah, king of Judah, came this word from Yahweh, saying,

‘Thus says Yahweh: Stand in the court of the house of Yahweh and speak to all those of the cities of Judah, who are coming to worship in the house of Yahweh, all the words that I instruct you to speak to them. Do not subtract a word. Perhaps they shall hearken and turn back, each one from his evil way. Then I will regret the evil that I had designed to do against them in view of their evil actions.’”

• **Jeremiah 26:1–3**

Jeremiah gave God’s warning to the king and to the people from inside a Temple court. Jeremiah was from a priestly family and was a recognized prophet from the time of Josiah (Jeremiah 1:1). I will not present more here. The rest of the narrative of Jeremiah 26:4–24 are in pages 9–11 of “[Israel and Judah: 42. Judah’s Last Kings, 1.](#)” The prophecies of Micah were quoted in Jeremiah’s defense. Jeremiah was released, apparently acquitted. However, evil people in the religious hierarchy were thwarted but not satisfied.

Jeremiah was seized and threatened:

“Now [1] the priests and [2] the prophets and [3] all the people heard Jeremiah speaking these words in the house of Yahweh.

Yet it came to be as soon as Jeremiah finished speaking all that Yahweh had instructed him to speak to all the people,

that [1] the priests and [2] the prophets and [3] all the people **grasped him, saying:
‘You shall die, yea die.’”**

• *Jeremiah 26:7–8*

Note that it seems that all who listened to the words of YHWH through Jeremiah quickly turned into an angry and violent mob. **“The priests and the prophets and all the people”** wanted Jeremiah to die (verse 11) at that moment.

Jeremiah spoke again to the people (verses 16:12–15). Suddenly the mood of the crowd changed. I think God changed the minds of **“all the people”** to side with the chief officials to protect and spare Jeremiah. Then the odds were:

- **“the priests”** (Levitical priests, but perhaps some pagan priests who were teaching in God’s Temple), and
- **“the prophets”** (false prophets surely because they opposed Jeremiah’s words from YHWH).

“Then the chief officials and all the people said to the priests and to the prophets, ‘There will be no judgment of death for this man, for in the Name of Yahweh our Elohim he has spoken to us.’”

• *Jeremiah 26:16*

So, the people quickly shifted and supported the officials that Jeremiah would not die. Jeremiah’s words from God were effective.

However, yet another prophet of God, named Uriah (spelled Urijah in the King James Version), gave a message similar to what Jeremiah said. Note what happened to that brave man:

“But again there was a man who prophesied in the Name of Yahweh, Uriah son of Shemaiah from Kiriath-jearim, and he prophesied against this city [Jerusalem] and against this land in terms like all the words of Jeremiah.

When king Jehoiakim and all his masterful men and all the chief officials heard his words, then the king sought to put him to death. Yet Uriah heard and was fearful, and he fled away and entered Egypt.”

• *Jeremiah 26:20–21*

The text tells us that agents of Jehoiakim kidnapped Uriah in Egypt:

“... they brought forth Uriah from Egypt and brought him to king Jehoiakim. And he smote him with the sword and flung his carcass into the burying ground of the sons of the people.”

• *Jeremiah 26:23*

God protected Jeremiah, but God allowed Uriah to be killed, perhaps by the hand of King Jehoiakim himself. The prophecies of Jeremiah and Uriah were powerful, had great emotional impact and led in some instances to violent responses by many in the audience. God’s words can be threatening to sinful and evil people. And note that all these events happened at the beginning of Jehoiakim’s reign (Jeremiah 26:1).

REVIEW: **Jehoiakim's 3rd Year**

I must present again the passage in the Book of Daniel that mentions King Jehoiakim of Judah and gives details about his reign. These words relate to Daniel's personal story. Nebuchadnezzar conquered Judah and seized the city of Jerusalem in the third year of Jehoiakim. However, the Babylonian leader did not destroy the city or the Temple.

"In the third year of the reign of Jehoiakim king of Judah, Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon came to Jerusalem and besieged it. Yet Yahweh gave into his hand Jehoiakim king of Judah and some of the furnishings of the house of Elohim. Then he brought them to the land of Shinar to the house of his elohim; he brought the furnishings to the treasure house of his elohim."

• *Daniel 1:1–2*

Daniel's statement is useful because it identifies the time of events told in 2 Kings 24:1–7 and 2 Chronicles 36:6–8, presented with commentary on pages 11–13 of, again, "[Israel and Judah: 42](#)."

Daniel writes that Nebuchadnezzar was "**king of Babylon.**" We know he was not king of Babylon when Jerusalem and Jehoiakim were captured. Jeremiah 25:1, as you will read below, tells us that the 4th year of Jehoiakim was the 1st year of Nebuchadnezzar's reign in Babylon.

However, Daniel was also correct, because at the time he wrote his words, Nebuchadnezzar was the King of Babylon. Daniel did not write his words as he was being dragged across the hundred of miles to exile in Babylon. He wrote them after Nebuchadnezzar was king. I think everyone reading Daniel's words understood that fact.

Jeremiah received another message from YHWH for the king and the people of Judah to hear and learn God's desires. Jeremiah received it in the 4th year of Jehoiakim's reign:

TEXT: Jehoiakim's 4th Year — YHWH's Message Concerning King Jehoiakim of Judah

Jeremiah 36:1–8

¹ It occurred in **the fourth year of Jehoiakim** son of Josiah, king of Judah, that this word came to Jeremiah from Yahweh, saying:

² **"Take for yourself the roll of a scroll, and write on it all the words that I have spoken to you concerning Israel, concerning Judah and concerning all the nations from the day I spoke to you in the days of Josiah until this day.**

³ **PERHAPS the house of Judah shall hear of all the evil that I AM DESIGNING TO DO TO THEM [Why?], so that they may turn back, each [of them] from his evil way, and I will pardon their depravity and their sin."**

⁴ So Jeremiah called Baruch son of Neriah, and Baruch wrote at the bidding of Jeremiah all the words of Yahweh which He had spoken to him, on the roll of a scroll. ⁵ Then Jeremiah instructed Baruch, saying,

"I am under restraint; I cannot enter the house of Yahweh. ⁶ So you must enter and read from the scroll which you have written at my bidding, the words of Yahweh, in the ears of the people in the house of Yahweh on a day of fasting. And also you shall read them in the ears of all of Judah who come from their cities. ⁷ their supplication shall fall before Yahweh, and they shall turn back, each from his evil way, for great is the anger and the fury which Yahweh has spoken as to this people."

⁸ And Baruch son of Neriah did according to all that Jeremiah the prophet had instructed him, to read from the scroll the words of Yahweh in the house of Yahweh. [end text]

Jeremiah 36:1. Note these points.

- Only Daniel 1:1–2 gives a precise time when Judah and Jerusalem were conquered in Jehoiakim's reign. Remember, YHWH said Nebuchadnezzar was "**My servant**" in Jeremiah 25:9, 27:6, and 43:10.

- The siege of Jerusalem is also mentioned without a time reference in 2 Kings 24:1 and 2 Chronicles 36:6–7.
- This word from YHWH took place in the 4th year, one year after Jerusalem was captured by the Babylonian army — in the 3rd year of Jehoiakim’s reign.
- The 4th year of Jehoiakim was also the 1st year of Nebuchadnezzar of Babylon’s sole reign (Jeremiah 25:1). Prior to his father’s death Nebuchadnezzar was the chief of the military and heir to the throne.
- Nebuchadnezzar kept Jehoiakim as ruler of Judah even though he was put on the throne by Pharaoh Neco (2 Kings 23:3).

Even though Jehoiakim resisted and defended Jerusalem for years, it is surprising that Nebuchadnezzar kept Jehoiakim as ruler of Judah, because he was originally placed on the throne by Pharaoh Neco of Egypt, Nebuchadnezzar’s enemy. Before this time YHWH warned Jehoiakim how to deal with Nebuchadnezzar, but he did not listen

Note: the seizure of the ritual cups and utensils taken from the Temple (“**House of Elohim**”) are mentioned in 2 Kings 24:13; 2 Chronicles 36:7; Daniel 5:2–4; Jeremiah 27:16–18, 28:3; and Ezra 1:7–11. These cups and utensils were being used at a banquet by King Belshazzar and his guests when Babylon was captured by Medes and Persians (who also acted as God’s agents, Daniel 5:13–31). Belshazzar’s reign ended.

Verse 2. Jeremiah himself knew how to read and write. He came from a priestly family that lived 3 miles from Jerusalem (Jeremiah 1:1). Did YHWH want Jeremiah to write a synopsis of his prophecies regarding Judah and Jerusalem? Whatever was written, the document was detailed and lengthy.

Verse 3. God sought to save all the people “**of the house of Judah**” from the coming punishments.

Verse 4. Baruch was Jeremiah’s “amanuensis,” his personal and professional secretary and scribe. Baruch wrote the words of YHWH’s prophecies that Jeremiah dictated from his memory. Do not be surprised that Jeremiah could do this, even some people today can do such things. See my July 2015 Commentary “[Thoughts About Babel](#)” and my 2016 article “[Memory in Luke](#).”

Verse 5. Jeremiah was “**under restraint**” which may have been some sort of “house arrest” that restricted him to confinement in his own house and not allowed to leave except under guard. This would have been like the apostle Paul’s “house arrest” when he was taken to Rome (Acts 28:30–31). However, Jeremiah was not bound with a chain like Paul was (Acts 28:20).

Verse 6. Baruch (whose name is translated as “blessed”) was to enter the Temple and speak aloud the words of YHWH given through Jeremiah and written down by Baruch. Baruch was perhaps also a strong and trained speaker, an orator or herald who could strongly project his voice. The Temple was located above the Gihon Springs, just north and high in elevation like the royal palace. Baruch’s reading may have been heard in the palace, and if not, it was reported to palace officials by those in the Temple court.

Verse 7. The words of YHWH in that document might have changed the minds of the rulers and people to repent of their sins and evils, so that YHWH would repent of “**the anger and the fury**” of His intended punishment.

Verse 8. Baruch followed Jeremiah’s instructions and read the scroll aloud in the Temple.

Note: Jeremiah 36:1–8 tells about an event that occurs in the 4th year of Jehoiakim. Jeremiah 36:9–26 tells of an incident that occurs in the 5th year of Jehoiakim. It will be presented later.

But first, below is Jeremiah 25:1–12, also given in the 4th year of Jehoiakim’s reign. Jeremiah was given this important prophecy that an exile of 70 years will happen to the people of Judah, and Israel’s exile will endure an additional 70 years.

Then YHWH will allow all the people to return to the land God promised to all the tribes of Israel if they wished to do so. Or, more correctly, if God leads them to return to the land He promised to Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob.

TEXT: Jehoiakim's 4th Year — YHWH's 70-Years Prophecy of Exile Declared

Jeremiah 25:1–12

¹ The word which came to Jeremiah concerning all the people of Judah in **the fourth year of Jehoiakim** son of Josiah, king of Judah (it was **the first year of Nebuchadnezzar** king of Babylon), ² which Jeremiah the prophet spoke to all the people of Judah and to all the dwellers of Jerusalem, saying:

³ “**From the thirteenth year of Josiah son of Amon, king of Judah, until this day, this twenty-third year, the word of Yahweh has come to me, and I have spoken it to you, rising early and speaking, yet you would not hearken.**

⁴ **And though Yahweh has sent to you all His servants the prophets, rising early and sending, yet you would not hearken, and you would not stretch out your ear to hearken ⁵ when they said:**

‘Turn back, now, each one from his evil way, and from your evil actions, and dwell on the ground that Yahweh has given to you and to your fathers from the eon and unto the eon. ⁶ Do not walk after other elohim to serve them and to bow down to them; do not provoke Me to vexation with the work of your hands, and I shall not bring evil upon you.’

⁷ **Yet you would not hearken to Me, averring [declaring] is Yahweh, so that you might provoke Me to vexation with the work of your hands, to your own evil.”**

⁸ Therefore thus says Yahweh of hosts:

“Because you do not hearken to My words, ⁹ behold, I will send and take all the families of the north, averring [declaring] is Yahweh, and Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon, My servant, and I will bring them

[1] **against this land,**

[2] **against its dwellers and**

[3] **against all these nations round about.**

I will doom them and make them a desolation and a hissing and an eonian waste. ¹⁰ I will destroy from them the sound of elation and the sound of rejoicing, the voice of the bridegroom and the voice of the bride, the sound of the millstones and the light of the lamp.

¹¹ **All this land will become a waste, a desolation, and these nations will serve the king of Babylon seventy years.**

¹² **Then when the seventy years are fulfilled, I shall check the king of Babylon and that nation, averring [declaring] is Yahweh, and the land of the Chaldeans for their depravity, and I will change it into eonian desolations.”**

[end text]

Jeremiah 25:1. This particular prophecy to the nations is analyzed in detail in Dr. Martin’s articles: “[Origin and Goal of Western Civilization, Part 1](#),” and “[Origin and Goal of Western Civilization, Part 2](#).”

Verse 2. YHWH’s prophecy was for all people in Judah and Jerusalem.

Verse 3. Jeremiah reviews his prophetic ministry to that moment. He has worked hard, risked his life, and the people have not listened or changed their behavior.

Verse 4. Other “servants” (prophets and those like Baruch who assist the prophets), have also worked diligently to get the message of YHWH to be accepted. We do not know how many servants were working, but more than Jeremiah, Uriah, Baruch, and others.

Verses 5–7. The message is familiar: repent, turn back from evil, worship YHWH alone and not other elohim. Stop provoking YHWH to anger.

Verse 8. Here comes the pronouncement of God’s judgment. It will not only involve the land of Judea, but the people living there, and even “**the nations round about.**” Judah and the lands around will become wastelands.

Verse 9. “**The families of the north**” is a reference to the armies of the nations north of Judah (and Israel) to be set loose against Judah by “**Nebuchadnezzar, my servant.**” They will devastate the land. Much of it will be a waste land.

Verse 10. This destruction was prophesied many times in other prophecies. Jeremiah himself taught:

“But My people have forgotten Me; They fume incense to a mere idol, And they stumble in their ways, the eonian trails, To walk the tracks of a way not heaped up, To make their land a desolation, an eonian hissing; Everyone passing by it is appalled and shakes his head.”

• *Jeremiah 18:15–16*

Verses 11. This verse restates verse 8 above. The 70 years duration of YHWH’s judgment upon the land of Judah is examined in detail in Dr. Martin’s article transcribed 1999 lecture “[Jeremiah, Part 3](#).” The effects in some parts of Israel today still exhibit “**eonian desolations**” (verse 12), with more desert than in the time of Jeremiah. In fact, Judea was greener in the time of Jesus than it is today. See Dr. Martin’s 1977 article, “[Biblical Meteorology](#).” Babylonian dominance as overlord over all the nations in the region of Judea, and over all the nations of the world will diminish “**when the seventy years are fulfilled**” (verse 12). The Babylonian system will remain, but the direct government control will diminish.

Verse 12. The 70 years of captivity and exile will end, and the power of Babylon will diminish. In a later prophecy to Jeremiah (after Jehoiakim’s reign), YHWH again announces the end of the 70-year deportation:

“For thus says Yahweh: ‘When at My bidding, seventy years are fulfilled for Babylon, I shall visit you and will carry out My good word for you, to restore you to this place. ...

When you seek Me, you will find Me, for you shall seek after Me with all your heart, and I will be found by you, averring is Yahweh. And [1] I will reverse your captivity, and [2] will convene you from all the nations and from all the places where I drove you away, averring [declaring] is Yahweh, and [3] I will restore you to the place from which I deported you.”

• *Jeremiah 29:10, 13–14*

While in captivity the prophet Daniel read, studied, and prayed to understand this prophecy:

“In year one of Darius son of Ahasuerus, of the seed of the Medes, who was made king over the kingdom of the Chaldeans, in year one of his reign, I, Daniel, understood by the scrolls the number of years which came by the word of Yahweh to Jeremiah the prophet, to fulfill for deserted Jerusalem, seventy years.”

• *Daniel 9:1–2*

Most of the 70-years prophecy was fulfilled according to Ezra the Scribe, who wrote about what the Persian king felt compelled to do:

“In year one of Cyrus king of Persia, to conclude the word of Yahweh from the mouth of Jeremiah, Yahweh aroused the spirit of Cyrus king of Persia so that he had a proclamation passed throughout his kingdom, and also in writing, saying,

“Thus speaks Cyrus king of Persia: Yahweh Elohim of the heavens has given me all the kingdoms of the earth, and He Himself has committed to me to build for Him a house in Jerusalem, which is in Judah.

Anyone among you of all His people, may his Elohim be with him. Let him go up to Jerusalem, which is in Judah, and let him rebuild the house of Yahweh Elohim of Israel. He is the One, Elohim, Who is in Jerusalem.”

• *Ezra 1:1–3*

Note, on the verses of Jeremiah 25:13–38. The remainder of Jeremiah chapter 25 changes focus from Judah and Jerusalem, and describes YHWH’s punishments to be inflicted upon Babylon. These punishments upon Babylon have not yet occurred in history. See F.E. Marsh’s 1922 article

“[Will Babylon be Rebuilt?](#)” and Dr. Martin’s 1975 article “[The Rebirth of Babylon.](#)”

Back to Jeremiah Chapter 36, Beginning With Verse 9

Remember that in pages 4–5 above I halted the narrative of the text of Jeremiah chapter 36 at verse 8. That is because 36:1–8 is a prophecy given in **the 4th year** of Jehoiakim. Jeremiah 36:9–32 tell of a message from YHWH coming to Jeremiah during **the 5th year** of Jehoiakim. This was a year after Baruch’s first reading of Jeremiah’s scroll, with YHWH’s judgments being read in the Temple.

In the 5th year of Jehoiakim, Baruch **again** reads a message from the scroll in the Temple to the crowds from all Judah that came to Jerusalem to celebrate **an unnamed feast day**. It seems to have been the same scroll of warnings from YHWH that he read before. After the reading Baruch is taken before the chief officials of Judah and later before King Jehoiakim:

TEXT: *Jehoiakim’s 5th Year* — *YHWH’s Message About King Jehoiakim of Judah*

Jeremiah 36:9–25 (one year after verse 36:8)

⁹ So it came to be in **the fifth year of Jehoiakim** son of Josiah, king of Judah, in **the ninth month**, [1] **all the people** in Jerusalem and [2] **all the people** who came from the cities of Judah into Jerusalem **proclaimed a fast before Yahweh**.

¹⁰ And Baruch read from the scroll the words of Jeremiah in the house of Yahweh, in the room of Gemariah son of Shaphan, the scribe, in **the upper court at the portal of the new gate** of the house of Yahweh, in the ears of all the people.

¹¹ When Micaiah son of Gemariah son of Shaphan, heard all the words of Yahweh from the scroll, ¹² he went down to the house of the king, to the room of the scribe, and behold, there all the chief officials were seated, Elishama the scribe, Delaiah son of Shemaiah, Elnathan son of Achbor, Gemariah son of Shaphan, Zedekiah son of Hananiah and all the other chief officials. ¹³ And Micaiah told them all the words which he had heard when Baruch read from the scroll in the ears of the people.

¹⁴ Then all the chief officials sent Jehudi son of Nethaniah, son of Shelemiah, son of Cushi, to say to Baruch, **“The scroll from which you read in the ears of the people, take it in your hand and come.”** So Baruch son of Neriah took the scroll in his hand and came to them. ¹⁵ They said to him, **“Be seated, please, and read it in our ears.”**

So Baruch read it in their ears. ¹⁶ And it came to be when they heard all the words **they were afraid**, each before his associate, and they said to Baruch, **“We must tell, yea tell the king all these words.”**

¹⁷ They also asked Baruch, saying, **“Please tell us; how did you write all these words? At his [Jeremiah’s] bidding?”**

¹⁸ And Baruch said to them, **“At his bidding; he dictated to me all these words, and I wrote on the scroll with ink.”** ¹⁹ Then the chief officials said to Baruch, **“Go, be concealed, you and Jeremiah. Let not anyone know where you are!”**

²⁰ Then they entered before the king in the court, yet they committed the scroll to the room of Elishama the scribe; and they told all the words in the ears of the king. ²¹ So the king sent Jehudi to procure the scroll; and he took it from the room of Elishama the scribe, and Jehudi read it in the ears of the king and in the ears of all the chief officials who were standing beyond the king.

²² Since it was **the ninth month**, the king was seated in **the winter house**, and a fire was blazing up on the brazier before him. ²³ And it came to be as Jehudi read three or four scroll columns he would tear it with the scribe’s razor and fling it into the fire which was on the brazier until the entire scroll had come to end in the fire which was on the brazier.

²⁴ Yet they were **not afraid**, nor did they tear their garments, neither the king nor all his officials who were hearing all these words. ²⁵ Moreover Elnathan, Delaiah and Gemariah interceded with the king that he not burn the scroll, yet he did not hearken to them.

²⁶ Then the king instructed Jerahmeel the king's son, Saraiah son of Azriel and Shelemiah son of Abdeel to take hold of Baruch the scribe and Jeremiah the prophet. But Yahweh had concealed them. [end text]

Jeremiah 36:9. This incident occurred about one year after Baruch's first reading of the scroll in the Temple. Apparently God's warning had little or no effect. No one seemed to care at that time. Now at the feast there are crowds in the city for a festival that the King was (perhaps) preparing to participate and make a speech to his subjects. Because the text says, "**proclaimed a fast before Yahweh.**" This was not the Day of Atonement which occurs in the 7th month of the Hebrew calendar, not in the 9th month.

It is interesting that in Jeremiah 36:6 (above, page 4), the first time Baruch read the scroll in the Temple, that day also was a fast day.

Verse 10. Baruch reads the scroll aloud again at the Temple to "**all the people.**" The "**the upper court at the portal of the new gate**" may have been a raised speaking platform overlooking the court. The Temple itself was above the Gihon Spring, located in the center of a natural theater. Even though Baruch was at the Temple, it is possible for him to be heard from a great distance.

The Solomonic Temple was higher in elevation than Herod's Temple in the time of Jesus and apostles in the 1st century AD. (See chapters 17–20, 24–25, and 27–28 in Dr. Martin's book [*The Temples That Jerusalem Forgot*](#), free online.) A speaker's voice could have carried far across the Kidron Valley. Evidence of this is in the Mishnah that tell about a machine that brought up water from below when the intermittent siphon spring was not flowing. The need for such a machine (authorized by the Sanhedrin) was crucial during the feast days when more water than usual was necessary to wash away the blood from sacrifices. The noise from the machine could be heard in Jericho, the sound traveling 17 miles to the east with an elevation difference of 3,352 feet from the Temple to Jericho which is 800+ feet below sea level. Read what the *Mishnah* Tamid 2.8 says could be heard from the Temple in Jericho (when conditions allowed, such as winds from west to east):

**"From Jericho they could hear the noise of the opening of the great gate;
from Jericho they could hear the sound of the 'Shovel';
from Jericho they could hear the noise of the wooden device which Ben Katin made for the laver;
from Jericho they could hear the voice of Gabini the herald;
from Jericho they could hear the sound of the flute;
from Jericho they could hear the noise of the cymbal;
from Jericho they could hear the sound of the singing;
from Jericho they could hear the sound of the Shofar; and some say,
even the voice of the High Priest when he pronounced the Name on the Day of Atonement ..."**

• *Mishnah, Danby Translation, 1933, 1958, p. 585*

If what the Mishnah records tell us is true, certainly, a voice from the Temple by a priest, a herald, or by Baruch could be heard by people near the Temple and across the Kidron valley on the Mount of Olives. Today, however, there is too much city and traffic noise for such things to be heard.

Verses 11–12. Baruch's words were reported to the king.

Verses 13–14. The names of the officials were important to Jeremiah's original audience. Baruch followed them with the scroll in his possession.

Verse 15. Some of those named perhaps did not hear what the prophecy said.

Verse 16. Together they wondered what to do. Perhaps they were afraid of King Jehoiakim's reaction.

Verse 17. Were these words of treason? No, not if the words were from YHWH. But if Baruch's or Jeremiah's words went against the king's orders or wishes, then yes, they were in trouble.

Verse 18. The words were dictated by the prophet to Baruch.

Verse 19. The officials seem to be acting in Jeremiah's and Baruch's best interests.

Verse 20. The officials reported YHWH's words on the scroll. They did not take the scroll to Jehoiakim.

Verse 21. Jehoiakim wanted the scroll read to him, which was done. The "**chief officials**" stood apart from

Jehoiakim.

Verse 22. A “winter house” was probably an enclosed building to hold heat inside. Most everything in Jerusalem is built with stone because of its availability to the north of the city. Wood was used for interiors. A brazier of coals was “before him.”

Verse 23. Jehoiakim was next to the reader and cut off the sections that his scribe had just read, and lit the sections on fire one by one. Perhaps his point was, done with the arrogance of youth, that if he burned the scroll it is as if it never existed. It was a grievous mistake.

Verse 24. Perhaps they did not believe the words on the scroll were from YHWH, but were Jeremiah’s words. None seemed to care about the words on the scroll, now gone.

Verse 25. Three named “Elnathan, Delaiah and Gemariah” tried to convince Jehoiakim not to burn the scroll, but he did not listen.

Verse 26. Apparently Baruch wisely had left the palace and returned to Jeremiah. Perhaps together they went into hiding and were not found.

TEXT: YHWH’s Message to Jeremiah After Jehoiakim Burned the Scroll of God’s Word

Jeremiah 36:27–32

²⁷ The word of Yahweh came to Jeremiah after the king had burned the scroll, the words which Baruch had written at the bidding of Jeremiah, saying:

²⁸ “**Do it again; take another scroll for yourself, and write on it all the former words which were on the first scroll that Jehoiakim king of Judah burned.** ²⁹ **And concerning Jehoiakim king of Judah you shall say,**

‘Thus says Yahweh: You yourself burned this scroll, asking, For what reason have you written on it saying the king of Babylon shall come, yea come, and he will lay this land in ruins and eradicate from it human and beast?’

³⁰ **Therefore thus says Yahweh concerning Jehoiakim king of Judah:**

‘He shall not come to have one [son] staying on the throne of David, and his carcass shall be flung to the scorching heat of day and to the ice of night. ³¹ I will visit

[1] **him and**

[2] **his seed and**

[3] **his officials for their depravity, and**

I will bring on them and

[4] **on the dwellers of Jerusalem and**

[5] **on the men of Judah**

ALL THE EVIL of which I have spoken to them, yet they did not hearken.’”

³² So Jeremiah took another scroll, and he gave it to Baruch son of Neriah, the scribe. And at the bidding of Jeremiah he wrote on it all the words of the scroll that Jehoiakim king of Judah had burned in the fire.

And further there were added to them many words like them.

[end text]

Jeremiah 36:27–28. YHWH ordered Jeremiah to rewrite the scroll. Then he gave him other words specifically for Jehoiakim.

Verse 29. Jehoiakim knew who Jeremiah was. He was a well-known prophet for the entire 23 years of Jehoiakim’s life.

Verse 30. Doom for Jehoiakim. He and all his sons will die.

Verse 31. The list of God’s victims expands to the officials, all those in Jerusalem, and all the men of Judah. YHWH explained that He spoke to them repeatedly through His prophets, but they refused to listen. So much for human will. It always goes astray.

Verse 32. Jeremiah dictated from memory what he dictated before and Baruch wrote it all down again, with additional words of the doom now soon to happen upon all Judah. The “**added ... many words like them**” were not added by Jeremiah or Baruch. They were the words from God in verses 28–31 above.

TEXT: YHWH Comforts Baruch’s Questions

Jeremiah 45:1–5

¹ The word which Jeremiah the prophet spoke to Baruch son of Neriah when he wrote these words in a scroll at the bidding of Jeremiah in **the fourth year** of Jehoiakim son of Josiah king of Judah, saying:

² **“Thus says Yahweh, Elohim of Israel, concerning you, Baruch:**

³ **You say, ‘Woe to me, for Yahweh has added affliction to my pain. I am wearied with my sighing, and I do not find rest.’**

⁴ **Thus you shall say to him [Baruch], ‘Thus says Yahweh: Behold, that which I have built I shall demolish, and that which I have planted I shall pluck up, that is, the entire land.**

⁵ **Yet you, are you seeking great things for yourself? Do not seek them. For behold, I shall bring evil upon all flesh, averring [declaring] is Yahweh, yet I will grant you your soul as spoils in all the places where you go.”** [end text]

Jeremiah 45:1. Baruch has been complaining to YHWH and possibly to Jeremiah about what God was going to do to punish Judah, his own people and country.

Verse 2. YHWH speaks specifically to Baruch through Jeremiah. That is special.

Verse 3. Baruch’s words are said back to him. Baruch is suffering in ways that are not told to us. Perhaps he is worried about the future of Judah. After all, YHWH is pronouncing unrelenting doom and gloom on the sinners and evils being committed in Judah and particularly in Jerusalem.

Verse 4. YHWH expresses his complete freedom of will to do as He pleases. He will build and demolish, plant, and pluck up, even if it means all of Judah.

Verse 5. Baruch is a man of great abilities and ambition. Both are worthy traits if one lives and acts justly toward other people. But God tells him that now is not the time for personal ambition (“**seeking great things for yourself**”). God knows Baruch’s heart. He is given a direct command, “Do not seek them.” Then he gives Baruch a reason. Everyone (“**all flesh**”) will have evil brought upon them from YHWH. In context that means the entire world will have severe problems, not just Judah. Things will not be better away from Judah.

Because of Baruch’s service to God and to Jeremiah, YHWH “**will grant you your soul**” which I understand means that Baruch will survive the worst of the coming calamities wherever he goes. It also seems to imply that Baruch wants to separate himself from Jeremiah’s service.

This word from YHWH to Baruch should be read in relation to Jeremiah’s other very important prophetic mission to all nations and people of the world, as presented in Dr. Martin’s articles, “[Prophetic Birth of Our Civilization](#)” and “[The Key to Old Testament History](#),” Both discuss other aspects of Jeremiah’s worldwide prophetic ministry that are outside the scope of the “Israel and Judah” narrative.

TEXT: Jehoiakim’s 4th Year — The Battle of Carchemish Between Egypt and Babylon

Jeremiah 46:1–28

¹ That which came as the word of Yahweh to Jeremiah the prophet concerning the nations: ² Concerning Egypt, about the army of Pharaoh Necho king of Egypt, which was **at the stream Euphrates in Carchemish**, which Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon smote in **the fourth year** of Jehoiakim son of Josiah king of Judah:

³ **“Array with buckler [a small shield] and large shield, And come close for battle! ⁴ Harness up the horses, and mount up, you horsemen! Stand by with helmets on! Unsheathe the lances! Put on the**

coats-of-armor!

⁵ For what reason do I see them in dismay, turned away back? Their masterful men are pounded; In flight they flee, and they do not turn around! Shrinking fear is round about! averring [declaring] is Yahweh.

⁶ Let not the fleet flee away, And let not the masterful man escape! Northward, by the side of the stream Euphrates, they stumble and fall. ⁷ Who is this who ascends like the Nile, Like streams whose waters reel? ⁸ It is Egypt who ascends like the Nile, And like streams whose waters reel. He said, ‘Let me ascend; Let me cover the earth; Let me destroy both city and those dwelling in it!’

⁹ On, you horses, And rave, you charioteers! Let the masterful men go forth, Cush and Put, who grasp the buckler, And the Ludim who grasp and position the bow!

¹⁰ Yet that day is for my Lord Yahweh of hosts, A day of vengeance to be avenged of His foes. The sword will devour and be surfeited [filled full] And be soaked with their blood, For a sacrifice belongs to my Lord Yahweh of hosts **in the land of the north by the stream Euphrates.**

¹¹ Ascend to Gilead and take balm, virgin daughter of Egypt; With futility do you multiply remedies; There is no recovery for you. ¹² Nations have heard your dishonor, And your yelling fills the earth; For masterful man stumbles against masterful man; The two of them fall down together.”

¹³ The word which Yahweh spoke to Jeremiah the prophet about the coming of Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon to smite the land of Egypt:

¹⁴ Tell it in Egypt, and announce it in Migdol; Announce it in Noph and in Tahpanhes. Say: ‘Stand by and prepare yourselves, For the sword has devoured round about you. ¹⁵ For what reason is he flattened? Your sturdy one does not stand, For Yahweh thrusts him down.’

¹⁶ Your multitude stumbles; Also each man falls over his associate; They are saying: ‘Rise, and let us return to our people, And to the land of our birth,’ in view of the tyrannizing sword. ¹⁷ Call the name of Pharaoh king of Egypt: The tumult who let the appointed time pass by.

¹⁸ As I live, averring [declaring] is the King, Yahweh of hosts is His Name:

‘Like Tabor among the mountains, And like Carmel by the sea, so shall he come. ¹⁹ Prepare for yourself gear for deportation, Dweller, daughter of Egypt, For Noph shall become a desolation, And it will be ravaged without a dweller.’

²⁰ A most lovely heifer is Egypt; A horsefly from the north has come upon her. ²¹ Moreover, her hirelings among her who were like stall-fed calves, They too turn around; They flee together; They do not stand; For the day of their calamity has come on them, The era of their visitation.

²² She makes a sound like a serpent as it goes away, For they are marching with potent power, And with hatchets they come against her like men chopping trees. ²³ They cut down her wildwood, averring [declaring] is Yahweh, Since it cannot be searched out; Indeed they are more numerous than the locust, And there is no numbering of them.

²⁴ Shamed is the daughter of Egypt; She is given into the hand of the people of the north.”

²⁵ Yahweh of hosts, Elohim of Israel, has said:

“Behold, I shall call to account Amon of No and Pharaoh, even Egypt and **her elohim** and her kings and Pharaoh with those who trust in him. ²⁶ I will give them

[1] into the hand of those seeking their soul, and

[2] into the hand of Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon and

[3] into the hand of his officials, and afterward she shall tabernacle as in former days, averring [declaring] is Yahweh.

²⁷ And **you, do not fear**, My servant Jacob, And do not be dismayed, Israel; For behold, [1] I shall save you from afar And [2] your seed from the land of their captivity; And [3] Jacob will return and [4] be given quietness And [5] be tranquil with no one making him tremble.

²⁸ **You, do not fear, My servant Jacob, averring [declaring] is Yahweh, For I am with you; Indeed I shall make an end of all the nations where I have driven you away; Yet I shall not make an end of you, Though I discipline you for judgment And am not holding you innocent, nay innocent.”** [end text]

Jeremiah 46:1–2. This battle occurs during the 4th year of Jehoiakim’s reign, likely in summer when most ancient battles were fought. Babylon had conquered the lands down to and including Judah and the city of Jerusalem. That was done in Jehoiakim’s 3rd year. With his southern flank secured, Nebuchadnezzar confronted Pharaoh Necho’s army that moved along the eastern Mediterranean coast to Syria. Both had allies and vassals fighting with them. Judah is not involved, but they are watching to see who won. YHWH decided Babylon would win. Pharaoh Necho had gained control up to the banks of the upper Euphrates River, beginning during the reign of Josiah and later during Jehoiakim’s reign. We are told by the writer of 2 Kings:

“The king of Egypt never again proceeded to march forth from his land; for the king of Babylon had taken all the territory that had been under the king of Egypt, from the wadi of Egypt as far as the stream Euphrates.”

• **2 Kings 24:7**

These words were written after the battle, but the words from verse 3 to verse 27 tell what happened after the battle of Carchemish. Egyptian losses were so great that Nebuchadnezzar successfully invaded Egypt.

Verses 3–4. These are the arms and equipment of an infantry soldier, cavalry, and chariot soldiers.

Verses 5–6. YHWH causes the Egyptians to retreat in disorder. Remember, Nebuchadnezzar is YHWH’s servant. In ancient times, fleeing armies usually throw down their weapons to flee faster without the weight of arms and armor.

Verses 7–8. The Egyptian army is flowing like swift water to return to Egypt from the battle in northern Syria. Pharaoh Neco thought he would be victorious like streams moving swiftly. It seems that words of Pharaoh are quoted.

Verse 9. The Egyptian masters of war in all contingents are fleeing.

Verse 10. This verse may have a dual fulfillment. It seems world-wide and even cosmic in scope. This battle is a form of a sacrifice at the Euphrates River.

Verses 11–12. Egypt is severely wounded. Nothing will be able to heal it. Nations that formerly attended to Egypt’s desires and needs, no longer respond to its calls.

Verse 13. After the battle, Nebuchadnezzar follows the Egyptian army to attack and plunder Egypt.

Verse 14–15. The sword continues to kill and devour lives. Anyone who stands to fight is thrust down. No strong Egyptians can prevail in any encounters with the Babylonians.

Verse 16–17. Total chaos on the way back to Egypt. This means the Babylonian combined army is closely pursuing the Egyptians. Remember Pharaoh is supposedly a “god” and YHWH mocks those who flee, saying call the name of your god Pharaoh to save you.

Verse 18–19. YHWH speaks directly to those in Egypt. Many will be deported, likely the skilled labor and craftsmen and the educated, like Daniel and his three companions. Portions of Egypt will become desolate without few tending to the irrigation canals and growing crops.

Verse 20–21. The biting horsefly (Babylon) will suck the blood of the heifer (Egypt). Non-native workers in Egypt will also flee.

Verse 22–24. Is the heifer (Egypt) making the sound of a moving serpent? The Babylonians are entering the land and chopping (killing, destroying) wherever they please.

There was some wood in Egypt, but most was imported from the lands south of Upper Egypt. Other wood was imported from Lebanon, especially cedar. Some wood was grown in Egypt in ancient times. The Babylonian and allied armies are like locusts in Egypt. The women of Egypt were ravished and abused.

Verses 25–26. YHWH says to the gods of Egypt that He “**shall call to account**” the god “**Amon of No**” by name, as well as all the elohim of Egypt. Spirit entities do exist (and communicate with human beings), posing as gods. There is a mutually parasitic relationship between the spirits and men. YHWH says something that

