



INFORMED AND FAITHFUL

Lesson 6: Captivity and Return of Judah

JoLynn Gower

352-2458; 493-6151

jgower@guardingthetruth.org

DILIGENCE IN DISCERNMENT

- ❖ 2 Timothy 2:15-16 Be diligent to present yourself approved to God as a workman who does not need to be ashamed, accurately handling the word of truth. [16] But avoid worldly and empty talk, for it will lead to further ungodliness...
- ❖ **WHEN YOU SAY WHAT PEOPLE DON'T WANT TO HEAR**

Perception vs Reality

THE LATER TIMES OF JEREMIAH

- ❖ Jeremiah was born in Anathoth, about 646 BC, a son of the priest Hilkiah
 - ❖ The people there had put out a “hit” on Jeremiah
 - ❖ Things momentarily looked better during the rule of Josiah when high places were being torn down and the temple rejuvenated
 - ❖ But things went rapidly bad after Josiah’s death
 - ❖ Enemies were on all sides, especially the north
 - ❖ God had a plan for Jeremiah and for Judah; Jeremiah didn’t particularly like either
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THE POWER OF THE WORD

- ❖ **Jeremiah 1:6** Then I said, "Alas, Lord God! Behold, I do not know how to speak, because I am a youth."
- ❖ **Hebrews 4:12** For the word of God is living and active and sharper than any two-edged sword, and piercing as far as the division of soul and spirit, of both joints and marrow, and able to judge the thoughts and intentions of the heart.
- ❖ **Jeremiah 5:14** Therefore, thus says the Lord, the God of hosts, "Because you have spoken this word, behold, I am making My words in your mouth fire and this people wood, and it will consume them."

THE WORD OF THE LORD

- ❖ Caused Jeremiah pain (38:6,9)
- ❖ Eaten (15:16)
- ❖ Burned inside him like fire in his bones (20:9)
- ❖ Josiah bowed before God's word
- ❖ Studying the Word: using the Bible itself
- ❖ Begin with prayer; be consistent; memorize key parts
- ❖ Read with focus and without prejudice
- ❖ Form principles from what you read
- ❖ Apply the principles! Be prepared to sacrifice!

WHEN GOD SPEAKS...

- ❖ Listen!
- ❖ Because Judah didn't listen and didn't repent, God allowed them to go into captivity to Babylon for 70 years
- ❖ **1st Babylonian raid: 605 BC**
- ❖ **2nd Babylonian raid: 597 BC**
- ❖ **Final Babylonian raid: 586 BC; temple destroyed**
- ❖ **Jeremiah 25:3** "From the thirteenth year of Josiah the son of Amon, king of Judah, even to this day, these twenty-three years the word of the Lord has come to me, and I have spoken to you again and again, but you have not listened."
- ❖ **Jeremiah 25:11** This whole land will be a desolation and a horror, and these nations will serve the king of Babylon seventy years.

OTHER OBSERVATIONS

- ❖ **Leviticus 26:34** Then the land will enjoy its sabbaths all the days of the desolation, while you are in your enemies' land; then the land will rest and enjoy its sabbaths.
- ❖ **Daniel 9:1-2** In the first year of Darius the son of Ahasuerus, of Median descent, who was made king over the kingdom of the Chaldeans—in the first year of his reign, I, Daniel, observed in the books the number of the years which was revealed as the word of the Lord to Jeremiah the prophet for the completion of the desolations of Jerusalem, namely, seventy years.

DURING CAPTIVITY

- ❖ 605 BC; 597 BC; 586 BC final overthrow of Judah
- ❖ All of Daniel's prophecies were made during captivity
- ❖ All of Ezekiel's prophecies were made during that time
- ❖ Daniel was taken under Babylon and lived into the time of the Medo-Persian conquest
- ❖ The Medo-Persians were Zoroastrian and, although they allowed the other gods and even rebuilt their temples, they still insisted that their primary god, Ahura Mazda, be the chief god
- ❖ Zoroastrian priests were called magi

CYRUS

- ❖ The Medo-Persian empire conquered Babylon: 538 BC
- ❖ Cyrus, in his first year ruling the former Babylonian empire, made a proclamation allowing those from Judah to return to their land and rebuild the temple
- ❖ **Isaiah 44:28** "It is I who says of Cyrus, 'He is My shepherd! And he will perform all My desire.' And he declares of Jerusalem, 'She will be built,' and of the temple, 'Your foundation will be laid.'"
- ❖ **Isaiah 45:4** "For the sake of Jacob My servant, and Israel My chosen one, I have also called you by your name; I have given you a title of honor though you have not known Me.

CYRUS CYLINDER

8.9"
x
2.5"



There were three main premises in the decrees of the Cyrus Cylinder: the political formulization of racial, linguistic, and religious equality; slaves and all deported peoples were to be allowed to return to home; and all destroyed temples were to be restored.

COUNTING YEARS

- ❖ 605 BC (first people taken) – 636-35 BC (exiles return)
OR
- ❖ 586 BC (temple destroyed) – 516 BC (new temple)
- ❖ The returning high priest was Joshua
- ❖ The returning kingly lineage was Zerubbabel
- ❖ 2nd year back they began on the temple itself
- ❖ Enemies offered to help build and when denied began to harass and turn in complaints to the Medo-Persians
- ❖ Artaxerxes issued a stop-work order
- ❖ Later, Darius searched the archives and found Cyrus' order and let work continue

THE DEDICATION

- ❖ **Ezra 6:16-18** And the sons of Israel, the priests, the Levites and the rest of the exiles, celebrated the dedication of this house of God with joy. They offered for the dedication of this temple of God 100 bulls, 200 rams, 400 lambs, and as a sin offering for all Israel 12 male goats, corresponding to the number of the tribes of Israel. Then they appointed the priests to their divisions and the Levites in their orders for the service of God in Jerusalem, as it is written in the book of Moses.
- ❖ Tisha b'Av: destruction of 1st and 2nd temples

TEMPLE TO WALLS

◆ **Daniel 9:24-27** "Seventy weeks have been decreed for your people and your holy city, to finish the transgression, to make an end of sin, to make atonement for iniquity, to bring in everlasting righteousness, to seal up vision and prophecy and to anoint the most holy place. So you are to know and discern that from the issuing of a decree to restore and rebuild Jerusalem until Messiah the Prince there will be seven weeks and sixty-two weeks; it will be built again, with plaza and moat, even in times of distress. Then after the sixty-two weeks the Messiah will be cut off and have nothing; the people of the prince who is to come will destroy the city and the sanctuary. Its end will come with a flood; even to the end there will be war; desolations are determined. And he will make a firm covenant with the many for one week, but in the middle of the week he will put a stop to sacrifice and grain offering; and on the wing of abominations will come one who makes desolate, even until a complete destruction, one that is decreed, is poured out on the one who makes desolate."

ENTER NEHEMIAH (446 BC)

❖ **Nehemiah 1:1-3** The words of Nehemiah the son of Hacaliah. Now it happened in the month Chislev, in the twentieth year, while I was in Susa the capitol, that Hanani, one of my brothers, and some men from Judah came; and I asked them concerning the Jews who had escaped and had survived the captivity, and about Jerusalem. They said to me, "The remnant there in the province who survived the captivity are in great distress and reproach, and the wall of Jerusalem is broken down and its gates are burned with fire."

START THE COUNT

❖ **Nehemiah 2:7-8** And I said to the king, "If it please the king, let letters be given me for the governors of the provinces beyond the River, that they may allow me to pass through until I come to Judah, and a letter to Asaph the keeper of the king's forest, that he may give me timber to make beams for the gates of the fortress which is by the temple, for the wall of the city and for the house to which I will go." And the king granted them to me because the good hand of my God was on me.

❖ 444 BC decree was given

REBUILDING THE WALLS

- ❖ Nehemiah quietly inspected the walls at night to be unseen
 - ❖ Nehemiah organized people into groups that built small sections and served their interests
 - ❖ **Nehemiah 4:16** From that day on, half of my servants carried on the work while half of them held the spears, the shields, the bows and the breastplates; and the captains were behind the whole house of Judah.
 - ❖ The wall was finished in 52 days
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