

## Seventy Years of Captivity is Ordained

Jeremiah 23-29

October 29, 2023

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**Even as God's judgment is pronounced, He provides words of comfort and restoration.**

### **I. God condemns the lying prophets who are preaching peace and safety and He proclaims His own omnipresence. (ch. 23:11-24)**

He who is the Glory of Israel does not lie or change His mind; for He is not a human being, that He should change His mind." (1 Samuel 15:29)

Every good and perfect gift is from above, coming down from the Father of the heavenly lights, who does not change like shifting shadows. (James 1:17)

From heaven the LORD looks down  
and sees all mankind;  
from his dwelling place he watches  
all who live on earth—  
he who forms the hearts of all,  
who considers everything they do. (Psalm 33:13-15)

Where can I go from your Spirit?  
Where can I flee from your presence?  
If I go up to the heavens, you are there;  
if I make my bed in the depths, you are there.  
If I rise on the wings of the dawn,  
if I settle on the far side of the sea,  
even there your hand will guide me,  
your right hand will hold me fast.  
If I say, "Surely the darkness will hide me  
and the light become night around me,"  
even the darkness will not be dark to you;  
the night will shine like the day,  
for darkness is as light to you. (Psalm 139:7-12)

### **II. God gave Jeremiah a vision of good and bad figs representing Judah in a surprising way, and sent the Babylonians against Jerusalem and her kings. (ch. 24)**

Jehoiachin was eighteen years old when he became king (609 BC), and he reigned in Jerusalem three months. His mother's name was Nehushta daughter of Elnathan; she was from Jerusalem. He did evil in the eyes of the LORD, just as his father had done.

At that time the officers of Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon advanced on Jerusalem and laid siege to it, and Nebuchadnezzar himself came up to the city while his officers were besieging it. Jehoiachin king of Judah, his mother, his attendants, his nobles and his officials all surrendered to him.

In the eighth year of the reign of the king of Babylon, he took Jehoiachin prisoner. As the LORD had declared, Nebuchadnezzar removed the treasures from the temple of the LORD and from the royal palace, and cut up the gold articles that Solomon king of Israel had made for the temple of the LORD. He carried all Jerusalem into exile: all the officers and fighting men, and all the skilled workers and artisans—a total of ten thousand. Only the poorest people of the land were left.

Nebuchadnezzar took Jehoiachin captive to Babylon. He also took from Jerusalem to Babylon the king's mother, his wives, his officials and the prominent people of the land. The king of Babylon also deported to Babylon the entire force of seven thousand fighting men, strong and fit for war, and a thousand skilled workers and artisans. He made Mattaniah, Jehoiachin's uncle, king in his place and changed his name to Zedekiah. (2 Kings 24:8-17)

So in the ninth year of Zedekiah's reign, on the tenth day of the tenth month (584 BC), Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon marched against Jerusalem with his whole army. He encamped outside the city and built siege works all around it. The city was kept under siege until the eleventh year of King Zedekiah.

By the ninth day of the fourth month the famine in the city had become so severe that there was no food for the people to eat. Then the city wall was broken through, and the whole army fled at night through the gate between the two walls near the king's garden, though the Babylonians were surrounding the city. They fled toward the Arabah, but the Babylonian army pursued the king and overtook him in the plains of Jericho. All his soldiers were separated from him and scattered, and he was captured.

He was taken to the king of Babylon at Riblah, where sentence was pronounced on him. They killed the sons of Zedekiah before his eyes. Then they put out his eyes, bound him with bronze shackles and took him to Babylon. (2 Kings 25:1-7)

### **III. These sieges occurred in fulfillment of God's word but the punishment of captivity was to only last 70 years. (25:1-14)**

The LORD said to Moses at Mount Sinai, "Speak to the Israelites and say to them: 'When you enter the land I am going to give you, the land itself must observe a sabbath to the LORD. For six years sow your fields, and for six years prune your vineyards and gather their crops. But in the seventh year the land is to have a year of sabbath rest, a sabbath to the LORD. Do not sow your fields or prune your vineyards. Do not reap what grows of itself or harvest the grapes of your untended vines. The land is to have a year of rest. Whatever the land yields during the sabbath year will be food for you—for yourself, your male and female servants, and the hired worker and temporary resident who live among you, as well as for your livestock and the wild animals in your land. Whatever the land produces may be eaten. (Leviticus 25:1-7)

I myself will lay waste the land, so that your enemies who live there will be appalled. I will scatter you among the nations and will draw out my sword and pursue you. Your land will be laid waste, and your cities will lie in ruins. Then the land will enjoy its sabbath years all the time that it lies desolate and you are in the country of your enemies; then the land will rest and enjoy its sabbaths. All the time that it lies desolate, the land will have the rest it did not have during the sabbaths you lived in it. (Leviticus 26:32-35)

He carried into exile to Babylon the remnant, who escaped from the sword, and they became servants to him and his successors until the kingdom of Persia came to power. The land enjoyed its sabbath rests; all the time of its desolation it rested, until the seventy years were completed in fulfillment of the word of the LORD spoken by Jeremiah. (2 Chronicles 36:20-21)

**IV. Chapter 26 describes a time during Jehoiakim's reign when Jeremiah came under threat of death for preaching God's impending judgment. (ch. 26)**

**V. God tells Jeremiah to prophesy judgment wearing a wooden yoke, representing subjugation by the Babylonians. (ch. 27)**

**VI. The false prophet Hananiah who contradicted this message was condemned by God to die. (ch. 28)**

**VII. God sent surprising and comforting words in a letter from Jeremiah to the exiles in Babylon. (ch. 29)**